



LKS2 - French Culture - Autumn Two  
Christmas Events



Key Dates

*Le 6 décembre - La Fête de St. Nicholas*

Parents give their children small presents to celebrate the day, as St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children. This is also where the custom of hanging up stockings comes from. In some towns there is a carnival procession and sweets are thrown to children in the crowd by a St. Nicolas figure.

*Le 24 décembre - La Veille de Noël*

Traditionally, this is when *Le Réveillon* (Christmas Dinner) is eaten - just before or after attending midnight mass. (The majority of French church-goers are Catholics). The meal often consists of oysters, *foie gras*, white pudding, stuffed turkey or goose and a chocolate log, *la bûche de Noël*. The adults often exchange gifts.

*Le 25 décembre*

This is spent quietly "*en famille*". Children open their presents. There is no "Boxing Day" - it's back to work on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

*Le 31 décembre - La Saint-Sylvestre*

New Year's Eve. Celebrations are held to see in the new year.

*Le 1er janvier - Le jour de l'an*

People wish each other "*Bonne Année*" and it is customary to send cards to friends and relatives, as long as they arrive before the end of January.

*Le 6 janvier - La Fête des Rois*

This is the festival of the kings - Twelfth Night. A special cake - *la galette des rois* - is baked and a *peve* hidden inside it. Whoever finds *la peve* in their cake becomes the *roi* or *reine* for the day and puts on a cardboard crown. Children sing a special song... *J'aime la galette*.