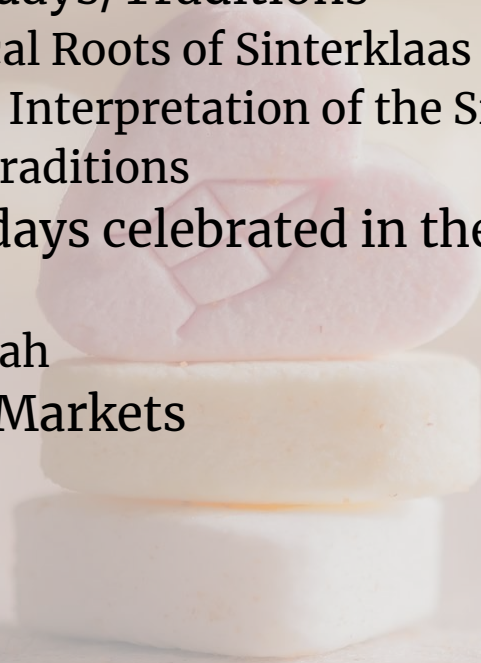


Holidays in the Netherlands



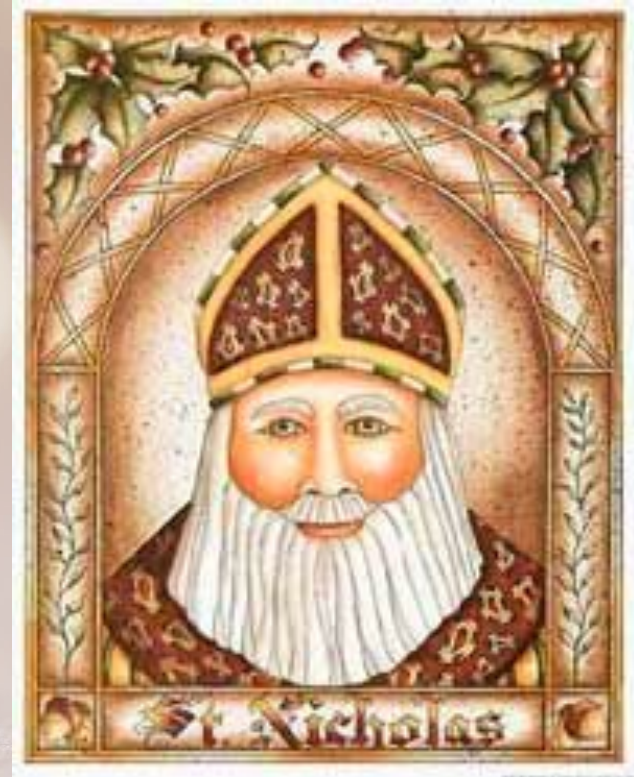
Outline

- Dutch Holidays/Traditions
 - Historical Roots of Sinterklaas Legend
 - Modern Interpretation of the Sinterklaas Story
 - Dutch Traditions
- Other Holidays celebrated in the Netherlands
 - Diwali
 - Hanukkah
- Christmas Markets



Dutch Holidays and Traditions: Sinterklaas

- Historical Roots
 - St. Nicholas born 271 A.D.; Died 343 A.D.
 - Devoted his life to using his inheritance to assist the sick and suffering
 - Was named Bishop of Myra at an early age
 - Died December 6



Dutch Holidays and Traditions: Sinterklaas

- History Merges into Legend
 - 12th-14th Centuries
 - St. Nicholas dropped pennies into the shoes of the poor..
 - Therefore, Catholic Nuns delivered Sweets, Nuts and Oranges to poor families on Dec. 5th
 - 16th Century
 - St. Nicholas tradition spreads outside the church to popular culture
 - At this time St. Nicholas deliveries move from windows to chimneys
 - In the Netherlands, despite the Reformation people continue to make Marzipan and Gingerbread treats shaped like the Saint, this is when he is renamed Sinterklaas.

The Beginning of the Modern Story

- In 1850 Jan Schenkman published the book “Sint Nikolaas en zijn Knecht” (“Saint Nicholas and his Servant”)
- Brings Uniformity to Dutch Sinterklaas traditions
 - Sinterklaas comes from Spain
 - Travels around the Netherlands on a horse
 - Gives gifts through chimney
 - Naughty children were punished with switches or even carried away by the servant in a jute sack



Modern Timeline and Traditions

- Sinterklaas and Piet(s) monitor children's behavior year-round from Spain.
- First Saturday after Nov 11th (This year Saturday November 12th) they arrive in the Netherlands by Stoomboot with presents (since 1934)
- In 2022 he will arrive first in a secret town (Helevoetsluis), then visits other cities and towns on his horse named Ohzosnel (Oh so Fast).
- Sinterklaas and Piets are everywhere until Dec. 5th
- Sinterklaas Journaal: A children's news-style program that reports on Sinterklaas's travels



Who is Zwarte Piet?

- Jan Schenkman's book referred to a "Servant" that assisted Sinterklaas.
 - He was referred to as a "black-skinned" servant or slave thought to be of muslim, north African descent
 - His job was to punish naughty children, or sometimes carry them away.
- In the early 1900s he was known by many names, but by the 1920's he was commonly known as Zwarte Piet (Black Piet).
- Around the 1950s there began to be a shift, attributing his blackened skin to soot from coming down the chimney.
 - But the character of Zwarte Piet has been commonly depicted with arguably racist imagery and portrayals, including but not limited to blackface.

Zwarte Piet: Shifting Opinions

- **2011:** The awareness campaign Zwarte Piet is Racism was initiated on July 1, 2011 by co-founders of Stichting Nederland Get Better (poet Jerry Afriyie & artist Raul Balai) and artist Quinsy Gario, to address Zwarte Piet's portrayal and institutional racism in the Netherlands.
- **2015:** United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination issued a statement urging the Netherlands to “actively” promote the elimination of racial stereotyping in regards to Zwarte Piet.
- **2017:** Amsterdam gave the Piets a makeover: eliminating blackface in favor of a sooty face
- **2018:** Dutch Public Broadcaster NTR updated it's portrayals of Zwarte Piet in favor of a sooty piet and did away with other problematic imagery such as large curly wigs, and golden earrings.
- **2020:** Prime Minister Rutte public announced he had changed his opinion on the portrayal of Zwarte Piet.
 - A 2020 poll by EenVandaag and published in NL Times reported that 55% of the 29 thousand Netherlands residents polled supported the “Traditional Piet” Which is down from 89% in 2013.

That said....

- These encounters can bring up questions in children and teens and could spark important conversations about stereotypes and racist portrayal.
- The following articles may be useful in guiding these conversations at home:

- [Center for Racial Justice Resource Guide With Interviews, Articles, and Lists](#)
- [VIA Institute on Character A Parent's Guide to Having Critically Important Conversations About Diversity, Racism, and Equality with Your Children](#)
- [Caregivers Guide to Prejudice and Discrimination](#)
- [Anti Defamation League Talking to Young Children about Bias and Prejudice](#)
- [From Colorlines The Dos and Don'ts of Talking to Kid of Color About White Supremacy](#)

Resources continued:

- There are many, many wonderful children's books that cover this topic
 - Check out <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature>
 - There are books on loads of topics so this is a great resource for a variety of social justice topics.
- Adult book suggestions:
 - Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin R. Banaji
 - Growing Up in Transit: The Politics of Belonging at an International School by Danau Tanu
 - Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor by Layla Saad
 - Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You (A Remix) by Jason Reynolds & Ibram X. Kendi
 - Understanding White Privilege: Creating Pathways to Authentic Relationships Across Race by Frances Kendall
 - White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo
 - White Rage: The Unspoken Truths of Our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson
- Podcast Suggestions:
 - [Talking to White Kids About Race and Racism](#)
- Dutch Group: The Netherlands Gets Better
 - Home of the Zwarte Piet is Racism awareness campaign: <https://www.nederlandwordtbeter.nl/home/>

SinterKlaas Intocht Celebrations 2022

- Den Haag
 - Saturday, November 12th
- Gouda
 - Saturday, November 12th (Stroopwafel Piet)
 - Gouda Muesem
- Amsterdam Intocht
 - Sunday, November 13th
- Wassenaar
 - Sunday November 20th



Between Nov. 13th and Dec. 5th

- Sint and Piet travel across towns to listen in chimneys for good behaviour
- Children put their empty shoes (and carrot) by the chimney
- Piet jumps down the chimney flues to take the carrot, exchanging carrot for a small gift or some candy.
- Sinterklaas and Piet visit schools, hospitals, Sterrenbad...workplaces....
- Pieteren ring doorbells, scatter sweets through slightly opened doors and leave presents by the front door.



What do Sint/Piet leave in the shoes?

- Kruidennoten
- Pepernoten
- Marzipan
- Chocolate candies/coins
- Small toys/gifts



More Festive Traditions

- Families spend time shopping for or making gifts for one another to be shared on Pakjesavond (Evening of Dec. 5)
- Gifts must be accompanied by a personalized often funny poem, Some families also camouflage the gift by wrapping it in an imaginative way
- Gift givers remain anonymous and receipt says a loud “Thank you, Sinterklaas!” (Even if they no longer believe)



December 5th: Pakjesavond

- Large chocolate letters in the first name initial or a S for Sinterklaas serve as place settings
- Sweets are eaten and there is a pile of mysterious presents nearby
 - Some families will have the presents appear on the doorstep after a cheeky Piet or Sint rings the bell.
- Family members take turns opening presents and reading the attached poems
 - The emphasis is on the originality of the gift and not the monetary value
- Families also enjoy singing Sinterklaas songs together



How is Sinterklaas celebrated at ASH?

- Chocolate letters are given to Elementary school students
- Sinterklaas and Pieten come to visit
 - These roete Pieten (sooty piets), no wigs, face paint, earring lipstick etc just a few swipes of “soot”
 - Lots of Sinterklaas songs: They don’t use the term Zwarte Piet but refer to the Pieten as Lieve Piet or “Dear Piet”
- Some classes may do crafts (such as a paper boot, or coloring page with Ohzosnel)



Diwali in the Netherlands

- It is the most popular Hindu festival, celebrated in the Lunar month of Kartika, which falls between Mid October to Mid November.
- A Multi-Faith celebration
 - Celebrated by over a Billion people across several faiths in India
- The word Diwali gets its name from the Sanskrit word “Deepavali” which means Rows of Lights.
- The festival is celebrated over five days and celebrates the significance of the Victory of Good over Evil, Light over Darkness, and Knowledge over Ignorance



One Legend..

- It marks the return of Lord Rama along with his wife Sita and his brother Lakshman to the city of Ayodhya after 14 years of exile.
- Lord Rama's father King Dashratha had promised his favourite queen to grant her anything she desired. The queen demanded that Rama be sent to exile and her own son Bharatha be made the king. Hence Lord Rama was exiled by his own father for 14 years.
- During their exile, Sita was kidnapped by the powerful demon king Ravana, who took her across the seas to his kingdom of Lanka. In the fight of good over evil, Rama vanquished the demon Ravana and rescued his wife Sita.
- Victorious they returned home to Ayodhya, to find the entire kingdom waiting for them. Streets were decorated with flowers and the whole kingdom was illuminated with oil lamps in the joyous celebration of the return of their king.
- The ritual of oil lamps is an integral part of Diwali to this day.



Diwali

- Diwali is a 5-day celebration
 - Each day has its own significance
 - **Day 1 Dhanteras:** Bake Sweets & Clean Home
 - **Day 2 Chhoti Diwali/Kalichaudas:** Decorate Home and Prepare for feast day
 - **Day 3 Diwali:** Most important day: Go to temple, gather with friends/family, feasts and fireworks
 - **Day 4 Annakut/Padwa/Govardhan Puja:** Mark the new year, exchange gifts/well wishes
 - **Day 5 Bhai Duj, Bhai Bheej:** Celebrate Siblings
 - Diwali is a time to spend with family, enjoy holiday foods, and give gifts



Oil Lamps



Rangoli



Lighting of Homes



Doorway Decorations

Diwali: Resources in the Netherlands

- Diwali Festival NL
 - www.diwalifestival.nl
- Diwali Gift Packs
 - Desi Foods:
+31686329064 is the
contact no. For ordering
- For Indian Groceries:
 - India Plaza: Kon.
Julianalaan 316, 2274 JS
Voorburg
 - Gateway of India:
Zwedenburg 145, 2591 BD
Den Haag



Hanukkah in the Netherlands

- History of Hanukkah
 - In 168 BCE a group of Maccabees reclaimed a Jewish Temple that had been occupied by their enemies.
 - They lit the Eternal Flame, but had only enough oil to burn for one night.
 - Miraculously the oil burned for eight nights, enough time to secure more oil and keep the Flame alight.
 - This miracle is celebrated each year.
 - The word Hanukkah means dedication, referring to the purification and rededication of the temple after the occupation



Hanukkah in the Netherlands

- In 2021 Hanukkah begins at Sundown on November 28th and ends at Sundown on Monday December 6th.
- Hanukkah celebrations are as varied as the people who celebrate but many include:
 - Games (such as Dreidel)
 - Singing Songs
 - Giving small gifts
 - Eating traditional foods such as Latkes or Sufganiyot



Hanukkah in the Netherlands: Resources

- Hanukkah Candles can be found at:
 - Jumbo- Van Leijenberghlaan 221, 1082 GG
 - Not all Jumbo's carry them but this one does.
 - on line:
<https://alwaystogether.community/collections/all>
- Hanukkah Donuts (Sufganiyot) can be found at:
 - Lidl Katwijk- Bosplein 1, 2224 GB Katwijk aan Zee
- For Fun
 - The Jewish Cultural Quarter has an Art Display on called: "A Celebration of Light: Hanukkah" which showcases 144 beautiful Menorahs:
<https://jck.nl/en/exhibition/celebration-light-hannukah>



Christmas Markets 2022

- European Markets
 - <https://christmasmarketsineurope.com/christmas-markets-in-europe-dates/>
- Dutch Christmas:
 - Royal Christmas Fair:
<https://www.royalchristmasfair.nl/en/visitors-information/>
 - December 8th - 23rd
 - De Haar: <https://www.kasteeldehaar.nl/country-christmas-fair/>
 - November 22-27
 - Christmas Town Valkenburg
 - Nov. 18th - Jan. 8th
 - Ice Village Amsterdam
 - Dec. 14th - 26th
 - Amsterdam Winter Paradise
 - Dec. 15th - Jan. 1
 - Magical Maastricht
 - Nov. 29th - Dec. 31st