

TRAVEL THE HISPANIC WORLD THIS NEW YEAR'S EVE!

DECEMBER 31, 2020



NATIONAL HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER
1701 4th Street SW • Albuquerque, NM 87102

Argentina

New Year's Eve involves a late dinner, with close friends and family members in attendance.

Firecrackers are part of celebrations, usually go on until the dawn of the first day of the New Year, with people dancing, singing, eating, drinking, and celebrating the whole night.

On the last day of the year, people in Buenos Aires, shred old documents and papers to symbolize leaving the past behind. Around noon, people throw the scraps of paper from their windows all over the city in a shower of confetti.

All over the country, on New Year's Eve, people eat dried fruits and nuts during the day.

At midnight they step forward with their right foot so that everything goes right throughout the year.

Another tradition is that of eating beans on New Year, which is done with a belief that doing so will ensure safety to the present job or will open up gates for new and better job in the coming year.

The Argentinians believe that wearing pink underwear on the 31st of December attracts love during the whole year.

Pan dulce (an Italian sweet cylindrical cake that is often prepared with dried fruits, such as currants and raisins) and Spanish turróns (a southern European nougat confection, typically made of honey, sugar, and egg white, with toasted almonds or other nuts, and usually shaped into either a rectangular tablet or a round cake) are some of the foods enjoyed on New Year.



Brazil

In Brazil, as well as other Central and South America, it is thought to be lucky to wear special underwear on New Year's Eve and helps to determine the wearer's specific successes for next year. Red brings love, yellow brings money, green brings luck, and so on. Local markets are festooned with colored underpants leading up to the New Year.

Many locals believe in wearing white and throwing white flowers and candles into the ocean as an offering to *Iemanjá*, the pagan Afro-Brazilian Goddess of the Sea who is known for blessing mothers and children, on New Year's Eve. If the ocean returns your offerings, then the goddess did not accept them, but there is no penalty if *Iemanjá* rejects the offerings. Offerings to *Iemanjá* are also said to bring prosperity for the New Year.

Lentils are the *alimentos do dia* for Brazilian New Year's celebrations. The legume can come in different forms, such as soup, to help with finances in the New Year. Then, before midnight, they believe people should also eat seven raisins.

It's considered good luck if you can jump over seven different waves while making wishes, one for each wave. Additionally, they enjoy fireworks on Rio de Janeiro's shores while eating lentils, which signify wealth.

Similar to *Años Viejos*, they burn life-sized dolls with face masks that represent bad events from the past year.



Colombia

In hopes of a travel-filled New Year, Colombians carry empty suitcases around the block. While some will run around the block with an empty suitcase, it's equally acceptable to carry your suitcase in and out of your front door 12 times

As the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve it is traditional in Colombia to eat one grape per chime – so 12 grapes in all – and make a wish each time you eat a grape!

Stuff your pockets full of lentils, it doesn't matter what color, on the 31st in order to guarantee that the following year is a bountiful one, preparing for a successful year to come.

For financial security and stability in the upcoming year, make sure you aren't penniless as the clock strikes twelve; having some hard cash either in your hand or your pocket is another Colombian New Year tradition. In essence you need to be surrounded by all the things you want to have next year.

Get the duster and brush out on the 31st if you want to ensure that you leave all negative thoughts and bad memories behind and start the New Year with a clean slate. It's traditional to give your house a thorough clean on the final day of the year to make sure that all those bad energies are a thing of the past. This tradition differs slightly from the rest, in that it involves casting off the bad things of the past year, rather than preparing for good things in the year to come.

When Colombians dress their table in preparation for the New Year, it's traditional to make sure that the table is decorated with shafts of wheat – generally, 12 is the right number. By doing this, they ensure that the New Year will be bountiful and there will be an abundance of food to eat.



Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, New Year's Eve is traditionally a very family-oriented holiday, and families and close friends gather together to celebrate. Costa Ricans definitely know how to party, though, and there is never a shortage of libations and delectable food.

Eat 12 grapes. It is a local tradition, and one that is shared with many other Latin American countries, to eat 12 grapes on New Year's Eve. You eat one grape for each new month to come. Don't forget to make 12 wishes, too!

It is believed that if you wear yellow underwear, you will attract good fortune in the upcoming year. Green underwear is worn to attract money. If you want to attract your soulmate in this next year, make sure that you wear red underwear. You can also hang these same colors in ribbon form on your front door to attract the same things.

Throw a pan of water over your shoulder. This is supposed to symbolize leaving the difficult times of the past year behind you so that you can start the New Year fresh.

At the stroke of midnight, Costa Ricans sing *Año Viejo*.

Check out the Fiesta Zapote. The Fiesta Zapote is one of Costa Rica's most famous fiestas and it runs from Christmas afternoon through New Year's Eve. This six-day party is a non-stop celebration filled with dancing, music, horse parade, Costa Rican bullfights (very different from bull fighting in Spain), drinking, traditional food (pupusas, churros, and chicharrones), games, rides, and more. Las Fiesta de Zapote, located in the town of Zapote, is the biggest rodeo of the year in Costa Rica. This is the fiesta of all fiestas. Over a million people attend Las Fiestas de Zapote.



Cuba

Cubans' tradition is to dine and party in family.

Throw water out of doors or down balconies.

Burn human-sized rag doll (made of old clothes).

Go around the block (those who want to travel carry a suitcase).

Relatives, friends and even strangers kiss and hug each other at New Year's Eve midnight.

Roasting pork is a must for Cubans during New Year's Eve celebrations.

At midnight in Havana, 21 salutes are shot from cannons at San Carlos de la Cabaña fortress, located at the other side of the bay, as part of a ceremony to celebrate another anniversary of the Cuban Revolution.

January 1st is more than New Year's Day in Cuba; it's the anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. On the first of January in 1959, Fidel Castro and his revolutionary army declared victory over the dictator Fulgencio Batista and began their march to Havana. For many Cubans on the island, it's a day to celebrate being Cuban and Cuba's sovereignty, as well as bring hope for the year ahead.



Ecuador

At the annual *Años Viejos*, the people in Ecuador burn scarecrows at midnight. These are filled with paper or sawdust and modeled after a public figure who somehow wronged the world in the previous year, such as a corrupt politician or a celebrity who fell from grace. Building the scarecrow is a family activity. While it's mostly done for fun and laughs, controlling the bevy of fires is sometimes a serious undertaking.

The Ecuadorians also burn photographs from the previous year in the name of good fortune and starting fresh.

It is not uncommon to witness the strange sight of men dressed flamboyantly in women's clothing, teetering in high heels, walking the streets and begging for money. The participating males, with their coiffed wigs and accentuated curves, call themselves *el Viudas*; the widows of the men smouldering in the flames. The widows are very insistent and will stridently block the streets until someone pays their toll.

Ecuadorians consume twelve grapes upon the stroke of midnight, each representative of one wish for each month of the coming year.

Another widespread belief for New Year is that the shade of your boxers and briefs has a significant impact on your next twelve months. Yellow is worn to bring increased prosperity for the coming year, red to enhance one's chances of finding passion and love. An array of colored sets can be seen hanging in street stalls throughout the country waiting to be purchased.



Mexico

The Año Nuevo is a time of embracing renewal. This is marked by throwing buckets of water out the window and opening the front door to symbolically sweep out the old year. Sweeping the house is a classic way of ensuring good fortune in the upcoming year. In cleaning the floor, it's also said that you're emptying the house of negative energy and ridding the bad vibes. Families toss coins onto the ground and sweep them back into the house to encourage a prosperous future.

Leaving all the lights on in your house at the stroke of midnight is said to bring prosperity.

Lentils play a big part in Mexico's New Year's Eve celebrations; you can either leave them outside your door on December 31st, or eat lentil soup right before midnight (or right after midnight). You can also stick a handful in your pocket, bag or purse if you're not in the mood for a snack. Either way, they are heavily associated with abundance and good fortune.

Tradition dictates that if you want to attract some good luck on New Year's Eve, you need to plan your outfit accordingly – right down to your underwear! Red underwear will bring you love in the New Year and yellow money and happiness. White underwear brings peace and calm and black supposedly attracts dignity. You can also get the same effect with candles or decorations: green for health, red for love and orange for wisdom.

Eat 12 grapes and make 12 wishes during the 60 second countdown to midnight.

While the writing of *propósitos*, or resolutions, is just as common a ritual in Mexico as it is in many other countries, there is also the tradition of purifying your negative thoughts and bad energy before the start of a New Year. This is done by compiling a list of everything bad that's going on in your life or of everything bad that happened over the past year, and then burning it. Legend states that this ensures the bad vibes won't come back to haunt you.

Put some money in your shoes and you'll enjoy good fortune during the following year! Equally, it's said that just holding money in your hand (the bigger the bill, the better!) when the ball drops will bring prosperity in the New Year.



Panama

Eat 12 grapes at midnight. As you eat each one, make a wish. 12 wishes for the New Year. They also say that the grapes will predict how your year will be. For instance, if your 2nd grape is sour, then February will be a bad month. But if you get a sweet grape, that month will be a sweet experience.

Spit out the grape seeds. Then count the number of seeds. You use the number of discarded seeds to determine your lucky lottery numbers. The lottery is very popular in Panama.

Have money in your hand at midnight. Don't forget to clasp some money in your hand while you are eating your grapes! Having money in your hands at midnight will help ensure you will have money throughout the coming year.

Walk with a packed suitcase around the house. This will ensure a New Year full of travel.

Wear yellow underwear. It gives you good luck throughout the New Year. Wear red. It will attract love in the New Year.

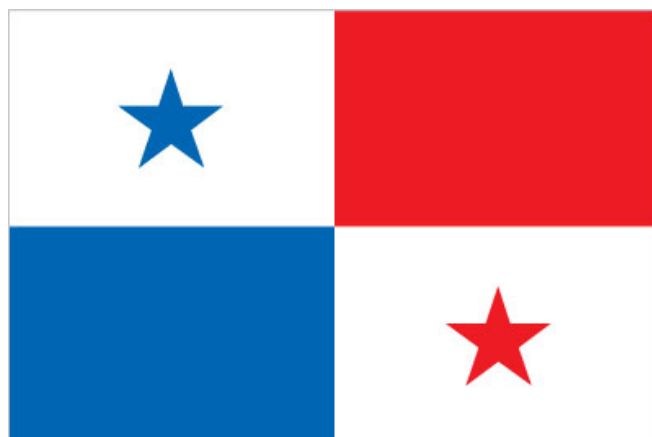
Put rice in a pot. It will attract wealth for the New Year.

Burn incense on December 31. This will get rid of bad energy from the old year

Hang a bunch of oranges, rice, and wheat behind the front door. The benefits of doing this are 3-fold: prosperity, work and health.

Burn a "stuffed man" at midnight. One of Panama's unique New Year traditions is that of the Muñecos. These life sized effigies are an old Panamanian tradition. These "stuffed people" are called many names: Muñecos, Dummies, Old Year Dolls, Judas Dolls. They are stuffed with firecrackers. Then are lit and beaten at the stroke of midnight. According to folklore, by beating and setting the effigies aflame, the sins and evil spirits of the old year are destroyed. Making way for good fortune in the New Year. The fire crackers are said to help drive the evil forces away, since ghosts are afraid of light and noise. The Muñecos are usually made to look like well-known politicians or movie stars from the outgoing year. Sometimes people attached strings to the Muñecos so that they can sit on their porch and have the doll "wave" its hand to passer-bys. Muñecos are especially common along the Pan-American Highway.

Swim in the Ocean on January 1. This ocean swim will "clean out" the bad things of the previous year and bring in good things of the New Year.



Peru

In one Peruvian village, people see out the year with a good old fashioned fight to settle their differences. Then then wipe the slate clean for the New Year.

One Peruvian tradition involves putting three potatoes under a chair. One is peeled, one is partially peeled, and the other has all its skin. At midnight, a person chooses a potato with their eyes closed and each yields a prediction for the future. If you get the one with skin, you'll be prosperous, the one that's partially peeled means you'll have a normal year, and the one with no skin means you're destined to have no money.

Like most South American countries, the Peruvians celebrate the New Year with grapes, fireworks, and traditional food.



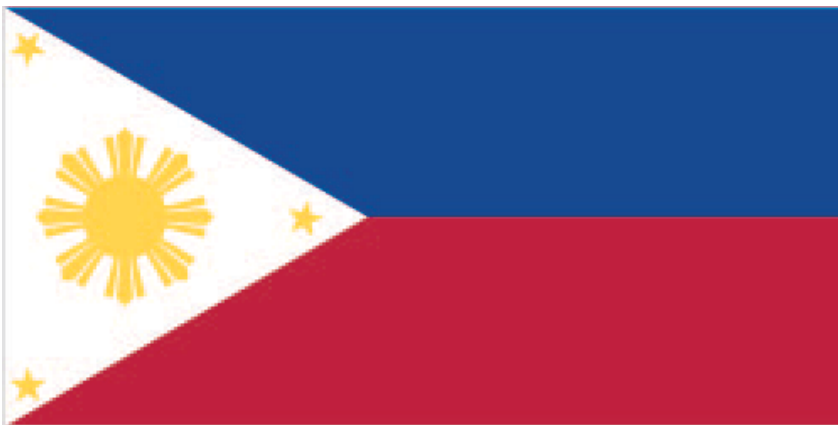
Philippines

You'll find round shapes all over the Philippines on New Year's Eve as representatives of coins to symbolize prosperity in the coming year. Many families display piles of fruit on their dining tables and some eat exactly 12 round fruits (grapes being the most common) at midnight. Many also wear polka dots for luck.

The celebration includes plenty of noise with horns, music, yelling, blowing whistles, clanging pots and pans, and lighting firecrackers to keep away bad luck and evil spirits.

Filipino people also eat traditional pancit noodles and delicacies like malagkit and biko.

Before the clock strikes midnight, all the windows and doors, including cabinets, cupboards, and drawers, are left open to allow good luck to enter.



Spain

Spaniards usually spend the night, called *Nochevieja* ("old night") at home, watching a countdown on TV.

As midnight approaches, it's common to wear red underwear for the night — a good luck charm for the coming year.

At the stroke of midnight, Spaniards eat 12 grapes – one at each stroke of the clock at midnight on New Year's Eve. Each grape represents good luck for one month of the coming year. If you don't manage to eat all 12 grapes, it's considered bad luck. After this they hit the streets and party — usually, very late into the morning.

Cava, the Spanish version of champagne, is the most popular beverage to celebrate with on New Year's Eve and is usually consumed as a toast after the clock strikes midnight. Some Spaniards put a gold object at the bottom of their glass, such as a piece of jewelry or a coin, to bring them good luck and wealth for the year ahead. Drink the whole glass of Cava in one go and collect your golden object at the end.

After the fireworks, celebrations, and dinners, many people in Spain believe that the correct way to begin the New Year is with your right foot – as the saying in English goes, 'start on the right foot,' or the Spanish-translated-into-English version, 'enter with the right foot.' So when you walk away from the fireworks or step down from the dinner table, make sure it's with your right foot; that way you can start the year in the best way possible – with luck for the future.



Uruguay

Nougat is one of the favorite desserts of Uruguayans for New Year's dinner.

Eat 12 grapes on New Year's Eve. Eat one grape for each new month to come and make 12 wishes.

Fill a bucket or glass of water and throw it back in the doorway of your house. The belief is that doing it will remove the bad energies of the home and ensure the beginning of the year clean of bad vibrations.

Go out with a suitcase, at midnight, and walking around the block. They say that this action will ensure at least one trip in the New Year.

In the neighborhoods of Centro and Ciudad Vieja, where most offices are located, Uruguayans finish their shifts on December 31, and celebrate in style. It's a tradition for office workers to rip up their concluding year's agendas and throw them out the window of the buildings where they work. Another custom is to throw buckets of water down the windows, but people in general don't mind being drenched as it's super-hot in the city at this time of the year.

Every year, New Year's Day is celebrated with a big tango party at around 8 p.m., in the Líber Seregni square in the neighborhood of Cordón. The party is organized by "Milonga Callejera". Famous tango dancers participate and everyone is invited to join in the traditional dance or watch the show. It's an outdoors free event that gathers lots of people from all over, and a lively way to finish the first day of the New Year.

