



POSTAL NEWS

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U.S. Postal Service Meets Your Stamp Needs for the Holidays and Special Occasions

WASHINGTON — Whether you're celebrating the holidays or another special occasion, the U.S. Postal Service has new Forever stamps for you along with favorites from recent years.

"Since 1893, we have issued stamps celebrating the cultures of people who have come together from around the world," said Postal Service Director of Stamp Services Mary-Anne Penner. "We hope America will take advantage of our diverse selection of stamps as they extend their best wishes to friends, family and loved ones."

Penner also noted that customers can save a trip to the Post Office by purchasing the stamps online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724).

Here's a list of holiday and special occasion stamps available this year: Christmas Magi, Colorful Celebrations, Diwali, Eid Greetings, Florentine Madonna and Child, Hanukkah, Holiday Windows, Holy Family, Kwanzaa, Nativity and Neon Celebrate!.



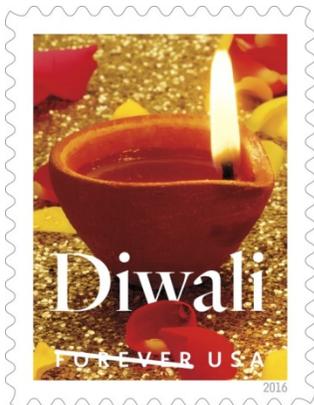
[Christmas Magi](#)

The stamp art illustrates the traditional tale of the Magi, who came bearing gifts for Jesus. The three regal figures sit atop a trio of bedecked and harnessed camels, the animals almost at the summit of a small hill. Guiding them is a large, dazzling star shining in the sky. The colors in the sky range from a rose near the horizon, darkening to a rich purple at the top, suggesting that the travelers are moving through the desert at dawn.



[Colorful Celebrations](#)

Celebrate any festive occasion with Colorful Celebrations. The booklet of 20 stamps includes 10 vivid, digitally created designs featuring eye-popping patterns that showcase geometric shapes, flowers and birds. The traditional Mexican art form papel picado inspired Atzin Gaytan’s digitally made stamp art. The Spanish term translates to “pierced paper.” Crafted with sharp tools and layers of tissue paper, papel picado designs often include birds, flowers and religious iconography.



[Diwali](#)

The stamp design is a photograph featuring a traditional diya oil lamp beautifully lit, sitting on a sparkling gold background. Diya lamps are usually made from clay with cotton wicks dipped in a clarified butter known as “ghee” or in vegetable oils.

Also known as Deepavali, Diwali celebrates the triumph of good over evil. Spanning five days each autumn, Diwali is considered by some to be the start of the new year. On the Hindu calendar, Diwali falls

on the eve of, or on, the new moon that occurs between mid-October and mid-November. In 2016, the main day of the festival was celebrated Oct. 29 for South Indians and Oct. 30 for North Indians.



[Eid Greetings](#)

Featuring a design that evokes centuries of tradition, this stamp commemorates the two most important festivals — or eids — in the Islamic calendar: Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The gold-colored calligraphy on this stamp was created by world-renowned calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya of Arlington, VA. The script reads Eidukum mubarak, “May your Eid be bountiful (or blessed).”



[Florentine Madonna and Child](#)

This Christmas stamp features a detail of Madonna and Child, a 15th-century tempera-on-panel painting at the National Gallery of Art Widener Collection, in Washington, DC. The painting is dated to circa 1470, and its anonymous artist is known only as “a Follower of Fra Filippo Lippi and Pesellino.” Art historians have speculated that the painter may have had preparatory drawings or close copies of the works of the masters he imitated, and that a relationship may have existed between those artists’ workshops and the workshop of this anonymous painter.



[Hanukkah](#)

The 2016 Hanukkah stamp features a warm, elegant illustration of a holiday menorah in the window of a home. Traditionally, the menorah is displayed in a doorway or window to proclaim the miracle of Hanukkah. Hanukkah spans eight nights and days of remembrance and ritual. The eight nights and days of Hanukkah begin on the 25th of Kislev in the Hebrew calendar, a date that falls in late Nov. or Dec.. In 2016, Hanukkah begins at sundown on Dec. 24.



[Holiday Windows](#)

With four warm, inviting illustrations of winter scenes featuring windows, the Holiday Windows Forever stamps rejoice in the simple pleasures of the season.

Nothing compares to the tranquil calm of a winter evening after the snow has fallen and the sun has set. Whether you enjoy viewing the peaceful scene from a cozy spot indoors or feeling the chill on your face outside, these brief moments remind us of what makes this time of year so special. Recalling nostalgic winter nights from childhood, these stamps highlight the role windows play during the holidays, letting us delight in the snow when we're inside while also sharing our warmth and merriment with the outside world. Conveying the joyful and reverent spirit of the holiday season, these elegant stamps showcase various ways we observe traditions and spread cheer.



[Holy Family](#)

The Holy Family stamp celebrates Christmas with a scene from the Nativity story that reminds us of the joys of the season: family, togetherness and the birth of the baby Jesus. The stamp continues the Postal Service's tradition of issuing beautiful and timeless Christmas stamps and will be a treasured addition to cards and letters sent during this season of goodwill and sharing. The Holy Family stamps may be in limited supply at local Post Offices due to high demand. The easiest way to purchase the stamps is at usps.com/shop at this [link](#).



[Kwanzaa](#)

This bright and colorful new stamp design celebrates the annual non-religious holiday of Kwanzaa, which takes place over seven days from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1. Dec. 26, 2016, marks the 50th anniversary of this widely celebrated holiday. Kwanzaa derives its name from the phrase “first fruits” in Swahili. The holiday honors the African-American family, community and culture.



[Nativity](#)

The Postal Service celebrates Christmas with a new stamp featuring a traditional Nativity scene. The stamp art depicts a peaceful yet powerful image of the Holy Family silhouetted against a dawn sky. The baby Jesus lies in a straw-filled manger in the center of the picture with Mary kneeling to the right and Joseph standing to the left, holding a lantern. A bright star shines over the scene. The Gospel of Luke relates how Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem to register for the census decreed by the Roman emperor. The Nativity stamps may be in limited supply at local Post Offices due to high demand. The easiest way to purchase the stamps is at usps.com/shop at this [link](#).



[Neon Celebrate!](#)

Good times call for good wishes. Bringing an extra wish for happiness to anyone celebrating a special time, this stamp features a brilliantly colored design crafted out of neon and glass that adds a spark to greeting cards, invitations and gift-bearing envelopes and packages.

Delivering for the Holidays

The Postal Service expects to deliver more than 16 billion cards, letters, flats and packages during the 2016 holiday season. As the largest e-commerce deliverer, the Postal Service is projecting that approximately 750 million packages will be delivered this holiday season — a 12-percent increase in volume when contrasted to last year.

In time for the holidays, the Postal Service will offer real-time delivery notifications — meaning customers who sign up for alerts at myusps.com will receive notification within a few minutes of the delivery scan for select packages.

For additional news and updates throughout the season, please visit the [USPS Holiday Newsroom](#).

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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