

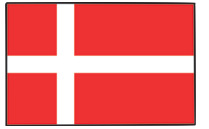
Christmas Around the World

Fact Cards



Christmas Around the World

Denmark



In Denmark, the Christmas feast is celebrated at midnight on Christmas Eve. They often have a special rice pudding dessert in which a single almond is hidden. It's said that whoever finds the almond, has good luck for a whole year.

Instead of Santa Claus, they have a bringer of gifts named Julemanden.



Christmas Around the World

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.

The Christmas tree is decorated on Christmas Eve and the presents are put underneath.

Christmas Around the World

India



Christians in India 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.

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.

Netherlands



In the Netherlands, people celebrate Sinterklaas on the 5th of December. Sinterklass is a legendary figure based on Saint Nicholas, although he is not the same as Santa Claus or Father Christmas.

Sinterklaas sails from Spain on his feast day, December 5th.

Nigeria



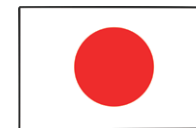
The Christmas meal in Nigeria is usually roasted goat meat and chicken with rice.

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 they day.



Japan



Christmas was introduced to Japan by the Christian missionaries and for many years only those who were of Christian faith celebrated it.

Today, lots of people in Japan love the Christmas season and it's almost universally celebrated even though only 1% of people believe in Christ.



Australia



Australia is usually incredibly hot on Christmas day.

Families often gather in gardens, backyards or at the beach to celebrate Christmas.

Many people in Australia put up Christmas trees and decorate their houses and homes with lights.



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.

Ireland

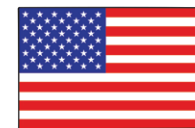


It is tradition to place a candle in the window of the home. This is a symbol to welcome strangers and to remember those who are far away from home at Christmas.

Homes are decorated with natural materials such as holly, pine cones and ivy.



USA



On Christmas Day in the USA, lots of people like to gather with their families to eat a large meal.

Some people like to thread pieces of popcorn onto a string and use this to decorate the tree.

In the United States, lots of people like to bake Christmas cookies to enjoy with friends and family.



Brazil



Each Christmas, thousands of people go to see the world's tallest floating Christmas tree on water in Rio de Janeiro.

It is 85 metres tall and contains 3.1 million bulbs.



Guatemala



Lots of people in Guatemala build a Nativity with their family.

The nativity scene is called a 'Nacimiento'.



Sweden



In Sweden, the biggest celebrations around Christmas time is St. Lucia's day, on December 13th.

A girl is dressed up in a white dress with a red sash around her waist and a crown of candles on her head.

A popular food eaten for breakfast on St. Lucia's day is a saffron bun called 'Lussekat', which means 'Lucia's cat'.

Mexico



Just before Christmas, during the 'Festival of Radishes',

Mexican farmers carve radishes to make Nativity scenes.



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'.

Botswana



Many people in Botswana travel to spend Christmas with their families.

Seswaa is a stew made with beef or goat meat that is very traditional at Christmas. Barbecues or braai are also becoming more popular.