

# Celebrating Nowruz

## March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025



[Source](#)

Nowruz is a festival that marks the beginning of the new year on the Persian calendar.

- Nowruz, which translates to "new day" in Persian (or Fārsī). This celebration takes place on the spring equinox, the first day of the month of Farvardīn in the Iranian calendar. [Source](#)

Nowruz starts precisely at the moment of the vernal equinox when the sun crosses the equator. This year, it occurred on March 20, 2025.

- Nowruz originates in Zoroastrianism, an ancient Persian religion that predates Christianity and Islam. Today, however, Nowruz is largely regarded as a secular holiday. In Iran, the New Year starts with the arrival of spring, and people celebrating Nowruz around the world embrace this season as a time of new beginnings and renewal for the year ahead. [Source](#)

The ceremonies of Nowruz focus on community, family, and a profound respect for tradition.

- In March 2009, the Canadian federal government passed a bill designating the first day of spring each year as "Nowruz Day." Furthermore, the United Nations officially recognized Nowruz as an international holiday in 2010. [Source](#)

### How is Nowruz Celebrated?

Nowruz is rich in tradition and symbolism, emphasizing the renewal of both nature and oneself.

There are numerous rituals associated with Nowruz, some of which date back thousands of years, while others have been adapted to fit modern times. [Source](#)

- Preparations for Nowruz start about three weeks in advance with a thorough spring cleaning known as "Khoneh Takooni," which means "shaking of the house."
- Chaharshanbe Suri, the fire-jumping ceremony, takes place on the eve of the Wednesday before Nowruz. During this event, people jump over bonfires and go door-to-door banging spoons to ward off bad luck and spirits. [Source](#).
- In the weeks leading up to Nowruz, families also set up a "haft-seen" (seven S) table, featuring seven items that each symbolize a different hope for the New Year. These hopes include rebirth, love, health, beauty, patience, prosperity, and sunrise. [Source](#)

The items typically displayed include:

1. Seeb, apple, represents health and beauty.
2. Samano, a sweet paste made from wheat grass, symbolizes fertility and the sweetness of life.
3. Seer (garlic), representing good health
4. Somag, crushed sumac berries, symbolizes sunrise.
5. Sengend, the sweet, dried fruit of the lotus tree or silverberry, represents love.
6. Serkeh, vinegar, symbolizes patience and age.
7. Sabzeh, sprouts, symbolizing rebirth. [Source](#)

## Learn more about Nowruz

- [Happy Nowruz! Explaining the Traditions Surrounding the Persian New Year](#) | CBS
- [Learn about Persian New Year traditions from this Montreal-based Iranian artist](#) | CBC
- [Celebrating renewal at Nowruz](#) | CBC

*Nowruz Mubarak!*

## Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

At Holland Bloorview, we recognize that empowering and elevating diversity is critical to fostering a healthy team. Creating a sense of well-being and belonging for all employees, volunteers, and students is an important part of this work. We're doing this by supporting the formation of employee resource groups (ERGs) or interest groups.

The IDEAA office has a [toolkit](#) with instructions for staff members who want to form a resource group. The IDEAA office can assist ERG leads with administrative support, such as creating internal communications, setting up meetings, and sharing information with

managers to encourage employee participation in these groups with enough notice. Discretionary funds are available if any ERGs would like to organize an official learning event for their members and the organization.

**This resource was developed by the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism Office (IDEAA). If you have any comments or would like to suggest additional resources, please e-mail [ideaa@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:ideaa@hollandbloorview.ca)**

