



Holiday Traditions

Season TRADITIONS

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The leaves of fall have collected beneath the now barren trees. The presence of sun no longer signifies warmth, and the sharp wind whistles past reddened cheeks.

The populace have dug up their mittens and scarfs from the winter storage. The season of traditions is definitely in the air.

It's time again to partake in traditions that persevere throughout the years and generation to generation.

Despite the many different pleasures of the season, several are recognizable to nearly everyone.

This year, while decking the halls with that holly thing, think proudly that it is a surviving tradition that began in 17th-century Germany when gathered garland suspended from the ceiling was a yearly decoration.

In addition to the German connection, there is an older Roman custom of decking the house with evergreens as emblems of the mysteries of the forests and its gods.

As the last tree ornament is placed on the tree with tinsel and glitz, think nobly that this tradition of bringing the nature indoors was inspired by German immigrants and became popular in America in the 1840s.

The tree symbolizes a season of bountiful vegetation and was therefore decorated with fruits.

Before the arrival of the Christmas tree, a small potted cherry or hawthorn tree was brought into the house.

Almost globally there is a bearer of gifts, whether it be "Father Christmas," "Santa Claus," the "Three Kings" (or Mom, Dad, grandparent, friend or stranger).

In all cases, the general idea of gift-givers is to question the children of their past behavior and reward the good with gifts.

Besides the indoor decorations and activities, the season is not complete without an annual snowfall.

During the season there is a sentimental necessity for snow because of its connotation with purity and magic.



Decorated trees and gift givers are holiday traditions that date back for centuries.

Even in warmer climates where snowfalls are few and far between, take a gander on the shop windows where artificial frost is sprayed artistically near thermometers reaching 75 degrees.

When the season is blessed with snow, a favorite pastime is to sit in front of a blazing fire with a cup of hot eggnog (yes, some people drink it hot).

The "yule log" and fire are the European way of honoring the sun. Instead of an actual fire, colored lights are strung throughout trees and houses to also represent sunlight.

Eggnog is said to be a descendant of the English drink called

syllabub, a spiced mixture of wine and creamed milk. The drink was popular in the 15th and 16th centuries.

The American eggnog substitutes the wine with a splash of rum and/or brandy. During the time of abundant progressive seasonal parties, people were said to go "eggnogging" around to different houses.

By the fourth "eggnogged" house, guests are easily provoked into participating in a merry sing-a-long. One song that is never missed by carolers is "Silent Night."

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