

EIP

EIP Around the World - India

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 India by Monika Rai, Partner, UK and European Patent Attorney, Solicitor

Q. When is your Christmas?

Christmas is called “Bada din (बड़ा दिन)” in India. 25th December is a national holiday even though Christmas has traditionally been celebrated mainly by the Christian community. There are over 25 million Christians in India mainly in Kerala in South India, Goa in Western India and many parts of North-Eastern India.

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

A Goan Christmas meal usually includes a whole roasted pig or chicken coated in spice, pulao rice with cashews and crispy fried onion, a coconut gravy called Xacuti, prawns, an Indian-Portuguese cake called Bebinca and Christmas cake. A Keralan Christmas meal usually includes Appam (rice pancakes), duck Mappas (curry), mashed tapioca with fish curry, beef Biryani, coconut pudding etc... you get the drift. Lots of lovely traditional Christmas food which differs in each state!

Q. Are there any particular traditions?

Christmas celebrations are focused around churches but, as with all festivals in India, there is plenty of light and colour. Homes, churches and shopping centres are covered with multicoloured fairy lights. Instead of pine Christmas trees, many decorate banana and mango trees. In North-east India Christians sing carols and tell the Christmas story

every night for a week. In Kerala, Catholics traditionally fast from 1st December until midnight mass on 24th December.

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Q. Anything else?

In recent years, Santa Claus has become a popular figure all over India and is addressed by various names including Christmas Baba, Christmas Thatha etc!!