

Happy Kwanzaa! Celebration of African Origins [B1]

Questa festività di spirito rivendicativo è nata negli anni sessanta del secolo scorso negli Stati Uniti, con la finalità di unire la comunità afroamericana e riconnetterla alle sue radici. Oggigiorno è festeggiata da milioni di persone in tutto il mondo.

Kwanzaa is a [week-long](#) celebration of African-American culture, which takes place from 26 December to 1 January. Kwanzaa was conceived to reconnect African-Americans to their African [roots](#). Years of [enslavement](#) had left them without knowledge of their past. New rituals based on African traditions created a sense of [belonging](#) and community. The holiday [fostered](#) unity, [pride](#) and hope for the future.

PRINCIPLES

The holiday was created in 1966 by Maulana Karenga, a professor and [chairman](#) of Black Studies at California State University. He was persuaded by his experience of the Watts [riots](#) in Los Angeles in 1965, which he believed [highlighted](#) racial division in the United States. Karenga's [aim](#) was [to outline](#) "a necessary minimum set of principles by which Black people must live in order to begin to rescue and reconstruct our history and lives."

SEVEN DAYS

The name Kwanzaa comes from the Swahili phrase "mutanda ya kwanza", which means 'first fruits'. An extra 'a' was added to make it a seven-letter word, as the number seven is significant in Kwanzaa philosophy. Kwanzaa has seven days, seven principles and seven symbols. On each of the days, families get together [to light](#) a candle and discuss the principle of the day. The symbols are used to create a Kwanzaa set used in the daily rituals. The set [comprises](#) fruits, vegetables and [nuts](#); a [straw mat](#); [ears of corn](#)

representing fertility; seven [candles](#) in the African colours of red, green and black; a [candleholder](#); a communal cup; and gifts.

BEING HUMAN

Kwanzaa is now celebrated by millions of people around the world. People from other ethnicities are also [encouraged](#) to take part. In the words of the founder: "Kwanzaa brings a cultural message which speaks to the best of what it means to be African and human in the [fullest](#) sense."

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF KWANZAA

Umoja (unity) [To strive](#) for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race. **Ujima (collective work and responsibility)** To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together. **Kujichagulia (self-determination)** To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves. **Ujimaa (cooperative economics)** To build and maintain our own stores and other businesses and to [profit](#) from them together. **Nia (purpose)** To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order [to restore](#) our people to their greatness. **Kuumba (creativity)** To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we [inherited](#) it. **Imani (faith)** To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the [righteousness](#) and victory of our [struggle](#).

Glossary

- **pride** = orgoglio
- **highlighted** = evidenziare
- **comprises** = includere
- **nuts** = frutti secchi, noccioline
- **chairman** = presidente
- **encouraged** = incoraggiare
- **struggle** = lotta
- **belonging** = appartenenza
- **to light** = accendere
- **straw mat** = stuoia di paglia
- **ears of corn** = pannocchie di mais
- **to outline** = delineare, tracciare
- **profit** = profitto
- **inherited** = ereditare
- **righteousness** = virtù, onestà
- **week-long** = che dura una settimana
- **roots** = radici
- **fostered** = incoraggiare, promuovere
- **To strive** = impegnarsi
- **purpose** = scopo
- **riots** = rivolte
- **aim** = obiettivo
- **candleholder** = porta candele
- **fullest** = più totale
- **to restore** = restituire
- **enslavement** = schiavitù
- **candles** = candele