



Region Identity

# LOCAL TRADITIONS

ERASMUS GREECE

# CHRISTMAS

- Christmas, Christian festival celebrating the birth of Jesus. The English term Christmas (“mass on Christ’s day”) is of fairly recent origin.
- Since the early 20th century, Christmas has also been a secular family holiday, observed by Christians and non-Christians alike, devoid of Christian elements, and marked by an increasingly elaborate exchange of gifts.
- In this secular Christmas celebration, a mythical figure named Santa Claus plays the pivotal role.

# CHRISTMAS

- If you will be traveling to Greece at Christmas, it's good to remember that many offices, businesses, restaurants, and other amenities may be closed or keeping unusual hours during the holiday season.
- Turkey is a big part of Greek Christmas food customs, and it is common to find this bird on most Greek Christmas tables. In some areas, the holiday is preceded by a time of fasting.
- In Greece, the Christmas season is in full swing by December 6th, the Feast of St. Nicholas, when presents are exchanged, and lasts through January 6th, the Feast of Epiphany.

# CHRISTMAS

- In general, don't expect as many Christmas displays, lights, or other Western decorations, except of course in the windows of expatriates and the ever-increasing number of Greeks who have adopted Western customs. Greece has been an oasis of non-commercialism when it comes to Christmas, though some lament that this has changed. In recent years, the City of Athens has sponsored extensive Christmas displays and events in Syntagma Square and elsewhere in Athens. However, as the government crisis unfolded and lingered, celebrations have remained somewhat toned down as Greece attempts to recover from its financial crisis.

# CHRISTMAS



# CHRISTMAS CAROLS

- Christmas in Greece is traditionally a solemn, religious holiday. Beautiful Christmas carols called kalanda have been handed down from Byzantine times and add to the reverent quality of the celebration. Kalanda, The Traditional Greek Christmas Carol, a tradition thru centuries.
- Greek Orthodox Christmas Carols In Greek Orthodox tradition, carols are sung on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24), New Year's Eve (Dec. 31) and on Eve of Epiphany (Jan. 5). The lyrics for these days are different.
- Groups of children go from house to house in their neighbourhood singing the carols.

# CHRISTMAS CAROLS

- The Singing is accompanied by the playing of triangles. Householders hear them through and reward the children with a small amount of money or with seasonal sweets.
- The lyrics shown below are the “standard” ones sung in cities, although there are several regional variations, which are typically longer and make use of local dialects.
- Children's Choir Rosarte - Greek Christmas Carol-Κάλαντα Ορεστιάδας
- <https://youtu.be/iFmRAiDDFcg\>

# CHRISTMAS SHIPS

- Christmas ships are boat parades held at Christmastime, typically featuring boats festooned with Christmas lights or winter/holiday decorations.
- In the United States in the nineteenth century, German and Irish immigrants shipped trees from Michigan and Wisconsin down to Chicago via boat to satisfy the large demand for Christmas trees.

Among these ships was the Rouse Simmons, a Christmas tree ship which sank in Lake Michigan in 1912. Christmas tree shipping continued to occur in Chicago into the 1930s.

Ships laden with Christmas gifts for distribution were also referred to as «Christmas ships» in the early twentieth century, even inspiring a popular World War I-era song, «Hurrah! Hurrah for the Christmas Ship».

# CHRISTMAS SHIPS



# DISHES AND DELICACIES ON CHRISTMAS

## MELOMACARONA

- The melomakarono (Greek: μελομακάρονο) is an egg-shaped Greek dessert made mainly from flour, olive oil, and honey. It is a traditional dessert prepared primarily during the Christmas holiday season. Historically, melomakarona are thought to be derived from the ancient and medieval makaria, which were eaten during funerals. Gradual changes in the recipe and the addition of dipping them in honey led to melomakarona which etymologically is derived from the Greek word for honey "meli" and "makaria".

## KOURAMPIEDES

- Kourampiedes (Greek: Κουραμπιέδες) is a traditional sweet, absolutely connected to Christmas and New Year's Day but also and to other joyful occasions as weddings and baptisms. Kourabiedes: The most traditional Christmas sweet has a life in today's Greece of only a century. They are absolutely connected to Christmas and New Year's Day but also and to other joyful occasions as weddings and baptism.

# DISHES AND DELICACIES ON CHRISTMAS

**MELOMACARONA**



**KOURAMPIEDES**



# GREEK CARNIVAL

- Greek Carnival season is a period Which traditionally begins 10 weeks Before Greek Orthodox Easter
- and culminates on the weekend before clean Monday, the first day of lent.
- The Greek Carnival is a period of masquerading eating, drinking and dancing with rich, extravagant
- parades of giant floats and colorful street groups.
- <https://youtu.be/HpLefPQJ9nE>



# CLEAN MONDAY

- Clean Monday is a public holiday in Greece marking the end of the festive Carnival season and the beginning of a 40 day period of great length known as the Sarakosti.
- Weather permitting, people spend Clean Monday outside, holding picnics and the children flying kites.
- Since it marks the beginning of the fasting period the consumption of meat, eggs and dairy products is traditionally forbidden. fish being eaten only on major feast days, though shellfish and mollusks are permitted.
- Fish can be eaten only on major feast days, though shellfish and mollusks are permitted.
- Thus, special food is laid on the table for the Clean Monday feast.
- The feast contains a special unleavened bread eaten only on this day named lagana, a fish roe spread named taramas as well as grilled octopus, seafood salads, shellfish and a special tahini dessert known as halvas.
- <https://youtu.be/7pNrKxNOJLE>

# CLEAN MONDAY



# EASTER

- Spring in Greece means easter. Easter in orthodox religion is the biggest celebration. In Greece it is celebrated in the holy week. All the days of the holy week mean something special in the orthodox church. The climax of it is holy Friday, Saturday, and the Sunday of easter. In the holy Friday at night we have the epitafios which is basically the coffin of Jesus Christ and the people of church alongside with the pastor lift it up and take it out for a stroll.



# EASTER

- In holy Saturday when the clock strikes midnight we say that Jesus was resurrected and all the people light up the candles that their godfathers gave them with the holy light that comes from Jerusalem.
- And after everything end people go to their houses to dine with their families and strike eggs which is a custom where 2 people technically fight with red egg for who will be able to keep their egg unbroken.
- Painted eggs is also a custom that we have in Greece where the housewives with their children (or not) paint eggs ( usually red) but any other color they might want to.
- In the Sunday that's when the fast breaks and we have a big feast celebration with ribs,lamb and a whole bunch of other meat products.
- The whole family comes together to eat and have fun and somehow that's how easter comes to its end.
- <https://youtu.be/QtmIhtfRgWg>

# EASTER



# GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

- Greek Independence Day, national holiday celebrated annually in Greece on March 25, commemorating the start of the War of Greek Independence in 1821. It coincides with the Greek Orthodox Church's celebration of the Annunciation to the Theotokos, when the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she would bear the son of God.
- <https://youtu.be/JdLDrB-FS2c>



# GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY



- Greece had been part of the Ottoman Empire since 1453. The Greek revolt was precipitated on March 25, 1821, when Bishop Germanos of Patras raised the flag of revolution over the Monastery of Agia Lavra in the Peloponnese. The cry “Freedom or death” became the motto of the revolution.

# OHI DAY

- Ohi Day or Oxi Day (Greek: Επέτειος του Όχι) is celebrated throughout Greece, Cyprus and the Greek communities around the world on 28 October each year. Ohi Day commemorates the rejection by Greek prime minister Ioannis Metaxas of the ultimatum made by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini on 28 October 1940, the Hellenic counterattack against the invading Italian forces at the mountains of Pindus during the Greco-Italian War, and the Greek Resistance during the Axis occupation.
- Most Greeks put a Greek flag on their windows and balconies, while a parade takes place with the participation of school students and the army.
- <https://youtu.be/xPHZLK1Vhyo>

# ΟΗΙ DAY

28 ΟΚΤΩΒΡΙΟΥ 1940  
**ΕΠΕΤΕΙΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΟΧΙ**



**ΟΗΙ DAY**  
OCTOBER 28, 1940



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

**50 GEL PETROUPOLIS**