

Spring

- 1. April Fool's Day (1.04)** - It is a day when you hoax friends of yours with jokes like sending them to the shop for some pigeon's milk, or telling them to dig a hole because the dog has died; when they come back and ask where the dead dog is you say "April fool" and laugh at them.
- 2. May Day (1.05)** - Coming of spring celebration. Young maidens rise early and go out to wash their faces in the May dew. In most places, the girls do it to ensure that they shall have a beautiful complexion for the rest of the year, no pimples and freckles. Visiting houses with may-garlands is still practised. Men and women dance around a maypole decorated with flowers and ribbons.
- 3. St. George's Day (23.04)** - The church festival of St George regarded as England's national day (not official bank holiday). On this day some Englishmen wear a rose in their jacket buttonhole.
- 4. Coronation Day (2.06)** – There is a gun salute to mark the anniversary of the day when the Queen was crowned (in 1952).
- 5. Queen's Birthday (Saturday in June)** – Trooping the Colour, an annual ceremony in London (sometimes known as The Queen's Birthday Parade) is to celebrate the Queen's "official" birthday (her real birthday is in April). The soldiers from the Queen's Household Division are inspected by the Queen, carry ("troop") their regimental flag ("colour"), and march past and salute the Queen. The traditional 41-gun royal salute by the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery to mark the Queen's birthday takes place in Hyde Park - opposite the Dorchester Hotel.
- 6. Palm Sunday** - Christian celebration of the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and his death on the cross. The day (the Sunday before Easter) begins Holy Week. It is observed by worship celebrations and parades using palm branches. Children are given crosses made from single palm leaves. Many churches hold processions around or between churches
- 7. Good Friday** - On this day, Christians remember the day when Jesus was crucified. It is traditional to eat warm 'hot cross buns' (combination of spicy, sweet and fruity). Christian churches hold special services and are often decorated with flowers.
- 8. Maundy Thursday** - is the day before Good Friday. On this day Christians remember the Last Supper. In England, the Queen attends a service in one of the many cathedrals through out the country to distribute Maundy Money.
- 9. Easter Sunday** – The most holy of Christian sacred days. The day commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from his death by crucifixion. Observances include worship services beginning at sunrise, special music, feasting, giving chocolate Easter eggs and parades.
- 10. Mothering Sunday** – celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent.
- 11. Father's Day** – celebrated on the third Sunday of June.

Summer

- 1. Midsummer Day (24.06)**- The middle of summer comes after the longest day and it is a time associated with witches, magic, faries and dancing. Many bonfires used to be burnt all over the country. This was in praise of the sun.
- 2. Notting Hill Carnival** - This is the largest street festival in Europe, held in London's Notting Hill area each August. It is celebration of the end of slavery in the West Indies. The festival includes a fancy carnival parade

Autumn

- 1. Halloween (31.10)** - In the past people believed that the spirits of dead people appeared on this day. Today children celebrate Halloween by dressing up as witches and ghosts and going 'trick or treating.' They go out in groups and knock on people's doors, shouting "Trick or treat!" People usually give them sweets or small presents.
- 2. Mischief Night (4.11)** - On this night children are under the impression that lawlessness is permissible. For example householders' gates are removed, their dustbin lids hoisted up on lamp posts, their window panes painted, their evening newspapers exchanged.

3. Guy Fawkes Night (5.11) - In Britain people light bonfires and let off fireworks on 5th November. Traditionally this is done to remember the time when Guy Fawkes tried (but failed) to destroy the British Houses of Parliament with gunpowder in the 17th century.

4. The Remembrance Sunday (the Sunday after 11.11) - It is a special day to commemorate all those men and women who were killed during the two World Wars and other conflicts. Once the day was known as Armistice Day and was renamed Remembrance Day after the Second World War.

5. St. Andrew's Day (30 November) - (Patron Saint of Scotland) It is the church festival of St. Andrew, regarded as Scotland's national Day (although it is not an official bank holiday). This Day is connected with Advent, which begins on the first Sunday after November 26. It was traditional for girls to pray to St. Andrew for a husband.

Winter

1. Christmas Day (25.12) - Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Observed by prayers, exchanging of gifts and family parties with turkey and Christmas pudding eaten for Christmas dinner. They decorate their homes and churches with green leaves, paper decorations and colourful electric lights. A wreath of holly is on the front door and garlands of holly, ivy and fir indoors. Mistletoe is often hung above doorways.

2. Boxing Day (26.12) - (St. Stephen's Day) Boxing Day is the following day after Christmas Day. It is Bank holiday. Householders give small gifts or money to the milkmen, dustmen etc. and employers give a Christmas bonus to employees. It is also connected with horse racing, hunting and shopping

3. New Year's Eve (31.12) and New Year's Day (1.01) - At midnight everybody joins hands and sings Auld Lang Syne (in Scotland – Hogmanay) On the first morning of the New Year children in Scotland, Wales and the England get up early so that they may make the round of their friends and neighbours and sing *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*.

Many nationalities living in GB celebrate their holidays, too. They are especially connected with the beginning of New Year:

- **Ramadan and Id-UI-Fitr** are the major festivals celebrated by Muslims.
- **Chinese New Year**
- **Divali - Hindu New Year**– festival of lights
- **Rosh Hashanah** – Jewish New Year and **Yom Kippur** – the Day of Atonement (very solemn festival)

4. Burn's Night (25.01) - The birthday of Scotland's most famous poet, Robert Burns (1759-1796), celebrated with great festivity by the Scots – traditional supper is eaten, pipers play wearing traditional kilts, Burns' poems are recited.

5. St Valentine's Day (14.02) the festival of lovers, first observed by Englishmen; people send cards and sign them *Your Valentine*

6. Shrove Tuesday – (Pancake Day) a day before Ash Wednesday. In England pancakes are eaten and pancake races are held in villages and towns. Pancakes are thrown and caught again.

7. Ash Wednesday – the official start of Lent

8. St. David's Day (1.03) - Celebrated in Wales in honour of the patron saint of Wales. Many Welsh people wear a daffodil or leeks which is a national emblem of Wales.

9. St. Patrick Day - The church festival of St. Patrick, is regarded as national day in Northern Ireland. The day is marked by the wearing of shamrocks the national emblem of Ireland and green clothes.