

Happy Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, the quintessential American holiday, had humble beginnings. On November 11, 1620, sixty-six days after leaving the Old World and surviving an arduous crossing, the British ship Mayflower anchored off Cape Cod, and 102 Pilgrims arrived in the New World. One month later, they crossed Massachusetts Bay to begin settling in Plimoth (Plymouth). The first winter was brutal and by spring, only half of the passengers and crew remained alive. Plimoth was in Wampanoag Territory, and the Indian chief Massasoit, the sachem, the political and military leader of the Wampanoag confederation, also known as Ousamequin (“yellow feather”) had been watching the colonists since they arrived.



Before the Pilgrims arrived, the Wampanoag had been decimated by a mysterious epidemic, and were in danger of being subjugated by the Narragansett Indian tribe. Although they had long suffered under European raiders and many would have preferred to eliminate the new arrivals, Massasoit knew that an alliance could be valuable. On March 22, 1621, Massasoit entered Plimoth for the first time, and with the assistance of Samoset and Tisquantum (“Squanto”), who both spoke English, forged a mutual defense and trade alliance with the Pilgrims. This alliance lasted more than 50 years, until it was broken during King Philip’s War (1675 – 1676).

The Wampanoag helped the English survive by teaching them how to cultivate corn, local fruits, and vegetables. They also taught them to fish, extract sap from maple trees, and avoid poisonous plants. After the first successful corn harvest, the Governor of Plymouth Colony, William Bradford organized a celebratory feast which became known as the “first Thanksgiving”. Very little is known about this celebration. A letter written by Edward Winslow in December 1621 to a friend in England that described the meal shared by the Pilgrims and Indians, and one brief mention in Governor Bradford’s journals “Of Plimoth Plantation”, written years later, mentioned the feast. It lasted 3 days and took place sometime between September and November 1621. Even though it was a celebration of harvest, the Pilgrims were giving thanks for having survived their first year in the New World.

According to culinary historians, the meal at the feast had very little in common with our modern Thanksgiving spread. Although wild turkeys were abundant in the area, there is no record that they were consumed during the celebration. According to Winslow, colonists went on a “fowling” mission while the natives brought “five deer”. Seafood was abundant, especially mussels, lobsters, bass, clams, and oysters. Vegetables included beans, cabbage, carrots, corn, and onions. Since the colonists had no flour, almost no sugar, and no ovens, pies were not part of the first celebration. It is unclear if the Pilgrims continued yearly celebrations, but they did have a second Thanksgiving celebration in 1623 to mark the end of a severe drought. As more and more settlers reached the New World, days of thanksgiving became common practice in New England.

After the Battle of Saratoga, Commander-in-Chief George Washington called for a day of “Solemn Thanksgiving and Praise”, and December 18, 1777 was the first time the 13 colonies celebrated a Thanksgiving Day in unison. Once he was president, George Washington again called for a national Day of Thanksgiving on November 26, 1789, to celebrate the end of the Revolutionary War. In 1817, New York became the first state to adopt an annual Thanksgiving Day. By 1827, Sarah Josepha Hale, the “Mother of Thanksgiving” began her 36-year campaign to establish it as a national holiday, that culminated on October 3, 1863, when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed that the last Thursday of November would be Thanksgiving Day.

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Division Director’s Message



U. Desmond Alufohai
Director

Protocol & International Affairs Division
Miami-Dade Aviation Department

Thanksgiving traditions around the world date to ancient times. In Greece, the 3-day autumn festival known as Thesmophoria was celebrated to honor the Goddess Demeter, the deity of food grains.

Africans always have festivals at the time of harvest. In some parts of Africa good grain harvests are a cause for celebration. In other parts of Africa there are the festivals of yam, corn, and other crops.

In Asian and elsewhere, there are colorful, exciting, and popular festivals year-round. For instance, the Hindu festival of “Holi,” celebrated annually in March in India honors the triumph of good over evil and the festival coincides with the end of winter and the beginning of spring. It is a time to give thanks for a good harvest and a time to come together to resolve conflicts.

In America, Thanksgiving Day is a National Holiday celebrating the harvest and other blessings of the past year. It is also a day of feasting, shopping, watching sports, and a time of gathering with family members, friends, and neighbors.

Finally, we take this opportunity to welcome newly arrived diplomats and Consular personnel to their new post.

Happy Thanksgiving!

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Miami International Airport Deploy Simplified Arrival For International Passengers

Just in time before the holiday travel season, Miami International Airport and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced the airport-wide expansion of [Simplified Arrival](#) – CBP’s enhanced international arrival process that uses facial biometrics to automate the manual document checks already required for admission into the U.S. Among the leading U.S. airports for international passengers, MIA is the latest to fully deploy Simplified Arrival. After travelers arrive at MIA from an international flight, they will pause for a photo at the primary inspection point. CBP’s biometric facial comparison process will compare the new photo of the traveler to images the traveler has already provided to the government, such as passport and visa photos. In addition, foreign travelers who have traveled to the U.S. previously will no longer need to provide fingerprints as their identity will be confirmed through the touchless facial comparison process. “We are extremely proud to now be able to provide the convenience of Simplified Arrival to all of our international passengers... Now, clearing Customs for passengers throughout MIA is as easy as the click of a camera,” said Lester Sola, MIA’s Director and CEO.

National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month / National Native American Heritage Month (November 1 to November 31) celebrates and recognizes the accomplishments of the peoples who were the original inhabitants, explorers, and settlers of the United States. At the beginning of the 20th century a movement started gaining momentum to establish a day of recognition for the contributions made by the native people to the establishment and growth of the U.S., as well as to educate everyone about their rich culture, history, heritage, art, and traditions. In 1914, Red Fox James, a Blackfoot Indian, rode horseback from state to state seeking approval for a day to honor Indians. In December the following year, he presented the endorsements of 24 state governments at the White House, however, there is no record of such a national day being proclaimed at that time. It wasn’t until 1986 that Congress passed a proclamation authorizing American Indian Week and not until 1990 that President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 “[National American Indian Heritage Month](#)”. On November 1, 2020, President Trump issued a proclamation designating the month of November as [National Native American Heritage Month](#).”

Thanksgiving Trivia

[Some Florida historians](#) have argued that the first Thanksgiving in North America took place in 1565 in Florida and not the one held 56 years later by the Pilgrims and Wampanoags in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Don Pedro Menéndez de Avilés the Spanish admiral waded ashore on September 8, 1565 and kissed a cross held aloft by the fleet’s captain, Father Francisco Lopez, who then claimed Florida for both his God and his country. As curious members of the indigenous [Timucua, North American Indian Tribe](#) looked on, the 800 newly arrived colonists gathered around a makeshift altar as Father Lopez performed a Catholic mass of thanksgiving for their safe arrival in the newly christened settlement of St. Augustine. At the invitation of Menéndez, the Timucuans then joined the newcomers in a communal meal. “It was the first community act of religion and thanksgiving in the first permanent settlement in the land,” wrote University of Florida professor emeritus of history Michael Gannon in his book “The Cross in the Sand.”

The [first Thanksgiving football game](#) was played between Princeton and Yale on November 30, 1876, and the first Macy’s Parade followed on November 27, 1924. The National Football League (NFL) took up the tradition in 1934, when the Detroit Lions played the [Chicago Bears](#) at the University of Detroit stadium in front of 26,000 fans. On October 6, 1941, [Congress passed a joint resolution](#) declaring Thanksgiving a national holiday to be celebrated on the last Thursday in November. President Roosevelt signed the resolution on December 26, 1941. Although it has lost most of its original religious significance, Thanksgiving has become a celebration that brings friends and families together.

In 2019, an [estimated 55 million people in the United States](#) travelled during Thanksgiving. It is unclear how the pandemic will affect this year’s travel, but according to a [recent national poll](#), 56% of the respondents still plan to travel.

Countries celebrating Independence and National Days in November

Albania: Nov. 28, 1912; Declared independence from the Ottoman Empire.
Angola: Nov. 11, 1974; Portugal granted Angola independence.
Antigua and Barbuda: Nov. 1, 1981; Antigua and Barbuda’s National Day marks the day the islands gained independence from Great Britain.
Barbados: Nov. 30, 1966; Gained independence from Great Britain.
Cambodia: Nov. 9, 1953; Celebration of Cambodia’s Declaration of Independence from France.
Dominica: Nov. 3, 1978; Gained independence from Great Britain and became an independent republic in the Commonwealth.
Latvia: Nov. 18, 1918; Latvia achieved full independence from the U.S.S.R. on Aug. 21, 1991, but the main Independence Day holiday in Latvia celebrates independence from German and Russian occupation on November 18, 1918, after the end of the First World War.
Lebanon: Nov. 22, 1943; Celebrates liberation from the French Mandate on this date.
Mauritania: Nov. 28, 1960; Gained independence from France.
Morocco: Nov. 18, 1955; Morocco gained independence from France on Mar. 2, 1956 and from Spain on Apr. 7, 1956. When King Mohammed V returned from exile in 1955, he gave an iconic independence speech on November 18. Until King Hassan II took the throne in 1961, Morocco celebrated Independence Day on March 2, but at the King’s request Independence Day would be commemorated from then on, on November 18.
North Cyprus: Nov. 15, 1983; In a unilateral declaration, the Turkish Cypriot parliament declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus independent from the Republic of Cyprus.
Oman: Nov. 18, 1650; Oman’s National Day celebrates independence from Portuguese control in 1650.
Panama: Nov. 28, 1821; November is Panama’s Patriotic Month, as it celebrates three independence days. Nov. 3 is celebrated as Independence from Colombia (1903). This day is also known as Colon Day. It is followed on Nov. 10, when Panamanians remember the “uprising in Villa Los Santos” against the Spaniards, and finally, National Day, celebrating independence from Spain, on Nov. 28.
Poland: Nov. 11, 1918; National Independence Day commemorates the anniversary of the restoration of Poland’s sovereignty as the Second Polish Republic in 1918 and independence from the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian Empires.
Suriname: Nov. 25, 1975; Formerly known as Dutch Guiana, Suriname gained independence from the Netherlands on Nov 25, 1975.
Yemen: Nov. 30, 1967; Marks the Declaration of Independence of South Yemen from the UK. The Yemeni National Day is observed each year on May 22, Unification Day.

DIPLOMATIC & CONSULAR RELATIONS

Welcome • Bienvenue • Bienvenidos • Akeyi



Mr. Marcus Boyle is **Regional Director, U. S. Department of State, Office of Foreign Missions** located in Coral Gables, Florida. He joined the U.S. Department of State in January 2010. He obtained a Masters of Operational Studies while simultaneously earning a Master of Science degree in Global Studies and International Relations from the University of Kansas. Prior to that he served as Management Officer in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, including time as acting Deputy Chief of Mission. He also served as a Special Assistant in the Under Secretary for Management's office at headquarters, and before that, as Director and Deputy Director at the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center in Iraq. Other assignments include Ankara, Turkey, Peshawar, Pakistan, and Washington D.C., as a Post Management Officer managing a portfolio covering Central Asia and the Middle East. Prior to joining the Department, Marcus spent eight years working in the National Football League (NFL), and Division One National Collegiate Athletic Association Football (NCAAF).



Mr. Francisco Del Castillo Andrade is **Consul General of Ecuador in Miami**. He is a Founding Partner with Estudios Diseño & Construcción EDCS.A. He previously served as General Manager with ENDEMICOECUADOR S.A, Executive Director of Castle Builder Cia. Ltda and General Manager, Castle Builder Cia. Ltda. He is a graduate of Political Governance and Leadership Program - IDE. He obtained a Masters degree in Management of Construction and Real Estate from Polytechnic University of Madrid and a Bachelor degree in Arts and Finance (with studies in anthropology) from Universidad San Francisco de Quito. Additionally, he earned a Certificado de Idioma Inglés - International Benedict School of Languages from Lausanne Switzerland, and a Certificate of Financial Management from Banco Popular Foundation, Financial Group.



Ambassador Jaime Lacadena Higuera, Consul General of Spain in Miami is a career diplomat in the Spanish Foreign Office. In 1987 he took up his first assignment as Director of Foreigners and Refugees in the General Directorate of Consular Affairs. In recent years he has served as Ambassador of Spain to the Dominican Republic from 2012 to 2017, Consul General of Spain in Bogotá from 2008 to 2012, and Ambassador of Spain to the Republic of Nicaragua from 2004 to 2008. In his career as a diplomat, he was assigned to diplomatic assignments in Kuwait and Argentina. While serving in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, he held various positions of responsibility, such as General Director of Foreign Policy for Ibero-America from 2002 to 2004; Deputy Director General of MERCOSUR and Chile, among others. Most recently, from 2017 to 2020, he served as Ambassador on Special Missions for the Ibero-American Foundations in the General Directorate for Ibero-America and the Caribbean. Ambassador Lacadena serves as the Consul General of Spain in Miami with jurisdiction covering the states of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. He obtained a Law Degree from the University of Zaragoza, Spain.



Mr. George Hamilton is **Consul-General of Sierra Leone in Miami**. He is also accredited to the following countries: Canada, Jamaica, Brazil, Guyana, Venezuela, The Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, Chile and Bolivia. He is a multi-disciplinary consultant with a focus in promoting and branding - tourism, culture, trade, energy, agriculture, healthcare, and strategic investment facilitation for the sustainable development and growth of Sierra Leone. He is a highly skilled professional designer, stylist, image consultant and branding expert. He obtained an HND, HNC-TH degree in Computer Science and B-Tech in Communications and Fashion Design from Lewisham College.

ABOUT US

The core mission of MDAD's Protocol and International Affairs Division is -

To facilitate the movement of official guests, delegations, dignitaries and VIPs through MIA and support the airport's international programs and initiatives.

Contact:

Tel: + 1 (305) 876-7457

Email: Protocol@miami-airport.com
www.miami-airport.com/about_us.asp

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