

Christmas traditions in Spain

During the Christmas season we do more or less the same activities as in the rest of the world.



The streets are beautifully lit, store windows display all kinds of holiday merchandise and interesting gifts. Streets are crowded with people searching for some presents for their friends and relatives. All this good spirit felt in the streets tells us that Christmas is just round the corner.



Christmas Eve in Spain is called "Nochebuena", which we celebrate on the 24th of December. We have a big dinner with the whole family and we eat a lot. The special sweet in Spain is the "turrón" and the typical is made of honey and almonds. At this night Santa Claus comes to the houses and brings some presents to the children.

The 31st of December we celebrate "Nochevieja", which is quite an impressive spectacle in Spain. At 12 o'clock we eat 12 grapes. When the clock strikes 12, the churches bells and the town halls sound 12 times, and at this moment, we eat 12 grapes, one for each toll of the bell. This will bring us luck for the coming New Year.



THE THREE KINGS (Three Wise Men)

The best-loved tradition among children during Spanish



Christmas is the Three Kings (Melchor, Gaspar and Baltasar).

The night on the 5th of January The Three Kings bring the presents to the children. But some weeks before we have to write the letter to The Three

Kings telling them what we want them to bring us. We also have to tell them that we had been good kids all year round.

At schools we receive the visit of Prince Aliatar, who is in charge for delivering all our letters to the Three Kings. And at last... the 6th January is there! We wake up early in the morning,



very anxious, to see if they have brought all the presents we have asked for. We open the presents and we play the whole day with the toys wishing Christmas holidays would never end. We also realized that the food and drink we had left for The Three Kings and their camels has gone from the plates



and glasses.

For breakfast or after lunch, families often have the typical dessert of the day, the "Roscón de Reyes", a large ring shaped cake that is decorated with candied fruits. Somewhere inside the cake there is a surprise, and the

person to find it will be crowned King or Queen of the house for the remainder of the day. And the person who finds the bean, has to pay the roscón next year.



NATIVITY SCENE

One symbol of Christmas that still maintains much importance throughout Spain is the Nativity scene. These scenes occupy squares in

cities and small towns throughout the country, and can also be

seen in the doorways and entrances of many Spanish homes. Some towns might even have a live Nativity scene, with actors and actresses playing the parts of Mary and Joseph and the three wise men as well as live animals like lambs, sheep, a donkey and a cow.



December 28, Day of the Innocents

December 28 marks a day of celebration called the Day of the Innocents. Although the roots of this day are bloody, in modern times, the customs practiced on this day are very fun. It's a chance for everyone to play a joke on someone and just when that person has fallen for it, say "Inocente, inocente! Some kind of "April Fool's Day".

¡INOCENTE!



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