



## Laure Weber-Vintzel

Preparing *Bredele*, biscuits or small cakes, is a strong tradition in my family, as in most Alsatian families. Whenever possible we would gather on either the last weekend of November or the first weekend of December to share the work depending on everyone's skills. I am usually in charge of cutting the shapes, thanks to my bad reputation as a cook. It is also a good time to chat, get updated on family news and hear about Santa Klaus' lists. This year, I had to make them all by myself, by following the family recipe attentively.

In this photo, please admire my very first batch of *Zimtsterne* (cinnamon stars, my favourite ones!). I also prepared some *Schwowebredele* with almonds. Next year, I will attempt to make *Anisbredele* but I felt it too ambitious for this year (and I knew one of my cousins would send me some).





Alix Weng

Any occasion is good to have yummy food for Chinese people! And especially during the festive season when we make and eat the symbolic raviolis and children receive red envelopes filled with lucky money!



En Provence il y a les 13 desserts qui sont composés comme suit :

- la pompe à l'huile
- les 4 mendiants qui représentent les ordres religieux ayant fait vœu de pauvreté (noix ou noisettes pour les Augustins, figes sèches pour les Franciscains, amandes pour les Carmes)
- raisins secs (pour les Dominicains),
- Les clémentines ou oranges,
- Le verdaù (melon vert),
- le nougat noir et le nougat blanc,
- les dattes,
- pate de coing,
- pomme ou poire.

Également, en Provence, le soir du 24 décembre, on mange léger et on rajoute une assiette sur la table pour le voyageur qui aurait pu se perdre dans la nuit ou pour le pauvre qui a vu de la lumière dans la maison et bien sûr il y a les santons pour la crèche avec comme personnage important (hormis le petit Jésus !!) le **Ravi** du village (voir photo).







Rachel Tidman

Christmas traditions in Australia usually involve a trip to the beach to avoid the heat, where we often fight over the shady spots with the local wildlife. Traditional food involves a barbecued roast and seafood platter, and there is a race against the clock to eat chocolate desserts before they melt!





Assa Fofana

A little tradition that we have recently started: our son Ismail likes singing Christmas carols in front of the tree on Christmas Eve.





## Lucy Hogan

Due to the incredibly sensible reason of supposed bad luck or a *piseog*, we were not allowed to put our decorations up in our house until Christmas Eve for much of my childhood. Although, we did wear down our parents eventually to 22nd or 23rd through a concerted campaign as can only be waged by six children simultaneously.

As we got older, we would wait to open our presents at midnight on Christmas Eve and a couple of hours before that 'the youngest "child" in the house' (i.e. me) would light the Christmas candle by the crib above the hearth. This would be accompanied by many 'Oos' and 'Ahs' and my mother's affirmation that now it really felt like Christmas.

There is a tradition in rural Ireland to light a candle and place it in the window as a welcome to strangers at Christmas. We used to do this, but I have a feeling the net curtains went up in flames so the candle was relocated to the mantelpiece. I'm not sure how welcome a stranger would be who ambled up to the house fuelled with Christmas cheer but I like the idea.





## Patricia Pozzetti

Holiday tradition in Brazil is very rich, and one that I really enjoy celebrates the new year. Everyone wears white clothes, goes to the beach and into the sea to jump over seven waves for good luck in the year to come, and to offer roses to the sea goddess called [Yemanjá](#) (linked to the African religious tradition called Candomblé). Unfortunately, the beaches were closed this year, due to the pandemic, and we were unable to observe the rituals of the Brazilian tradition, but to give you a better idea, past celebrations look like this.



## Hogmanay in Scotland


'Hogmanay' is the Scots word for the last day of the year, or New Year's Eve, and in non-COVID-19 times involves an evening of parties with friends and family. Traditionally, after midnight, Scottish people start visiting friends and family in what is called 'first-footing', where the first person to enter the home of someone on New Year's Day is seen as a bringer of good fortune for the coming year. This person carries a gift, which is usually whisky and so the parties continue into the very early hours!...

On Hogmanay, one tradition I always do with friends is go for a walk up one of the hills behind my hometown before we head out. The views looking back down to Loch Lomond (loch being Scots for lake) are incredible and I made sure I still went up the hill this year.

On New Year's Day, after a long night of partying into the morning, many Scots go for what is called the 'Loony Dook' where people go into the freezing waters, wherever they are. Friends and I usually go in a large group but COVID-19 restrictions on the size of gatherings meant this could not happen. Nevertheless, myself and a friend managed to go for a very brief swim in Loch Lomond to welcome 2021. The temperature was a tropical 2°C and felt very refreshing!....

Dan  
Donachie



Click video for the view 



## Emily Tagliaro



Nothing beats a hot summer.

Growing up in the southern hemisphere, Christmas day was spent religiously on the beach. After having opened our Christmas presents in the backyard (under our non-traditional Christmas tree), we would fill a cool box with fresh seafood, beer and ice, and head off to the [St Kilda beach](#) for lunch on plastic plates. My mother, true to her Italian culinary traditions, also filled the picnic basket with containers of toasted polenta, [baccalà alla vicentina](#), vegetarian [Russian salad](#), and panettone.

Digestion was possible thanks to hours of swimming and beach cricket. We would laugh in horror at the backpackers who wore woolly Santa hats on the beach, all while we all sported our traditional red Christmas bathing suits (a staple annual Christmas present for each member of the family).

On days when it rained, we would stay at home and have lunch (the menu did not change) in the backyard. If it stopped raining, we would turn on the water sprinkler system and run across under the blades of very cool water and into puddles of mud. Obviously, everyone except the dog, preferred Christmas without rain.

Apart from my family and after more than 20 years of living in Europe, warm-weathered Christmas and New Year's Eve/Day are perhaps the sole things I really miss about Australia.





Tamara Benicasa

Walking all around and under the Christmas illuminations in Paris has been a 30-year tradition for me. It embodies Paris as *the City of Lights* and is a picture-perfect way to kick off the festive season!