



*Happy Nowruz!*

# Nowruz

Interfaith/ National, Baha'i, Zoroastrian

nowrooz



Nowruz translates to "new day". It is a festive celebration of the spring equinox and the beginning of a new year. Originating in Persia and the Zoroastrian faith, the holiday is recognized as an important part of Iranian cultural identity and is celebrated by Persian communities around the world. It was formerly recognized by the United Nations as an international holiday in 2010.

Nowruz is celebrated as a secular holiday by people from diverse ethnic communities and religious backgrounds. It is also recognized as a holy day for the Bahá'ís and Zoroastrians.

This collection of information sheets on major holidays and cultural events is a joint partnership of the School of Information staff, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the Office of the Provost. Facts have been vetted by U-M's Association of Religious Counselors (ARC), and other campus groups. Public feedback is welcome; please email [DEIHolidayFacts@umich.edu](mailto:DEIHolidayFacts@umich.edu).

## Date

- The holiday marks the start of the spring equinox which varies slightly from year to year between March 19-21.
- Link to [calendar](#) for the Nowruz Persian New Year Countdown.
- Link to [Bahá'í calendar](#) for year/date lookup.

## Greetings

It is appropriate to greet colleagues with a "Happy Nowruz" or "Happy New Year."

## Common Practices and Celebrations

- Nowruz is the most common spelling, but there are multiple variations of the spelling and pronunciation among observers around the world including Noroz, Norouz, Naw-Rúz and Norooz.
- Naw-Rúz is a feast day each year that marks the end of 19 days of fasting in the Bahá'í faith.
- Common traditions include feasts, prayer, dancing, performances, painting eggs, family picnics, and assembling a symbolic haft-sin [haft seen] table.
- Chahar-shanbe-soori is a Persian Iranian festival celebrated on the eve of Nowruz; participants jump over bonfire flames to cleanse themselves of negative energy from the past year and to welcome good energy and blessings for the new year.

## Common Dietary Restrictions

- Dietary restrictions vary, but some follow a vegetarian diet of vegetables, fruits and grains; this will vary depending on the individual and/or culture.
- Bahá'ís are asked to abstain from alcohol.
- Many Muslims follow halal food guidelines, meaning food that is permissible by Islamic standards. Vegetarian meals prepared without alcohol meet halal standards.

## Impact to U-M Community

- Bahá'ís and Zoroastrians suspend work, so employees may request time off or a modified schedule
- Muslim colleagues and students may request to take the first day of the celebration off. Colleagues and remote students in Muslim countries will likely have a national holiday.
- Link to [U-M Guidance Regarding Conflicts](#).

## U-M Campus Resources

- [Maize Pages - Bahá'í](#), U-M
- [Maize Pages - Muslim](#), U-M
- [Association of Religious Counselors](#), U-M

## Information Sources

- [International Nowruz Day](#), UN
- [Celebrating Nowruz: A Resource for Educators](#), Harvard University
- [Wikipedia.org](#), Nowruz, Iranian New Year
- [Wikipedia.org](#), Naw-Rúz, Bahá'í

## Photo credit:

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