



☆The 15th Monthly International Culture Event Notice: They have this in Korea too?!☆

The country closest to Japan is Korea. In Korea there are many customs that are very similar to Japan. Let's compare Japan and Korea's cultures by looking at the similar words, the slightly different food cultures, and the customs that only exist in Japan!



♪Date: Sunday, December 15th , 2013
♪Time: 14:00pm – 15:30pm
♪Place: Asobook Community Room
♪Presentation: Kwon JooHyun (Korea)

Entry is free of charge and everyone is welcome! We are looking forward to seeing you there!



★Christmas★

When December comes around, everyone thinks of Christmas. In England and America on the eve of December 24th Santa Clause visits everyone's houses and puts presents under the Christmas trees. However, did you know that in Switzerland and most of Europe Saint Nicholas comes to visit on December 6th?

The actual Saint Nicolas lived during the first half of the 4th century in a city called Myra, part of modern-day Turkey, and was active as a Christian Bishop. Saint Nicholas was a very generous person and today many legends about him remain.

For example, during 311-312 Myra was afflicted by a great famine. Saint Nicholas heard that a ship loaded with wheat for the Emperor was anchored in Myra on its way to Constantinople (the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire). Saint Nicholas tried to convince the ship's captain to give some of the wheat to the suffering inhabitants of Myra, but the captain was scared of the consequences if he were unable to deliver the exact amount of wheat the emperor expected. However, Saint Nicholas promised the captain that they would not suffer any loss, so the captain agreed and left enough wheat for two years. Later, when the ship arrived in Constantinople, miraculously the weight of the wheat had not changed

from the expected amount. Another legend tells how Saint Nicholas heard about the plight of a farmer, who was so poor that he could not provide his three daughters with a proper dowry and thus, they were unable to marry. In order to help them, Saint Nicholas secretly threw bags filled with gold down the chimney of the farmer's house. The daughters had hung their socks to dry in the chimney and the bags fell right into the socks. This legend may be the origin of the American and English custom of hanging Christmas Stockings (socks to be filled with presents) by the fireplace. In America and England these Christmas Stockings are hung in front of the fireplace, and on the night of December 24th Santa Clause fills them with presents.

December 6th is celebrated slightly different in Switzerland. Saint Nicholas is called "Samichlaus" in



Christmas Stockings hanging by the fireplace

Swiss German and is always accompanied by a man called “Schmutzli” who is dressed in a dark brown frock with a hood and carries a big black bag and a birch. On December 6th the Samichlaus and Schmutzli visit elementary schools and you can also meet them while walking through the city. If the children have been good kids for the last year they receive mandarins, peanuts and chocolates from the Samichlaus. However, if they behaved badly during the last year, Schmutzli catches them and puts them in his big black bag to punish them. Therefore, in order to show they have been good, the children recite short poems for the Samichlaus. If they do so they will definitely receive mandarins, peanuts and chocolates. Furthermore, if you leave your boots in the fireplace underneath the chimney on December 6th, Samichlaus will fill them with mandarins, peanuts and chocolates.

In Switzerland we also have someone who brings us presents on the evening of December 24th. This someone is called “Christkind”. The “Christkind” is a more ethereal being than the Samichlaus and is often depicted as a childlike angel. So in Switzerland, children get presents twice! ^-^ (Romy)



News Corner

☆The Niseko Town International Exchange Committee presents: Swiss Christmas Party☆

For one day the Niseko Chomin Center will be transformed into a Swiss Christmas Wonderland. Come by and make Swiss Santa Claus figures while enjoying food from various countries!

There is no entrance fee, but please bring something to eat or drink so we can enjoy food and drinks while having a chat. Home cooked dishes are very welcome! The Coordinators for International Relations from Switzerland, England and Korea will prepare dishes from their home countries!



- ♪ When: Saturday, December 14th 2013, 12:00am-14:00pm
- ♪ Where: Chomin Center 1F, Small Hall
- ♪ What to bring: Food and Drinks (Home cooking if possible, but store-bought is also OK)
- ♪ Who: Everyone is invited to participate! (Adults and children welcome!)
- ♪ Application: Please apply by Tuesday, December 10th 2013
(Please let us know what kind of food you are going to bring)
- ♪ To apply please contact: Niseko Town International Exchange Council
(Niseko Town Council, Planning & Environment Division)
Romy, Maekawa, Phone: 0136-44-2121 Email: kikaku@town.niseko.lg.jp

The Radio Show by Niseko's Coordinators for International Relations

「*To the Ears of the World*」 76.2 MHz

♪Friday, December 6th 15-15:50

Luo Yuqing : 「The Chinese Gourmet Food Boo



♪Friday, December 13th 15-15:50

Romy Beer : 「Swiss Christmas♥」

♪Next Potluck Party♪

Date and Time: February 1st 2014,
12:00am-14:00pm

Theme: Chinese New Year –
Spring Festival

If you have any inquiries, things you want to know more about, comments, or questions about the International Exchange Newsletter please feel free to contact us anytime!

Contact : Niseko Town International Exchange Council (Niseko Town Council Planning & Environment Division)
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