

Christmas Observed During Month Throughout World

From Alaska to Australia . . . from Hawaii to Holland . . . from Portugal to Peru— it's Christmas now, or going to be soon. For Christmas is a round the world event that starts in some countries Dec. 5 . . . and the ending is not in sight until Jan. 6!

Holland, Switzerland, Belgium and Germany begin their celebrations Dec. 5, the eve of St. Nicholas' Day. In the Latin American countries, the Feast of the Epiphany, Jan. 6, is the big day.

In the Philippines, Christmas starts on Dec. 16. The country, which is predominantly Catholic, climaxes eight days of mass worship at 3 a.m. with midnight services on Christmas Eve. Then the caroling, food, gift exchanges and fireworks begin.

The Philippine Christmas finally ends on Jan. 6 with the visit from the Three Kings of the East. Children put their shoes out the night before and in the morning find them filled with coins. This same tradition is also found in Spain, Portugal and Latin America.

In Sweden, Christmas is actually the celebration of Lucia, on Dec. 13. That day the eldest girl of each family arises early and dresses in a long white robe with a crown of lighted candles on her head. Then she wakes the family with servings of cake and coffee.

One of the most delightful practices in Sweden, and in Denmark and Norway, is to prepare a tree for the birds on Christmas Eve Day. A wheat sheaf is tied to the top of a pole. Beneath it the children scatter suet.

Another custom in the Scandinavian countries centers around the Christmas dinner, a dessert of rice pudding. One whole almond is hidden and the person who finds it, while eating the pudding, gets a prize and the assurance of good luck in the coming year.

Danish children leave a bowl of milk and rice for their Jule-Nissen. This custom of hospitality is found in Holland too. There children put out carrots and hay for St. Nicholas' horse.

In Holland gifts are disguised. Small gifts are sent in immense packages—gifts are tucked into anything, including a sausage, to make it im-

possible to guess the content. German families make a game out of the unwrapping of gifts. Presents are wrapped in layers of paper, each marked with a different person's name. The gift is passed from one to another until the last wrapper is removed. The gift is for that person. Sometimes, instead of the gift there will be instructions for how to locate it.

In Mexico children have a pinata rather than a stocking hung for small gifts. The pinata is a fragile earthen jar usually, which is decorated and disguised. It's filled with inexpensive toys, nuts, candy and other goodies. The children each have a turn at breaking the pinata which is suspended from the ceiling. When the contents tumble everyone makes a scramble for them.

"Winter" Festivals Behind the Iron Curtain, Christmas is similar to ours . . . but there is no reference to the religious meaning of the Day. They have "Winter Trees" and "Father Frost."

The Chinese too follow our traditions without any religious themes. They have a wonderful, gay time, but don't believe in the meaning of the occasion.

The special Japanese holiday marks the New Year, but they liked the celebration they saw the GIs having so much . . . they now have a Kurisumasu (Christmas) too. But, it is much more like our wild New Year's Eve frolics, while their New Year resembles our Christmas.

The Japanese like Santa's red and white outfit because those are their traditional festival colors. So Santa, and especially short-skirted girl Santas, are pictured everywhere. Most employers give one or two month's salary as a bonus at this time . . . and the Japanese spend it freely.

Aloha-Holiday Christmas in our newest State, Hawaii, is typical of the island. Santa arrives by outrigger canoe with hula-skirted helpers.

Evergreens are put up and decorated the same as we do, but they are soaked in a wide variety of solutions to keep the needles from drying out. Poinsettias are used generously as they grow wild. Tiny trees are made from the greenery tops of pineapples to use as table decorations.

Christmas in the United States is the product of a mixture of traditions from most all countries, but especially from England, Germany, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, and even Bavaria.

One tradition from England which we do not follow is their Boxing Day. It's the day after Christmas and at that time gifts are left for the milkman, postman and others who have served.

From Switzerland Santa's "locomotion" comes from Switzerland, where it is believed that gifts are brought by a radiant angel who rides in a sleigh drawn by six reindeer.

The tradition of putting candles in the window comes from Bavaria where every window has a candle . . . to light the way for Kristkind, messenger of the Infant Jesus. The burning of the Yule Log is a custom from England and from Italy. In Italy, the Log replaces the Christmas tree. Children stand blindfolded before the fire and recite a poem. When they are finished and the blindfold re-

moved, there are gifts at their feet.

In Italy, and in Spain, some gifts are given by drawing from a large bowl, called The Urn of Fate. Packages, some of them empty, are placed in the bowl and everyone draws until they have a gift. Then they may trade around until each person has a suitable gift.

Christmas is, indeed, a Happy Holiday around the world . . . and in most countries it is also a beautiful time, filled with traditions honoring the Birth of the Child, Jesus.



YEAR 'AROUND CHRISTMAS GIFT—Luggage knows no season and will be used for years. Select a case to match a set the recipient already owns, or start them on a collection. Shown here are a pair in white vinyl bound with black cowhide; two leather duffel bags; and a handsome tapestry satchel.—Photo Courtesy Luggage and Leather Goods Manufacturers of America, Inc.

Dolls Always Popular For Most All Girls

Maybe it's the mother complex in her, but every little girl wants—and deserves—a doll. This year, reports Toy Guidance Council, the perfect, oh-so-wonderful doll will be waiting for her . . . exceeding anything she may have fancied in her most elaborate dreams.

Dolls not only resemble children, they walk, talk, cry and drink like children. Manufacturers have exceeded the already near-human realism of previous seasons, now creating models with such muscular agility, they actually perform ballet routines.

Another amazing development is a versatile 3-foot high doll, exact counterpart of any real youngster her age, designed to walk alongside a carriage pushing a smaller doll! Magic on the family scene.

Speech versatility is still another development in the doll world. This year Chatty Cathy, young Miss America of the play pen set, makes her entry on the holiday scene speaking whole sentences in small child chatter! Another female with a talent for talking.

More Marvels Still more marvels have entered the field—accessories,

even furniture, copied from current "grown-up" models; kits with instructions on the "care and feeding" of dolls . . . even diets and scientific baby care; and still another thrill—a baby's bath with nozzle spray.

High fashion takes over the miniature doll group, with a boom in carrot-tressed dolls, bangs and bee-hive coiffures, even needle-pointed shoes and bulky charm bracelets. 1960's doll is a career girl carrying a brief case!

Stuffed animals have personalities, too. Patterned after zoo counterparts, they look amazingly real. Others have come from outer space, or a fantasy group, and some are TV characters named Huckleberry Hound and Quick Draw McGraw.

With so many "jet age" developments, it should be a record year for the Doll . . . First Lady of The Land.

If Pop doesn't have an electric razor give him one for Christmas. There are many new models available—you'll surely find one that's just right for light or heavy beards, to give Dad just what he's always wanted, "A close shave!"

Novel Way To Display Cards Is Presented

Here's a novel way to display cards: Color thin wooden dowels with vegetable dyes or ink . . . arrange them in a decorated container and spike your cards on to the end of each dowel.

Incidentally, it will look prettier if you keep the dowels at different heights. The effect is like a bouquet of lovely Christmas cards!

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