

EIP

EIP Around the World - France

To mark the festive season, we spoke to our EIP colleagues who has international background or connection and asked how they celebrate the festivity in their home countries.

Christmas in France by Lucie Jones, Executive Paralegal

Q. When is your Christmas?

Brittany is traditionally a Catholic area of France so Christmas is a big celebration. Christmas Eve is as important as Christmas Day, if not more! We have a lavish dinner on Christmas Eve, open the presents on Christmas morning and eat more all day long. We literally spend hours at the table. No Boxing Day though!

Q. Are there any special Christmas dishes or food people eat ?

I'm lucky my parents live by the sea, so we walk to the nearest oyster place and order a feast of fresh oysters, with a matching white wine. We also have the traditional foie gras, salmon, capon, Bûche de Noël... each with a matching wine. And no brussels sprouts!

Q. And Music?

Definitely "Petit Papa Noël" by Tino Rossi, a song from 1946 that consistently reaches the top of the charts at Christmas. It's about a child singing to Santa, telling him to please not to forget to drop toys for him, but feeling guilty because the night is cold, and Santa may get ill. It still gives me goosebumps when I listen to it! Another one of my favourites is "Noël Joyeux Noël" by the Compagnie Creole. I have a great memory of a nativity play I did as a child where we were dressed in traditional Martinique clothes singing and dancing on this awesome song.

Q. Anything else?

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Christmas is not completely over until the Epiphany on 6th January to celebrate the Wisemen visiting Jesus. On the day (and often most days of the week!) we eat a galette des rois. The most common version in Brittany is the frangipane one, definitely my favourite! A figurine is hidden in it and the person who finds it is the king/queen and can choose their queen/king. That can lead to some awkward moments in office parties... Luckily it is served with plenty of champagne.