

How to Celebrate St. Lucia Day

Explore this Article ■ [Planning a St. Lucia Procession](#) ■ [Throwing a Party](#) ■ [Celebrating at Home](#)
■ [Questions & Answers](#) ■ [Tips and Warnings](#) ■ [References](#)

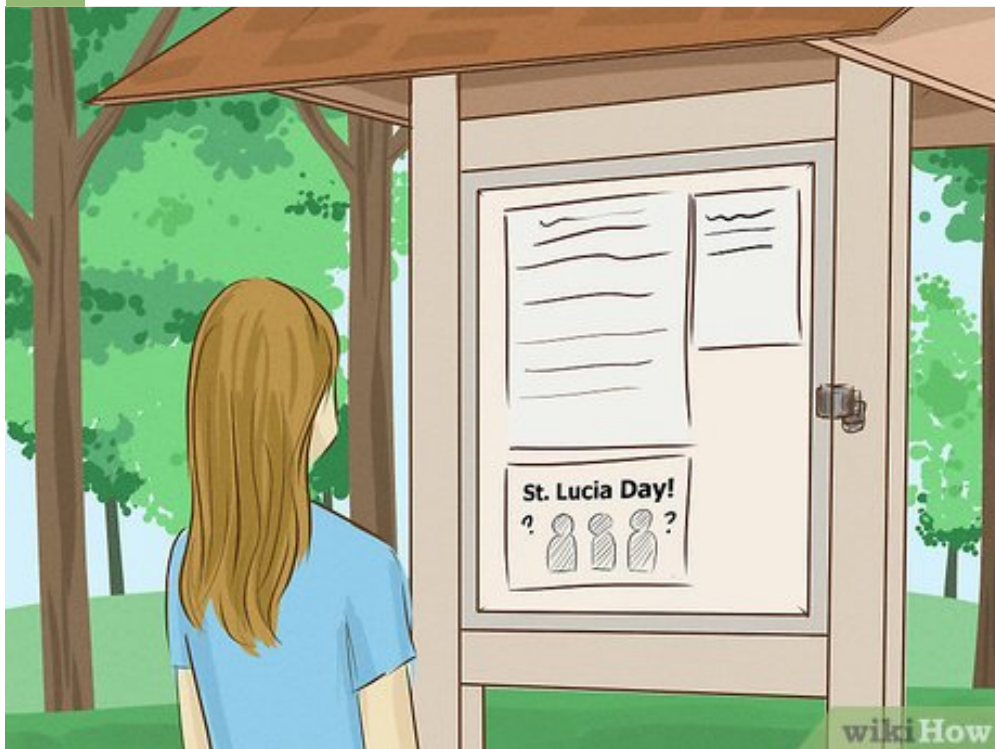
Co-authored by **wikiHow Staff** and **36 contributors**

Last Updated: February 12, 2022

St. Lucia Day is celebrated on December 13th around the world, but it is especially popular in Sweden. The holiday is the feast day of the Catholic St. Lucia, but it originated as a pagan holiday celebrating the winter solstice. Learn to celebrate like the Swedish do by holding a St. Lucia procession, throwing a party, or celebrating St. Lucia Day at home in the traditional Swedish way.

Method 1

Method 1 of 3: Planning a St. Lucia Procession



1 Find your participants. St. Lucia Day processions are traditionally done by children and teenagers. There isn't a required number of participants, but you need at least one older girl to portray St. Lucia. Other girls will be her Maidens, and boys participate as Star Boys. Very young children often participate as elves, gingerbread people, or other mythological creatures.

- If you don't live in Sweden, contact your local Swedish cultural association to ask for volunteers.
- Ask your family and friends!
- You can also try posting a request for volunteers on your local neighborhood message boards.



2 Schedule the procession. The procession should take place on the evening of December 13th, when it's dark enough for the candles to give off lots of light. You can hold the procession indoors or outdoors--some suitable places include parks, churches, Swedish cultural associations, or even your own neighborhood streets.^[1]



3 Buy or make the dresses for Lucia and the Maidens. St. Lucia and her Maidens wear long-sleeved white dresses with a red sash and red stockings. You can buy all of these at most big clothing stores, but you can also sew them yourself.



4 Buy or make the wreath. St. Lucia also wears an evergreen wreath (often called a crown) with seven candles on her head. Premade St. Lucia wreaths are available, but you can also [make one yourself](#).^[2]



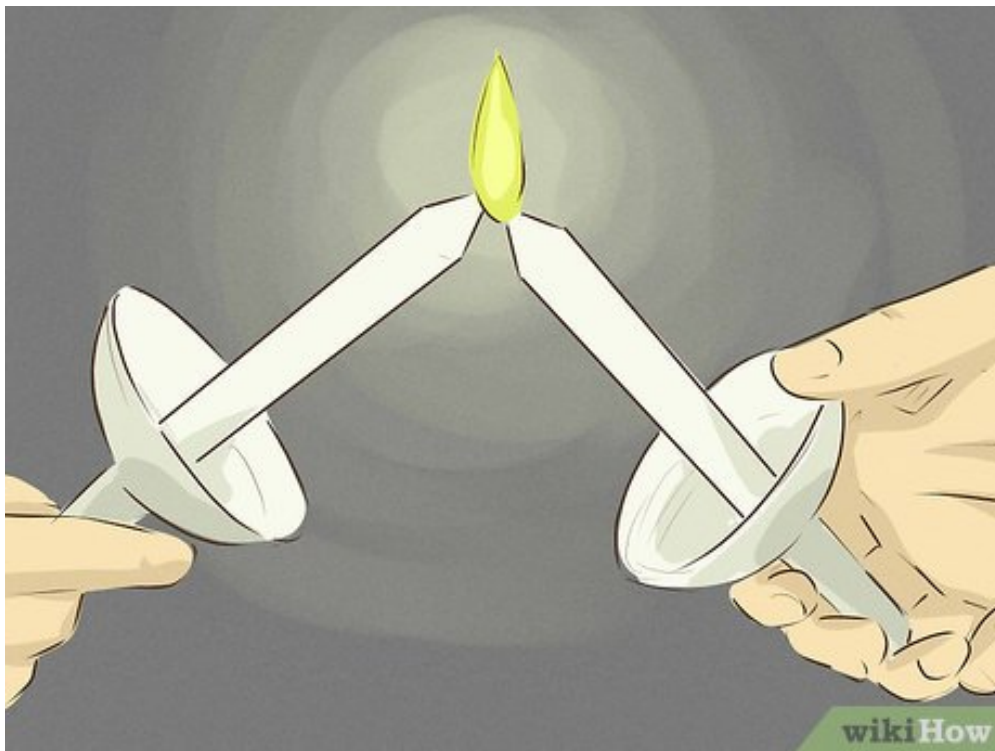
5 Find costumes for the boys. Star Boys wear white robes with a white cone-shaped hat with stars on it--very similar to a wizard's hat. You can easily make the hats out of white posterboard and star cutouts.



- 6 Buy white candles.** You will need one candle for each participant, as well as seven candles for St. Lucia's wreath. Electric candles are recommended for safety.



- 7 Print out song lyrics and music.** Make sure you have printouts of the traditional St. Lucia Day song. This is especially important if you plan to sing it in Swedish but have participants who don't speak the language.



- 8 Turn off the lights and light the candles.** Make sure all the lights in the room or outside are off. Everybody should have their candle on before the procession begins! [3]



- 9 Walk in the procession.** In the actual procession, St. Lucia walks ahead, with the Maidens immediately behind her. The Star Boys and other participants walk behind the Maidens. Traditionally, the procession would go along the entire main street of the town, but nowadays it is much shorter. The procession can be as short as a walk up the main aisle of the church. [4]



10 Sing the Lucia song. After the walk is completed, St. Lucia stands in the center, with the Maidens in a semicircle behind her and the other participants along the sides and back of the semicircle. St. Lucia leads the whole group in singing the St. Lucia Day song, either in Swedish or in translation. You can listen to the Lucia song in Swedish [here](#).^[5]

Method
2

Method 2 of 3: Throwing a Party



1 Choose a time and location. The best time to throw a St. Lucia Day party is immediately after a procession, but if there is no procession in your area, just schedule it for the evening of December 13th. You can host a party in your home, a restaurant, a church, or your local Swedish cultural association--it's up to you and your budget!



2 Invite your guests. If you are outside Sweden, it would be appropriate to invite members of the local Swedish community, especially if they are participating in a local procession. Otherwise, you can simply invite your own family and friends. Since St. Lucia Day is so close to Christmas, it would be a good idea to send out invitations several weeks in advance to be sure people can come.[6]



3 Decorate for the holiday. St. Lucia's colors are red and white, but you could also decorate with the Swedish flag. You can use crepe paper, bunting, and tablecloths in red and white. Most Christmas decorations would also be appropriate for St. Lucia Day, especially decorations with evergreens or candles.[7]



4 Serve traditional Swedish foods. On St. Lucia Day, it's traditional to serve a St. Lucia Crown Cake--usually a round coffee cake with seven candles placed in a circle on it. Adults traditionally drink glögg, a type of mulled wine, and you can serve coffee or lingonberry juice for non-drinkers. You can also serve traditional Swedish foods like meatballs, gingerbread cookies, and buns.[8]



5 Arrange traditional entertainment. If there is a St. Lucia procession in your area, it is traditional for participants to sing St. Lucia Day songs at parties afterwards. If not, you can play recordings of St. Lucia Day songs and other traditional Swedish music.[9]

Method 3 of 3: Celebrating at Home



1 Buy the traditional dress or robe. It's traditional in Swedish families for the oldest girl to dress as St. Lucia and wake her family at dawn on St. Lucia Day. She wears the same dress and wreath as the girl playing St. Lucia in the procession.

- If you don't already have the clothes, make sure you get these items ahead of St. Lucia Day--you'll need them at dawn.
- If there are no daughters in your family, there's no reason why another family member can't stand in as St. Lucia!^[10]



2 Prepare the morning snacks in advance. Swedish families traditionally eat lussekatter on the morning of St. Lucia Day. Lussekatter are cat-shaped saffron buns, but any bun or roll is also suitable. They are eaten with glögg or coffee. Make sure you have the food and drink ready to go before you go to bed!^[11]



3 Wake up your family at dawn. The person playing St. Lucia should wake up the rest of the household at dawn to wish them a happy St. Lucia Day and to serve the traditional morning snack. Dawn represents the arrival of light in the winter darkness, so it's important to get up early on St. Lucia Day.



4 Watch special holiday programs. In Sweden, television stations show big St. Lucia processions and concerts on the morning of St. Lucia Day. If you aren't in Sweden, you can look up videos online to recreate the experience in your own home.^[12]



Community Q&A

Question

What culture or country celebrates St. Lucia Day?



Community Answer

St. Lucia Day is celebrated in Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, etc.), some parts of Italy, Bosnia, Croatia, and St. Lucia (the Caribbean island)

Helpful 18 Not Helpful 0

Question

How is St. Lucia day celebrated in Sweden?



Community Answer

Children do a parade with candles on their heads (only girls) and bring their parents breakfast in bed.

Helpful 17 Not Helpful 0

Question

How many candles do women wear?



Community Answer

The lead girl wears a crown with seven white candles. Everyone else carries one white candle.

Helpful 19 Not Helpful 3

Question

How early should the Saint Lucia wake up?



Community Answer

Early enough for everyone else to still be in bed, so usually around dawn!

Helpful 12 Not Helpful 3

Question

What are best hostess gifts?



Community Answer

Simple things, such as food or flowers or just a simple card would be best. Do not overdo the presents, they should always be kept simple.

Helpful 9 Not Helpful 1

Question

Why are the drawings for St. Lucia day of white people when the natives of the island are black?



Community Answer

Anyone who shares the faith can celebrate the holiday, so why limit it to a certain race? it isn't only exclusive to black people, so why must the pictures be? It is good to have a mix of all the different people who share in the celebration of St. Lucia.

Helpful 22 Not Helpful 37



Warnings

- Be very careful if you plan to use real candles in your procession.

References

1. ↑ <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/12/nyregion/on-st-lucia-s-day-a-festival-celebrates-the-triumph-of-light.html?mcubz=2>
2. ↑ <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/12/nyregion/on-st-lucia-s-day-a-festival-celebrates-the-triumph-of-light.html?mcubz=2>
3. ↑ <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/12/nyregion/on-st-lucia-s-day-a-festival-celebrates-the-triumph-of-light.html?mcubz=2>
4. ↑ <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/12/nyregion/on-st-lucia-s-day-a-festival-celebrates-the-triumph-of-light.html?mcubz=2>
5. ↑ <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/12/nyregion/on-st-lucia-s-day-a-festival-celebrates-the-triumph-of-light.html?mcubz=2>
6. ↑ <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/activities/view.cfm?id=949>
7. ↑ <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/12/nyregion/on-st-lucia-s-day-a-festival-celebrates-the-triumph-of-light.html?mcubz=2>
8. ↑ <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/activities/view.cfm?id=949>
9. ↑ <https://sweden.se/culture-traditions/lucia/>

10. ↑ <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/activities/view.cfm?id=949>
11. ↑ <https://sweden.se/culture-traditions/lucia/>
12. ↑ <https://sweden.se/culture-traditions/lucia/>

About This Article



Co-authored by:
wikiHow Staff
wikiHow Staff Writer

This article was co-authored by **wikiHow Staff**. Our trained team of editors and researchers validate articles for accuracy and comprehensiveness. wikiHow's **Content Management Team** carefully monitors the work from our editorial staff to ensure that each article is backed by trusted research and meets our high quality standards. This article has been viewed 162,225 times.

★★★★☆
50 votes - 70%

Co-authors: **36**

Updated: **February 12, 2022**

Views: **162,225**

Categories: [Featured Articles](#) | [Celebration Events](#)

<https://www.wikihow.com/Celebrate-St.-Lucia-Day>

The text and visual content in this PDF is intended only for your personal, non-commercial use. Any commercial reproduction of the contents of this document without the express written permission of wikiHow, Inc., is prohibited.