



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

2020

Cultural HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

By: ANDREA ARNOLD

The Robson Valley is home to people from many different cultures. Most residents have either descended from or have themselves arrived from other countries. Some have held onto the holiday traditions that their families have practiced for many generations. These traditions seem to mostly be around specific types of food, or stories passed down from grandparents, but there are also some traditions that require active participation from the whole family. The Goat touched base with many families in the Valley to find out how they celebrate during the holidays. Turn the page to read about some of the traditions!


*What traditions have you kept from your heritage?
Write to us! goatnewspaper@gmail.com*




Rocky Mountain Goat

2020 Holiday Edition

**I am very proud to be the MLA
for Prince George-Valemount**



**I wish you a Merry Christmas
and a happy, healthy, 2021**



Shirley Bond, MLA
 Prince George-Valemount
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**Valemount & District
Volunteer Fire
Department**





Warmest wishes this holiday season and a safe and prosperous 2021



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of Fraser-Fort George**

On Behalf of Simpcw Community
Staff, Chief & Council..




Wishing everyone a safe
& Merry Christmas!!



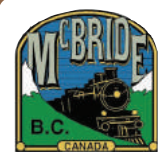
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HOLIDAY HOURS:
 CLOSED: Wed. Dec. 23rd to Mon. Dec. 28th, 2020.
 RE-OPEN: Tues. Dec. 29th, Wed. Dec. 30th, and
 Thurs. Dec 31st, 2020
 CLOSED: Fri. Jan. 1st, 2021



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Volunteer Fire
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Happy New Year!**

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from Dennis & Adam



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Fröhliche Weihnachten

GERMAN



Eva and Aisla McNaughton check out the treats left by Nikolaus in the early hours on December 6./
SUBMITTED

The German culture is very serious about celebrating, and it begins before Nikolaustag on December 6. Katharina McNaughton shares a variation of the German tradition with her husband and daughters. In the weeks leading up to December 6, every other evening or so, they sing German Nikolaus and Christmas songs, as well as some in English so the girls can sing along, while gathered around a candle-lit table and Weihnachtspyramide (German Christmas Pyramid). The kids put their boots out each night hoping Nikolaus will leave them treats for the morning.

On the evening of the 5th, the family sets out Nikolaus plates at their spots around the table before bed. During the night, Nikolaus comes and decorates the table and fills the plates with German chocolates, mandarin oranges, apples and usually a pair of Christmas socks. "In the morning, the kids rush to see what Nikolaus brought," said McNaughton. "We usually sing 'Lasst Uns Froh Und Munter Sein' one more time to thank Nikolaus."

Heiligabend, or Christmas Eve is the most important day, with dinner and gift opening. The Christkind is a sprite-like child, usually depicted with blond hair and angelic wings and is the traditional Christmas gift-bringer in many parts of Europe and in parts of the Hispanic world.

"It was Christkind that brought the gifts that weren't from family or friends," said McNaughton. "Everyone gets dressed really nicely and we have a fancy dinner with duck, goose, roast or rabbit, red cabbage, brussel sprouts, dumplings or potatoes."

Following dinner, the Christkind delivers the presents, while family members are in another room. The family gathers to listen to or sing Christmas songs and light the candles on the tree. McNaughton's family still enjoys seeing the tree light up with candles as they open gifts on the 24th.

Food and drink are a big part of all the German Christmas celebrations. A spicy gluhwein (mulled wine), is enjoyed during family gatherings or after dinner as a dessert, taking the place of tea or coffee. There is a non-alcoholic version available as well, however, it is quite spicy so not many children enjoy it. "The Germans have a lot of traditional food and baking that go with Christmas," said McNaughton.

Other symbols that are very important to German tradition are the advent calendar and the advent wreath. McNaughton's daughters open the door on the advent calendar each morning, and for the four Sundays leading up to Christmas they light a candle on the advent wreath.



**Wishing you a safe and
peaceful Christmas**

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Happy Holidays

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**Wishing Everyone
a Very Merry
Christmas and
a Prosperous
New Year!**

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boldog Karácsonyt HUNGARIAN



“Beigli,” a poppy seed and walnut roll will be a part of the Tot-Bojnik Christmas celebrations./ SUBMITTED

The Tot-Bojnik family have held onto several of their Hungarian holiday traditions since arriving in Canada 10 years ago. Their Christmas tree will be decorated with Szaloncukor, a special Christmas candy. The candy, literally “parlor candy” because of where the tree was traditionally located, has a filling such as jelly, marzipan, or coconut and is covered in chocolate and wrapped in shiny coloured foil. Although the family does

not make the candy, Karolina-István Tot-Bojnik remembers making it with her grandmother once. She often makes “Beigli,” a poppy seed and walnut roll to share with friends and neighbours, as well as a Hungarian fish soup, Halászlé, which they enjoy on Christmas Eve. The soup is made with freshwater fish and is traditionally prepared with onions and red paprika over an open fire.



щасливого Різдва UKRAINIAN



A bowl of kutya, sweet wheat berry pudding./SOURCED

Before moving to Canada 15 years ago, the Antypov family celebrated Ukranian Christmas on the 7th of January. This was a huge event where families would, among other events, partake in 12 traditional meals, and go Koliadky (caroling).

Since moving, the family has adapted to many of the customs here in Canada, including moving the day of celebration to December 25. However, they still sometimes prepare one of the 12 traditional meals, Kutya, a sweet wheat berry pudding. They also enjoy Holubtsi (cabbage rolls).

Andriy remembers that when families went singing on January 7, they would throw handfuls of seeds, wheat or barley into the homes they were visiting. It was meant to bestow a blessing and wishes for riches on the residents. “And when we were done,” said Antypov, “they could use it for the Kutya.”

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
Wishing you a Safe and Peaceful Christmas

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Best Wishes
to all during the
holiday season!

HOLIDAY HOURS:
OPEN Dec 24th until 3pm
CLOSED Dec 25th until January 2nd
OPEN Jan 2nd 12pm - 4pm



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And wishing you all the
best in 2021!

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Christmas
and a very
Happy New
Year!



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VALEMOUNT
COMMUNITY
FOREST

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Wishing you Health, Happiness and Prosperity.

The best to you in 2021!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

buon Natale

ITALIAN





TOP: Fried Baccala is a staple dish on the Vizza Christmas Eve dinner table./SOURCED

BOTTOM RIGHT: LaBafana travels the country on the evening of January 5, looking for the Baby Jesus. During her travels she leaves goodies for good children and coal for naughty children./SOURCED

As in many European cultures, the biggest celebration for the Italians is Christmas Eve. During this meal, both the Vizza and the Barone families would not have any meat on the table. The meal historically named “the Feast of the Seven Fishes,” serves an abundance of fish and other seafood to reflect the abstinence from meat until Christmas Day. The table is set with a minimum of nine dishes. Some of the dishes prepared for the Vizzas table include the traditional Baccala (salted cod), as well as pasta with anchovies and garlic. “Or for those of us who don’t like anchovies, olive oil and garlic,” said Olivia Vizza. Fran Barone Chiupka remembers similar meals. Her father wanted to uphold the tradition of leaving all the leftovers on the table overnight. His family had done so, so that

there would be food out when the Baby Jesus arrived, or any other midnight guests. Her mother, who was raised in a Portuguese home would have none of it. They went to bed with a clear table. “We leave a plate out,” said Vizza. “We clear the rest of the table.” Christmas Eve was also the time to open presents, and enjoy many Italian desserts. Turdilli (gnocchi shaped fried cookies), Scalille (honey cookies), Frittelle (deep fried bread dough), and Panettone (Italian Christmas Bread). They also travelled to other homes to visit extended family. Chiupka is saddened that, as the number of family members in the valley have dwindled, this part of the tradition has ceased. Both families had the tradition of attending midnight mass on Christmas Eve. In more recent



years the service has moved to Christmas morning. January 6, the morning of the Epiphany (the day the Italians believe the Wise Men found the manger), marks the end of the Christmas season. It is on the evening of the 5th, that Befana, an old woman, delivers small gifts to children throughout Italy. The legend goes that the Wise men were hosted in the home of LaBefana, and invited her to join them on their quest. She declined but then changed her mind and hurried after them to no avail. She continues to search homes for the Child, leaving goodies for the good children and coal for the bad. Vizza, is passing this story down to her grandchildren through a children’s book, gifted to each of them. Also, on January 6, her tree comes down.



’Tis the season to thank all our dear customers for your abundant support throughout the past year.

Season’s greetings from the whole team!



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Happy Holidays



veselé Vánoce CZECH



Petr Herstik and his family moved from the Czech Republic 11 years ago. The family has continued to celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve as they did prior to the move. Some years, they have a Christmas wreath set on the table and decorated by four candles. Each of the candles are lit on Sunday of the advent time leading up to Christmas (four weeks).

"We have a traditional Christmas Eve dinner - řízek (also known as schnitzel) and potato salad," he said. Each family has their own recipe for the salad so the tradition varies from family to family. They also have pea soup. Karp (Carp) is also traditionally eaten instead of the řízek however the Herstik's prefer the latter.

The family also enjoys several traditional Christmas sweets and sweet braided bread. This year they have baked coconut meringue cookies (kokosky), vanilla crescents (vanilkové rohlíčky) and kind of biscotti with walnuts, raisins and chocolate chips (chlebiček). The bread, Vánočka will be made in the coming weeks.

The descendants of Frank and Vera Hulka that still live in the valley also enjoy some of these same food traditions. Grandma would often bake many of these same treats, and now the responsibility has been passed onto children and grandchildren. Granddaughter Rachel Ondang makes her spicy cookies (lebkuchen) each year, and their family gathers for dinner and presents on Christmas Eve. My own family has continued the tradition of a Christmas Eve dinner of dumplings (Knedlíky) with chicken or filled with fruit, that we began with our grandparents (as we are not fond of fish).

"We don't have the tradition of Santa Claus so gifts can be opened on Christmas Eve because we don't have to wait for the overnight delivery (so no stockings, no cookies and milk by the fireplace either)," said Herstik

A few fun traditions that the family has not practiced in recent years involve cutting an apple crosswise to find out if one will be healthy next year, or throwing a shoe over one's shoulder to indicate travels etc.

Dumplings are sliced using a fine string or thread. A knife sticks to the boiled bread making slicing difficult./
SUBMITTED



Vánočka, the braided bread, will be baked for the Herstik's closer to Christmas./
SUBMITTED

Merry Christmas!

LDM LAKES DISTRICT MAINTENANCE INC.



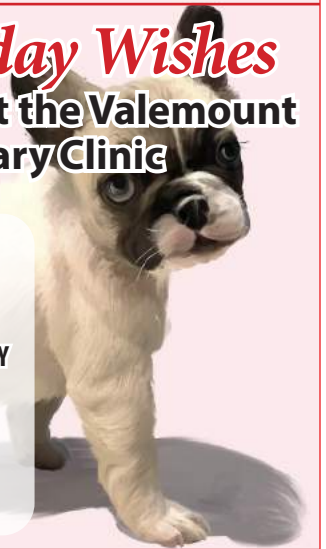
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from all of us at the Valemount Veterinary Clinic

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Dec 25th & 26th - CLOSED
Jan 1st - CLOSED

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family and good times

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TO BE JOLLY*

RE/MAX

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Shelly Battensby

Merry Christmas!

Cheers to a
DEEP Winter!

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wishes for a
Happy Holiday
season and
a wonderful
New Year!

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Joyeux Noël MÉTIS



Charlene Jones' family will participate in the Muskrat Skull for the first time this season. The one pictured here was handed down to her by her great mosom (grandfather)./ SUBMITTED

Charlene Jones has recently started learning about her aboriginal heritage. She comes from a Cree Métis background. "I've been gathering tidbits here and there every time I go to visit (family)," said Jones. This is the first year she and her family will play the muskrat skull game. The skull is passed around from person to person and each one has to try and put their finger in the skull with your eyes closed, she said. "There is a rhythm to (the game); the breathing, bouncing and the arm movements; it's harder than you would think." When her great mosom (grandfather) would play, each person in the group would have an opportunity to play. The winner would get a handmade gift such as a pair of moccasins or something beaded. Jones was recently given skulls from her great mosom and kokum (grandmother). This will be a way to revive that piece of family history.

Hanukkah Sameach JEWISH



The Menorah stands ready for the beginning of Hanukkah in the Schwartz home. This family heirloom was purchased when Schwartz was a child. The lettering at the base of the Menorah are Hebrew characters meaning "Israel." /SUBMITTED

When Gary Schwartz was a child, his family celebrated Hanukkah. His family would light their Menorah and say prayers in Hebrew. On the Friday evening during the eight days, his family would travel to his grandparents. There, they would light the candle, and the children would receive Hanukkah gift - chocolate coins

wrapped in gold and silver. They played with dreidels and sang the dreidel song.

Schwartz continues to celebrate, along with his wife, in a low-key way. Each evening of Hanukkah, Schwartz lights a candle while saying a short prayer in Hebrew. He and his wife feast on rich food and baking during the eight days.

Latkes, beef brisket, and roast chicken are some of the foods they enjoy. Fried food is symbolic because of the significance of oil to the celebration.

Schwartz keeps the celebration of Hanukkah completely separate from any Christmas connection. "It does not have anything to do with Christmas," he said. It is a Jewish holiday that often falls in December, prior to the 25th. This is the only thing that the holiday has in common with Christmas. The holiday celebrates the victory of the Maccabees over the larger Syrian army. The Temple in Jerusalem was rededicated at this time as well, and It also celebrates a miracle that happened during this time. They wished to light the Temple but could only find enough oil for the Menorah for just one day. Miraculously, the oil allowed the flames to remain lit for eight days.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a safe, happy & healthy New Year!

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From all of us at Valemount



Vrolijk kerstfeest DUTCH INDONESIAN

Mark Ondang came from a Dutch Indonesian background. The Dutch established a colony in what is now Indonesia in 1800, resulting in a blend of Dutch and local traditions. The traditions he's brought with him to share with his family are food-based. A must-have snack for the holiday is Kacang Bawang (deep fried peanuts with garlic and onion). For Christmas Eve, Spekkoek is prepared. "This is a layer spice cake that takes several hours to make as you bake each layer before adding the next," said Ondang's wife Rachel. "His mom would make these and

send them out to family instead of gifts each year. A gallon of the peanut mix and a cake for each of the seven kids." After his mom passed away, he took on the responsibility of making the peanuts, and his daughters took on the cake baking.

When his family came to Canada, they left many of their traditions to help with integration, however, the food always shows up for special days.



EUROPEAN DUTCH

McBride resident Jasmine Hoetjes and her family are often in New Zealand for the holidays. This year, they were unable to make the trip. However, the Dutch traditions are close at hand no matter where they are. The family celebrates the Dutch Sinterklaas. "We put a clog out with carrots and apples the evening before, usually the 5th of December," she said. "In the morning Sinterklaas has filled the clog with Dutch candy and a few gifts." The family dresses in orange, and each one has a person they give a gift to and make up a poem or story about. Then they play games and eat traditional Dutch treats. Hoetjes says they make speculaas (sweet and spicy image stamped cookies) and boterkoek (Dutch butter cake).

In past years, the family was able to be in New

Zealand celebrating with family. Some of the adult family members dress in costume as Sinterklaas and his helper Zwarte Piet to help the tradition live on. This year, as Hoetjes and her family were unable to join the festivities overseas, they had a small Sinterklaas celebration of their own.

Thelma Molendyk married into a very large Dutch family, and adopted one of their treats into her holiday baking. "It's more of a New Year's thing," she said. Oliebollen is a deep fried ball of dough, sprinkled post-fry with powdered sugar. Some recipes call for apples, but Molendyk sticks with raisins or currents in her creations. "People think they are a good pre-New Years party treat because they help soak up the alcohol," she said.

Chúc Mừng Năm Mới Cung Chúc Tân Xuân



VIETNAMESE



Vietnamese Caramelized and Braised Pork Belly with Eggs (Thit Kho Tau) takes several days to cook during the Lunar New Year preparations. /SOURCED

Eric Martin is half Chinese, and his wife Katie Tran is Vietnamese. They celebrate the Lunar New Year which usually falls in late January or early February. The

holiday, called Tet, is a three day event that takes weeks to prepare for. In Vietnam, they normally take 3 weeks off to cook, shop, clean and decorate. "Given we are in McBride, we normally just do a bit of cooking some special dishes and try to call our families," said Martin. "One dish we eat is Thit Kho Tau - pork belly, cooking it slowly in coconut juice - for three days." Lots of duck eggs are included as well. Over time, the coconut juice goes into the meat, and the meat flavour goes into the sauce. This is served often with white rice, or on rice paper. "For people who are close to us, we would also give out red envelopes with some lucky money in it," said Martin.

SEASON'S GREETINGS!

Wishing you
and yours a
very Merry
Christmas!

From the whole team

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Jae, Liz and Staff
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Merry
Christmas



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FINNISH

Joyeux Noël

FRENCH





Hidden in a dish of Riisipuuro, (rice pudding), is a single almond. The person who finds the almond receives good luck for the upcoming year./SOURCED

There are not too many Finnish traditions Emilia Roth has held onto since coming to Canada in 2008, however, there are two food items that have to be included in the Christmas festivities or it just wouldn't feel like Christmas. On the morning of Christmas Eve, the family has a breakfast of rice porridge or pudding (Riisipuuro). An almond is placed in the pot before it is served, and the one who finds the almond in their portion is believed to have good luck in the coming year. Another treat that the family enjoys is a Christmas tart (Joulutortta). The puff pastry dessert is shaped like a star with a prune centre, and dusted with powdered sugar. Roth's family joins her in-laws for Christmas Eve evening to continue the celebrations.

Yann Asmat would love to once again share a large traditional French Christmas dinner with many courses with friends and family. Visiting and making memories over food and drink, over the course of several hours./ SOURCED.



Diane Roth's family arrived in eastern Canada from France many years ago. Her way of keeping that heritage close is to prepare tourtiere or meat pie for Christmas Eve. She loves to share this piece of herself with her family. Just three years ago, Yann Asmat moved from France to Canada to begin a new chapter in his life. The first year here they participated in the Community Christmas Dinner in McBride, and last year, they travelled back to France for the holiday. This coming Christmas will be their first in their Robson Valley home. Asmat has many fond memories of Christmas dinner in France. "It was a big feast," he said. "It took sometimes four hours to eat." The meals often consisted of many courses or rich food. Usually there were oysters, duck liver foie gras, and other rich samplings. A fowl was also a part of the meal. Asmat remembers the very special feeling that came along with all of the traditions from home. Though his son is still very young, they hope to capture some of the same special Christmas

feelings from back home, as they discover what the holiday will look like for them. "I would like to, in the future, have a long table full of food and be surrounded by friends and family," he said. "But I'm not sure if I can find people who would want to sit for four hours for a meal here." Most of these families have also incorporated Canadian traditions into their celebrations. Many of them will have a decorated tree and eat a large meal on Christmas Day. For some, stockings will be hung on the 24th, and the exchange of gifts will occur on the 25th after Santa Claus visits. Although some of the traditional celebrations look very different from one culture to another, they do have a few things in common: each of these families, along with most North American families, take time over the holidays to spend time with family and friends, singing carols, enjoying food, drink and making memories.

May the beauty and peace of the season stay in your heart forever

Happy Holidays!

From Georgie Kenzie at Robson Valley Long Arm Quilting 250.569.7433



Season's Greetings!

Peace and Goodwill to All

From all of us at Robson Valley Essentials 250-569-2415



Best wishes to you and your family throughout the holiday season! Wishing everyone a Healthy and prosperous New Year!

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

from all of us at KILIN RESTAURANT 1117 Frontage Rd, McBride (250) 569-8820 SMORGASBORD FRIDAYS 5-9PM *Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day



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from the RMG staff



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