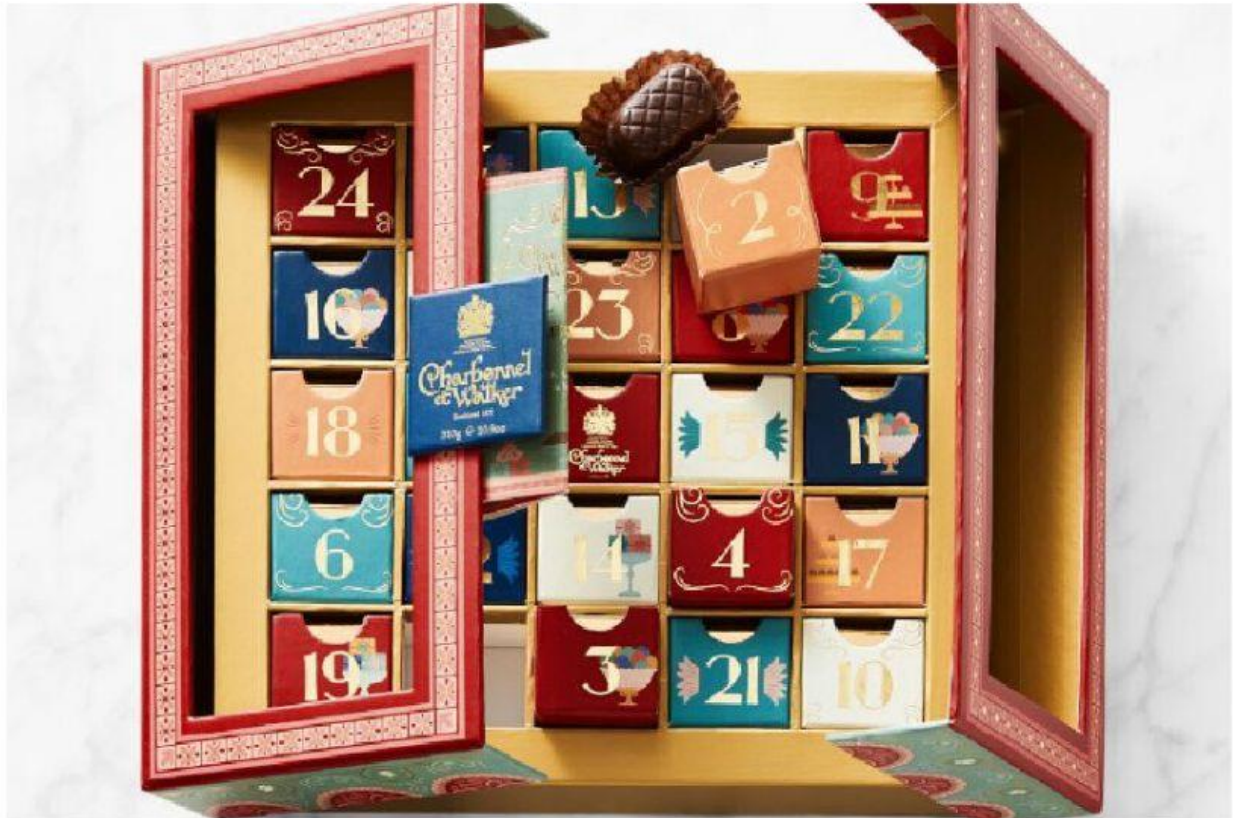


British Traditions

CULTURE

As with every country, Britain has got a lot of holidays and traditions. Read about some of them.



Advent Calendars

Christmas is celebrated on 25th December. People, especially children, usually wait for this day a lot, so they often make or buy advent calendars. People use these to count the days until Christmas. The calendar can be different shapes, often rectangular, and it has 24 windows on it. There is one window for each day in December until Christmas Day. Every morning in December, families open a new window on the calendar, and there they can see a picture connected with Christmas, for example a star or a stable, or find a small gift, such as a toy or a chocolate item.



Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day (also known as Poppy Day) takes place on 11th November. This is the day when World War I ended. On this day, people remember those who died in that war. People usually buy plastic poppies and wear them on their clothes. This is a very good way of raising money for charity in Britain.



Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday is also known as Pancake Tuesday in the UK. This is the last day before Lent begins. Many Christians give up meat, fat or sweet foods and fast during Lent. That is why Shrove Tuesday is their last opportunity to eat lots of sweet food before Lent.



Bonfire Night

Bonfire night, or Guy Fawkes Day, is on 5th November every year. This is when people in Britain light big bonfires and set off fireworks. Guy Fawkes was a member of the Gunpowder Plot, a group of Catholics who wanted to replace the Protestant king James I with a Catholic king. The plan failed, and Guy was caught and sent to prison. James 1, then decided to allow people to light bonfires to celebrate the king's survival and the failure of the plot.



Boxing Day

Boxing Day is a public holiday, and it is usually celebrated on 26 December. In the past, on the day after Christmas servants received boxes with money and gifts for their work throughout the year. Nowadays, people don't work on this day, but spend time together with their families. Boxing Day is also known as a shopping day. Huge price reductions attract millions of people who start queuing in front of the shops long before they are open. It is also a day when there is a lot of sport on TV as football and rugby unions organize league matches on Boxing Day.

Saint George's Day



Saint George's Day is Britain's national holiday and it is on 23rd April. Saint George was born in the 3rd century. He was very brave and became a Roman soldier. The legend has it that St George killed the Dragon which poisoned the countryside. To make the Dragon less angry, people gave the Dragon animals to eat, and when there were no more animals, they started to give the Dragon their children. One day it was the king's daughter who was to be given to the Dragon. St George saved the king's daughter and killed the beast. You can see the Saint George's Cross a red cross on the white background on the flag of England.