

*LICEUL GHEOGHE TĂTĂRESCU ROVINARI*



*REF-School Magazine/Magazine de l'école*



ISSN 2501-8256

ISSN -L 2501-8256

DECEMBRIE 2022

## Christmas in Poland

Poland is a largely catholic country and Christmas Eve is a very important and busy day. It's now often the most important day over Christmas - even though it's not a holiday but Christmas an he Story in the Bible

*Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. Having come in, the angel said to her, "Greetings, favored one. The Lor*

**d the 26th December are holidays! Traditionally it was day of fasting and abstinence (not eating anything) and meat is not normally allowed to be eaten in any form.**

One of the most important dishes is "barszcz" (beetroot soup) and it's obligatory to have it. If you really hate it, you can eat mushroom soup instead!



Before Christmas, children in schools and preschools take part in "Jasełka" (Nativity Plays). They are very popular and often more secular than religious. The Christmas story is also sometime put into modern times.

A very popular film to watch in Poland over Christmas is 'Home Alone!' In Poland it's called 'Kevin Sam w Domu' which means 'Kevin Alone in the House'. In 2010 it wasn't going to be shown, but so many people complained that it was put back on TV!

-Podaru Gabriel

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/poland>

### *Christmas in China*

More young people are celebrating Christmas in cities where Christmas parties are becoming popular and it's also a time where young couples will be gifts for each other, a bit like Valentine's day.

In Chinese Happy/Merry Christmas is 'Sheng Dan Kuai Le or 圣诞快乐' in Mandarin and 'Seng Dan Fai Lok or 聖誕快樂' in Cantonese. Happy/Merry Christmas in lots more languages.

In China, only about one percent of people are Christians, so most people only know a few things about Christmas. Because of this, Christmas is only often celebrated in major cities. In these big



cities there are Christmas Trees, lights and other decorations on the streets and in department stores. Santa Claus is called 'Shengdan Laoren' (old Christmas Man) and has grottos in shops like in Europe and America. The post men might dress up as Santa when delivering letters before Christmas!

More young people are celebrating Christmas in cities where Christmas parties are becoming popular and it's also a time where young couples will be gifts for each other, a bit like Valentine's day.

In Chinese Happy/Merry Christmas is 'Sheng Dan Kuai Le or 圣诞快乐' in Mandarin and 'Seng Dan Fai Lok or 聖誕快樂' in Cantonese. Happy/Merry Christmas in lots more languages.

In China, Santa is known as 'Sheng dan lao ren' (Traditional: 聖誕老人, Simplified: 圣诞老人; means Old Christmas Man).

Only a few people have a Christmas Tree. If people do have a tree it is normally a plastic one and might be decorated with paper chains, paper flowers, and paper lanterns (they might also call it a tree of light). The Christmas Trees that most people would see would be in shopping malls.

-Florin Guran

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/china>

## *Christmas in Romania*

In Romania, Christmas and mid-winter celebrations last from 20th December to 7th

January. The 20th is called 'Ziua de Ignat' or simply 'Ignat Day'. It is traditional that if the family keep pigs, one is killed on this day by the head of the household. The meat from the pig is used in the Christmas meals. After the pig is killed, the family members share a dish called 'Pomana Porcului' (Pork's Charity) which is traditionally cooked in a cauldron and consists of a variety of pork bits (pork belly, shoulder, liver, kidneys, etc.) in a garlic sauce and served with mămăligă (polenta). The name 'Ignat Day' comes from the 20th is also the saint day of 'Saint Ignatius of Antioch' and also 'Saint Ignatius, Archimandrite of the Kyiv Caves' in some churches.

The Christmas celebrations really begin on Christmas Eve, 24th, when it's time to decorate the Christmas Tree. This is done in the evening of Christmas Eve. In Romanian, Christmas Eve is called 'Ajunul Craciunului'.

A traditional Romanian Carol is the 'Star Carol'. The star, made of colored paper and often decorated with tinsel, silver foil and sometimes bells, is put on a pole. In the middle of the star is a picture of baby Jesus or a nativity scene. Carol singers take the star with them when they go carol singing. The words of the Star Carol are:

"The star has appeared on high,  
Like a big secret in the sky,  
The star is bright,  
May all your wishes turn out right."



-Vulpe Alexandru Andrei

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/romania>

## *Christmas in Japan : Facts and traditions*

In Japan, Christmas is known as more of a time to spread happiness rather than a religious celebration. Christmas Eve is often celebrated more than Christmas Day. Christmas Eve is thought of as a romantic day, in which couples spend together and exchange presents



Fried chicken is often eaten on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day. It is the busiest time of year for restaurants such as KFC and people can place orders at their local fast food restaurant in advance! There was an advertising campaign by KFC in the 1974 called 'Kentucky for Christmas!' (Kurisumasu ni wa kentakkii!)



Christmas is not a national holiday in Japan. However, often schools are closed on Christmas Day because it's near the start of the New Year school break. But most businesses will treat the 25th as a 'normal' working day.

One piece of music is especially famous around Christmas and the end of the year in Japan - Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and its final act the "Ode to Joy". The music is so famous it's simply known as 'daiku' (which means 'number nine'). Choirs all over the country sing it in German. One choir in Osaka, has 10,000 people in it and is known as the 'Number Nine Chorus'! It's thought it was first sung in Japan at Christmas by German prisoners of War in World War One and over the years it became more and more popular.

-Egri Alexandru Andrei

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/japan>

## *Christmas in Greece*

The Christmas holidays total no less than 12 days in Greece.

The traditions of the "12 days of Christmas" include both ancient ones and relatively new ones, the latter being the decoration of the Christmas tree and the Christmas roast turkey. From a historical point of view, the day commemorating the birth of Christ was designated to be December 25 in the year 354, this date being celebrated in antiquity as the birthday of the divinity Mithra, known as the "Invincible God of the Sun". It seems that, with the Christianization of Greece, the god Mithra was gradually replaced by the Lord Jesus...



On Eve, children (especially boys) go caroling with drums and triangles with which they accompany their traditional songs. They also carry with them model ships decorated with walnuts painted in gold. The tradition of having a miniature boat or ship during caroling dates back to ancient times. In the public squares, instead of fir trees, huge beautifully lit ships are arranged.



The traditional Greek Christmas meal generally consists of various lamb or pork dishes. Sweets are in great demand, and the Greeks compete to put on the table an astonishing diversity of sweet dishes, made at home.

-Beznila Gabriela Nicoleta

Bibliography: <https://www.diane.ro/2012/12/craciun-grecia-traditii-obiceiuri.html?m=1>

### *Christmas in America*



## The time before Christmas

US citizens are eagerly awaiting the holidays weeks before the event: with lavish decorations, hearty food, and, of course, the American's favorite hobby during Christmas time, Christmas shopping. Of course, they remain true to their all-time favorite motto – BIGGER IS BETTER!

## Christmas atmosphere

America's best-known Christmas decorations attract Around 125 million people to the Rockefeller Center in New York City every year. The tradition dates back to 1931 when construction workers first set up a small, decorated tree on the building-ground.

Today, the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree usually measures a whopping 20 to 30 meters and is adorned by more than 25,000 glittering lights. In addition, breathtaking XXL Christmas decorations and an ice skating rink will get you in the right mood to buy gifts for your loved ones.



## Christmas movies

When it's cold outside and the lights of the Christmas tree flicker inside, many Americans like to make themselves comfortable on the sofa and watch one of the traditional Christmas movies on TV. Classics such as Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" (1938), "It's a Wonderful Life" (1938) or "Miracle on 34th Street" (1947) are as much a part of an American holiday season as humorous comedies such as "The Grinch" (2000), "Kevin Alone at Home" (1990), "Elf" (2003) or National Lampoon's "Christmas Vacation" (1989).

## Christmas hits

Of course, the holiday season also includes the Christmas sounds. Songs like "Last Christmas" by Wham!, "All I Want for Christmas Is You" by Mariah Carey, or "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" by Brenda Lee can be heard all December long, from the morning drive to

work to do shopping in the evening. By the way, the best-selling Christmas song of all time is Bing Crosby's White Christmas, which has sold over 50 million copies worldwide since 1947.

### Christmas markets

Shining lights and the scent of mulled wine - a visit to the Christmas market is a particularly pleasant way to get into a festive mood. The tradition of Christmas markets, which originated in the German-speaking part of Europe, is becoming increasingly popular in the USA as well.



In many American cities, you can shop for presents at Christmas markets and, at the same time, warm yourself up with a hot drink. Among the most beautiful Christmas markets in the USA are:

### Christmas towns

All of this is not festive enough for you? You can always get more! Some American cities have turned into true Christmas towns where you'll feel like you've stepped through a magical portal and come out inside a snow globe ...

Leavenworth, Washington: The snowy town of 2,000 residents in the North

East of the United States proudly calls itself the most Christmassy place in America. To attract more tourists, the city decided in the 1960s to remodel itself in the style of a "typical" Bavarian mountain village richly decorated with lights and lametta.

Mackinac Island, Michigan: Mackinac Island, the island of tranquility, will certainly make you dream. If you get off the ferry here during the holiday season, you can celebrate as you did 100 years ago – including a horse-drawn carriage ride, a visit by Santa Claus, and a lot of nostalgia.

North Pole, Alaska: In the city of North Pole in the northernmost US Federal State, you can drive on roads like Criss Cringle Drive, Mistletoe Lane, or Santa Claus Lane. The annual ice sculpture contest attracts artists from all over the world to create their fleeting masterpieces from ice.

### Christmas dinner

The traditional Christmas dinner in the USA is served with dishes similar to those of the Thanksgiving feast. Turkey, baked ham, and all kinds of side dishes fill the stomachs of an American Christmas party, as do the cookies, cakes, and desserts afterwards. Americans also love eggnog, a drink prepared with rum, brandy, or whiskey.



### Presents

In the United States, people gather on December 24th in church or for dinner in convivial company. However, they really get going with their Christmas party only on December 25th. On the morning of the traditional Christmas Day, everyone goes together to unwrap presents.

Another American tradition is for children to hang socks by the fireplace, which they will find stuffed with sweets and small gifts on Christmas Day. As a small token of appreciation for his efforts during Christmas night, milk and cookies are placed near the fireplace for Santa Claus in return.

You can't get enough gifts? Here are a few interesting facts about them:

Christmas presents symbolize the gifts that Jesus received from the three Wise Men.

The biggest Christmas gift ever weighs 225 tons and stands in the port of New York today. The Statue of Liberty was given to the Americans by the French on Christmas 1886.

The best-selling toy of the 1980s was the Rubik's Cube.

According to data from the National Retail Federation, American consumers spent an average of \$967.13 on Christmas presents in 2017.

-Pupăzan Elena

Bibliography: <https://www.info-america-usa.com/christmas-in-america/>

## *Christmas in Spain*



Christmas is perhaps the most traditional, family-oriented celebration in the whole world, and in Spain it lasts until 6th January. Visiting the country between the middle of December and the start of the New Year is a time that's always full of lovely moments for sharing. Here are five of the most popular Christmas traditions in Spain.

#### El Gordo" Christmas lottery

The Christmas time festivities kick-start in Spain on 22nd December with the National

Christmas Lottery. The first prize is popularly known as "El Gordo". Participation is massive and the draw is closely followed throughout the morning. It has a peculiarity that makes it very special, the winning numbers are sung by children in an unmistakable chant. The prize money is very well spread out and the winners usually celebrate their glory in the street.

#### Meals bursting with Christmas flavours and lots of sweet treats

Christmas is a time for lavish meals with family and friends. The most special night is 24th December, Christmas Eve, when restaurants and hotels offer extraordinary menus to celebrate it in a big way. The meals normally include several starters, for example, Ibérico ham, seafood and delicious cheeses, followed by dishes such as soups, roast meat, fish or stuffed turkey. And to finish, sweet treats and desserts, the true stars of the Christmas dinner table. Turrón, marzipan, Spanish sweets, shortbread and naturally, Epiphany cake are all delicacies not to be missed.



-Ciobotaru Nicuta Alexandra

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/spain>

## *Christmas in Lebanon*



The only Middle Eastern country of the month that celebrates Christmas as an official holiday is Lebanon. About fourteen days before Christmas, the Lebanese usually plant seeds of Lebanese plants such as wheat, chickpeas, lentils and beans in cotton wool. The seeds are watered daily until Christmas day. When making the scenes representing the Nativity of Jesus, the Lebanese use brown paper to make people, and plants grown in cotton wool are placed around the manger. Lebanese families participate in the midnight religious service on Christmas Eve. Papa Noel (Santa Claus) makes personal visits to the home or to the church



to give gifts to the little ones (clothes or candies). A traditional Christmas dinner in Lebanon includes turkey, Lebanese salad with roast duck (Tabouleh) and pastries such as a honey cake (Baklava) or Buche de Noel. On Christmas Eve, when the church bells start ringing at midnight, this is an indication for everyone to dress in their best clothes and walk to the nearest church. On Christmas morning, friends visit each other each other and coffee, liqueurs and candied almonds are served. The Christmas lunch is the most important meal of the holiday and is usually served at the grandparents' house or at the home of the oldest member of the family. Rice and chicken meat, boiled crushed wheat (bulghur) mixed with meat, salt and pepper (Kubbeh) are not missing from the Christmas table. A Lebanese tradition requires that every time a child is born at this time of the year, especially when it is a boy, a unique kind of pudding should be prepared. This type of pudding is called Mughly and



is made from rice flour, cumin, sugar and other spices, and is served in small bowls, topped with coconut, raisins, almonds, crushed hazelnuts and walnuts. This pudding is offered to everyone who enters the house, family members and friends. In the villages, big bonfires are made in the streets and in the markets, as a way to fix all the misunderstandings with friends throughout the year. The Lebanese sing and dance around the fire. As for entertainment in Lebanon, you should know that during Christmas there are special dances called Dabkeh: young

women and men hold hands in semicircles and dance to specific music. The dancers wear clothes in vibrant colors and cover their heads.

-Popescu Toma Marius Daniel

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/lebanon>

## Christmas in TURKEY

Christmas really isn't celebrated in Turkey. December 25th isn't a public holiday- it's just a normal day! Only 0,2% of the Turkish population are Christians, and many of those are migrants/refugees from countries such as Syria and Iran, etc. Christmas in Turkey will go to Christmas services at their churches.

Istanbul is still an important location for the Greek and Eastern Orthodox Churches as the churches have had a base there for hundreds of years.



. Santa Claus is known as 'Noel Baba' but he's more likely to bring presents to children on New Year's Eve than at Christmas! (And decorations with Santa on are more likely to have him holding a banner saying 'Happy New Year' rather than 'Merry Christmas'!

At midnight there are large celebrations and lots of big firework displays.



Father Christmas is believed to bring presents to children on Christmas

-Baltoi Elena Alexandra

Bibliography: <https://www.whychristmas.com/cultures/turkey>

## *Noël en France*



### *Le 25 décembre ?*

Le solstice d'hiver était célébré avant le christianisme : les Romains fêtaient les Saturnales du 17 au 24 décembre. Lorsque Jules César réforme le calendrier, le solstice d'hiver tombe un 25 décembre. C'est finalement en 1582 que le pape Grégoire XIII décide de corriger le calendrier julien et le remplace par le grégorien, plus précis : il supprime les années bissextiles en trop, remet Pâques à l'équinoxe de printemps, retire les jours entre le 4 et le 15 octobre 1582 mais ne veut pas corriger Noël, qui était alors un 25 décembre.

### *Une fête qui varie selon les régions :*

Par ailleurs, les Français apprécient les crèches et leurs décorations s'inspirent des traditions régionales. En Provence, à Aubagne, on façonne des personnages en terre cuite, que l'on appelle "santons" (« lei santoun » en provençal qui signifie « petit saint ») pour les mettre dans les crèches. Cet artisanat provençal continue d'exister. Les cantiques de Noël ont également leur place durant le temps

Dans de nombreuses régions, c'était un moment pour se souvenir des disparus. Ainsi, en Alsace, on nommait " fête de la souvenance " cette veillée du 24 décembre. En Bretagne, on priait pour les morts; dès que commençait la veillée, on comptait dans le ciel neuf étoiles, correspondant aux neuf mois d'attente de la Vierge avant la naissance du Christ. On disait aussi que La Vierge viendrait se réchauffer près de la bûche de Noël. En Corse, on laissait pour eux les portes ouvertes toute la nuit et de la nourriture. En Languedoc, c'était un demiverre de vin, du pain, du sel et un couteau. Enfin, dans les Hautes-Alpes, on buvait à la santé des absents. Parfois des légendes étonnantes se racontaient comme en Auvergne et en Limousin, où l'on disait que les bœufs avaient, cette nuit-là, le don de parler et qu'ils cessaient de ruminer au douzième coup de minuit de crainte de réveiller l'enfant Jésus.

Les décorations :

Le sapin de Noël, toujours présent dans la pièce centrale de la maison, est le lieu sacré où les cadeaux seront déposés dans la nuit du 24 et ouverts le 25 au matin. Le premier arbre de Noël serait apparu à Sélestat en Alsace en 1521. Son origine viendrait aussi des mystères, pièces de théâtre jouées dans les églises ou sur les parvis qui, durant la période de Noël, racontaient des récits de la création du monde. Souvent, un sapin était l'arbre de vie planté au milieu du paradis terrestre. Cet arbre était décoré d'oblatas (offrandes, petites friandises figurant les hosties), et de pommes représentant le fruit défendu, objet du premier péché. Aujourd'hui les

car c'est Heinrich Wichern qui l'a inventée au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Elle était la couronne de l'Avent et portait 4 bougies, pour les 4 dimanches avant Noël. Cette coutume est encore très répandue en Alsace.

Le Marché de Noël :

Le marché de Noël se compose d'échoppes généralement en bois et construites pour la période des fêtes, qui proposent des objets de décoration, des jouets et des cadeaux, des produits souvent artisanaux. Selon la région, des produits culinaires de tradition sont proposés. En France, la tradition des marchés de Noël, vivante dans l'Est (Alsace), s'est répandue dans le reste du pays au cours des années 1990. Le marché de Strasbourg, qui a 436 ans et où l'on déguste un excellent vin chaud, reçoit 2 millions de visiteurs chaque année. Les marchés de Noël s'étendent généralement de fin novembre à fin décembre. A Paris, trois grands marchés sont incontournables : celui de St Sulpice, celui de la Défense et celui du Trocadéro. Les plus réputés restent encore ceux d'Alsace qui ont une longue tradition.

Le père Noël :

Et bien oui, il existe, n'en doutez pas surtout en période de fête. Son image actuelle est en vérité celle d'un designer de coca cola, monsieur Haddon Sundblom, que nous devrions tous connaître et qui l'a façonné en 1931 pour une campagne de publicité. On lui doit cette image de bonhomme bienveillant, aux joues rouges, jovial avec son costume rouge, inspirée de Saint Nicolas encore fêté dans le Nord et l'Est de la France, le 6 décembre. Ce saint patron des enfants, accompagné du père fouettard, était beaucoup plus moralisateur que notre père Noël! -Pupāzan Elena





In Mehedinți, in the villages at the foot of the mountains, a beautiful custom is kept, namely God's coil, which is a braided coil and is given to the first caroler, who usually has to be a boy. He must shout at the gate "Give me the roll and the sausage/ Because if I don't, I'll go to another one". The coil is given with a lighted candle. The boys compete in the streets of the village to get as many God's coils as possible.

The villagers used to offer the carolers not only colindeți but also boiled brandy or wine. Motivating especially with the cold outside, they urge carolers to taste the drink.

Unfortunately, in the villages of Oltenia there are fewer and fewer carolers, but luckily this ancient tradition has not been lost for good, but it is only being changed with the modernization of society.



*COLECTIVUL DE REDACTIE*

Director prof. DOLCESCU ALEXANDRU LAURENȚIU

PROF VĂTĂU ROXANA MARIA

ELEV PODARU GABRIEL

ELEV IANĂȘI SEBASTIAN