



American and British Celebrations and Festivities



Second Monday of October	Columbus Day US	What : discovery of America by Christopher Columbus on October 12, 1492 How : Parades, election of a Columbus Day Queen, re-enactments (like in San-Francisco)	
October 31	HALLOWEEN UK & US	What : ancient pagan practice (" <i>All Hallows' Eve</i> ") How : costumes and masks of ghosts, witches, skeletons, vampires and other monsters	
5th November	Guy Fawke's Night UK	What : a plot against the parliament and the king failed on 5th November 1605 How : bonfires and fireworks, some burn an effigy of Guy Fawkes	
Last Thursday of November	Thanksgiving US	What : Families celebrate the end of the starvation for the first settlers in 1620, they " <i>give thanks to God</i> " How : Families gather for a traditional <i>Thanksgiving</i> dinner (roast turkey, sweet potatoes, corn and pumpkin pie !)	
25th December	Christmas UK & US	What : from " <i>Cristes Maesse</i> " (" <i>Christ's Mass</i> ") The birth of Christ is celebrated on this date chosen after 2 pagan and Roman festivals (the winter solstice and " <i>Natalis Solis</i> ") How : Christmas tree, wreaths, Santa-Claus, Carols, presents	
31 December 1st January	New Year's Eve New Year's Day UK & US	What : People celebrate the New year (usually on New Year's Eve) How : Parties and Fireworks. in the US : " <i>Bowl games</i> " (Football) and sometimes " <i>Open houses</i> " on New Year's Day	
14th February	Valentine's Day UK & US	What : Dedicated to people in Love How : Sweethearts celebrate with cards, presents and flowers	
17th March	St. Patrick's Day UK & US	What : The Irish community celebrates St. Patrick, who converted most of the Irish to Christianity (in the fifth Century) How : Parades, beer and stout, music, and...shamrocks !	
Between 22 March and 25 April	Easter	What : On the 1st day after the full moon in March, Christians celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ How : decorated and chocolate eggs, bells, and bunnies, church services and egg hunts. US : Easter Bonnet parades	
1st May	May Day UK & US	What : People celebrate the arrival of spring and warm weather How : Dances around the " <i>Maypole</i> ", floral decorations and colored ribbons. Labor demonstrations in Europe	
4th July (July 4th)	Independence Day US	What : A group of patriots wrote the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776. How : Flags everywhere, patriotic speeches and parades, a lot of baseball games, music, dancing, and traditional picnics. And of course, wonderful fireworks in the evening !	

