# **Our English Corner**

*New Year’s Customs and Traditions Around the World*

Apostolos Diavolikis, a second-grade student, interviewed an American friend about traditions related to the celebration of the New Year in the USA as well as in Hungary. His name is Arion and he is of Greek and Hungarian origin.

1. On New Year’s Eve, the kids in Greece sing carols. Is there a similar custom in the USA or Hungary?

In the United States there are no carols but people get together and have parties. In Hungary they don’t sing carols either.

1. Are there any traditions connected with Christmas day or New Year’s day?

In the United States people make gingerbread houses using pieces of baked gingerbread dough or bake gingerbread cookies. They also make eggnog – a drink made with milk, cream, sugar and whipped egg whites and egg yolks - with added alcohol for the adults and without alcohol for the children.

Families in Hungary make special salty cookies for the New Year’s day, called “ szaltakeske “, which they store and eat for months.

1. How about the New Year’s dinner? Are there any special dishes served on New Year’s Eve or New Year’s day?

In America, a lot of people gather together and have dinner but there aren’t any traditional dishes.

In Hungary, they make “ turostaska “ , which is basically like Greek ‘tyropita’ but it is sweet.

1. How do people decorate their homes for the New Year’s day?

Well the most popular decoration in the States is placing balloons all over the house, featuring the coming new year.

The Hungarians decorate their homes with pictures of Saint Nicholas, who is very special to them.



1. In Greece children look forward to New Year’s day because they get presents from their families. Is it the same in these two countries?

In Hungary kids also get their presents on New Year’s day but in the States kids get presents on Christmas day.

1. Finally, is there a habit or tradition for the New Year which is typical of these countries?

The most amazing thing in the United States is the large amount of money which is spent on gifts during the holiday season which is much higher compared to other countries.

In Hungary people don’t meet any of their friends on New Year’s day because, as they say, that would spoil their friendships. So they celebrate only with their families.

1. Well thank you so much for your time and for all the information you have given us!

You are welcome!