

12 Fascinating New Year's Eve Traditions from Around The World



Japan

Just before midnight on New Year's Eve, the Japanese eat soba noodles. The Toshihoshi Soba, which means “year crossing buckwheat noodle” has lots of symbolism. The long noodle *denotes* the crossing from one year to the next and the easy-to-nibble noodles signify a letting go of the past year's *regrets*, a cutting-off if you will, before the fresh start the new year brings.



Spain

In Spain, with 12 seconds remaining until the New Year, people eat 12 green grapes to bring good luck in the coming year. It's thought to be bad luck if you can't eat them all by the final midnight chime. But *gobble* them down in time and 12 months of good fortune will come your way.



France

The French *ring in* the New Year with a huge *feast*, commonly known as *le réveillon de la Saint-Sylvestre*. The meal is full of traditional, decadent eats, including foie gras, *oysters*, lobster and *escargot*. And, just like in the U.S., champagne is the drink of choice.



Italy

Italians revere *lentils* for their coin-like shape, symbolizing luck and *prosperity*. Their New Year's Eve dinner usually features it to ensure luck in the coming year. They add pork to lentil dishes in the form of *cotechino*, a spicy sausage, or *zampone*, a deboned *pig trotter*, to represent the *plenitude* of the land.



Colombia

On the last night of the year, Colombians place three potatoes—one *peeled*, one unpeeled, and one half peeled—under their bed. At midnight, they pull out the first potato they grab. Peeled means they'll have financial problems, unpeeled indicates *abundance*, and half peeled...well, somewhere in between.



Australia

Australian celebration is similar to American one. Fireworks **herald** the New Year in cities and towns throughout the country. The countdown begins and at midnight sparks fly. Displays are launched off bridges, such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge, jetties along the beaches, and on river banks, with the lights of the fireworks sparkling off the water and drawing huge crowds.



The Philippines

Filipino culture celebrates the New Year by serving twelve round fruits. The round produce symbolizes coins—which represent **prosperity** and **wealth** for each month of the upcoming year. Apples, melons, oranges and grapes are popular picks, but any round fruit will do.



Denmark

After a traditional New Year's Eve meal of boiled **cod** with **mustard**, the Danes eat a tower of marzipan **doughnuts** called *kranssekage*, meaning "**wreath**" or "doughnut" cake. This traditional cake is also served at weddings and birthdays.



Canada

In rural areas of Canada, New Year's Eve is a time to spend ice fishing with friends. Celebrations on the frozen ponds and rivers tend to last all night as buddies fish in the open or in purpose-built fishing shacks and perhaps catch fish or two to help celebrate the coming year.



Ireland

The Irish have a tradition of **banging** bread **against** the walls of their house on New Year's Eve. The idea is that bad luck and evil spirits are **chased away** and good luck invited in. It's also done to ensure that the coming year is filled with an abundance of bread and other food.



Brazil

In Brazil, particular foods are eaten to ensure the attraction of good luck for the coming year. Seven is the lucky number on New Year's Eve, so seven **pomegranate** seeds are eaten to keep the purse full and seven grapes to ensure abundance in all areas of life. Some Brazilians also jump over seven waves in the ocean and make seven wishes for the new year as they *leap*.



Greece

Since the days of the ancient Greeks, the onion has been representative of growth and rebirth. The reason for this is simple – onions are viewed as highly fertile because the bulbs seem to want to sprout, even if they are being left alone. When an onion is left too long without being used, it seems to want to put down roots and grow once again. According to Greeks, this is the ultimate symbol of **fertility** and this is why the onion is always hung on a door in the household – to help the people in the household grow and experience a rebirth of their own in the coming year.

Task 1

Match food pictures with its name written in blue bold in the text.

- a) Pomegranate
- b) Doughnut
- c) Mustard
- d) Cod (треска)
- e) Pig trotter
- f) Lentil
- g) Escargot
- h) Buckwheat
- i) Oysters



Task 2

Answer the questions

1. Why are **doughnuts** considered to be unhealthy food?
2. Do you know some tricks how to peel **pomegranate**?
3. What do Ukrainians prepare from **pig trotters**?
4. What do you eat **mustard** with?
5. Have you ever tried **oysters** and **escargot**? If yes, what are they like? If no, would you love to?
6. Do you ever cook **lentil**? If yes, what do you serve it with?

Task 3

Match verbs with their definitions

1. to denote
2. to nibble (a cookie)
3. to regret Ving
4. to gobble
5. to ring in (New Year)
6. to peel
7. to herald
8. to bang against
9. to chase away
10. to leap

- A feel sorry for doing/not doing smth
- B celebrate
- C jump
- D hit against
- E take small bites out of smth
- F acclaim/ be a sign that smth is about to happen
- G drive away smb or smth/get rid of
- H be a sign of; indicate
- I to remove fruit or vegetable skin
- J eat smth hurriedly and noisily

Task 4

Match **nouns** with their definitions

1. Feast
2. Prosperity
3. Plenitude/abundance
4. Wealth
5. Wreath
6. Fertility

- A an arrangement of flowers and leaves, usually in the shape of a circle, which you put on the girl's head or at Xmas on the door
- B a large meal, typically one in celebration of something
- C the quality of being fertile; (about soil or women) productiveness
- D the state of being financially successful
- E possession of a large amount of money, property, or other valuable things
- F a very large quantity of something

Task 5

Answer these questions.

1. What do Ukrainians believe may *chase away* evil spirits from their houses?
2. Why do we say "Health is above *wealth*"? May it be true that wealthy people are healthier?
3. What usually *heralds* that winter has come?
4. How are you going to *ring in* New Year?
5. What do you *regret* doing/not doing this year?
6. Do you usually have a big *feast* on New Year's Eve? What are some traditional dishes you usually have?
7. What do we usually *bang* our toe against at home?
8. Do you believe it is good that nowadays there are *abundance* of shops/cafes and goods? Or do we consume too much?
9. What do you think it means: "Look before you *leap*"?
10. When do we *gobble*?
11. What do you usually *nibble* when you have a break?