

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

What do you do for Christmas? In this article we are going to look at Christmas in some South American countries. Remember, it's summertime in South America in December. Read over the article and complete each sentence with a word or expression from below. (Answers on page 3.)

Dancing, live animals, toys, gifts, fruit, Christmas Eve, llamas, carols, potatoes, parade, at the foot of their beds, on a piece of paper, bed of straw, candles, shepherds, lights, turkey, Nativity scenes, silk clothing, supper

Brazil

Brazilians create a nativity scene called a "Presépio". This comes from the word "presepio", which refers to the (1) _____ where Jesus first slept in Bethlehem.

The people of northern Brazil watch a version of a play called "Los Pastores" ("The (2) _____").

The person who brings children presents is known as "Papai Noel" (Father

Noel). According to legend, he lives in Greenland. When "Papai Noel" arrives in Brazil, he is usually wearing (3) _____ because it's so hot.

Brazilians play a game called "amigo secreto" (secret friend). Participants in the game write their name (4) _____. Each participant takes a paper (but does not reveal the name of the person on it). On Christmas Day, family and friends give a present to their secret friend.

Christmas dinner usually includes (5) _____, ham, rice, and fresh vegetables.

Many families celebrate Mass on 24th December in the afternoon, or early evening. Afterwards, they have a special (6) _____ called a "ceia" at midnight. On Christmas Day there are masses in the morning and late afternoon. Many people also go to the beach.



Colombia

The Christmas season in Colombia starts on 7th December. Families light (7) _____ in honour of the Virgin Mary. The 8th December is a national holiday. On this day, many families light candles. City streets and parks are illuminated with large Christmas (8) _____ as well.



On 16th December families start setting up the Christmas tree, which is artificial for ecological reasons. It is decorated with lights. Families also set up (9) _____ with either plastic or hand crafted figures.

From 16th December to 24th December families usually gather together at night around Nativity scenes to sing (10) _____.

People have a special meal on Christmas Eve with family and neighbours. Traditional Colombian food includes "ajiaco", which is a soup with potatoes and chicken. Everyone waits until midnight to wish each other Merry Christmas and to exchange (11) _____.

Traditionally, "El Niño Jesus" (baby Jesus) is the one who brings the gifts; but recently Santa Claus has been introduced as well. Children get up on Christmas morning and find presents (12) _____. Some people also give presents on 6th January, but 25th December is still the main holiday.

Ecuador

On Christmas Day there are colourful processions in Ecuador. People who live in the mountains dress in their finest clothes and ride (13) _____ down to the ranches of their employers.

At the ranch there is a "presebre" (a Nativity scene). People bring gifts of (14) _____, and children often make speeches, asking for blessings for their family or their animals.

There is a big outdoor party with lots of singing and (15) _____. The ranch owners often give presents to all the employees and their families.

The Christmas dinner usually consists of roast lamb, baked (16) _____, and brown sugar bread. In the cities, most people eat turkey.



The Dominican Republic

The big celebration in the Dominican Republic is on (17) _____. Families eat together, and the most common food is roast pig.

Many people do their Christmas shopping in a street called La Calle del Conde in the capital Santo Domingo. There are lots of street vendors trying to sell you things such as plastic dolls or real (18) _____.

Some people exchange gifts on Christmas Day, but most people wait until "El día de Reyes" (The Three Kings' Day), on 6th January.

On 5th January there's a (19) _____ with the Three Kings on their camels. After the parade children rush home to bed. However, before going to sleep, they put some water and grass under the Christmas tree for the camels.

The next day, on 6th January children open their presents and spend most of the day playing with their new (20) _____. On 7th January it's time to go back to school.

