Cultural Celebrations: November

What's on in November?

- **November:** W̱SÁNEĆ Moons: WESELÁNEW – Moon of the Shaker Leaves
- **November 1st: Samhain** A festival in the Pagan and Wiccan religions that marks the end of the harvest season.
- **November 1st & 2nd: Día de Los Muertos** Day of the Dead
- **November 8th: Diwali** The Hindu festival of lights, celebrating the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil.
- **November 24th: Dev Diwali/ Dev Deepavali** A Hindu festival honoring all deities.
- **November 24th: Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Birthday:** A day commemorating the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji who founded Sikhism

Heritage Months:

- **Hindu Heritage Month**
- **Lebanese Heritage Month** .

WESELÁNEW – Moon of the Shaker Leaves
November

For the Saanich Peoples, November marks a month of falling leaves, turbulent waters and the skies., and a cooling of the earth. In the WESELÁNEW moon, fishing was undertaken mostly in the safety of local waters. This was the time when big winds come and changed the season to Winter. The days became cooler and travelling in food gathering territory was limited. The winds that came with this moon were a signal to move to the winter village as the open sea became dangerous for movement in open boats. Most foods were now in storage for the Winter and fishing was done only close to the village sites. The Saanich Peoples formed hunting parties and moved West into the mountains to hunt elk. Elk were only hunted after the first snowfall as it was easier to track an elk if it was wounded. This way no meat would be wasted. Winter fires were lit and this was the beginning of Winter gatherings.

SJELCASEN – The Moon of Putting your Paddle away in the Bush
November - December

This is the season of strong, unpredictable winds when travel on the open sea becomes unsafe and the big canoes and paddles are put away in gratitude for their service through the year's journeys. As snow becomes possible, communities settle into winter life — gathering in longhouses for storytelling and ceremonies. With most food stored, people turn to weaving mats, clothing, and baskets, repairing tools and fishing gear, and splitting red cedar logs (S,ILETEW) into planks for building. The low winter tides allow for clam digging, while the powerful SKANET (southeast) and SCES (southwest) winds mark the true arrival of winter.



Source:

🔗 **Learn about PEKELANEW - W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council**

Resources:

🔗 **13 Moons of the W̱SÁNEĆ**

Cultural Celebrations: November

Hindu Heritage Month
November

November is also recognized as Hindu Heritage Month in Canada, celebrating Hindu communities, their cultures, and traditions. Hindu culture is one of the world's oldest, encompassing diverse languages, philosophies, and practices that emphasize balance, compassion, and connection to the natural world. Family and community are central, and festivals such as Diwali and Dev Diwali highlight values of light, learning, and gratitude. Food plays a meaningful role, with vegetarian dishes, sweets, and offerings (prasad) shared in celebration and devotion.

Resources & Recipes:

🔗 **Hindu Heritage Month**



Lebanese Heritage Month
November

November is also recognized as Lebanese Heritage Month in Canada, celebrating Lebanese communities, their cultures and traditions. Lebanese culture reflects a unique blend of Arab, Mediterranean, and European influences, shaped by its diverse religious heritage and long history. Family and community are central, as well as a vibrant, Mediterranean-inspired cuisine. Arabic, French, and English are commonly spoken.

Lebanese cuisine is known for its freshness, balance, and rich Mediterranean flavours. Traditional dishes include hummus, tabbouleh, baba ghanoush, kibbeh, and falafel, often served with warm pita and fresh herbs. Meals typically feature shared plates, grilled meats, olive oil, lemon, and aromatic spices, reflecting a culture of hospitality and gathering. Popular desserts like baklava and ma'amoul showcase the use of nuts, honey, and dates.

Resources & Recipes:

🔗 **Authentic Lebanese Cuisine**



Samhain
November 1st

Samhain is an ancient Celtic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. Originating in Ireland and Scotland, it was a time to honour ancestors, prepare for the darker half of the year, and celebrate the final harvest. Feasting played a central role, with traditional foods like root vegetables, apples, grains, and meat shared around communal fires. People offered food to spirits and set extra places at the table for departed loved ones. Many modern Halloween traditions trace their roots back to Samhain's blend of harvest celebration and remembrance.

Resources & Recipes:

🔗 **The Celtic Festival of Samhain**



Cultural Celebrations: November

Día de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

November 1 & 2st



Día de los Muertos is a Mexican celebration honouring loved ones who have passed on. It is a joyful remembrance, filled with music, colour, and offerings. Families create ofrendas (altars) decorated with marigolds, candles, photos, and meaningful items, and prepare favourite foods of those being remembered, such as pan de muerto, tamales, and atole. Sugar skulls, papel picado, and visits to cemeteries reflect the belief that loved ones return during this time. The celebration blends Indigenous traditions and Catholic influences, recognizing death as a natural part of life and celebrating enduring connection to ancestors.

Resources & Recipes:

🔗**Day of the Dead Holiday**

Guru Nanak Jayanti

November 24th



Guru Nanak Jayanti, also known as Guru Nanak Gurpurab, celebrates the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus. It is one of the most significant Sikh festivals, marked by devotional singing, processions, and prayers at gurdwaras. Central to the celebration is the Langar, a free community kitchen where volunteers prepare and serve vegetarian meals to all, symbolizing equality, service, and unity. Traditional foods such as kada prasad, dal, and roti are shared as offerings of gratitude and devotion.

Resources & Recipes:

🔗**Guru Nanak Jayanti - A celebration of Sikhism**

Diwali & Dev Diwali/ Dev Deepavali

November 8th & November 24th



Diwali is one of the most widely celebrated Hindu festivals, symbolizing the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil. Celebrated over five days, Diwali is marked by lighting diyas (oil lamps), decorating homes with rangoli, sharing sweets, preparing traditional foods, and gathering with family and community. For many Hindus, the festival is associated with Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, and is a time to welcome abundance, offer prayers, and celebrate new beginnings.

Dev Diwali, meaning "the Diwali of the Gods," is celebrated on the full moon of Kartik, about fifteen days after Diwali. It is especially significant in Varanasi, where thousands of diyas illuminate the Ganges ghats in honour of the gods' descent to Earth following Lord Shiva's victory over Tripurasura. Traditional celebrations include offerings, sweets, fruits, and community feasts, symbolizing gratitude, abundance, and spiritual renewal.

Resources & Recipes:

🔗**Dev Diwali**