

**Happy new year**





First of all I would like to tell you about the favourite holiday of Russian people. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December we always celebrate the New Year's Eve. And the 1<sup>st</sup> of January is the New Year's Day.

The New Year holiday is very popular in our country, especially with children. In every house there is a fir-tree. The presents are supposed to be sent by Father Frost and the Snow Maiden. People usually see the New Year is sitting round a festive table. They are addressing New Year's greetings and good wishes to one another. They are raising their wine glasses filled with sparkling champagne.

This tradition goes back to an ancient time. In 1700 Peter the Great opening the window on the West ignored the old tradition and introduced the Julianian calendar that started with the approximate date of the birth of Jesus Christ. Peter ordered to celebrate the New Year on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January. And since time we always celebrate this holiday on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January.



## Happy new year



As for me I like Christmas. And I tell you about this holiday. The Russian Christmas is celebrated on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January. The holiday is connected with the wonderful birth of Jesus Christ as it is described in the Holy Bible.

On that day, about 2000 years ago, Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem .

When Jesus was born, wise men from the East came to worship him. They gave the Child presents-gold, frankincense and myrrh. That's why people nowadays try to please their friends and relatives giving them Christmas presents.

To my mind Christmas-tide is a very interesting period. It is from January the 7<sup>th</sup> (Christmas) till January the 19<sup>th</sup> (Epiphany). It was established by the Church in honour of the birth and baptism of Jesus Christ. At the period people used to walk wearing fancy costumes and singing songs, they went from house to house giving and receiving gifts and treats.

And I want to tell you about Russian Shrovetide. It is the last Sunday before the Lent that proceeds Easter. It is celebrated as the Farewell-to-Winter Festival. On the day people have fun. They ride a troika, climb a pole for a gift.

Eating pancakes on that day is a pagan tradition. It is connected with glorifying the sun: pancakes are oval as the sun. Father Frost and Spring the Beauty are the main characters of the festival. In some regions people burn the figure of the Winter. On this day people say goodbye to

winter and welcome spring.



## Merry christmas



There are many holidays and traditions in our country. One of them is Maslenitsa. This holiday lasts for a week. Russian people celebrate it at the end of February or at the beginning of March. They say «good-bye» to winter in these days. During «Maslenitsa week» we always cook pancakes. It is a tradition to cook pancakes and eat them with fish, sour cream, caviar, honey, sugar, butter. Our family likes to invite our friends to come to see us. We buy cakes, fruit, cook pancakes for our guests. It is a pleasure to eat pancakes and to talk with each other. During this holiday we celebrate the beginning of spring. Usually this holiday is celebrated in parks. It is a time of fun during the «cheese week».



## Maslenitsa