



Notable  
Quotable

“Laughter is  
America’s most  
important export.”

- Walt Disney,  
animator



December Horoscopes and Birthdays

In astrology, those born between December 1–21 are Archers of Sagittarius. Sagittarians are travelers, open-minded, and constantly in search of meaning. Archers seek change and take concrete steps to achieve their goals. Those born between December 22–31 are Capricorn’s Goats. Goats are practical, determined, and focused on ambitious goals. They persevere with grit and honesty.

Iceland’s Yule Lads *continued from pg. 1*

steals leftover smoked lamb; and Candle Beggar, who steals candles. These Yule Lads arrive to fill a good child’s shoe, left on the windowsill, with a gift or treat. Bad children find their shoes filled with potatoes or turnips. This may sound like a harmless Yuletide tradition, but in the past, the Yule Lads were far more terrifying.

In olden days, the Yule Lads—the offspring of two ogres—were joined on Christmas Eve by the Yule Cat,

When Brown Is Best

On December 4, it’s time to add a new color of footwear to your shoe closet—it’s Wear Brown Shoes Day. Most men play it safe when dressing and opt for black shoes. Black is versatile and goes with most any outfit. But sometimes black just won’t do, and brown shoes are the perfect finishing touch.

When choosing a pair of shoes, one must always first consider the colors of the outfit. Are you wearing a smart, suave ensemble for a night out in the city? You may want to play it safe and follow the maxims “No

Residents

- December 3 Jonnie Butler
- December 4 Judith Voight
- December 8 Barbara Barnes
- December 10 Patricia Borders
- December 13 Gladys Brunner
- December 13 Virginia Angle
- December 15 Calvin Cardieri
- December 17 Esther Bishop
- December 17 Daniel Fitzgerald
- December 20 Miriam Ekhoﬀ
- December 30 Ann Howell

Employees

- December 3 Joan Johnson
- December 7 Lashinda Cogdell
- December 17 Dustin Isabell
- December 18 Eleanor Kirby
- December 24 Melissa Ferrer
- December 30 Barbara King
- December 31 Deri Williams



a giant black beast. According to legend, they would gobble up any person found not wearing one new item of clothing. The Icelanders definitely take their myths seriously. Magnus Skarphedinsson, a top elf researcher and headmaster of Iceland’s Elf School, says that 54% of Icelanders believe in these beings. The image of the Yule Lads may have changed from naughty to nice over the centuries, but many Icelanders still fret over their arrival each December.

brown in town” or “No brown after six.” Black is likely best. But are you wearing earth tones like khaki, tan, or green? Then dare to go brown. Brown even pairs well with varying shades of red, white, and navy. Are your shoes brown suede? Brown brogues? Antique brown patina oxfords? As you can see, brown shoes can be just as fancy as black. So on December 4, don’t play it safe. Ditch the black, take a fashion risk, and wear a pair of brown shoes. If you’re particularly stylish, pair those brown shoes with some colorful shoelaces.

Arbor Oaks at Tyrone

December 2017



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Celebrating  
December

Write a Friend  
Month

Bingo Month

Safe Toys and  
Gifts Month

Eat a Red  
Apple Day  
December 1

International  
Volunteer Day  
December 5

Hanukkah  
December 12–20

Look for an  
Evergreen Day  
December 19

Christmas Day  
December 25

Make Cut-Out  
Snowflakes Day  
December 27

Iceland’s Yule Lads

Children eagerly anticipate the arrival of Santa Claus on December 25, but in Iceland children await no fewer than 13 different Santa Claus-like visits. Beginning on December 12 and for 13 nights leading up to Christmas Day, homes are visited by the elf-like Yule Lads, mischievous sprites who are naughty and nice.

The Yule Lads, like Snow White’s dwarves, have unique names and personalities and get into unique mischief. According to the National Museum of Iceland, they are: Sheep-Cote Clod, who disturbs sheep; Gully Gawk, who steals foam from buckets of cow’s milk; Stubby, who steals food from frying pans; Spoon Licker, who licks batter from spoons; Pot Licker, who licks food

from unwashed pots; Bowl Licker, who steals food from under the bed; Door Slammer, who stomps around the house and keeps everyone awake; Skyr Gobbler, who eats up all the Icelandic yogurt; Sausage Swiper, who steals sausages; Window Peeper, who peers into windows and sometimes steals things he finds inside; Door Sniffer, who has a big nose and steals baked goods; Meat Hook, who

*continued on pg. 4*



Keep Your Footing

Scotland’s Hogmanay is one of the world’s greatest New Year’s celebrations. *Hogmanay* is the Scottish word for the last day of the year. For Scots, the celebration of Hogmanay was traditionally even more important than Christmas. The most important ritual of Hogmanay is the practice of *first-footing*, which begins immediately after midnight. This entails being the first person to cross over a friend’s or neighbor’s

threshold. Any first-footer must arrive bearing symbolic gifts of salt, coal, shortbread, whiskey, and black bun. Another ritual is *redding the house*, which involves cleaning the home and hearth and then “reading” your fortune on the hearth’s ashes. No Hogmanay celebration is complete without singing a rousing rendition of “Auld Lang Syne,” composed by Scotland’s own national poet, Robert Burns.



## On Top of Technology



*The roof of the future may do more than just keep out the rain.*

December 3 is Roof Over Your Head Day, a day to give thanks for the gift of shelter. Nowadays, however, roofs provide more than warmth and safety. Technological advances allow roofs to provide us with renewable energy, a cleaner environment, and even fresh food.

Entrepreneur Elon Musk is best known for his company Tesla and its electric cars. Lesser known, but just as visionary, is his work to produce a new kind of roof. Tesla is designing solar glass roof shingles that look like traditional shingles but have the benefit of harnessing the sun's power and turning it into valuable energy to run a home. The durable glass is specially designed to withstand hailstones falling at over 100 mph. At \$42 per square foot, these tiles are much costlier than the average asphalt shingle, which costs \$5 per square foot. And while these tiles also cost more than the large, rectangular solar panels now perched atop many roofs, they

look nicer and more natural than the clunky rooftop panels.

Another innovative roof option is the "green roof," where shingles are completely eschewed for a roof composed of soil, plants, and shrubs. Residential home owners and urban building managers are opting for living rooftop gardens, where plants help clean the air, manage stormwater runoff, reduce air conditioning and heating costs, absorb heat, provide habitat for birds and animals, offer park space for people, and even provide fresh fruits and vegetables. Innovations do not stop at green roofs; there are also designs for green walls, bridges, and railroad tracks. In all of these cases, success depends on the expertise of the engineer in considering a roof's ability to retain moisture, allow drainage, prevent erosion, repel pests, and determine which plants will be most successful. In the near future, homes will provide more than just a roof over our heads.

## Sticky Business



*80% of the world's supply of maple syrup comes from Canada.*

Begin December 17 with pancakes, waffles, or French toast covered in a puddle of maple syrup because it's Maple Syrup Day. Maple syrup typically comes from sugar maple, red maple, or black maple trees. In cold climates, these trees store starch in their trunks and roots. When the weather warms, this starch is converted to sugar and then rises in the form of sap to feed the tree. Maple sap is collected by boring a hole into the tree trunk and attaching a *spile*, or tap, through which the sap "runs."

This dripping sap is collected and boiled down to remove excess water and create a concentrated syrup. It takes almost 40 gallons of maple sap to create one gallon of maple syrup. In South Korea, the sap is not even boiled down to syrup. Instead, maple trees known as *gorosoe* are tapped, and the sap is drunk fresh from the tree. In some regions of South Korea where the sap is believed to have health and spiritual benefits, people drink as much as five gallons at once.

## The Meaning of Messy



*Moisture evaporates quicker from an unmade bed, making it more hygienic than a made one.*

December 21 is the shortest day of the year in the northern hemisphere, so why bother making your bed when you'll soon be back under the covers? That was the rationale behind fifth-grader Shannon Barba's appeal to the U.S. Congress asking to make Don't Make Your Bed Day an official holiday. Perhaps Barba doesn't appreciate what making a bed in the morning reveals about

an individual's personality. Some psychologists claim that those who make their beds set a positive tone for the rest of the day. Bed-makers are organized go-getters. What about those who don't make their beds? These people are not necessarily unorganized, but instead enjoy not knowing what happens next. They enjoy surprises that bring excitement and energy to the day.

## Seeing the Light

On the eighth day of the 12th month, Buddhists celebrate Rohatsu, also known as Bodhi Day, which commemorates the Buddha's Awakening. This is the moment that the first Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, achieved Enlightenment, or *bodhi*, as it is called in Sanskrit.



*Practicing Buddhists view Buddha as a teacher and not a god or deity.*

Scholars know relatively little about Siddhartha Gautama. He was the son of a clan chieftan and a princess, and so became a prince in his own right. But at age 29, Prince Siddhartha left his palace to walk among the people and was appalled at their pain and suffering. He abandoned his kingdom, family, and riches to become a wandering holy man searching for a means to release humanity from pain and suffering. At one critical moment, Siddhartha seated himself under a pipal tree, now known famously as the Bodhi tree, and vowed to never rise until he discovered the truth. After 49 days of deep meditation, he supposedly attained Enlightenment and became known as the Buddha,

or "Awakened One." What is Enlightenment, in this Buddhist sense? Some believe it is the moment he achieved liberation from the endless cycle of rebirth, suffering, and dying again. He achieved *nirvana*, extinguishing any sense of self and, along with it, any feelings of desire, hatred, or ignorance, which lead to suffering. Rather than abandon humanity and continue on his own path to enlightenment, the Buddha returned to the world to teach others this path to the end of suffering. For the remaining 45 years of his life, the Buddha traveled throughout India sharing his insights.

Modern-day Rohatsu traditions include deep meditation in the manner of the Buddha. While very few ever reach Enlightenment, it is in this practice that we come to a better understanding of how to ease the suffering of ourselves and others. Perhaps the best way to commemorate Bodhi Day is to extend simple kindnesses to ease the suffering of others.