

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN “NOWRUZ”

**Nowruz** (Persian: نوروز, IPA: [nou'ru:z], meaning "New Day") is the name of the Iranian New Year in the Solar Hijri calendar. Nowruz is also referred to as the Persian New Year.

**Nowruz** marks the first day of spring and the beginning of the year in the Persian calendar. It is celebrated on the day of the astronomical Northward equinox, which usually occurs on March 21 or the previous/following day depending on where it is observed. The moment the Sun crosses the celestial equator and equalizes night and day is calculated exactly every year and families gather together to observe the rituals.

**Nowruz** is celebrated by people from diverse ethnic communities and religious backgrounds for thousands of years. It is a secular holiday that is enjoyed by people of several different faiths. The distinct culture based on the language, food, music and leisure activities that developed among the many people and ethnic groups.

## “NOWRUZ” AROUND THE WORLD

**Nowruz** is celebrated in Greater Iran, Caucasus, Central Asia and by Iranians worldwide. Also the Canadian parliament by unanimous consent has passed a bill to add Nowruz to the national calendar of Canada, on March 30, 2009.

Countries that have Nowruz as a public holiday include the following:

-  Afghanistan (21 March)
-  Albania (22 March)
-  Azerbaijan (20 March to 26 March, total of 7 days)
-  Georgia
-  Kosovo (21 March)
-  Kyrgyzstan (21 March)
-  Iran (20 March to 24 March, total of 5 days in general + total of 14 days for schools and universities)
-  Iraq (*de jure* in  Iraqi Kurdistan, *de facto* national) (21 March)
-  Kazakhstan (21 March to 24 March, total of 4 days)
-  Bayan-Ölgii, Mongolia (22 March, regional state holiday only)
-  Tajikistan (20 March to 23 March, total of 4 days)
-  Turkmenistan (20 March to 23 March, total of 4 days)
-  Uzbekistan (21 March) and others.



## UNITED NATION RECOGNITION

The UN's General Assembly in 2010 recognized March 21 as the International Day of Nowruz, describing it a spring festival of Persian origin which has been celebrated for over 3,000 years and calling on world countries to draw on the holiday's rich history to promote peace and goodwill. During the meeting of The Inter-governmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage of the United Nations, held on [28 September – 2 October 2009 in Abu Dhabi, Nowruz was officially registered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#). In response to the UN recognition, Iran unveiled a postage stamp. The stamp was made public in the presence of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad during the first International Nowruz Celebrations in Tehran on Saturday, 27 March 2010. President Ahmadinejad also called for joint efforts to further acquaint the world about the meaningful holiday, adding that it could significantly promote global peace and justice: “Observing Nowruz will not only promote cultural values, but it will also help nations establish relations based on friendship, peace, justice and respect.”

The second International Nowruz Celebrations were also held in Tehran in 2011. The 3rd International Nowruz Celebrations were held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on March 25, 2012 with Tajik President and his Iranian, Afghan counterparts in attendance. Turkmenistan is scheduled to host the next international ceremonies to celebrate Nowruz.

**“NOWRUZ” CELEBRATION  
IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

