



*helpful
Ramadan
basics*



Ramadan

What is Ramadan?

The month of Ramadan is considered the most sacred month of the year for Muslims. It memorializes the night Muslims believe the Angel Gabriel recited the first verses of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad.

When is Ramadan?

It is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, which is based on lunar cycles. Since there are fewer days in the lunar year than there are in the solar year, Ramadan's dates vary by about 11 days year to year.

Astronomical calculations predict the start of each Ramadan season, but Ramadan does not formally begin until the first crescent of the ninth-month's moon is sighted.

Year	First day of Ramadan	Last day of Ramadan
2019	6 May	4 June
2020	24 April	23 May
2021	13 April	12 May
2022	3 April	2 May
2023	23 March	23 April
2024	11 March	9 April
2025	1 March	30 March
2026	18 February	19 March
2027	8 February	9 March



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What happens during Ramadan?

During this month Muslims begin their fasts when each day's sun rises, and they end it when the sun sets. **They refrain from taking liquids or food as well as having sexual relations for 11-16 hours a day, depending the month's seasonal timing.** They purpose to do good deeds and avoid bad ones during this time, focusing on becoming better Muslims and thus most worthy of Allah's approval. During this time many Muslims will read or recite the entire Qur'an and attend special nightly prayers at the mosque.

Why is Ramadan so important?

Keeping the fast during Ramadan is an **act of obedience**, signaling Muslims' desire to obey and to please Allah. They also hope to receive something special from him.

Who must fast during the month of Ramadan?

Islam ordains that all post-pubertal persons observe Ramadan's fasts, unless they are ill, traveling, or are women who are menstruating, pregnant or nursing.

What is Ramadan's standard daily practice?

Most Muslim families awaken before dawn to start their fasts with a meal they call *suhur*. It's usually a substantial breakfast-like meal. Following the meal, they usually pray. They will cease eating and praying just before sunrise, and won't begin eating again until the sun has set.



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What might a day during Ramadan look like?

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The breaking of the fast in the evening is called *iftar*, and takes place after prayers. It is usually a light snack of dates, fruit and other healthy bits that precede a more complete meal a bit later. **It is customary for family and friends to break the fast together.** Typically, family members will follow this up by going to the mosque for special evening prayers. They often get home late at night.

Besides fasting, what other good deeds do Muslims seek merit from during Ramadan?

Since Ramadan is typically a time when Muslims are supposed to **focus on charitable deeds and greater collaborations in community**, often people are more conscientious about serving the poor and generously giving of their means.

During the month of Ramadan are there any days that are more special than others?

The Night of Power is said to be the night the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed. People will read/recite the Qur'an and pray throughout the night, believing that the gates of paradise are open and their sins will be forgiven. Angels do the bidding of Allah on that night.



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How Does the month of Ramadan conclude?

Ramadan's concluding festivities are called **Eid ul-Fitr**. Muslims celebrate the fast's conclusion by attending special mosque services as well as family and community events. They typically wear new clothes and give gifts to children, especially. The festivities are celebratory and family-oriented, and can sometimes extend for a few days. At this time Muslims often express a special sense of closeness to Allah, and a renewed sense of commitment to their faith practices.

Helpful Hints for Iftar or Eid ul-Fitr guests:

1. Dress modestly, for a special occasion.
2. From the beginning, make sure you use your right hand for everything.
3. Bring a gift. Flowers or sweets are appreciated. (No pork or alcohol products)
4. Wait to be seated; In some homes seating will be gender-specific.
5. Eat what is served to you.
6. Be observant regarding departure time. Sometimes there are tea or coffee social cues.

