

## Greek Christmas Traditions

Christmas in Greece is a lovely mix of old traditions and religious celebrations. Shiny Christmas trees are everywhere.,,

Children go door-to-door singing Kalanda. These are traditional Christmas songs. They fill the air with happy tunes and stories about Christ's birth. This practice comes from Greek culture. It shows the warmth that fills the Christmas season.

## The Importance of Agios Vasilis – Greece's Take on Santa Claus

In Greece, the cheerful character spreading Christmas joy is Agios Vasilis, the Greek version of Santa Claus. He looks like Santa Claus from the North Pole, but Agios Vasilis, also called Saint Basil the Great, is special in Greek culture. He is known for his kindness and is celebrated on January 1st. This is why many Greek kids get their gifts on New Year's Day.

This tradition comes from the Orthodox calendar and the importance of Saint Basil's Day. In recent years, many families have chosen to exchange gifts on December 25th. This aligns with how people celebrate Christmas around the world.

Many lucky children in Greece get to feel the joy of receiving gifts on Christmas Day and Saint Basil's Day!



## Kalanda: The Heartwarming Greek Christmas Carols

As the Christmas season brings joy, the sound of Kalanda, the traditional Greek Christmas songs, fills the streets and homes in Greece. Early in the morning, groups of kids often hold triangles and tambourines. They take

part in a warm tradition of singing carols and spreading happiness. They go from door to door, singing Kalanda, which talks about Christ's birth and other Christmas stories.

The tradition of Kalanda is important in Greek culture. It brings people together during Christmas time. It's exciting to see the happiness and energy coming from the young carolers. They share their joyful spirit with every home they visit.

Homeowners often show their thanks for the children's joyful songs. They usually give them sweets, small gifts, or even some money. This makes the Greek Christmas tradition feel even more special.



## Greek Christmas Food

Christmas in Greece is a time to enjoy many traditional dishes. These meals often include tasty meats, fragrant bread, and sweets that just melt in your mouth. The holiday table is filled with items like tender roast pork, flavorful stuffed turkey, and Christopsomo, which is a sweet bread. This bread means good luck and wealth.

But no Greek Christmas feast is complete without a big mix of sweets. Enjoy the honey-soaked Melomakarona cookies topped with lots of nuts. Or try the soft Kourabiedes almond cookies covered in powdered sugar.



Vasso Panagouli