

The Grand Tradition of Christmas Trees

One of the many special things that help to make magical Christmas memories is the brightly decorated family Christmas tree. It is the centerpiece of the Christmas holiday decorations in most homes.

Christmas trees are not only the main focus of homes that have been decorated for the holidays, they can also be found in many public places such as offices, malls, and squares. These trees make the holidays feel much more festive. To most people Christmas doesn't really begin until after the traditional lighting of the town's official tree; thus starting a month-long string of holiday events.

Interestingly, the history of the Christmas tree can actually be traced back to when prehistoric pagan practices became Christianized. In the pagan belief, the evergreen tree, which is what is used for the vast majority of Christmas trees, was used to symbolize the renewal of life.

Many different folk tales describe the origins of the Christmas tree as we know it today. Germanic tribes held the belief that Patron trees were sacred, and medieval myths referred to the miracle of evergreen trees "flowering" during the Christmas season. The shape of an evergreen has also been linked with the holy trinity of Christian belief, which is symbolized by a triangle.

The origin of the much-loved traditional Christmas tree is accredited to the Germans, as they are thought to be the first people to bring live evergreens into the home to decorate. This was long before electricity was first used. Looking back, it's hard to imagine anyone placing lit candles on a very flammable Christmas tree, but that was the tradition. The tips of the tree's branches would support tiny candle holders, complete with actual candles that were attached very carefully.

For the last century or so, a wide variety of festive lights have taken the place of the candles that used to be placed on the tree. Some families enjoy choosing Christmas tree lighting that adds technological flair to the holidays - chasing, changing, and flashing lights run by tiny computer chips. Others select lighting reminiscent of their own childhood Christmases.

A family's ornaments are a visual record of the memories of past holidays. Children especially attach emotional importance to the Christmas ornaments. While the traditional decorating scheme of holiday ornaments is most commonly used, many people choose to forego tradition by creating theme trees, such as a beach tree covered in seashells.

The purchase of a single special ornament for each individual child every Christmas is what some families cherish. This way the children will have their own collection of favorite ornaments to use as the basis of their Christmas tree decorations when they get older.

The Christmas tree will doubtless continue to be the primary focal point of the Christmas season, continuing to bring joy, festive feelings, and treasured memories to all. These trees add to the warmth and glow of the holiday, helping to perpetuate a longing for the return each year of Christmas.

About the Author

Marlia Brightston, a history teacher with a passion for Christmas, uses an [artificial Christmas trees](#) in her classroom on every Christmas. Hence she can focus on the kids instead of watering and caring a real tree, and never worry about it dying. She also adds other fun items like artificial Christmas wreaths and [pre-lit Christmas wreaths](#).

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