

# *CHRISTMAS IN SPAIN*



**The expression Spain is different is well known beyond our borders: our meals, our schedules and, ultimately, our customs are sometimes unusual even within Europe.**

**This is also reflected in how we celebrate Christmas. We present several "facts" that will allow you to know our peculiar way of living this endearing celebration:**

**Unlike many countries in the world,  
our Christmas does not end on  
December 25, but begins that day.**

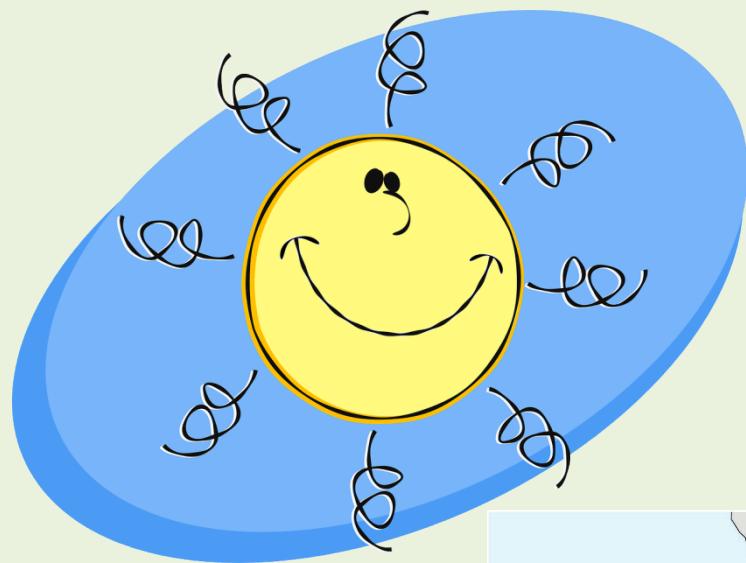
**At Christmas we include Christmas  
Eve and Epiphany Day (January 6).**

**Although it is not a religious  
celebration, December 31 and  
January 1 are included as Christmas  
celebrations.**



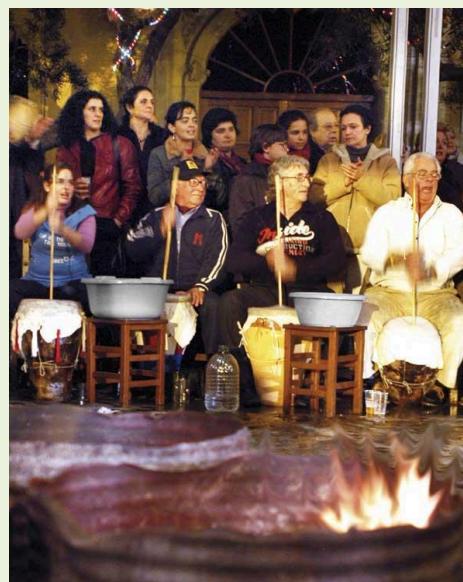
**In most areas of Spain, Christmas is not related to snow, as the weather is usually rather mild and dry.**

**Much less in the Canary Islands, where the temperature is always around 20 or 25 degrees.**



**There is no special traditions during Advent, except in churches, where masses with choirs are frequent.**

**Of course, in the streets you can breathe Christmas already in Advent! ... Lights illuminate the streets as in all places and everyone prepares the special ingredients for the family dinners that will take place.**



**Several lunches or dinners are usually held between relatives, friends and co-workers.**

**The most special are the Christmas Eve dinner ("Nochebuena" for us, which can be translated as "The good night") and the New Year's Eve dinner (which we call Nochevieja, or ... Old Night!).**

**Lunches are also frequent on Christmas Day, New Year's Day and**

## **Epiphany Day.**



**Our holidays are really complete ...  
In it we include the day of the Holy  
Innocents (December 28), in which  
we play pranks on everyone. That's  
right ... this is the Spanish version of  
April's Fools Day.**

**This tradition dates back centuries,  
when pastry chefs included salt in  
their cakes instead of sugar.**

**The most common thing is to stick a  
"puppet" on people's backs.**



**Although Santa Claus (Papá Noel for us) is known to all, the normal thing in Spain is to receive gifts on the morning of January 6.**

**These gifts are brought by the three Wise Men: Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar, the same men who brought gold, incense and myrrh to Jesus when he was born.**

**We cannot forget to leave them by  
the door of our rooms some milk ...  
and biscuits for their camels!**



**In Spain we have a lot of traditional  
meals at Christmas:**

**turrón, polvorones (made from pork  
fat, flour, almonds ...), good  
seafood, cheeses, Iberian ham ...**

**All of them are part of our  
Christmas dinners.**



**But, probably, one of the traditions that attracts the most attention is that of eating twelve grapes at 12 o'clock at night on December 31 while we listen attentively to the 12 chimes that, from Puerta del Sol Square in Madrid, transport us to the new year.**

**This tradition began more than a century ago, when there was an excess**

of white grape production that threatened to not be able to be sold. As a solution to this problem, everyone was encouraged to eat them as a sign of good luck on the last night of the year.



And if you don't manage to take 12 grapes during the last 12 chimes of the year, you have the opportunity to try again an hour later from the Canary Islands. There is an hour less there than on the peninsula ... as in the United Kingdom, Portugal or Ireland!

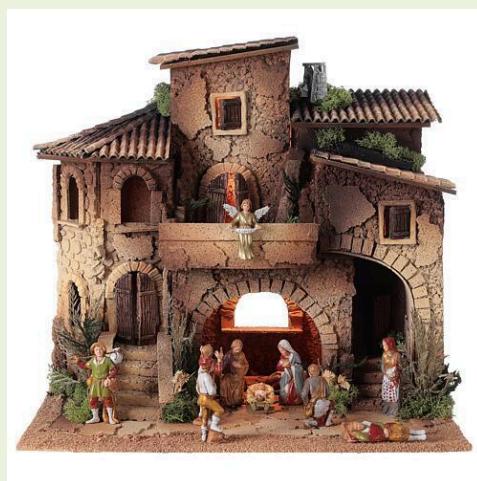


**One of the most ingrained traditions  
is to put a "nativity scene"  
somewhere in the house.**

**It consists of a representation of the  
stable in which Jesus was born.**

**The tradition of putting up a tree  
came to Spain much later. Today  
they coexist.**

**It is also possible to visit big  
"nativity scenes" in the churches**



**Did you know?**

**Many of the world's spectacular  
Christmas lights are made in the  
small city from which we write to  
you: London, New York, Dubai,  
Beijing, Brisbane, Paris ...**

**A great company called "Ximenez" is  
the architect ... Maybe the lighting  
in your city comes from Puente  
Genil.**

**SEE YOU IN SPAIN!!!**



## **OUR SCHOOL**

**Our school is located in five small villages belonging to Puente Genil, main town of the area, in the province of Córdoba (Andalucía, southern Spain). It's what we call here a "rural school", with an average of 12/15 pupils per class.**



We have chosen this year, to send you, several symbols that immediately identify us with our place of origin: the Three Wise Men and the map of our country, in addition to other general decorations typical of our Christmas





**¡¡OS DESEAMOS  
LAS MEJORES  
NAVIDADES, Y UN  
PRÓSPERO AÑO  
NUEVO!!**