

4 seasons:

I want to tell you something about the weather in the Netherlands. Every year there are four seasons: spring, summer, fall and winter. In the winter it is cold, sometimes it also snows. Then we go outside and make a snowman. In the spring it is a bit warmer and leaves are growing back on the trees, animals are born and flowers are growing in the grass. In the summer we can swim outside. Sometimes we sail a boat. In the summer we have a few weeks off from school or work. Then we go on vacation with family or friends. In the fall the weather gets a bit colder. Then the leaves on the trees also change color and they get beautiful colors such as red, yellow and orange.

The Dutch kitchen:

Because we live in the north, our food is not very exotic, but most of all simple and healthy. Something I really like to eat in the winter is Kale. This is a hotchpotch of potato with cabbage. We also often eat smoked sausage here. "Bitterballen" are also well known in the Dutch kitchen. These are small fried meat balls. We often eat these when there is a party. Sometimes we eat small black candies called licorice. It has a distinct taste and you have to love it.

Christmas:

In the Netherlands we celebrate Christmas in the winter. Then it gets dark early in the evening, so around Christmas time we decorate our house with lights and candles. Many people also place a small pine tree in the house and also decorate that with lights, garlands and Christmas balls. We put on nice clothes and go to a special Christmas service. We often eat with family.

Birthdays:

When it is someone's birthday, we celebrate this by decorating the house with garlands. Family and friends come to visit and sing birthday songs, eat a cake and give a present. We congratulate the birthday boy/girl by giving him/her three kisses on both cheeks, we also congratulate all family and friends.

New Year's Eve:

Every year on December the 31st we celebrate New Year's Eve. In the middle of the night, exactly at noon, we light fireworks to celebrate the start of the new year. Everyone in the neighborhood comes outside to watch the fireworks. We wish each other a happy New Year by giving each other three kisses on the cheek. On New Year's Eve and New Year's Day we like to eat an "oliebol". This is a fried ball of dough with raisins.

Ice skating:

In the Netherlands it is winter from December to March. It is then very cold. There are no leaves on the trees anymore. When we go outside we wear a warm coat with a hat and gloves. In the winter it freezes, which means that the temperature is 0 degrees or below 0 degrees. The water of the lakes becomes ice. Sometimes the ice gets so thick that we can

stand on it. When the ice is so thick that we can stand on it, everyone is happy, because that means that we can also skate on the ice. Skates are shoes with iron underneath, so you can glide over the ice very fast. You have many different types of skates. Competitions are also held to see who can skate the fastest.

Mills:

On many pictures about the Netherlands you will see mills. Mills are buildings with blades that are used to grind something or to move water. There are windmills and watermills, they are powered by wind or water. Mills are used for grinding, pressing or stamping grain, sawing wood, pumping water or generating electricity.