

# MULTICULTURAL & DIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025

## Month-Long Observances

- Autism Awareness Month (Canada)
- Disability Employment Awareness Month (USA)
- Black History Month (UK)
- Women's History Month (Canada)
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month (Int'l)
- Latin American Heritage Month (Canada)
- Library Month (Canada)
- Healthy Workplace Month (Canada)



Oct 1

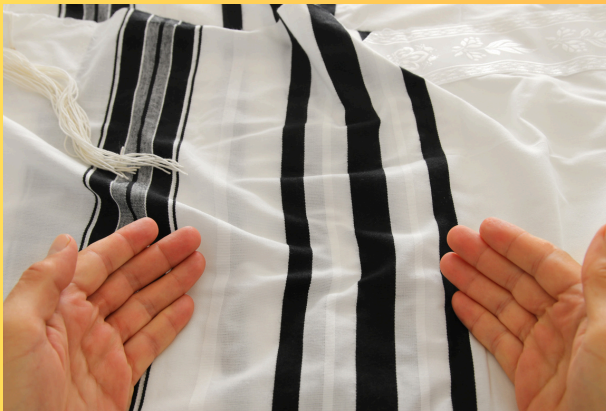
### National Seniors Day (Canada)

This is Canada's day to say "thank you" to seniors for shaping the nation's past, enriching its present, and guiding its future. It was established in 2010 by the Government of Canada to coincide with the United Nations' International Day of Older Persons. The day is meant to recognize and celebrate seniors for the contributions they have made, and continue to make, in communities, workplaces, and families across the country, and to raise awareness about issues facing seniors, such as health, social inclusion, financial security, and elder rights. Schools, organizations, and churches may invite seniors to share their stories and wisdom. Families are encouraged to spend time with their older relatives and express appreciation.

Oct 2

### Int'l Day of Non-Violence

This day is observed every year on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the birthday of **Mahatma Gandhi**, the leader of India's independence movement and a pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence. It was established by the **United Nations** in 2007. The purpose of the day is to spread the message of non-violence through education and public awareness, affirm the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence, and to inspire individuals, communities, and nations to reject violence in all its forms and resolve conflicts peacefully. Schools and organizations may host debates, art exhibitions, or essay competitions on peace and non-violence.



Oct 2

### Yom Kippur (Jewish)

**The Day of Atonement** is the holiest and most solemn of all days in the Jewish year. It is a sacred time of fasting, prayer and self-examination, devoted to seeking forgiveness and beginning anew. It is a day of repentance and reconciliation with God and others. Traditions and observances include a 25 hour fast (no food or drink), refraining from work and marital relations, prayer services with special liturgies, confession of sins, and sounding of the shofar (ram's horn) at the end of Yom Kippur, marking the close of the fast.

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Oct 5

## World Teachers' Day

This day was established in 1994 by UNESCO to honour the signing of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers, which set international standards for teachers' rights, responsibilities, and working conditions. The 1966 Recommendation remains the main reference point worldwide for governments, unions, and educators when discussing teachers' rights and quality of education. The purpose of the day is to recognize and appreciate the vital role of teachers in shaping society, to raise awareness about the challenges teachers face worldwide, and to promote support for teachers' professional development and well-being.

Oct 6

## Chuseok (Korea)

Chuseok is referred to as Korean Thanksgiving Day. It is a celebration of the harvest and thanksgiving for the bounty of the earth. Family members come from all over the country to visit their hometowns. Families honour their ancestors through rituals called **charye** (ancestral memorial services) and **seongmyo** (visiting ancestral graves). Traditions include preparing and sharing food (especially half-moon-shaped rice cakes), wearing traditional Korean clothing, and playing folk games.



Oct 11

## Int'l Day of the Girl Child

It is a day dedicated to recognizing the rights of girls and the unique challenges they face around the world, while promoting their empowerment and human rights. The day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2011 following a proposal by Canada. The day aims to highlight the importance of girls' education, health, safety, and equal opportunities. It raises awareness about issues such as gender-based violence, child marriage, and gender discrimination, while encouraging policies and actions that break barriers and close gender gaps.

Oct 12

## Día de la Raza (Mexico)

This day celebrates the Hispanic and Latino heritage in the Americas. On October 12, 1492, Columbus landed in the Americas, marking the beginning of widespread contact between Europe and the Western Hemisphere. Early commemorations focused on Spanish colonial achievements and the spread of European culture. The day now honours Indigenous peoples and their contributions, recognizes cultural diversity and the unique identities of Latin American nations, and reflects on historical injustices caused by colonization, and promotes reconciliation.





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Oct 13

## Thanksgiving Day (Canada)

Canadian Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks for the harvest and blessings of the past year. The earliest known Thanksgiving was held by English explorer **Martin Frobisher**, who gave thanks for safe passage through the treacherous Arctic waters. Over time, harvest festivals became common among settlers, influenced by both European traditions and Indigenous ceremonies of gratitude. Thanksgiving was declared a national holiday in 1879, originally celebrated on various days in October or November. In 1957, the Canadian Parliament officially set the holiday as “the second Monday in October” to coincide with the harvest season.

Oct 21

## Diwali (Sikh, Hindu)

Diwali, meaning “row of lights”, is one of the most important and widely celebrated festivals in India and across the world by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and some Buddhists. It symbolizes the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. The festival usually lasts five days, with each day having its own rituals and meaning. Diwali is not just a religious festival — it's also a time of family reunions, charity, joy, and renewal. Many people clean and decorate their homes, wear new clothes, and share food with neighbours and the less fortunate. In places like Canada and the UK, public Diwali festivals feature parades, lights, music, and food stalls.



Oct 24

## United Nations Day

United Nations Day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter, the founding document that established the United Nations (UN), in 1945. This day highlights the UN's ongoing efforts to promote peace, security, human rights, and sustainable development around the world. United Nations Day was first celebrated in 1948, and in 1971, the UN General Assembly recommended that the day be observed as a public holiday in member states. The day serves to raise awareness about the goals and achievements of the UN, celebrate unity and cooperation among nations, encourage people, governments, and organizations to work together for peace, development, and human rights, and to reflect on global challenges such as poverty, conflict, climate change, and inequality, and the role of the UN in addressing them.

Oct 29

## Chung Yeung Festival (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan)

The festival's history goes back over 2,000 years, blending Confucian ancestor reverence with Daoist and folk beliefs about balance and protection from misfortune. Families visit ancestral graves to clean them, offer food, burn incense, and pay respects. A major tradition is hiking to high places, which symbolizes rising to greater heights in life and avoiding danger. This also ties to the belief that higher altitudes ward off evil spirits.



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Oct 31

## Halloween (Canada, USA)

Halloween is observed annually on October 31<sup>st</sup>. It has its origins in the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain and the Western Christian feast of All Hallows' Eve. Samhain marked the end of the harvest season and the start of winter. Ancient Celts believed that on the night of October 31, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead blurred, and spirits could return to earth. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Catholic Church established 1<sup>st</sup> November as All Saints' Day, or All Hallows' Day. This meant that the night of October 31<sup>st</sup> became All Hallows' Eve, which eventually evolved into the name Halloween. Common traditions include Trick-or-treating, Costumes, Jack-o'-lanterns, and Haunted Houses. People decorate their houses with Halloween symbols such as witches, black cats, bats, spiders, and cobwebs.



## OTHER OBSERVANCES

- Oct 2 - Dussehra (Nepal, Hindu)
- Oct 2 - Mehragan (Iran, Zoroastrian)
- Oct 6 - Harvest Moon Festival (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan)
- Oct 7 - Sukkot (Jewish)
- Oct 9 - Han-Gul Day (Korea)
- Oct 10 - Karva Chauth (Hindu)
- Oct 13 - Indigenous Peoples' Day (USA)
- Oct 13 - Taiiku no hi (Japan)
- Oct 14 - Shemini Atzeret (Jewish)
- Oct 15 - Simchat Torah (Jewish)
- Oct 18 - Oktoberfest (Germany)
- Oct 22 - Abu Simbel Festival (Egypt)
- Oct 31 - Samhain (Wicca)

## NATIONAL & INDEPENDENCE DAYS

- Oct 1 - National Day (China)
- Oct 1 - Independence Day (Cyprus, Nigeria)
- Oct 3 - Foundation Day (Korea)
- Oct 3 - Day of German Unity (Germany)
- Oct 5 - Republic Day (Portugal)
- Oct 6 - Constitution Day (Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico)
- Oct 8 - Independence Day (Croatia)
- Oct 9 - Independence Day (Uganda)
- Oct 10 - Independence Day (Cuba)
- Oct 12 - National Day (Spain)
- Oct 16 - National Heroes Day (Jamaica)
- Oct 18 - Independence Day (Azerbaijan)
- Oct 23 - Labour Day (New Zealand)
- Oct 24 - Suez Victory Day (Egypt)
- Oct 24 - Independence Day (Zambia)
- Oct 25 - Republic Day (Kazakhstan)
- Oct 26 - National Day (Austria)
- Oct 28 - National Day (Czech Republic, Greece)
- Oct 31 - Reformation Day (Chile)

### Disclaimer:

*In creating this newsletter, we aim to honour and celebrate the diversity of our community. While we strive to acknowledge a wide range of cultural and religious holidays and observances, we recognize that we may not be able to include every holiday or tradition. This is not a reflection of the value or importance of any holiday or tradition. We deeply respect all cultural, religious, and personal celebrations and appreciate your understanding.*

### Reference:

Multicultural Calendar 2025

Sheena Singh, Creative Cultural Communications,  
Toronto, ON.