

Christmas Traditions Around the World

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Austria: Bad Austrian children live in fear of the Christmas devil Krampus. Unlike the murderous monster in the 2015 movie, Krampus is said to beat naughty children with branches.



Canada: Canada Post recognizes the address Santa Claus, North Pole, Canada, HO HO HO as legitimate. Any letters sent to this address are replied to.

Catalonia: Catalonians include the figure of the Caganer in their nativity scenes. Caganer is a figure depicting a man squatting down defecating. They also decorate Tío de Nadal, or “the pooping log”, with a face and blanket and beat it with sticks on Christmas Eve.



Czech Republic: Unmarried women stand by a door and throw a shoe over their shoulder. If the toe points towards the door, they are believed to be married in the next year.

Germany: Children leave a shoe outside on December 5th. Good children awake to find it filled with sweets while naughty ones are disappointed to find a branch.



Greece: A race of goblins, known as the Kallikantzaroi are said to wreak havoc during the 12 days of Christmas.

Guatemala: Guatemalan neighborhoods sweep out their houses, and then create a large pile of dirt accompanied by a devil effigy. They then burn it to cast the devil away.



Iceland: A mythical beast known as the Yule Cat is said to stalk the Icelandic hills. People don't receive new clothes before Christmas Eve are 'devoured' by him.

Italy: Italian children, rather than Santa Claus, await the arrival of Befana the friendly witch.



Japan: As a result of a powerful advertising campaign in 1974, many Japanese families now eat KFC on Christmas Eve.

Latvia: A group of “mummers” dressed in outlandish costumes travel from house to house exchanging treats for blessings.



Norway: All brooms are hidden on December 24th in case an evil spirit or witch should try to steal them.