



Otázka: Festivals in the U.K. and the U.S.A.

Jazyk: Angličtina

Přidal(a): Pužmanová

Festivals and Important days

- Of course we have many important moments for celebration. Most often we celebrate the birthday, name day, wedding and. At this occasion the guest of honour receives presents, flowers, candies and other gifts.
- The British are conservative. They still use their traditional system of weights and measures, they drive on the left and they still wear traditional school uniforms at some schools. Their mania for tea at any time of the day is world famous.
- The Americans are far from having the reputation of being conservative. The Americans have a fondness for grandiosity and freedom.
- Both the British and the Americans observe holidays and feasts in which many of the national customs and traditions have been preserved.

In Britain:

- 1) New Year's Eve is the last day of the year on 31 December. They have family parties. People dance, tell jokes and stories, eat and drink. In Scotland they call the last day Hogmanay. We celebrate the arrival of the New Year either at home with the family or we go to a hotel or to some restaurant, while some of us go out to the mountains to celebrate.
- 2) St. Valentine's Day (February 14th – it is lover's day). On this day young people send Valentine cards to a person of the opposite sex. The cards have funny, loving or serious

contents such as "I'll be your sweetheart, I'll be your Valentine"...

- 3) All fool's day. It is named after the custom of playing practical jokes and tricks on people. Then you can shout "April Fool".
- 4) Easter is a religious holiday. It is an ancient symbol of spring and new life. Christians remember Christ's death and his return to life. We celebrate Easter on the Sunday and Monday after the first spring full moon. On Monday in the morning boys go around with a rod woven out of willow branches to spank the girls. They are rewarded with coloured eggs or ribbons.
- 5) Mother's day (2nd Sunday in May) honours all mothers.
- 6) Father's day (3rd Sunday in June) honours all fathers.
- 7) Halloween (October 31st) is a night of traditional fun and games. Children light pumpkin lanterns to ward off witches and evil spirits. They play tricks and dress up in strange clothes. In Britain it is celebrated only in the North of England and in Scotland, but it is generally celebrated in the U.S.A. and Canada. Children go with their baskets or bags to their friend's and neighbours' houses and when people come to the door, children say "Trick or treat" which means "Give us a treat or we will play a trick on you".
- 8) Remembrance Day (November 11th) two minutes' silence honours those killed in the two world Wars. The symbol is poppy-it symbolizes blood.
- 9) Christmas - Unlike the Continentals, the English have no traditional celebration on Christmas Eve. Before English children go to bed on Christmas Eve, they hang up Christmas stockings and believe that Santa Claus or Father Christmas come and fill up the stockings with presents and toys. The most festive day of Christmas is Christmas day and at midday Christmas dinner is a great occasion. It consists of roast turkey with Chestnut stuffing and roast potatoes and Christmas pudding. December 26th is called Boxing Day. From the custom in earlier times of giving postmen, milkmen, dustmen and the like small sums of money, which they collected in their Christmas boxes.

United States:

There are no national holidays in the USA since each state has the right to decide about its own holidays.

- 1) Martin Luther King's Day (the third Monday in January). He was a black leader and civil - rights campaigner.
- 2) St. Patrick's day - March 17th. The festival comes to the USA from Ireland. Everything turns green on this day. Millions of three leaved shamrock (representing the Holy Trinity)

are used for decorations.

- 3) Memorial day – the fourth Monday in May. The American honour the dead of all wars.
- 4) Easter is not a national holiday. Most Americans spend Easter with the family. In some families they organize an egg – hunt children look for eggs which the adults hid somewhere. There is a traditional Easter Egg Roll in front of the White House.
- 5) Independence Day (July 4th) each city has its own ceremony, all-day picnics, baseball matches and in the evening are huge fireworks. Everything has started in year 1776. The Continental Congress declare that the 13 American Colonies will no longer be the subject of Britain. They were United, free and independent.
- 6) Valentine's Day see above
- 7) Halloween see above
- 8) Thanksgiving Day – every fourth Thursday in November. It remembers the first settlers – Pilgrim Fathers who came in 1620. It is a family holiday. It was first celebrated in 1621 by the Pilgrim settlers of Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts, on their first harvest. Now it is an occasion for the whole family to be together and enjoy a traditional dinner (roast turkey).
- 9) Christmas in the USA is not a family holiday, families invite friends to join them at Christmas dinner and often give parties. On Boxing Day most shops are open although people have a day off. Christmas traditions are observed. Santa Claus visits homes of good children on the night before Christmas and leaves them gifts.