

Tree Talk

Why Do We Display Christmas Trees?

It is believed that as far back as ancient times and well before Christianity, plants that remained green all year long were special and represented happiness, health, and everlasting life. Ancient people hung evergreen boughs in their homes and over doors and windows for many of these same reasons.

It wasn't until the 1500s that people in Germany brought evergreen Christmas trees into their homes to be decorated and represent the living Christmas spirit. Balsam fir was the tree of choice back then and still is heavily used today. The fir brings with it a pleasant aroma of the forest along with good form and needle retention.

Christmas trees in America didn't catch on until the early 1800s. Most found this kind of decoration strange or even pagan. The first record of a tree being displayed was by some German settlers in Pennsylvania in the 1830s. By the late 1840s the idea of displaying a Christmas tree in American homes had finally caught on.

Decorating Christmas trees in the early 1800s consisted of using fruits, nuts and cookies. Decorating the tree with lights began around 1917 from the idea of Albert Sadacca and grew into a multi-million dollar business. From all of this, Christmas trees are now found decorated in parks, town squares, and homes, and they have become an American tradition.

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