

2023 Religious Holidays & Observances Calendar



Camille Leak (She/Her)

DEI Truth Teller, Story Teller & Facilitator
Real Talk & Brave Spaces, LLC

www.realtalkbravespaces.com

Connect with me on LinkedIn!



What Is This?

- This guide provides information about diverse cultural celebrations and religious holidays.
- It includes a brief description of the events, any restrictions associated with each event, and a calendar.
- This guide is a high-level overview and does **not** include every holiday or observance of every religion, faith, denomination, or school of thought.
 - The guide provides a high-level overview of what is considered the "big five world religions": Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism.
 - As such, it omits faiths like Sikhism, Jainism, Baha'i, Zoroastrianism, Shinto, Taoism, Wicca, etc. in an effort to be digestible.
 - Even within those five religions, this guide only highlights the "major" holidays.

How Do We Use It?

- This resource can assist in internal event planning and external engagements. For example:
 - You might not want to host an internal luncheon or dinner during a time of fasting.
 - You might understand why an external partner is not as responsive as they typically are due to observing a holiday.
- Non-Christian religious holidays and traditions are rarely factored into the planning of events or meetings and as a result, many non-Christians often feel torn between observing their faith/celebrating with their family and being at that "important" meeting.
- As such, you may want to consider these holidays when planning critical meetings or other events to be more inclusive and considerate of others.

BUDDHISM

Holiday/Observance (listed in alphabetical order)	Description	Notes
Bodhi Day	Commemorates the day that the historical Buddha experienced enlightenment. This is a full day meant for remembrance and meditation.	
Lunar New Year	The beginning of a calendar year with months that are coordinated with the cycles of the moon. The exact date can vary by country of origin or ethnic background.	People might require time off for travel and observance.
Magha Puja Day	Commemorates the date when the four disciples traveled to join the Buddha.	
Wesak or Buddha Day	The celebration of Buddha's birth. This is the most important Buddhist festival.	Observers are encouraged to refrain from slaughtering and eating meat on this date.

CHRISTIANITY

Holiday/Observance (listed in alphabetical order)	Description	Notes
Ash Wednesday	It marks the first day of Lent, the period of 40 days before Easter in which Christians forgo ordinary pleasures.	Fasting or abstaining from meat is practiced by some Christians on Ash Wednesday, select days during Lent, or all of Lent. Some practicing Christians also attend church service the morning of Ash Wednesday when a cross is marked on their forehead with ashes.
Christmas	Celebration of the birth of Jesus. It falls on December 25 th every year.	People might require time off for travel and observance.
Easter	Celebration of Jesus's resurrection. Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the Spring Equinox full moon, which is the first full moon on or after March 21.	People might require time off for travel and observance.
Good Friday	Good Friday marks the day of the crucifixion of Jesus. This is the Friday before Easter.	Fasting or abstaining from meat is practiced by some. People might require time off for travel and observance.

HINDUISM

Holiday/Observance (listed in alphabetical order)	Description	Notes
Diwali, Deepavali, or Dipavali (Festival of Lights)	A major holiday that is also celebrated by Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. A 5-day celebration, with the main festivities happening on the 3 rd day, that celebrates the victory of good over evil.	People might require time off for travel and observance. Some Jains fast.
Ganesh Chaturthi	Celebration of the birth of Ganesh, son of Shiva.	Some people only observe the first day while some observe for 10 or 11 days.
Holi (Festival of Colors)	The celebration of spring.	
Krishna Janmashtami	A 1-2 day holiday celebrating the birth of Krishna.	
Maha Shivratri	This celebration honors Shiva.	It involves all-night worship the night before as well as fasting, prayer, and a vigil the day of.
Navarathri (Nine Nights)	It celebrates either Durga's or Rama's victory over an evil demon, depending on the region of origin. The celebration lasts for 9 nights and 10 days.	
Raksha Bandhan (The Bond of Protection)	This day celebrates brotherhood, sisterhood, and love.	

ISLAM

Holiday/Observance (listed in alphabetical order)	Description	Notes
Eid al-Adha (Festival of the Sacrifice)	The 3-day holiday commemorates the sacrifice of Abraham with the primary festivities taking place on the first day. It also highlights the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, call Hajj.	People might require time off for travel and observance.
Eid al-Fitr (End of Muslim Month of Fasting)	It marks the end of the Muslim month of fasting, Ramadan. There is a celebratory meal on the evening of this day. For some practicing Muslims, this is a 3-day celebration and they will attend early morning prayers each day.	People might require time off for travel and observance.
Islamic (Hijri) New Year	It also marks the end of Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Medina.	
Mawlid	This commemorates the birth of Muhammad. Celebrations, communal meals, and discussions on Islam usually take place on this day.	
Ramadan (Muslim Month of Fasting)	This month commemorates the first revelation of the Quran to Muhammad and consists of fasting, prayer, and reflection. This annual observance is regarded as one of the 5 Pillars of Islam.	Practicing Muslims fast, abstaining from both food and water, from dawn to dusk with the last ten days reserved for possible all-night prayer vigils.

Please note that all Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

Halal Restrictions: Islamic dietary laws which apply throughout the year. These restrictions can include alcohol and pork.

JUDAISM

Holiday/Observance (listed in alphabetical order)	Description	Notes
Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)	This celebration lasts for 8 days and consists of prayer, gift giving, and lighting of the Menorah.	
Passover	This 8-day celebration marks the liberation of the Jewish people from Egypt.	For observing Jews, labor is not permitted on the first two and last two days of Passover. People might require time off. In addition to Kosher restrictions, the use of leavening is prohibited. Matzah is eaten in place of bread.
Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)	A 2-day celebration that marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year and is celebrated with various customs and traditions.	For observing Jews, labor is not permitted. People might require time off.
Shavuot (Festival of Weeks)	Commemorates the receipt of the Torah on Mount Sinai.	For observing Jews, labor is not permitted. People might require time off.

Please note that all Jewish holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

Kosher Restrictions: Jewish dietary laws which apply throughout the year. These restrictions can include pork, shellfish (fish is allowed), and mixing meat with dairy.

JUDAISM (cont.)

Holiday/Observance (listed in alphabetical order)	Description	Notes
Shemini Atzeret (8th Day of Assembly)	A holiday devoted to the spiritual aspects of Sukkot and the love of God.	For observing Jews, labor is not permitted. People might require time off.
Simchat Torah (Rejoicing in the Torah)	Marks the conclusion of the annual cycle of the public Torah Readings and the beginning of a new cycle.	For observing Jews, labor is not permitted. People might require time off.
Sukkot (Feast of the Tabernacles)	A 7-day celebration that celebrates the gathering of the harvest and commemorates the sheltering of the Jews in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land.	For observing Jews, labor is not permitted for the first 2 days. People might require time off.
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	The most sacred day of Judaism. Some observing Jews will spend the day in the synagogue.	No labor or travel is permitted and it is traditionally observed with fasting for 25 hours and intensive prayer. People might require time off for observance.

Please note that all Jewish holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

Kosher Restrictions: Jewish dietary laws which apply throughout the year. These restrictions can include pork, shellfish (fish is allowed), and mixing meat with dairy.

Pro Tip: Add These Holidays To Your Google Calendar

1. Open Google Calendar.
2. Select Add Other Calendars > Browse Calendars of Interest.
3. Check the box for each faith or country whose holidays you want to add to your calendar.
 - To capture the “big 5 world religions,” we recommend selecting Christian holidays, Jewish holidays, Islamic holidays, and Hindu holidays under “Global Religious Holidays” as well as “China” under “Regional Holidays” as a proxy for Buddhism.
4. Click OK.

Pro Tip: Add These Holidays To Your Outlook Calendar

1. Click File > Options > Calendar.
2. Under Calendar options, click Add Holidays.
3. Check the box for each faith or country whose holidays you want to add to your calendar.
 - To capture the “big 5 world religions,” we recommend selecting Christian holidays, Jewish holidays, Islamic holidays, India (a proxy for Hinduism), and China (a proxy for Buddhism).
4. Click OK.

JANUARY 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Lunar New Year	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

FEBRUARY 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Maha Shivratri
19	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
26	27	28				

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

MARCH 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Magha Puja Day	7	8 Holi	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			← Ramadan →			
26	27	28	29	30	31	
			← Ramadan →			

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

APRIL 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Ramadan
2	3	4	5 Ramadan	6 Passover	7 Good Friday	8
9 Easter	10 Passover	11	12 Ramadan	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 Ramadan	20	21	22 Eid al-Fitr
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

MAY 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5 Buddha Day	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Shavout	27
28	29	30	31			

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

JUNE 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 Eid al-Adha	30	

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

JULY 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 Islamic (Hijri) New Year	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

AUGUST 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Raksha Bandhan	31		

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

SEPTEMBER 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Krishna Janmashtami	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Rosh Hashanah
17 Rosh Hashanah	18	19 Ganesh Chaturthi	20	21	22	23
24	25 Yom Kippur	26	27 Mawlid	28	29	30 Sukkot

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

OCTOBER 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Sukkot	4	5	6	7 Shemini Atzeret
8 Simchat Torah	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Navarathri	19	20	21
22	23 Navarathri	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

NOVEMBER 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Diwali	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

DECEMBER 2023

Buddhist Holiday

Christian Holiday

Hindu Holiday

Muslim Holiday

Jewish Holiday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 Bodhi Day Hanukkah	9
10	11	12	13 Hanukkah	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Please note that all Jewish and Muslim holidays begin the evening **before** the date specified on most calendars. This is because a Jewish or Muslim "day" begins and ends at sunset rather than at midnight. In the winter months, practicing employees may need to leave early to observe.

Thank You!



Camille Leak (she/her)

DEI Truth Teller, Story Teller & Facilitator

Real Talk & Brave Spaces, LLC

www.realtalkbravespaces.com

Connect with me on LinkedIn!