

CHRISTMAS IN SPAIN

24th December: “Nochebuena”

This is the night before Christmas. There are few things that you must have ready for that day:

Christmas tree: This is an international sign of Christmas time, you will find it in every country where they celebrate Christmas: Greece, Spain, Norway, Uganda, America...

Belen: We also set the nativity scene we call it “Belen” You can find very different figures for the “Belen” and it is very fun if every year you do it a little bit different.

The funniest figure is the “cagane”. This figure is typical from Catalonia (the area where Barcelona is), but in Valencia you can also find it in every “Belen”. He is crouched down and he is wearing the typical Catalanian hat.

Dinner: We have dinner at home with the very close relatives: Mum, dad, brothers, sisters and probably some uncle, aunt and cousins. We do not have a typical main dish for this night but we always eat a lot of appetizers and seafood



25th December: “Navidad”

“Navidad” means “Christmas” and we meet to have **lunch** with the relatives that we don’t see very often during the year. We usually cook lamb as main dish and we eat many appetizers and seafood. This lunch takes very long because, after it, we eat a dessert, we have coffee and we eat “turrón” which is our typical sugar and almond candy.



28th December: “Dia de los inocentes”

It means “Day of the innocents” and it is a day for **jokes**. You can not trust anybody in the street because they will pull your leg. If you watch the news at the TV there is always a false piece of news.



Some typical jokes are changing the sugar for salt, changing the time in somebody’s watch or sticking with glue a coin on the pavement and waiting somebody to try to take it. Then you scream “*???INOCENTE, INOCENTE!!!*” It is a very funny day!!

31st December: “Nochevieja”

“**Las 12 uvas**”. It is traditional in Spain to eat 12 grapes at midnight. From 23.30 every channel on TV finishes the program and people go to the main square of Madrid “Puerta del Sol” where there is a big clock. The last 12 seconds before midnight the bell of the clock sounds very strongly and for each stroke you must eat one grape. It is very important to do it properly if you want to have a happy and lucky new year. When the last stroke sounds, everybody takes the last grape, everyone screams: “*????????????FELIZ ANO NUEVO!!!!!!!*” and that is how the year begins.



1st January: “Ano Nuevo”=NEOΣ XPONOΣ

Dinner: We usually meet with the family to have dinner at home to celebrate the new year. We don't cook a big lunch as at Christmas but with the coffee we eat *turron* too. Normally it is not such a long dinner because people are tired after the new year's eve's (party and we want to sleep *siesta*).

5th January:

Los Reyes Magos (The tree kings): The three kings and their helpers come to the city to give presents to the children who were good during the year. We celebrate with a beautiful **parade** where thousands of candies are thrown. Children write a letter to the kings telling them the presents they would like to get, and if they had not time to write it, they can give it now in the parade. Afterwards, they go home, they have dinner, they leave their shoes in front of the living room/s window and they go to sleep.

During this night, the Tree Kings come to every house and they recognize everyone's shoes, so they put the presents near them.



6th January:

As soon as you wake up “????HAN VENIDO LOS REYES!!!!” (The tree king came!!) you run to your shoes to see the **presents** they brought.

We eat a big breakfast to finish all the *turrón* and the sweets that you could not eat for these two weeks and you enjoy all day playing with your presents.