



Eid ul-Fitr in 2020 is on Sunday, the **24th of May**. Based on sight ability in North America, in 2020 Eid ul-Fitr will start in North America a day later - on Monday, the **25th of May**.

Note that in the Muslim calendar, a holiday begins on the sunset of the previous day, so observing Muslims will celebrate Eid ul-Fitr on the sunset of Saturday, the **23rd of May**.

The date of Eid ul-Fitr may also vary from country to country depending on whether the moon has been sighted or not.

The dates provided here are based on the dates adopted by the Fiqh Council of North America for the celebration of Eid ul-Fitr. Note that these dates are based on astronomical calculations to affirm each date, and not on the actual sighting of the moon with the naked eyes. This approach is accepted by many, but is still being hotly debated.

#### THE MONTH OF RAMADAN

The Islamic year is guided by the lunar calendar, rather than the solar calendar. Ramadan is the 9th month in the Muslim lunar calendar. As a result of the lunar cycle, Ramadan typically falls approximately ten days earlier than the previous year. Since the twelve month cycle takes thirty three years to complete, Ramadan falls at different seasons of the year, but is always celebrated in different countries throughout the world at the same time.

#### EID-UL-FITR CELEBRATION

Eid-ul-Fitr or Id-Ul-Fitr, often abbreviated simply as 'Eid', is one of the most widely celebrated festivals in the Islamic calendar and it occurs after the sighting of the new crescent moon which signals the end of the month of **Ramadan**. Eid is an Arabic term meaning "festivity" or "celebration" while Fitr means "to break the fast".

Eid is celebrated over a three day period in Islamic countries. It is a joyous occasion for all Muslims, particularly children. It is a time when Muslims give thanks for the blessings they have received from Allah, celebrate the victory of the forces of good over evil, and forgive their neighbours for old grudges and ill feelings. It is also a time for spreading peace, sharing with others and giving thanks for completing another period of **fasting** for the month of Ramadan.

Eid celebrations are marked by fervent preparations within Muslim communities. Families decorate their homes, Eid cards and gifts are bought to distribute to friends and family, sweets and other delicacies are prepared, and new clothing is bought or made to celebrate the occasion. Before the social celebrations begin however, the day begins with prayer.

The morning of the first day of Eid-ul-Fitr begins with an early meal, followed by a special charity in the form of money, food, or produce which is given to the needy or to Islamic organizations. Thousands of Muslims around the world then gather at their mosques (usually the largest mosques) or large open meeting sites, and turn towards the holy city of Makkah (Mecca) to share in prayers of thanksgiving for completing their fast during the month of Ramadan. At the end of the morning prayers, families and friends engage in a special **Salaat**, whereby they visit each other and exchange gifts and greetings.



#### OBSERVANCE OF THE DAILY FAST OF RAMADAN GUIDELINES

- In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful.
- Formally make intention to fast.
- Have a light meal before the break of dawn approximately 4:44 am and do not partake in any food or drink during the entire day until the break of fast at sunset.
- Perform the early morning prayer (Fajr) before sunrise.
- During the day, avoid all evil thoughts or action and instead be God-conscious, kind, considerate, polite, courteous and generous to others. Read the Qur'an as frequently as possible throughout the day and night. Perform (Zuhr) and late afternoon (Asr) prayer.
- A few minutes before sunset offer a prayer to preferably seeking forgiveness.
- Immediately at sunset make the special prayer to break the fast and then break the fast with a light snack, preferably a date and water or soft drink.
- Immediately thereafter perform the prayer at sunset (Magrib).
- After the prayer you may then partake of dinner.
- The night prayer approximately from 8:00 pm onwards should be performed at the Masjid in congregation together with the special prayer (Taraweeh) during the nights of Ramadan.

The rest of the night should be either spent reading the Qur'an or other form of worship (Ibadaat) or remembrance of Allah (Dhikr) and of course adequate sleep. It is highly recommended that you break your sleep after midnight and perform the late night prayer (Tahajjud).

*Source: Iqra Productions a member of the United Islamic Organisation of T&T Inc.*

#### PILGRIMAGE TO MAKKAH

Ramadan is the month in which the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) received the first revelation of the Qur'an from Allah near the holy city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia. Every year millions of Muslims from around the world journey to Makkah in commemoration of this sacred occasion. This journey, known as **Haji**, is a great achievement for Muslims, with any person completing the journey earning the right to add the title of **Haji** or **Hajin** to his or her name. It is the goal of every Muslim to make at least one journey to Makkah in his or her lifetime, since it is a pilgrimage which strengthens his or her love and devotion to Allah.

#### DEVOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Ramadan is a time of great religious and social significance for Muslim communities around the world, and all devotional activities during the month of Ramadan are carried out either individually or as part of a group. It is the period prescribed by the Qur'an for fasting which occurs each day, with the intention of teaching self discipline and self restraint to all Muslims.

#### NIGHT OF POWER

During Ramadan, Muslims read a part of the Holy Qu'ran every day until they complete the entire book. Many participate in extra prayer sessions or **Taraweeh Salaat** at the **Masjid** or mosque, and spend the night praying, especially during the **Lailatul-Qadr** or **Night of Power**. The Night of Power is the night on which the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) was first visited by the angel Gabriel on Mount Hira. Although the exact date of this occurrence is not known, it is generally believed to have occurred within the last ten days of the month of Ramadan. "**Lailatul-Qadr** is better than a thousand months" (Surah 97 V3) because Allah brings down during it his mercy and forgiveness for His servants. This entire night is spent in prayer at mosque or at home. A person who engages in worship is given a reward better than one who has performed worship for a thousand months. This night is among the odd numbered nights of the last ten days of Ramadan, however many believe it to be the 27th night.

Today, many Muslims spend these last ten nights in devotional prayers at mosques, until the final night of Ramadan when the moon is sighted. The sighting of the moon signifies the end of the month of Ramadan and signals the beginning of the celebration of Eid-ul-

#### FASTING

Fasting begins with the sighting of the new moon of **Shawwaal** and ends with the new moon of **Ramadan**. This may take 29 or 30 days and it is intended to teach discipline and self-restraint to all Muslims. It is also intended to help them draw closer to Allah. Fasting lasts from sunrise to sunset, during which time Muslims are required to abstain from food or drink. They must also refrain from indulgences, foul language, fights or quarrels, or participating in anything that could be deemed as evil. Fasting also allows the more affluent Muslims to experience the sufferings of the less fortunate in their communities. This experience encourages them to be kind to each other, and share the wealth entrusted to them with their poorer brothers and sisters.

Fasting is **obligatory** for all Muslims except infants, the mentally challenged, and persons who are physically ill. With the exception of these, all Muslims - rich or poor, master or servant, of high or low status - are expected to fast during this time. For those who are too old or feeble to bear the hardships of fasting, a charitable act is required.

Fasting encompasses spiritual and physical discipline. Fasting in Islam involves deliberately cultivating a peaceful and prayerful attitude of mind and undergoing the physical discipline of giving up all food, liquid, smoking and sexual activity during the hours of first light of dawn to sunset for the entire month.

Going without food is not the most important aspect. Allah pointed out that if a person could not give up evil ways, violence, greed, lust, anger and malicious thoughts, He had no need of their giving up food and drink. It would be meaningless:

"There are many who fast all day and pray all night, but they gain nothing but hunger and sleeplessness" (hadith).

#### ZAKAT

To assist the needy during Ramadan and in accordance with Islamic rules, a sum of money, goods or produce known as **Zakat** is collected once a year during Ramadan. Muslims are encouraged to save a portion of their earnings, which are then collected and distributed to deserving individuals or Islamic organizations worldwide. An extra Zakat known as **Zakat-ul-Fitr** is usually collected during Eid celebrations, to ensure that the poor and needy are also able to share in the joy of the festival. Zakat-ul-Fitr is usually given before Eid prayers at the end of Ramadan. Fitr.

#### FIVE DAILY PRAYERS

From dawn to the rising of the sun, the first prayer of the day, **Fajr** is observed.

The second prayer, **Zuhr** is performed after midday.

The third prayer, **Asr** is performed late in the evening before the setting of the sun.

The fourth prayer, **Maghrib** is performed after sunset until all sunlight has faded.

The fifth prayer, **Isha** is performed between night and dawn.

**Tahajjud** - this is a prayer said in the early hours of the morning after midnight.

**Tarawee** prayers are voluntary prayers done after the Isha prayer at night. These prayers are either eight or twenty rakah and said only during Ramadan.

Prior to sunrise each day in the month of Ramadan, a meal is taken in preparation for the daily fast. Fasting begins at least ten minutes before the first light of dawn is seen in the sky, and Muslims are required to declare their intention to fast before noon of the given day. As soon as the sun sets, fasting ends for that day and evening prayers are performed. Since the evening meal **iftar** is a special occasion, families and friends come together to share in the joy of completing their fast for another day.

Prayers are divided into five daily prayer times according to Islamic rules. Two hours each day are allocated to each prayer period. However prayers may be performed for a few minutes within this time. Before prayers are performed, Muslims are required to cleanse themselves, remove their shoes and turn in the direction of the holy city Makkah.



Source : <http://www.moonsighting.com/ramadan-eid.html>  
<http://www.when-is.com/eid-al-fitr-2016.asp>

