

New Year in Srilanka

New Year in Srilanka or the Sinhala New Year is also called Aluth Avurudhu. This festival usually falls on April 13th and 14th every year and celebrated by Srilankans. People begin the New Year by taking a ceremonial bath on the last day of the old Year. They apply Nanu (a herbal mixture) on their head and body before bathing. They believe this herbal will purify their body and soul. The starting time of the New Year is determined by the astrologers and this time is called **Auspicious** time. Women in the villages play Rabana which is a type of a drum to announce the time to start performing New Year rituals. During this time people go to the temple and perform religious rites to receive the blessings of the priest. Srilankans decorate their house with lights on the New Year's Day because it is inauspicious to decorate the house before New Year.



The main New Year day begin with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp. Then they wear new cloths and offer betel leaves to their parents and elders. This is considered as token of love and thankfulness.



Food is the essential part of the New Year. Sinhaleese food is very rich in nutrition. They prepare sweet meats like mung kavum, konda kavum and uduvel. There is also an old tradition of preparing Kiri Bhaat (milk rice (with rice from the new crop. It is prepared by the father or male head of the family. All the family members sit together and enjoy the feast on the New Year's Day.



On the festival day people play lots of games. A famous game called Guddu(LIKE BASEBALL)is played by both children and adults. Another game is also played with coconuts where people try to hit others coconuts. Ladies play on swings. They visit their relatives and friends' house to gift them sweets and other auspicious gifts.



The New Year festival comes to an end with the anointing of the oil ceremony. In this auspicious hour, an elder anoints the young with herbal oil. Sinhalese also set an auspicious time to go to work.

