

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

The Department of Intercultural Communication and International Tourism

December, 2021



What's new?

Francisk Skorina Gomel State University for the first time hosted the international discussion "Culture is the fifth skill" on the topic of intercultural communication and cultural characteristics of countries and peoples of the world. Eleven teams from Belarusian and Russian universities took part in the videoconferencing. The event was organized by the Department of Intercultural Communications and International Tourism of Gomel State University.

The student presentations reflected the peculiarities of mentality, value orientations, national-specific features of verbal and non-verbal behavior, national etiquette, traditions and customs. The cultures of South Korea, Russia, Norway, Great Britain, Israel, Thailand, Australia and China were considered. The sophomores of the specialty "Linguistic support of intercultural communications (international tourism)" made a presentation about the Japanese culture. All participants of the first International thematic discussion were awarded with certificates; the best presentations of the teams were awarded with diplomas. We hope that the discussion will become a good tradition and such meetings will be held annually.

Looking forward to further fruitful cooperation!

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S EVE TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Christmas is almost upon us, our favourite time of the year. Wherever you are from in the world, why not take some time to learn more about Christmas and New Year's Eve traditions all over the planet? From fun, quirky traditions to more unusual customs, we've pulled together a list of interesting Christmas traditions from different countries. See how they compare to your traditions at home or see how many of these you already know! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

THE NETHERLANDS

Christmas in The Netherlands is much more centered around December 5th rather than the traditional 24th/25th. In the couple of weeks leading up to it, children put one of their shoes by the fire on the Saturday nights before bed, filled with carrots, treats, poems or drawings for 'Sinterklaas' and his horse in the hope that they'll wake up to little gifts in their shoe in return.

A few days before December 5th, people flock to the closest port to welcome Sinterklaas and his 'Petes' as he arrives on his boat from Spain! He and his Petes then hand out sweets to those who came to greet him. December 5th is essentially the Christmas Day of the Netherlands, when families all eat together and open presents that arrive on the doorstep in a sack of potatoes.



On New Year's Day, the Dutch like to take part in the New Year Dive where thousands of people from the Netherlands take to the ice cold sea and lakes wearing orange.

SPAIN

As well as having Santa Claus coming to leave presents on the 25th December, the Spanish also have Three Wise Men who come to visit on the 6th January. Little children leave food for the men and water for their camels and in return the Wise Men will leave presents. On the 5th January, the day before the Wise Men visit, a special cake is eaten called El Roscon de Reyes (the cake of the Wise Men) with little presents hidden within the cake - however there is one bad present in the cake and whoever finds it pays for the cake!

On New Year's Eve, the Spanish wear red underwear for good luck but they have to be a gift from someone otherwise it doesn't count. On the first 12 seconds of the New Year, the Spanish take 12 grapes and eat one per second to represent luck in the next 12 months.

ENGLAND

In England the British custom is to crack Christmas crackers at the dinner table before you start your meal on Christmas Day. Christmas crackers are filled with jokes, small toys or silly gifts, as well as a coloured paper hat that everyone wears for dinner. It's not a British Christmas without watching the Queen's Christmas Day speech on TV.



On Boxing Day, some households like to cook Bubble and squeak, a meal that consists of all of the leftovers from the Christmas Dinner the day before. It's made from brussel sprouts, roast potatoes, parsnips and more, all thrown in the pan and mashed together to eat for an early lunch.

SWEDEN

Christmas in Sweden is celebrated on Christmas Eve, when Santa (usually a dressed up neighbour) will come round in the evening and deliver the gifts along with a rhyme. In the morning they'll eat rice pudding for breakfast, followed by a delicious buffet of ham, stockfish, pickled herring and meatballs for lunch and gingerbread and mulled wine in the afternoon.

PORTUGAL

In Portugal, a fun Christmas tradition involves a special festive cake which is eaten called 'Bolo Rei'. Inside the cake there's one trinket inside and whoever finds it "wins". In some Portuguese homes a fava bean is hidden inside the cake and whoever eats the slice that contains the bean, that person has to bake or buy next year's cake.



POLAND

On the Christmas dinner tables of Polish families, it's traditional to serve 12 different dishes and everyone must try each one in order for the next year to be fulfilling. The number 12 is due to the number of months in the year and the number of apostles.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Christmas in America is exactly like the movies make out - full of parties, crazy decorations, gingerbread houses and delicious festive food. The States go so wild with their Christmas lights, that they've even made an annual TV show out of it called The Great Christmas Light Fight, with families all over the country decorating their houses like mad with lights to get the win! You wouldn't believe some of the displays they create... It literally stops traffic.



CHINA

While the Chinese don't necessarily celebrate Christmas, if you visit China during the Christmas period there will be lavish decorations around the big cities ahead of Christmas and they will remain lit up all the way up to Chinese New Year, the main celebration in China.

JAPAN

The Japanese don't tend to celebrate Christmas, however one tradition that is pretty nationwide is getting a KFC takeaway for lunch on the 25th. In Japan, if you don't preorder your chicken weeks in advance, you'll have to suck it up and wait in line at the nearest store, sometimes for hours!



VENEZUELA

On Christmas Day, it's been tradition for Venezuelans in Caracas to roller skate to church instead of walk! However nowadays this tradition happens a lot less. Venezuelans will eat hallaca on Christmas Day, a dish similar to a Mexican tamale. On New Year's Eve, 12 grapes are eaten where you make a wish for each grape you eat. People also put rice or money in their pockets before midnight on NYE in hope to have an abundant, wealthy New Year.



GERMANY

An advent wreath is put on the dining room table on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. The wreaths have four large candles on them and each one is lit every Sunday. In some German households, the Christmas tree is not revealed until Christmas Eve.

December 5th is also an important day in Germany; it marks St Nicholas' Day, a very exciting day for the kids during the Christmas period. Children leave freshly polished boots outside of the bedroom door before bedtime. They say St Nicholas and his assistant will visit their homes overnight and leave presents in their boots for them to open the next morning.

Krampus is also a tradition in Germany.

AUSTRIA

In Austria, there is quite a scary Christmas tradition known as Krampus, a beast-like demon character who roams the city scaring naughty children. The Krampus character is meant to be St Nicholas' evil accomplice. Sometimes men dress up as Krampus on the eve of St Nicholas.



ICELAND

For 13 days in the lead up to Christmas in Iceland, 13 mischievous trolls, also known as the Yule Lads, wreak harmless havoc across the country! On each of the 13 nights, children leave their favourite pair of shoes by the window, hoping that the Yule Lads will leave them a nice Christmas gift in them during the night, and they won't get given rotting potatoes for being naughty. The 13 Yule Lads all wear real traditional Icelandic outfits, and each of them cause mischief in their own, jokey way!

FRANCE

On Christmas day, the French eat foie gras and seafood with their Christmas meals; their main Christmas meal is called Réveillon. A lot of people however still go for turkey as it's seen as being more traditional festive food (it's just not considered to be very French). Yule logs are also burned in French homes.

AUSTRALIA

Christmas in Australia is all sun, sea and sand. Drinks on the beach and chilling by the pool is how the Aussies spend Christmas Day. Santa often pays a visit to the beach, arriving in style on a boat, handing out sweets to the kids. They drink stubbies and grill shrimp and seafood on the barbecue on Christmas as well as eating cold meats. Backyard cricket is a popular Christmas game to play during the day.



To be continued

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