

Christmas Around the World



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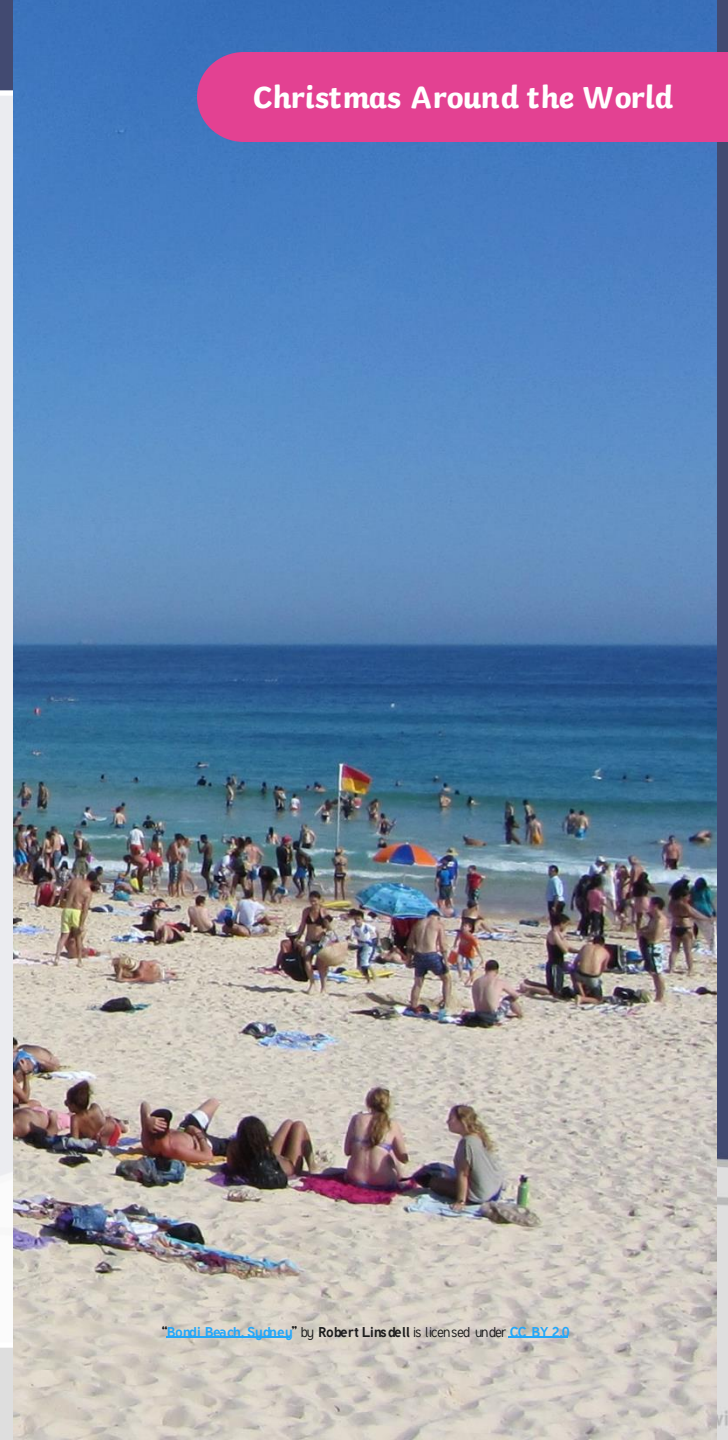






Australia

- The temperature in Australia on Christmas Day can range between 30-40°C with the hottest temperature recorded on Christmas Day in South Australia at 40.7°C.
- Children have their summer holidays from mid-December through to early February
- Some people go camping over Christmas!
- Bondi Beach is famous for families having their Christmas lunch on the beach.
- A typical Christmas menu could include seafood, glazed ham, cold chicken, duck or turkey, cold deli meats, pasta, salads, desserts of all types, fruit salad, ice cream plus Christmas treats such as mince pies. Some Australian families follow tradition of a roast dinner and Christmas pudding even in the warm summer weather.



"Bondi Beach, Sydney" by Robert Lindsay is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)



Australia

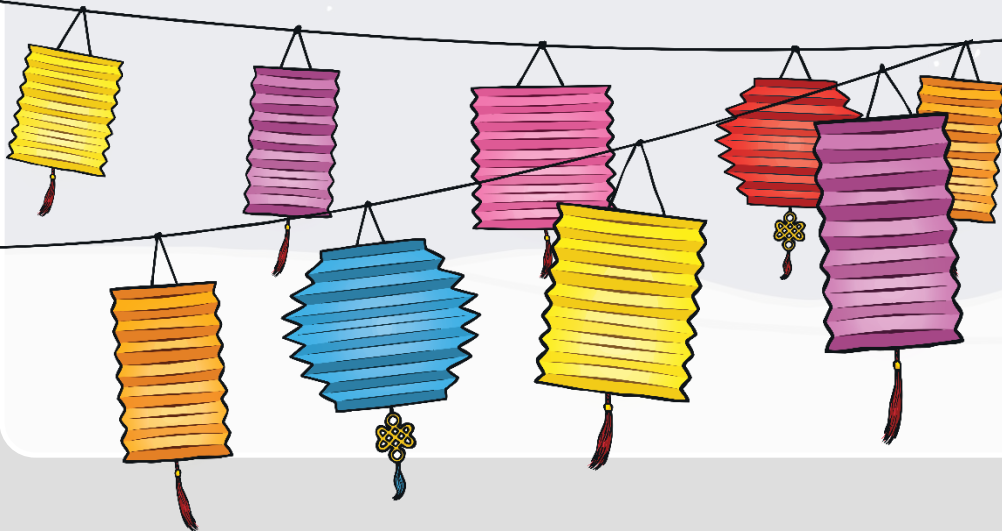
- Some Australian families have the tradition of creating Christmas light displays in their streets for everyone to enjoy. One street in Sydney has raised more than \$35,000 for charity by charging an entry fee to see their light displays on the homes in the street.
- When Santa gets to Australia he changes into a t-shirt, shorts and thongs (flip-flops). He then gives his reindeers a rest, calling on the help of his kangaroo friends or as they are known as the 'Six White Boomers' (a popular Australian Christmas carol).





China

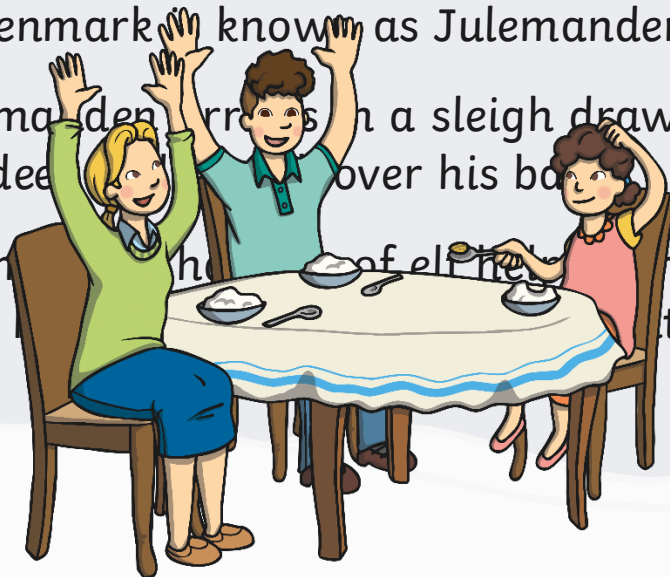
- Christians in China often celebrate by lighting their houses with paper lanterns.
- Christmas trees are called 'trees of light' and are decorated with paper chains, paper flowers and paper lanterns.
- Lots of people in China do not celebrate Christmas. The main winter festival is called Chinese New Year and takes place in February. Many Chinese people worship their ancestors during Chinese New Year.





Denmark

- The Christmas feast in Denmark is usually celebrated at midnight on Christmas Eve.
- It is common to have special rice pudding dessert in which a single almond is hidden. Whoever finds the almond will have good luck for a whole year.
- Instead of Santa Claus, the bringer of gifts in Denmark is known as Julemanden.
- Julemanden arrives in a sleigh drawn by reindeer and flies over his boyhood home.
- Julemanden is accompanied by two elf-like helpers named Juul and Hanne.





France

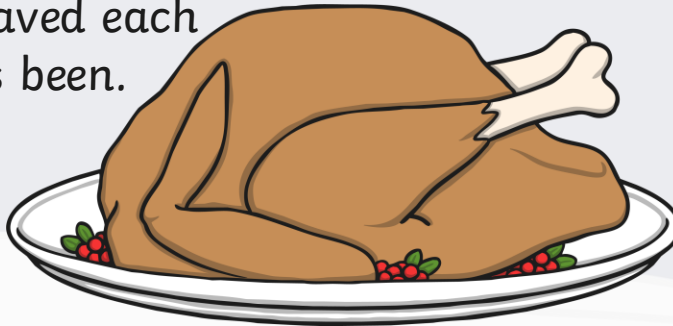
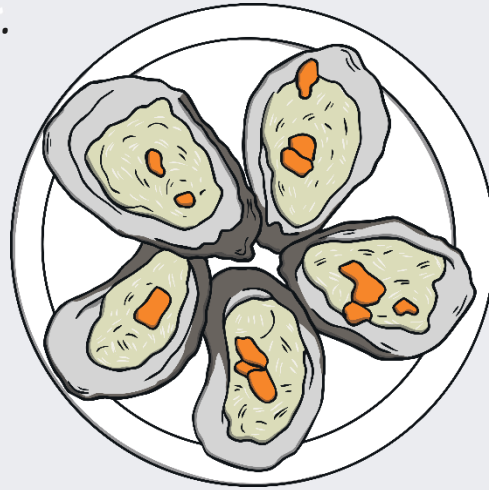
- Most French homes at Christmas time have nativity displays with clay figures called santons. Craftsmen make the santons all throughout the year to sell at annual Christmas fairs.
- Many homes also display a festive wreath and a Christmas tree.
- Many people in France celebrate by making a traditional log shaped cake called a 'bûche de Noël' (Christmas log).





France

- Christmas dinner varies in different parts of France. Some favourites are goose, turkey and oysters.
- Many French children receive gifts from Père Noël. He travels with a stern friend, Père Fouettard, who reminds him how well behaved each child has been.





Germany

- According to legend, on Christmas Eve in Germany, rivers turn to wine, animals speak to each other, tree blossoms bear fruit, mountains open up to reveal precious gems and church bells can be heard ringing in the bottom of the sea. Only the pure of heart can witness the Christmas magic.
- In many homes, children will be distracted while a Christmas tree is brought out and decorated on Christmas Eve. Presents are then put underneath. Traditionally, plates are laid out for each member of the family with fruit, nuts, chocolate and biscuits. Often, carols are then sung, sparklers are lit, the Christmas story is read and then the gifts are opened.

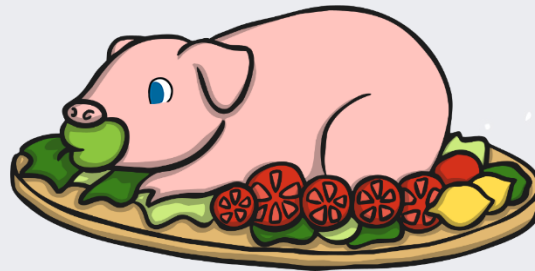
Christmas Around the World





Germany

- On Christmas Day, many families enjoy a banquet of roast goose, breads and marzipan.
- There are lots of huge Christmas fairs in Germany which are very beautiful.
- After the presentation of the tree, there is a huge feast of dishes like suckling pig, white sausage, macaroni salad and many more.





Italy

- The Christmas season is celebrated from early December until 6th January.
- During the Christmas period, in some areas of Italy, shepherds come into the towns and play bagpipes and sing carols.
- Most churches, town squares and houses will have a model of the nativity scene called a 'presepe'. This is seen as the most important decoration at Christmas time.
- In Italy, the traditional Christmas cake eaten is called a 'panettone'. It is a sweet cake filled with candied fruit.

Christmas Around the World



"Presepe Plumazzo" by Marcello is licensed under [CC-BY 2.0](#)



Italy

- In Italy, most children receive gifts on the 6th January. This day is called 'Epiphany'. 'La Befana' traditionally brings presents.
- Legend says 'La Befana' is an old, kind witch who flies on a broomstick. Long ago, the three wise men stopped to ask her for directions to the stable where the baby Jesus had been born. She didn't know the way, but offered them shelter and food. They asked her to join them on their journey but she was too busy. Later that day she set off on her broomstick, with presents for the baby Jesus, to follow the wise men but could not find the baby. She is said to still be flying around, searching for the baby Jesus.

Christmas Around the World



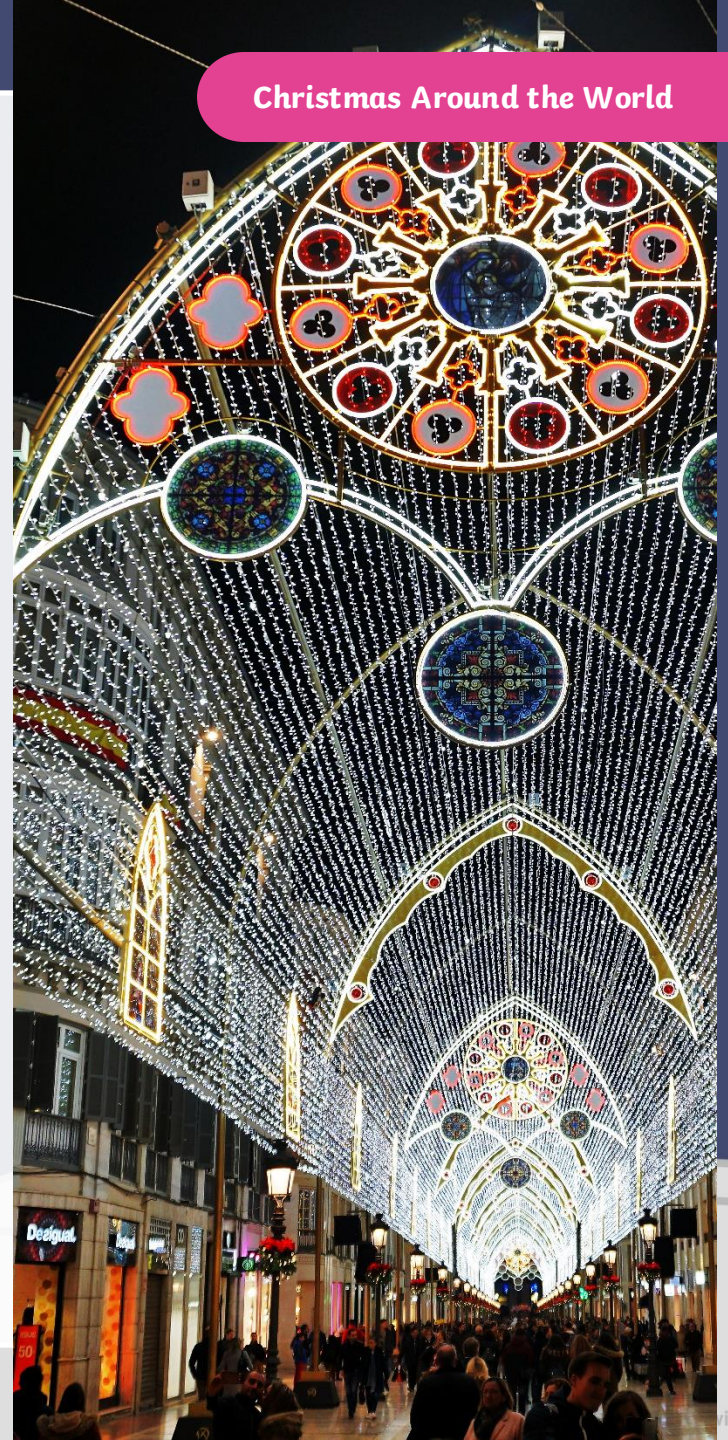
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Spain

- In Spain, the main Christmas meal is usually eaten on Christmas Eve.
- Cities in Spain decorate their streets with beautiful lights and a lot of people enjoy walking around to discover them.
- 'The Day of Innocent Saints' is on 28th December. On this day, many people remember the innocent babies who were killed by King Herod as he searched for baby Jesus. Some people try to trick each other with pranks, similar to how others celebrate April Fools' Day.
- Most families eat together in Christmas time. Normally, families reunite on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, whereas in New Years Eve, some people tend to go out with their friends. It's a very typical Christmas tradition to have Churros con chocolate as breakfast on New Years Day.

Christmas Around the World





Spain

- On 6th January, Epiphany is celebrated in Spain. In Spain, this is called 'The Festival of the Three Magic Kings'. This day celebrates the wise men bringing gifts to baby Jesus.
- Usually, children in Spain receive a few gifts on Christmas Day but most on the 6th of January for Epiphany. Tradition says that the three kings travel around, continuing the tradition of giving gift, just like they did for baby Jesus.
- On the night of the 5th of January, children leave their shoes out before they go to bed to be filled with gifts.
- On the 5th of January, all cities and towns in Spain organise parades to welcome the Three Wise Men, who bring presents to children that day or the morning of the 6th of January.



"Arrival of the King" is licensed under CC BY 2.0



India

- Many Christians in India choose to decorate mango and banana trees at Christmas time.
- Decorations are colourful and bright.
- In some parts of India, small clay oil-burning lamps are used as Christmas decorations. They are placed on the edges of roofs and on the tops of walls.
- Churches are decorated with poinsettias (red Christmas flowers) and candles for the Christmas Evening service.



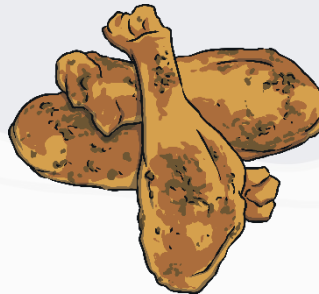
Christmas Around the World





Japan

- Lots of people in Japan celebrate Christmas, although only 1% of the population is Christian.
- Lots of homes are decorated with Christmas trees and mistletoe.
- Lots of people in Japan enjoy exchanging gifts at Christmas.
- On Christmas Day, many people in Japan eat fried chicken for dinner! Local fast food restaurants can be fully booked months in advance.



Christmas Around the World



"Tokyo Tower and Roppongi Christmas Illumination" by Marish Prabhune is licensed under CC BY 4.0



Mexico

- Several weeks before Christmas, there are huge markets set up in towns and cities in Mexico which offer crafts, food and flowers for the Christmas season. Some people travel for days to get to these markets.
- The poinsettia is a red flower native to Mexico that is used widely in Mexico as a Christmas decoration. It has been connected with Christmas since the 17th century.





Mexico

- The main Christmas celebration in Mexico is called Las Posadas. People re-enact Joseph and Mary's search for somewhere to stay in Bethlehem. They go house to house getting refused until they finally reach a house where an altar and nativity scene have been set up.
- Once they have reached the right house, a traditional prayer is spoken and the party begins. Food and drink are served and then children take it in turns to break open the piñata.



"Templo Santa María Magdalena, Toluca, Estado de Puebla, México" is licensed under CC BY-ND 4.0



Netherlands

- In the Netherlands, Santa Claus is known as 'Sinterklaas'.
- Sinterklaas arrives three weeks before the 5th December on a steamboat from Spain.
- Between his arrival and the 5th December, many children fill their shoes with hay and sugar for Sinterklaas's horse and awake to find them filled with little presents or nuts and candy.





Netherlands

- On the 4th December, Sinterklaas appears in person in children's homes asking the children about their behaviour over the past year.
- On the evening of the 5th of December, Sinterklaas will sometimes visit the houses to talk to the children.
- People in the Netherlands also celebrate Christmas from 24th-26th December.
- Sometimes, there is a 'Sunday School' service in church where the Christmas Story is read.
- On Christmas Eve, Many children in the Netherlands believe Santa delivers more presents from Lapland!



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Vietnam

- In Vietnam, Christmas Eve is often more important than Christmas Day.
- In Ho Chi Minh City, many people like to go into the city on Christmas Eve to visit a Catholic Cathedral.
- Many people will celebrate Christmas by enjoying Christmas decorations and lights in big department stores and hotels across the city. They may also throw confetti and take pictures.
- All churches and some Christian homes will display a nativity scene.
- At Christmas, some Vietnamese people will share a special Christmas Eve meal called 'reveillon' followed by a chocolate log for desert.

Christmas Around the World





The Philippines

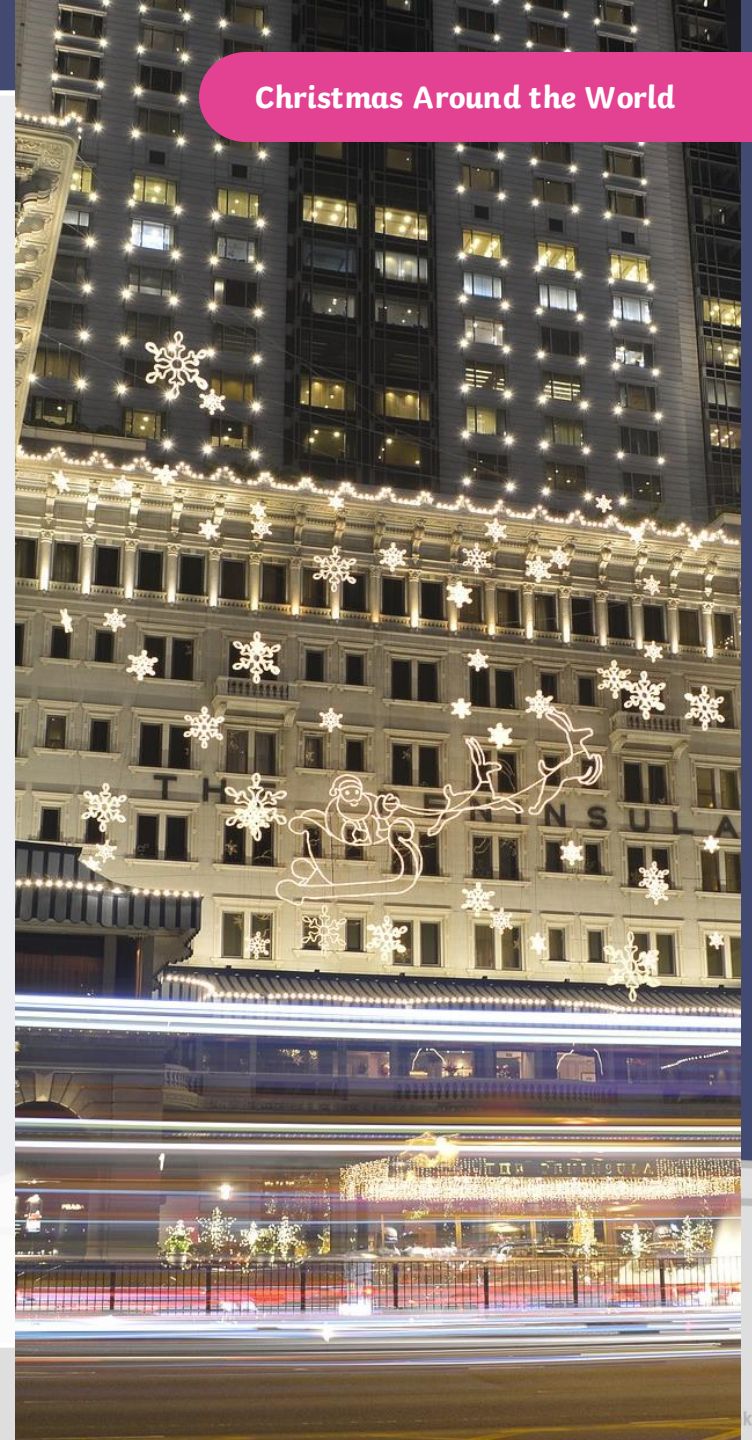
- In the Philippines, the Christmas season begins in September. Christmas carols are played on the radio and many people put up Christmas trees and decorate their homes with lights and a lantern ornament called a 'parol'. Parols are most often star-shaped but they can come in lots of different shapes and sizes.
- In the nine days before Christmas, Catholic churches hold services at dawn (very early in the morning). This series of masses is called Simbang Gabi. Some people believe that if they go to all of these services then their Christmas wishes will come true.
- People usually eat their Christmas meal with their family on Christmas Eve. They call this Noche Buena. They eat traditional dishes and also fruits like grapes and apples.



Hong Kong

- Christmas services are held at the cathedral and other churches. Some services are in Cantonese and some are in English.
- Hong Kong is decorated with lots of lights and decorations. Shops and attractions take part in a big celebration called 'Winterfest'.
- Boxing Day is a public holiday in Hong Kong.

Christmas Around the World





Brazil

- Each Christmas, thousands of people go to see the world's tallest floating Christmas tree in a lagoon in Rio de Janeiro.
- It is 85 metres tall and contains 3.1 million bulbs.

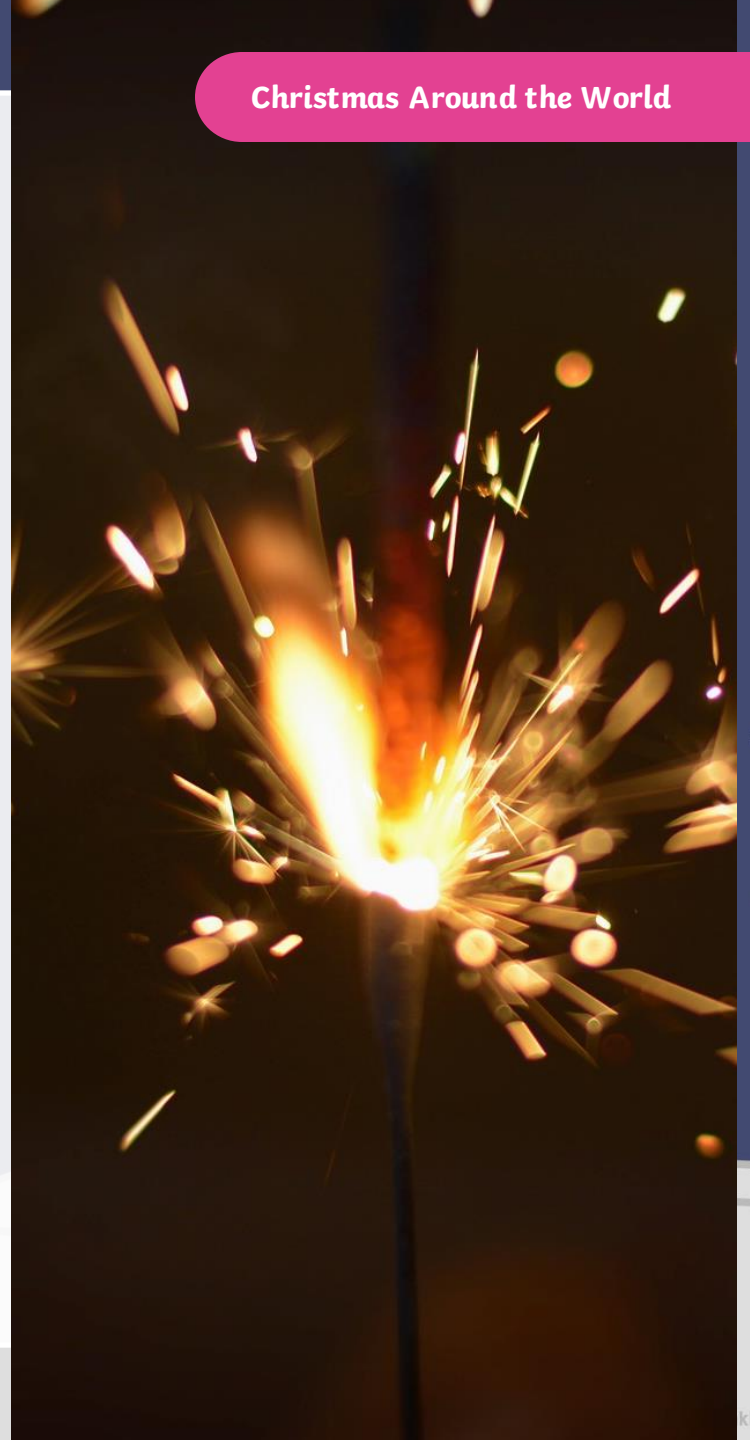
Christmas Around the World





Nigeria

- The Christmas meal in Nigeria is usually roasted goat meat and chicken with rice.
- Special events and dances take place. There are masquerade displays where dancers perform wearing masks.
- There is a festive atmosphere with lots of sparklers and fireworks to celebrate the day.





Ethiopia

- Christmas is celebrated on 7th January in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. It is called Ganna or Genna.
- Many Christians fast for up to 44 days before Christmas. During this time, they don't eat meat, fat, eggs and dairy products and they pray and try to do good things. They break their fast with the Christmas feast.
- The Christmas feast often includes injera (a traditional Ethiopian flatbread) and w'et, a stew made with chicken, beef, lamb or other meat, plus vegetables and peas or lentils.





Botswana

- Many people in Botswana travel to spend Christmas with their families. They sometimes spend this time in their ancestral homelands, away from the cities.
- Seswaa is a stew made with beef or goat meat that is very traditional at Christmas. Barbecues or braai are also becoming more popular. People share their feasts with the whole family or sometimes even the whole village.

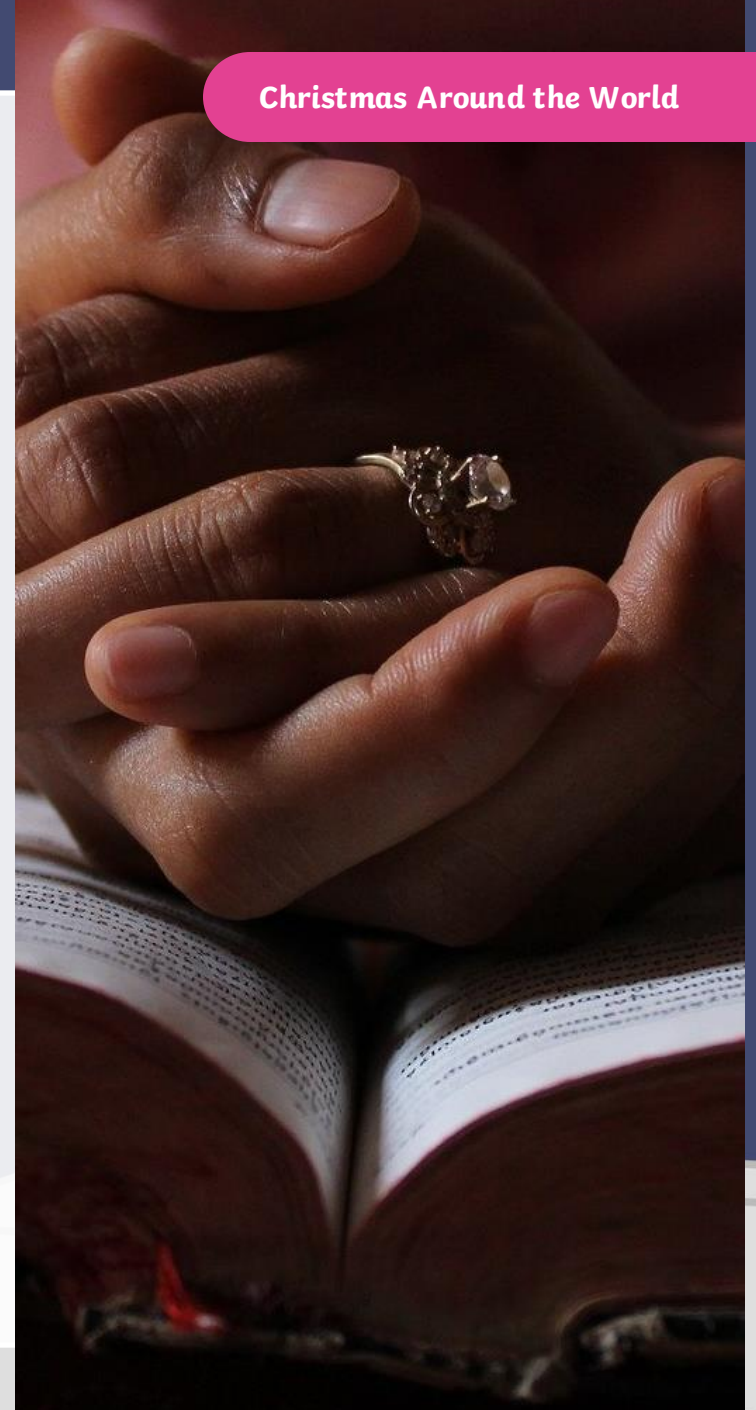
Christmas Around the World





Democratic Republic of the Congo

- Christmas is a very important religious festival for Christians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is traditional to have a Christmas feast with meat (often chicken or goat) and to wear new clothes. Many people save up or buy in advance as these things can become expensive at Christmas when lots of people want them.
- Many people attend church services on Christmas Eve. These can last into the early hours of Christmas Day and feature choirs and nativity plays telling the story of the Bible from the creation to after the birth of Jesus.





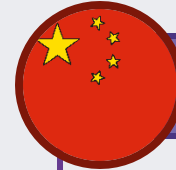
English

Merry Christmas



Spanish

Feliz Navidad



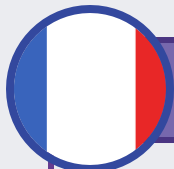
Mandarin

Shèng dàn kuài lè



Vietnam

Giáng sinh vui vẻ



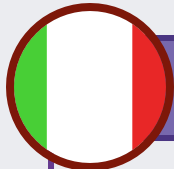
French

Joyeux Noël



Dutch

Vrolijk Kerstfeest



Italian

Buon Natale



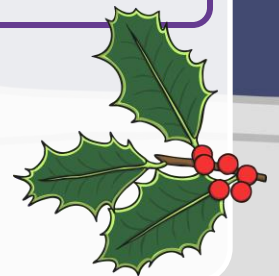
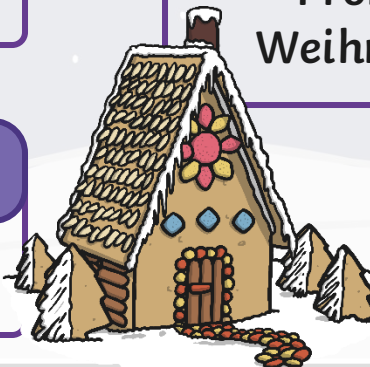
German

Fröhliche
Weihnachten



Japanese

Merii Kurisumasu





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