

Italian Holidays - Questions

1. Name of the holiday in English

New Year's Eve

1. Name of the Holiday in Italian

Capodanno

2. Date in English

December 31st

2. Date in Italian

31 dicembre

3. A brief history of the holiday: What are the origins of this holiday in Italy? Why is it celebrated in Italy? What does it commemorate? What famous people are connected to this holiday?

Ring in the new year!

4. Is it more of a regional holiday or is it celebrated all over Italy?

All over Italy.

5. How is this holiday celebrated in Italy? Is it celebrated differently in different regions?

- Many regions celebrate the new year with the classic traditions, such as wearing red underwear, having a large dinner, and dancing in their local "piazza". However, there are some special things that a few regions do to celebrate.
- In ancient Rome, people gave each other figs and honey during the New Year's Eve celebration. A similar tradition continues in Naples. Figs are gifted, wrapped in laurel leaves.
- Fireworks are also a staple in Italian New Year's Celebrations, but especially over the colosseum in Rome.

6. Are there any special customs connected with the celebration of this holiday in Italy?

- Wear red underwear -considered lucky by Emperor Augustus and represents passion and love. For the tradition to work, the underwear *must* be a gift!
- Throw old things out the window- literally "out with the old". These items are often crockery.
- Kiss under the mistletoe- if there is any mistletoe left over after Christmas, kiss your partner under it! This is thought to drive evil spirits away from the couple, as mistletoe is thought to provide protection.

7. Are there any special foods/meals connected with this holiday?

- Eating lentils after midnight symbolizes prosperity, wealth, longevity, and luck. The more lentils you eat, the more prosperous the new year will be for you.
- The sausages, while sliced to resemble the shape of coins, symbolize wealth and abundance.
- Rice also represents coins and wealth, so risotto is another dish to be served on New Year's Eve.
- Grapes represent wisdom, frugal spending and good luck. It is also a tradition to eat 12 grapes or raisins at the stroke of midnight to bring good luck for the next 12 months. If your partner is with you at midnight, share a pomegranate, as this fruit represents loyalty and fertility.

8. Are there any specific recipes you can share of foods prepared for this holiday?

Pandoro! Link for pandoro below

Link below for **Cotechino e lenticchie**.

9. Are there special greetings Italians say to each other on this holiday? Any special Italian vocabulary connected with this holiday?

"Felice Anno Nuovo!"

10. Did your family immigrant ancestors celebrate this holiday? Does your family still celebrate it with Italian traditions?

My family would eat black eyed peas and say "money, money, money".

11. Add any other information you consider pertinent or interesting.

The first person you see after midnight may give you a glimpse into the year to come. According to Italian tradition, if the first person you see on the street is an old person, or a hunchback, luck is in your future. If you meet a priest, a baby, or a doctor, there could be misfortune ahead.

12. List as many ideas as possible on how we can incorporate these holiday celebrations at our lodges to foster interest in Italian culture, heritage, and language. Think of activities that would appeal to different age levels (children, young adults, other embers, families, specific interest groups).

Link for **Cotechino e lenticchie**

<https://www.cucchiaio.it/ricetta/ricetta-cotechino-lenticchie/>

Link for **Pandoro**

<https://ricette.giallozafferano.it/Pandoro.html>

- It would be beneficial to host a New Years Eve party at our local lodges, where we could sing and dance in our own "piazza".
- We could make and eat **cotechino e lenticchie**
- Have a wine tasting
- Walk around after midnight to see how people are celebrating.
- Have a "heritage hour" where each person finds their family's town on a map, and we discuss those regional traditions to see what new things we can learn from each other.
- Incorporate some new Italian phrases into our vocabulary.