



Celebrating August

**Read a Romance
Novel Month**

**What Will Be Your
Legacy Month**

Homemade Pie Day
August 1

Farmers Market Week
August 3–9

Coast Guard Day
August 4

Bowling Day
August 9

Vinyl Record Day
August 12

Mail Order Catalog Day
August 18

Poet's Day
August 21

Kiss and Make Up Day
August 25

More Herbs, Less Salt Day
August 29

Pawsitive Days of August



The hot and sultry days of summer, known as the “dog days,” stretch from July 3 to August 11. This period of time was named by the ancient Romans, who observed that the

Dog Star, Sirius, was most visible in the night sky during this steamy season.

It makes perfect sense, then, that August 3–9 is Assistance Dog Week, a week honoring canines that help humans with disabilities. Guide, hearing, and medical-alert dogs are specially trained to accompany their owners anywhere and everywhere. “Detection dogs” sniff out everything from bedbugs to forest truffles to cancer.

In addition, August 5 is Work Like a Dog Day, a day for all those dogs who put in a hard day of work. Search-and-rescue, police, therapy, herding, hunting, tracking, guard, and sled dogs are not merely pets but are integral partners in working endeavors. For example, no other dog can compete with the bloodhound’s sense of smell, which is so reliable that it’s admissible as evidence in a courtroom. Bloodhounds can track a smell more than 300 hours old and trails more than 130 miles (209 km) long.

The Doberman pinscher was bred by a German tax collector named Karl Friedrich Louis Dobermann as a protective companion to assist him on his daily rounds. Not only is the Doberman a tough guard dog but also it’s one of the smartest dog breeds in the world.

German shepherds are renowned Hollywood actors as well as police and therapy dogs. The breed’s courage may be rivaled only by their charisma. When Rin Tin Tin debuted on the silver screen, he received more than 10,000 pieces of fan mail per week.

While we’ve all heard the saying “work like a dog,” these industrious canines give the phrase new meaning.

Lefties Take the Lead



Did you hear the one about the inventor who developed a left-handed hammer? It didn’t sell. He forgot to invent left-handed nails! But if he had, they likely would have been sold by the Left Handers Club,

which celebrates International Left Handers Day on August 13.

Left Handers Day is about more than just advocating for left-handed products, like scissors, pens, and can openers. It’s about creating “Lefty Zones,” where right-handed people attempt tasks using their left hands. For one day, the proverbial shoe will be on the other foot, with righties struggling to use tools unfit for their right-handedness. It’s a day when all lefties will fight for their, um... rights.

When Tomatoes Fly



The story goes that during Buñol's traditional parade featuring Giants and Big-Heads figures (costumed characters prominent in Spanish festivals,

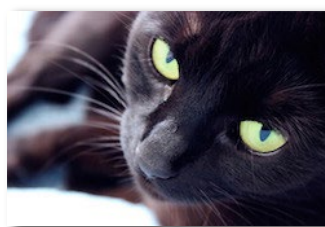
dating back to the 16th century), a playful scuffle broke out among some young people. When a participant lost his temper and started hitting things, nearby vegetable stalls became the battleground. Tomatoes flew, and a chaotic food fight erupted, which police had to stop. The following year, the youngsters deliberately brought their own tomatoes to recreate the fun, and La Tomatina was born.

Though the festival was banned in the early 1950s by the Spanish government for lacking religious significance, the locals protested passionately. In 1957, they held a "tomato funeral," carrying a coffin with a giant tomato through the streets accompanied by funeral music. This clever demonstration convinced the authorities to allow the festival again, and it officially became part of Buñol's annual festivities.

Today, La Tomatina, the last Wednesday in August, attracts over 20,000 participants from around the world. The event kicks off with a slippery pole climb called *palo jabón*, followed by an hour-long tomato battle where trucks unload around 150,000 overripe tomatoes onto the streets. Participants gleefully throw the squishy fruits at each other, turning the town square into a red, messy playground.

More than just a food fight, La Tomatina celebrates community spirit, spontaneity, and fun. It has grown from a local prank into an internationally famous festival, recognized as a Fiesta of International Tourist Interest. Whether you're young or young at heart, La Tomatina is a joyful reminder that sometimes it's good to let loose and enjoy a little harmless mess.

Black Cats in a New Light



Does a shiver run down your spine when a black cat crosses your path? Do you instantly think of witches on broomsticks when

you see one? Black Cat Appreciation Day on August 17 is your chance to revise your superstitious notions. For example, in Scotland, Great Britain, and Japan, black cats are considered good luck and signs of prosperity. Some even believe that a woman who owns a black cat will have many suitors. Long ago, sailors would choose a black cat as their ship's cat to protect their ship and bring good fortune. Shelters offer another reason to appreciate (and adopt) black cats: they go well with any outfit.

The Timeless Tale of Qixi



On the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, which this year is August 29 on the Western calendar, the Chinese celebrate Qixi —also known as the Double Seventh Festival. It's a holiday born of the myth

of two lovers: Zhinü the weaver maid (a fairy runaway from heaven) and Niulang the cowherd.

Niulang was a kindhearted cowherd who, after losing his parents, lived with his cruel brother and sister-in-law. His sister-in-law demanded that Niulang bring nine cows to pasture and return home with 10. Forlorn, Niulang set off on his impossible task and met an old man who assured him that he could find a sick ox beyond the mountain. After searching for weeks, Niulang finally found the ox, which he restored to health. Imagine Niulang's surprise when he discovered that the ox was actually a supernatural being from heaven. The ox was so thankful that it introduced Niulang to a beautiful fairy. The fairy's name was Zhinü.



Zhinü was the seventh daughter of a goddess. Bored with heaven, she descended to Earth, where she married Niulang. The two were very happy, but when Zhinü's mother discovered that her daughter had married a mortal, she became enraged and returned Zhinü to heaven. With the help of his ox, Niulang chased after his wife. When the goddess

found out, however, she created a huge river between the lovers, separating them forever. Niulang and Zhinü's heartbreak so moved the hearts of all the magpies of the world that the birds created a bridge over the river. On the seventh day of the seventh month, the mother goddess allows Niulang and Zhinü to meet. For this reason, Qixi is considered China's Valentine's Day.

Heartthrob of the Silent Screen



He was born Rodolfo Alfonso Raffaello Pierre Filibert Guglielmi di Valentina d'Antonguolla, but his devoted fans knew him as Rudolph Valentino. Valentino was one

of Hollywood's earliest stars of the silent era. He was tall, dark, and handsome—a perfect on-screen hunk. After dancing a tango in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, he became a national sensation. His sudden death on August 23, 1926, threw his legions of fans into hysteria. Some even attempted suicide. A reported 100,000 mourners lined up outside the church where services were held. By train, Valentino's body made its last trip to Hollywood for a final silent goodbye.