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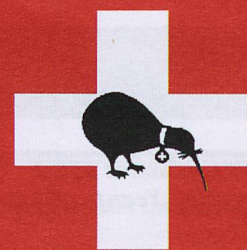
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# HELVETIA



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## Advent – The crafting time begins

### Highlights

- Embassy's Message
- Lifestory Peter Arnold
- 94th Congress OSA
- Swiss Citizenship
- Christmas Craft & Baking
- Cupcake Competition

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Photo: swissvista.com

Advent is a magical time. We Swiss celebrate quite a few traditions that shorten the time until Christmas Eve. The first sign that Christmas is at our door step is the Christmas wreath. We gather fir and winter foliage such as ivy and box to cover a wreath ring made of straw and decorate it either simply with four candles or add bows and decorative objects to give it even a more festive touch.

Traditionally, in many churches, each of the four candles on an Advent wreath has their own meaning. The first Sunday of Advent symbolizes Hope; the second Faith; the third Joy and the fourth Sunday Peace.

The first candle is lit on the first Sunday of Advent, the Sunday four weeks prior to Christmas, followed by the second candle on the second Sunday and so on. In many homes the wreath is placed on a table, and the candles are lit each morning until the last candle is lit on the Sunday before Christmas. Advent calendars as we know them today popped up around 1920. Every day a new door or window is opened between December 1 and 24. Some are simple wall calendars; others are square or round, placed on a table and illuminated with a candle from the inside so that each opened door reveals the scene with a glow to the viewer. Some calendars are more elaborate. Advent is also the time when children write their wish list of gifts they hope to receive .

Source: Wikipedia/www.swissvistas.com



Christmas Market at Einsiedeln Monastery

Photo: swiss-image.ch

The Charming Monastery Town set against the fantastic backdrop of the imposing Benedictine monastery and sprawling along the length of the main street, the Christmas market in Einsiedeln is one of Switzerland's largest. The delightfully decorated market stands, the enchanting Christmas illuminations and the enormous Christmas tree make visitors' eyes shine in wonder. The range on offer is completed by a wide variety of shops and stores full of eye-catching decorations and mouth-watering Christmas Treats.