NEWS You Can Use

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Celestial Events in the 2021 Astronomical Calendar

March 9 - 10: Quadruple Formation

A lineup of the planets Saturn, Jupiter, and Mercury, outlined by the setting crescent moon, will be visible in the early morning to the southeast US. The planets will be bright dots to the naked eye, but viewers with access to a pair of binoculars or a small telescope may get a look at four of Jupiter's moons or even some of Saturn's rings.

May 26: "Blood Moon" Lunar Eclipse

This total lunar eclipse will be visible in western North and South America, Australia, and Southeast Asia. The moon will appear to turn red, thus the name "Blood Moon". This moon is also what is known as a supermoon, meaning it will appear larger and brighter than the average full moon!

August 12 - 13: Peak of the Perseid Meteor Shower

The Perseid Meteor Shower occurs every year in August and produces up to 60 shooting stars each hour. This year, the shower is supposed to be particularly brilliant because it will occur during the new moon, meaning that the falling stars will be more strongly contrasted against the darkened night sky. The meteors will be seen coming from the Perseus constellation.

October 8: Draconid Meteor Shower

The Draconids will appear in the high northwest skies after nightfall with about 10 to 15 shooting stars an hour. The Draconids are best viewed from nightfall to midnight, when the shooting stars will appear highest in the sky. The dragon's shooting stars are fairly easy to spot since they are some of the slowest moving of any annual shower and will be competing with only a small sliver of moon in relatively dark skies.

nationalgeographic.com/science/article/ten-spectacular-stargazing-events-to-watch-in-2021

Use Turmeric to Boost Metabolism

Turmeric is a golden-yellow spice that is particularly famous in Indian cuisine and throughout southern Asia.

One component found at high levels in turmeric, known as curcumin, is quite effective as a weight loss supplement and metabolism booster.

Some researchers have found that turmeric may induce cell death in white fat cells, designed to store energy for later, causing obesity over time due to fat accumulation. Over time turmeric can help the body to be less supportive of white fat and more supportive of the production and maintenance of brown fat cells which contain iron rich mitochondria along with stored fat, allowing it to be burned off more quickly.

Turmeric is an amazingly diverse spice with lots of different uses. The spice can be taken in capsule form (concentrated curcumin is also available), or it may be used in salad dressings, Asian curries, or golden milk, a tasty and effective ayurvedic drink.

dailyhealthpost.com/4-ways-eating-turmeric-transforms-fat-storing-cell-into-fat-burning-ones/

Savory March Menu Ideas

Classic Broccoli Cheddar Soup

4 tbsp. unsalted butter
1 c. carrot matchsticks
2 small cloves garlic, minced
3/4 tsp. smoked paprika
3/4 tsp. ground mustard
3/4 tsp. onion powder
Pinch cayenne pepper
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
4 c. chicken stock
6 c. small broccoli florets
6 oz. cream cheese
4 c. grated sharp cheddar

In a medium saucepan sautee carrot and garlic in butter until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Stir in paprika, ground mustard, onion powder, and cayenne. Pour in the chicken stock and bring to a boil. Season with salt and pepper.
Add the broccoli and simmer until very tender, about 3 to 5 minutes. Add the cream cheese and cheddar and cook, stirring, until melted.
Season with salt and pepper and serve warm.

delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a30768983/keto-broccoli-cheddar-soup-recipe

Braised Chicken Thighs

6 bone-in skin-on chicken thighs (about 2 1/2 lbs.)
salt and pepper
1 tbsp. vegetable oil
2" piece ginger, grated
5 cloves garlic, grated
8 oz. small shallots, peeled
3/4 c. sake or dry white wine
1 c. soy sauce
3/4 c. water
2 tbsp honey
1 tbsp. toasted sesame oil
Toasted sesame seeds
Thinly sliced green onions

Preheat oven to 425°. Heat oil in large, deep ovenproof skillet on high; add chicken seasoned with salt and pepper and cook until deeply golden, 6 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
Add ginger, garlic, and shallots to skillet and cook for 1 minute, then add wine. Cook about 3 minutes until reduced by half. Add soy sauce, water, and honey; bring to a boil.
Place chicken skin-side up in skillet, set in middle rack of oven. Braise uncovered for 35 minutes, until cooked through. Remove chicken. Return skillet to stovetop on med- high heat. Cook sauce until thickened, 3 minutes, stir in sesame oil and pour over chicken thighs. Garnish with sesame seeds and green onions. Serve with rice.

delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a30503020/braised-chicken-thighs-recipe/

Spring Cleaning: How to Recycle Your Old Laptop

Before you release any computer or smartphone to be re-used or recycled, make sure to back up documents, photos, videos, or music you may want to retain and then perform a factory reset. Otherwise, someone could access your personal data.

Donate to a library, school, or local nonprofit. If your laptop is less than 5 years old, it can be easily refurbished for a second life. Many social organizations have a need for more electronic equipment, so donating your laptop can benefit the local community.

Find an electronics recycling center. Earth911 is a reputable and widespread company that takes your laptop and recycles it safely and responsibly. Another company with a good reputation is Dell's Goodwill Reconnect Program. cnet.com/how-to/recycling-electronics-what-to-do-with-your-old-laptops-phones-cameras-and-batteries/

Emergency Funds In Retirement

Unanticipated costs can upend even careful financial planning.

In retirement on a fixed income, it can be difficult to cover the costs of unexpected emergencies: natural disasters like fire or flooding, replacing appliances, repairing a leaky roof and other maintenance on a house, or thousands of dollars in dental work which traditional Medicare doesn't cover. Friends or family members may need financial help.

Those who now handle home maintenance tasks may someday have to start paying for jobs they used to do themselves.

If funds are tied up in tax-deferred retirement accounts, a tax bill can eat into any money used for an emergency. An emergency fund can reduce the risk of these additional costs in an already bad situation.

Many experts suggest retirees should have a cash cushion of three to five years' worth of living expenses to cover their regular bills PLUS replacement costs of big-ticket items, such as appliances, and estimated amounts for unexpected events, such as car repairs.

To start building an emergency fund, even near or in retirement, use tax refunds, work bonuses, extra money from a part-time or side gig, or required minimum distributions.

Those who are still working can address expensive projects before retirement. Replace old appliances or windows or upgrade to a newer vehicle now, if they will be needed within a year or two after retirement.

kiplinger.com/article/retirement/t047-c000-s004-retirees-need-emergency-funds-too.html

It Happened In

MARCH

March 5, 1933 –
Amid a steadily worsening economic situation, newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed a four-day "Bank Holiday" to stop panic withdrawals by the public and the possible collapse of the American banking system.

March 10, 1862 –
The first issue of U.S. government paper money occurred as $5, $10 and $20 bills began circulation.

March 24, 1989 –
One of the largest oil spills in U.S. history occurred as the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound off Alaska, resulting in 11 million gallons of oil leaking into the natural habitat over a stretch of 45 miles.

March 27, 1977 –
The worst accident in the history of civil aviation occurred as two Boeing 747 jets collided on the ground in the Canary Islands, resulting in 570 deaths.

historyplace.com/specials/ calendar/march.htm

Is Inflation On The Horizon?

Over the past 12 months, consumer prices excluding food and energy have increased 1.5%, right in line with the average since the last recession. Including food and energy into the calculation reduces the rate slightly. While food and energy cycle up and down separately from the overall inflation trend, short-term changes usually reverse themselves in a year or two.

The inflation that is dangerous is

broad-based and long-lasting. People may have as many dollars as before, but they are worth less. Inflation also causes businesses to show fake profits subject to taxation. Retailers selling in an inflationary environment collect profit including the amount prices rose while the product was on the shelf. But this taxable inflated portion of profit does not reflect the increased cost of replacing the product.

Persistent high inflation also correlates with more volatile economies. The period from 1965 through 1985 began with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson spending more on the Vietnam War and on Great Society social programs here at home. The Federal Reserve rapidly increased the money supply in order to accommodate.

The Fed tightened in 1970, triggering a recession. To get out of that, they increased the money supply and as inflation rose, the Fed tightened again, causing the 1973-75 recession. More easing followed by more tightening sent the economy into the double-dip recession of 1980-82.

The monetary base increased over 50% in the past 12 months. Paper currency and bank balances increased 26%, but this has not yet triggered inflation because consumers and businesses paid down debt and saved cash.

When this excess capacity is spent, it may not cause inflation if matched with a production increase, but early retirements paired with business spending on pandemic remediation efforts rather than increased production may create the conditions for inflation.

forbes.com/sites/billconerly/2021/02 /25/inflation-has-not-shown-up-yet-but-its-coming