

Real Christmas Tree Traditions & Myths

Celebrating the holiday season with a Real Christmas Tree is a long-standing tradition. Each year, millions of American families celebrate the holiday season with a fresh, farm-grown Christmas Tree. Christmas Tree enthusiasts believe the aroma of a Real Christmas Tree is a strong reminder and symbol of life, family traditions and the innocence of childhood itself. Much like other crops provide food for the body, the aroma of a farm-grown Christmas Tree provides food for the soul.

The use of evergreens as a symbol and celebration of life during Winter Solstice celebrations started in ancient Roman and Egyptian times. This practice evolved over the centuries to be incorporated in the celebration of Christmas in the Germanic areas of Europe.

The first recorded display of a decorated Christmas Tree was in 1510, in Riga, Latvia. Christmas Trees were decorated with fruit, cookies and candy that would later be shared among family members as gifts after the Holiday Season was over.

Now in the 21st century, the tradition of families choosing their centerpiece of holiday celebrations has become generational, inheritable and transferable. Many tree farmers and retailers across America witness this phenomena firsthand each year.

Along with legends and traditions, many myths about the Real Christmas Tree have become as attached as the stars on the top. One such myth is that all Real Christmas Trees come from pristine forests and therefore it is shameful to use a Real Tree instead of an artificial one. Of course, this is only myth... 98% of all Real Christmas Trees used each year are grown on farms as sustainable crops, just like corn or pumpkins.

Another myth is that Real Christmas Trees are a fire hazard. How many times have we all seen the burning tree on the local action news? In fact, based on stats compiled by the National Fire Protection Association, fewer than one-one thousandth of a percent (0.001%) of all Real Christmas Trees used each year are involved in a fire. With proper care, Real Christmas Trees can maintain their freshness and moisture content throughout the holiday season.

Many people also complain that a Real Tree bothers their allergies. While its quite possible that a person may be allergic to tree pollen or even tree sap, its not as widespread as many believe. Judy Tidwell, on About.com reports that during the holidays, there "are many allergens that can cause reactions, although the Christmas Tree often takes the blame. The main culprits include mold, dust and food."

A Real Tree itself is unlikely to produce pollen during December, but being outdoors for years in the field, it can collect pollens, dust, mold or other allergens. Of course, so can the artificial tree stored in the attic or basement.

Compiled by the National Christmas Tree Association www.realchristmastrees.org