



Christmas in Ukraine: customs and traditions





Ring out wild bells

By Lord Tennyson



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- Ring out wild bells, to the wild sky
 - The flying cloud, the frost light
 - The year is dying in the night
 - Ring out wild bells, across the snow,
 - Ring out the old ring in the new
 - Ring happy bells across the snow
 - The year is going, let him go.
 - Ring out the false, ring the true
 - Ring out the grief that saps the mind
 - For those that here we see no more;
 - Ring out the feud of rich and poor
 - Ring in redress to all mankind.





Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright,
Round your virgin, mother and child,
Holy infant, so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glory streams from heaven afar.
Heavenly hosts sing hallelujah,
Christ the Saviour is born.
Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from thy holy face.
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.





Do you know Christmas ABC?

- **M** for the Music, merry and clear;
E for the Eve, the crown of the year;
R for the Romping of bright girls and boys;
R for the Reindeer that bring them the toys;
Y for the Yule log softly aglow.
- **C** for the Cold of the sky and the snow;
H for the Hearth where they hang up the hose;
R for the Reel which the old folks propose;
I for the Icicles seen through the pane;
S for the Sleigh bells, with tinkling refrain;
T for the Tree with gifts all abloom;
M for the Mistletoe hung in the room;
A for the Anthems we all love to hear;
S for St. Nicholas – joy of the year!



History of Christmas



Christmas in Ukraine

Christmas traditions

vertep



Didukh



carols



fortune-telling

Christmas presents



Christmas food





History of Christmas.



- For the Ukrainian people Christmas is the most important family holiday. It is celebrated according to ancient customs that have come down through the ages and are still observed today.
- Christianity was introduced in 988 A.D. This day was a festival long before Christianity, because ancient people believed that this was the time when the Sun god started his journey back to Earth. The church accepted many ancient customs as part of the Christian holidays (Feasts of Winter Solstice). This is why Ukrainian customs are quite unique and deeply symbolic.



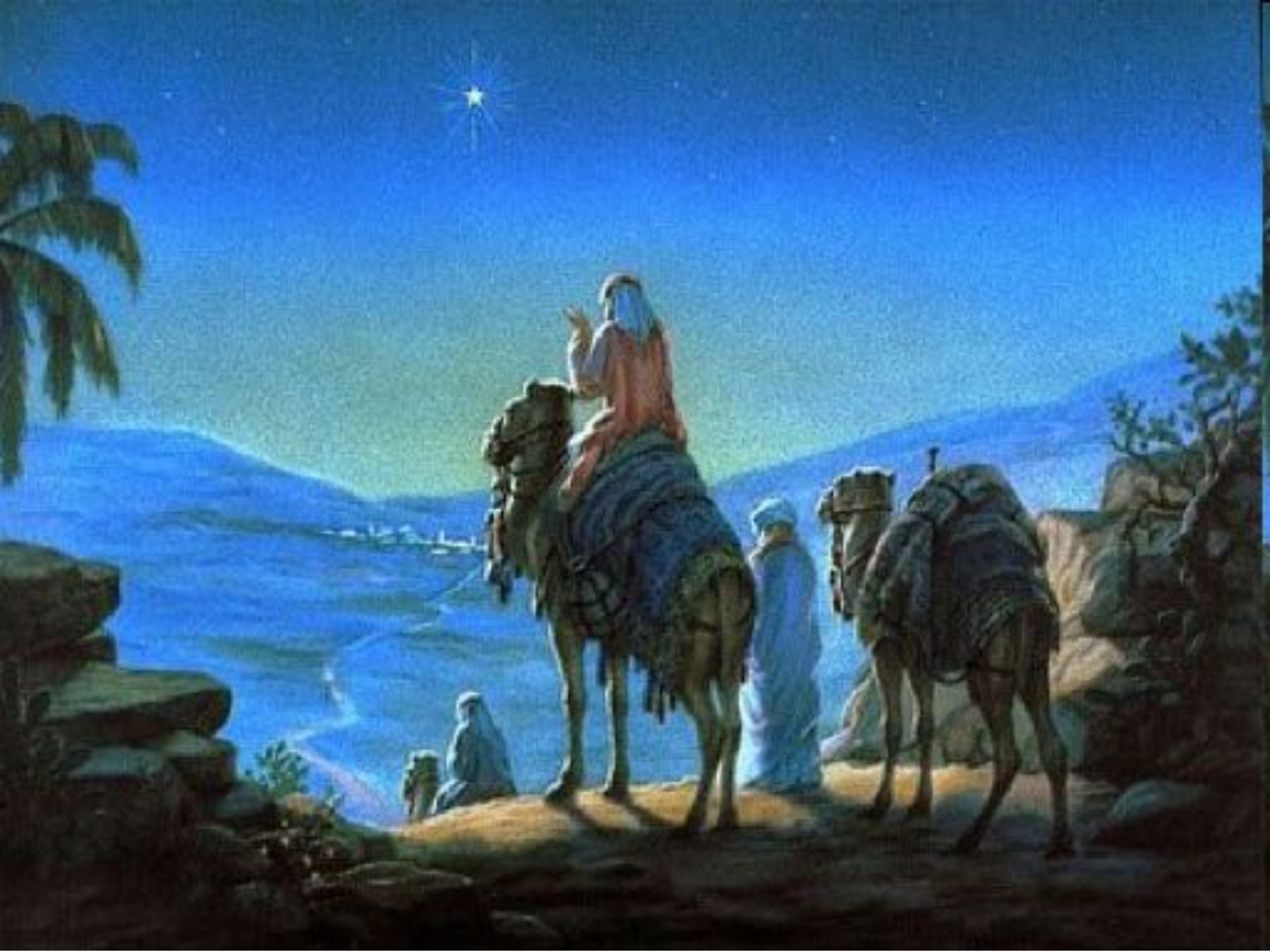


The Birth of Christ























Traditions of Christmas





Sviata Vecheria (Holy Supper)



Didukh is a sheaf of wheat stalks. It is placed under the icons. The stalks of grain symbolize all the ancestors of the family.



Kutia (boiled wheat mixed with poppy seeds and honey) is the most important food of the Christmas Eve Supper and is also called God`s Food.



There are twelve courses in the supper in honor of twelve Christ`s Apostles. Meat and dairy products are not permitted.



Colach(Christmas bread) is placed in the centre. This bread is braided into a ring and three such rings are placed one on top of the other, with a candle in the centre. The three rings symbolize the Trinity.











Caroling





Caroling-singing folk ritual songs.

Carols have come to us from ancient times. Our ancestors sang ritual Koliadky in honor of the Sun returning to summer in the feast which was called Kolo or Koliada.

There are two main groups of Christmas songs in Ukraine: Koliadky which are sung on the Christmas Eve and schedrivky (from the word meaning generous) which are sung during the feast of Epiphany.

The group of carolers is usually picturesque: one member is dressed as a goat, another carries a six-pointed star attached to a long stick, which symbolized the star of Bethlehem. They go from door to door singing carols for each member of the family. The hosts present carolers with apples, nuts, sweets and money.





Vertep





Vertep- Ukrainian Christmas Puppet Theatre.

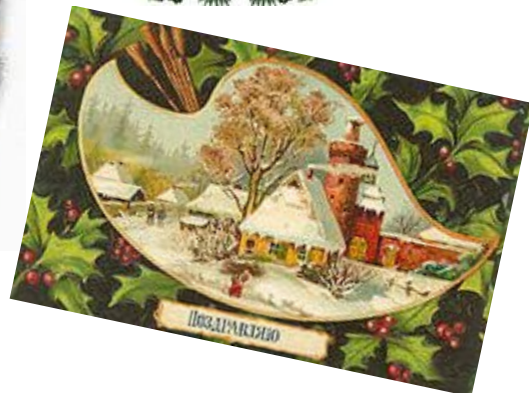
It`s history began in the 17-th century. The theatre was probably founded by students of the Kyivan Academy. Puppets were made of wood. The play which was staged had two separate acts. The first had a religious theme and told about the birth of Christ. The second act of the play consisted of short, humorous scenes. There was traditionally one personage there, who was just called “Kozak Zaporozhets”. Probably the role of Kozak was based on Kozak Mamai, the semi-legendary folk hero. In the puppet theatre the Kozak doll was always made larger than the others. He wore the traditional dress of the Kozaky, had a bandura (Ukrainian folk string instrument) and smoked a pipe. The Kozak puppet spoke of the glorious historical past of Ukraine, he was the eternal defender of Ukraine`s freedom.





Christmas cards







- Every person wants to be happy, to feel harmony in his her soul. Christmas is a great chance to forget wars, terrorism and other cruel things that spoil our life. It's a chance to become better, to believe in miracles. It's a chance to look into the eyes of people who are near you and say, "I love you with all my heart! I wish your dreams to come true! Be happy!" If all people did it, we think, our life would be better. Merry Christmas!

