
Does your local "do" the 4th of July?

Posted by Rogin the Armchair Fan - 04-07-2008 08:10

Mine doesn't. Odd, I think. Is it just 'cos we lost? You can't move for cork hats and 3 for 2 Foster's offers on Australia Day, and the less said about St. Patrick's Day the better.

You'd think the opportunity to flog a bumper load of hot dogs, and get rid of that barrel of Coors that the brewery left in January and no-one's touched since, would be too much for most landlords.

Re:Does your local "do" the 4th of July?

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 09:14

The Australia Day thing is just a beer promotion, though, isn't it? And to large extent that's true of St Paud's as well: I had the devil's (excuse me, the "divil's") own job getting any Irish food this March (look, I just fancied it, OK?) So it's all down to what the likes of Anheuser-Busch think will play in the market, and perhaps, yeah, they do think bigging up a military defeat might strike the wrong tone.

I'd happily celebrate the "Spirit of '76" myself, for all my misgivings about America the World Power. They need better bread buns for those hot dogs, though.

Re:Does your local "do" the 4th of July?

Posted by evilC - 04-07-2008 09:30

Does the States do St George's Day in a big way, though - with ales and Yorkshire pudding and fish'n'chips and and and...? If not then why should we do 4th of July?

Of course, this is a rhetorical question, really. I'm happy for us to partake in the traditions of other countries. I feel it helps keep us more 'tolerant' and 'aware'. I also (put simply) think we owe it to the countries we invaded and pillaged. It's the least we can do, in our superficial way.

Changing the subject slightly - I've always said that if I won the lottery (the only way I'm ever going to get a significant amount of money) I would like to spend a year (and most likely two) just doing a world tour, taking in all the major festivals and events - religious and otherwise. I'd like to see Diwali and the Kumbh Mela in India, the masque in Venice, the carnival in Rio and ooh, loads I don't even yet know about! Maybe this makes me a horrible cultural tourist, but what's the point in professing that you know about something when all you've ever done is read about it in your favourite armchair? I've never travelled, so I feel like I've got alot of cultural catching-up to do.

Re:Does your local

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 04-07-2008 09:47

Wyatt Earp wrote:

I had the devil's (excuse me, the "divil's") own job getting any Irish food this March (look, I just fancied it, OK?) Actually the otherwise ordinary O'Neill's are ok in this area.

Wyatt Earp wrote:

I'd happily celebrate the "Spirit of '76" myself

Ah, is this the place to say that it's 32 years ago today since I saw The Ramones and The Flamin' Groovies at the Roundhouse? If so, consider it said...

Re:Does your local "do" the 4th of July?

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 11:51

We don't celebrate the 4th of July because we fucking hate the fucking Americans.

I mean, OK, we (the collective 'we' of the British public, which includes millions of people whose taste appals me) lap up the Americans' cultural waste produce in a depressingly supine manner - and don't get me wrong, there's some good stuff too, Tamla Motown, Woody Allen, woohoo for that - but we also, at the end of the day, think they're a bunch of crass, domineering, loudmouthed cunts and the idea of celebrating their national day would rub most Brits up the wrong way (and I'm not just talking about clever Brits who've been to university and that, I'm talking about Brits who listen to happy hardcore and wear sportswear when they aren't doing sport). There'd be vandalism, if not full-scale riots. That's my take on it, anyway.

Happy Independence Day to all WSC's American readers, by the way!

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Nico Rijnders - 04-07-2008 11:55

Prodigal Son to thread. Or not.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by evilC - 04-07-2008 12:01

Y'see, although I see SR's point, I simply wish we'd celebrate with the same vigour the 'special days' associated with the Indian subcontinent, parts of Africa and the Caribbean.

(Okay - Notting Hill Carnival -I'll give you that. But that's just representing one segment of our diverse population, when there's so many more. And the carnival is going a bit commercial too.)

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 12:03

evilC wrote:

Y'see, although I see SR's point, I simply wish we'd celebrate with the same vigour the 'special days' associated with the Indian subcontinent, parts of Africa and the Caribbean.

(Okay - Notting Hill Carnival -I'll give you that. But that's just representing one segment of our diverse population, when there's so many more. And the carnival is going a bit commercial too.)

Yeah, but the Americans aren't a "segment of our diverse population", are they. They're us... gone wrong.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Rogin the Armchair Fan - 04-07-2008 12:16

"...whence came all these people? They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes... What, then, is the American, this new man? He is neither a European nor the descendant of a European; hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations.

So, increased European integration then ...?

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Re:Does your local

Posted by SamLKelly - 04-07-2008 12:23

evilC wrote:

Y'see, although I see SR's point, I simply wish we'd celebrate with the same vigour the 'special days' associated with the Indian subcontinent

Try getting down Oxford Road in Manchester on Eid, and you might change that opinion.

A pub not far from the office I'm sitting in has had a board outside for the last three weeks letting us know about the chance to 'celebrate American Independence Day!'. Why the bleeding hell anyone in England would want to do such a thing, they don't explain, and it's only appeared this year, so clearly they don't sell enough beer at the start of July...

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Re:Does your local

Posted by The Chubby Cyclist - 04-07-2008 12:27

SamLKelly wrote:

Why the bleeding hell anyone in England would want to do such a thing...

Well, remember that it is also independence for us, and it means that we don't have the kinds of people who'd vote for George Walker Bush voting in our elections.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Disco Sea Shanties - 04-07-2008 12:27

This is something Wyatt might know, where would you go in London to actually get some decent American beer if you wanted to celebrate today?

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Lyra - 04-07-2008 12:30

The best thing about today is that the LA office is shut and I don't have to respond to 2000 queries at the time of day when I want to be going to the pub god damn it. See also: "Thanksgiving". Which must be worse surely?

Fact of the day: Both Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died on the same day - 4th July 1826!

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Mighty Mudhsuden - 04-07-2008 12:30

Any Sainsbury's, I would imagine.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Mighty Mudhsuden - 04-07-2008 12:31

Spearmint Rhino wrote:

evilC wrote:

Y'see, although I see SR's point, I simply wish we'd celebrate with the same vigour the 'special days' associated with the Indian subcontinent, parts of Africa and the Caribbean.

(Okay - Notting Hill Carnival -I'll give you that. But that's just representing one segment of our diverse population, when

there's so many more. And the carnival is going a bit commercial too.)

Yeah, but the Americans aren't a "segment of our diverse population", are they. They're us... gone wrong.

See also: Australians, surely?

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Lyra - 04-07-2008 12:31

we don't have the kinds of people who'd vote for George Walker Bush voting in our elections.

No, we just have to live with the sort that vote for Boris Johnson "because he's funny on Have I got News For You".

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Re:Does your local

Posted by SamLKelly - 04-07-2008 12:32

The Chubby Cyclist wrote:

SamLKelly wrote:

Why the bleeding hell anyone in England would want to do such a thing...

Well, remember that it is also independence for us, and it means that we don't have the kinds of people who'd vote for George Walker Bush voting in our elections.

I can certainly see how that would be a good thing, of course, but citizens of Commonwealth countries don't vote in our elections either.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 12:33

Mighty Mudhsuden wrote:

Spearmint Rhino wrote:

evilC wrote:

Y'see, although I see SR's point, I simply wish we'd celebrate with the same vigour the 'special days' associated with the Indian subcontinent, parts of Africa and the Caribbean.

(Okay - Notting Hill Carnival -I'll give you that. But that's just representing one segment of our diverse population, when there's so many more. And the carnival is going a bit commercial too.)

Yeah, but the Americans aren't a "segment of our diverse population", are they. They're us... gone wrong.

See also: Australians, surely?

I think British people feel a greater warmth towards Australians than towards Americans, I dunno.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Mighty Mudhsuden - 04-07-2008 12:34

Yeah, definitely.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by evilC - 04-07-2008 13:24

Generally true ...except when they start getting smug about sport!

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 13:57

The Chubby Cyclist wrote:

Well, remember that it is also independence for us, and it means that we don't have the kinds of people who'd vote for George Walker Bush voting in our elections.

OFFS.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 14:02

Where to get good American beer? That's actually a bit tricky, because Oddbins have slimmed down their once pretty good range, and I don't know what the supermarkets are doing at the moment. There's always the beer stall at Borough Market--or there's a great offy called Nelson Wines between South Wimbledon and Colliers Wood.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Hofzinsler - 04-07-2008 14:33

You'd be better off just celebrating the Velvet Revolution a few months early.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by TonTon - 04-07-2008 14:37

That is a great offy, I can add my recommendation to Wyatt's.

I was discussing this with a mate, and he said:

We can celebrate their independence while not condoning what they've become. Like Zimbabwe.

Which I liked.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Inca - 04-07-2008 14:55

I'd just like to assure SR by saying that Americans don't think of the Welsh at all when we think of British people. Nor Scotland, and whatever part of Ireland it is that doesn't want to blow up British things. We just think of the English. So when he says "us" gone wrong, don't worry, you can fully wash your hands of us.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 15:00

I wish it was that easy. I'm a quarter American, and I have many relatives over there.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by dgih - 04-07-2008 15:01

Another bright spot in the gleaming new OTF, this.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 15:04

Up your arse.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by dgih - 04-07-2008 15:19

My timing could have been better, SR. It was more the Zimbabwe 'comparison' and election based commentary (given the UK's obvious flawless voting patterns).

But, whatever.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Inca - 04-07-2008 15:23

No, I think your timing was spot on, dgih.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 15:41

Yeah, well I think you both smell of old flannels.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 15:56

If "we" think like that about Americans, or any nation's people in general, then "we're" a bunch of bigoted arses. And no doubt a lot of "us" are just that.

But I think most of "us" aren't. That Terry Collier "Americans? Flash. Germans? Arrogant." (etc) thing is there, but I don't think it goes very deep for most people, or that it's taken all that seriously.

As well as Americans the people, there are attitudes to America the place, America the culture and America the nation state, of course. The last of those is really what's in focus on the Fourth of July, and it's probably, at least at the moment, the least approved aspect of the four in Western Europe generally.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 16:06

Well, I was partly devil's-advocating, and partly channeling a voice in my own head, a voice which is a pretty strong one.

I don't think everyone's as even-tempered and level-headed as you are, Wyatt, and I'm certainly not.

My feelings towards America are violently conflicting ones. On the one hand, I love a lot of American culture (music, films, TV, comedy, art and so on). On the other hand, I hate a lot more of it, and I hate the way that the bad stuff is aggressively forced upon us (or passively swallowed by us, or both). And I'm strongly against America politically and religiously. And who forms a nation's culture, religion and politics if not its people? It's a tough one.

I'm sure I'm not alone in feeling that way (even if I'm unquestionably quite far over at one end of the Anti-American/Pro-American spectrum).

And, if there was a serious move (by a brewer, or anyone else) to start celebrating 4th July in the UK, I'm sure I wouldn't be the only one shouting "OH, FUCK OFF!!!"

By a long way.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by TonTon - 04-07-2008 16:10

What Wyatt said.

I find it a bit odd that I have to say it, but of course neither I nor my mate are having a dig at Zimbabweans, or people from the US either. Since that appears obvious to me, and clearly isn't obvious to dglh, maybe there's another way that could be expressed which would help make the meaning more clear.

Any suggestions gratefully received.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 16:14

SR, do you think the people "passively swallowing" American culture feel about it the way you do? That's the only way I can make sense of what you're saying, and it, well, doesn't make sense.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Spearmint Rhino - 04-07-2008 16:16

Wyatt Earp wrote:

SR, do you think the people "passively swallowing" American culture feel about it the way you do? That's the only way I can make sense of what you're saying, and it, well, doesn't make sense.

I actually think a lot of people who passively swallow American junk culture still feel quite hostile to America and Americans, yes, and I think they would bridle at being invited to take part in a festival of American triumphalism.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 16:18

Well, I'd bridle at the latter, certainly. But that's not what the Revolution, which the Fourth of July commemorates, was about.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by TonTon - 04-07-2008 16:20

It certainly isn't what the revolution was about, but it does appear, from a distance, to be a good deal of what some July 4th celebrations are about.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Guy Potger - 04-07-2008 16:30

TonTon wrote:

It certainly isn't what the revolution was about, but it does appear, from a distance, to be a good deal of what some July 4th celebrations are about.

Wasn't it about demanding greater rights and privileges for the colonists than the native British?

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 04-07-2008 17:40

That's a bit like "How dare the teachers go on strike, don't they know what nurses get paid?"

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Guy Potger - 04-07-2008 17:47

Thanks for pointing that out, WE.

I hadn't spotted that one before...

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Mr Beast - 04-07-2008 18:05

When you see 16 year old school leavers in tuxedos and limos going to their prom night you know something is wrong in this country. It might be a rite of passage for American teens - and especially lame film makers - but when the fuck did it become the norm over here? We'll be doing Thanksgiving next.

I wouldn't expect any bar to celebrate the 4th July anymore than I'd expect an American bar to celebrate St Andrews Day.

I've loved visiting the USA every time I've gone but surely it's the differences between countries that makes them interesting

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Guy Potger - 04-07-2008 18:08

Why, if an American bar celebrates St Patrick's Day, wouldn't they celebrate St Andrew's?

There's a big community in "the colonies" who are from Caledonian stock, both from "pioneer" types and the ones disposed after the clearances.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Mr Beast - 04-07-2008 18:15

I've found plenty of bars all over the States who profess to be Irish but never Scots ones. I've not worried about that too much.

My point is that we don't have to ape all American culture and traditions. I will change my mind when the Boyz in the hood start Morris dancing

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Guy Potger - 04-07-2008 18:19

It was meant to be rhetorical. Mr B.

(and re. your previous post - I think you'll find that the "correct" term is "Dinner Jackets" ...)

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Auntie Beryl - 04-07-2008 19:56

Honest question here - from a position of ignorance - is St George's Day even on the US radar?

I know it's a muted (at best) celebration over here; I don't celebrate it at all. That's down to a number of complex reasons bound up with a fear of bonehead nationalism. But over there? Or in, say, Australia?

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by evilC - 04-07-2008 20:23

See my post from earlier, Auntie Beryl. I ask pretty much the same thing, from an 'even-handedness' angle.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Inca - 04-07-2008 20:45

Auntie Beryl wrote:

Honest question here - from a position of ignorance - is St George's Day even on the US radar?

No.

What is it?--this is the first time I've heard of it.

It's an interesting point about Irish-Americans vs. Scots-Americans. There is nowhere near the interest in Scotland and Scots identity as there is with Ireland/Irish identity. Of course, most of the professed Irish-Americans are kids that discovered that their great-great grandparents came from Ireland, and they suddenly start going around talking about being Irish and wanting to take a Celtic class.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by The Chubby Cyclist - 04-07-2008 22:10

Inca wrote:

It's an interesting point about Irish-Americans vs. Scots-Americans. There is nowhere near the interest in Scotland and Scots identity as there is with Ireland/Irish identity.

I assume from this, and your question about St George's day, that the idea of an interest in England, the concept, even, of English-Americans, or any interest in an English-American identity, is totally alien and nobody would even think to address it?

(St George being the patron saint of England (amongst many other places and things), and April 23rd being England's St Patrick/St Andrew's day)

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Inca - 04-07-2008 22:32

I should have explained that I know who St. George is, but have never heard of St. George's day. A few Americans have heard of Guy Fawkes Day, but I think St. George's day is way off the radar.

And yeah, there really isn't any interest in England. If someone described themselves as English-American, it would be strange.

Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by 1890 - 05-07-2008 11:40

WE, Sainsbury has a few US ales on sale, various Sierra Nevada ales, Boston lager, Brooklyn lager and the likes.

I went to the 4th of July celebration in Geneva a few times, it was the biggest outside the USA back in the 80's. It was held in an athletic stadium in the countryside, gridiron games, cheerleaders, Budweiser (which at the time was quite exotic), hot-dogs and not much French spoken. It attracted a few locals who fell in love with the whole "American Dream" thing about Corvette cars, biker stuff, rocker stuff and the likes. The proper Americans were all dressed in a very preppy fashion and looked a bit bewildered by drunken Swiss dressed like a Hell's Angel trying to tell them in very bad english how great their country was...

Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by jason voorhees - 05-07-2008 11:53

My grandfather would fly the 13-colony Martha Washington special every July 4th. When called upon by the rest of the commune as to why he'd fly the flag of the imperialists, he would reply "aha ! But it is the flag of revolution ! "

Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 05-07-2008 13:54

Still pondering SR's broadside. I think to claim that (for example) Americans are domineering because America is domineering is a little like saying that Luxembourgers must be really small because Luxembourg is really small.

Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by 1890 - 05-07-2008 14:24

The White Horse on Parsons Green in SW6 has an American ale festival this week-end with over 30 US cask ales inc 5 draught ones.

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Re:Does your local \"do\" the 4th of July?

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 05-07-2008 14:27

Nice to know, thanks! I don't think I can make it this w/e though. Unsporting of the Yanks to hold their revolution at this time of year.

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Re:Does your local

Posted by Guy Potger - 05-07-2008 14:29

Wyatt Earp wrote:

Still pondering SR's broadside. I think to claim that (for example) Americans are domineering because America is domineering is a little like saying that Luxembourgers must be really small because Luxembourg is really small.

Oh, I'd just put it all down to him having been possessed by the spirit of Dorothy Parker.

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