



Christmas in Germany - traditions and famous dishes

For most German families the time around Christmas is the most cherished time of the year. It's the time you get together with your family and remember how important you are for each other. Of course, Christmastime in Germany is also very famous for its very special traditions and its delicious dishes. By reading this poster you'll get to know some of them, culminating in the Christmas feast on the 24th December.

Christmas dishes

Christmas goose ("Weihnachtsgans")

ingredients: two onions, seven small apples, one goose (4-5 kg), two level teaspoons of salt, one cup of water, one level teaspoon of white pepper, half a tea spoon of instant roast sauce, half a cup of malt beer, two teaspoons of dry sage

cooking utensils: a grill, wooden needles, a pan for catching the fat, a sieve, a small pot



A delicious roast goose with dumplings and red cabbage is a typical Christmas meal throughout Germany.

Peel and half the onions wash the apples and preheat the oven to 200 °C. Wash the goose with cold water and add some salt on the inside, fill it with the apples and close it using the wooden needles. Put the goose inside the oven and place a pan for catching the fat filled with water, pepper and onions beneath it. Fry the goose for three hours, turning and basting it every 30 minutes. Add the instant roast sauce powder, the malt beer and the sage to the gravy in the pan and serve both the goose and the gravy separately.

Potato salad with sausages ("Kartoffelsalat mit Wiener Wurst")

ingredients: 1000 g medium potatoes, 230 g wiener sausages, half a cup vinaigrette dressing, quarter a cup mustard, one small onion (chopped), one bell pepper (minced), two cloves garlic (minced), one tablespoon of sugar, one teaspoon of salt, a quarter teaspoon black pepper

cooking utensils: two large pots, one small bowl, a grill, a hotplate

Put the potatoes into a large pot, boil them for 15 minutes and add some salt while cooking. Switch off the hotplate, drain and add the bell pepper and the onion. Put the vinaigrette, garlic, black pepper, sugar and mustard in a small bowl. Cook the sausages on a grill for two to three minutes and cut it into cubes after. Finally, combine sausages, potatoes and the dressing in a large bowl and serve it warm.



Another common meal at Christmas: potato salad with "Wiener"

This dish is very popular with religious families, as it requires little preparation. Many families in Germany eat this meal upon their return from the typical "Weihnachtsmesse" - the midnight mass in the church all about the story of the birth of Jesus. Incidentally, the name of the sausage "Wiener" has even become part of American English, to describe the German-style sausages consumed by Americans at sporting events such as baseball and football games.

Poached carp ("Karpfen")

ingredients: one carp (1500 g), salt, 750 g clarified butter, lettuce, parsley, one lemon

cooking utensils: a large pot, a plate, a hotplate



German families often buy live carp - these fish are allowed to swim in the bathtub until Christmas Eve!

Clean the carp with cold water from the inside and the outside, dry it and salt it. Put the clarified butter into a big pot and heat it up to 180 °C. As soon as you can see little bubbles in the fat it has got the right temperature. Then add the carp and cook it in the boiling fat for 15 minutes turning it continuously. Pick the salad to pieces, dry it and put it together with the fish on a preheated plate. Add some lemon juice and parsley and serve immediately.

This dish is popular in southeastern Germany, in areas which border on the Czech Republic and eastern Austria, where people traditionally ate carp from huge ponds originally built by monks to provide them with nutritious fish during times of fasting.

Christmas traditions

The Christmas tree ("Weihnachtsbaum")



The German tradition of having evergreen trees inside the house for Christmas can be traced to 16th century Northern Germany. Firstly, they were only erected in front of guildhalls decorated with nuts, apples and pretzels for the guild members' children.

Nowadays almost every Christian family in Germany has its own Christmas tree at home, usually between the 24th December and New Year's Eve. The British Royal family, who have their family roots in Germany, adopted this tradition in Victorian Times. From here, the Christmas tree tradition spread to English-speaking countries and former British colonies all over the world!

In Germany most families do not purchase or decorate their tree until the 24th of December, as it is considered to bring bad luck if one brings a Christmas tree home before this date.

A worldwide Christmas Tradition "Made in Germany" - the Christmas tree.

Other Christmas traditions

Despite globalization, traditions still play an important role at certain times of the year, such as Christmas, the Easter Processions, the many wine and beer festivals and village carnivals. A typical Christmas tradition in southern Germany is the "Böllerschießen", or the shooting of a riflemans' salute during festivities.

"Böllerschießen"

There is a famous tradition in the area around Berchtesgaden of shooting with special cannons, muskets and pistols at Christmas, making loud noises in order to keep evil spirits away. The shooters usually wear historical uniforms or the typical "Lederhosen" and are organized in clubs. The cannons, however, aren't only used at Christmas time, but also at many other important events such as weddings, New Year's Eve and funerals.



Christmas goes off with a bang - "Böllerschützen" give a Christmas salute in one of the most traditional areas of Germany, the "Berchtesgadener Land".

Sources:

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