



# CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

From Calabria

# WHAT ARE OUR TRADITIONS? WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR HOUSE?

December can be considered the most magic month in the year

From 8th December people we used to start to decorate **Christmas tree** with colored balls and the whole house is adorn with garlands and a lot of lights.

Someone relized also the **Nativity**. It's looks like a typical poor village where you can find animals, food market, shepherds. Alla around, a cave in which is the new born Jesus. It's typical to create it with raw materials such us: moss, bark, stones... and built mountains, path..





## GIFTS AND GAMES

During Christmas holidays, we exchange some gift and most evenings we go to our relatives or friend's house to play **tombola**, the typical Christmas game, or play with Neapolitan cards at some games such as **cucù**, **briscola**, or **scopa**.



## THE ATMOSPHERE IN OUR CITY

The city fills with lights, as do the stores.

Along the main street are adorned two big fir trees with a lot of lights.

In the central square it is usual ,for a man , dressed as Santa Claus to take a photo under the tree, with the children.

In several municipalities there is the custom of living nativity scenes where citizens personify characters such as farmers, shepherds, etc. during the time of the Nativity.

# EPIPHANY

The Christmas celebrations end on January 6th, with the Epiphany.



The «**Befana**» is represented as an old lady, with a hump and hooked nose. She travels on a broom, she is dressed in rags and dirty with soot. On the night between 5th and 6th January, she leaves gifts and sweets to the children who have been good, while to those who have been less good she leaves pieces of coal.

The «**Befana**» is a mainly Italian custom and coincides with the arrival of the Magi at the Bethlehem cave, to bring gold, myrrh and incense as gifts.

# WHAT IS OUR CULINARY TRADITIONS?

According to the Calabrians ancient tradition ,there are 13 courses that must strictly serve and eat during the Christmas Eve dinner, a real culinary event during which the family joins for dinner and celebrate together.

The 13 courses represent the number of the Apostles together with Jesus. During the Christmas Eve dinner the menu must be based on preserved or fresh vegetables, vegetables and fish, while meat and sausages large space during the Christmas lunch.





## TYPICAL SWEETS

One of the typical Calabrian sweets is **PITTA NCHIUSA**

It is a preparation based on durum wheat puff pastry, almonds, raisins, walnuts, cinnamon and liqueurs. This dessert originates from San Giovanni in Fiore, in the heart of the Sila. It's made up of many roses made with the pastry filled with dried fruit.

Another delicious dessert is **FRITTELLE** made with flour, eggs, sugar and anise



Some sweets that cannot miss among the Calabrian dishes are:

## CRUSTOLI

Their peculiarity is that they are prepared with fig honey, typical of Cosentino area. Their sweet taste it's made simply with flour, sweet wine, cinnamon, oil and orange peel.

## SUSUMELLE

The susumelle are a specialty of the area of Reggio Calabria, Catanzaro, Crotona and Vibo Valentia. They are "cookies of sweet dough", typically shaped like oval loaves that can be covered with honey or black and white chocolate. In some recipes raisins, candied fruit, nutella or pistacchio are added to the cookie dough.





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