

Festivals

What are festivals?

Festivals are special days or times of the year when people celebrate. People might have time off work or school. At festivals, people dance and sing. Sometimes, they wear beautiful costumes and take part in parades. Often, you will see fireworks at festivals.

People all over the world celebrate many different festivals. Below, you can read about some of them.



a parade

Harvest festivals

Harvest festivals are held in many countries. They celebrate the food that has been grown and harvested to last throughout the winter.

In this country, harvest festivals take place at the end of September. Many schools make displays of food and flowers. They also give food to charity.

Sometimes, bakers will make special harvest loaves. These loaves are shaped like wheat to celebrate the harvest. Wheat is important because it is used in many types of food, including bread.



a harvest loaf



a food box for charity

New Year festivals

New Year festivals celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of the new one.

Hogmanay

In Scotland, people call the New Year festival Hogmanay and they celebrate it on the last day of the year. At Hogmanay, there are dazzling firework displays and lots of singing and dancing.

Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year festival is celebrated on the first day of the new year in the traditional Chinese calendar. This day changes every year but it is always in January or February.

At Chinese New Year, people celebrate with music and dancing. They often have wonderful parades. In the parades, huge puppets move through the streets and people wave colourful flags. The most impressive puppet is the dragon. In Chinese legends, dragons are friendly and bring good luck. In the parades, the dragon puppet always comes last.

After the parades, people let off firecrackers (noisy fireworks). Everyone has fun!

Flower festivals

Flower festivals are held all over the world in spring and summer. They usually celebrate the arrival of spring and the new flowers that grow.

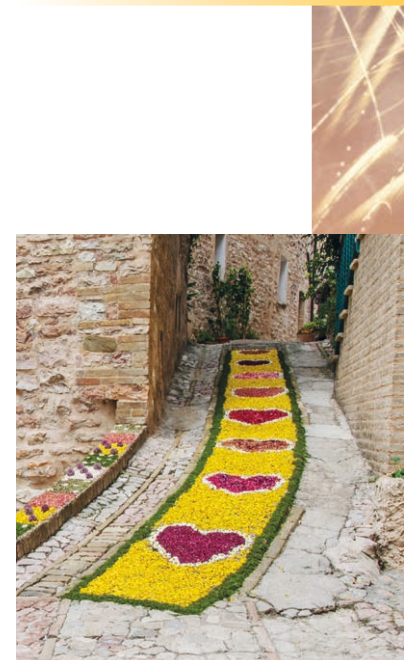
In a country called the Netherlands, people decorate boats and lorries (called floats) with tulips and other flowers. The Netherlands is famous for its tulips.

In a country called Italy, people make huge carpets of flowers in the streets. The flowers stay in place for days or even weeks. At the end of the festival, children are allowed to play in the flowers.

On an island called Jersey, people make giant models of animals, boats and cars out of flowers and take these models on a parade through the island's towns. There is music and dancing. At night, the models are covered in lights and they make the streets sparkle. At the end of the parade, there is a huge firework display.



a Chinese dragon puppet



a street covered in flowers