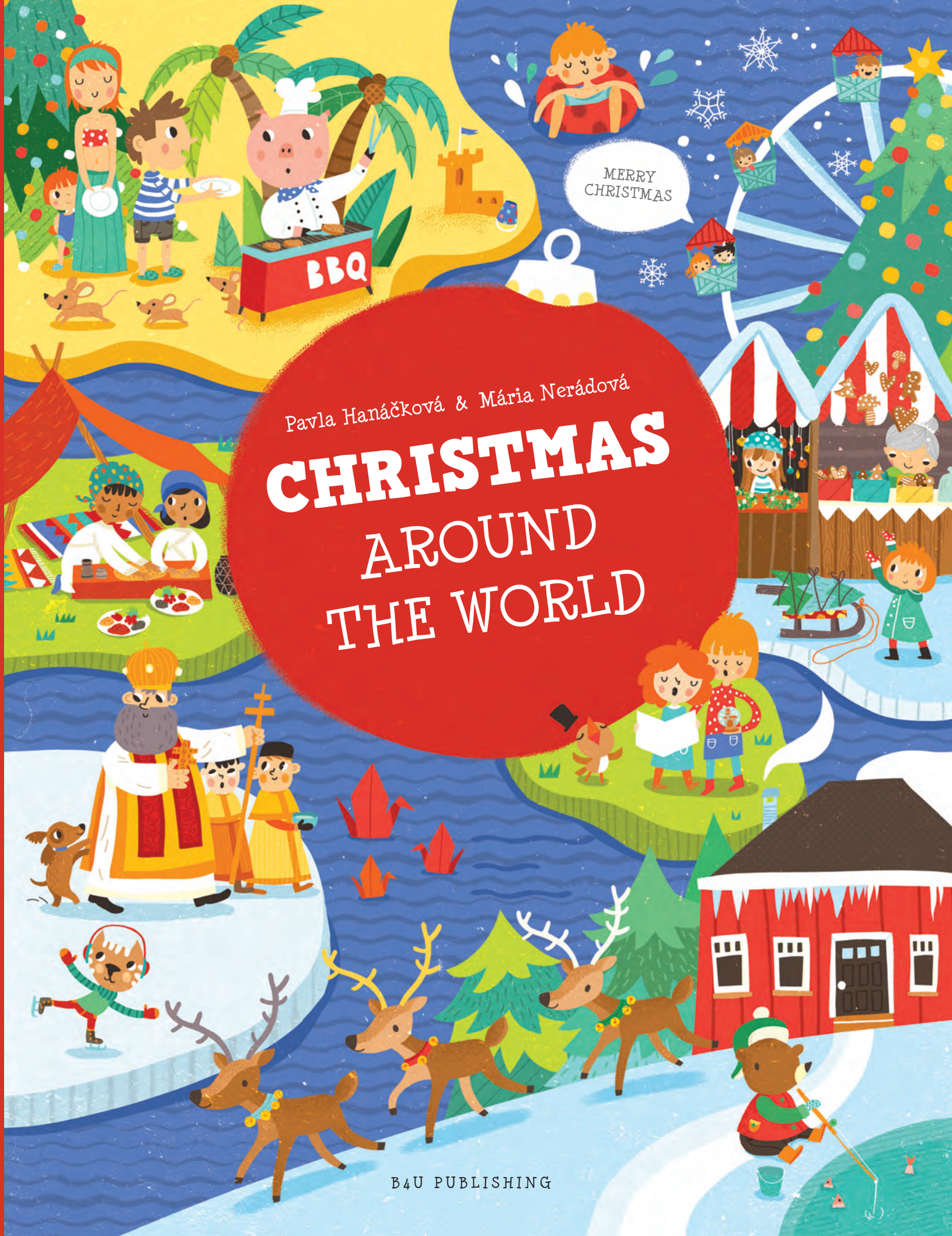


Pavla Hanáčková & Mária Nerádová

# CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD





# Christmas in Spain

In Spain someone gets a huge present just before Christmas every year – the grand lottery draw takes place on 22 December! On Christmas Eve – known as Nochebuena – the whole family meets for a large dinner, which is a real feast that includes seafood or meat and lots of sweet things, too. Christmas is considered to be a time for family, and children have to wait for their presents until Epiphany (6 January). So that they aren't sorry for their long wait, **Papá Noel** (a Santa Claus

figure) leaves them a few small presents under the tree, and they open these the following morning. After dinner it is common for people to visit their friends to wish them a happy Christmas. Every home has a Christmas tree and a nativity scene. In Catalonia el caganer is added to the nativity scene. This special figure is of a boy apparently emptying his bowels – symbolizing good fortune and a good harvest! Catalanian homes also have a yule log on display.





# Christmas in Germany



**I**t is unthinkable that a German family should celebrate Christmas without a Christmas tree. Originally this was decorated mainly with apples, nuts and dried fruit. Every home also has an Advent wreath and an Advent calendar, on which children count off the days until Christmas. Christmas markets are held in practically every German

town. Here people can buy Stollen sweet bread, gingerbread and hot punch, and there are fairground rides and figures of the Nutcracker. Christmas is celebrated on 24 December, when a traditional dinner is followed by the bringing of gifts by the **Christkind** (in the south of the country) and the **Weihnachtsmann** (in the north).



# Christmas in Venezuela

Venezuelan Christmas is filled with colour, music and fun. People leave their homes before dawn to attend mass. Car-driving is forbidden, so people travel to mass on roller skates! The sound of Christmas carols hangs in the air, and everything is beautifully illuminated by fireworks. Whoever fears that he might oversleep ties one end of a length of string to his big toe and dangles the other from his window. Passing skaters can give this a tug to wake the sleeper. On the evening of 24 December another great mass is celebrated and after families they sit down at a sumptuously laid table to give thanks for an exceptional evening.

Presents are brought by **El Niño Jesus**, at midnight. They are unwrapped under the tree on 25 December.



## Typical foods include:

Baked ham  
pan de jamón (a savoury roll with ham and olives)  
hallaca (corn-based dough with a filling, wrapped in a banana leaf). Dessert: dulce de lechoza (sweet dessert made of papaya)



Some homes have a decorated Christmas tree, although small **nativity scenes** – known as pesebres – are more typical.





We also have a lot of fun, because  
we play a game called ganna,  
similar to field hockey!

In Venezuela, we skate  
through the streets!

In Russia, we don't  
celebrate Christmas  
until 7 January!



Did you know that in Australia you  
can spend Christmas Day on the  
beach? And you won't be cold!

Home sweet home...  
We love our gingerbread!



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