

TRAVEL THE HISPANIC WORLD THIS NEW YEAR'S EVE! TRADITIONS



NATIONAL HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER
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NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS BURNING & SHREDDING



ARGENTINA

On the last day of the year, people in Buenos Aires, shred old documents and papers to symbolize leaving the past behind. Around noon, people throw the scraps of paper from their windows all over the city in a shower of confetti.

BRAZIL

Brazilians burn life-sized dolls with face masks that represent bad events from the past year.

CUBA

Cubans burn human-sized rag boy dolls (made of old clothes).

ECUADOR

At the annual *Años Viejos*, the people in Ecuador burn scarecrows at midnight. These are filled with paper or sawdust and modeled after a public figure who somehow wronged the world in the previous year, such as a corrupt politician or a celebrity who fell from grace. Building the scarecrow is a family activity. While it's mostly done for fun and laughs, controlling the bevy of fires is sometimes a serious undertaking.

Ecuadorians also burn photographs from the previous year in the name of good fortune and starting fresh.

MEXICO

There is a tradition of purifying your negative thoughts and bad energy before the start of a New Year. This is done by compiling a list of everything bad that's going on in your life or of everything bad that happened over the past year, and then burning it. Legend states that this ensures the bad vibes won't come back to haunt you.

PANAMA

Burn incense on December 31. This will get rid of bad energy from the old year.

Burn a "stuffed man" at midnight. One of Panama's unique New Year traditions is that of the *Muñecos*. These life sized effigies are an old Panamanian tradition. These "stuffed people" are called many names: *Muñecos*, Dummies, Old Year Dolls, Judas Dolls. They are stuffed with firecrackers. Then are lit and beaten at the stroke of midnight. According to folklore, by beating and setting the effigies aflame, the sins and evil spirits of the old year are destroyed. Making way for good fortune in the New Year. The fire crackers are said to help drive the evil forces away, since ghosts are afraid of light and noise. The *Muñecos* are usually made to look like well-known politicians or movie stars from the outgoing year. Sometimes people attached strings to the *Muñecos* so that they can sit on their porch and have the doll "wave" its hand to passer-bys. *Muñecos* are especially common along the Pan-American Highway.



NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS COLORS



ARGENTINA

- wear **pink** underwear on December 31 - **attract love during the whole year**

BRAZIL

- **red** underwear - **brings love**
- **yellow** underwear - **brings money**
- **green** underwear - **brings luck**
- Local markets are festooned with colored underpants leading up to the New Year.
- Many locals believe in **wearing white and throwing white flowers and candles** into the ocean as an offering to Iemanjá, the pagan Afro-Brazilian Goddess of the Sea who is known for blessing mothers and children, on New Year's Eve. If the ocean returns your offerings, then the goddess did not accept them, but there is no penalty if Iemanjá rejects the offerings. Offerings to Iemanjá are also said to bring prosperity for the New Year.

COSTA RICA

- **yellow** underwear - attract good fortune in the upcoming year
- **green** underwear - attract money
- **red** underwear - attract your soulmate in the next year
- You can also hang these same colors in **ribbon form on your front door** to attract the same things.

ECUADOR

- **yellow** underwear - bring **increased prosperity for the coming year**
- **red** underwear - **enhance one's chances of finding passion and love**
- An array of colored sets can be seen hanging in street stalls throughout the country waiting to be purchased.

MEXICO

- Tradition dictates that if you want to attract some good luck on New Year's Eve, you need to plan your outfit accordingly – right down to your underwear!
- **red** underwear - will bring you **love in the New Year**
- **yellow** underwear - **money and happiness**
- **white** underwear - brings **peace and calm**
- **black** underwear - **attracts dignity**
- You can also get the same effect with candles or decorations: **green** for **health**, **red** for **love**, and **orange** for **wisdom**.

PANAMA

- **yellow** underwear - **good luck** throughout the New Year
- **red** underwear - **attract love** in the New Year

SPAIN

- wear **red** underwear for the night - **good luck charm for the coming year**



NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS GRAPES



COLOMBIA

As the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve it is traditional in Colombia to eat one grape per chime – so 12 grapes in all – and make a wish each time you eat a grape!

COSTA RICA

Eat 12 grapes. It is a local tradition, and one that is shared with many other Latin American countries, to eat 12 grapes on New Year's Eve. You eat one grape for each new month to come. Don't forget to make 12 wishes, too!

ECUADOR

Ecuadorians consume twelve grapes upon the stroke of midnight, each representative of one wish for each month of the coming year.

MEXICO

Eat 12 grapes and make 12 wishes during the 60 second countdown to midnight.

PANAMA

Eat 12 grapes at midnight. As you eat each one, make a wish. 12 wishes for the New Year. They also say that the grapes will predict how your year will be. For instance, if your 2nd grape is sour, then February will be a bad month. But if you get a sweet grape, that month will be a sweet experience.

PERU

Like most South American countries, the Peruvians celebrate the New Year with grapes.

SPAIN

At the stroke of midnight, Spaniards eat 12 grapes – one at each stroke of the clock at midnight on New Year's Eve. Each grape represents good luck for one month of the coming year. If you don't manage to eat all 12 grapes, it's considered bad luck.

URUGUAY

Eat 12 grapes on New Year's Eve. Eat one grape for each new month to come and make 12 wishes.





NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS FOOD



ARGENTINA

Another tradition is that of eating beans on New Year, which is done with a belief that doing so will ensure safety to the present job or will open up gates for new and better job in the coming year.

Pan dulce (an Italian sweet cylindrical cake that is often prepared with dried fruits, such as currants and raisins) and Spanish turrone (a southern European nougat confection, typically made of honey, sugar, and egg white, with toasted almonds or other nuts, and usually shaped into either a rectangular tablet or a round cake) are some of the foods enjoyed on New Year.

BRAZIL

Lentils are the *alimentos do dia* for Brazilian New Year's celebrations. The legume can come in different forms, such as soup, to help with finances in the New Year. Then, before midnight, they believe people should also eat seven raisins. Enjoy fireworks on Rio de Janeiro's shores while eating lentils, which signify wealth.

COLOMBIA

When Colombians dress their table in preparation for the New Year, it's traditional to make sure that the table is decorated with shafts of wheat – generally, 12 is the right number. By doing this, they ensure that the New Year will be bountiful and there will be an abundance of food to eat.

MEXICO

Lentils play a big part in Mexico's New Year's Eve celebrations; you can either leave them outside your door on December 31st, or eat lentil soup right before midnight (or right after midnight). You can also stick a handful in your pocket, bag or purse if you're not in the mood for a snack. Either way, they are heavily associated with abundance and good fortune.

PANAMA

Put rice in a pot. It will attract wealth for the New Year. Hang a bunch of oranges, rice, and wheat behind the front door. The benefits of doing this are 3-fold: prosperity, work and health.

PERU

One Peruvian tradition involves putting three potatoes under a chair. One is peeled, one is partially peeled, and the other has all its skin. At midnight, a person chooses a potato with their eyes closed and each yields a prediction for the future. If you get the one with skin, you'll be prosperous, the one that's partially peeled means you'll have a normal year, and the one with no skin means you're destined to have no money.

PHILIPPINES

Filipino people also eat traditional pancit noodles and delicacies like malagkit and biko.



NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS MONEY



MEXICO

Put some money in your shoes and you'll enjoy good fortune during the following year! Equally, it's said that just holding money in your hand (the bigger the bill, the better!) when the ball drops will bring prosperity in the New Year.

PANAMA

Have money in your hand at midnight. Don't forget to clasp some money in your hand while you are eating your grapes! Having money in your hands at midnight will help ensure you will have money throughout the coming year.

PHILIPPINES

Another popular practice especially among children is to fill up one's pockets with coins and shake the pockets at 12 midnight. This practice is believed to bring good fortune. Some also scatter coins around their house – at every nook and corner, inside drawers, on tables and anywhere they believe will bring them more luck and money.

In many countries it is believed that wearing green will attract money for the upcoming year.





NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS MUSIC, SINGING, NOISE MAKING



Most countries take to music, singing, and noisemaking to celebrate the New Year. Año Viejo is a popular song throughout Latin America.

In Argentina, the tango is common music heard through New Year's celebration. Dancing is also an important part of the festivities.

In the Philippines, the celebration includes plenty of noise with horns, music, yelling, blowing whistles, clanging pots and pans, and lighting firecrackers to keep away bad luck and evil spirits.

In Costa Rica, Fiesta Zapote, a six-day party, is a non-stop celebration filled with dancing, **music**, horse parade, Costa Rican bullfights (very different from bull fighting in Spain), drinking, traditional food (pupusas, churros, and chicharrones), games, rides, and more.

And, fireworks are another common way to bring in the New Year!





NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS POTATOES



One Peruvian tradition involves putting three potatoes under a chair.

One is peeled, one is partially peeled, and the other has all its skin.

At midnight, a person chooses a potato with their eyes closed and each yields a prediction for the future.

If you get the one with skin, you'll be prosperous,
the one that's partially peeled means you'll have a normal year,
the one with no skin means you're destined to have no money.

NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS ROUND ITEMS



You'll find round shapes all over the Philippines on New Year's Eve as representatives of coins to symbolize prosperity in the coming year. Many families display piles of fruit on their dining tables and some eat exactly 12 round fruits (grapes being the most common) at midnight. Many also wear polka dots for luck.





NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS SUITCASES



COLOMBIA

In hopes of a travel-filled New Year, carry empty suitcases around the block. While some will run around the block with an empty suitcase, it's equally acceptable to carry your suitcase in and out of your front door 12 times

PANAMA

Walk with a packed suitcase around the house. This will ensure a New Year full of travel.

CUBA

Go around the block (those who want to travel carry a suitcase).

URUGUAY

Go out with a suitcase, at midnight, and walk around the block. They say this will ensure at least one trip in the New Year.





NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS AÑO VIEJO ~ LYRICS



Yo no olvido al año viejo
Que me ha dejado cosas muy buenas
Ay, yo no olvido al año viejo
Porque me ha dejado cosas muy buenas

Me dejó una chiva
Una burra negra
Una yegua blanca
Y una buena suegra

Ay, me dejó una chivita
Y una burra muy negrita
Una yegua muy blanquita
Y una buena suegra

Me dejó una chiva
Una burra negra
Una yegua blanca
Y una buena suegra

Ay me dejó, me dejó, me dejó
Me dejó cosas buenas, cosas muy bonitas

Yo no olvido al año viejo
Porque me ha dejado cosas muy buenas
Ay yo no olvido, no no no al año viejo
Porque me ha dejado cosas muy buenas

Me dejó una chiva
Una burra negra
Una yegua blanca
Y una buena suegra

Ay me dejó una chiva
Una burra muy negrita
Una yegua muy blanquita
Y una buena suegra

Me dejó una chiva
Una burra negra
Una yegua blanca
Y una buena suegra (eh, eh, eh, eh, eh)

Ay qué bueno pa' bailar
Mira mulata, ay qué rico pa' cantar

Me dejó una chiva
Una burra negra
Una yegua blanca
Y una buena suegra

Pero, pero, pero, pero, pero, pero
Pido pa' que está esto pa' bailar
Dímelo, a cantar

Me dejó una chiva
Una burra negra
Una yegua blanca
Y una buena suegra

Ay no no no
Ay yo no olvido al año viejo que va
Yo no olvido al año viejo otra vez

Source: LyricFind
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El Año Viejo lyrics © Sony/ATV Music
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