

# Sample some holiday foods from around the world

By VIRGINIA JUSTICE

The holidays are celebrated in different ways around the world. Not all cultures celebrate Christmas or Hanukah, and even climate sometimes dictates what food items are available during the holiday season. In the northern hemisphere, December is winter, in the southern hemisphere it is summer, so while we in Oregon are dealing with the cold and possibly snow, people in Australia and other countries south of the equator are dealing with the heat. Many countries share traditional holiday foods or have meals similar to neighboring countries.

For Israelis, latkes are a popular Hanukah food. This pancake-type dish is made with shredded or mashed potatoes, diced onions and eggs, then fried in oil until crisp on both sides. This fried potato dish is typically served with applesauce or sour cream.

In Greenland, where Christmas trees are imported because pine trees do not grow there, the Christmas celebration includes mattak, whale skin with blubber inside, and kiviak, which is auk (a small bird) inside a seal skin that is buried for several months to decompose. Greenlanders also enjoy fish, cooked or raw, barbecued caribou with a desserts of berries, apple crisp and Danish pastries.

For Peruvians, spiced hot chocolate is a holiday tradition even though Christmas is summertime. This hot chocolate with spices like cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves is made in large quantities and served to the less fortunate along with panettone, an Italian sweet bread made with currants and orange zest. For Christmas dinner, Peru-



vians will dine on turkey, tamales, salads, applesauce and panettone.

Polish families dine on 12 foods that represent the 12 apostles. Borscht, a beet soup served hot or cold, is often the first course of the Christmas Eve dinner. The Polish typically do not consume meat during this time so dishes contain fish, vegetables and legumes. Pierogi (a polish dumpling) and cabbage rolls, which normally contain meat, are made without it during the holidays.

On the island of Jamaica, fruitcake, curry goat, stewed oxtail and rum are a part of the traditional Christmas feast. Dried fruit for the fruitcake is soaked in rum for months before the cakes are made to ensure moist, flavorful cake.

Lutefisk is a traditional holiday dish in many Nordic countries. Lute-

fisk is dried white fish, which has been soaked in a lye solution, then rinsed and cooked. The preparation of lutefisk is a lengthy process starting with soaking the dry fish in water for five to six days, changing the water daily. The fish is then soaked in a water and lye solution for two days followed by again soaking the fish in clear water for six days (water changed daily). After completing the soaking the fish is cooked by parboiling or baking in a low heat oven. The result is a fish with a jelly-like texture and strong fish smell.

Australians are likely to have a barbecue for Christmas dinner due to the summer heat. Their celebrations include shrimp and fish or the more traditional roast turkey with stuffing. In Japan, Kentucky Fried Chicken is a holiday tradition; peo-

ple call in orders months in advance and line up around the block to ensure they get this holiday food.

One thing that appears to be common in holiday celebrations around the world is sweets: pastries, sweetbread, pudding, candy and cookies with national and regional twists are a huge part of the holiday season. In many countries special cakes, pastries and breads are made to honor Christ and the Apostles; some of these treats include a hidden prize said to bring happiness, health or prosperity during the coming year to the person who finds it.

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