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## Learning/Teaching/Training Activity

**13 – 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Halmeu, ROMANIA**

# **TRADITIONS OF OUR COUNTRIES**

**Guide to General Culture about:**

***Czech Republic***

***Italy***

***Romania***

***Spain***

***Türkiye***

# ROMANIA

## 1. Settlement in Europe

Romania is a state located in southeastern Central Europe, on the lower Danube, north of the Balkan peninsula and on the northwestern shore of the Black Sea.

Romania's neighbors are:

- Bulgaria
- Serbia
- Hungary
- Ukraine
- Moldova
- Black Sea



## 2. Form of government

The form of government of the Romanian state is **a republic**.

Romania is led by a **President** and **Parliament**. The Parliament has two chambers: the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies

## 3. National Day

Romania's national day is **December 1st**, the date when, in 1918, the Great National Assembly of Alba Iulia decided the **Union of Transylvania with the Romania**.



## 4. Currency

The national currency is **the leu**.

1 Euro = 5 lei

## 5. Capital of Romania - Bucharest

The municipality **of Bucharest** is located in the south-east of the country and is crossed by the Dâmbovița River. It has been the capital of Romania since 1862. The population residing in Bucharest, of over two million inhabitants, places it on the sixth place in the hierarchy of capitals in the European Union.

From an economic point of view, Bucharest is the most prosperous city in Romania and is one of the main industrial centers and transportation hubs in Eastern Europe.



### **Sights to visit in Bucharest:**

- a) **Calea Victoriei** is one of the oldest arteries of Bucharest, dating back to 1692. Along it there are important museums, the Central Library, theaters and other historical buildings.
- b) **The Old Town** is made up of narrow, cobbled streets and is best known for its restaurants, pubs and nightlife. Here there are also old places, decorated with paintings, stained glass, mosaics and carved paneling. Also here is the Cărturești Carusel bookstore, one of the most beautiful bookstores in Europe, with the elegant atmosphere of the old days. In addition, on the top floor there is also a café, where visitors can relax reading.
- c) **The fountains in Unirii Square** have become a point of attraction especially because of the shows that took place every summer weekend, when the area becomes pedestrian, the fountains are dressed in dozens of colors, and the water jets are synchronized with the music.
- d) **The Palace of Parliament** is the second largest building in the world in terms of area, after that of the Pentagon, with an area of 365,000 square meters. Today it is the seat of the Chamber of Deputies, but part of it can also be visited.



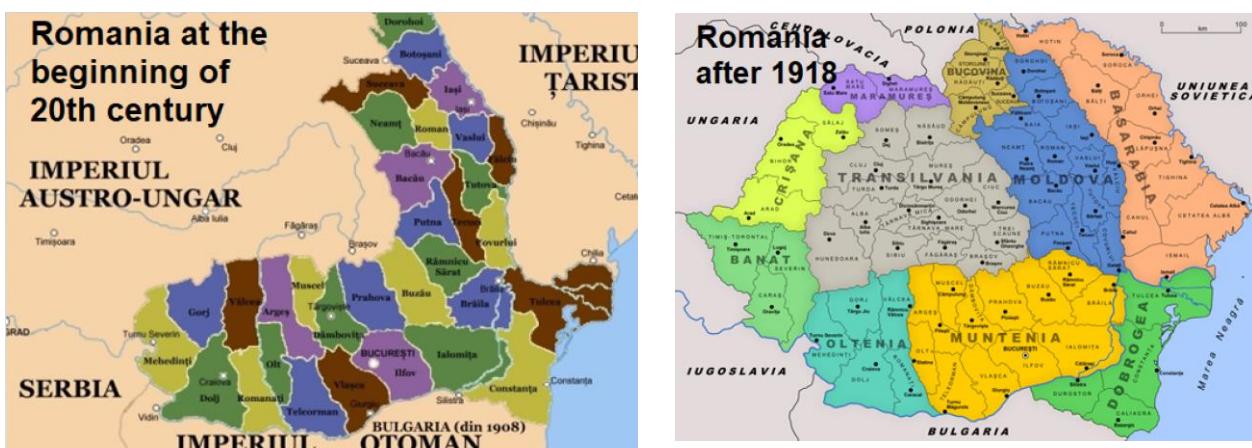
## 6. Romania and the European Union

Romania became an EU member state on January 1, 2007 and was admitted to the Schengen area as of January 1, 2025.

## 7. Important historical event: *The formation of Greater Romania: December 1, 1918*

Over time, there were three Romanian countries: Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania, but due to the harsh times, they failed to unite. In 1859, the Small Union took place – the union of Moldavia with Wallachia.

Then, after the First World War and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Great National Assembly (made up of the representatives of the Romanians in Transylvania) in Alba Iulia decided to unite Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș with the Romanian Kingdom.



Thus, the Great Union of 1918 was the historical process as a result of which all the historical provinces inhabited by Romanians united in 1918 within the same national state, Romania.

## 8. Important holidays

### 8.1. CHRISTMAS/ Nativity of the Lord December 24-27

Christmas customs in Romania reflect a harmonious combination of pre-Christian, Christian traditions and modern influences

#### *Habits:*

- ⊕ Before Christmas, Christians fast for six weeks, between November 15 and December 24
- ⊕ Sacrificing the pig. Pork is consumed predominantly during this period.



- Caroling. Groups of children, young people and adults go caroling on Christmas Eve (December 24)
- **The Viflaim** is a skit that presents the journey of the Magi from the East, their meeting with King Herod and the worship of Prince Jesus.
- **The Star**. The children walk with the Star that represents the Star of the Sunset.
- **The Goat** and **the Bears** are New Year's customs and have the role of driving away evil spirits.

## 8.2. Dragobetele/Celebration of Love, February 24

It is said that Dragobete was a handsome young man, who went through the villages and taught the proud and the boys the secrets of love. According to tradition, on the morning of Dragobete, the girls washed their faces with the snow that had not yet melted, dressed in the most beautiful clothes and went to church. There they met the boys and went together to the forest, to gather the first spring flowers. On the way back, the flying tactic was applied: each boy chose a girl who was dear to him and chased her, and if the girl also liked the boy, he let herself be caught – then they kissed in front of everyone. Hence the saying "Dragobetele kisses girls!"



## 8.3. Sânzienele, June 24

Legends say that the Sânzienele are very beautiful girls, who live in the forests or on the plains. They are caught in the hora and "give special powers" to flowers and weeds, which become medicinal plants, good for all diseases. On the night of the Sânzienes, the fairies fly through the air or walk on the ground. They sing and distribute fruit to married women, multiply birds and animals, heal the sick.

The dance of the Sânzienelor is often hidden from the eyes of those around it. Superstitions say that whoever dares to disrupt their game and watch them will get sick and will never find a cure.



## 9. The folk costume

Romania is one of the few countries in the world where some people from the countryside still wear traditional costumes on working days, not only on certain holidays.

Romania stands out for an extraordinary variety of folk costumes. Its origin dates back to the Dacian period, as can be seen from the representations on Trajan's Column in Rome.

For women, the folk costume is generally composed of a shirt (ie), skirt and an apron. The men's folk costume consists of a shirt (men's ie), trousers (izmene) and opinci or boots.



## 10. Dishes

10.1. **Cabbage rolls** are one of the most famous traditional Romanian dishes. They consist of cabbage or vine leaves stuffed with rice, pork or beef, onions, and spices. Cabbage rolls are often served with sour cream and polenta.



10.2. **Micii (mititeii)** is a Romanian meat specialty, which is obtained from the mixture of minced meat of sheep, beef and pork. They are seasoned with garlic, paprika and other spices, then grilled or baked in the oven. They are often served with mustard.

## 11. Personalities:

### 11.1. Historical personality: *Queen Marie (1875-1938):*

*"I have Romania in my mind, heart and soul"*

Queen Marie was the wife of King Ferdinand, the first king of Greater Romania. Her name was Mary of Edinburgh and she was the granddaughter of Queen Victoria of Great Britain and Tsar Alexander II of Russia. She played a crucial role in the destiny and evolution of Greater Romania. During the First World War he was involved in medical assistance, raised the morale of the troops and cared for the wounded soldiers of the Romanian Army on the front. For the courage she showed, she was nicknamed "Soldier Queen" and "Mother of the Wounded".



He used dynastic relations to plead for the international recognition of Greater Romania at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. His foreign visits have led many European leaders to have a favorable attitude towards Romania.

### 11.2. *Gheorghe Hagi, footballer*

Hagi started playing football at the age of 10 and made his debut in Division A at the age of 17.

Between 1987 and 1990 he played for Real Madrid, Brescia, Barcelona and Galatasaray (four Turkish championship titles, a UEFA Cup and a European Super Cup).

At the national team, Hagi managed to make 125 appearances, with 35 goals scored. As a player, Hagi wore the number 10 (playmaker). Some of his goals have gone down in football history

He was a fair-play player, who was very rarely penalized by the referees.



### 11.3. *Nadia Comănescu, gymnast*



She is the first gymnast in history to be awarded a grade of 10 in a competition, seven times. The performance was noted in the Guinness Book. She is nicknamed the "Fairy of Montreal" after winning the absolute Olympic title in 1976

He won 25 medals at the Olympics, World and European Championships.

## 12. Romanian crafts: beaded bracelets

In winter, in the sittings, Romanian women braided bracelets and collars from beads.



## 13. Romanian songs:

**Dragostea din Tei (formația O-zone) [Link](#)**

Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Alo, salut, sunt eu un haiduc  
Si te rog iubirea mea primește fericirea  
Alo, alo, sunt eu, Picasso  
Ti-am dat beep si sunt voinic  
Dar sa stii nu-ți cer nimic  
Vrei sa pleci dar nu ma nu ma iei  
Nu ma nu ma iei, nu ma nu ma nu ma iei  
Chipul tau si dragostea din tei  
Mi-amintesc de ochii tai  
Vrei sa pleci dar nu ma nu ma iei  
Nu ma nu ma iei, nu ma nu ma nu ma iei  
Chipul tau si dragostea din tei  
Mi-amintesc de ochii tai  
Te sun sa-ți spun ce simt acum  
Alo, iubirea mea sunt eu fericirea  
Alo, alo, sunt iarasi eu, Picasso  
Ti-am dat beep si sunt voinic  
Dar sa stii nu-ți cer nimic  
Vrei sa pleci dar nu ma nu ma iei  
Nu ma nu ma iei, nu ma nu ma nu ma iei

Chipul tau si dragostea din tei  
Mi-amintesc de ochii tai  
Vrei sa pleci dar nu ma nu ma iei  
Nu ma nu ma iei, nu ma nu ma nu ma iei  
Chipul tau si dragostea din tei  
Mi-amintesc de ochii tai  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Ma-ia-hii, ma-ia-huu  
Ma-ia-hoo, ma-ia-haa  
Vrei sa pleci dar nu ma nu ma iei  
Nu ma nu ma iei, nu ma nu ma nu ma iei  
Chipul tau si dragostea din tei  
Mi-amintesc de ochii tai  
Vrei sa pleci dar nu ma nu ma iei  
Nu ma nu ma iei, nu ma nu ma nu ma iei  
Chipul tau si dragostea din tei  
Mi-amintesc de ochii tai.

**Made in Romania (Ionuț Cercel) [link](#)**

Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau țigan  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau oltean  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Nu contează cine ești sau ce limbă vorbești  
Asta e țara ta, România  
Nu contează cine ești sau ce limbă vorbești  
Asta e țara ta, România  
Solo, i-auzi cea mai nouă  
Hai cu moldoveanu', cu ardeleanu', bucureșteanu'  
Haide sus țiganu'  
Și cu olteanu', cu moldoveanu', cu ardeleanu' (da, da, da, da)  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau țigan  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau oltean  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Nu contează unde stai sau ce dialect ai  
Distrează-te și bea că-i țara ta  
Nu contează unde stai sau ce dialect ai  
Distrează-te și bea că-i țara ta  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau țigan  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau oltean  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Nu contează cine ești sau ce limbă vorbești

Asta e țara ta, România  
Nu contează unde stai sau ce dialect ai  
Distrează-te și bea că-i țara ta  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau țigan  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Chiar dacă ești moldovean, ardelean sau oltean  
Suntem made in Romanie (iali, iali, iali)  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania  
Da dumla dumla da, da dumla dumla da  
Daga dumla dumla da, made in Romania

# SPAIN

## 1. SETTLEMENT IN EUROPE

Spain is considered one of the number one countries for expatriates in terms of quality of life, occupying a prominent place in the US News publication for quality of life and a position in the top ten for quality of life in the Global Passport Index



## 2. FORM OF GOVERNMENT

In Spain we have the **parliamentary monarchy**. We have a **king**, who we don't choose but who is inherited, and then we have the president, who we choose with the elections.



## 3. NATIONAL DAY

**October 12** commemorates the Discovery of America in 1492. This holiday was established for the first time in 1982 and was regulated in 1987. Every October 12, the National Holiday of Spain, known as Hispanic Heritage Day, is celebrated. Since the date is one of the eight non-replaceable and common holidays throughout the territory.



#### 4. CURRENCY

In Spain we use the common European currency, the euro.



#### 5. CAPITAL

Capital of Spain is Madrid. This town is the largest city in the country and the second in the European Union, with a population of more than 3 million inhabitants. As the capital of Spain, Madrid has the seat of Government, the Cortes and is also the official residence of the Kings of Spain.



#### 6. SPAIN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Spain joined the European Union on **January 1, 1986**. Along with Portugal, it became an official member after signing the Treaty of Accession on June 12, 1985.

#### 7. AN IMPORTANT HISTORICAL EVENT

Francoism was the dictatorial regime that governed Spain from 1939 to 1975, under the leadership of Francisco Franco. It emerged after the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), in which Francoist forces, supported by the army, the church, and conservative sectors, confronted the Republican government, which was predominantly left-wing. After Franco's military victory, a dictatorship was established that annulled political freedoms, dissolved democratic institutions and banned political parties and unions.



## 8. IMPORTANT HOLIDAYS

In Spain, the most important holidays are:

- ❖ January 1, New Year.
- ❖ January 6, Kings.
- ❖ April 18, Good Friday.
- ❖ May 1, Labor Day.
- ❖ August 15, Assumption of the Virgin.
- ❖ October 12, National Holiday of Spain.
- ❖ November 1, All Saints.
- ❖ December 6, Spanish Constitution Day.



## 9. FOLK COSTUMES

Thus, among the most famous regional costumes in Spain, the flamenco dress stands out, in Andalusia; the fallera costume, in the Valencian Community; the Aragonese costume, in Aragon; the sailor suit, in Galicia; the Asturian costume, in Asturias; the La Mancha costume, in Castilla La Mancha, or the Canarian costume, in the Islands



## 10. DISHES

Typical Spanish dishes are Iberian ham, croquettes, potato omelet, paella, octopus, gazpacho, chorizo, horchata and Madrid stew.



## 11. IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES

Some of the most important people are Andres Iniesta, Ibai Llanos, Penelope Cruz, Rafa Nadal and Fernando Alonso.



## 12. SPANISH CRAFT

The Fallas are spectacular sculptural monuments made of wood and papier mâché that are placed in the city's streets and squares to be admired before they succumb to the flames. In addition to the large fallas, there are also children's fallas, much smaller in size, designed by and for the little ones.



## 13. SPANISH SONG

The Macarena by the group Los del Río is the best-known song in Spain.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWaymcVmJ-A>

## MACARENA

Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Macarena tiene un novio que se llama  
Que se llama de apellido Vitorino  
Y en la jura de bandera del muchacho  
Se la dio con dos amigos, ay  
Macarena tiene un novio que se llama  
Que se llama de apellido Vitorino  
Y en la jura de bandera del muchacho  
Se la dio con dos amigos, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Macarena, Macarena, Macarena  
Que te gustan los veranos de Marbella  
Macarena, Macarena, Macarena  
Que te gusta la movida guerrillera, ay  
Ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Macarena sueña con el corte inglés  
Y se compra los modelos más modernos  
Le gustaría vivir en Nueva York  
Y ligar un novio nuevo, ay  
Macarena sueña con el corte inglés  
Y se compra los modelos más modernos  
Le gustaría vivir en Nueva York  
Y ligar un novio nuevo, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Macarena tiene un novio que se llama  
Que se llama de apellido Vitorino  
Y en la jura de bandera del muchacho  
Se la dio con dos amigos, ay  
Macarena tiene un novio que se llama  
Que se llama de apellido Vitorino  
Y en la jura de bandera del muchacho  
Se la dio con dos amigos, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría Macarena  
Que tu cuerpo es pa' darle alegría y cosa buena  
Dale a tu cuerpo alegría, Macarena  
Hey Macarena, ay

# ITALY

## 1. SETTLEMENT IN EUROPE

Italy is composed by 20 regions, two of which are islands, one is just our Sicily, the largest island in the Mediterranean sea. We live here! In Italy we can also find two microstates: San Marino and the Vatican City. The Italian peninsula is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, the Ligurian, Tyrrhenian, Ionian and Adriatic seas. To the north are the highest mountains: The Alps and the Apennines run the length of the “boot”. A large plain is the green heart of Italy: la Pianura Padana.



## 2. FORM OF GOVERNMENT

He is our **Republic President**, Sergio Mattarella. The President of the Republic carries out an essential function in the formation and activity of the Government: he appoints the Prime Minister and the ministers and the main government acts are attributed to him as presidential decrees.

The current **Government President** is Mrs Giorgia Meloni,. She directs the general policy of the Government and she is responsible for it.



## 3. ITALY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Italy has been **one of the founding countries of the European Union since 1951**, together with Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. In 1957 in Rome, Italy, the founding states signed the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC).

## 4. CURRENCY: the euro

May 3, 1998: The European Council establishes the list of eleven member states that adopted a common currency, the Euro, on January 1, 1999: Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Finland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland, Austria, Portugal.

It is divided into 100 smaller units called cents. The euro coins come in different denominations: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cents, and 1 and 2 euros. The euro banknotes range from 5 to 500 euros.



## 5. CAPITAL: ROME, THE ETERNAL CITY

### 5.1. Famous monuments

- **Piazza della Repubblica**
- **Coliseum**: it is an enormous monument built by Romans, it is an arena.
- **Trastevere**: a place where you can eat great food
- **Fori Imperiali**: it is a tentacular mass of ruins, it was the centre of ancient Rome.

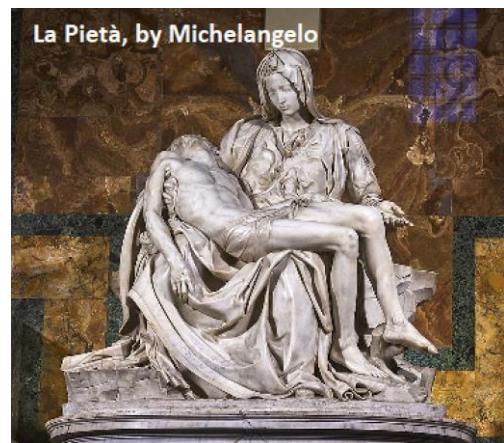


- **Piazza di Spagna** is one of the most famous squares in the world, which houses the Baroque Barcaccia mountain and it is topped by a beautiful staircase
- **Trajan's Column**: is a Roman triumphal column in Rome, Italy, that commemorates Roman emperor Trajan's victory in the Dacian Wars.



### 5.2. Famous artists in Rome

- **Michelangelo** - La Pietà, David, Sistina Chapel
- **Bernini** - Ratto di Proserpina, Dafne e Apollo
- **Caravaggio**



## 6. SPECIAL DAYS AND FESTIVITIES

### ➤ 25 Aprile, Italian Liberation Day

It is celebrated on April 25th every year. It marks the day in 1945 when Italy was freed from Nazi and Fascist control during World War II. On this day, the Italian Resistance and Allied forces helped push out the German soldiers and end the dictatorship of Benito Mussolini.

The poppy is a symbol of the memory of the Italian Resistance, but also of rebirth, life, and Freedom.



People celebrate this day to remember the brave men and women who fought for freedom. There are parades in many cities, especially in Rome, and people wave the Italian flag. Tricolor arrows whizz across the sky. In some places, there are speeches and ceremonies at important monuments to honour those who fought in the war. President also lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to honour those who died for Italy



It's a day of national pride, and many Italians enjoy spending time with family and friends. There are fireworks and celebrations, and for kids like me, it's a fun day because we don't have school.

### ➤ 2nd June, Republic Day

Italian Republic Day is celebrated on June 2 every year. It marks the day in 1946 when Italians voted to create a republic instead of having a king. During this day, there are parades, especially in Rome, where soldiers and other groups march. For us it's an important day to think about family and people we love. It's a quiet day, and it helps us remember the past and appreciate what we have today.



## 7. AN HISTORICAL EVENT THAT CHANGED THE HISTORY OF SICILY

### *Garibaldi and the landing of the thousand*

The Expedition of the Thousand, also known as "I Mille," was an important event in Italian history that took place in 1860. It was led by a brave man named Giuseppe Garibaldi, who wanted to unite Italy into one country.

Garibaldi and his group of about a thousand volunteers set sail from the port of Quarto, near Genoa. They landed on the island of Sicily, where they faced many challenges but were determined to succeed. The volunteers, known for their red shirts, fought against the local rulers, the Borboni, and gained the support of the Sicilian people.



Garibaldi and his troops captured cities and towns. Their adventure was not just about battles; it was also about bravery, friendship, and the dream of a united Italy. Thanks to Garibaldi and the Thousand, Italy eventually became one nation. This event is celebrated as a significant moment in the history of Italy and shows how ordinary people can make a big difference when they work together for a common goal.

## 8. PERSONALITIES

### **8.1. SANT'AGATA**

Saint Agatha is the beloved protector of Catania, a beautiful city in Sicily! She is celebrated every year with a big festival known as the Feast of Saint Agatha, which takes place in February. This festival is one of the most important celebrations in the city.

It is the third most followed Catholic religious festival in the world, precisely because of the number of people it involves and attracts. It takes place every year from February 3 to 6, on February 12 and August 17.



Saint Agatha is known for her bravery and faith.

Saint Agatha was born in the early 3rd century to a noble and wealthy family and, at only 15 years old, she consecrated herself to God. The Roman proconsul Quinziano, a bad man, fell in love with the young girl. Quinziano hated Christians and wanted Agatha to renounce Catholicism and marry him, but she did not want to.

Since the Saint had a great faith in God, the proconsul decided to martyr her, including the removal of her breasts and torture in the furnace, which she managed to avoid thanks to a strong earthquake forcing Quinziano to stop the terrible tortures inflicted on her. Then she was closed in a cell where she died a few hours later.

Because of her courage, she became a symbol of strength and protection for the people of Catania.

During the feast, the streets come alive with colorful processions, music and dancing. People carry a beautiful statue of Saint Agatha through the city, and many dress in traditional clothing.

There are also delicious foods, like sweets and pastries, that everyone enjoys such as the "cassatelle" or Saint Agata nipples and "olivette di Sant'Agata" or little olives.

### **8.2. LEONARDO DA VINCI**

Leonardo was a prominent representative of the Renaissance at its peak. Universalist spirit: painter, sculptor, architect, musician, engineer, inventor, anatomist, geologist, cartographer, botanist and writer. Leonardo da Vinci is often considered the greatest genius in the entire history of mankind.

He painted the famous ***Mona Lisa*** and the ***Last Supper***.

Leonardo da Vinci designed flying machines, a tank, submarines, a calculating machine, and much more.

### **8.3. GALILEO GALILEI**

Galileo Galilei was an Italian physicist, mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher who played an important role in the Scientific Revolution. His achievements include improvements to telescopes and astronomical observations. Galileo has been called the "father of science."

## **9. FOLK COSTUMES**

Sicily has a rich culture and beautiful traditional costumes! These costumes are colorful and are often worn during festivals and special celebrations.

For women, traditional Sicilian dresses are usually very bright and made of beautiful fabrics. The dresses often have long skirts and are adorned with lace and embroidery. Women also wear a shawl over their shoulders. It's common to see them with flowers in their hair, adding to the festive look.

Men's traditional costumes are also striking! They typically wear trousers and a white shirt, topped with a colorful waistcoat. A hat, known as a "coppola," is often worn. Sometimes you can see men with a long sash tied around their waist, which adds a special touch to their outfit.

During local festivals, you can see people dressed in these traditional costumes, dancing and singing. The costumes reflect the island's history and its blend of different cultures, making Sicilian traditions unique and lively.



## 10. TRADITIONAL DISHES

### **Gelo di Cannella (Cinnamon Frost)**

It is a typical pastry recipe whose origins are back to the period of Arab-Norman dominations. You have to eat it cold and it is only made of sugar, water and cinnamon..of course!



### **Pasta alla norma**

It is made with sauce, tender eggplant, ricotta salata cheese and lots of basil..it's tasty!

### **Granita**

It is a semi frozen treat made with ice, sugar and a flavour, usually fruit or nuts. It is often served for breakfast with cream and alongside a "brioscia col tuppo" – an unfilled pastry that is perfect for dipping. It's perfect in a hot summer day!





**Polpette di cavallo con salmoriglio** (Sicilian style horse meat balls with lemon sauce)

Tunnina ca cipuddata, or fried tuna with sweet and sour onion, is one of the most typical main course in Catania.

## 11. TRADITIONAL CRAFT: OPERA DEI PUPI

The Opera dei Pupi, or Puppet Theater, is a wonderful and unique tradition from Sicily! This special form of storytelling uses beautifully crafted puppets to tell exciting tales, often about knights, heroes, and battles.

The Puppet theatre known as “Opera dei Pupi” (in Sicilian Pupo means marionette or child) originated in Sicily in the early 19th century from the popular tradition of the storytellers.



The Sicilian puppet is a puppet made of wood and metal that represents the characters and stories told in the epic-chivalric literature typical of the Sicilian tradition.

The stories told in the Opera dei Pupi are inspired by famous legends, like the adventures of Charlemagne and his knights and the plots are taken from epic poems such as the ‘Chanson de Roland’ and the ‘Orlando Furioso’, enriched with elements of folklore and creativity of the puppeteers themselves.

Each puppet is controlled by skilled puppeteers who bring the characters to life by moving them and giving them voices. The shows are usually held in small theaters, and families gather to watch and enjoy the performance together.

The performances are full of action, music, and sometimes even humor, making them entertaining for both kids and adults. This tradition is not just about fun; it also teaches important lessons about bravery, friendship, and honour. Today, the Opera dei Pupi is celebrated as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, which means it is recognized as an important part of the world's cultural history. It's a magical experience that captures the hearts of everyone who sees it!

## VISIT SICILY

### CATANIA

Catania is a city on the east coast of the Mediterranean's largest island: Sicily. The powerful Mount Etna stands tall over the city and dominates the skyline and the sea is a deep blue. Catania is the perfect mix of Greek and Roman history mixed with Baroque style, delicious food and colorful places.

"U Liotru" is the real symbol of Catania. It is a little lava stone elephant which sits on the Elephant Fountain. No one really knows what the elephant means or why the Romans chose an elephant to represent the city, but we are very proud of it!

It is known that once Sicily was inhabited by dwarf elephants; according to the tradition an elephant drove out of the area on which stands today Catania all dangerous animals, making it possible to inhabit it. As a sign of gratitude, the people of Catania sculpted this statue.

Catania is called "the black city" because of its monuments, churches and historical buildings in lava stone, and also "baroque city" thanks to its baroque palaces and churches built after the devastating eruption of 1669. Baroque style of Cathedral Square is a Unesco World Heritage Site.

In Piazza Duomo, the Main Square, in front of the Elephant Fountain stands Saint Agatha Cathedral, dedicated to the patroness of Catania.

The body of Saint Agatha is kept in the crape. Around the same square there are elegant cafés, prestigious restaurants and in a corner of the square the underground river of Catania resurfaces: the "Amenano" in the mountain called "Acqua 'o linzolu".

### THE FISH MARKET

The fish market is a smelly and colourful place in Catania. Based on an ancient tradition, the fish market is open on weekday mornings from 7am to 2 pm and all day on Saturdays. Every morning it is lively and animated, and here you can buy or taste a huge selection of fresh fish and seafood, including clams, mussels, sardines, swordfish, tuna and others.

Following the local traditions, fishermen will try to attract buyers with their loud voices and lots of gesticulations. Nearby there are also fruit and veg stalls as well as cheese and mushrooms from the mountain villages around Etna.

### ETNA

Etna is the highest active volcano in Europe with a height of about 3,326 m. Mount Etna is one of the world's most active Volcanoes and is often in a state of activity. From June 2013. it is in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

It is beautiful when its top is full of snow and even more beautiful when it erupts! Numerous villages and towns lie around Etna; inhabitants do not care about its eruptions, on the contrary the soil around Etna is very fertile and promotes agriculture.

## **THE SEA OF CATANIA**

The sea of Catania gives beautiful views. In Catania, you can choose to dive off high cliffs made of lava or relax on a warm, golden beach.

The long beach in the city of Catania is called “La Playa”, here the sand is fine and golden. At the Playa you can relax and sunbathe or play a nice game of beach volleyball with your friends.

According to Greek myths, in Catania Polyphemus, angry with Ulysses, threw large cliffs that you can still see today in the sea of Catania: they are called “I Faraglioni”.

# TURKIYE

## 1. Settlement in Europe

Türkiye, officially the Republic of Turkiye, is a transcontinental country with the majority of its territory in Anatolia in Western Asia and the other part in Eastern Thrace, an extension of Southeastern Europe.



## 2. Form Of Government: republic

Republic means that the people govern themselves, and this form of government is carried out by the president and deputies elected through elections. The president of Turkyie is *Recep Tayyip Erdoğan*.



## 3. National Days

There are 7 official holidays in total, excluding religious holidays. Our national holidays are 5 in total:

- April 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day,
- May 19 Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day,
- July 15 Democracy and National Unity Day
- August 30 Victory Day
- October 29 Republic Day.



## 4. Currency

Turkish lira (TL; symbol: code: TRY) is the official currency of the Republic of Turkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The printing and management activities of the Turkish lira, whose sub-unit is kuruş, are carried out by the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkiye.

## 5. Capital of Turkiye

"The capital of the Turkish State is Ankara" was accepted as a one-article bill (October 13, 1923). With the enactment of the law, Ankara became the capital of the new Turkish state.



## 6. Turkiye and the European Union.

The Republic of Turkiye is not yet a member state of the European Union, the historical developments and negotiation process on this issue are ongoing, and political and economic studies on the subject continue for our country internationally.

## 7. An Important Historical Event

The Ottoman Empire period has ended. The Turkish state's form of government has been declared a republic. The declaration of the Republic is a part of the **Atatürk Revolutions**, which aimed to modernize Turkish society, and is a political revolution movement with other innovations and reforms.

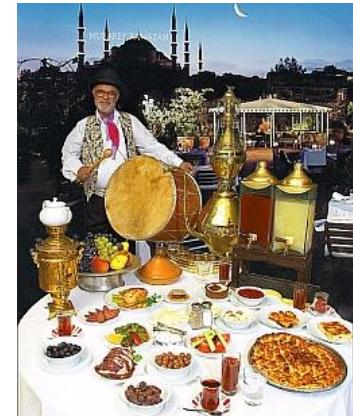


## 8. Important Holidays

We mention national holidays in the fifth slide. That's why we want to talk about religious holidays in this part.

There are two religious holidays in Turkiye.

- Ramadan Feast
- Eid Feast



## 9. Folk costumes

There are seven regions in Turkiye. Each region has its own folk costumes. Some of them are as seen in the image.

## Folk dances

Each region of Turkiye has its own dances, as well as folk costumes.



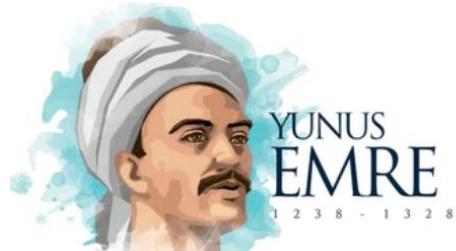
## 10. Dishes

- Kebab. When it comes to famous dishes of Turkey, it is of course impossible not to mention kebab, since almost every city has at least one type of kebab unique to it. ...
- Mantı ...
- Lahmacun. ...
- Baklava. ...
- Kofte. ...
- Olive oil stuffed vine leaves. ...
- Pide. ...
- Döner and İskender.
- Çiğ köfte (raw meatball without meat)



## 11. Important Persons

**Aziz Sancar** is a Turkish molecular biologist. In 2015, he was awarded the **Nobel Prize in Chemistry** for mechanistic studies of DNA repair. He has made contributions on photolyase and nucleotide excision repair in bacteria that have changed his field.



**Yunus Emre** was a Turkish folk poet and Sufi who greatly influenced Turkish culture. The UNESCO General Conference unanimously passed a resolution declaring 1991, the 750th anniversary of the poet's birth, International Yunus Emre Year

*Ben gelmedim kavga için benim işim sevgi için./ I didn't come for a fight, my job is for only love.*

## 12. Traditional Craft: Ebru

Paper marbling is a method of surface design, which can produce patterns similar to smooth marble or other kinds of stone.



## 13. Folk songs

**Barış Manço** was a Turkish rock musician, singer, composer, actor, television producer and show host.

***The original Lyrics of the song***

Keşke hislerimi sana açıkça anlatabilseydim

Sana deli gibi âşık olduğumu söyleyebilseydim

Göz göze geldiğimiz o anda sanki dilim tutuldu bir anda

Konuşmadım karşısında

Oysa bütün cesaretimi toplayıp sana gelmiştim  
Senin için çarpan şu kalbi gör istemiştim  
Tam elini tutmak üzereyken, aşkımı itiraf edecekken  
Sokaktan gelen o sesle yıkıldı dünyam  
"Domates, biber, patlıcan!"  
"Domates, biber, patlıcan!" (Ooh)  
Bir anda bütün dünyam karardı (ooh)  
Bu sesle sokaklar yankılandı (ooh)  
"Domates, biber, patlıcan!" (Ooh)

***Lyric of the song***

wish I could tell you my feelings clearly  
I wish I could tell you that I am madly in love with you  
At that moment when our eyes met, my tongue was suddenly tied  
I couldn't speak in front of you  
Yet I gathered all my courage and came to you  
I wanted you to see this heart that beats for you  
Just as I was about to hold your hand, confess my love  
My world was shattered by that voice coming from the street  
"Tomato, pepper, eggplant!"  
"Tomato, pepper, eggplant!" (Ooh)  
In an instant, my whole world went dark (ooh)  
The streets echoed with that voice (ooh)  
"Tomato, pepper, eggplant!" (Ooh)

## THE CZECH REPUBLIC

### 1. Settlement in Europe: Central, often referred to as „the heart of Europe“



### 2. Form of government:

The Czech Republic is a **parliamentary republic with a representative democracy**.

- **Executive:**

- **President** (head of state) is elected for five years: **Petr Pavel**
- **Prime Minister** (head of government) leads the Cabinet.

- **Legislature:**

- **Chamber of Deputies** (200 members, 4-year term).
- **Senate** (81 members, 6-year term).

- **Judiciary:**

- Independent, with the **Constitutional Court** overseeing constitutionality.



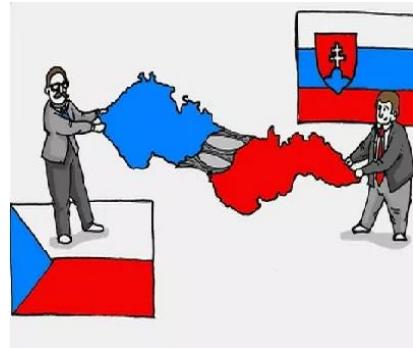
It is a member of the EU, NATO, and other international organizations.

### 3. National Days:

On **October 28th**, the Czech Republic celebrates **Czech Statehood Day**. This national holiday commemorates the founding of **Czechoslovakia** in 1918, when the country became an independent state after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The day marks the birth of Czechoslovak statehood, a significant moment in Czech history. It is celebrated with ceremonies, events, and reflections on the country's independence and national identity.



On **January 1st**, the Czech Republic celebrates **Czech New Year's Day**. This holiday marks the anniversary of the country's **split from Slovakia** in 1993, when the Czech Republic became an independent nation after the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia. It is a day to reflect on the country's sovereignty and independence. The day is typically observed with various national events and celebrations.



#### **4. Currency:**

The Czech Republic's currency is the **Czech koruna** (CZK), which has been the official currency since 1993, following the country's split from Slovakia.

Czech banknotes feature prominent historical figures, including:

- **100 CZK:** **Charles IV**, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia.
- **200 CZK:** **Jan Amos Komenský** (John Amos Comenius), philosopher, educator, and theologian.
- **500 CZK:** **Božena Němcová**, a famous Czech writer.
- **1,000 CZK:** **František Palacký**, historian, politician, and one of the founders of Czech nationalism.
- **2,000 CZK:** **Ema Destinnová**, a renowned Czech opera singer.
- **5,000 CZK:** **Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk**, the first president of Czechoslovakia.



These figures are celebrated for their contributions to Czech culture, science, and history.

#### **5. Capital:**

**Prague** is the capital and largest city of the **Czech Republic**. It is known for its rich history, stunning architecture, and vibrant cultural scene.

- **Population:** Around 1.3 million people.
- **Location:** Situated on the **Vltava River** in central Bohemia.
- **Key attractions:**
  - **Prague Castle** (largest ancient castle in the world).
  - **Charles Bridge** (historic stone bridge).
  - **Old Town Square** (with the famous Astronomical Clock).
  - **St. Vitus Cathedral** (Gothic cathedral).

Prague is a major European cultural, political, and economic hub, often referred to as "The City of a Hundred Spires" due to its many historic churches.

**Prague** is sometimes referred to as the "**Mother of Cities**". This nickname is believed to have originated in the Middle Ages, reflecting the city's historical significance, beauty, and cultural heritage. It symbolizes Prague's central role in the development of the Czech state and its influence on European history and culture. The title is also associated with the city's prominent position in the region and its status as a cultural and intellectual hub.



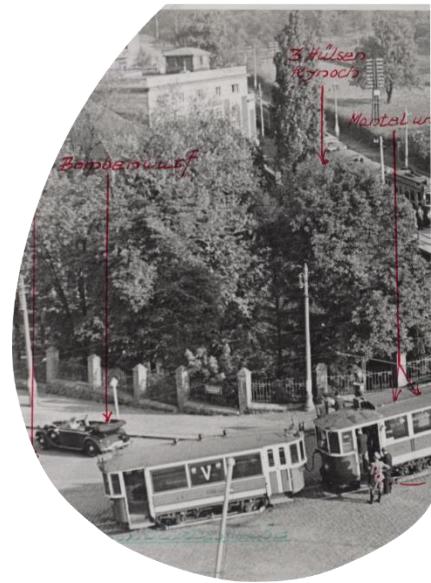
## 6. Czech Republic and the European Union

The Czech Republic became a member of NATO in 1999, a member of the EU in 2004, and joined the Schengen area in 2007.

## 7. Important historical event

The **Czech assassination of Reinhard Heydrich**, known as **Operation Anthropoid**, was a pivotal event during World War II.

- **Reinhard Heydrich** was a high-ranking Nazi official, head of the **Gestapo**, and one of the main architects of the **Holocaust**.
- On **December 28, 1941**, he was appointed **Protector of Bohemia and Moravia**, effectively governing Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia.
- On **December 28, 1941**, **Czechoslovak resistance fighters**, trained by the **British Special Operations Executive (SOE)**, carried out the operation to assassinate him.

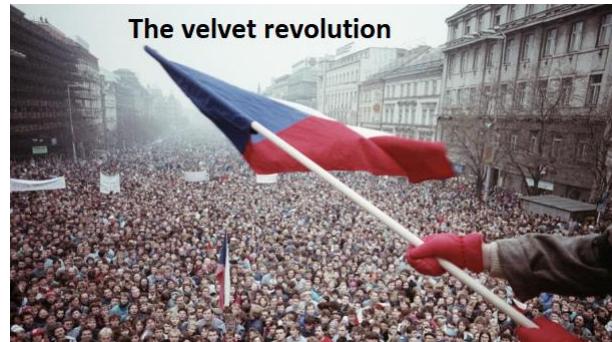


- On **May 27, 1942**, **Jan Kubiš** and **Jozef Gabčík** attempted to kill Heydrich. Gabčík fired a submachine gun at Heydrich's car, while Kubiš threw a grenade, which fatally wounded him.
- Heydrich died a week later from his injuries, and the Nazi regime retaliated with brutal measures, including the destruction of the village of **Lidice** and mass executions.

The assassination remains a symbol of Czech resistance and bravery against Nazi oppression.

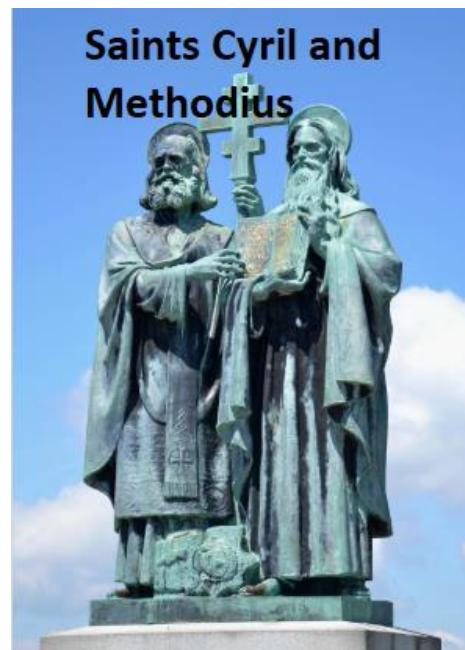
## 8. Important holidays

- The **Velvet Revolution** occurred in **November 1989**, leading to the end of communist rule in Czechoslovakia.
- **November 7** marked increased coordination among opposition groups against the communist regime.
- The revolution was **peaceful**, with mass protests and nonviolent demonstrations.
- The communist government **resigned** after weeks of protests.
- **Václav Havel** was elected president, signaling the transition to democracy.
- The revolution contributed to the **collapse of communism** in Central Europe.



On **July 5th**, the Czech Republic celebrates the **Feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius**. They are revered as the **apostles of the Slavs** and are credited with spreading **Christianity** to the Slavic peoples in the 9th century.

- **Cyril and Methodius** were Byzantine missionaries who created the **Glagolitic alphabet**, the first written system for the Slavic languages, which eventually evolved into the **Cyrillic alphabet**.
- They translated the **Bible** and other Christian texts into Old Church Slavonic, helping to establish a Christian cultural and religious foundation in the Slavic world.
- The celebration honors their contributions to the spread of Christianity and literacy among the Slavic peoples, including the Czech lands.



The day is both a **religious** and **cultural** celebration in the Czech Republic, recognizing their historical significance.

## **9. Folklore:**

- **Colorful and Vibrant:** Czech folk costumes feature bright colors and intricate embroidery, reflecting regional traditions.
- **Regional Variations:** Different regions, like **Moravia** and **Bohemia**, have unique styles with distinct patterns.
- **Women's Costumes:** Include full skirts, embroidered blouses, aprons, and headpieces like bonnets or wreaths.
- **Men's Costumes:** Embroidered shirts, vests, knee-length pants, and hats complete the look.
- **Symbolic Embroidery:** Embroidery represents local heritage, prosperity, and fertility.
- **Worn for Festivals:** These costumes are worn during festivals, weddings, and folk dances.
- **Craftsmanship:** Folk costume-making is a skilled tradition, often passed down through generations.



## 10. Dishes

➤ **Svíčková** is a traditional Czech dish made of **marinated beef sirloin** in a creamy, rich sauce made from **vegetables (carrots, onions), cream, and spices**. It's typically served with **dumplings** and often garnished with lemon, cranberries, and whipped cream. It's a beloved comfort food in Czech cuisine.



➤ **Kapr s bramborovým salátem** (carp with potato salad) is a traditional Czech dish, especially popular during **Christmas** celebrations.

- The dish features **fried or baked carp**, which is the traditional choice for Christmas Eve dinner in Czech households.
- It's served with a creamy **potato salad**, made with boiled potatoes, mayonnaise, pickles, peas, and sometimes eggs.

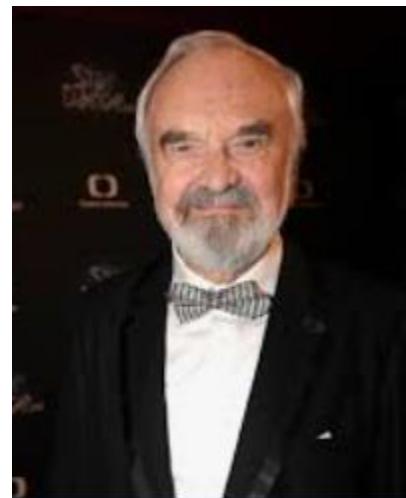
This combination is considered a festive and symbolic meal in Czech culture, with carp being a long-standing tradition for Christmas.



## 11. Famous Czechs

### Zdeněk Svěrák

- **Profession:** Actor, Writer, Playwright, Songwriter
- **Famous Works:** Co-writer of the beloved Czech film series *Kolya* and *The Elementary School* (Obecná škola).
- **Awards:** Winner of numerous awards, including an **Academy Award** (Oscar) for *Kolya* (1996).
- **Music:** Known for his collaborations with composer **Jaroslav Uhlíř**, creating popular songs for children and the general public.
- **Cultural Influence:** A highly respected figure in Czech culture, known for his clever, humorous writing and deep connection to Czech traditions.



Zdeněk Svěrák is a national treasure in the Czech Republic, beloved for his creativity and contributions to Czech cinema and music.

### ***Jaromír Jágr***

- **Born:** February 15, 1972, in Kladno, Czech Republic.
- **Profession:** Legendary **ice hockey player**.
- **NHL Career:** Played 24 seasons, scoring over **1,900 points**.
- **Stanley Cups:** 2-time **Stanley Cup** winner with the **Pittsburgh Penguins** (1991, 1992).
- **International:** Won a **gold medal** with the Czech Republic in the **1998 Winter Olympics**.
- **Longevity:** Continued playing professionally into his **50s**.
- **Legacy:** Considered one of the greatest hockey players of all time.

Jaromír Jágr is a hockey icon known for his exceptional skill, long career, and contributions to the Czech national team.



### **12. Music:** Contemporary performer: Pokáč

Pokáč follows Czech folk tradition through:

1. **Storytelling:** His songs often tell relatable, humorous stories, a key aspect of folk music.
2. **Simple Acoustic Style:** Like traditional folk, his music features acoustic guitar and straightforward arrangements.
3. **Themes of Everyday Life:** His lyrics focus on common experiences and social observations, similar to folk songs about ordinary people.
4. **Czech Identity:** He reflects national pride and cultural themes, akin to traditional folk music.
5. **Lyrical Humor:** Pokáč's witty lyrics echo the humor often found in Czech folk songs.

He modernizes the folk tradition while staying connected to its roots.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3y4XQ4B4Vw&list=RDEMPmQR-774r\\_ibc8tA1Yc4g&index=4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3y4XQ4B4Vw&list=RDEMPmQR-774r_ibc8tA1Yc4g&index=4)

### **Kdyby byl Bavorov**

Kdyby byl Bavorov,  
co sou Vodňany,  
dal bych ti hubičku  
na obě strany.  
Ale že je za vodou,  
za vodičkou studenou,  
nedám ti má milá ani jedinou.  
Ale že je za vodou,  
za vodičkou studenou,  
nedám ti má milá ani jedinou.

Kdyby byl Bavorov  
co Prachatic.  
dal bych ti hubiček  
na statisíce.  
Ale že je za vodou,  
za vodičkou studenou,  
nedám ti má milá ani jedinou.  
Ale že je za vodou,  
za vodičkou studenou,  
nedám ti má milá ani jedinou.

