

CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND FIREWORKS



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Celebrating Diversity

Over many years, communities from west to east across Canada have been growing through immigration and benefiting from the rich tapestry that the world's most diverse and pluralistic country sets as an example to the world. These diverse communities and ethnic diasporas bring their own unique traditions and culture – from language, food and traditions – through to culture and celebration in the arts that express their own cultural values and creativity.

Many cities across the country continue to welcome newcomers at a faster rate than any time in Canadian history. Almost all communities know that these newcomers are what will continue to sustain growth in their cities, given the natural birthrate sees a steady decline and immigration being the source of growth. We have seen communities embrace newcomers, diversity and pledging their support to newcomers as a source of strength, not weakness.



Two of the largest sources of immigration are the South Asian and Asian communities in countless communities in Canada. The rich and diverse cultural communities that represent the Hindu and Chinese communities date back centuries. Those communities and others bring with them to Canada their traditions and practices. What may be lesser known is that Diwali is a festival celebrated by 1 billion Hindu's globally and Lunar New Year; the largest annual holiday of the year on Earth is celebrated by 1.5 billion Asians globally.



Celebrating Diversity with Sparks

In an illuminating decision that brightens the skies and hearts across the nation, communities across Canada have embraced the vibrant celebrations of Diwali and the Lunar New Year by officially adding them to the list of holidays celebrated with consumer fireworks. This move is more than a nod to multiculturalism; it's a celebration of the diverse tapestry that is Canada today. The erosion of these age old customs diminishes the unique identities of Canada's multicultural mosaic.

A Burst of Inclusion

Diwali is known as the Festival of Lights, and the Lunar New Year, a time of renewal and reunion, are two of the most significant celebrations for Hindu and Chinese communities, respectively. By recognizing these festivals alongside traditional Canadian holidays, the country sends a powerful message of inclusion and respect for cultural diversity. It's an acknowledgment that the essence of Canada's identity is its multicultural mosaic.

Economic Sparks

The decision has also supported economic benefits. Fireworks retailers have seen a surge in sales during these festivals, contributing to local economies and supporting small businesses. This boost is particularly welcome in the wake of challenges posed by global events, providing a much-needed lift to community spirits and financial stability.



A Growing List Of Inclusive Cities

Many cities from east to west across Canada allow for fireworks with specific conditions on Diwali. They include Barrie, Guelph, Waterloo Region (Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge), Brantford, Mississauga, London, Saskatoon, London, Edmonton Chatham-Kent, and Stratford.

Cities that embrace the centuries-old tradition of fireworks on Lunar New Year in Canada that reflect their diverse cultural practices include Barrie, Saskatoon, Brantford, Mississauga and London.

With national immigration and inter-provincial immigration changing rapidly, we are seeing the pluralistic nature of our communities become more vibrant. It is no accident that many of these communities which are seeing growth are evolving their policies on Diwali and Lunar New Year fireworks use to create more inclusive cities.

A Reflection of Canada's Evolving Identity

This initiative reflects Canada's evolving identity, one that embraces and celebrates its cultural diversity. Fireworks have been used during Diwali for over 800 years by Hindu's and is steeped in tradition. It's a testament to the country's commitment to fostering an inclusive society where all traditions can be celebrated with equal pomp and splendor. As Canadians, we're reminded of the strength found in our diversity and the shared joy in our celebrations.



Pictured above: Members from the London community celebrating the inclusion of fireworks in their city as part of Diwali – April 2023

Looking Forward

As we move forward, the successful inclusion of Diwali and Lunar New Year into Canada's list of fireworks-celebrated holidays stands as a beacon of unity in diversity. It encourages us to look towards other ways we can acknowledge and celebrate the multitude of cultures that call Canada home. Let the sparks of Diwali and the Lunar New Year light the way for a future where every culture's celebrations are recognized and embraced.

Conclusion

In a world where cultural heritage is often threatened, inclusion of cultural holiday traditions serve as beacon of hope, reminding us of the power of community, unity and the importance of preserving and respecting diverse traditions.



About the CNFA

The Canadian National Fireworks Association (CNFA) is a national association that represents fireworks manufacturers, distributors, and retailers. The CNFA's mission is to promote fair access and safety in the sale and use of all fireworks through public education, advocacy with regulators, and member compliance. The CNFA is committed to working with federal, provincial, and local municipalities to educate consumers, vendors and regulators about the safe sale and use of family fireworks, along with fair and reasonable regulation. www.nationalfireworks.ca

Mission Statement

The CNFA's mission is to promote fair access and safety in the sale and use of fireworks through public education, advocacy with regulators, and member compliance. Working with all three levels of government, the CNFA advocates on behalf of the fireworks industry to guarantee that our voice is heard. We work for fair and easy access to fireworks and provide education and training opportunities for our members.

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