French Culture: Christmas Traditions Le Jour Des Rois-Epiphany-The Feast of the Three Kings



Le Jour des Rois, or Epiphany, is a significant feast celebrated in many cultures, particularly in France, marking the culmination of the Twelve Days of Christmas. This day commemorates the visit of the three wise men, also known as the Magi or the Three Kings, to the infant Jesus. According to Christian tradition, these wise men traveled from the East, following a bright star to Bethlehem, where they presented gifts to the newborn Messiah.

The gifts the wise men brought symbolize important aspects of Jesus's life and mission. Gold represents his kingship, frankincense his divinity, and myrrh his mortality. These offerings hold deep spiritual significance and are central to the Epiphany narrative.



A cherished tradition on Le Jour des Rois is the sharing of a special meal featuring a dessert known as "la galette." This pastry, typically a flaky puff pastry filled with almond cream, is adorned with a ceramic figurine, or "fève," hidden inside. The tradition of hiding a fève within the galette dates back centuries and is said to symbolize the hiding of the infant Jesus from King Herod. The person who discovers the fève in their slice is crowned king or queen for the day.

In many households, families gather to enjoy homemade galettes, lovingly prepared with care and often featuring unique variations passed down through generations. However, store-bought galettes are also readily available, offering convenience without sacrificing tradition.



The moment of revealing the fève and crowning the lucky recipient adds an element of excitement and joy to the festivities. Often, the crowned individual wears a paper crown, further enhancing the celebratory atmosphere. This simple yet meaningful tradition fosters a sense of unity and joy among family and friends, as they come together to honor the age-old customs of Epiphany.

Questions

Exercise A: Use the words from the word bank to complete each definition.

La fève	la Fête des Rois	La Galette	la Couronne

1. _____ refers to a traditional French pastry typically enjoyed during Epiphany celebrations, consisting of flaky puff pastry filled with almond cream.

2. _____ is a a small ceramic figurine hidden inside the galette, symbolizing the baby Jesus and adding an element of surprise to the tradition.

3. _____ translates to "the crown" in English, often referring to the paper crown worn by the person who discovers the fève in their slice of galette, signifying their status as king or queen for the day.

4. _____ means "Feast of the Kings" in English, denoting the celebration of Epiphany, commemorating the visit of the Magi to the infant Jesus.

Exercise B True or False

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. The Feast of the Three Kings is celebrated on Le Jour des rois, which falls on January 6th.		
2. The three wise men are also known as the Magi or the Three Queens.		
3. The gifts brought by the wise men symbolize Jesus's kingship, divinity, and mortality		
4. La galette is a savory dish served during the Feast of the Three Kings.		
5. The ceramic figurine hidden inside the galette is called a "fève."		
6. The tradition of hiding a fève in the galette represents the hiding of Jesus from King Herod.		
7. Store bought galettes are not served on Epiphany because they are not traditional.		
8. The person who discovers the fève in their slice is crowned queen for the day.		
9. The act of crowning the person who finds the fève is done with a real gold crown.		
10. Sharing the galette and the tradition of finding the fève fosters unity and enjoyment.		

Answer the questions using complete sentences.

1. What is the significance of the gifts brought by the wise men?

   _____

   _____

2. Describe the traditional filling of a galette.

   _____

   _____

3. What does the ceramic figurine hidden inside the galette symbolize?

   _____

   _____

4. Explain the historical significance behind the tradition of hiding a fève in the galette.

   _____

   _____

5. How is the lucky individual who finds the fève in their slice recognized during the celebration?

   _____

   _____

6. How does the sharing of galette and the tradition of finding the fève contribute to the sense of community during Epiphany festivities?

   _____

   _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS