

English Traditions



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Every nation becomes special by means of its own traditions and customs. There is no other nation that clings to the past with the tenacity of the British. They are really proud of their traditions, they cherish them. When we think of Britain we often think of people drinking white tea, eating fish and chips, sitting by the fireplace or wearing bowler hats, but there is much more in Britain than just those things. Some British traditions are royal, such as the Changing of the Guard which takes place every day at Buckingham Palace. The Trooping of the Color happens on the Queen's official birthday. It's a big colorful parade with hundreds of soldiers and brass bands.



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British holidays (Christmas, Easter, Guy Fawkes Night, Remembrance Day) are especially rich in old traditions and customs. A traditional Christmas dinner consists of roast turkey and potatoes, cranberry sauce, sweet mince pies and Christmas pudding. On Christmas Eve children hang up their stockings around the fireplace for Father Christmas to fill with presents. At Easter chocolate eggs are given as presents symbolizing new life. Guy Fawkes Night is also known as Bonfire Night because English people burn stuffed figures on bonfires. On Remembrance Day red poppies are traditionally worn in memory of servicemen who lost their lives in wars. National Morris Dancing can be seen throughout the month of May in most of English villages. Groups of men and women wear colored costumes, carry white handkerchiefs and perform their lively folkdance.



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Sports play an essential part in the life of Britain and it is a popular leisure activity. Rugby, golf, cricket, polo and horse-racing are British national sports and they are played on village greens and in towns on Sundays.

Politeness and punctuality are typical features of all British people. They often say “Sorry”, “Please” and “Thank you” with a smiling face and they always try to arrive on time.

The British are also traditional about their breakfast. They usually eat bacon and eggs, a toast with orange jam, a bowl of cereals or porridge in the morning.

There are over 60 thousand pubs in the United Kingdom. Pubs are an important part of British life too. People talk, eat, drink, meet their friends and relax there.



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The full English breakfast

Afternoon tea

Pancake Day

Marble Championship

Guy Fawkes Night

Druid's Order

Easter



The full English breakfast

The tradition of having a substantial breakfast meal has existed since the 18th century. The full English breakfast became very popular after the World War I, in those days it was served at the hotels and restaurants all over the country.

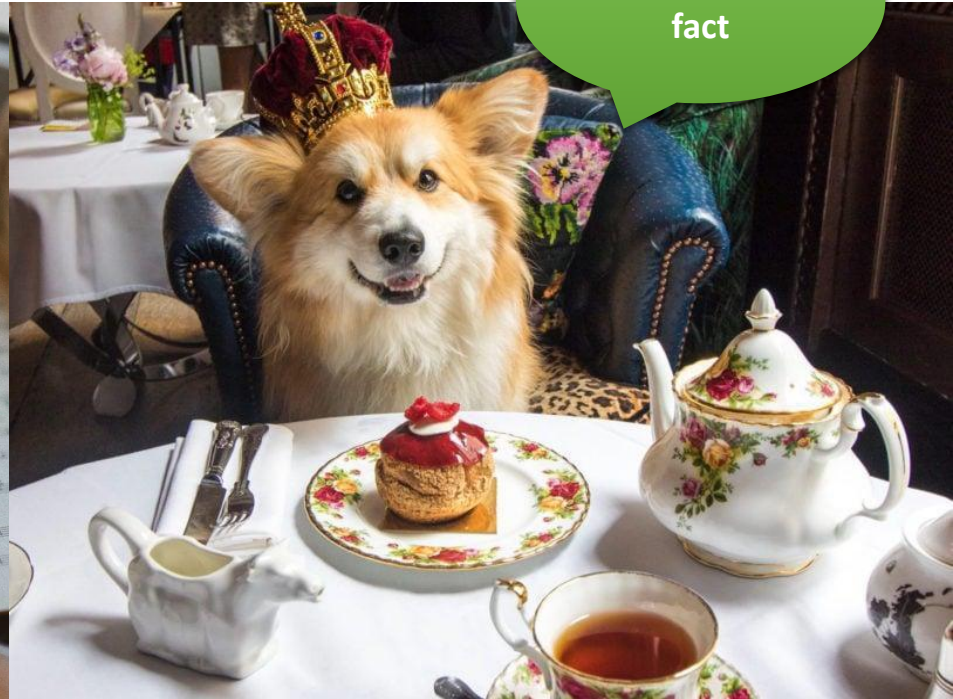
The full breakfast consists of sausages, bacon and eggs, served with toasts, grilled tomatoes, baked beans and fried mushrooms.



Afternoon tea

One of the most well-known English traditions is afternoon tea – light refreshments, including tea, traditionally served around 5 p.m. English people often drink tea with milk; they may or may not add sugar.

Tea is usually taken along with finger sandwiches, crumpets, scones, cakes, jam and marmalade. Traditional tea treats also include puddings, buns, muffins and biscuits.



Pancake Day

Pancake Day or Shrove Tuesday is held in February or March. It is the day, preceding Ash Wednesday – the first day of the 40 days Lent. It has been celebrated in Britain for centuries.

On Pancake Day children go from house to house asking for a pancake. “Pancake races” are held all over the Britain. Contestants have to race with frying pans tossing and flipping pancakes in the air.



Marble Championship

Marble championship is an annual event which takes place on Good Friday. The participating teams, consisting of six members, have to knock out the marbles from the raised concrete ring. The winner gets a silver cup.



Guy Fawkes Night

The Guy Fawkes Night is a traditional celebration which is held on 5 November. Its history begins on 5 November 1605 when the Gunpowder Plot was foiled. That night Guy Fawkes, a member of the Plot, was arrested and people lit bonfires around London, celebrating the survival of the king.

Today the Guy Fawkes Night is widely celebrated in Britain. The celebrations involve lighting bonfires, fireworks displays and burning the effigies of Guy Fawkes.



Druid's Order

Even such event as summer solstice day (24th of June) and autumn equinox (22nd of the September) cannot pass by the Englishmen which have recreated the Druid's Order in honor of pagan religion of Celts and celebrate these holidays at the place of the famous Stonehenge.



Easter

Easter is not only a traditional holiday but also the time when many different fests take place. The annual Boat race between two famous universities Oxford and Cambridge is among them. This event takes place on the Easter Sunday on the river Thames. The tradition of decorating real eggs for Easter dates back to the Middle Ages. In 1290 the English king, Edward I, ordered 450 eggs to be covered in gold leaf to be given as Easter presents. It is thought that the bright hues used to decorate Easter eggs were meant to mirror the colors of the reawakening spring growth. Easter Sunday in the British Isles is traditionally marked by church services, often held at dawn so that worshippers can view the sunrise, a symbol of Christ's resurrection. Afterwards Easter eggs are exchanged and eaten.





Interesting fact:

The future Queen Elizabeth II loved corgi from childhood, having first seen dogs of this breed in the children of Thomas Tyne, 5th Marquis of Bath. In 1933, King George VI brought home the first corgi in the royal family - Duca.



