



25 Festive Recipes from Around the World

Introduction

Welcome to a culinary journey that celebrates Festive traditions from various cultures!

Each recipe comes with a story, cultural insights, and personal reflections to bring the festive spirit to your table.



The earthy aroma of Ugba fills the air as family members gather, sharing laughs and stories. This rich, flavorful dish is a Nigerian holiday staple, bringing warmth to the celebration.

Ugba and Okporoko

(Nigeria)

Did You Know?

Ugba is made from African oil beans, a key ingredient in many Nigerian dishes, praised for its unique, nutty flavour.

Fun Fact:

Okporoko, or dried fish, adds depth to the dish, symbolizing prosperity in Igbo culture.



Ingredients

- 200g Ugba (oil bean slices)
- 150g stockfish (Okporoko), pre-soaked
- 2 tbsp palm oil
- 1 tbsp ground crayfish
- 2 fresh chilies, sliced
- 1 small onion, diced
- Salt and seasoning cubes to taste

Method

- Boil the stockfish until tender.
- Heat palm oil in a pan, sauté onions and chilies for 2 minutes.
- Add crayfish, stockfish, and Ugba. Mix and cook for 5 minutes.
- Season to taste and serve warm.



In Kerala, the Festive season isn't complete without appam, a rice pancake that complements the warmth of a coconut-infused chicken stew. Each bite brings comfort and celebration.

Appam and Chicken Stew

(India)

Did You Know?

Appam is made with fermented rice and coconut, a common pairing in South Indian cuisine.

Fun Fact:

The dish reflects Kerala's unique blend of Christian heritage and local flavors.



Ingredients

Appam:

- 1 cup rice flour
- 1 cup grated coconut
- 1 tsp sugar
- ½ tsp yeast
- Water

Method

- Dissolve yeast and sugar in warm water; let it froth.
- Blend rice flour, coconut, and water into a smooth batter. Add yeast mixture.
- Ferment for 8 hours.
- Cook batter in a skillet, swirling to form thin pancakes.

Ingredients

Chicken Stew:

- 500g chicken
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 tsp each: turmeric, garam masala, and chili powder
- Salt to taste

Method

- Sauté onions until soft.
- Add turmeric, garam masala, and chili powder; cook for 1 minute.
- Stir in chicken, season with salt, and cook until browned.
- Pour in coconut milk and simmer until chicken is tender.
- Serve appam with chicken stew.



As January 6 approaches, Spanish families slice into the Roscon de Reyes, a round cake decorated with fruits, hoping to find the hidden figurine that brings luck.

Roscon de Reyes

(Spain)

Did You Know?

Whoever finds the figurine is crowned “king” for the day, while finding a bean means buying the next cake!

Fun Fact:

Roscon de Reyes is traditionally enjoyed with hot chocolate for a festive breakfast or snack.



Ingredients

- 3½ cups flour
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup milk, warm
- 2 tsp yeast
- 2 tbsp butter
- Zest of 1 orange
- Candied fruits and sugar for topping

Method

- Combine warm milk, yeast, and sugar; let sit for 10 minutes.
- Mix in flour, eggs, butter, and orange zest. Knead into a dough and let rise for 2 hours.
- Shape into a ring, decorate with candied fruits, and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 25–30 minutes.



In Goa, Bebinca, a rich, layered coconut dessert, is a must-have during Christmas celebrations. Made with coconut milk, sugar, eggs, and spices, it's a treat that takes time and care to prepare, making it even more special during the holiday season.

Bebinca

(India)

Did You Know?

Bebinca is a labour-intensive dessert, requiring the careful layering and slow baking of its ingredients to create its signature texture.

Fun Fact:

Bebinca is considered the queen of Goan desserts, and it's often served in festive gatherings and especially Christmas.



Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 1½ cups sugar
- 10 egg yolks
- 2 tbsp ghee

Method

- Mix flour, coconut milk, sugar, and egg yolks into a smooth batter.
- Grease a baking dish with ghee. Pour a thin layer of batter and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 5 minutes.
- Repeat layering and baking until batter is used up. Cool and slice.



As the roast turkey comes out, a nut roast takes its place on many British tables, blending mushrooms, chestnuts, and herbs into a delicious, plant-based centrepiece.

Nut Roast

(UK)

Did You Know?

Nut roast is a modern holiday staple, especially popular with vegetarians and vegans.

Fun Fact:

Each family has its unique recipe, making every nut roast a special part of the holiday meal.



Ingredients

- 200g mixed nuts (walnuts, cashews, almonds)
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, grated
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Sauté onion, garlic, and carrot in olive oil until soft.
- Mix sautéed vegetables with nuts, breadcrumbs, and herbs. Season to taste.
- Press into a loaf tin and bake at 190°C (375°F) for 40–45 minutes.



Baked until golden brown, these sausage rolls, filled with tangy cranberry and creamy brie, add a festive twist to traditional British holiday snacks.

Sausage Rolls with Cranberry and Brie

(UK)

Did You Know?

Sausage rolls are popular during British celebrations and are often served as appetisers at holiday gatherings.

Fun Fact:

Cranberry and brie make these sausage rolls a festive favorite for holiday parties.



Ingredients

- 500g sausage meat
- 250g brie, sliced
- 2 tbsp cranberry sauce
- 1 sheet puff pastry
- 1 egg, beaten

Method

- Roll out the puff pastry. Spread sausage meat down the centre, top with brie slices and cranberry sauce.
- Fold pastry edges over to seal, then slice into rolls.
- Brush with beaten egg and bake at 200°C (400°F) for 20–25 minutes until golden.



Layers of salted cod, potatoes, and onions bake into a creamy casserole, filling Portuguese kitchens with warmth and rich aromas, perfect for holiday gatherings.

Bacalhau com Natas

(Portugal)

Did You Know?

Salted cod, or bacalhau, is one of Portugal's most beloved ingredients, with over 1,000 recipes devoted to it.

Fun Fact:

Bacalhau was popularised as a preserved food and remains a central part of Portuguese holiday meals.



Ingredients

- 500g salted cod, soaked and flaked
- 500g potatoes, diced
- 2 onions, sliced
- 2 cups cream
- 3 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp flour
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Fry potatoes until golden. Sauté onions separately.
- Make a roux with butter and flour, gradually whisking in cream.
- Combine cod, potatoes, onions, and cream. Pour into a baking dish and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 20 minutes.



In Australia, Christmas is celebrated in the summer, and Pavlova, a light meringue dessert topped with fresh fruits like strawberries, kiwis, and passionfruit, is the perfect refreshing treat for a warm holiday feast.

Pavlova

(Australia)

Did You Know?

Named after Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, the dessert is known for its crisp crust and marshmallow-like centre.

Fun Fact:

There's a friendly rivalry between Australia and New Zealand over the origin of Pavlova, but both nations claim it as their own holiday classic.



Ingredients

- 4 egg whites
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- Fresh fruits (berries, kiwi, etc.)
- Whipped cream

Method

- Whisk egg whites until stiff peaks form. Gradually add sugar, vinegar, and cornstarch.
- Spread into a circular shape on parchment paper and bake at 120°C (250°F) for 1 hour.
- Cool, top with whipped cream and fruits.



In Jamaican homes, the rich scent of curried goat and the tangy aroma of sorrel drink signal the arrival of Christmas, a time for food, family, and festivity.

Curried Goat and Sorrel Drink

(Jamaica)

Did You Know?

Sorrel is made from hibiscus flowers, and the drink is often spiced with ginger, cloves, and rum.

Fun Fact:

Sorrel's red hue makes it an especially festive holiday drink in Jamaica.



Ingredients

Curried Goat:

- 1kg goat meat
- 2 tbsp curry powder
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 potatoes, diced
- 1 cup coconut milk

Method

- Marinate goat meat with curry powder and salt.
- Sauté onion and garlic, then brown goat meat.
- Add coconut milk and simmer for 1–1½ hours. Add potatoes in the last 20 minutes.

Ingredients

Sorrel Drink:

- 2 cups dried sorrel
- 2-inch ginger, grated
- 5 cups water
- Sugar to taste

Method

- Boil sorrel, ginger, and water for 10 minutes. Let steep, strain, and sweeten to taste. Chill before serving.



In the warmth of the kitchen, Tave Dheu bakes in earthen pots, filling homes with comforting aromas that bring Albanian families together during the holidays.

Tave Dheu

(Albania)

Did You Know?

Traditionally, Tave Dheu is prepared with lamb liver, though variations with other meats are also common.

Fun Fact:

The dish is cooked in clay pots, which give it a distinct flavor.



Ingredients

- 500g lamb, diced
- 1 cup yogurt
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp flour
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 tbsp butter

Method

- Sauté lamb and onions in butter until browned.
- Mix yogurt, eggs, and flour into a smooth sauce.
- Transfer lamb to a baking dish, cover with sauce, and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 30 minutes.



During the Christmas feast in Finland, Lanttulaatikko, a sweet and savoury rutabaga casserole, makes its appearance on the festive table, offering a comforting balance to the rich meats and hams.

Lanttulaatikko

(Finland)

Did You Know?

Lanttulaatikko is made with mashed rutabagas, breadcrumbs, syrup, and spices, and is often baked until golden brown.

Fun Fact:

This casserole has been a Christmas favorite in Finland for centuries, with each family adding their own personal touch.



Ingredients

- 500g rutabaga, peeled and cubed
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- 1 cup cream
- 2 tbsp molasses
- ½ tsp nutmeg

Method

- Boil rutabaga until soft, then mash.
- Mix with cream, egg, molasses, breadcrumbs, and nutmeg.
- Transfer to a baking dish, top with extra breadcrumbs, and bake at 175°C (350°F) for 45 minutes.



In France, Bûche de Noël, a festive Yule log-shaped cake made of sponge and buttercream, is a traditional Christmas dessert. Adorned with chocolate 'bark' and decorated with seasonal motifs, it's a sweet centrepiece for holiday feasts.

Bûche de Noël

(France)

Did You Know?

The Bûche de Noël is inspired by the ancient tradition of burning a log during the winter solstice to bring good fortune for the new year.

Fun Fact:

The cake's iconic shape is meant to resemble the Yule log, a symbol of warmth and light during the cold winter months.



Ingredients

- 4 eggs
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup flour
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 cup whipped cream
- Chocolate ganache

Method

- Whisk eggs and sugar until fluffy. Gently fold in flour and cocoa.
- Bake in a jelly roll pan at 180°C (350°F) for 10 minutes.
- Roll the sponge with whipped cream. Cover with ganache and decorate.



As families gather around a table set with fufu and eru stew, a sense of togetherness fills the room, making the holiday meal complete.

Fufu and Eru

(Cameroon)

Did You Know?

Eru stew is made with wild spinach and often contains smoked fish or meats.

Fun Fact:

Fufu, a cassava-based dish, is a common staple across Africa, enjoyed especially during the holidays.



Ingredients

- 2 cups cassava flour
- 1 bunch eru leaves (or spinach), chopped
- 500g smoked fish or meat
- 2 tbsp ground crayfish
- 1 tbsp palm oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Boil water and gradually mix in cassava flour to form fufu. Shape into balls.
- Sauté eru leaves in palm oil, add smoked fish, crayfish, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes.
- Serve eru stew alongside fufu.



These sweet rice balls, often filled with black sesame paste, are enjoyed during the Winter Solstice as a symbol of family unity and warmth.

Tangyuan

(China)

Did You Know?

The round shape of tangyuan represents unity and togetherness, making it perfect for holiday gatherings.

Fun Fact:

Tangyuan is typically served in a ginger syrup for extra warmth.



Ingredients

- 1 cup glutinous rice flour
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup black sesame paste
- 2 tbsp sugar

Method

- Mix sesame paste and sugar; shape into small balls and freeze.
- Combine flour and water into dough, wrap dough around sesame balls.
- Boil tangyuan in water until they float, then serve in sweet syrup.



During the festive season in the Philippines, street vendors serve Puto Bumbong and Bibingka, two beloved sticky rice delicacies that evoke the warmth and joy of Simbang Gabi, the Christmas dawn masses.

Puto Bumbong and Bibingka

(Philippines)

Did You Know?

Puto Bumbong is steamed in bamboo tubes, giving it a unique cylindrical shape, while Bibingka is baked in clay pots lined with banana leaves for a distinct aroma.

Fun Fact:

These treats are traditionally enjoyed after church services, paired with hot chocolate or salabat (ginger tea).



Ingredients

Puto Bumbong:

- 1 cup glutinous rice flour
- 1 cup black rice flour
- Coconut and muscovado sugar for topping

Method

- Mix flours with water into a sticky dough. Shape into rolls and steam.
- Top with grated coconut and sugar before serving.

Ingredients

Bibingka:

- 1 cup rice flour
- 1 cup coconut milk
- ½ cup sugar
- Salted eggs and cheese slices for topping

Method

- Mix flour, coconut milk, and sugar into batter. Pour into molds.
- Top with salted egg and cheese; bake at 180°C (350°F) for 25 minutes.



In Colombia, Christmas wouldn't be complete without Natilla, a creamy cinnamon custard, and Buñuelos, cheesy fried dough balls, enjoyed by families during festive gatherings.

Natilla y Buñuelos

(Colombia)

Did You Know?

Natilla is made with milk, sugar, and cinnamon, while Buñuelos are made from cheese and flour, then fried to golden perfection.

Fun Fact:

Natilla y Buñuelos are a staple of Colombian holiday celebrations, often shared during La Nochebuena (Christmas Eve).



Ingredients

Natilla:

- 1 litre milk
- ½ cup cornstarch
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick

Method

- Dissolve cornstarch in milk, then simmer with sugar and cinnamon until thickened.
- Pour into moulds and let set before serving.

Ingredients

Buñuelos:

- 2 cups yuca starch
- 1 cup cheese, grated
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup milk

Method

- Mix all ingredients into a dough. Shape into balls.
- Fry in hot oil until golden brown.



In Iran, Ghormeh Sabzi, a rich herb stew with tender lamb, kidney beans, and dried limes, is a beloved dish enjoyed during festive occasions, especially during Persian New Year (Nowruz) and family gatherings.

Ghormeh Sabzi

(Iran)

Did You Know?

The key to Ghormeh Sabzi is the blend of fresh herbs, including parsley, cilantro, and fenugreek, which gives the stew its unique, aromatic flavour.

Fun Fact:

Ghormeh Sabzi is often considered the national dish of Iran, with each family having its own secret recipe.



Ingredients

- 500g lamb, diced
- 1 cup mixed fresh herbs (parsley, cilantro, fenugreek)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 cup kidney beans, cooked
- 2 dried limes

Method

- Brown lamb with onion, then add herbs and sauté until fragrant.
- Add beans, dried limes, and water; simmer for 1½ hours. Serve with rice.



Fresh fish marinated in citrus juice with onions, cilantro, and chili, ceviche is a popular holiday dish in coastal Latin America, particularly in Peru.

Ceviche

(Peru)

Did You Know?

Ceviche is considered Peru's national dish, and each region has its own variations, adding to its global popularity.

Fun Fact:

Ceviche is often enjoyed as a light starter during festive occasions or a refreshing appetiser during hot weather.



Ingredients

- 500g fresh white fish, diced
- ½ cup lime juice
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 chili, chopped
- Fresh cilantro

Method

- Marinate fish in lime juice for 10 minutes until opaque.
- Add onion, chili, and cilantro. Serve chilled with corn or sweet potato.



These small, fluffy cheese breads are a Brazilian favourite, often served as a snack or appetiser at Christmas parties.

Pão de Queijo

(Brazil)

Did You Know?

Pão de queijo is made with tapioca flour, making it naturally gluten-free.

Fun Fact:

The cheese used in Pão de Queijo is usually Minas cheese, a traditional cheese from the Minas Gerais region of Brazil.



Ingredients

- 2 cups tapioca flour
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup cheese, grated
- 2 eggs

Method

- Heat milk and butter; mix into flour. Add cheese and eggs.
- Shape dough into balls and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 20 minutes.



In Greece, Vasilopita is a cherished New Year's cake, made with a sweet, fluffy sponge. A coin is hidden inside, and the cake is served at midnight to bring blessings for the year ahead.

Vasilopita

(Greece)

Did You Know?

The cake is traditionally prepared on January 1st to honour St. Basil, and whoever finds the coin is believed to have good luck for the year.

Fun Fact:

The tradition of Vasilopita goes back centuries, and it's a symbol of prosperity and good fortune for the entire household.



Ingredients

- 3 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ cup milk

Method

- Cream butter and sugar, then beat in eggs. Add flour, baking powder, and milk.
- Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 45 minutes. Insert a coin into the cake before baking for good luck!



In Italy, Cotechino, a large pork sausage served with lentils, is a festive dish often enjoyed on New Year's Eve. The tender sausage and the rich, savoury lentils are believed to bring good fortune for the year ahead.

Cotechino with Lentils

(Italy)

Did You Know?

Cotechino is typically made from pork, fatback, and spices, and is slowly simmered until tender.

Fun Fact:

In some regions of Italy, the lentils are considered a symbol of prosperity and are thought to bring financial luck in the new year.



Ingredients

- 1 cotechino sausage
- 2 cups cooked lentils
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Method

- Boil the cotechino sausage for 2 hours, then slice.
- Sauté onion, carrots, and celery in olive oil until soft.
- Add lentils and the sliced sausage. Simmer for 15 minutes.



In Mauritius, the festive table often features Biryani, a fragrant and spiced rice dish layered with marinated meat, potatoes, and saffron, perfect for celebrating Christmas and New Year with loved ones.

Mauritian Biryani

(Mauritius)

Did You Know?

Mauritian biryani is influenced by Mughlai and Indian cuisines but is distinct due to the addition of fried potatoes and the use of a local spice blend.

Fun Fact:

Cooking biryani is often a community effort during festive gatherings, with each person contributing to the preparation of this elaborate dish.



Ingredients

- 2 cups basmati rice
- 500g chicken, marinated with yogurt and spices
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cinnamon stick, 2 cloves
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 1 cup fried potatoes

Method

- Cook the rice with cinnamon and cloves. Set aside.
- Sauté onions, tomatoes, and spices in ghee, add chicken, and cook through.
- Layer the cooked rice, fried potatoes, and chicken in a pot. Steam for 15 minutes.



In Zimbabwe, festive gatherings often feature Sadza ne Nyama, a comforting meal of maize-based porridge served with flavorful stews or relishes, symbolising togetherness and tradition.

Sadza ne Nyama

(Zimbabwe)

Did You Know?

Sadza is a staple in Zimbabwean cuisine, similar to polenta, and is commonly served with peanut butter sauce during celebrations.

Fun Fact:

Sadza is traditionally eaten by hand, and the way it's moulded into small balls to scoop up the relish.



Ingredients

- 2 cups maize meal (cornmeal)
- 4 cups water
- 500g beef, diced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tsp paprika

Method

- Boil water and stir in maize meal to form a smooth, thick porridge (sadza).
- Brown beef and sauté onion, bell pepper, and tomatoes.
- Serve beef stew over sadza.



Spicy gingerbread cookies, known as Lebkuchen, are intricately decorated and shared during Christmas markets in Germany, embodying the festive spirit.

Lebkuchen

(Germany)

Did You Know?

Lebkuchen dates back to the Middle Ages, with many regions in Germany having their own variations.

Fun Fact:

Some Lebkuchen are made with nuts and fruits, making them a unique holiday treat.



Ingredients

- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup mixed candied peel, chopped

Method

- Mix all dry ingredients, then add honey, sugar, egg, and candied peel.
- Roll out dough, cut into shapes, and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 12-15 minutes.



In Eastern Nigeria, Christmas gatherings are incomplete without Ukwa, a dish made from African breadfruit seeds. Nutritious, hearty, and rich in flavor, it's a cherished tradition during the festive season.

Ukwa

(Nigeria)

Did You Know?

Ukwa is a status dish, often commanding premium prices due to its cultural significance and labor-intensive preparation.

Fun Fact:

The seeds of the African breadfruit tree are hand-picked and meticulously prepared, making Ukwa both a labour of love and a delicacy.



Ingredients

- 2 cups African pear (ukwa) seeds, peeled
- 2 tbsp palm oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp ground crayfish
- Salt to taste

Method

- Boil the African pear seeds until tender.
- Sauté onions in palm oil, then add crayfish and salt.
- Mix in the boiled pear seeds and simmer for 10 minutes.

As we approach the most magical time of the year, let this collection of festive recipes from around the world bring joy, warmth, and togetherness to your holiday season. From the savoury traditions of Uganda to the sweet delights of Italy and the comforting flavours of Colombia, each recipe tells a story of culture, family, and celebration.

Whether you're looking for inspiration to try something new, or simply want to share in the spirit of the season with colleagues and loved ones, these dishes are a perfect way to bring a global touch to your Christmas table.

At EPUT, our strength lies in our diverse community, and this countdown is a celebration of the rich cultural tapestry that makes us who we are.

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