

Christmas in New Zealand

New Zealand celebrates Christmas much like Great Britain and North America. Christmas is on December 25. Santa Claus, or Father Christmas, brings presents to good children. Homes are decorated with strings of lights and decorated trees. People in New Zealand sing Christmas carols and have a large Christmas dinner.

What is different about Christmas in New Zealand is the weather. Since New Zealand is in the Southern Hemisphere, December 25 is in the summer. There is no snow or cold weather. Many New Zealanders, also known as Kiwis, go to the beach or have a barbecue on Christmas Day. Santa sometimes arrives by boat, rather than a sleigh.

Because the weather is warm, parades during the Christmas season are popular.

In December, the pohutukawa tree blooms in New Zealand. It is now known as the New Zealand Christmas tree, because of its bright red flowers.

Much of the Christmas food in New Zealand is like the food in Great Britain. Roast beef, plum pudding and potatoes are popular. New Zealanders like a special dessert for Christmas called a pavlova. It is a special meringue with a soft center. It is topped with whipped cream and fruit, such as strawberries, passionfruit and kiwi.

Christmas is the beginning of summer vacation for many New Zealanders. Many people will play sports or have fun outside.



Christmas decorations along a street in Auckland, New Zealand



The pohutukawa tree is known as the New Zealand Christmas tree.



The pavlova is a popular Christmas dessert in New Zealand.



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Fill in the Blank

Fill in the blank with the correct answer about Christmas in New Zealand.

1. New Zealand is in the _____ Hemisphere.
2. Christmas in New Zealand is warm because it is _____ .
3. Many traditions in New Zealand are like the traditions in _____ and _____ .
4. The pohutukawa is called the New Zealand Christmas tree because it blooms in December and its flowers are _____ .
5. A New Zealand Christmas dessert decorated with fruit is called a _____ .

In the space below, draw a picture of what you think Santa Claus looks like in the summer.