

VORWEIHNACHTENSITTEN (PRE-CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS)

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS LIKE A GERMAN

Await the arrival of the Christkind or Weihnachtsmann

Finally, the time has come to decorate the tree! Though in recent times it has become more common in Germany to decorate the tree along with the rest of the house earlier in December, traditional practice is to wait until the 24th.

After the meal the children go to their rooms to await the arrival of the *Weihnachtsmann*, meaning Father Christmas or, more traditionally, the *Christkind*, meaning Jesus child. After one of these mysterious figures has visited, a bell is rung and the children come downstairs to find the tree magically decorated and surrounded by presents.

Go to church



Though Germans go less and less frequently to church, on Christmas Eve they attend *en-(midnight)-messe*. There is a real feel of community at these Christmas Eve church services and they also are a chance to indulge in the classical Christmas catalogue with the added benefit of the acoustics of a cathedral. What's more, they won't even kick you out if you've opted out of the church tax.