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# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

For believers, that of the Immaculate Conception is a deeply rooted and heartfelt holiday.

December 8, in Calabria, is the scent of sweets with an ancient memory: from zeppole to crepes, known in other areas of the region with the name of "cuddrurieddri" or "cullurielli".

The feast of the Immaculate Conception refers to past cults endorsed by small local communities in which devotion to Mary, mother of the Lord remains strong.



# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



By Immaculate Conception we mean a Catholic dogma, officially proclaimed by Pope Pius IX on 8 December 1854.

In Crotone, a church located in the heart of the historic center has been dedicated to the Immaculate Virgin since the 16th century.

With the Immaculate Conception, the holidays begin, in fact it is traditional to make the Christmas tree and the Nativity scene on this day.

# CHRISTMAS

Christmas (or the feast of the Nativity) is an annual holiday commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world.

Central feast of the Christian liturgical year, it is preceded by the season of Advent or fasting of the Nativity and begins the season of Christmas, which in the West lasts twelve days and culminates in the twelfth night.



# CHRISTMAS

Christmas Day is a public holiday in many nations of the world, it is celebrated religiously by the majority of Christians, as well as culturally by many non-Christians.

The traditional account of Christmas, the Nativity of Jesus, outlined in the New Testament, says that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, according to the Messianic prophecies.



# CHRISTMAS

When Joseph and Mary arrived in the city, the inn had no room and so they were offered a stable where the baby Jesus was soon born, with angels announcing this news to the shepherds who then spread the information further.

Although the month and date of Jesus' birth are unknown, the church in the early 4th century set the date as December 25th.

This corresponds to the date of the winter solstice in the Roman calendar.



# CHRISTMAS EVE

There are 13 foods that you must eat in Calabria on the evening of 24 December, 13 courses like the number of the Apostles together with Jesus but they can also be 9, like the months of waiting, or 7 like the virtues, but always based on vegetables and fresh fish.

The tradition included: olives, dried tomatoes, pickled vegetables, pasta with breadcrumbs, fried cod, stewed cod, black and white broccoli, fennel, walnuts, chestnuts, mandarins and grispelle, bread and wine are not counted.



# CHRISTMAS EVE

As for desserts, on the Italian table, “pandoro” and “panettone” cannot be missing; followed by homemade “tiramisu” and some desserts taken in pastry.

We Calabrians have typical sweets, such as: “crustoli”, “susumelle” and “pitta 'mpigliata”.

Other traditions of December 24 are those of not clearing the table after dinner, because one leaves food for the Baby Jesus who is coming.



# CHRISTMAS EVE

And again the “fhocara” is lit in the square, the bonfire that drives away evil spirits, and the “strina” is sung.

A typical Calabrian dish on Christmas Eve is cod, the only fish that was once affordable for all budgets but healthy and tasty and has now become a gourmet dish.



# CHRISTMAS



A Christmas custom is to eat baked pasta made with eggs, sausage and the typical “soppressata”.

This dish is followed by meatballs (also called "vrasciole"), kid surrounded by potatoes, legumes, pork and vegetables.

Nowadays, lunch does not start with first courses, but with appetizers, among which “Nduja” reigns supreme, accompanied by stuffed crepes, “DOP” cured meats, “pecorino crotonese” and “caciocavallo Silano”.

# CHRISTMAS

Afterwards, the fundamental and essential characteristic of the first courses is that they are prepared with fresh homemade pasta, then cooked in the most disparate ways, from “maccharuni” to “fettuccine”.

As for the main courses, even if it cannot be denied that meat is the undisputed queen, including capon, turkey, pork and kid baked with wild herbs and potatoes, it is possible that some dishes based on fish, such as the “stocco con la ghiotta” accompanied by a sauce of oil, onion, tomatoes, olives, capers and raisins.



# CHRISTMAS

The side dishes are usually led by Calabrian broccoli and all strictly spicy.

The most common ingredients for desserts are figs, walnuts, honey and oil.

In addition to cedar and bergamot-based desserts, it is customary to prepare “Quazunielli” (calzone stuffed with raisins, walnuts, must and cinnamon), “Turdiddri” (fried gnocchi made with oil flour and anise, covered with honey bees and figs), figs covered with chocolate, nougats and many others.



# SAINT STEPHEN

Stephen, (c. 5 AD - c. 34 AD) traditionally revered as the first martyr of Christianity, was, according to the Acts of the Apostles, a deacon in the early Church of Jerusalem.

Accused of blasphemy at his trial, he delivered a speech denouncing the Jewish authorities who were suing him and was then stoned to death.

His martyrdom was witnessed by Paul of Tarsus, a Pharisee and Roman citizen who would later become a Christian apostle.



# SAINT STEPHEN

The only source of information on Stephen is the New Testament book of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Catholic, Anglican, Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Eastern Church venerate Stephen as a saint.

Traditionally, Stephen is invested with a crown of martyrdom.

We celebrate Saint Stephen Day(26 th of December) by preparing broth or soups, accompanied by Christmas leftovers.



# NEW YEAR'S EVE

In Calabria the New Year's menus can be both fish and meat based.

All to be washed down with a selection of good Calabrian wines, to accompany any food from appetizer to dessert.

The Calabrian dish typical of New Year's luck is undoubtedly “sazizzi” and “rapi affucati”, that is, turnip greens stewed together with pieces of the typical sausage with sweet or spicy chilli.



# NEW YEAR'S EVE

Those who do not like the strong taste of rapi can eat the red roasted sausage, accompanied by abundant “patate mpacchiuse” from Sila.

Lunches and dinners end with traditional desserts made with honey, dried figs and walnuts, and good omen fruit such as pomegranate and grapes, fresh or dried, which represent wealth.



# NEW YEAR'S EVE

On New Year's Eve in the South and in Calabria where, exactly as in ancient Rome, it is still customary to light bonfires and shoot barrels to drive away evil spirits, wear something red to ward off fear, throw away old things as a physical elimination of badly, eating certain foods such as lentils, pomegranates and grapes, fried foods and above all good and fatty pork, symbol of abundance and good omen for the coming year.



# NEW YEAR

On the first day of January, after the party, meat (pork or lamb), vegetables such as chard and chicory and dried fruit appear on tables throughout Italy.

According to some popular traditions, these are foods that favor a new year full of money, health and satisfaction in all sectors.



# NEW YEAR

The traditions linked to this festival have also endured over time: from the use of mistletoe, considered auspicious as a source of purification as well as a real elixir against sterility, to the fireworks, invented in China around the eighth century after Christ.

Another auspicious tradition is to leave the windows open at midnight or to throw away old things to make room for new projects.



# EPIPHANY

Epiphany is a Christian holiday that celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ.

In Western Christianity, the feast commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Child Jesus, and therefore the physical manifestation of Jesus to the Gentiles.

It is sometimes called the Day of the Three Kings and in some traditions it is celebrated as a Little Christmas.



# EPIPHANY

Eastern Christians commemorate Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, seen as his manifestation to the world as the Son of God.

The traditional date for the festival is January 6th.

Folk customs on Epiphany include singing Epiphany, chalking the door, blessing one's home, eating the Three Kings Cake, winter swimming, and attending church services.



# EPIPHANY

It is customary for Christians in many localities to remove their Christmas decorations on the eve of Epiphany.

In Italy there is a tradition that the “befana” brings socks to children: if they have been good, they will have a sock full of sweets; if they have been bad, they will have a sock full of coal.



# CHRISTMAS'S GAMES

During the holidays, in addition to eating, you play to stay with the family and have fun: usually you play "Tombola(Bingo)" , "Mercante in Fiera(Mercant at the Fair)" and with Neapolitan cards.

The most famous games to play with Neapolitan cards are: "Cucù Col Morto", "Primera", "55", "Las Vegas" and "Monachello".

These games are played with money, whoever wins takes other people's money.

