

Christmas in Spain - La Navidad en España 2011

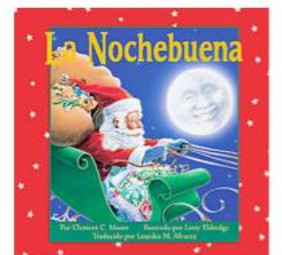


Christmas starts on **21st December** for **Hogueras**, the Winter Solstice the shortest day in the year. People jump through the fires to get luck to protect themselves from illnesses!

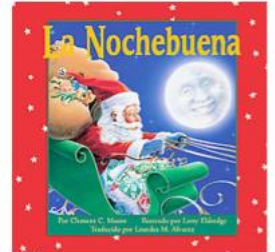
22nd December - el Gordo- A national lottery where everyone buys tickets and the prize is divided between many winners-El gordo means ' the big or fat one'!



24th December, Nochebuena. On this day, all of the family come around for a massive meal of many courses! Spanish people are most likely to eat lots of seafood. Children may exchange one small present each and at midnight they go to "Midnight Mass" in the Church. Some children sing carols at people's doors instead. There are huge nativity scenes in most town centres and in all the churches, and some are animated like the scenes in the windows of Harrods in London, only religious!



On **25th December**, el día de Navidad: all of the shops are closed and everyone is on holiday, **fiesta**, although many people go to restaurants to eat their dinner.



The Spanish celebrate New Years Eve or Nochevieja like us on **31st January** and they eat 12 grapes when the clock strikes 12 midnight for good luck in the New Year.



The most important dates are the **5th January** and the **6th January** which is when Spanish people believe the Three Kings visited Jesus in Bethlehem. On 5th January, there are parades in every town in the evening and the people on the floats throw sweets for the children to collect! On the 6th of January-people open most of their Christmas presents!



¡Feliz Navidad! is Spanish for Happy Christmas and **¡Próspero año nuevo!** means Happy New Year!

PS-don't forget to eat those grapes when the clock hits 12!!

