



Auld Lang Syne

"Here at the gateway of the year, may we strive to make good cheer. In our revels shall joy abound and sorrow be cast underground"

(Caitlin Matthews)

"Should old acquaintance be forgot, And never brought to mind? Should old acquaintance be forgot, And auld lang syne. For auld lang syne, my dear, For auld lang syne. We'll take a cup of kindness yet, For auld lang syne."

(Robert Burns)

"Ring out the old, ring in the new. Ring happy bells across the snow. The year is going, let me go. Ring out the false, ring in the true."

(Alfred Lord Tennyson)

"I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're Doing Something. So that's my wish for you, and all of us, and my wish for myself. Make New Mistakes. Make glorious, amazing mistakes. Make mistakes nobody's ever made before. Don't freeze, don't stop, don't worry that it isn't good enough, or it isn't perfect, whatever it is: art, or love, or work or family or life. Whatever it is you're scared of doing, Do it. Make your mistakes, next year and forever."

(Neil Gaiman)

"New Year's Day. A fresh start. A new chapter in life waiting to be written. New questions to be asked, embraced, and loved. Answers to be discovered and then lived in this transformative year of delight and self-discovery. Today carve out a quiet interlude for yourself in which to dream. Take a leap of faith and begin this wondrous new year by believing. Believe in yourself. And believe in your dreams. Only dreams give birth to change."

(Sarah Ban Breathnach)

"Come, gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness."

(William Shakespeare)

"May you have the hindsight to know where you've been, the foresight to know where you're going, and the insight to know when you're going too far."

(Celtic Wisdom)

"Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right."

(Oprah Winfrey)

"Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, Whispering *it will be happier*."

(Alfred Lord Tennyson)

"May Light always surround you;
Hope kindle and rebound you.
May your Hurts turn to Healing;
Your Heart embrace Feeling.
May Wounds become Wisdom;
Every Kindness a Prism.
May Laughter infect you;
Your Passion resurrect you.
May Goodness inspire
your Deepest Desires.
Through all that you Reach For,
May your arms Never Tire."

(D. Simone)

"Make New Year's goals. Dig within, and discover what you would like to have happen in your life this year. It is an affirmation that you're interested in fully living life in the year to come. The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written."

(Melody Beattie, *The Language of Letting Go*)

"Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better person."

(Benjamin Franklin)

"And now we welcome the new year. Full of things that have never been."

(Rainer Maria Rilke)

"If you asked me for my New Year Resolution, it would be to find out who I am."

(Cyril Cusack)



NEW YEAR SYMBOLS

Rebirth | Starting Fresh | New Beginning

New Year's Day is observed on January 1, the first day of the year on the modern Gregorian and Julian calendars. In pre-Christian Rome under the Julian calendar, the day was dedicated to Janus, god of gateways and beginnings, for whom January is also named.

New Year's Eve, with its emphasis on romance and indulgence, might seem like a totally secular celebration. But underneath all that glitter and sparkle is an ancient holiday with deep spiritual roots. For centuries, and in similar ways, people have been observing the end of one year and the beginning of another.

Because the Winter Solstice is the turning point of the year, beginning the lengthening of days, it has long been viewed as the birth of the year. Pagans celebrated the return of the Sun and Christians welcomed the birth of the Son of God. The days between Solstice and the New Year are a magical, luminous time period, when anything is possible. In England, the Twelve Days of Christmas were considered omen days which could be used to predict the weather in the coming year. In Scotland, no court had power during these days. And in Ireland, tradition held that if a person died during the Twelve Days, he or she went straight to Heaven.

In ancient Babylon, the days between the Winter Solstice and the New Year were seen as the time of a struggle between Chaos and Order, with Chaos trying to take over the world. Other cultures (Hindu, Chinese, Celtic) also viewed this as a time for reversing order and rules.

While each culture's New Year celebration has its own flavor, there are certain common themes. The period leading up to New Year's Day is a time for setting things straight: a thorough housecleaning, paying off debts, returning borrowed objects, reflecting on one's shortcomings, mending quarrels, giving alms. In many cultures, people jump into the sea or a lake and literally wash the slate clean.

Why does the start of the new year carry such special symbolism? And why is its celebration so common around the world, as it has been for at least as long as there have been calendars? Behavior this ubiquitous must surely be tied to something intrinsic in the human animal, something profoundly meaningful and important, given all the energy and resources we invest not just in the celebration but also our efforts to make good on a fresh set of resolutions (even though we mostly fail to keep them). It may be that the symbolism we attach to this one moment is rooted in one of the most powerful motivations of all: our motivation to survive.

The celebration part is obvious: As our birthdays do, New Year's day provides us the chance to celebrate having made it through another 365 days, the unit of time by which we keep chronological score of our lives. Another year over, and here we still are! Time to our raise our glasses and toast our survival!

But what about those resolutions? Aren't they about survival, too—living healthier, better, longer? New Year's resolutions are examples of the universal human desire to have some control over what lies ahead, because the future is unsettlingly unknowable. Not knowing what's to come means we don't know what we need to know to keep ourselves safe. To counter that worrisome powerlessness, we do things to take control. We resolve to diet and exercise, to quit smoking, and to start saving. It doesn't even matter whether we hold our resolve and make good on these promises. Committing to them, at least for a moment, gives us a feeling of more control over the uncertain days to come.

Interestingly, New Year's resolutions also commonly include things like treating people better, making new friends, and paying off debts. It's been so throughout history. The Babylonians would return borrowed objects. Jews seek, and offer, forgiveness. The Scots go "first footing," visiting neighbors to wish them well.

There are hundreds of good luck rituals woven among New Year celebrations, also practiced in the name of exercising a little control over fate. The Dutch, for whom the circle is a symbol of success, eat donuts. Greeks bake special Vassilopitta cake with a coin inside, bestowing good luck in the coming year on whoever finds it in his or her slice. Fireworks on New Year's Eve started in China millennia ago as a way to chase off evil spirits. The Japanese hold New Year's Bonenkai, or "forget-the-year parties," to bid farewell to the problems and concerns of the past year and prepare for a better new one. Disagreements and misunderstandings between people are supposed to be resolved, and grudges set aside. In a New Year's ritual for many cultures, houses are scrubbed to sweep out the bad vibes and make room for better ones.



LUNAR NEW YEAR

Lunar New Year is the beginning of a calendar year whose months are coordinated by the cycles of the moon. The relevant calendar may be a purely lunar calendar or a lunisolar calendar.

Asian Lunar (January/February):

- Chinese New Year (Chunjie)
- Japanese New Year (Shogatsu)
- Korean New Year (Seollal or Solnal)
- Mongolian New Year (Tsagaan Sar)
- Tibetan New Year (Losar)
- Vietnamese New Year (Tết)

South/Southeast Asian/Indic Lunisolar (March/April):

- Nava Varsha (India)
- Bege Roch (Baloch Hindu people, Pakistan and India)
- Aluth Avurudda (Sinhalese, Sri Lanka)
- Vishu (Malayalee)
- Maithili (Nepal)
- Satu Suro (Java)
- Burmese New Year (Thingyan)
- Cambodian New Year (Chaul Chnam Thmey)
- Lao New Year (Pii Mai)
- Nepali New Year (Bisket Jatra)
- Odia New Year (Pana Sankranti)
- Thai New Year (Songkran)
- Tamil (Puthandu)
- Bengali New Year (Pohela Boishakh)
- Dai New Year (Water-Sprinkling Festival)
- Sangken (Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, India)

South Asian Lunisolar (March/April):

- Ugadi and Gudi Padwa (Deccan people of India)
- Kashmiri New Year or Navreh (Kashmiri Pandits)
- Meitei Cheiraoba (Meitei people)
- Nyepi (Bali, Indonesia)



Middle Eastern Celebrations

-Islamic (Muslim, Arabic, Hirji) New Year follows a purely lunar calendar of 12 months that retrogresses through the Gregorian and Julian calendar years. The day of Muslim New Year may thus fall in any season on the calendar.

-Iranian New Year (Nowruz) is the day containing the exact moment of the Northward Equinox, which usually occurs on March 20 or 21.

-In Judaism, Rosh Hashanah (Head of the Year) begins with the new moon of the month of Tishrei (The month the world was born) in September or October. Rosh Hashanah also inaugurates the ten days known as the High Holy Days or Days of Awe, culminating with Yom Kippur (which is the holiest day of the year in Judaism).

