



# Advent workshop

## How Christmas is celebrated in other countries

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All over the world, Christians wait for Christmas every winter, the day Jesus' birthday is celebrated. This tradition is, indeed, very old. Even though nobody is quite sure, when precisely it started, it's commonly believed that it existed in 480 already – that's more than 1500 years. Originally during advent, it was compulsory to fast so you would be capable to recollect your faith. In France, you had to fast at least three days, and particularly religious people still do it today. Nowadays, of course, advent still is a rather spiritual time for many people, even though it can take very diverse shapes. Instead of fasting many people now prefer spending more time with friends and family, putting up Christmas trees, opening a wicket of their advent calendar every morning, or lighting candles on their advent wreaths. No matter how important celebrating Advent is to you, this particular time of the year will still make your home warm, snug and cozy during cold winter days.

There are also Advent traditions appearing mainly in specific regions of the world. On the Philippines, for example, starry lanterns called „parol“ (see right) are hung up, while in Finland lanterns made of snow and ice are put up in front of houses. In some cities in Mexico children dressed up as Maria and Joseph go knocking from door to door asking for a room to sleep in, much like it's told in the Christmas story. They're followed by a number of people who together often sing sections of the Christmas story in front of the houses. Walking from door to door singing is a common custom in Puerto Rico, too. Like this those groups of friends wake up the tenants who have oftentimes been warned and celebrate together for a little while before moving on to the next house.



You can try out two further Christmas traditions, one from England, another from Hungary yourself. We explain them to you on the following pages.





# CHRISTINGLES

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Christingles are oranges, that carry a lighted candle wrapped in red tape and has sticks with fruit or sweets to its four sides. This advent bricolage is best loved in the UK – originally it's from Germany though. In 1747 Herrhut bishop Johannes de Watteville used it for the first time in a mass. Back then it was only a candle wrapped in red tape. Later, protestants, when emigrating, brought it to other countries with their belief. In England Christingles are sold every advent to generate donations for children. Some people don't think that's a good idea though as they believe Christingles should be for free, much like the love of God. Anyhow, they are snug (and yummy!) advent decoration. In case you want to make one yourself, follow this instruction:

1. Take an orange or a tangerine – this symbolises the world.
2. Remove a tiny bit of the skin on top in order to put a small candle into the hole – that's Jesus as the light of the world.
3. Wrap the candle in red tape or creped paper – that's Jesus's blood.
4. Skewer fruit, nuts or sweets onto four little sticks and put them on either side of the orange/tangerine – this symbolises the four seasons as well as the fruit of the world.



Possibly the word „Christingle“ originates from German „Christkindl“, meaning the Infant Jesus.





# BEIGLI

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In Hungary, but also in other Eastern European countries, beiglis are usually much eaten during advent. Beiglis are cake rolls, stuffed with walnuts (diós) or poppy seed (mákos). Those with poppy seed resemble poppy-seed cake quite a bit. Traditionally you will make one cake per stuffing and both are served together. This is the recipe:

- 1) Heat milk to about 37°C.
- 2) Crumble yeast into the milk and put aside until the yeast rises.
- 3) Melt the butter and mix it with flour (best with your hands).
- 4) Form a dip into the flour and add yeast and milk, as well as two eggs.
- 5) Knead everything properly.
- 6) Cover the dough and let stand in a warm place for about an hour.
- 7) In the meantime, mix the stuffings, but leave out the raisins for now.
- 8) Split the dough in two equally sized halves.
- 9) Use a rolling pin to form the clumps of dough into two flat squares.
- 10) Spread the stuffings equally on either square, leaving about one centimetre uncovered to either side. Spread the raisins on top of the stuffings.

- 11) Fold the corners on to the stuffings and press them a little, then make a roll out of the dough.
- 12) Pierce the rolls with a thin object, so they won't break when baking.
- 13) Apply the egg.
- 14) Bake the rolls for 35 minutes at 180°C.
- 15) Done! Enjoy!



## Ingredients

100ml milk  
50g sugar  
25g fresh yeast  
500g flour  
200g butter  
2 eggs

walnut stuffing (diós)  
200g chopped walnuts  
150g sugar  
2 tbs apricot or orange jam  
75 ml milk  
100 ml raisins

poppy-seed stuffing (mákos)  
200g poppy seed  
150g sugar  
2 tbs apricot or orange jam  
75 ml milk  
100 ml raisins  
1 stirred egg for application before baking