

Canada

Many Canadians celebrate Christmas much like the American people. They decorate a pine tree with ornaments that represent Christmas and put presents under the tree. In the middle of the night, Santa Claus comes down the



chimney to leave children gifts. He flies in a sled pulled by nine tiny reindeer. Most eat a Christmas dinner of roast turkey with vegetables and sauces. For dessert it is a rich, fruity Christmas pudding with brandy sauce. Mince pies, pastry cases filled with a mixture of chopped dried fruit.

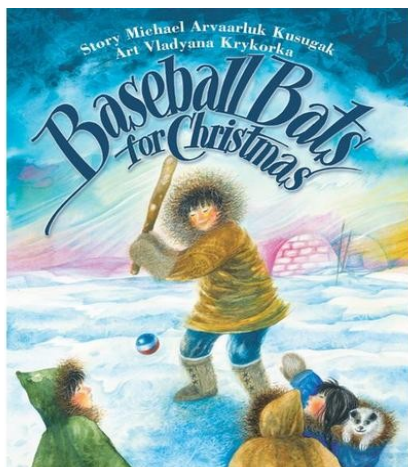
Many children eat sweets called **Barley Candy** and **Chicken Bones**. Barley Candy is usually on a stick



and is shaped like Santa, reindeer, snowmen, a tree or other symbols of Christmas. Chicken Bones, a pink candy, tastes like cinnamon. You melt them in your mouth and once melted, they reveal a creamy milk chocolate center.

But, Canada is a very big country made of many provinces, or territories, and many ethnic groups which celebrate their own traditions. Usually there is snow and it looks very festive.

In British Columbia Christmas turkey may be accompanied by either fresh or smoked salmon.



A big winter festival, called **Sinck tuck**, was started by the Inuit Eskimos. There is dancing and a present-giving party.

In northern Canada, some people plan a **Taffy Pull**, held in honor of St. Catherine, the patron saint of single women.

Newfoundland and Labrador hold a Christmas Light-up Contest each year. People dress the outside of their houses up with lights and often

and often have big ice sculptures in their front gardens. They have no trouble finding enough snow or ice, because about 12-14 feet of snow fall every year! Turnips are saved from the summer harvest and are given to children, with a lighted candle pushed into a hollowed out hole as another decoration.

In the provinces of Newfoundland small groups of **belsnicklers**, or **masked mummers**, appear in neighborhoods, ringing bells, knocking on doors, making noise, seeking candy or other treats. The hosts may try to guess who the mummers are and if they guess right the mummer removes his or her disguise and stops making rude noises and actions.

The Eastern Canadian province of Nova Scotia was settled by Scottish highlanders, who brought songs and carols from Britain two centuries ago. These are sung each Christmas morning. Most families decorate a fir or pine tree. Nova Scotia is famous for sending trees to America for Christmas. Many families eat lobster, caught off the shores of Nova Scotia in the North Atlantic Ocean, for their



Christmas dinner instead of the traditional turkey or ham.

In Quebec, which is the French-speaking part of Canada, people celebrate Christmas by putting up a big Christmas tree. **Crèches** or **nativity scenes** are displayed in homes as Christmas decorations. Many people also put a Christmas tree outside with colored lights. After attending midnight mass, families may be served **tourtiere** or **pork pie** which is a sort of stew made of layers of meat, potatoes, and onions. A layer of pastry goes on top. Most people eat turkey for their Christmas dinner. Another favorite food is **boulettes** or small meatballs. Christmas



dinner is called “**reveillon**,” which means “waking up.” In Canada, “Merry Christmas” is “**Joyeux Noel!**”

January 6th is considered the end of Christmas and is called **La fete du Roi**. It is celebrated with a cake which has a bean inside it. The person who finds the bean is the king or queen for the day.

Resources:

Australian Media Pty Ltd. Santa's Net. "Christmas in Canada". <http://www.santas.net/canadianchristmas.htm>

Cooper, James. Why Christmas? "Christmas in Canada". <http://whychristmas.com/cultures/canada.shtml>

The North Pole. Christmas Around the World. "Christmas in Canada". <http://www.the-north-pole.com/around/canada.html>