

The story of Sinterklaas

We´d like to tell you something about a special celebration that is celebrated in The Netherlands. Called "Sinterklaas" or "Saint Nicolas".

He brings presents to all the children in Holland on the 5th of December, which is the eve of his birthday.



Sinterklaas is a very old, friendly man, a bishop with a white beard, red mitre and robe, and a gold staff, and during the year, he lives in Spain. He goes around riding a white horse, and he is surrounded by lots of helpers, called "Black Peters". They are as their name suggests, black. They are dressed in beautifully coloured clothes, and would carry his sacks filled with presents.

These helpers are very friendly, very cheeky, [they love to play tricks on anyone] but above all they are extremely acrobatic. They´re always climbing and jumping and running all over the place.

3 weeks before his birthday, he sets sail from Spain on a steamboat and arrives in a different town in Holland every year to celebrate his arrival in Holland.

On that day all the children of that town and their parents, will greet Sinterklaas and from that day on, all the children in the whole country are allowed to put their shoe next to their chimney, filled with a carrot and some hay for his white horse, and perhaps a painting or poem for Sinterklaas himself. His helpers go round the country and climb up and down the rooftops, climb through the chimney into all the houses, to check up on the children, to make sure they are all good and behaving well, and if they were good, they fill the children´s shoes with small presents, sweets and candy. If children haven´t been good, they wouldn´t get anything, or they would sometimes even put a lump of coal in the shoe!

The story goes that children that have been really bad, would go into the empty sack after all the presents have been handed out, and taken back to Spain with Sinterklaas and his helpers, but we have never heard of this actually happening.

Like all the children across the world do around Christmas time, the children in Holland would also make a list of all the presents they would like to receive, and would send letters to Sinterklaas. Sinterklaas would keep all this information in his large book.

When the big night [5th December] finally arrives, all the children are very anxious. They sit together with their family, sing Sinterklaas songs and eat typical Sinterklaas sweets and candy and drink Chocolate milk. They eat "Speculaas" [candybread], Marzipan, "Pepernoten", "Taai-taai" and Chocolate figures and letters.

What would then normally happen is that there would be a sudden knock on the

door, and the door would come ajar and one of the Sinterklaas helpers would throw a handful of sweets into the room. All the kids would then scramble for the sweets, and when everybody would be back on their feet again, Sinterklaas would have left a large sack with presents for all the children. That's when the fun would really start, with the unwrapping of all those lovely presents

St. Nicolas' anniversary at school 5 th of December 2008.

In the weeks before the arrival of St.Nicolas and his Peters, the children are busy with handycraft, writing letters to St.Nicolas and baking gingerbread nuts. The eldest pupils make surprises of their presents and add a poem.



Each year the arrival of St. Nicolas and his Peters is a surprise. This year they should come by helicopter, but....

The helicopter couldn't find the school, so they landed in the middle of nowhere!

A farmer in the neighbourhood gave them his tractor and so they arrived at school!



The children were waiting and sang some songs.



St. Nicolas is visiting the young ones and gives them their presents.



What will be in my present ????????





December ice-skating.

The 10th of December the pupils from 8 till 12 years old went for ice-skating.

Nowadays we don't have nature-ice, so in wintertime there is an skating-rink in the neighbourhood.





We 've had a lot of fun !



