



JEWISH AMERICAN

HERITAGE MONTH

31 FUN FACTS

1. The popular holiday songs “Santa Baby,” “Silver Bells,” and “White Christmas,” “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” and “A Holly, Jolly Christmas,” were all written by Jewish composers!

2. Did you know that **Sue Bird**, considered to be **one of the greatest players in WNBA history**, is Jewish?

3. Over half of the **attorneys active during the Civil Rights Movement** in the South were Jewish.

4. There was a **kosher kitchen on Ellis Island in 1911**, to serve the large waves of Jewish immigrants coming to America.

5. The **bagel** was brought to the United States by Jewish immigrants from Poland in the late 19th-century.

6. The words, “... give me your tired, your weak, huddled masses...” that are written on the **Statue of Liberty** come from a poem by **Emma Lazarus**, a Jewish writer and activist.

7. The creators of **Superman**, **Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster**, were children of Jewish immigrants and wrote comics telling the story of Superman fighting Nazis, Adolf Hitler, and other aggressors in the 1940s.

8. **Levi Strauss**, a Jewish immigrant from Germany, **invented blue jeans in 1873**.

9. Jewish basketball star **Ossie Schectman** **scored the first ever basket** in the first professional basketball game.

10. **18 Jews** have been awarded the **Medal of Honor**, the greatest award given to American military service members for acts of valor.

11. **Henry Moskowitz** was a Jewish civil rights activist, and one of the **co-founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**.

12. There are **131 Jewish American Nobel Prize Laureates**.

13. **Maneschewitz**, a brand of wine and other kosher products, was **founded in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1888**.

14. As of 2023, there are **10 Jewish Senators and 27 Jewish Members of the U.S. House of Representatives**.

15. **Lazlo Biro**, a Jewish Hungarian-Argentine inventor, **created the modern ballpoint pen** in response to the inconsistencies and struggles of using fountain pens.

16. Jewish scientist **Rosalyn Yalow** developed a method called **radioimmunoassay**, allowing the measurement of tiny amounts of biological material in human blood. This led to numerous breakthroughs in medicine, including detection of type -1 diabetes, and other hormonal and endocrine diseases.

17. **Touro Synagogue** in Rhode Island, founded in 1763, was **America's first Jewish house of worship**.

18. There are seven Jewish players, coaches, and executives in the **Pro Football Hall of Fame**, including linebacker Andre Tippett, coach Marv Levy, and executive Al Davis.

19. One of the many reasons many Jewish Americans eat **Chinese food on Christmas** is that many Chinese dishes **conform to basic Jewish dietary rules**, due to their lack of dairy.

20. Jewish immigrants originally founded some major **Hollywood studios**, after facing **discrimination in other entertainment industries**. Many built on their experience in vaudeville theaters, which put on cheap performances in many different languages to cater to immigrant populations in New York.

21. **Kosher dill pickles** were a large part of the food culture among Jews in **Eastern Europe**, before becoming a staple item in the United States.

22. The "I **<3** NY," logo was created by Jewish American graphic designer **Milton Glaser**, who was also responsible for well known graphics such as Bob Dylan's "Greatest Hits: 1975" poster, and many others.

23. Voice actor **Mel Blanc**, otherwise known as "**The Man of 1000 Voices**," played Tweety Bird, Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and many other iconic characters. He grew up in a Jewish household in San Francisco, and started his work in Vaudeville theaters.

24. **Marvin Hamlisch**, a Jewish composer, pianist, and conductor, is **one of only 12 people to win the "EGOT."** This consists of winning an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony Award. He also won two Golden Globes and a Pulitzer Prize for his work.

25. **Yip Harburg**, born to Eastern European Jewish immigrants, **wrote the iconic song "Over the Rainbow."**

26. Jewish scientist **Jonas Salk** discovered the **polio vaccine** in 1955.

27. Jewish Engineer **Joseph Strauss** was the **supervisor of the construction of the Golden Gate bridge** in San Francisco.

28. President **Barack Obama** held the **first ever White House Seder** in 2009, celebrating the Jewish holiday of Passover.

29. Half a million **Jewish American soldiers** fought in World War 2.

30. The first woman elected to a national office of a labor union was **Rose Schneiderman**, a Jewish immigrant from Poland.

31. Jewish Americans have made **vital contributions to the tech industry**, founding companies such as **Google, Whatsapp, and Dell**.

