

Naw-Rúz

The festival of Naw-Rúz, which literally translated means 'new day', marks the first day of the Bahá'í calendar and is joyfully celebrated as the New Year in Bahá'í communities all over the world. Naw-Rúz falls on the first day of the month of Bahá, meaning 'glory' in Arabic, on the vernal equinox. 'Bahá' is considered the Most Great Name or attribute of God.



Originally the ancient Persian new year, Naw-Rúz was adopted into the Bahá'í calendar by Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. Today Bahá'ís celebrate it alongside people in many countries, notably Zoroastrians in Iran and India.

The Holy Day coincides with the vernal or spring equinox, a time in the earth's cycle when night and day are of equal length. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, explained the significance of the equinox as symbolic of the Messengers of God who bring the light of God's teachings into the world:

'This sacred day when the sun illumines equally the whole earth is called the equinox and the equinox is the symbol of the divine messenger. The sun of truth rises on the horizon of divine mercy and sends forth its rays on all.'

Just as the earth is entering a time of rejuvenation, humankind is entering a day of renewal and transformation.

Naw-Rúz also marks the end of the Bahá'í month of fasting, a period of physical abstinence from food and of spiritual awakening and nourishment.

The festival is celebrated in many different ways. Prayer and devotion are naturally a part of this sacred day as well as gathering together and visiting friends and family. However, no traditions or rituals are attached to it and people are free to celebrate according to their customs.

20th March or 21st March.

