

EIP

EIP Around the World - Turkey

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 and New Year's Day in Turkey by Arda Tok, Paralegal

Q. When is your Christmas?

Christmas is not celebrated in Turkey. However, we do celebrate the New Year and we go big! Towards the end of December you can expect to see decorations and trees pop up. The trees tend to be artificial and you decorate it the day of New Year's Eve and pop all the presents under it. There also tends to be an exchange of gold where instead of money or gifts, your elders will give you gold coins to save for a rainy day. (This is also done at weddings.)

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

So in Turkey they eat ... TURKEY! But it would be the only time it is ever really eaten. If you are a big family (which is usually the case) then the grandad and uncles and such will go and pick a live turkey and sacrifice it the same they do with lamb on Eid. The table spread is actually amazing and normally the food will go over two or three tables as everyone that comes will also bring some sort of Turkish dish. When it hits midnight a pomegranate is smashed and everyone will eat a piece of it to bring good fortune and luck in the new year.

Q. Are there any particular traditions?

As for an activity we always play Bingo. It's a major tradition in Turkish homes and

everyone will get involved and the big prizes usually involve more gold and money.

p2

There also tends to be a belly dancer so after food you either go out to watch a belly dancer or someone in the family will be dressed as one to dance into the new year.

All in all a Turkish New Year's involves a lot of food, family and gold!