

January 1 more than just New Year's Day

January 1 marks the first day of the new year according to the Gregorian calendar, which is the most widely used calendar across the globe. The arrival of January 1 is a cause for celebration in many countries, but the first day of the year has also played host to its fair share of history. This year, New Year's revelers might want to reflect on some of the more notable events that have taken place on January 1 as they pop some champagne corks and count down to the dawn of 2016.

- 42 B.C.: Julius Caesar becomes the first historical Roman to be deified. This honor is bestowed posthumously by decree of the Roman Senate.
- 1068: Romanus IV is crowned Byzantine Emperor. His reign would prove to be relatively brief, as he was captured and held prisoner by the Turks in 1071. Romanus IV was eventually released, only to be overthrown by a coup and forced to retire. Despite agreeing to retire to a monastery, Romanus IV suffered one additional indignity when he was intentionally blinded. The injuries ultimately became infected, costing Romanus IV his life in 1072.
- 1502: Present-day Rio de Janeiro, which will play host to the 2016 Summer Olympics, is first encountered by Portuguese explorers. The timing of this discovery con-

tributed to the city's name, which translates to "January River" in English.

- 1515: Francis I succeeds to the French throne. Francis I's reign lasted 32 years, during which he is credited with initiating the French Renaissance that brought many Italian artists, including Leonardo da Vinci, to France.
- 1772: The London Credit Exchange Company issues the first traveler's cheques. The cheques, which can be used in 90 European cities, were designed to offer travelers more financial security than cash.
- 1773: The lyrics to "Amazing Grace" are used in a prayer meeting for the first time. The lyrics were written by Englishman John Newton, who worked as a captain of slave ships and had a reputation for being profane.
- 1804: French rule in Haiti ends. This

makes Haiti the first independent nation of Latin America and the only nation in the world that was established thanks to a successful slave revolt.

- 1863: The Emancipation Proclamation, an executive order that immediately changed the federal legal status of more than three million enslaved persons in the United States, goes into effect. The proclamation was issued during the American Civil War and proclaimed the freedom of slaves in 10 states that were still rebelling against Union forces.
- 1908: The Times Square Ball is dropped for the first time to commemorate the dawn

of a new year. The ball has dropped every year since, with the exception of 1942 and 1943, when blackouts related to World War II had been instituted.

- 1959: Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista is ousted by Cuban revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro. Remarkably, Castro would retain his leadership until 2008, when his deteriorating health led him to retire. Castro's brother, Raúl, unanimously won election as president in February of 2008.
- 1990: David Dinkins is sworn in as Mayor of New York City, becoming the city's first black mayor. To date, he is the only black man or woman elected to that position.



Scrapbooks can help document your year

Many interesting and special events take place during the course of a typical year. While the trend is to share photos and anecdotes via social media, these memories tend to be forgotten soon after they are posted. Rather than relegate birthdays, holidays, school milestones, and other such yearly events to the black hole of cyberspace, crafty men, women and children may want to display them in more prominent ways. Scrapbooking is a popular hobby that can help people document various events over the course of the year. But scrapbooking can be much more than that as well. Scrapbooks can serve as valuable resources that speak to the way life once was. Such traditions are not new. Books highlighting family memorabilia, such as recipes, poems, letters, and illustrations, were popular in England as early as the 15th century. Even school yearbooks are a type of scrapbook, highlighting students and events in a single convenient book. The reasons for scrapbooking are the same today as they once were. Scrapbooks preserve memories, record family stories and pass down information through generations. Scrapbooks can even be customized in any manner their creators

desire. For those who have resolved to devote more time to documenting happy times and special events in the year ahead, scrapbooking is a great way to do just that. Here's how to make the process creative and successful.

- Devote a box to "scraps." At the beginning of the year, set aside a medium-sized box, such as a shoebox, that can store various items you want to include in your scrapbook. These may include ticket stubs, receipts, brochures from trips, or any other items you deem worth saving.
- Make time to scrapbook. Set aside a few days each month to go through collected items and organize them so you have an idea of what will be included on your pages. Every event may not make the final cut, but that's up to you.
- Indulge in some craft-store shopping. Not everyone has the time to design each scrapbook page from scratch. Fortunately, there are numerous pre-designed templates or slip-in pages that require little work on

the part of scrapbookers.

- Use your own handwriting. Handwritten sentiments can make the scrapbook even more meaningful.
- Don't overload with photos. Let one or two photos on a page best convey the emotions and stories. Create balance with white space, text and other accents.
- Categorize your photos. Disorganized photos can make scrapbook creation more challenging and ultimately frustrating. Organize your photos by month and rely on cloud-based photo storage systems to keep them safe. Then, when you need them, you can print only those images you want to include in your book.
- Have fun with the process. You have the entire year to create a beautiful scrapbook. Take your time and experiment with different ideas.

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2016

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Thanks for bringing so much joy to our year with your visits. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

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