

The pooping log - and other bizarre Christmas traditions

OK, each to their own, but some of these traditions might seem a bit weird...

 By [Rod Baker](#) 17 Dec 2013



Many of us tend to associate Christmas with something like this, but people around the world have many other ways to celebrate the occasion – and some of those ways seem (to us, anyway), positively strange. (Image: Jacob Windham from Mobile, USA, via Wikimedia Commons)

The festive season is generally regarded as a time of goodwill - with North Korea being a singular exception since shoving a Christmas tree up anywhere near their border with South Korea could lead to threats of war and the tree being shot down for being propaganda. (And let's face it, when being the 'Dear leader's' uncle enough to get you shot - something that can really ruin your day - *anything* is possible.)

Fortunately in sane (or saner) parts of the world, artillery shells are not likely to come your way. For instance kids in Italy during the festival of Epiphany can expect a visit from an old witch known as "La Befana" (no, not Bafana Bafana) who despite her gross appearance, apparently has a good heart and walks through village streets giving gifts to children. Who said beauty is skin deep but ugliness goes clear to the bone?

In Germany, just to show that Germans can give you a friendly bang, Bavarian Highlanders get kitted out in their traditional dress and then fire handheld mortars into the air every year. So their festive season goes with a bang (but a lot less lethal than that promised by the aforementioned North Korea).

Back in the US, in the southern part of the state of Louisiana the locals set up massive bonfires every Christmas Eve to light up the river so that Papa Noel (the south Louisiana Santa Claus) can find their houses. What about simply leaving your outside lights on?

How's this for a shoe thing...? In the Czech Republic Christmas eve is a single lady's chance to find out if she's going to be on the shelf for much longer. She stands outside her front door, flings a shoe over her shoulder and it lands with the toe pointing towards the door she'll be married within the year. So presumably if it's pointing away the men-folk are safe for another year, and if it lands parallel to the door, then who the hell knows what the future holds.

Look, I am not taking the pith, but then, who knows... on 8 December every year in Catalonia, Spain, the kids start feeding a log that the family keeps in their home.

They also cover it - to keep it warm (what about setting it on fire - that should work, though that sort of defe

the purpose of the whole exercise) and then on Christmas Eve, beat the hell out of it so that it will poop out their presents.

Now I ask you, is that any way to repay something that has just given you a new bicycle or Barbie?

Oh cluck! Christmas is clearly a bad time for turkeys and chickens, and much else besides, but in Japan, particularly for chickens... KFC is the staple Christmas fare for virtually the entire nation; some people even reserving their bucket well in advance. Their marketing team there must deserve a medal - or a complimentary bucket of their favourite tummy filler.

Compared with the above - and other [25 bizarre Christmas traditions from around the world](#) my idea of lazing around the pool and getting on the outside of a bottle or three of wine and a fat fillet steak seems positively boring. Hic!

ABOUT ROD BAKER

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