

New Year Tradition in Spain

Spanish people celebrate the New Year with great warmth and **gusto** (pleasure, excitement, enthusiasm). Lots of food, drinks, song, dance and gifts add festivity and fun to the New Year celebration in Spain. The streets are beautifully lit, shops display all kinds of holiday merchandise and friends and family participate in festive parties dressed in thick woollies to combat the chilly December night. New Year traditions in Spain reflect the cultural heritage of the Spanish people. Have a look at some unique New Year traditions in Spain.

New Year's Eve in Spain is known as **Noche Vieja** (Old Night). It is a custom to stay at home till midnight and at midnight people eat **doce uvas** (twelve grapes), one at each stroke of the clock. This is supposed to bring good luck, prosperity, and happiness in el **Año Nuevo** (the New Year). In main cities people congregate in the **plaza central** (main square). In Madrid people gather in the **Puerta del Sol** and eat the grapes. Then they dance the night until the early hours in the morning.

There is a tradition in Spain to host a children's parade on January 5 or **Día de los Reyes Magos** (Three Kings Day). Children come to see the parade and ask for gifts from the people who are dressed as three Kings Melchior, Gaspar and Balthasar. Later, before going to bed, children leave their shoes or dinner plate out hoping that when they wake up they will find gifts left by. A typical New Year dessert consists of *Roscón de los Reyes*. This is a large ring shaped cake that is decorated with candied fruits. There are some surprises hidden inside the cake and the person who unravels the surprise is crowned as king or queen of the household.



Puerta del Sol, Madrid, España

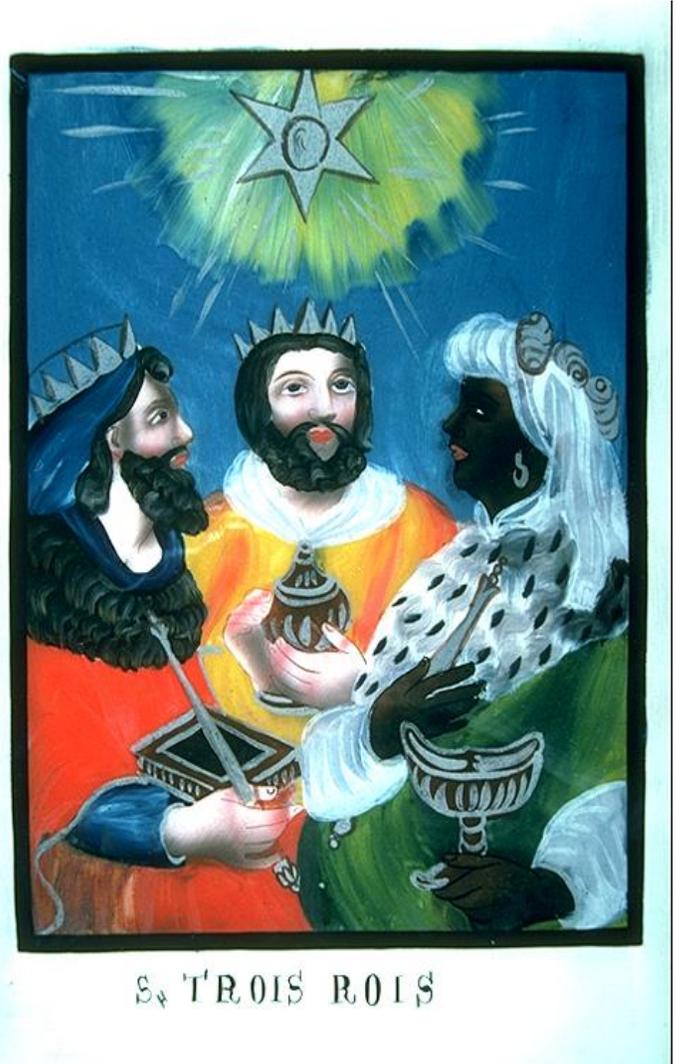
¡Una, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis, siete,
ocho, nueve, diez, once y.....
doce uvas!



A long standing tradition is that as each chime rings out you eat / swallow a whole grape before the next chime peals. The intention being that by the time the final chime rings you have eaten **twelve whole grapes!**



**El roscón
de
los reyes**



¡Feliz día de los Reyes Magos!