

„Bei uns ist immer was los!“

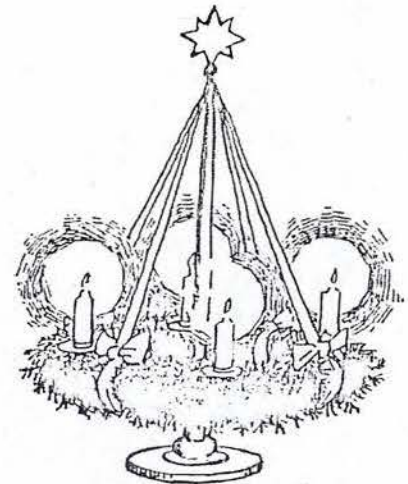
ADVENT—PERIOD OF TIME BEFORE CHRISTMAS
four Sundays of Advent / vier Sonntage in der Adventszeit:

zweiter Sonntag oder kupferner Sonntag, den ____ . Dezember
(second Sunday or copper Sunday)

Countdown to Christmas

Christmas, or *Weihnachten*, is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Although Christmas day is December 25, the Christmas season in Germany starts four Sundays before and ends twelve days after. Families keep track of the four weeks before Christmas, called Advent, by lighting candles. They place the candles in a special holiday candleholder made of evergreen branches twisted in a circle. They light one candle on the first Sunday, two on the next, and three the following Sunday. When all four candles are lit, Christmas is right around the corner!

Advent



The Advent Season

The German Christmas season starts with Advent, which is observed in most homes with the Advent wreath. Made of fir branches entwined with bright red ribbons and crowned with four candles, this wreath is either suspended from the chandelier in the living room or placed upon a table.

Each Sunday the family gathers around the wreath and one candle is lit for each week. On the last Sunday before Christmas all four candles have been lit and shed their mellow light — a prefiguration of the coming of Christ.

Advent begins with an Adventskranz, an Advent wreath. It is woven from boughs of fir, and red, gold, or purple ribbons. Advent is the four week period commemorating waiting the birth of Christ. The four weeks of Advent are marked off by four candles mounted on the wreath lit each Sunday. The family gathers around the wreath each evening before eating to sing hymns and watch the head of the family light the correct number of candles for the week. The candles burn throughout the meal.