

Adieu summer, Autumn is here

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That time of the year has come for us to tuck away the summer memories and get ready to explore and enjoy the cool and crisp weather of the magical Autumn.

According to the astronomical calendar, the seasonal transition occurs on September 22, the date of the Autumn equinox.

Astronomer Muhammad Reda Al-Asfour says signs are already here for us to know that nature is gearing up for the equinox.

But do you know where exactly is the best place to spend the Autumnal, or fall equinox?

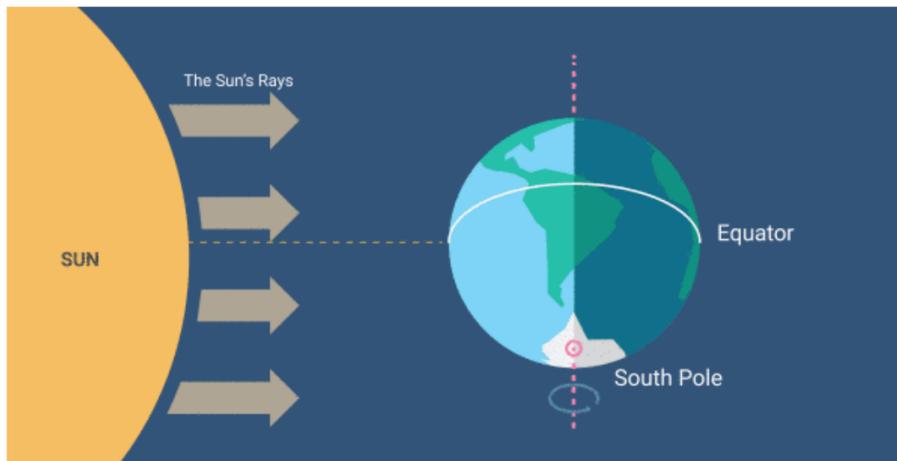
The answer probably is at a Mayan pyramid.

Yes, you heard it right!

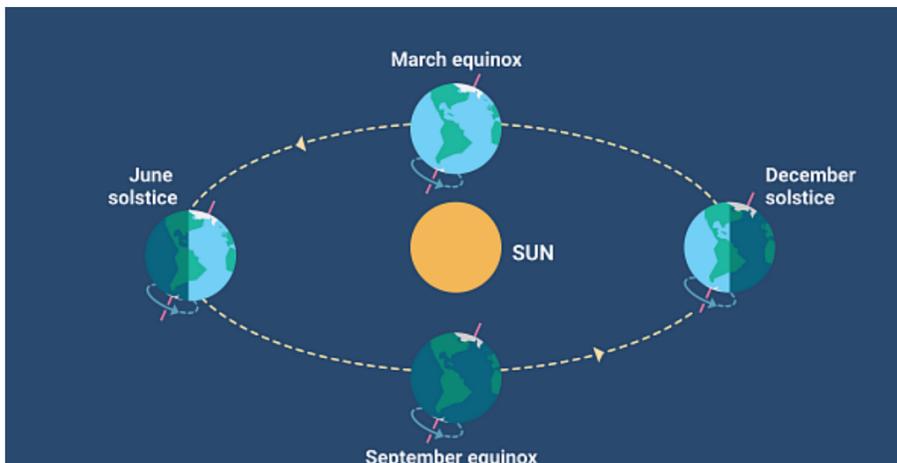
For the Mayans, these days were of supreme importance, and they paid homage to these celestial positions.

So, if you could, venture to the ancient city of Chichén Itzá in the Mexican state of Yucatán on a spring or autumnal equinox, to get awed by the astounding performance of the Sun's descent from the top of the Temple Kukulkan.

The staircases are built at a carefully calculated angle that it looks like an enormous snake of



Earth's position at the September equinox



Earth orbits the Sun at a slant. (courtesy of Time and Date.com)

sunlight slithers down the stairs on the day of the equinox.

Also, know that it is not just Mayans, but many cultures around the world hold feasts and celebrate festivals and holidays to mark the September equinox.

This Tuesday, on 22 September 2020, at 4.30 pm, here in Bahrain also Autumn will mark its entry with the phenomenon known as "autumnal equinox". The season will last for 89 days, 20 hours, and 31 minutes.

Astronomers say an equinox happens when the Sun shines directly on the Equator.

In other words, the September equinox occurs the moment the Sun crosses the celestial Equator – the

imaginary line in the sky above Earth's Equator – from north to south. This happens either on September 22, 23, or 24 every year.

Also during equinox night and day are nearly the same length – 12 hours, all over the world.

However, understand that equinoxes are not day-long events, even though many choose to celebrate all day.

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stead, they occur at the moment the Sun crosses the celestial equator – the imaginary line in the sky above Earth's Equator.

Explaining Al Asfour said, "On the day of the

autumnal equinox, the Sun will rise completely from the eastern point and set completely from the west point, while its position gradually tilts towards the south."

"The Sun's rays on this day will be completely perpendicular to the equator as night and day are roughly equal."

On next Sunday, Bahrain will experience the same length of the day, and night, he said, "with the Sun rising at 05:28 am and setting at 05:28 pm with midday at 11:28 pm."

Explaining, he said the onset of autumn in the northern hemisphere means, "night begins to increase at the expense of day, and temperatures begin to gradually decrease."

"However, in the Southern Hemisphere, the opposite happens. As the spring season begins, the day begins to increase at the expense of the night, and the temperatures begin to rise gradually."

In the Southern Hemisphere, it is known as the vernal (spring) equinox and marks the first day of spring.

The phenomenon will continue until 21 December 2020 to the day of the "winter solstice" in the northern hemisphere, and the "summer solstice" in the southern hemisphere.

He explained that the four seasons occur as a result of a tilt of the earth's axis by 23.5°, and its rotation around the sun in an elliptical orbit, causing Sun's rays to fall at different angles on every passing month.



On the day of the autumnal equinox, the Sun will rise completely from the eastern point and set completely from the west point, while its position gradually tilts towards the south. The Sun's rays on this day will be completely perpendicular to the equator as night and day are roughly equal

ASTRONOMER MUHAMMAD REDA AL-ASFOUR

YOU
KNOW WHAT

The term equinox comes from the Latin words *aequus*, meaning equal and *nox*, meaning night. This has led to the common misconception that everybody on Earth experiences equal day and night – 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night time – on the day of the September equinox.

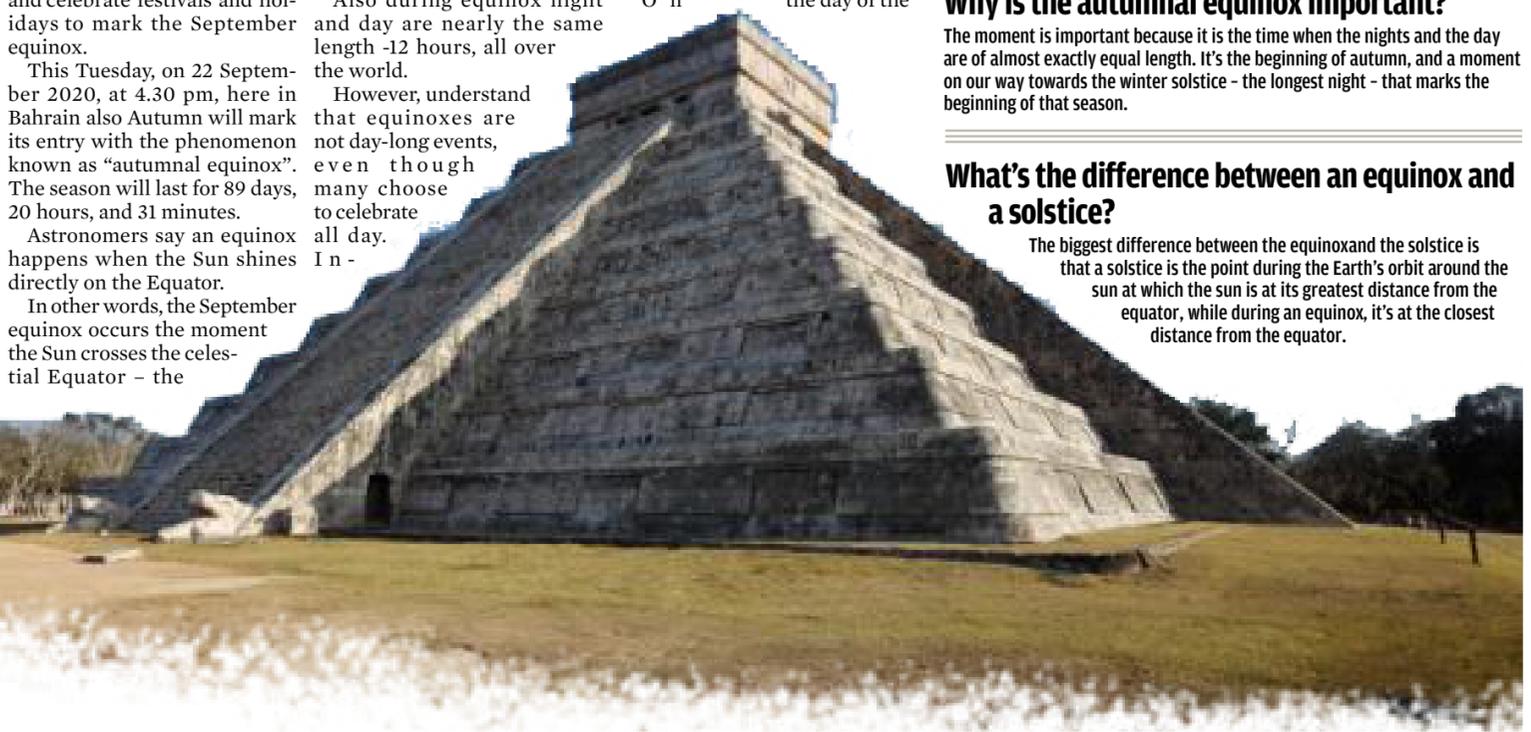
In reality, most places on Earth enjoy more than 12 hours of daylight on this day. This is because of two reasons: the way sunrise and sunset are defined and atmospheric refraction of sunlight

Why is the autumnal equinox important?

The moment is important because it is the time when the nights and the day are of almost exactly equal length. It's the beginning of autumn, and a moment on our way towards the winter solstice – the longest night – that marks the beginning of that season.

What's the difference between an equinox and a solstice?

The biggest difference between the equinox and the solstice is that a solstice is the point during the Earth's orbit around the sun at which the sun is at its greatest distance from the equator, while during an equinox, it's at the closest distance from the equator.



GFH Financial group brings 'Smile' to children with cancer

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GFH Financial Group announced its partnership with the "Smile" initiative to support children with cancer in Bahrain by providing them with electronic devices to assist school and online.

Salah Sharif, GFH Group Chief Administrative Officer, said that this support comes within the framework of the Group social responsibility.



Salah Sharif, Chief Administrative Officer of GFH



Chairman of Future Society for Youth, Sabah Abdul Rahman Al Zayani

"Deciding to support the education of these young heroes coincides with the group's trend towards investing in education through its ownership of a group of schools that cover the three educational levels in the Middle East, and its recent launch of the "Britus" educational platform," Salah Sharif said.

Chairman of Future Society for Youth, Sabah Abdul Rahman Al Zayani, to which the "Smile"

initiative is affiliated, expressed his appreciation to GFH for supporting children affiliated with the initiative.

He emphasized that this would undoubtedly have a significant impact on the education of the heroes of the smile.

"In the Smile Initiative, we are currently conducting a comprehensive study of the needs of sick children for laptops and tab-

lets, as it is expected that these devices will be distributed to about 65 children who are not financially able to obtain them," Al Zayani said.

It is noteworthy that the "Smile" initiative implements a set of programmes including the "Abjad" educational programme where a group of volunteer teachers teaches children at the initiative's headquarters or through home visits.