



## **RAMADAN IN AMERICA**

### **SELECTED WEBSITES AND ONLINE PUBLICATIONS**

"For so many Muslims around the world, Ramadan is also a time of deep reflection and sacrifice. As in other faiths, fasting is used to increase spirituality, discipline, and consciousness of God's mercy"  
- *President Obama, August 1, 2011*

As with Muslim communities around the world, Ramadan for American Muslims is marked by fasting and charity. But while fasting is observed one month of the year, many Muslim Americans make charity and giving back to their communities year-round activities. From disaster relief to promoting peace, Muslims are making a difference in communities. In 2011, Ramadan begins on or about August 1 and will end with Eid al-Fitr on or about August 30. Ramadan and Eid dates differ among countries. *IIP, 2011.*

**Statement by President Barack Obama on the Occasion of Ramadan** (August 1, 2011) - "For so many Muslims around the world, Ramadan is also a time of deep reflection and sacrifice. As in other faiths, fasting is used to increase spirituality, discipline, and consciousness of God's mercy."

**Statement by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Beginning of Ramadan** (August 1, 2011) - "Ramadan is a time for self-reflection, sharing and renewal. American Muslims make valuable contributions to our country every day and millions around the world will commemorate this month with acts of service and volunteerism to their communities."

**Global Social Change and New Engagement in the Muslim World: Where We Go from Here and the Role of Youth and Social Media** Briefing by Farah Anwar Pandith, Special Representative, U.S. Dept of State, at the Foreign Press Center, U.S. Dept of State, in New York, August 11, 2011.

**Who Are American Muslims?** - According to a Pew Research Center survey, two-thirds of American Muslims were born outside America in at least 68 countries. Slightly more than one-third of Muslims in America are native-born.

**Thomas Jefferson's Iftar** - In 1805, Thomas Jefferson hosted what some consider the first Iftar at the White House. The first Muslim ambassador to the United States, from Tunisia, was hosted by President Jefferson, who arranged a sunset dinner for his guest because it was Ramadan — making it the first known iftar at the White House, more than 200 years ago.

**U.S. Muslims Gather for Iftar at Halal Restaurant** - When U.S. Muslims observe Ramadan, they often visit halal restaurants — which serve food prepared according to Islamic dietary laws — for iftar, the post-sundown meal that breaks Ramadan's daily fast. Ali Baba, a halal restaurant near San Diego, serves iftar underneath tents that evoke old Baghdad. **See also**

**Fitness and Fasting in Ramadan** - During Ramadan, Mubarakah Ibrahim adjusts her schedule to carry on her work as a fitness trainer while observing the daily fast required during the holy month.

## IN BRIEF: MOSQUES OF AMERICA



**Mosques of America: Washington** - Situated along Embassy Row in the U.S. capital city, the Islamic Center, with its 49-meter minaret, sits on the same street as Christian churches, a Jewish synagogue and a Buddhist temple. It was conceived in the mid-1940s by an Egyptian diplomat and a Palestinian immigrant businessman who set up a foundation to build a mosque and community center.

**Mosques of America: Ross, North Dakota** - The North Dakota mosque was built to handle rugged prairie winters. It was constructed as a sub-basement to shelter it from wind and cold. It was small — about 111 square meters — and contained a coal stove as well as benches and a rug.

**Mosques of America: Harper Woods, Michigan** - The Albanian Islamic Center in Harper Woods, Michigan, was founded by Albanian Muslims in the Detroit area. Today, it still serves the Albanian-American community as well as newer Muslim immigrants from the Balkan countries, plus Iranians, Palestinians, Maltese, Arabs and Indians.

**Mosques of America: New Orleans** - The largest mosque in the New Orleans area, Masjid Abu-Bakr Al Siddiq, was spared by Hurricane Katrina and became a rallying place for Muslims whose homes had been damaged. Imam Omar Suleiman sometimes wears robes in black and gold, the color of the New Orleans Saints football team.

**Mosques of America: Abiquiu, New Mexico** - Tucked away in a desert region of northern New Mexico, Dar al Islam is a nonprofit group that offers educational opportunities for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Its mosque and madrassa building is a North Africa-style adobe (mud brick) structure designed by Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy.

## VIDEO

**Muslim-American Profiles: Mihyar 1** (01:05) and **Muslim-American Profiles: Mihyar 2** (01:34) - This video was produced by the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs in July 2011. It features Sudanese-American Mihyar Osman Alnifaity.



## FEATURES

### **Ramadan in America: Faith and Community**

As with Muslim communities around the world, Ramadan for American Muslims is marked by fasting and charity. But while fasting is observed one month of the year, many Muslim Americans make charity and giving back to their communities year-round activities. (source: America.gov)

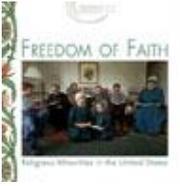
### **A Multicultural Ramadan**

American Muslims trace their ancestry to more than 80 countries. America.gov explores the richness of these traditions through the lens of Ramadan.

### **Birthplace of America's Religious Freedom**

The Flushing Remonstrance, signed in 1657 in what is now the New York neighborhood of Flushing, Queens, is the earliest known document in America to argue for religious freedom. The interactive map on the left presents samples of the many houses of worship in Flushing today.

## PHOTO GALLERIES & VIDEOS



**Mosques in America: A Blending of Cultures** - There are 1,900 mosques in the United States, representing many different cultures and traditions.



**Innovations from Islam's Golden Age** - The traveling exhibition 1001 Inventions: Discover the Golden Age of Muslim Civilization, at the California Science Center through 2011, reveals how science and technology flourished in the Islamic world from the seventh to the 17th century.

**Photo Gallery: Did You Know?** - As this photo gallery shows, today's Muslim American population is an extraordinary mosaic of ethnic, linguistic, ideological, social, economic, and religious groups.

**Muslims in America: 1957–2007** is adapted from the U.S. Department of State's publication Being Muslim in America. It documents important historic milestones for Muslims in America since 1957, beginning with the dedication of the Islamic Center of Washington, which was attended by President Dwight D. Eisenhower and first lady Mamie Eisenhower.

**Muslims in America: 1619–1934** This timeline is adapted from the U.S. Department of State's publication Being Muslim in America. It documents important historic milestones for Muslims in America, beginning in the 17th century and continuing through 1934, when the first building built specifically to be a mosque was established.

**Observing Ramadan Worldwide** - Many of the world's 1.5 billion Muslims will observe the month of Ramadan in different ways, blending their own cultural customs with Islamic traditions of prayer and fasting. In the United States alone, Muslims come from more than 80 countries and represent a mosaic of ethnic, linguistic, ideological, social and economic groups.

## E-PUBLICATIONS

**Being Muslim in America** - The young women pictured on our cover are both Muslim. They live near Detroit, Michigan, in a community with many Arab-American residents. Each expresses her faith in her own way, with a combination of traditional and modern dress. Here, they compete fiercely on the basketball court in a sport that blends individual skills and team effort. They - along with the other men, women, and children in this publication - demonstrate every day what it is like to be Muslim in America. *36 pages.*

**e-Journal USA: Freedom of Faith** - The principle of religious freedom is a cherished right in the United States, one that has historical roots older than the formation of the nation itself. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the United States pulses with a unique cultural chemistry brought on by a wave of immigration which has brought followers of more diverse faiths to many communities. This edition of eJournal USA examines how the nation adjusts to these demographic changes to remain true to the principles of freedom of faith. *36 pages.*

## USEFUL U.S. GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

- **EID in America** - More than 400,000 ethnically-diverse Muslims celebrate Eid and the holy month of Ramadan in Washington, D.C.
- **President Obama - on the Occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr** *America.gov*, September 9, 2010.
- **President Obama's Iftar Remarks** *America.gov*, August 13, 2010.
- **Secretary Clinton's Video Message on Eid ul-Fitr** *America.gov*, September 10, 2010.

- [Secretary Clinton's Iftar Remarks](#) *America.gov*, September 7, 2010.
- [Mutual Respect Crucial For Religious Freedom](#) *IIP Digital*, January 14, 2011.
- [Interfaith Dialogue Strengthens Faith and Tolerance](#) *America.gov*, November 16, 2010.
- [An Iftar for Everyone](#) *IIP Digital*, August 23, 2010.
- [Off to Find America, Mosque by Mosque](#) *IIP Digital*, August 20, 2010.
- [Muslim American Spends Week on Street for Ramadan](#) *IIP Digital*, August 17, 2010.
- [Muslim-American Charitable Efforts Extend Beyond Ramadan](#) *IIP Digital*, Aug., 2011.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- 65% of the Muslim American population are first-generation immigrants, and 61% of the foreign-born arrived in the 1990s or later.
- American Muslim Population is estimated 2,595,000 in 2010.
- The top countries of origin for Muslim immigrants to the U.S. in 2009 were Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- Muslim Americans spend about \$170 billion on consumer products annually, according to a 2007 figure by advertising agency JWT, and this figure is expected to grow.
- Iftar dinners at the White House during Ramadan have become regular occasions since the mid-1990s.
- An Imam can serve in several different roles in the United States. In most African-American mosques, the Imam operates in both spiritual and administrative capacities. In predominantly immigrant mosques, however, the Imam is more likely to be a spiritual leader only.
- The largest mosque in the U.S., opened by the Islamic Center of America in 2005, is in Dearborn, Michigan.
- Keith Ellison (Democrat-Minnesota), is the first Muslim elected to Congress and the first African American to represent Minnesota.
- Miss America 2010, Rima Fakih, is a Muslim American woman of Lebanese descent.
- Zaytuna College, the America's First Muslim college was open in Berkeley, California, 2010.
- There are 1,900 mosques in the U.S., representing many different cultures and traditions.
- President Dwight Eisenhower spoke at the Islamic Center of Washington dedication in 1957, affirming America's principle of religious freedom. At the time, the center was the largest Muslim place of worship in the Western Hemi-sphere. The Center seeks to promote a better understanding of Islam in the U.S. It was conceived in the mid-1940s by an Egyptian diplomat and a Palestinian immigrant businessman who set up a foundation to build a mosque. Many Islamic nations donated funds, decorations and craftsmen to the project, and support also came from American Muslims. Today more than 3,000 worshippers attend Friday prayers. The Center also offers services such as marriage ceremonies, burials, counseling, instruction in Islam and Arabic and public tours. *See also - Mosques*

**All Internet links were active at August 24, 2011**

**No recommendation is made in respect of non-U.S. Government web sites listed  
We welcome your feedback! Email us: [wellington.arc@state.gov](mailto:wellington.arc@state.gov) If you do not have  
Adobe Acrobat Reader, [download it here](#)**

