

Canada Weekly

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Season's Greetings
 Dec 20 1976
 Joyeux Noël
 Heureuse Année
 Happy New Year
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God Jul Och Gott Nyttår
 Frohe Weihnachten
 und ein glückliches
 Neues Jahr
 Bon Natal
 Feliz Ano Novo
 Felices Pascuas
 y
 Próspero Año Nuevo



Kalá Xristougyena
 και
 Ευτυχισμένος ο Χριστούγενος
 Linksmy šr. Kalėdų
 ir
 Laimingų Naujų Metų!
 恭賀新禧
 Gladelig Jul Og Gott Nyttår
 Wesolych Świąt i Szczęśliwego
 Nowego Roku
 طيب التمنيات بمناسبة الاعياد السعيدة

The Christmas mosaic in Canada

Christmas is a delightfully predictable festival in Canada. Each year, families gather to eat the traditional food, follow the same rituals and experience the same joy as they did in previous years.

Christmas ships

People of many origins living in the harbour cities of Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia, are accustomed to seeing "Christmas ships" during the festive season. The Vancouver carol ship, decked in lights with a Christmas tree at the masthead, carries bell-ringers and children's choirs. Following is a flotilla of brightly decorated smaller craft - tugs, fishing boats, fireboats and private yachts. For years, this traditional procession of boats has travelled the waterways of Greater Vancouver and its music is clearly heard on shore.

Victoria's "Santa Ship", which sets sail in mid-December, charts a route through the United States and Canadian Gulf Islands, distributing toys to children in the small communities.

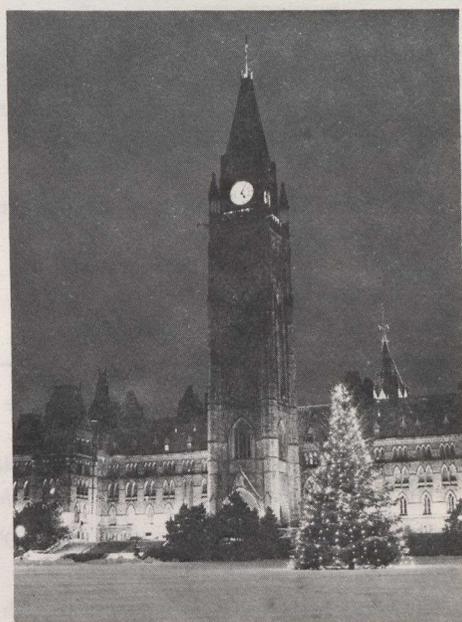
People from many lands

Canadians trace their heritage to many corners of the globe and many of their Yuletide celebrations reflect the origins of their forefathers.

In the festivities of the Métis, a people of French-Canadian and Indian heritage, groups in northern Canada still eat buffalo meat for the Christmas repast.

On Christmas eve a party begins that might last as long as two weeks. Sometimes there is a church ceremony, but always there is a large family gathering. Men fire their guns in open fields to signal the beginning of the season.

The traditional feast is a reminder of Christmases past and only the best will do. The most tender part of the buffalo is served, together with deer and moose meat. Berries, potatoes and wild rice complement the meat dishes. Fiddling, singing and dancing



Christmas tree in front of Canada's Parliament Buildings in Ottawa.

follow, sometimes all through the night. Celebrations resume the next evening.

French Canada

Christmas in French-Canadian homes is also based on the traditions of early settlers. Preparations begin weeks, even months, in advance. A nativity scene, or *crèche*, is usually found under the Christmas tree and, on Christmas eve, the family attends midnight mass together.

On return from church in the early hours of the morning, the *réveillon*, or Christmas feast, is set - a joyous family reunion with numerous relatives sharing the fun and food. Delicacies include *tourtières*, or meat pies, turkey, vegetables and fruit cake or Christmas log (a special cake) for dessert. Wines flow freely. Gifts are exchanged, carols are sung and party games and dancing follow.

Austrian and German families

Austrian families serve breaded filet of sole at Christmas, a habit that dates back to the days when fish was a luxury for an inland people. Hot