

August 15<sup>th</sup>

## BULGARIA

### THE DAY OF VARNA

#### A WEEK OF THE SEA



The Day of Varna has been celebrated since 1993 when 15 August was officially recognised as being the town's day by Varna authorities.

The day is closely related to the religious Day of Assumption. On that day the festivities start with a large sermon held at the Cathedral of Varna, situated in the centre of the town and named after the Virgin. Then a huge parade starts from 'Sts Cyril and

Methodius' square with the wonder working icon of the Holy Virgin ahead of it.

The celebrations of the Day of Varna are accompanied by a great number of cultural events such as exhibitions, concerts, international festivals, many guests, and the culmination is the wonderful sunset fireworks.



August 15<sup>th</sup>

## GREECE

### Day of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary



This feast celebrates Mary's ascent to Heaven.

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## LITHUANIA

### HERBAL HOLIDAY (MEADOW GRASS CELEBRATION)/ FEAST OF ASSUMPTION



Herbal holiday (a photo taken from [www.efoto.lt](http://www.efoto.lt))

Herbal feast is one of the most beautiful summer festivals. It is a public holiday in Lithuania.

Herbal holiday is the oldest summer festival and devoted to Assumption.

In the old times farmers used to finish the harvest and prepare for autumn till the Herbal holiday.

Lots of people arrive to Herbal feast held in churches. People meet their relatives during this holiday. They also bring lots of bouquets of flowers and twigs which are consecrated during the Mass. Wreaths and bread made from the first harvests are also consecrated. Bouquets are put on the wall at home in order to protect a house. The most famous herbal feast is held in a village Pivasiunai and it attracts thousands of people every year.



August 15<sup>th</sup>

## SPAIN

### Assumption day

## ITALY

### Assumption day

**The feast day of the Assumption of Mary, also known as Assumption Day, celebrates the day that the Virgin Mary ascended into Heaven following her death, according to popular Christian belief. It is the principal feast day of the Virgin Mother.** It has been a belief of the Roman Catholic faith since the fourth century CE and is celebrated as the Feast of Our Lady of the Harvest.

This day was once a pagan holiday until it was decided to be Christianized and make it solely about the Virgin Mary. Before, it was first celebrated in honor of the goddess of the Isis of the Sea who was said to be born on this particular day according to myths that have been spreading.

Ferragosto (Assumption Day) is celebrated on August 15th in Italy. **Some countries celebrate the day at other times of the year. This day is also known as the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God (in the eastern countries), or the Feast of the Assumption.**

The Italians will hold festivals locally throughout the cities where their regional and low priced cuisine is available for sampling. There are many who use this time to go on their seasonal vacations to the seaside where there are some festivals ongoing there. many businesses and shops will be closed.



There are sometimes festivals with a medieval theme and people dressed in such costumes. Performances outdoor during that time is filled with music and dancing.

The Italians in Italy and all over the world go all out with their celebration with fireworks and bright processions in the streets. The main event on that day in Sicily, Rome is a bowing procession. The Virgin Mary's statute is carried through the streets dressed with flowers and a statute of Jesus waits for her at a different location. The procession heads back to the church where an important benediction takes place.

In the past, people would flood the Italian plazas and go for carriage rides through lakes that were temporarily constructed. They would carry rose scented water in bowls that they use to sprinkle on themselves.

Italians extend their celebration to superstitious believe of throwing coins through their windows on to the streets. The color blue is used to symbolize the truth about the Virgin Mary and as an indication that the color of the sky is blue, which is symbolic also of heaven.