# 的最奇特的圣诞节习俗

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8 Truly Strange Christmas Customs

　　　　The holiday called Christmas is an amalgam of many winter holidays from around the world. The name is designated as a celebration of the birth of Jesus, although the date is not recorded in the Bible, and people at that time did not place particular important on birth dates. Scientists say the actual date was June 17th, 2BC because of the appearance of the star that beckoned the Magi. December 25th was set as the date for Christmas in the 4th century by Pope Julius I as an attempt to Christianize midwinter pagan holidays such as Solstice and Saturnalia. Customs such as bringing evergreens inside, eating fat-laden foods, and hanging lights are universal responses to the cold, dark winter season. Some of the stranger Christmas traditions are remnants of those older pagan holidays, and some have been changed over the centuries until their origins are hard to discern. Others were just made up to boost Business!

　　　　1. Krampus

　　　　St. Nicholas, Father Christmas, or Santa Claus is the weirdest Christmas tradition ever, but he is so well known and so well documented that his origins are beyond the scope of this particular post. As a tool to encourage good behavior in children, Santa serves as the carrot, and Krampus is the stick. Krampus is the evil demon anti-Santa, or maybe his evil twin. Krampus Night is celebrated on December 5th, the eve of St. Nicholas Day in Austria and other parts of Europe. People dress as Krampus and roam the streets looking for someone to beat with a stick. Since it is also a night for drinking, the beatings probably don’t hurt much. (Image by Flickr user salendron.)

　　圣诞节是全世界冬季节日的集合。之所以取名为圣诞节，是为着纪念耶稣的诞生，尽管《圣经中》并未记载耶稣诞生的具体日期，那个时期的人对出生日期也不甚重视。科学家说，具体日期实为公元前2年6月17日，因为在那一天，昭示东方三博士的星星出现了。公元前4世纪，为了把一些冬至时期的异教徒节日（如冬至日和农神节）基督教化，教皇尤利西斯一世把12月25日定为基督诞生日。而一些传统，如在屋内摆置常绿树，吃油脂丰富的食物，挂小灯，则是在寒冷阴暗的冬季之时，人们的普遍做法。还有一些更为奇特习俗，是古老异教节日的遗留物；一些历经几个世纪后，变化颇大，已难以溯及其源头；另外一些则是受商业利益驱使而生。

　　 (“Krampus\*”是巴伐利亚地区和阿尔卑斯山其他一些地区的传统活动，每年12月前后举行。Krampus是圣诞老人的原型——圣人尼古拉斯的助手，在当地的传说中，他肩背一个装着礼物的大袋子，手拿一根棍子，好孩子可以收到他的礼物，顽皮的孩子则会被棍子敲打。)

　　　　2. Caga Tió

　　　　In English, Caga Tió is “the pooping log”. Really. The Catalan custom is still celebrated in Spain, where you can buy your own el Caga Tió. The log is hollowed out, with legs and a face added. You must “feed” him every day beginning on December 8th. On Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, put him in the fireplace and beat him with sticks until he poops out small candies, fruits, and nuts. When he is through, the final object dropped is a salt herring, a garlic bulb, or an onion. Oh yeah, there is a traditional song the family can sing to encourage the process.

　　　　 poop log,

　　　　 poop turrón,

　　　　 hazelnuts and cottage cheese,

　　　　 if you don’t poop well,

　　　　 I’ll hit you with a stick,

　　　　 poop log!

　　2 Caga Tió

　　翻成英语，Caga Tió是指“拉屎的木头”。是真的。这一习俗源自加泰罗尼亚，西班牙仍然保留着这一传统，在那里，你可以买到自己的Cago Tió。木头是真空的，添了手和脚。从12月8日起，你必须每日“喂养”它，到了圣诞前夕或者圣诞节当天，再把它放到壁炉里，用棍子打它，直到它拉出小糖果、水果和坚果。拉完后，最后出来的是一条咸鱼，一根大蒜或者一段洋葱。哦，对了，还有一首传统的歌曲，一家人唱着，鼓励木头“拉屎”。

　　拉屎木

　　快拉杏仁

　　拉榛果，拉松软干酪

　　你要是不好好拉

　　我就拿棍子打你

　　拉屎木

　　　　3. Caganer

　　　　Another Catalonian tradition is the Caganer, a Christmas statue found in nativity scenes in Andorra and parts of Spain, Italy, and Portugal. The scenes depict the entire town of Bethlehem, and the Caganer is usually tucked away in a corner, far from Mary and Joseph. The Caganer needs privacy, because he is defecating. There are quite a few explanations for this custom, but none have been confirmed as the original source. Caganers have been used for at least a couple hundred years. You can even buy Caganers that resemble modern-day celebrities. (Image by Flickr users clare\_and\_ben.)

　　3 Caganer

　　另一个加泰罗传统为Caganer的圣诞雕塑，在安道尔、西班牙的部分地区、意大利以及葡萄牙，人们可以在耶稣诞生布景上看到它。这个场景刻画了整个伯利恒，而Gaganer通常被置于小角落里，远离圣母玛利和约瑟夫。它在大便，所以需要私人场所。关于这一习俗有甚多解释，但是没有一个被确认为是最初的版本。Caganers至少已经出现200年了。你可以买到仿现代名人的Caganers.

　　　　4. The Pickle Ornament

　　　　The story goes that when German families decorate the Christmas tree, the last ornament to be hung is the Christmas pickle -usually a blown glass ornament that may have been passed down through generations. It is tucked away in a hard-to-see spot (it is green, after all). The first child who finds the pickle on Christmas morning gets a special gift and good luck all the next year. The trouble with this legend is that people in Germany were unfamiliar with it. Glass tree ornaments were indeed made in Germany, in the shape of fruits and vegetables and other objects. These ornaments became very popular in America when F.W. Woolworth began importing them in the 1880s. An old German legend no doubt helped to sell more glass ornaments! (Image by Flickr user the queen of subtle.)

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　　4 腌菜装饰

　　故事是这样的：德国人在装饰圣诞树时，最后挂上去的是一卦圣诞腌菜——通常为吹制的玻璃装饰物，也许已经传了好几代了。人们把它藏在隐蔽的地方（它是绿色的）。在圣诞节的早上，第一个发现它的孩子可以得到一份特殊的礼物，且来年会有好运气。问题在于德国人对它并不熟悉。玻璃圣诞树装饰品原来是确是产于德国，形似水果、蔬菜或者其他东西。19世纪80年代，F.W.伍尔沃思把它们引进到美国后，这些装饰便在美国流行开来。古老的德国传说无疑有助于这些产品的销售。

　　　　5. Kentucky Fried Chicken

　　　　The celebration of Christmas in Asia usually involves imported western traditions, but in Japan those traditions have been shaped by commercial interests. The holiday places special emphasis on romantic love, so it’s a day to spend with a sweetheart or spouse. Bakeries sell Christmas cakes as traditional sweetheart treats. And you might have to make reservations to get a table at KFC. Yes, Kentucky Fried Chicken. The fast food franchise let it be known that fried chicken is traditional for the Christmas feast. And so it is -in Japan. (Image by Flickr user sleepytako.)

　　5 肯德基炸鸡

　　在亚洲，庆祝圣诞节通常会涉及到一些泊进的西方传统，然而，在日本，这些传统却被打上了商业利益的烙印。一到假日，浪漫爱情就显得分外重要，因此，这一天应该和心爱的人或者配偶一起度过。面包店会推出圣诞蛋糕作为传统的情人餐。要想在肯德基就餐，你也许还得订餐。是的，肯德基炸鸡。这位快餐界的大哥让人们以为炸鸡是传统的圣诞大餐。在日本就是这样。

　　　　6. Zwarte Piet

　　　　Zwarte Piet, or Black Peter is Santa’s helper in the Netherlands. Sinterklass arrives on the eve of St. Nicholas Day in a steamship with his slave Zwarte Piet, portrayed in public processions in several cities. Since about 1850, children who don’t behave during the year were told that Black Peter might take them back to Spain, where Sinterklaas lives. The racist aspects of the custom have been downplayed in recent decades, and the tale of Black Peter now describes him as a chimney sweep instead of a slave, which explains the blackface. But charges of racism still follow Black Peter, as he is often portrayed with an Afro and exaggerated features.

　　6 Zwarte Piet

　　Zwarte Piet（德语），意为黑皮特，在荷兰，人们认为他是圣诞老人的助手。在几个城市的公众\*中，描绘了圣诞老人在圣人尼古拉斯日前夕，和奴隶Zwarte Piet 一起，乘着汽船一起出现的情景。大约从1850年始，若有小孩在这一年中不听话，大人就会告诉他，黑皮特会把他们带到圣诞老人居住的西班牙去。在最近几十年，这一传统的种族主义成分被淡化，黑皮特也从奴隶变成了扫烟囱的人，这样也说明了他脸黑的原因。但是由于他经常被刻画成一个有着非洲发型的夸张形象，对其有关种族主义的控诉仍然不断。

　　　　7. TV Yule Log

　　　　The Yule Log is a tradition that dates back hundreds of years. The Yule Log on TV is a relatively new tradition for those who have no fireplace to burn their own log. WPIX in New York has broadcast 24 hours of a burning fireplace on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day since 1966. The original film was shot at Gracie Mansion, but a carpet fire during the first filming made the mayor wary of a reshoot a few years later, so the loop seen now was filmed in California.

　　7 电视圣诞柴

　　圣诞柴这一传统有几百年的历史。而电视圣诞柴则是个相对较新的传统，主要是为那些没有烧柴壁炉的人家而设的。从1966年开始，纽约WPIX频道就开始在圣诞节前夕24小时播放壁炉燃烧的情况。第一次节目是在市长府邸格雷西公寓拍摄的，但是那一次拍摄引起了地毯起火，几年之后，市长对重拍警觉起来，因此，现在大家看到的场景是在加利福尼亚拍摄的。

　　　　8. Mari Lwyd

　　　　Mari Lwyd, an old midwinter custom in Wales, is a holdover from pagan celebrations before Christmas was introduced. Mari Lwyd means “gray mare” in English.

　　　　In its purest form (still to be seen at Llangynwyd, near Maesteg, every New Year’s Day) the tradition involves the arrival of the horse and its party at the door of the house or pub, where they sing several introductory verses. Then comes a battle of wits (known as pwnco) in which the people inside the door and the Mari party outside exchange challenges and insults in rhyme. At the end of the battle, which can be as long as the creativity of the two parties holds out, the Mari party enters with another song.

　　　　The horse in the above scenario is made of a horse’s skull attached to a pole. The person operating the horse is concealed by sheets, and sometimes has a contraption to work the horses jaw! (Image by Flickr user arosmae.)

　　8 Mari Lwyd

　　Mari Lwyd是冬至时威尔士的古老习俗，是在圣诞节出现之前，异教节日的变相延续。Mari Lwyd在英语中意为“灰色的母驴”

　　这一传统的最初形式是这样的：一匹马和它的派对来到一户人家或者酒吧前，唱几首引见的诗歌，接下来是一场斗智赛，屋内的人和屋外的Mari派对唱着歌互相挑战对方，辱骂对方。直到双方词穷才尽，战争进入收尾阶段，Mari派对再唱着另外一首歌走进屋去。

　　在上一场景中，马的造型是由系在一根木棒上马头颅组成，马的操控着被布遮盖住，有时，还有特殊的装置，可以移动马的下巴。

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