Religious and cultural festivals

There are a lots of religious and cultural festivals and observances which take place in Newcastle and across the UK. This is a quick guide to some of the most celebrated cultural and religious festivals locally and nationally.

South Asian

Pakistani, Bengali, Indian and other South Asian cultures come together in the Newcastle Mela in **August** every year.

Includes a parade from Grey's monument and a variety of artists and music.

Buddhist

The Tripi?aka is the formal term used for a Buddhist canon of scriptures.

Vesak or Buddha day is **May 8th**

Chinese

Chinese New Year is the Chinese festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar. The festival is usually referred to as the Spring Festival in mainland China, and is one of several Lunar New Years in Asia.

The lunar calendar is based on the cycles of the moon, so the dates of the holiday vary slightly from year to year, beginning some time between January 21 and February 20.

China, South Korea (**Seollal**), Taiwan, and Vietnam (**T?t Nguyên ?án**) celebrate the Lunisolar New Year on the same date.

Christian

The Christian scripture is known as the Bible and contains the Old Testament and New Testament. The Christian celebrations are:

- Epiphany **January 6th**
- Ash Wednesday 2024 date:14 February, 2025 date: 5 March, 2026 date: 18 February

- Good Friday
- 2024 dates: March 29 (Western) May 3 (Eastern), 2025 dates: April 18 (Western) April 18 (Eastern), 2026 dates: April 3 (Western) April 10 (Eastern)
- Easter Sunday 2024 March 25, 2025 April 13, 2026 April 3
- Ascension. 2024 dates: May 9 (Western) June 13 (Eastern), 2025 dates: May 29 (Western) May 29 (Eastern), 2026 dates: May 14 (Western) May 21 (Eastern)
- Pentecost 2024 dates: May 19 (Western) June 23 (Eastern), 2025 dates: June 8 (Western) June 8 (Eastern), 2026 dates: May 24 (Western) May 31 (Eastern)
- Trinity Sunday. 2024 dates: May 26 (Western) June 23 (Eastern), 2025 dates: June 15 (Western) June 8 (Eastern), 2026 dates: May 31 (Western) May 31 (Eastern)
- Advent Sunday. 2024 date: 1 December, 2025 date: 30 November, 2026 date 29 November
- Christmas Day **December 25th**

Christian Orthodox

- Christmas Day (Russian) **January 7th**
- Pascha (Easter day) **April 24th**

Disability

International day for People with disabilities **December 3rd** The observance of this aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilise support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

England

St George's Day Patron saint of England. **April 23rd**

Hindu

Hinduism is the ancient religion of India. It encompasses a rich variety of traditions that share common themes but do not constitute a unified set of beliefs or practices. Texts include : Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana

- Maha Shivrati 2024: 8 March, 2025: 26 February, 2026: 15 February
- Holi 2024: 25 March, 2025 14 March, 2026 3 March
- Shri Ram Navami **April 10th**
- Vijay Dashmi **October 4th**
- Diwali 2024 1 November, 2025 21 October, 2026 8 November

Igbo / Nigerian

The **New Yam Festival** is celebrated every first Saturday in August, the festival is based on traditional harvest festivals in Nigeria and focuses on Igbo cultural heritage. Ndi Igbo North East England (NINEE) hold events in the North East to celebrate.

Ireland

St Patrick's Day Patron saint of Ireland **March 17th**

Judaism

The sacred book of Judaism is the Hebrew Bible. Particularly important to Judaism are the first five books, which are known as the Torah. These writings explain and interpret God's laws. The main celebrations in Judaism are:

- Pesach begins/ first night of Passover. 2024 date: April 22, 2025 date: April 12
- Passover 2024 dates: April 23 & 24, 2025 dates: April 13 & 14
- Shavuot (Pentecost) 2024 date: June 12 & 13, 2025 date: June 2 & 3
- Rosh Hashanah (New Year) 2024 date: September 15, 2025 date: October 2
- Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) 2024 date: September 25, 2025 date: Monday October 12
- Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) 2024 date: Sept. 30 – 6 October, 2025 date: October 17 – 23
- Hanukkah 2024 dates: December 8 – 15, 2025 dates: December 26 – January 2 (2026)

LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning)

Northern Pride Festival (formerly Newcastle Pride) takes place in **July** on the Town Moor and Exhibition Park. It includes Stonewall Remembrance March.

May Day

A European festival of ancient origins marking the beginning of summer, usually celebrated on 1 May, around halfway between the spring equinox and summer solstice. It may also be known as Beltane or Calan Haf in Ireland, Scotland or Wales.

International Workers' Day also falls on 1st May. In Newcastle the Tyne & Wear May Day march and rally is held on or around this date to celebrate the contributions of workers and to advocate for workers rights.

Men

International Men's Day is **November 19th** It focuses on men's and boys' health, promoting gender equality, improving gender relations, and highlighting male role models. There is a theme each year.

Museums and local culture

Tyne and Wear Museums hold the The Late Shows in May across museums and cultural venues in Newcastle and Gateshead. They open late on Friday and Saturday night for one weekend only. They offer a lots of activities, events and performances for free. This includes design, craft, theatre and fun in venues.

Heritage open days take place in September every year. Many museums and cultural venues open their doors to the public for free. Visit their website to find what's available.

Memorial

- Holocaust Memorial Day **January 27th** This day the world remembers the six million Jews and millions of other minorities who were killed by the Nazis during WW2.
- Remembrance Day is a memorial day. On this day we honour the achievements and sacrifices that were made in past wars. The most important observance takes place on the second Sunday in November.

    - Remembrance Sunday **November 13th**
    - Armistice day **November 11th** (end of WW1)

Muslim

- Jum'uah (Jummah) – Friday Prayers at the time of Zuhar
- Eid al fitr – Celebration that marks the end of Ramadan. 2024 date: 10 April – 12 April, 2025 date: 31 March – 2 April
- Eid-ul Adha- The festival of sacrifice. 2024 date:18 June – 20 June, 2025 date: 6 June – 10 June
- Al- Hijra- Islamic New Year. 2024 date: 7 – 8 July 2024
- Ramadan – The month of fasting. 2024 date: 11 March – 8 April

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Scotland

- Burns Night **January 25th** A Burns supper is a celebration of the life and poetry of the poet Robert Burns, the author of many Scottish poems.
- St Andrew's day. Patron Saint of Scotland **November 30th**

Sikh

The Holy Scriptures are known as the Adi Granth or the Guru Granth Sahib.

- Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh 2024 date: 2024 date 17 January, 2025 date: 6 January
- Baisakhi/ Vaisakhi **April 13th (**GemArts usually present the annual Vaisakhi celebrations in April.)
- Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev **June 16th**
- Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev: 2024 date: November 15th, 2025 date: November 5th
- Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur **November 24th**

Wales

St David's Day Patron saint of Wales **March 1st**

War

Remembrance Day is a memorial day. On this day we honour the achievements and sacrifices that were made in past wars. The most important observance takes place on the second Sunday in November.

- Remembrance Sunday **November 13th**
- Armistice day **November 11th** (end of WW1)

Women

International Day of Women is **March 8th** This is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

Links and resources

International Newcastle: Festivals and cultural celebrations

Religion or Belief in the Workplace: A guide for employers, employees, service providers and their service users. public

Breaking Boundaries: UK Religion, faith, cultural guide and festival calendar

Last updated: January 20, 2025

Useful Organisations

Connected Voice Haref

Email: haref@connectedvoice.org.uk

Website: https://connectedvoice.org.uk/services/haref

Telephone: 0191 235 7022

Address: One Strawberry Lane, NE1 4BX

The Late Shows

Email: info@thelateshows.org.uk

Website: https://thelateshows.org.uk/

Telephone: 0191 235 7022

Address: Discovery Museum, NE1 4JA

Related Articles

Places of worship

Community Centres and Hubs

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Museums and attractions