



**CENTER FOR BLACK LEARNING
DECEMBER 2023**

Kingdom of Kush

1070 BC-350 AD

Modern-Day Sudan



The Richness of African American Heritage & Achievements

Coming In
December



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December**

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HAPPY KWANZAA
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Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration held in the United States and other nations of the African diaspora in the Americas to honor African heritage in African-American culture. It is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st each year.

Origins and Purpose:

Kwanzaa was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, a professor of Africana Studies, as a way to bring African Americans together as a community. The holiday was established during the Civil Rights Movement and seeks to foster a sense of Pan-African unity and pride.

The Name: "Kwanzaa" derives from the Swahili phrase "matunda ya kwanza," which means "first fruits." The extra "a" was added to the word to represent the seven children present at the first celebration, each representing one of the principles.

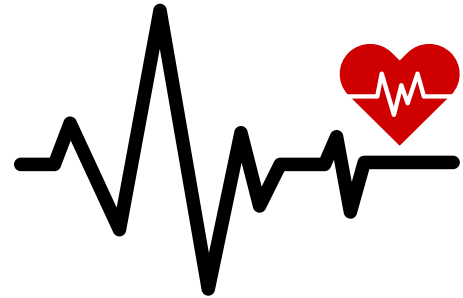
Celebration: Families celebrate Kwanzaa in their own ways, but celebrations often include songs and dances, African drums, storytelling, poetry reading, and a large traditional meal. On each of the seven nights, the family gathers and a child lights one of the candles on the Kinara, then one of the principles is discussed.

Kwanzaa is not meant to replace Christmas or any other religious holiday, but rather to complement them and provide a means of celebrating African-American cultural heritage.



African American Health

Heart disease remains a leading cause of death for all Americans, and African Americans are disproportionately affected by cardiovascular disease (CVD).



Reports have indicated that more than 40% of non-Hispanic African American men and women have high blood pressure. The mortality rates from heart disease are higher for African Americans than for whites. This is true across both genders, but African American men are especially at risk.

The need for targeted interventions to improve heart health in the African American community. Efforts such as community-based education, improving access to preventive healthcare services, and addressing broader social determinants of health are critical in reducing these disparities.

African Americans have a higher prevalence of heart disease compared to their white counterparts. The reasons for this are complex and multifactorial, including socioeconomic factors, access to healthcare, lifestyle choices, and genetic predispositions. African Americans develop high blood pressure more often and at an earlier age than whites and Hispanics, which significantly raises the risk of heart disease and stroke.

STAYING ACTIVE



African Americans, particularly those in urban environments, often report higher rates of sedentary behavior, which is associated with an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Data has shown that African American adults are less likely to meet physical activity guidelines compared to other ethnic groups.



Regular physical activity, particularly aerobic exercise and strength training, plays a critical role in controlling weight and improving insulin sensitivity, which is the body's ability to use insulin effectively to lower blood glucose levels. For individuals with or at risk for diabetes, this can mean better blood sugar control and a reduced need for medication.



Visiting local markets in Africa provides a glimpse into the region's agricultural diversity and food culture. The range of produce available reflects the varied climates and ecosystems across the continent. Listed below are some of the fruits and vegetables you can find at the local market throughout the continent of Africa:

Bananas, pineapples, mangoes, papayas, coconuts, oranges, lemons, limes, avocados, guavas, passion fruits, lychees, baobab fruit, marula, tamarind, spinach, kale, amaranth leaves, moringa, potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, eggplant, cucumbers, carrots, fresh corn, rice, millet, beans, and lentils.





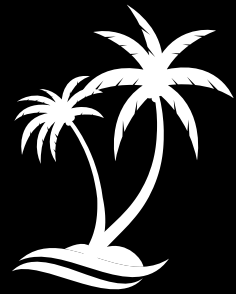
Research has shown that African American couples often face unique challenges that can affect their relationship dynamics, such as socioeconomic pressures, racial discrimination, and cultural expectations. Despite these challenges, many African American couples build strong, resilient relationships, often centered around family and community support.

There's also a growing body of literature that highlights the strengths of African American couples. This includes a strong emphasis on egalitarian roles, flexibility in gender roles, and a strong sense of resilience that helps to navigate external pressures.

It's important to note that there's a significant diversity within the African American community, and as such, experiences in relationships and commitments can vary widely. There are no one-size-fits-all descriptions, and each couple's journey is unique to their circumstances and perspectives.



Family Vacation



Christmas break is around the corner . If your considering a family vacation to a Caribbean destination, there are many destinations to pick from which are particularly welcoming and friendly towards African American travelers. Several islands often stand out for their hospitality, cultural richness, and inclusivity. Here are some of the most notable ones:

- Barbados
- Jamaica
- The Bahamas
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Dominican Republic
- St. Lucia

The Caribbean is a diverse region, and each island has its own unique culture and atmosphere. African American travelers, like all travelers, are likely to find warm welcomes and enriching experiences throughout the Caribbean.

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CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Merry Christmas

MENU

Main Course

Fried or roasted chicken, turkey, glazed ham, roast beef or oxtail. Seafood: fish, shrimp, crab, or seafood gumbo.

Side Dishes

Collard greens, macaroni and cheese, candied, yams, black-eyed peas, and cornbread.

Beverages

Homemade lemonade, sweet tea, or punch. Eggnog.

Dessert

Sweet potato pie, pecan pie, red velvet cake, banana pudding, and peach cobbler



Preparation of Sweet Potatoes: Boil the sweet potatoes whole in skin for 40 to 50 minutes, or until done. Run cold water over the sweet potatoes, and remove the skin. Break apart sweet potato in a bowl. Add butter, and mix well with mixer. **Making the Filling:** Stir in sugar, milk, eggs, nutmeg, cinnamon, and vanilla. Beat on medium speed until mixture is smooth. **Pour filling into an unbaked pie crust.** **Baking the Pie:** Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 55 to 60 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Pie will puff up like a soufflé, and then will sink down as it cools. **Cooling and Serving:** Allow to cool and serve. Optionally, it can be served with a dollop of whipped cream or a sprinkle of cinnamon.



Ingredients:

- 2-3 large sweet potatoes**
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup granulated sugar**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 2 large eggs**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1 unbaked pie crust (9 inches)**



Christmas 2023



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President Nelson Mandela



18 July 1918 – 5 December 2013

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid activist and politician who served as the first president of South Africa from 1994 to 1999.

Mandela was born into the Thembu royal family in Mvezo, South Africa. He studied law at the University of Fort Hare before working as a lawyer in Johannesburg.

He was arrested and imprisoned in 1962, and was sentenced to life imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow the state.

Mandela served 27 years in prison, and was released by President F.W. de Klerk in 1990. Mandela emphasized reconciliation between the country's racial groups and investigated past human rights abuses. Mandela became an elder statesman and focused on combating poverty and HIV/AIDS.



H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

2024

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Red: This color often symbolizes the blood shed in the struggle for freedom and independence. It can also represent the shared blood of the African people.

Black: Black generally stands for the people of the African continent. It's a celebration of black skin and identity, representing the people's resilience and strength.

Green: This color is usually a symbol of the lush, fertile land of Africa. It represents the natural wealth of the continent and can also signify growth and hope.

Yellow/Gold: When included, yellow or gold often represents the mineral wealth and natural resources of Africa, such as gold, diamonds, and other precious resources. It can also be a symbol of the sun and its life-giving energy.

Entrepreneurship



There is a growing trend of increased venture capital investment in African-American owned startups. More venture capital firms and investors are focusing on diversity and inclusion, leading to more funding opportunities for Black entrepreneurs. African American entrepreneurs engaging in e-commerce, leveraging platforms like Shopify and Etsy to reach wider markets.

There was a noticeable rise in African American entrepreneurs in the tech industry. This included not only tech startups but also African American professionals taking on more prominent roles in major tech companies.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a surge in the number of Black-owned businesses. Many African American entrepreneurs were starting businesses, driven by both necessity and opportunity.



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