



Christmas in Horizons

BY INTERNATIONAL KINDERGARTEN HORIZONS

Christmas is celebrated in different ways in different parts of the world. International kindergarten "Horizons" gathers children from all over the world, so teachers together with the children and their parents tried to explore different ways to celebrate Christmas in the children's countries of origin.

Christmas time is a special part of the year when many people make new resolutions and draw up plans for the coming year. Everywhere it is celebrated with similar joy and importance but with a speck of difference and special traditions in each country.

CHRISTMAS IN SLOVAKIA

Christmas trees are put up on in the morning of Christmas Eve in Slovakia. Some people have natural trees, but most have artificial ones. They usually don't eat anything during the day until evening. About 5 or 6 pm (it's different in each family) they have a traditional dinner with their family - parents, brothers and sisters... Every country has special dishes for Christmas dinner. This is what a typical Slovakian Christmas meal looks like:

Before the main dishes, people eat wafers with honey and small pieces of garlic. The dinner consists of two main dishes; the first one is "vianocna kapustnica" - sauerkraut soup, which is made from sauerkraut, slices of sausage and dried mushrooms, which give a marvelous flavour to the soup. Other ingredi-

ents depend on different traditions of the part of the country where people live. Each family has a special family recipe for it.

The second main dish is fish and potatoe salad. Fish is deep-fried. Salad is made from boiled potatoes cut into small cubes, carrots, pickles, onion, hard-boiled eggs also cut into small cubes and mayonnaise -all this mixed together. After both main dishes people eat "Loke"; food made from pieces of baked risen dough with raisins and poppy seed. After that they eat different fruit, apples, oranges, pineapples, bananas, nuts and a lot of cakes.

After Christmas dinner, people gather around a Christmas tree where they find presents. At midnight people go to church.

CHRISTMAS IN AUSTRIA

At home the advent season is very romantic, this year especially because there is lot of snow. This family lives in 150 years old wooden house with small windows. It is a very romantic winter house.

On Christmas Day, mother prepares Christmas dinner for the evening. Father will decorate the Christmas tree. It is a surprise for the children who are playing during this exciting time or spending time with grandparents and friends, so they can't see the tree. In the afternoon, all grandparents come to visit and the whole family goes to the children's Christmas Mass in local church. After

that the big waiting comes to its end and the Christ child rings the bell and flies away. The eyes are bright and the presents are under the tree. Everybody is hungry after that day and they can't wait to enjoy the dinner. Main dish is sometimes a turkey, sometimes fish.

The next few days they spend with their relatives and friends enjoying their company and having a lot of fun. The presents are usually for the children and for grown-ups Christmas is a great opportunity to gather.

CHRISTMAS IN DENMARK

In Denmark, there are few different ways of celebrating time before Christmas. It starts with the 1st of December and ends on the Day before Christmas, on 24th of December.

They have candles numbered 1 to 24, one to be lit each day.

It's a tradition to give little presents to the children each morning during that period, but nowadays, presents are usually given only on Sundays, not every day. There is a little calendar and each day children open one part of it. Behind every number, there is a small picture that shows something about Christmas.

Christmas is celebrated on 24th of December.

The most of the Christmas tree decorations are made by people themselves. There are real candles on their Christmas tree and little cones with candies.



CHRISTMAS IN ITALY

There is an old saying in Italy "Natale con i tuoi, Pasqua con chi vuoi!" - that means "Be with your closest family on Christmas; be with who ever you want on Easter!"

This goes to show that for Italians it is most important to spend Christmas days with their families.

Christmas trees are brought home after the 8th of December. The holy family figurines are put under the Christmas tree, but baby Jesus figurine isn't laid in the manger until Christmas morning or after mid-



night on Christmas Eve. They eat fish on Christmas Eve, and after dinner the whole family goes to church.

On Christmas Day they eat some traditional cakes: Panettone; made with raisins and dried fruit, Torrone; made with almonds or walnuts and chocolate, and Pandoro; made with lot of butter.

On the 6th of January children are visited by Befana -an old lady who flies on the broom and brings candies to the well behaved children. Those who haven't been nice get a sweet called Carbone, a black and not so delicious candy. There is a saying for

that day "L' Epifanie tutte le feste posta vie" - it means "With Epiphany all the holidays are gone", or "When Befana goes, all the holidays are gone with her".

CHRISTMAS IN GREAT BRITAIN

In Great Britain, Christmas celebrations continue until the Twelfth Night. Preparing foods, sending Christmas cards, house and church decorations and wrapping up gifts keep everyone busy. On Christmas Eve, younger kids hang up their stockings on the ends of the beds or by the chimney for the Father Christmas. On Christmas morn-