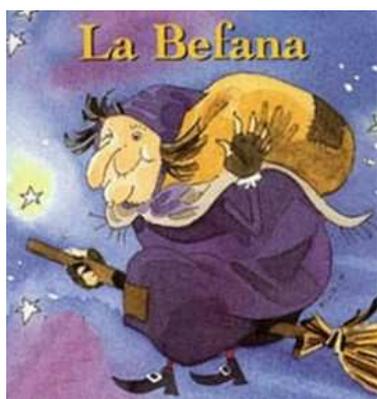


Christmas Around the World

第11回 English Extravaganza(Rebecca 先生放送原稿) Fri. December 2nd, 2016
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Hi, everyone! It's time for another English Extravaganza. Today, I'm going to talk about Christmas. Christians celebrate the birth of Christ, the son of God, on Christmas, which is at the end of December. Today, the holiday is also about spending time with family and exchanging gifts. The day before Christmas, on Christmas Eve, children will leave out cookies for Santa Claus and carrots for his reindeer, hoping that Santa will visit and leave them gifts. Since Christianity is practiced (キリスト教の教えが実践されている) around the world, I want to tell you about some fun or odd Christmas traditions from different countries. For example, I heard that eating KFC on Christmas Eve is popular in Japan.



Spirits and witches join the holiday in some countries. In Norway, there's no cleaning on Christmas Eve. All brooms(ほうき) are safely hidden away, in case they're stolen by witches and evil spirits. Guatemalans, however, sweep out their houses before Christmas. Each neighborhood makes a large pile of dirt, puts a small statue of the devil on top, and burns it. Austrian children live in fear of Krampus, a Christmas devil who's said to beat naughty(腕白な) children with branches. Meanwhile, Italian children await the arrival of Befana, a friendly witch who delivers sweets and toys on January 5th.

For some countries, this is a time for remembering their family members who have died. Consoda is a traditional Christmas morning feast in Portugal and families set extra places for the souls of the late loved ones(亡き最愛の人々). In Finland, families light candles at the graves of their loved ones. Finnish graveyards light up with rows and rows of lights, making them sad but beautiful sights.

Many traditions are related to giving gifts. Germans hide a pickle(一本のキュウリの漬け物) in the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve. The first child to find it in the morning gets a small gift. On December 5th, German children leave a shoe outside, which is filled with sweets overnight. Naughty children awake to find a tree branch instead. In Canada, the Canadian Post recognizes the address "Santa Claus, North Pole, Canada, HOHOHO". Any letters received at this address are opened and replied to. So, if you want to write a letter to Santa, you know where to send it now! I hope you enjoyed this week's English Extravaganza! I'll see you next week!

