

Cultural News

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Water Festival

The Water Festival is the New Year's celebrations that take place in Southeast Asian countries such as, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand. It is called the 'Water Festival' by Westerners because people splash / pour water at one another as part of the cleansing ritual to welcome the new year. Traditionally people gently sprinkled water on one another as a sign of respect, but as the new year falls during the hottest month in South East Asia, many people end up dousing strangers and passersby in vehicles in boisterous celebration. The act of pouring water is also a show of blessings and good wishes. It is believed that on this Water Festival, everything old must be thrown away, or it will bring the owner bad luck.

The annual Water Splashing Festival of the Dai ethnic minority falls during the New Year celebrations of the Dai Calendar. It is the most important festival observed by the Dai ethnic people of Xishuangbanna Prefecture, and, similar to its direct neighbor Laos' Songkran festival, it involves three days of celebrations that include sincere, yet light-hearted religious rituals that invariably end in merrymaking, where everyone ends up getting splashed, sprayed or doused with water.

The festival lasts for three days. The first two days's activities are concentrated on the banks of the Lancang River. On the first day, a grand celebration marks the beginning of the festival. An out-door market is set up, where locals go for new year shopping. It is also a great place to purchase local souvenirs. Local food and snacks are other highlights traveler may not want to miss. Artists create sand carvings on open space close to the market. A dragon boat race is held on the Lancang River to ring out the old year in the afternoon. At night, the banks of the river are colorfully lit, and locals float river lanterns on the river. Floating river lanterns is an old tradition in China, which is still preserved in many cities today. The practice is thought to drive bad luck away and bring good luck.

The third day, the climax of the festival, is reserved for water splashing. On that day, the Dai put on their newest and best clothes, then assemble at the local Buddhist temple, where the monks chant Buddhist scriptures. Afterward, a symbolic water splashing ritual is enacted whereby a Buddhist statue, with pomp and ceremony, is first coaxed out of the temple to the courtyard, then is splashed with water. This important ritual is called 'Bathing the Buddha'.

The completion of the 'Bathing the Buddha' ritual serves as the signal that encourages ordinary mortals to themselves engage in mutual water

splashing. Accordingly, people flock to the streets with pots, pans, bottles, or whatever, where they uninhibitedly splash, spray and douse each other with water, with the same gusto with which Westerners engage in a good snowball free-for-all.

The Water Splashing ceremony, however, is more than just good-natured fun; it also contains a religious element: water is regarded by the Dai as a symbol, firstly, of religious purity, but also of goodwill among people. Therefore, splashing a fellow human being with water during the Water Splashing Festival, whether a close neighbor or a fellow villager, or even a stranger, is an expression of the desire for good luck and prosperity to that person.

For the tourist interested in interacting directly with the Dai ethnic minority of Xishuangbanna Prefecture in an informal and fun-filled manner, the annual Water Splashing Festival that takes place in the month of April is the perfect occasion. China Highlights offers a special tour to the city of Jinghong each year to coincide with the Dai ethnic minority's annual Water Splashing Festival.

The festival has many different names specific to each country, such as Songkran in Laos and Thailand, Chaul Chnam Thmey in Cambodia, and Thingyan in Myanmar. The New Year is celebrated in other South Asian countries, based on the astrological event of the sun beginning its northward journey. Traditional dance, singing and cultural shows are performed together during the festival. Religious activities in the tradition of Theravada Buddhism are also carried out at both pagoda and monastery. Young people visit elders to pay respect during this period.

The Myanmar New Year Thingyan is announced by the traditional calendar of Myanmar Team and normally falls around 13 April. Cambodia celebrates the Cambodian New Year from 13 to 15 April. The Lao New Year, called Songkran (สงกรานต์) in the Lao language, is celebrated every year from 13 to 15 April. The Thai New Year (สงกรานต์ = Songkran in Thai language) is fixed every year from 13 to 15 April.

"Water Festival" is often a confusing term for foreigners in Cambodia because the Khmer New Year in April is not normally referred to as "the Water Festival", unlike equivalent new year celebrations in neighboring countries. Rather, the "Water Festival" in Cambodia usually refers to the festival Bon Om Thook (Khmer: ពិធីបុណ្យអុំទូក) focused on traditional boat racing, which usually takes place in November each year.



APRIL 2017 CALENDAR

BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
ARAB AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH
AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

- 1- Atheist Day (International)
- 2- Palm Sunday (Orthodox Christian)
- 3- National Anthem Day (US)
- 5- Ramanavami (Hindu)
- 9-15 Pan American Week (US)
- 10- Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
- 10-14- American Indian Awareness Week (US)
- 11-15- Theravadin New Year (Buddhism)
- 13- Thomas Jefferson Day (US)
- 14- Baisakhi/Vaisakhi (Sikh)
- 16- Easter (Christian)
- 18- Pet Owners Independence Day (US)
- 20- Chinese Language Day (International)
- 21- First Day of Ridva (Baha'i)
- 23- Yom HaShoah (Jewish)
- 24- Lailat al Miraj (Islam)

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In Yunnan (China), the Water Splashing Festival is celebrated by the Dai ethnic group which is one of the 55 ethnic minorities in China. The whole celebration usually starts on the 13th of April and takes 3–7 days. On the first day of the festival Dai people race dragon boats and light fireworks (made of bamboo) for good luck in the coming years. The second day, Dai people get together to dance, and pour water on others because they believe that pouring water on others can help remove bad luck and bring out happiness. Finally, on the last day of the festival, young generations will get together to exchange gifts and date their mates. The Water Splashing Festival is one of the most influential ethnic festivals in Yunnan area. It attracts thousands of tourists every year from all over China. The huge tourist industry contributes greatly to the development of the area.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_Festival

RX for Deaf Patients “Deaf people have a language and culture”

Rx for the Initial Meeting:

Inquire about your patient’s preferred communication method by asking “How do you prefer to Communicate?” Options include:

American Sign Language
Signed English

Lipreading & Speech
Writing (rare)

Remember: this sets the tone for your relationship.

If they sign, have an ASL interpreter available for the following:

Intake/Assessment	Consent for procedures
Education	Doctor’s rounds
Procedures, testing and surgeries	Discharge
Meeting with Family	Any significant event where communication is essential

Deaf individuals-like hearing individuals-come from all walks of life: socio-economic issues, cultural differences and educational variances are just as diverse.

Avoid using friends or family to interpret. They may not know how or may be emotionally unable to accurately convey medical information appropriately.

Fingerspelling and writing are second languages for Deaf individuals who sign.

Video Interpreting

Position the camera so the Deaf patient is visible from waist up. Ensure the camera and screen will not be blocked during the interpretation.

Consult the decision tree when in doubt: patients with low-vision, cognitive problems, etc do not benefit from video.

Onsite Interpreting

Inform your interpreter about the content of today’s interpretation. This helps for

planning and spotting cultural bumps.

Speak directly to your patient. If you want to ensure understanding, ask the patient to tell you the instructions or the procedure or medicine.

Know that your ASL interpreter will be at your side or close to you-this is so the Deaf patient can see both you and the interpreter.

Use common terminology instead of jargon. Include specific locations (ie-left shoulder) to help interpreters who may not have the history.

Allow the interpreter extra time-some concepts need to be expanded for clarity.

Explain procedures, tests, etc prior to doing them. Often times the Deaf person will be unable to see the interpreter if the test requires them to look a certain way, bend over, etc. If something will cause pain, be direct.

Prepare for questions or additional comments in some emergency or long stay settings. Deaf individuals may want to make sure everything is known while an interpreter is present. Say only what you want interpreted. If distractions occur (telephone consultation with another provider, etc) excuse yourself and handle out of view for patient comfort. Deaf patients WILL assume you are talking about them and all comments will be interpreted.

If reading a consent form, read at pace comparable to speaking.

Expect your interpreter to follow you out of the room. It is a violation of ethics for any interpreter to stay in the room alone with the patient.



New Staff Interpreter Profile: Miriam Mascareno

Miriam was born and raised in Sinaloa, Mexico. After getting married she moved to Davis, California with her husband where they both studied at the University of California, Davis.

In addition to studying linguistics at UCD, Miriam has a B.S. in ELT from the University of Sinaloa, Mexico. She earned a Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English from Cambridge University, England. When she returned to Mexico, she worked over 25 years as an ESL teacher at the University of Sinaloa.

In 2004, she moved back to Davis to reside permanently and became a volunteer at the local International House teaching ESL to international students. She was always interested in languages and started to teach Spanish at the adult program at Davis High School.

Miriam always wished to contribute to her community and received training to volunteer as a health care promoter at CommuniCare. Being among LEP patients, Miriam then realized the need for qualified medical interpreters and pursued a certificate in Medical Interpreting from American River College.

We asked her what are her biggest accomplishments? Miriam responded “My biggest accomplishment was to be able to get a position at UCDCM as a medical interpreter. UCDCM provides a challenging and exciting environment where we are constantly learning new medical terminology and cases. To help me achieve this goal, I relied on my medical interpreting experience, as I taught medical terminology

to Medical hospital residents in Mexico and worked part-time as a medical interpreter for Interlingva and Dignity Health in hospitals at Davis, Sacramento and Woodland before joining UC Davis Health”.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and taking walks around the North Davis greenbelt and UCD arboretum. Miriam strives to be in excellent physical condition by practicing Zumba and eating a well-balanced and healthy diet.

When we asked her how does she feel about joining the MIS team, she answered: “I enjoy working in a team that shares common experience and training that allow us to understand the cultural and linguistic barriers of patients in our hospitals and clinics and the importance of efficient and reliable medical interpreting and its benefits for patients and healthcare providers”.

Welcome aboard, Miriam! We are happy to have you as a part of the UC Davis Medical Center Interpreting Team.

