



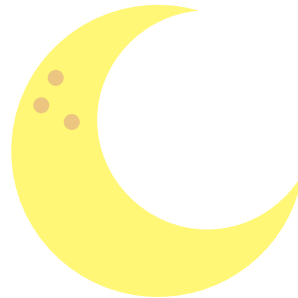
Happy
Ramadan

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What is Ramadan?

- Ramadan is the ninth month on the Muslim lunar calendar (that's why the dates change every year). The calendar's 12 months add up to approximately 354 days. That's 11 days shorter than the 365 days of the standard Gregorian calendar.
- Celebrated as the month when the first verses of the Quran were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) in 610 CE.
- Fasting Ramadan is one of the 5 pillars of Islam.
- Its end is marked by the celebration of Eid ul Fitr.



Do all Muslims fast?

- Several groups are excused - pregnant women, breastfeeding women, those on their menstrual cycle, and those who are mentally or physically ill, are not expected to fast.
- Children are not obligated to fast until they hit puberty.
- Elderly and those travelling are not expected to fast either.



Are there health benefits associated with fasting?

- Improves your blood levels.
- Promotes fat breakdown and weight loss.
- May help you overcome addictions.

What is the purpose of Ramadan?

- To focus the mind on prayer, spirituality, and greater charity. During Ramadan, Muslims should increase their charitable activities to show compassion for the less fortunate.
- Muslims are also supposed to curb negative thoughts and emotions like jealousy and anger, and even lesser things like swearing, complaining, and gossiping, during the month. Collectively, it strengthens one's character.
- But, if that makes it sound super serious and boring, it's really not. It's a time of celebration and joy, to strengthen community.



Maghrib prayer

- Named the 'sunset prayer' as it is prayed just after sunset.
- It is the fourth of five obligatory daily prayers (salat) performed by Muslims.
- After the azaan (call to prayer), Muslims will often break their fast with a few dates, then delay eating until after Maghrib prayer.
- Upon hearing the azaan and during the time of prayer, it is best to whisper or remain silent.

Interesting facts:

- Over 2 billion people fast for the month of **Ramadan** all over the world.
- It will be the longest in Nuuk, Greenland (about 18 hours).
- It will be the shortest in Porto Montt, Chile (about 12 hours).
- The word "Ramadan" is from the Arabic root word "ar-ramad" which means intensely heated by the sun.

