

Thanksgiving Day - A Time for Gratitude and Togetherness

Hey there, dear reader! Thanksgiving Day is just around the corner, and I couldn't be more excited to delve into the rich history and traditions that make this holiday so special. In this blog, we're going to explore Thanksgiving Day, learn about its origins, and understand why it's a time for gratitude and togetherness. So, grab a cosy spot, and let's embark on this journey of discovery together.



[Source: freepik]

What is Thanksgiving?

Thanksgiving is a national holiday primarily celebrated in the United States and Canada, with similar but distinct traditions in each country. The holiday has its roots in giving thanks for a good harvest and the blessings of the past year.

Thanksgiving is characterised by gratitude, family gatherings, and a festive meal. It's a time to reflect on the positive aspects of life, appreciate the people around you, and share in the joy of the harvest season. While the historical origins and specific customs may differ, the core idea of Thanksgiving remains the same—a time for reflection, appreciation, and togetherness.

The History of Thanksgiving Day

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[Source: freepik]

Thanksgiving Day, a cherished holiday in the United States, is a time for family gatherings, feasting, and expressing gratitude for the blessings of the year. But how did this tradition begin? To understand the history of Thanksgiving Day, we need to travel back in time to the early 17th century.

The origins of Thanksgiving can be traced to the year 1621 when a group of English Pilgrims, seeking religious freedom, arrived aboard the Mayflower in what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts. These early settlers faced harsh conditions, including a brutal winter that took the lives of many.

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However, with the help of the indigenous people of the Wampanoag tribe, the Pilgrims learned essential agricultural skills and how to cultivate native crops. In the autumn of 1621, after a successful harvest, the Pilgrims and Wampanoag people came together for a three-day feast. This event is often considered the first Thanksgiving, a celebration of the bountiful harvest and a symbol of cooperation and goodwill between two different cultures.

The modern Thanksgiving holiday, as we know it today, owes much to the efforts of Sarah Josepha Hale. She was an influential writer and editor, best is known for writing the nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Hale tirelessly lobbied for a national day of Thanksgiving in the United States.

After years of advocacy, President Abraham Lincoln heeded her call. On October 3, 1863, amid the Civil War, Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring the last Thursday of November as a national Thanksgiving Day. This proclamation aimed to foster unity during a time of great division and to encourage gratitude for the nation's blessings.

In 1941, Congress officially established Thanksgiving Day as the fourth Thursday in November, which it remains today. One iconic aspect of modern Thanksgiving is the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, held in New York City since 1924. This parade features enormous balloons, colorful floats, and marching bands, becoming a cherished tradition for families across the country.

Today, Thanksgiving is celebrated not only in the United States but also in some other countries, including Canada, where it falls on the second Monday in October.

What People Do on Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day, celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States, is a cherished holiday filled with special activities and time-honored traditions. It's a day when people come together to express gratitude for the blessings of the year and to spend quality time with family and friends.

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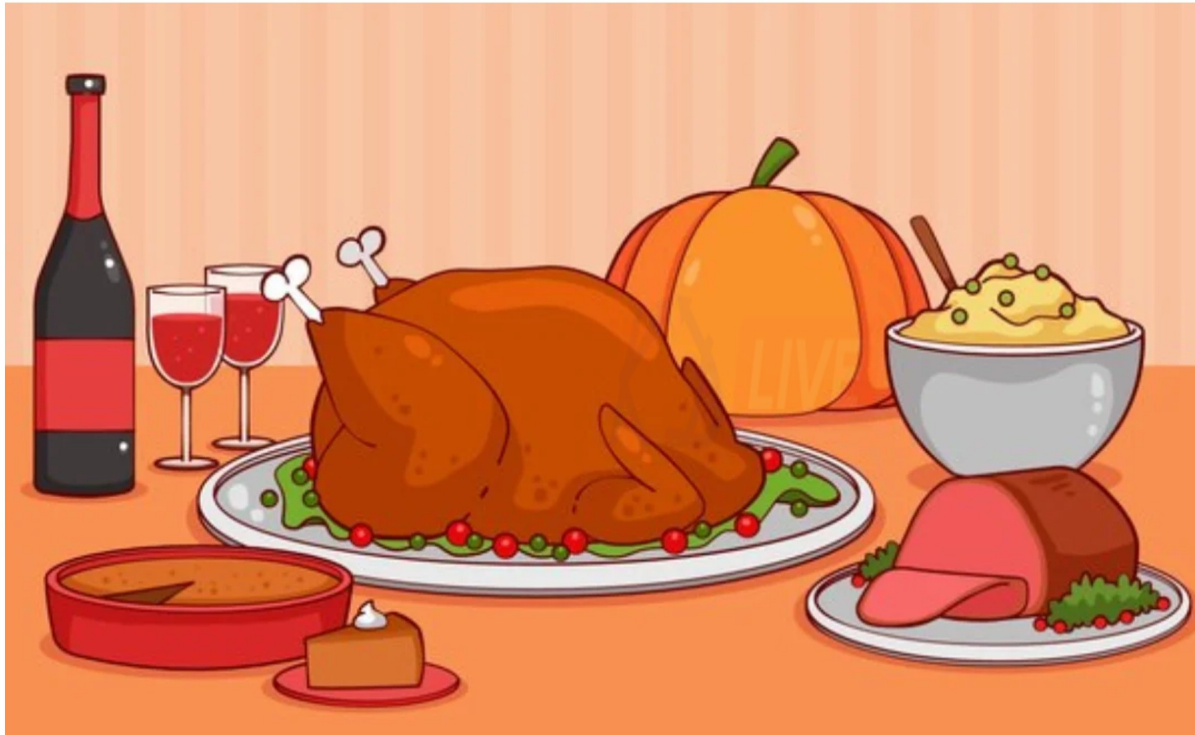
[Source: freepik]

- 1. Family Gatherings:** Thanksgiving is synonymous with family reunions. Many people travel long distances to be with their loved ones on this day. It's a time for families to come together, share stories, and create lasting memories. The warmth of these gatherings is what makes Thanksgiving so special.
- 2. Thanksgiving Feast:** The Thanksgiving dinner is the centerpiece of the day. A traditional Thanksgiving meal often features a roasted turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, gravy, and a variety of side dishes. Pumpkin pie and other desserts are the sweet ending to this delightful feast.
- 3. Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade:** Millions of people across the country and around the world tune in to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Featuring giant balloons, intricate floats, marching bands, and celebrity performances, this parade is a beloved tradition that has been entertaining generations for nearly a century.
- 4. Volunteer and Charitable Work:** Giving back to the community is an essential part of Thanksgiving for many. Some individuals and families volunteer at local shelters, and food banks, or participate in charity events to help those in need. It's a way of spreading the spirit of gratitude and compassion.
- 5. Black Friday Shopping:** While not officially part of Thanksgiving Day, many people look forward to the Black Friday sales that begin shortly after Thanksgiving. It's a day when shoppers can find great deals and start their holiday shopping.

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Fascinating Facts About Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day is a time for feasting, gratitude, and family gatherings. But beyond the turkey and pumpkin pie, there are some intriguing and lesser-known facts about this beloved holiday. Let's uncover some of the most interesting Thanksgiving Day facts:



[Source: freepik]

- 1. The First Thanksgiving Wasn't About Turkey:** The Pilgrims and the Wampanoag tribe shared venison, fish, fowl, and shellfish at the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621. Turkey only became a Thanksgiving staple much later.
- 2. Sarah Josepha Hale's Persistence:** Sarah Josepha Hale, the woman who wrote "Mary Had a Little Lamb," campaigned for 17 years to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. Her relentless efforts paid off when President Abraham Lincoln declared it so in 1863.
- 3. Presidential Pardoning of Turkeys:** The tradition of the President pardoning a turkey dates back to the 1940s. It's said that President Truman received a turkey as a gift and decided to spare it, starting the tradition of "pardoning" the turkey. These pardoned turkeys usually live out their days on a farm or at a petting zoo.

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4. **The Day After Thanksgiving:** Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is not just known for shopping. It earned its name from the heavy traffic and chaos that occurred in Philadelphia in the 1960s. It's now one of the the biggest shopping days of the year.

These fascinating facts shed light on the rich history and evolving traditions of Thanksgiving Day. While the turkey and pumpkin pie remain central to the celebration, the holiday's history and customs are far more diverse and intriguing than one might initially think.

How Thanksgiving Day is Celebrated Around the World

Thanksgiving, primarily celebrated in the United States on the fourth Thursday of November, is a holiday deeply rooted in American history. However, expressions of gratitude and harvest festivals are common to many cultures worldwide. Here's a glimpse of how similar celebrations take place in various parts of the world:

1. **Canada:** The neighbors to the north celebrate Thanksgiving, too, but on the second Monday in October. Canadians mark the occasion with a hearty meal that often includes turkey, stuffing, and pumpkin pie. Thanksgiving in Canada also signifies the end of the harvest season and a time to express gratitude.
2. **Liberia:** Liberia celebrates Thanksgiving, albeit on a different date and with a unique history. In 1820, freed American slaves settled in Liberia and brought the tradition of Thanksgiving with them. It's celebrated on the first Thursday of November, similar to the U.S. tradition of expressing gratitude for the year's blessings.
3. **Grenada:** In Grenada, Thanksgiving is celebrated on October 25th. It's a day to give thanks for the harvest and is often accompanied by church services, parades, and community gatherings. The celebration also includes traditional foods like turkey and local dishes.
4. **Norfolk Island:** This tiny island in the South Pacific, an Australian territory, has its own Thanksgiving tradition celebrated on the last Wednesday of November. Thanksgiving on Norfolk Island is a time for islanders to commemorate the arrival of Pitcairn Islanders in 1856.
5. **Germany:** In Germany, the Erntedankfest, or Harvest Thanksgiving Festival, is celebrated in early October. Communities come together to give thanks for the harvest, often with parades, church services, and feasting. It has a strong religious and agricultural significance.
6. **Korea:** In South Korea, Chuseok is a holiday with similarities to Thanksgiving. Celebrated in late September, it's a major harvest festival and a time for families to gather, share food, and pay respects to ancestors. Traditional foods like songpyeon (rice cakes) are an integral part of the celebration.
7. **Japan:** While Japan doesn't have an equivalent Thanksgiving holiday, they do celebrate Labor Thanksgiving Day, known as Kinrō Kansha no Hi, on November 23rd. This day is a time to give thanks for workers and to celebrate productivity and labour rights.



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8. **China:** The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival, falls in September or early October in China. It's a time for family reunions, similar to the spirit of Thanksgiving. Families gather to admire the full moon and share mooncakes, a traditional pastry.

While the traditions and dates may vary, the essence of Thanksgiving, celebrating the harvest and expressing gratitude, is a sentiment shared by cultures around the world. These global celebrations remind us of the universal human desire to come together, give thanks, and cherish the blessings of the year.

As we conclude our journey through the world of Thanksgiving Day, I hope you gained a deeper appreciation for this heartwarming holiday.

So, dear reader, how was your reading experience? Did you learn something new about Thanksgiving, or did it reaffirm your love for this wonderful holiday? I'd love to hear your thoughts and any personal Thanksgiving traditions you have. Feel free to share your stories and ideas in the comment section below.

Thank you for joining me on this Thanksgiving adventure, and if you'd like to explore more informative blogs, don't forget to visit our blog, [KD Live](#), where we're always eager to bring you fascinating content. Happy Thanksgiving!

