

EIP

EIP Around the World - South Korea

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 Korea by Chris Price, Partner, UK and European Patent Attorney

Q. When is your Christmas?

Christmas Day (25th) has been a national holiday in Korea since 1949. Unlike many Asian countries, a large proportion of Koreans are Christian, which explains why the day is a national holiday.

But unlike the UK, Christmas is not a family holiday. It is for young people to enjoy romance generally, and for Christians of course. It's usually Christmas Eve and Christmas Day that are celebrated.

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

Korean traditions are rooted in family. As such, a large potluck dinner often occurs at Christmas. The holiday menu features foods like Bulgogi (barbecued beef), sweet potato noodles, and kimchi. Oven cooking is historically rare in Korea. It is not rare nowadays but still not familiar to us.

Q. Are there any particular traditions?

Christmas is a symbol of love. So there are many charity activities and support for disadvantaged people. In church we have a kind of party giveaway bags which contain variety sweets and snacks which are given to children. Most churches have a carol service in early morning of Christmas Day. They visit every church member's house to

sing Christmas-related songs. The hosts usually prepare food for them to share later.

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Q. And Music?

Old classics like "Silent night" and "Jingle bells" are among the most popular ones, but many K-Pop bands release Christmas songs every year.