Cultural Holidays

Celebrating Differences in 2017

This calendar is offered to you by the Diversity Office of Erasmus University. Our university is convinced that education and research benefit from diversity among students and employees. We therefore strive to create a distinctive educational and academic environment, in which everyone has equal opportunities, feels at home and is able to develop his or her talents to the fullest. This calendar is a daily reminder of the power of diversity and the many different holidays that are celebrated by students and employees at our university. Find out more about our policy and initiatives at www.eur.nl/diversity.

Erasmus University Rotterdam
Make it happen.
Shangwei Wu
PhD Candidate at Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

“Back home in China, my mother cooks a nice meal on New Year’s Eve. We then eat together in front of the television so we can watch the Spring Festival Gala.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity

January 2017

Chinese New Year
Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is celebrated at the turn of the traditional Chinese calendar. Celebrations typically start on the evening preceding the first day and end with the Lantern Festival around 15 days later. Family reunion is a major part of Chinese New Year.

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1 New Year’s Day
6 Armenian Christmas

January 2017 Calendar

Chinese New Year

Armenian Christmas

Chinese Christmas
For me, Carnaval means dropping everything for a little while and simply having fun with my friends and family.

Dutch Carnaval
The Dutch version of Carnaval is mainly celebrated in the south of the Netherlands, the traditionally Catholic region. Here, normal daily life grinds to a halt for about three to five days as the streets are filled with float parades, festivities and lots of people wearing costumes.

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity
"On International Women’s Day, men in Russia give presents to the important women in their lives."

International Women’s Day is a civil awareness day on which the extraordinary acts of women worldwide are honoured. The focus of the celebrations differs from region to region, with women being celebrated out of respect and love, but also for their economic, political and social achievements.

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity
April 2017

African Freedom Day
Freedom Day is a national public holiday in South Africa. It commemorates the first post-apartheid elections held on 27 April 1994. It thus marks the end of segregation and the beginning of a new democratic state subject to a new constitution.

“Freedom Day demonstrated to me how profound change for the better can take place under a climate of peace and surprising tolerance.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity
Ascension Day

Ascension Day falls on a Thursday, exactly 40 days after Easter. It commemorates the bodily Ascension of Jesus into heaven and is one of the universally celebrated Christian feasts. Government offices, schools, banks and many businesses are usually closed in countries where Ascension Day is a public holiday.

“Ascension Day means having the day off from work, and it is without a doubt a special day. In the morning I go to church to attend the mass.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity
Eid al-Fitr

Eid al-Fitr, or the Festival of breaking the fast, is a major religious holiday celebrated by Muslims around the world. It marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting, and is a time of family and social gatherings, traditional sweet dishes, feasting and gift giving.

“For me, showing that we treat our elders with respect is one of the most important aspects of Eid al-Fitr.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity

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Prof. dr. Semiha Denktas  
Head of Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Programme Coordinator at Erasmus University College

June 2017
Keti Koti
Keti Koti, which is Sranantongo for ‘broken chains’, is Emancipation Day in Suriname. It marks the end of slavery in the country on 1 July 1863. It is celebrated by all people throughout Suriname and by many in the Netherlands. The festivities include a colourful parade called Bigi Spikri.

“All humans should have the right and opportunity to stand up for themselves.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity
“Independence Day would not be the same without what we call the ‘silly games’, for example eating krupuk attached to a string or playing football dressed in sarongs.”

Read the full interview at [www.eur.nl/diversity](http://www.eur.nl/diversity)
Charlotte Ornstein
Student at Rotterdam School of Management

“We should not focus on the differences between people, but on the similarities instead. Yom Kippur for me is a special day, I see it as the great day of reconciliation.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity

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September 2017

**Yom Kippur**
Yom Kippur, also known as the Day of Atonement, is the holiest day of the year in Judaism and celebrated around the world. Its central themes are atonement and repentance. The holiday is observed by fasting for roughly two days and intensive prayer.

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Eid al-Adha (Islamic Sacrifice Feast)
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)
Yom Kippur (Jewish Day of Atonement)
Labour Day (US & Canada)

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Eid al-Adha (Islamic Sacrifice Feast)
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)
Yom Kippur (Jewish Day of Atonement)
Labour Day (US & Canada)
Sharmini Bisessar-Setrarajah
Research Programme Administrator at the International Institute of Social Studies

“Diwali is a time for bonding and unity, a time to start each new year with a clean slate.”

Diwali
Diwali or Deepavali is the Hindu festival of lights, and is known as one of Hinduism’s major festivals. It spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance. Its celebration includes home decorations, performing religious rituals, fireworks and gift giving.

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity
“On Thanksgiving we invite everyone to bring their favorite dish, all dairy and meat-free. We inspire our guests to learn new recipes and to join us in this new vegan tradition.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity

Joey Johannsen
Sustainability Coordinator at Rotterdam School of Management

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**November 2017**

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**Thanksgiving**

Thanksgiving is a public holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November throughout the United States. It originated as a day of thanksgiving for the blessing of harvest and all the good things that happened during the preceding year.
Dr. Markus Klimek
Anesthesiologist and Student Coordinator at Erasmus Medical Center

“Celebrating Christmas for me has changed over the years, except for one thing: I always visit the Cologne Christmas Market.”

Read the full interview at www.eur.nl/diversity

December 2017

Christmas
Christmas is an annual festival which commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. Originally a religious holiday, it has become a cultural holiday for many, with Christmas being celebrated by billions of people around the world.

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Be different, be open, be yourself.
Make it happen.

Colophon

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