

Even though we celebrate in different ways, Christmas gives us the opportunity to remember the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas around the World

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Children around the world celebrate Christmas in different ways. This calendar describes some of them. Cut out the pictures on page 34. Place this calendar on a wall in your home. Beginning on December 1, find the picture that is described by the words for the day. Then paste the picture on the square for that day.

In Japan, children love to eat Christmas cake with strawberries and whipped cream.

In Finland, families visit cemeteries on Christmas Eve and place candles on the graves of loved ones.

In India, people put small clay lamps on the roofs of their homes to show that Jesus is the Light of the World.

In Ireland, families place candles in the windows of their homes to show that they would have welcomed Mary and Joseph.

German children leave their shoes or boots by

In Australia, many people

Families in Argentina light diamond-shaped lanterns

In Venezuela, children

the fireplace or outside their front doors. The next morning, the shoes are filled with candy.

In the United States, people decorate evergreen trees with small lights, tinsel, and ornaments.

On this day in Sweden, a young girl wears a white dress with a red sash and serves bread and biscuits.

Children in Spain are given toys, sweets, or small instruments as they go from house to house reciting verses or singing carols.

Tongan families get up early to make and deliver breakfast to their neighbors. Children are excited to deliver these breakfasts and see what the neighbors bring.

in Australia, many people go to the beach and sing Christmas carols.

Families in the Philippines decorate with *parols*, which are star shapes made out of bamboo and tissue paper and lit with tiny lights.

In Holland, families celebrate on Christmas Eve by drinking hot chocolate and eating *banketletter*, a cake that looks like the first letter of the family's last name.

One week before Christmas, Italian children dress as shepherds and go from door to door singing songs and reciting poems.

In Paraguay, people decorate their homes with *coco* flowers.

diamond-shaped paper balloons called *globos* on Christmas Eve and release them into the night sky.

In Liberia, families eat dinner outside, sitting in a circle. A traditional Liberian Christmas dinner includes biscuits, rice, and beef.

In Norway, children eat rice pudding. The child who finds the hidden nut wins a candy pig or a piece of chocolate.

Children in England receive a paper-covered tube, called a Christmas cracker, at Christmas dinner. The tube cracks loudly when pulled apart. A paper hat, poem, or small toy is inside.

In Lebanon, chickpeas, wheat, beans, and lentils are planted two weeks before Christmas. The sprouts are used to surround the nativity scene in the home.

roller-skate in the streets early on Christmas morning.

In Bulgaria, everybody at the table stands at the same time when dinner is over.

Mexican families cut designs in paper bags to make lanterns, or *farolitos*. Candles are placed inside the *farolitos*, which line the sidewalks, windows, and rooftops.

In New Zealand, many cities have celebrations in parks. People listen to well-known singers sing Christmas carols.

In Ghana, families stay up all evening playing games. Just before midnight, the family counts down the seconds until Christmas day.

