

CELEBRATING A RARE REVOLUTION



On July 4th we Americans will celebrate the birth of our country. Specifically, we will honor the day the Declaration of Independence was approved by the Second Continental Congress in 1776.¹

As we imagine the Founders signing the document—historic icons like Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams—it's only natural to think of the beginning of America as being unique in history. A legacy we can be proud to continue.

But how exceptional was the origin of the United States? After all, most countries celebrate their founding with a national holiday and tell their citizens that they are special.

The OTHER Revolutions

In his classic book *The Anatomy of A Revolution*, historian Crane Brinton sought to find a common thread between the English, French, Russian, and American revolutions. He did find many similarities, but eventually had to conclude our transition out of British rule was essentially different.

According to history professor Larry Schweikart, Brinton observed that while the American revolution began with a war, it didn't end with the retributive violence that characterized the other revolutions.²

We shudder when we think of the tens of thousands sent to the guillotine in France, or the more than 100,000 killed during the Red Terror of the Bolsheviks.

After George Washington defeated the British in the American Revolutionary War, people in the states went back to living, working, and worshipping much as they had before the conflict. Like other revolutionary leaders, Washington then went from the military to serve in the highest civil office. But after two terms as President he voluntarily stepped down.

Contrast this with the aftermath of Mexico's war of independence against Spain, which was similar in many ways to our own. They fought to free themselves from a European monarchy

across the sea, and after winning their independence they ratified a constitution based on that of the U.S.

But their great-general-turned-president, Santa Anna, suspended the constitution and ended up serving five terms, during which it's widely agreed he lined his own pockets. This is sadly the typical course for many revolutions.³

American Exceptionalism

Historians are still debating the factors that made the American Revolution so successful in establishing a long-term government by the people and for the people. They cite everything from strong real estate laws to the religious views of the people to the central role of capitalism as making the difference. Yet each of these were present in other revolutions.

One thing we know for sure is that the document we celebrate on the 4th of July, the Declaration of Independence, was unique in recorded history. It was the first formal statement by a nation's people asserting their right to choose their own government.

It's a document we should be familiar with ([read it here](#)) and keep in mind as we participate in the democratic institutions of our great republic.

As this Independence Day approaches, we hope you'll be sharing the celebration of liberty and freedom with friends and family. And perhaps the barbecues and fireworks will be a special reminder of the extraordinary history that laid the foundation for what we enjoy today.

Have a great weekend and enjoy celebrating the 4th next week!

Source: Efficient Advisors

Golf Tip of the Week



2 Words to Get the Ball to Drop in the Hole

How do you make the perfect putt? Here's a clue: 2 words, 3 syllables.

It's "perfect pace." By saying those 2 words during your putt, you may be able to restore the rhythm to your stroke.

Here's how it works. As you prepare to make your stroke, think of that phrase and a pendulum.

As you swing the putter back, think "per-fect," 2 syllables. As you swing through, think "pace."

The move will help establish cadence in your putt and enable you to hit the ball solidly and smoothly. It also helps eliminate jerky and abrupt movements in your swing.

Focus more on how you're going to putt rather than making the putt.

Tip adapted from Golf Digestⁱ

Recipe of the Week



New England Clam Chowder

Serves 6

Ingredients:

1 cup water
18 large littleneck clams
3 slices of bacon
1 medium onion
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 pound all-purpose potatoes
2 cups half-and-half
1 cup milk
¾ teaspoon salt or to taste

Directions:

1. Boil the water over high heat in 6-quart saucepot. Put in clams and boil again.
2. Lower the heat slightly. Cover the pot and let simmer until the clams open, 5-10 minutes.

3. Put the clams in a bowl as they open. Throw away any clams that don't open.
4. Remove the clams from the shells once they're cool to the touch. Chop them up coarsely. Throw away the shells.
5. Strain the clam broth through a paper towel-lined sieve into a measuring cup. Add water if necessary to make a total of 2 cups.
6. Cook bacon over medium heat in the same clean saucepot until lightly browned. Use slotted spoon to move the bacon to paper towels.
7. Put the onion in the pot with the drippings. Cook until tender, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes.
8. Mix in flour and pepper until blended. Cook for 1 minute. Stir in clam broth gradually until smooth. Add potatoes and heat until boiling.
9. Lower the heat and cover. Simmer until potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes.
10. Add half-and-half, milk, and chopped clams. Heat but do not boil. Stir in bacon.
11. Add salt as needed.

Recipe adapted from Good Housekeepingⁱⁱ

Health Tip of the Week



What Are Cataracts and How Are They Treated?

Cataracts cause cloudy or fuzzy vision. Cataract sufferers may also experience sensitivity to glare.

The cloudy areas in the lens of eyes that are caused by cataracts produce vision changes.

Cataracts typically affect people 60 and older, but younger people can also get it.

Some cases of cataracts require surgery on the lenses of the eyes. Cataracts give sufferers the feeling they're looking at the world through a dirty window.

Advanced cataracts may have the appearance of a whitish or gray film over the eyes.

Cataract symptoms may include:

- Difficulty seeing at night
- Sensitivity to light
- Seeing lights with “halos”
- Double vision
- Dimmer perception of colors

The vision of people with cataracts is sometimes improved with prescription eyeglasses. Doctors may advise cataract surgery for patients who increasingly begin to see halos around bright lights.

Proceeding surgery, doctors usually conduct tests to measure the size and shape of patients' eyes and instruct patients to refrain from eating 12 hours prior to treatment.

Patients are usually awake but sedated during surgery, which takes about an hour. A small surgical tool is used to suction out the cataract. A new lens is then put in the eye. Lenses are made of plastic, silicone, or acrylic.

Side effects are rare.

Full recovery usually takes about 8 weeks. About 90% of patients say they see better after cataract surgery.

Tips adapted from WebMDⁱⁱⁱ

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- ⁱ <https://www.golfdigest.com/story/two-simple-words-to-help-drop-the-ball-in-the-cup>
 - ⁱⁱ <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/a9038/new-england-clam-chowder/>
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