



How Kids Celebrate Holidays Around the World





Saki celebrates GIRLS' DAY

KONNICHIWA! I'M **SAKI**, AND I'D LIKE TO WELCOME YOU TO JAPAN. IT'S MARCH 3RD, WHEN WE CELEBRATE DOLL'S DAY, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS GIRLS' DAY. ON THIS DAY, FAMILIES PRAY FOR OUR LITTLE GIRLS' GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, AND BOYS DON'T MISS OUT—THEY HAVE THEIR OWN DAY IN MAY.

1 Little girls

In the past, many Japanese died of disease at a very young age. This explains the tradition of relatives encouraging their children (girls and boys) to remain healthy. Today we simply celebrate being together with our loved ones.

2 Dolls on a red carpet

In mid-February we display in our homes—on a tiered platform covered with red carpet—dolls representing the emperor, the empress, samurais, ladies of the court, and musicians. These are placed on five to seven different levels, and there are strict rules as to where each doll belongs and what it is complemented with.



9 Rice cakes

As part of the Girls' Day celebrations we eat sweet biscuits and cakes made from rice.

sakura



THIS IS
SAKI

3 A lovely day spent with parents

During the holiday, we visit a shrine with our parents. Then our parents wish us a happy life and give us a present.

8 Saké

It is traditional for adults to drink saké, made from fermented rice.

7 Golden screen

Behind the emperor and empress, who are on the top level, a golden screen is a must, as it symbolizes the throne. The emperor holds a baton, the empress a fan. To each side of the imperial couple is a lamp, and there are two vases between them.

6 Glam soup

A salty soup containing clams is another traditional Girls' Day dish. Shells that fit together perfectly symbolize a happy couple.



5 Paper dolls

In certain parts of the country we still observe the ritual of releasing paper dolls into the water. In the past, people believed that evil spirits, disease, and ill fortune would float away with them.



4 Kimono

The kimono is a traditional Japanese garment worn mostly by women, but also sometimes by men. Not only do we dress our dolls in kimonos, but we often wear them ourselves. They are made in countless variations so that every woman and girl can choose one she likes.

Kiyan celebrates KUMBH MELA

WELCOME TO INDIA, AND TO OUR KUMBH MELA CELEBRATIONS! MY NAME'S **KIYAN**, AND I'M GOING TO BE YOUR GUIDE. YOU COULD EASILY GET LOST HERE, AS IT'S THE BIGGEST RELIGIOUS GATHERING IN THE WORLD, ATTENDED BY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE. WE CELEBRATE THE VICTORY OF THE GODS OVER DEMONS. THE MAIN EVENT IS A PURIFYING DIP IN THE RIVER GANGES.

1 Processions

Before we get the chance to bathe, we watch a procession of holy men enter the river in a precisely determined order. Others may go into the river only after these men have done so.

2 Tent cities

Look how huge this tent city is! The pilgrimage takes place three times a year in four holy cities; it visits each city once every twelve years. It is attended by millions of people from all over the world.



10 Huge numbers of people

So many people take part in the celebrations that on the main day the site can be seen from satellites in space!

9 Sadhu

Sadhus—ascetic pilgrims—are men dressed in orange. Some of them rub themselves with ashes. A sadhu is a spiritual teacher who leads a group of pilgrims, so he is the first to bathe in the river.

8 Sacred cow

We Hindus consider the cow to be a sacred animal—which is why we don't eat beef. This beautifully dressed-up cow is enjoying the party with us!

7 Cleansing bath

The biggest event of the whole holiday is a ritual cleansing bath. All Hindus should go to a holy river to wash away their sins, thus allowing them to live a better life. *Brr-rr!* This water's cold!

6 Hindu temple

See that temple in the distance? It's a Hindu one, and it's where we go to pray.



5 Pitcher

A clay pitcher called a *kumbha* symbolizes the nectar of immortality. In mythology this jar was the prize for the gods who battled with the demons. Today the festival takes place in the four places where a drop of the nectar fell.

4 Songs

When so many people get together, there's a really happy atmosphere. Our celebrations include the singing of songs. When I sing, I dance too.





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Good company, great food and drink, and most importantly, lots of fun—we all love the holidays! But have you ever wondered how people celebrate in other countries? Together we'll join in with many celebrations, all of them different. What's Halloween like in Ireland, and Timkat in Ethiopia? What are the customs observed during Hanukkah? You'll make new friends who'll tell you all about their culture. Ready to explore? It's party time all over the world!

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