



It's Thanksgiving!

~ Myra Yip (L7) ~

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Almost every culture in the world has celebrations thanking a good harvest. In America, they celebrate it with a festival called Thanksgiving which falls on the fourth Thursday in November. The festive holiday of Thanksgiving usually features turkey and pumpkin on dinner tables and parades with colourful floats on the streets, enjoyed by families and friends. It is for people to spend time together and be thankful for a good year. It also acts as a reminder to give thanks for the good things; nice people and providential events in our lives. Most American families make Thanksgiving dinner special by saying grace and a prayer to give thanks.



The origin of this festival began as a feast to give thanks in the early days of American colonies almost 400 years ago. In 1602, a boat filled with more than 100 people of assorted religious beliefs from Plymouth, England, sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to settle in the New World. Their first winter in the New World was difficult because they had arrived too late to grow any crops. Without food, almost half the colony died. The following spring, people in the New World taught these surviving Pilgrims ways to grow crops and hunt. Then came autumn where sufficient crops of food were harvested. The colonists were thankful for the harvest, so they held a feast to invite all those they were grateful for to join in the celebration. This is the origin of Thanksgiving where such a festival and tradition is continued until today.

On Thanksgiving Day, some particular dishes are served, and one of them is turkey. There are many ways to make turkey, e.g. roast / bake / stuff. Pumpkin comes next, e.g. pumpkin pies; log rolls; cookies; soup and even pumpkin desserts. To complement the turkey, cranberry sauce is served, together with cranberry side dishes that make the meal more appetising with its sweet and slightly sour taste.



Thanksgiving parade is another important event at Thanksgiving. Elaborate parades featuring huge and amusing floats; musical extravaganza plus many amazing entertainment fill the streets. These festive parades are telecast throughout America. Mostly, the theme of the floats and shows are family-oriented to project the message of warmth and thankfulness. All kinds of designs of turkeys; football; pumpkins and even Disney characters are there to make people cheer and go wild. The parades make children laugh and smile while adults relax to enjoy the fun; the crowd and the boisterous atmosphere. The aim of the parade is to instill the spirit of festivity in the hearts of the revellers. People feel all ginged up to have a wonderful and jovial holiday, wishing each other a happy day and cheering for another good year ahead.



Lastly, another famous Thanksgiving event is soccer. American football is an important part of Thanksgiving in the USA. Professional soccer games are often held at Thanksgiving, e.g. The National Football League has been playing games on Thanksgiving Day annually since the celebration first began.

Thanksgiving is indeed a wondrous yearly festival and holiday for the Americans to celebrate and remind them to be grateful. I wish that one day I can go to America and celebrate Thanksgiving together with the Americans to enjoy the floats; balloons; shows and to mingle with the wild crowd. Also, I hope to eat a traditional Thanksgiving meal with an enormous juicy turkey and tons of pumpkin dishes, which I am sure, will be great fun!

