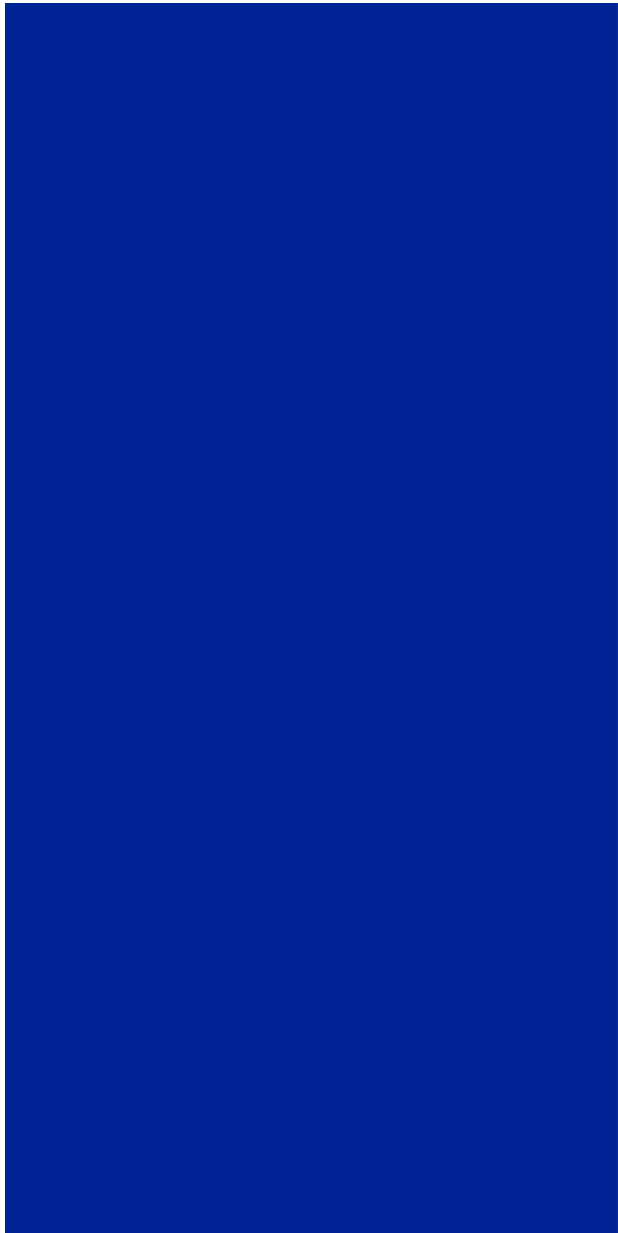


Christmas in France



France

Joyeux Noel (pronounced (soft J) Zhwaɑ-yoo Noh -Welll)

Christmas in France

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This is the Flag of France. In this room we are going to learn all about Christmas in France. To say Merry Christmas in France, they say *Joyeux Noel*.



Christmas in France



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France is known for its Christmas Festivals. They begin right after Thanksgiving and run all the way until January. You can visit over 300 shops, which sell everything from Christmas Trees, to toys, to food. They have beautiful lights and decorations.

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Nearly every French home at Christmastime displays a Nativity scene or crèche, which serves as the focus for the Christmas celebration. The crèche is often peopled with little clay figures called santons (sonn tonns) or "little saints." Most of the crèche figures have been passed down for generations and some even have other characters in them like a baker, or a policeman!

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In France it is a time for the whole family to come together at Christmas time to celebrate. On the eve of Christmas beautifully lit churches and cathedrals ring out Christmas carols with the church bells.

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In Southern France, a log is burned in people's homes from Christmas Eve until New Year's Day, which represents good luck for the new year.

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On the night of Christmas Eve, there is a special meal to celebrate the very beginning of Christmas Day. This traditional Christmas Eve dinner is called le Réveillon de Noël. This is a very late supper held after midnight mass on Christmas Eve. Food served at the dinner includes goose, seafood, ham, turkey, and salads.



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In France, they also have a fun tradition that they serve 13 desserts at the end of the meal. One of the most famous desserts is a cake shaped like a log, called the *Bûche de Noël*, which means "Christmas Log."

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In France, Santa Clause is known as Père Noël.

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Once dinner is over and the family has retired to bed, they leave a fire burning and leave their shoes out in front of the fireplace or around the Christmas tree. When they awake on Christmas Day, they hope to find that *le Père Noël* has visited and that the shoes are filled and surrounded by gifts.

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France is known for its wooden toys, and especially its finely crafted wooden car toys. Some candies that French children eat are jelly candies.

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These are some French children at Christmas!