

内 容 提 要

本书介绍了美国规模最大的十二个节假日(从元旦到圣诞节),每篇文章从节日的起源和传说谈到节日的礼仪和活动,又从节日期间的服饰谈到食谱。

本书经过注释,适于大专院校学生、英语爱好者、英语工作者、出国留学生和外事工作者阅读。

2533/23

《英语世界》丛书
Měi Guó Jié Jià Rì

美 国 节 假 日

刘国华 注释

责任编辑: 周陵生

商 务 印 书 馆 出 版

(北京王府井大街 36 号 邮政编码 100710)

新华书店总店北京发行所发行

北京第二新华印刷厂印刷

ISBN 7-100-00773-9/H·275

1990年8月第1版

开本 787×1092 1/32

1990年8月北京第1次印刷

字数 120 千

印数 0-6,000 册

印张 5

定价: 1.45 元

目 录

前言	1
1 NEW YEAR'S DAY (元旦)	2
(January 1)	
2 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY (林肯诞辰日)	14
(February 12)	
3 VALENTINE'S DAY (圣瓦伦丁节)	42
(February 14)	
4 WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY (华盛顿诞辰日) ...	51
(February 22)	
5 EASTER (复活节)	66
(A Sunday in March or April)	
6 MEMORIAL DAY (阵亡将士纪念日)	75
(May 30)	
7 INDEPENDENCE DAY (美国独立纪念日)	80
(July 4)	
8 LABOR DAY (劳动节)	97
(First Monday in September)	
9 HALLOWEEN (万圣节前夜)	108
(October 31)	

前 言

《美国节假日》一书原是美国出版的一本英语教师手册，旨在帮助学习英文的外国学生了解美国文化背景，组织与各个节日有关的庆祝活动。

全书共十二篇文章，分别叙述了美国规模最大的十二个节日。从节日的起源和传说谈到节日的礼仪和活动；又从节日期间的服饰谈到食谱。趣读本书的同时，可使我们了解到大量的有关美国历史文化、风土人情和宗教信仰等方面的知识，是学习英语的学生和准备赴美工作或学习的同志们所不可遗漏的一课，也是外事工作者真正融通美国客人所不可多得的借鉴。此外，对英语教师来说，作为教学的参考资料，亦实有其保存意义和价值。

在多数节日的后面我们还增加了与文章内容相关的“附录”，其形式有名人轶事、诗歌、故事甚至节日食谱。

在本书的注释过程中，纽约市大学来华任教的 Tony Giffone 先生曾给予了大力协助，特别是在个别地方的删节和压缩问题上提出了宝贵的意见，在此，深表谢意。

由于本人水平所限，注释中难免出现错误和欠妥之处，望英语界同行和前辈们不吝提出批评建议，以便更好地完成英语教学这一改革开放时代所赋予我们的更加艰巨的任务。

刘国华

1988年4月20日于保定

New Year's Day

January 1

“**H**appy New Year!”

“The same to you, and many more.” The familiar greeting heard throughout the United States on January First has a counterpart¹ in every land. The words may be different and the dates may vary, but new year greetings everywhere express the hope for renewed life and happiness.

Down through history, primitive and civilized peoples alike have celebrated the coming of a new year. For ancient peoples dependent upon the land, time revolved about the seasons. A new year began for the Egyptians when the life-giving waters of the Nile River overflowed their banks, and the early Britons counted from the first day of Spring, as did the Romans. To this day some countries begin their year with the vernal equinox.²

As civilization advanced, a calendar based on the seasons was no longer practical, and in 45 B.C. the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar³ ordered the adoption of a calendar which would correlate the civil and the astronomical years. The Romans arbitrarily chose January 1 as the first day of the year and so it has remained in all parts of the Western world, even though the Gregorian calendar,⁴ in general use since 1582, al-

tered the division of the months. Present day New Year's customs also perpetuate many Old World traditions.

January, which derives its name from *Janus*,⁵ the Roman god of beginnings, endings, openings and closings, appropriately symbolizes the theme of leaving the old for the new. When we see the old year out and noisily welcome the new one, we are following the ancient tradition of burying the past and frightening away demons that might threaten the future. The modern reveler⁶ who blows toy horns and turns on the factory siren is erasing past mistakes or failures with a noisy final gesture. And when he hurls confetti to the winds, whistles and shouts, he is showing his joyous expectancy for the new year. *Father Time*,⁷ always shown as a very old man with a long white beard carrying a scythe, is ceremoniously ushered out, and the round fat cherub, symbolizing the new year redolent with hope, is welcomed amid wild cheers.

Whether the New Year's Eve party is in a luxurious hotel ballroom or in a modest home, it will be gay, noisy and glittery. The music will be loud and carefree, and there will be bright colors, festive foods, and high good spirits to make this last night of the year one of fun and frivolity. At celebrations in restaurants, clubs and shipboard salons, guests are given silly paper hats and noisemakers⁸ and as the evening goes on no one remains a stranger. At midnight everyone joins hands and signs, "We'll take a cup of kindness yet, for Auld Lang Syne."⁹

Preparation for the party includes planning what one will wear. If it is a formal affair, men will wear tuxedos and the ladies will put on their most elegant gowns. And even small parties mean "dressing up." But if it is a masked ball,¹⁰

"dressing up" takes another form. The guests vie for the most original, exotic, humorous or appealing costume. Hidden behind a mask or domino, dignity and care are cast aside, and not until unmasking at midnight must the party-goers discard the illusion of their changed personalities.

Not everyone goes to a party, but almost everyone makes an occasion of New Year's Eve. A favorite place to see the old year out is New York City's Times Square.¹¹ Thousands of New Yorkers and tourists crowd this famous spot (at the intersection of Broadway and Seventh Avenue) and crane their necks to watch for "*Happy New Year*" to flash across the electronically controlled sign tract that circles the Allied Chemical Tower. When the moment arrives bedlam breaks forth. Bells ring, whistles blow, people cheer with unrestrained exuberance.

This chaotic scene is repeated in public squares throughout the country, but not at the same moment. Because of the four time zones in the United States the New Year comes to the Central States one hour later, to the Mountain States two hours later, and finally to the Western States three hours after the Eastern States have noisily said good bye to another year. So by following the radio and television broadcasts everyone can enjoy the festivities in other parts of the country as well as their own.

Some people prefer to see the old year out at a church service. Although the holiday does not have religious origin, churches of many denominations, and faiths hold "Watch Night"¹² services on New Year's Eve. Practices differ among the religions but most of these late evening services include a period of quiet meditation, perhaps a short talk, prayers

and hymn singing. The spirit is one of sobriety, joyous renewal and of rededication to the principles of the faith.

Then with the arrival of the pristine new year, thoughts turn to the future — a future viewed optimistically and hopefully. Greeting cards and spoken messages convey wishes for health, wealth and long life. A new year allows a fresh start and New Year's resolutions abound.

Grownups and children alike enthusiastically vow to get rid of their bad habits and resolve to lead better lives. Children are apt to write down their resolutions with solemn ceremony:

"I resolve to stop teasing my sister."

"I resolve to save part of my allowance."

"I resolve to hang up my clothes before I go to bed."

To show their seriousness they sign their names and deliver the paper to a parent for safe-keeping. Adults make equally ambitious resolutions:

"I resolve to stop smoking."

"I resolve to lose weight."¹³

"I resolve to learn a new language."

Despite the sincerity of the resolutions, no one seems surprised that the determination to "turn over a new leaf" disappears before the new year is well started.

Just as each person takes year-end stock of¹⁴ his individual progress and needs, business and government leaders also evaluate prospects for national and international affairs. Political analysts summarize the past and predict future trends, and printed charts show the state of the economy. Authorities in every field broadcast "wrap ups"¹⁵ of the year's events, and with characteristic new year spirit they predict

greater things to come.

Although New Year's traditions in the United States stem from as many cultures as do the people themselves, they have gradually assumed a typical American flavor.¹⁶ The giving of gifts, for instance, an important part of Roman and Old English tradition, has all but¹⁷ disappeared. Instead, New Year's cards are exchanged among friends and relatives, and commercial firms combine greetings with advertisement of their products by distributing calendars and small trinkets. There are, of course, notable survivals¹⁸ still followed in their original form. Two of the most cherished came from Scotland: toasting from the wassail bowl and the ever-popular song, "Auld Lang Syne".

The custom of visiting friends, relatives and neighbors on New Year's Day is one of the Old World¹⁹ traditions that has taken on a new form in the United States. It is called the *Open House*.²⁰ Officially inaugurated by George Washington during his first term as President, it is now as much a part of New Year's Day as floral parades and football games. On January 1, 1789, President Washington first opened the doors of his official residence, then in Philadelphia, to all who wished to come. Then, when the capital was moved to the Federal City²¹ in 1800 the White House became the scene of the annual open house. Over the years the occasion grew increasingly elaborate. The Vice-President and his wife and the Cabinet members and their wives were added to the receiving line, and sumptuous food and patriotic music created an atmosphere of elegant conviviality. This White House tradition came to an end with the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt,²² whose physical handicap prevent-

ed him from standing, but the Open House is still a very popular way for clubs, civic organizations and individuals to observe the holiday.

An open house is just what the name implies: the front door is left open, inside there is a spirit of relaxed cordiality, and guests are free to arrive and leave when they like. Invitations may say simply, "Drop in after the game." or "Come drink a New Year's toast with us."²³ At a large party, and most of them are large, guests serve themselves from festive buffet tables laden with cold roast beef, turkey and ham (along with cranberry sauce and other holiday specialties), a chafing dish of tiny meat balls or a cheese fondue, and platters of decorative and delicious hors d'oeuvres.²⁴ They meet new friends, greet old ones, and drink repeated toasts from the punch bowl.

Americans love parades and nowhere more than in the New Year's Day spectacles do we note remnants of medieval pageantry. Lively music, fine horsemanship, and athletic finesse create an excitement clearly reminiscent of the Roman circus. Chariot races were even a part of the early *Tournaments of Roses*.²⁵ First the glitter and drama of the colorful parade and then the football stadium becomes the arena for the cheering crowds.

At New Year's most of the United States is blanketed in cold winter weather, but in California and the Southern States January is generally fair and mild. Gardens are in full bloom, the citrus crops ripen, and balmy weather invites outdoor recreation. The now famous New Year's parades and Bowl games have grown up in this atmosphere. Their names typify the region: Pasadena, California, has its *Tourna-*

ment of Roses and Rose Bowl game; in Miami, Florida, it is the *Orange Bowl*; at Dallas, Texas, the *Cotton Bowl*; and at New Orleans, Louisiana, the *Sugar Bowl*. Recently, two more have appeared: the *Gator* (alligator) *Bowl* at Jacksonville, Florida and the *Sun Bowl* at El Paso, Texas.

The Tournament of Roses is the oldest and largest of the New Year's pageants. From a small village celebration started some 75 years ago when members of the Valley Hunt Club decorated their surreys with flowers to celebrate the ripening of the oranges, it has grown into an internationally renowned event. Three and a half million spectators line the Pasadena²⁶ streets and another 70 million television viewers watch miles of flower-bedecked floats²⁷ transform the city into a make-believe world of beauty and imagination. Each year there are 50 or 60 floats made entirely of live flowers, mostly from Southern California, although some are shipped in from the Netherlands, Africa and Hawaii. Some depict storybook characters, others suggest the sponsor's hallmark, and some represent abstract ideas. Exotic figures from the *Arabian Nights*²⁸ and such fabulous personages as *Jack and the Bean Stalk* enchant the children as well as their parents. Giant flower-covered animals bow to the onlookers and mysteriously articulate, "Happy New Year", while a gardenia-encrusted world revolves slowly above a platform where marigolds spell out PEACE; and the float carrying the Citrus Queen²⁹ sprays orangescented perfume along the parade route.

Preparation for the New Year's parades and games represents a year-long effort. Themes, floats and entertainment are planned far in advance and teams of professionals spend

months creating the floats. The queens and their courts are usually elected from college student bodies, and before they mount their flowery thrones they are presented at gala coronation balls.

Several days before the old year ends the City of Pasadena suspends all other activities and devotes itself to the *Tournament of Roses*. Special committees arrange accommodations for the thousands of visitors to already populous Southern California, and by New Year's Eve the parade fans are setting up their locations along the parade route. There they camp until the parade passes the following day.

As the last floats pass by, the crowds are beginning to move toward the football stadium. The *Rose Bowl* game, the most eagerly awaited sports contest of the year, matches the winner of the "Big Ten"³⁰ with a representative of the Pacific Coast Conference, chosen by the Intercollegiate Conference Committee, unofficially assisted by every sports writer in the country and innumerable partisan fans.

Marching bands in trim uniforms keep the crowd entertained while the stadium fills. Drum majors (and majorettes)³¹ prance and team mascots and clowns cavort around the field as the band plays the school songs and cheer leaders organize the rooting sections. For many these colorful pre-game events are as much of an attraction as the game itself.

Sports enthusiasts in other parts of the country enjoy the game by radio or television. They invite in a few friends, have an informal picnic-style meal, and gather around the TV set to share the holiday mood of the spectators in the stadium.

New Year's dinners with traditional holiday foods and drinks are customary with many families. It is a time to cement ties of kinship and to observe both faces of January — to be grateful for the blessings of the past year while looking forward to a brighter future.

〈元旦〉注释

1. counterpart 指相应的东西或人。如, The U.S. Congress is the counterpart of the British Parliament (美国的国会相当于英国的议会)。
2. vernal equinox 春分。autumnal equinox 秋分。equinox 昼夜平分(时)(the time of year when day and night are of equal length)。
3. Julius Caesar 儒略·凯撒(公元102或100~144年), 古罗马将军、政治家和暴君。
4. Gregorian calendar 格里历, 即目前通用的阳历, 该历法为教皇Gregory 十三世于1582年所创。
5. Janus 罗马神话中守护门户的两面神。
6. reveler 狂欢者, 欢宴者。
7. Father Time 时间老人(身带长柄大镰刀和古代计时器的老人, 是时间的人格化)。
8. noisemaker 发噪音器(特指狂欢时用来凑热闹的汽车喇叭、铃铛等)。
9. "We'll take a cup of kindness yet, for Auld Lang Syne." 为古老民歌《友谊地久天长》的最后一句。Auld Lang Syne 是苏格兰语, 意为“昔日”、“美好的往日”。
10. masked ball 假面舞会。
11. Times Square 泰晤士广场, 在纽约市中心, 以其附近多戏院和餐馆而驰名。

12. watch night = watch meeting 除夕礼拜。
13. to lose weight 减肥。
14. take stock of 估量；观察。
15. wrap ups (美国口语) 总结性的新闻摘要报告。
16. Although New Year's traditions in the United States stem from as many cultures as do the people themselves, they have gradually assumed a typical American flavor. 虽然美国的新年传统习惯同美国民族一样都来自多种文化，但这些传统习惯却逐渐呈现出典型的美国色彩。
17. all but 相当于副词，接形容词或动词，意思是“几乎”。如：
The work is all but finished. (工作几乎完成了)。
18. survivals 这里指遗留下来的习惯与做法。
19. Old World 东半球(与美洲大陆相对而言；尤指欧洲)。
20. Open House (允许公众参观的)开放日。
21. Federal City 华盛顿市的别称。
22. Franklin D. Roosevelt 罗斯福(1882~1945)，于1933~1945任美国第三十二任总统。
23. "Come drink a New Year's toast with us." ("来同我们共饮新年喜酒吧")。在美国口语中，come 后边可以直接接动词原形，用于祈使句。又如：Come have supper with us. (来同我们一起吃晚饭吧。)
24. hors d'oeuvres (法语) 餐前的小吃。
25. Tournaments of Roses 以及下段中提到的 Rose Bowl , Orange Bowl 和 Cotton Bowl 等都是美国元旦期间在全国若干地方举行的大学生足球大赛，由当年足球季内各地区的优秀校队参加，赛前往还举行盛大的游行活动。另外，这些大赛的名称都具有地区代表性，如加州的 Rose Bowl ，迈阿密的 Orange Bowl 等等。

26. Pasadena 帕萨迪纳, 加州西南部一城市, 是每年 Tournaments of Roses 举行的地方。
27. ...miles of flower-bedecked floats... 排列数英里长的花饰彩车。
这里用来构成复合宾语, 因为前边的谓语动词是 watch, 所以 transform 前不加不定式 to。
28. Arabian Nights 即古代阿拉伯民间故事集《一千零一夜》。下面提到的 Jack and the Bean Stalk 均为故事里的人物。
29. Citrus Queen 柑桔皇后, 是游行彩车上由真人化装扮演的。
30. "Big Ten" 指美国中西部 10 所大学的足球强队, 它们是:
University of Wisconsin, Ohio State University, Purdue University (Indiana), University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Indiana University, Northwestern University, Illinois University, University of Iowa 和 University of Minnesota.
31. drum major 游行乐队的指挥; drum majorette 游行乐队的女指挥。

附录 I

AULD LANG SYNE¹

Scottish Air²

Robert Burns³

1. Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never bro't⁴ to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days of auld lang syne?
Refrain
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne;
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet⁵

For auld lang syne.

2. And here's a hand, my trusty friend
And gie's⁶ a hand o'thine;⁷
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

1. 见《元旦》注9。

2. 苏格兰曲调。

3. 罗伯特·彭斯(1759~1796)苏格兰著名诗人。

4. bro't=brought.

5. We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet=We'll take a cup of kindness
yet. kindness 在此处为“友情”。

6. gie's=give us. gie=give.

7. o'thine=of thine, thine=yours.

附录 I

NEW YEAR'S DINNER MENU

Fruit Cup¹

Galery Radishes Olives

Roast Turkey

Chestnut Dressing²

Mashed Potatoes³-Giblet Gravy⁴ Baked Sweet Potatoes

Creamed Onions

Cranberry and Almond Relish

Pumpkin Pie

Coffee

1. fruit cup (切成小块盛在高脚杯中的)什锦水果点心。

2. chestnut dressing 栗子味调料。

3. mashed potatoes 马铃薯泥。

4. giblet gravy (鸡、鸭等禽类的)杂碎汤。

Lincoln's Birthday

February 12

“**N**OW he belongs to the ages” was the remark ascribed to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton as President Lincoln died from an assassin's bullet.

Those prophetic words have been abundantly verified during the hundred years since the death of the great leader. Not only to his countrymen but to honest seekers for liberty in every part of the world Abraham Lincoln has become the symbol of freedom — personal, political and economic.

In 1809, the year Abraham Lincoln was born, the United States was thirty-three years old. Three great statesmen — George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson² — had safely piloted the new country through the treacherous shoals of war and domestic dissension. By purchase of the Louisiana Territory from the French, President Jefferson had doubled the size of the country, and exploration parties were pushing out the boundaries toward the West.

Lured by stories of the rich lands beyond the Alleghenies,³ Abraham Lincoln's grandfather, for whom he was named,⁴ left his home in Virginia and with his wife and five children joined the march of landhungry families to the Kentucky frontier. Three or four years after they had staked their claim⁵ to 2,000 acres Grandfather Lincoln died with an Indian bullet in his back and his three sons were left

the task of clearing the land. Thomas, the youngest, (Abe's⁶ father) also worked on the farms of relatives in different parts of Kentucky and learned the carpenter's trade along the way. At 28 he married Nancy Hanks, a quiet young brunette,⁷ who also had come over the Wilderness Road from Virginia as a babe in arms. Their first home was a log cabin near Elizabethtown, Kentucky, where their first child, Sarah, was born.

Always hopeful of finding an easier life, Tom⁸ then moved his little family to a farm on Nolin's Creek near Hodgenville. There, on February 12, 1809, in the rough dirt-floored cabin, a second child, Abraham, was born to Nancy and Tom.

Until he was old enough to go to the little one-room school, where he and the other backwoods children were taught the ABC's and the multiplication tables, Abe explored the secrets of the red earth and the live creatures that populated their woods. He learned how to plant seeds, to hoe corn and to swing an axe so that it would split the logs clean and even. He listened to Tom Lincoln's hair-raising tales of his own boyhood, of narrow escapes⁹ from Indian massacres and of how, even during Sunday services, men sat with their rifles propped against their knees.

As though swept by the Westward surge,¹⁰ the family was constantly on the move during Abe's early years — from farm to farm, across rivers and wild timberlands. Sometimes Abe heard his father complain that times were getting harder in Kentucky, and that folks with slaves to do the work were making it hard for the rest. The country north of the Ohio River was opening up. Indiana, they heard, had