

Czech folklore



About folklore...

- o Folklore in the Czech Republic has deep roots
- o It is represented in Bohemia (mainly in Chodsko) and all over Moravia
- o National costumes, folk pottery, songs or adages are a typical example of it
- o Folk tradition is maintained throughout the Czech Republic by folklore groups



History

- o At the time of the arrival of Christianity into the Czech lands, the new religion have already set the calendar, including holidays like Easter and Christmas and also holidays of the saints
- o The calendar was set up by the Church and people upgraded holidays themselves

Costume of Tábor



Pilsen costume



Costume of Domažlice



Costume of Valašsko



Costume of Haná



Carnival (Masopust)

- o Carnival is associated with cheerfulness, entertainment, a lots of masks, good food and drink
- o First written report about the carnival is from the 13th century
- o Our ancestors celebrated carnival wildly and Church didn't like it but the carnivals were still more and more cheerful
- o The carnival food was shrove cones and funnel cakes, people were cheerfully drinking beer and wine, singing and dancing
- o In some places, mainly in Southern Moravia and in Southern Bohemia, this tradition lasts until today



Burning of Witches

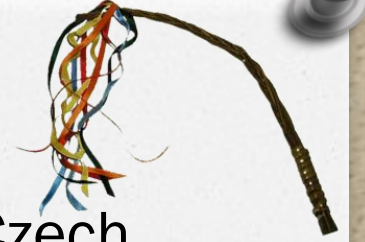


- o The burning of witches or Filipojakubská night is a tradition associated with bonfires and belief in witches
- o Tradition of bonfires on the eve of the 1st May isn't mentioned in any medieval Czech sources. It may have been organised under German influence
- o The original social, protective, and religious significance was replaced by fun and social function
- o The tradition of burning a dummy of the witch was re-invented or it persisted from the past
- o Nowadays burning is considered as welcoming of spring

The 1st of May / Máj

- o This is a very old tradition known mainly from Southern Bohemia and Slovakia
- o This tradition has kept until today, single boys go into the forest to chop off the highest and the most beautiful tree and make a traditional maypole (májka) out of it, a symbol of spring
- o Boys decorate the tree with wreaths, scarves, flowers, ribbons and streamers
- o According to the tradition, girl, who is not kissed on the 1st of May won't be healthy and beautiful. The most typical tree for the kissing is a cherry tree

Easter



- o Easter is a religious holiday which became state holiday in the Czech Republic
- o Date of Easter is determined on the first Sunday after the first spring full moon
- o This day was originally connected with the consecration of the Easter food - lamb, loaves, mazanec and other food which is still present on the Easter table.
- o On Easter Monday kids or even adults go trick-or-treating around the neighborhood with Easter whip, which is the symbol of spring and life
- o The "trick-or-treaters" also symbolically slap the girls with the Easter whips
- o As a reward for trick-or-treating, girls give them a dyed or decorated egg.

Christmas

- Christmas are preceded by four advent Sundays, during which people bake christmas cookies, buy gifts and prepare everything for Christmas
- Christmas Day, celebrated on 24th December, is especially for small children the most beautiful day of fulfilled wishes. The tables are decorated with lots of christmas cookies, the whole house has a typical smell of a christmas tree, which is decorated the day before Christmas Eve
- Every family celebrates Christmas according to their traditions for example: cutting apples after christmas dinner, lead casting and plenty of other folk customs.
- The most important is the christmas dinner, which is traditionally fish soup and carp with potato salad.
- After dinner, the family sits around the tree, where they have gifts from Ježíšek (members of the family) to please their loved ones.

