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ЗА РАЗВИТИЕ
НА ЧОВЕШКИТЕ
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ЦЕНТЪР ЗА РАЗВИТИЕ НА ЧОВЕШКИТЕ РЕСУРСИ



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Spring holidays in Sweden

April 1st

Where does this holiday - the Day of Fools, Day of Humor and Jokes (April Fools' Day or All Fool's Day) come from is a mystery which, unfortunately, is covered in darkness.

One of the most influential versions of the origin of the feast is related to the fact that the first of April Fool is the day of the vernal equinox and the timing of Easter. Celebrations to mark the "Spring New Year" were always accompanied by jokes, funny jokes and pranks.

The other, also distributed version of Laughter Day is associated with the transition to the Gregorian calendar, which was introduced by Pope Gregory in 1582. The fact that the New Year was celebrated during the Middle Ages not on 1 January but at the end of March. King Charles the Ninth (King Charles IX) to make reform of the calendar in France. Therefore, New Year's week began on March 25 and ending on 1 April.

In those days, it was also adopted people to have fun during the Christmas holidays. But despite the changes in the calendar, some conservative people continued to celebrate New Year's week according to the old style. The others laughed and joked about them. Thus was born the so-called "April Fool's Day."

Easter



Easter in Sweden is look forward more as a religious holiday than just a mere festivity. Hectic preparations are marked a week before the arrival of D-day in Sweden with majority of the Swedish people cleaning their houses and buying new clothes for their near and dear ones. However, Easter celebrations in Sweden start with Palm Sunday, commemorating Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The day is unfurled with joyous processions of people holding branches of small willows to place before the images of Christ. It's commonly believed that certain superstitions are attached with the observance of Easter in Sweden. As many Swedish natives still believe that witches are active and their black



magic becomes more powerful during this week. On Maundy Thursday they were thought to fly off on brooms to harmonize with the devil at some place called blåkulla, and return the following Sunday. One of the major Easter customs in Sweden is the making of Easter letters and decorating their houses with tapestries, chicklings and daffodils. However, a Swedish Easter remains incomplete without its traditional delicacies like spring lamb, Strömmingsflundror known as stuffed



herring and Laxpudding or salmon gratin. To make the occasion more special varied Easter festivities are held in Sweden. Bonfires and firework display continues to pre dominate the events in the country. Since its holiday time in Sweden, many Swedish countrymen flock to the popular Easter holiday destinations like the historic town of Vadstena, the exotic island of Gotland and the wooden church houses of Älvsbyn. Thus, with a spring of festive activities lined up to woo the audiences, Easter celebrations in Sweden is a great time to be there. In Sweden, common Easter traditions include egg painting.



Children dressed up as Easter witches with long skirts, colorful headscarves and painted red cheeks, go from house to house in the neighborhood and present the occupants with paintings and drawings in the hope of getting sweets in return. According to Swedish folklore, during Easter the witches fly to Blåkulla (the Blue Mountain) to meet the devil.

Small branches and twigs of willow or birch are a common sight in every Swedish house during the Easter holidays. Feathers and small decorations are also placed on these twigs in a vase.

For lunch/dinner on Holy Saturday, families traditionally feast on a smörgåsbord of herring, salmon, potatoes, eggs and other kinds of food. Most businesses are closed in Sweden during the Easter holidays.



Labour Day

Labor Day and International Workers' Solidarity (known as Labour Day, May Day) is celebrated annually on May 1. On that date, many countries around the world celebrate the social and economic achievements of the labor movement.

The history of the holiday is associated with the international socialist movement in the 19th century workers' protests and respect for basic social rights. Initiated on May 1, 1886 in the U.S., where unions held an informal nationwide strike, which involved over 300,000 workers across the country requesting the introduction of the official 8-hour workday. After three days of protests in Chicago police and private security guards dispersed the protesters, injuring about 200 people and killed at least four. On May 4, during the ensuing protest against police brutality among police dropped a bomb in which a policeman was killed and six injured. Hastily convicted and executed were seven anarchists, subsequently



acquitted as innocent.

In 1889 the founding congress of the Second International, held in Paris called for international demonstrations in solidarity protests in Chicago. In 1904 the Socialist International Conference in Amsterdam calls "all social democratic parties and trade unions of all countries to demonstrate energetically on May homologation of 8-hour day for world peace." Since the most effective way of demonstrations, strikes, Congress decided it was "mandatory for all proletarian organizations of all countries to stop work on May 1, wherever possible without adverse effects on workers."

National Day of Sweden



National Day of Sweden (Sveriges nationaldag) is a national holiday so observed in Sweden on 6 June every year. The day was renamed and justified as the national day by Riksdagen, the Swedish parliament, in 1983. Previously it was commemorated as Svenska flaggans dag (Swedish flag day).

The tradition of celebrating this date began 1916 at the Stockholm Olympic Stadium, in honour of the election of King Gustav Vasa in 1523, as this was considered the foundation of modern Sweden.

Some question the validity of this as a national holiday, as it was not observed as a holiday until decades later. However this event does signify the end of the Danish-ruled Kalma Union, so in a sense it is a marking of Swedish independence, though the event occurred so long ago that it does not have as strong of a presence in the social consciousness as does, for example, Norway's Syttende Mai(17 May).

In 2005 it became an official Swedish public holiday, taking that honour from Whit Monday. This change led to fewer days off from work (more working-days) as the 6th of June will periodically fall on the weekend, unlike Whit Monday, which was always celebrated on a Monday. This has in turn led to complaints from some Swedish unions.



Spring Holidays in the Czech Republic

The Ride of the Kings

History: The Ride of the Kings, a folklore festival, is Vltčnov's greatest cultural event, and its significance reaches beyond the borders of the Czech Republic. Vltčnov's festivities, featuring the Ride of the Kings, are held every year on the last Sunday of May. The original Ride of the Kings ranks among the oldest European folk customs and its uninterrupted tradition dates back to the year 1808;



Napoleon Bonaparte had won the Battle of Austerlitz three years before and was in the process of preparing his campaign against Russia. However, the roots of this custom reach even deeper, as some of the pagan myths indicate. Several theories attempt to shed light upon the origin of the Ride of the Kings.

The best known and most recent theory is associated with the Bohemian-Hungarian War. In 1469, The King of Bohemia, Jiří of Poděbrady, defeated his son-in-law, Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus, who, in order not to be recognized and captured, dressed up in a female folk costume, covered his face with ribbons and headed for his residence in Trenčín guarded by his company, who had to collect money from serfs to feed him. This version of the



Ride of the Kings has been handed down for generations.

The largest number of local variations of the Vlčnov garb cannot be seen anywhere else but in this very town, as verified by an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records. On March 21, 1999, 182 adults and children presented 81 variations of the Vlčnov folk costume, the oldest of which dates from 1846.

We bid you a hearty welcome to Vlčnov with the cry of the King's riders:

“Harken, ye highlanders, lowlanders, home lads and strangers, to what I shall tell you on the Pentecost. Our king is honourable, yet very poor.”

Or you may like this prankish one:

“Do not fret when your mother-in-law joins you for the Ride, vintage Starohorské wine will surely cheer you up.”

Czech Republic Easter Symbols

Easter



Many Czech Easter symbols are related to spring and the beginning of new life. Some of the best known are:

- Easter Eggs and kraslice

The hand-painted or otherwise decorated egg (kraslice) is the most recognizable symbol of Czech Easter. Girls decorate Easter eggs to give them to boys on Easter Monday. There are many Easter egg decorating techniques and the more elaborate

ones require a certain level of skill. Different materials can be used, such as bee's wax, straw, watercolors, onion peels, picture stickers. The most common designs are probably geometrical patterns, but you can also see flowers, leaves or snowflake patterns in a whole range of colors. There are no limitations to creating pretty, colorful eggs. A nationwide Easter egg contest is held in Prague and other Czech cities around Easter time.

Easter Bread



Most Eastern European households have a recipe for a sweet eggy bread made at Easter. This is a tradition - a sweet nutmeg and lemon scented bread with. The glory of this bread, of course, is its vast size - nearly 2 feet long! - and beautiful braiding. It makes a spectacular holiday centerpiece, and the sweet, moist flavor is indescribable.

Willow and pomlázka

Young, live pussywillow twigs are thought to bring health and youth to anyone who is whipped with them. An Easter pomlázka (from pomladit or "make younger") is a braided whip made from pussywillow twigs. It has been used for centuries by boys who go caroling on Easter Monday and symbolically whip girls on the legs. In the past, pomlázka was also used by the farmer's wife to whip the livestock and everyone in the household, including men and children. There would be no Czech Easter without the pomlázka.

Boys used to make their own pomlázkas in the past. The more twigs, the more difficult it was to braid one. This skill is not widespread anymore and pomlázkas can be bought in stores and street stands. Some men don't even bother and use a single twig or even a wooden spoon!

**Baby Animals - Lamb, Bunny
Rabbit, Chicken**



One Easter tradition is to bake a lamb. In the Czech Republic, real lamb is usually replaced with one made from gingerbread.

Dousing

Dousing a girl with water has a similar symbolic meaning as the pomlázka.

The Color Red

Red and other bright colors symbolize health, joy, happiness and new life that comes with the spring.

The Days Before Easter Sunday

The following is based on my experience of Easter in the Northern Moravia region.

Children finish school on Ash Wednesday (Škaredá středa), which is a good idea because they need to spend some serious time on making Easter what it should be. In the evening of Green Thursday (Zelený čtvrtek), every boy in the village equips himself with a wooden rattle (řehtačka), which is specially made for the purpose, the boys form a group and walk through the village, rattling their rattles vigorously, so the noise can be heard from afar. The meaning of the rattling is to chase away Judas. The same procedure repeats on Good Friday (Velký pátek) and one more time on White Saturday (Bílá sobota) when the boys don't only walk through the village but stop at every house in the morning and rattle until they're given money, which they then split between themselves.



Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday (Neděle velikonoční) is a day of preparations for Easter Monday. Girls paint, color and decorate eggs if they haven't done so already, and boys prepare their pomlázkas!

In my family, decorating Easter eggs is a simple affair: dip some hardboiled eggs in water filled with boiled onion peels and then place store-bought Easter stickers on the eggs.

Easter Monday

Easter Monday (Pondělí velikonoční) is a day off, the day of the pomlázka.



The origin of the pomlázka tradition (pomlázka meaning both the whip and the tradition itself) dates back to pagan times. Its original purpose and symbolic meaning is to chase away illness and bad spirits and to bring health and youth for the rest of the year to everyone who is whipped with the young pussywillow twigs. Boys would whip girls lightly on the legs and possibly douse them with water, which had a similar

symbolic meaning. An Easter carol, usually asking for an egg or two, would be recited by the boy while whipping. The girl would then reward the boy with a painted egg or candy and tie a ribbon around his pomlázka. As the boys progressed through the village, their bags filled up with eggs and their pomlázkas were adorned with more and more colorful ribbons.

This tradition is still largely upheld, especially in villages and small towns, although it may have lost its symbolism and romance and is now performed mainly for fun. Some boys and men seem to have forgotten that the whipping is supposed to be only symbolic and girls don't always like that. The reward has also changed - money and shots of plum brandy (slivovice) are often given instead of or in addition to painted eggs and candy. So by early afternoon, groups of happy men can be seen staggering along the roads... All that aside, Easter remains one of the most joyful holidays on the Czech calendar.

May Day-Labor Day



The Czech Republic, like most countries, celebrates Labor Day on the first of May. The origins of this holiday are based on a significant event from America's labor movement history.

The Knights of Labor and other labor unions went on strike in Chicago on May 1, 1886 in an attempt to shorten the workday to eight hours. Clashes between strikers and the police resulted in the Haymarket Massacre on May 4, 1886.

By 1889, the International Working Men's Organization, The First International, had declared the first day of strikes, May 1, an international working class holiday in commemoration of the Massacre.

Czech citizens were required to celebrate the holiday during the communist era; therefore after 1989 they usually observe this holiday quietly with family.



Liberation Day

Victory in Europe Day — known as V-E Day or VE Day — commemorates 8 May 1945 (in Commonwealth countries; 7 May 1945), the date when the World War II Allies formally accepted the unconditional surrender of the armed forces of Nazi Germany and the end of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich. The formal surrender of the occupying German forces in the Channel Islands was not until 9 May 1945. On 30 April Hitler committed suicide during the Battle of Berlin, and so the surrender of Germany was authorized by his replacement, President of Germany Karl Dönitz. The administration headed by Dönitz was known as the Flensburg government. The act of military surrender was signed on 7 May in Reims France, and ratified on 8 May in Berlin, Germany.

APRIL 23 - INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY



This national day (23 April National Sovereignty and Children's Day) in Turkey is a unique event. The founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, dedicated April 23 to the children of the country to emphasize that they are the future of the new nation. It was on April 23, 1920, during the War of Independence, that the Grand National Assembly met in Ankara and laid down the foundations of a new, independent, secular, and modern republic from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. Following the defeat of the Allied invasion forces on September 9, 1922 and the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923, Ataturk started his task of establishing the institutions of the new state. Over the next eight years, Ataturk and his followers adopted sweeping reforms to create a modern Turkey, divorced from her Ottoman past. In unprecedented moves, he dedicated the sovereignty day to the children and entrusted in the hands of the youth the protection of this sovereignty and independence.



Every year, the children in Turkey celebrate this "Sovereignty and Children's Day" as a national holiday. Schools participate in week-long ceremonies marked by performances in all fields in large stadiums watched by the entire nation. Among the activities on this day, the children send their representatives to replace state officials and high ranking bureaucrats in their offices. The President, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Ministers, provincial governors all turn over their positions to children's representatives. These children, in turn, sign executive orders relating to educational and environmental policies. On this day, the children also replace the parliamentarians in the Grand National Assembly and hold a special session to discuss matters concerning children's issues.



Over the last two decades, the Turkish officials have been working hard to internationalize this important day. Their efforts resulted in large number of world states' sending groups of children to Turkey to participate in the above stated festivities. During their stay in Turkey, the foreign children are housed in Turkish homes and find an important opportunity to interact with the Turkish kids and learn about each other's countries and cultures. The foreign children groups also participate in the special session of the Grand National

Assembly. This results in a truly international Assembly where children pledge their commitment to international peace and brotherhood.



The importance of April 23 as a special day of children has been recognized by the international community. UNICEF decided to recognize this important day as the International Children's Day.

Labor and Solidarity Day in Turkey



Labor and Solidarity Day in Turkey is an occasion for some people to demand better conditions for skilled laborers and union workers. Many others use the day to relax and see their friends and relatives.

What do people do?

Some people in Turkey participate in demonstrations on Labor and Solidarity Day. They may demand better conditions for skilled laborers and union workers, or protest the



government's policies. If the demonstrators gather in unsanctioned places, the police may try to disperse the crowd.

People who do not participate in political demonstrations try to avoid public gatherings on May 1 because demonstrations sometimes end in violence. Many people use the day off to have a picnic and spend time with friends and relatives.

Public life



Labor and Solidarity Day, observed on May 1, is an official holiday in Turkey. Administration buildings, schools and post offices are usually closed on this day. However, many businesses remain open. Public transport routes may vary in the event of street protests. Visitors should consider avoiding the demonstrations, as they may end up in violence.

Background

May 1 became an official holiday, called “Workers' Day” (İşçi Bayramı), in Turkey in 1923. The event was marked by mass protests and occasional violence. This led the Turkish authorities to ban the participation in the May 1 demonstrations in 1924. The protests continued and the government banned the holiday in 1925.

May 1 returned as the “Spring and Flowers Day” (Bahar ve Çiçek Bayramı) in 1935. It was a peaceful day until 1976, when workers organized their first May 1 demonstration in many years. Even bigger demonstrations followed in 1977, and someone opened fire in the 500,000-strong crowd in the Taksim Square in Istanbul. Thirty-four people died in the resulting stampede and more than 100 people were injured.

The Turkish authorities have since banned the May 1 demonstrations at the Taksim Square. In 1981, the government banned the holiday for the second time. May 1 returned as an official holiday under the name of “Labor and Solidarity Day” in 2009.

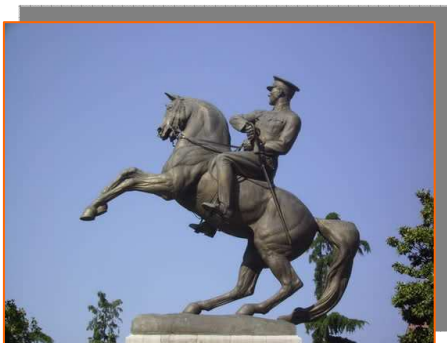
Symbols

The symbols of Labor and Solidarity Day in Turkey are a worker's hands holding the globe and images of people from around the world holding hands. These symbols can be seen on May 1 in Turkey.

Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day in Turkey



19 May the Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day (Turkish: 19 Mayıs Atatürk'ü Anma ve Gençlik ve Spor Bayramı) or simply Youth Day (Gençlik Bayramı), is an annual Turkish national holiday celebrated on May 19 to commemorate Mustafa Kemal's landing at Samsun on May 19, 1919, which is regarded as the beginning of the Turkish War of Independence in the official historiography.



What do people do?

In the run-up to the May 19 celebrations, young Turkish athletes carry the national flag from Samsun, a Black Sea port from where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk started Turkey's War of Independence in 1919, to Ankara, the country's capital. The marathon usually

takes about 10 days. The Turkish president accepts the flag at a ceremony on May 19.



Various sports events take place on May 19 throughout Turkey. Many people celebrate this day by watching athletes perform at their local stadiums or by participating in sports events that are open to the public, such as half-marathons. University students usually prepare special programs for their teachers and parents on this day.

Gymnastics Festival



The first "Gymnastics Festival" (İdman Bayramı) was held at the sport meadow of Kadıköy İttihad Sports (Union Club until 1915) by Erkek Muallim Mektebi (Teachers' College for Boys) with personal enterprise of Selim Sirri Bey (Tarcan), who was the Inspector of the Ministry of Education of the Ottoman Empire at the time. According to some sources, it was held on May 12, 1916, as to Faik Reşit Unat, in May 1916, as to Selim Sırrı Tarcan himself, in April 29, 1916. Selim Sirri Bey had brought a score of the Swedish folk music titled Tre trallande jänitor ("Three carolling girls") and collected by Felix Körling. This folk music became "Dağ Başını Duman Almış" marşı with Turkish lyrics written by Ali Ulvi Bey(Elöve) in 1917 and sung in this festival for the first time



Many Turks also observe May 19 as Atatürk's birthday. Although the exact date of his birth is not known, Atatürk used to say he was born on May 19 (referring to his political career). Many people lay wreaths to Atatürk's monuments and hang Turkish flags outside their windows.

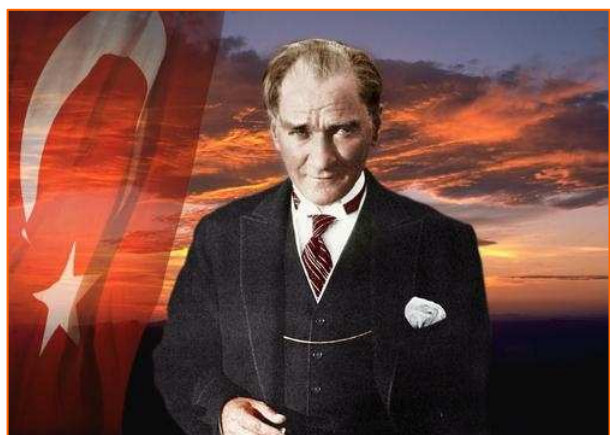
Public life

The Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day is an official holiday in Turkey. All administration buildings, post offices, schools, and most businesses are closed on this day. Public transport routes may vary in the event of marathons and similar events.

Background



1938. The day received its present name, the “Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day”, in 1981, which became the 100th anniversary of Atatürk’s birth.



Symbols

The Turkish flag, images of Atatürk and the boat on which he arrived in Samsun, as well as images related to sports are the symbols of the Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day in Turkey.

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