European Historic Houses

CHRISTMAS THROUGH HISTORIC HOUSES

EHH Christmas Campaign 2026

Participation Guidelines

This Christmas, EHH invites historic house owners across Europe to share the traditions that make their homes, families and regions unique, celebrating the richness of Europe's intangible cultural heritage.

1. Who can participate?

Owners of historic houses across Europe wishing to share a Christmas tradition connected to their property, family or region.

2. What traditions can be featured?

Any Christmas custom with special meaning to you or your historic house, including:

- Festive decorations, works of art and Christmas table settings.
- Traditional dishes and family recipes.
- Religious and regional celebrations.
- Christmas music and songs.
- Family rituals passed down through generations.
- Preparing the house for guests or community celebrations.

All traditions are welcome, whether centuries-old or more recent.

3. What should you submit?

A short story (approximately 200 words)

Describe your tradition, its origins, how it is celebrated and its significance to your house.

Two photographs

- **Photograph 1:** An image of the exterior of your historic house (winter/Christmas theme, if possible).
- **Photograph 2:** An image illustrating your Christmas tradition.

Please submit clear, high-quality photographs suitable for publication.

Basic information

- Name of the historic house.
- Location (town/region and country).
- Social media accounts or websites (if any).

European Historic Houses

4. How will your contribution be featured?

Selected stories and photographs will be featured across EHH's communication channels from **1 to 23 December 2026.**

5. How to participate

Fill out this form by **4 December 2026.**

**By participating, you confirm that you have permission to share the photographs and authorise their use for this campaign.*

Example:

Photograph 1: **Blarney Castle, Ireland**



Photograph 2: **Christmas Eve Candle**



Short Story: **A Light in the Window: An Irish Christmas Tradition**

Every Christmas Eve, we continue the Irish tradition of placing a candle in the window of our home. On 24 December, the candle is lit at dusk, marking a custom that has been observed in Irish households for generations.

The tradition is commonly associated with the story of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter on the night of Christ's birth. In Ireland, it also carries religious significance, with one account linking the candle to the practice of welcoming Catholic priests into homes during periods of religious persecution.

The custom offers a tangible connection to Ireland's domestic and cultural heritage. The candle represents hospitality; a value long associated with Irish homes and remains a simple way of keeping an established tradition alive.

While its meaning may vary from household to household, the Christmas Eve candle continues to be a familiar sight in Ireland, bringing a distinctive touch to the festive season and reflecting the enduring place of traditional customs in Irish home life.