

## Tradition Of The Christmas Tree

The use of evergreen trees, wreaths, and garlands as symbols of eternal life was common among the ancient Egyptians, Chinese, and Hebrews. The modern custom cannot be proved to be directly descended from pagan tradition. It can, however, be traced to 16th century Germany. It was reported that a small fir was decorated with apples, nuts, dates, pretzels and paper flowers, and were brought into homes to celebrate the annual Feast of Adam and Eve on DEC-24. The modern, decorated version was widespread among German Lutherans by the 18th century. Brought to North America by German settlers in the 17th century, it had become widespread there by the mid-19th century. In the early 19th century, the custom became popular among the nobility and spread to royal courts of Europe as well. Traditionally, Christmas trees were not brought in and decorated until Christmas Eve (24 December), and then removed the day after twelfth night (i.e., 6 January); to have a tree up before or after these dates was even considered bad luck.

The early trees were decorated differently than today's evergreens. Early ornaments were usually hand-crafted or edible. Nuts, candies, fruits, and pieces of coloured paper were the most common. The average modern tree is decorated with a combination of store-bought ornaments and family memorabilia with several strings of lights strewn over the branches instead of candles, but no matter how the tree is decorated it still symbolizes a timeless Christmas tradition of families gathered together exchanging presents and love

