



*Gaspari Print - Holy Week Procession
Families carrying Zegen Baskets*

Easter is undoubtedly the most important religious holiday within the Slovenian culture. Slovenian families on Palm Sunday would prepare a “butara” (an arrangement of greenery and ribbons) reminiscent of palms and carried by children to church where they were blessed by the priest. On Holy Saturday, day before Easter Sunday, families would prepare a “Zegen” basket consisting of such items as potica, ham, dyed eggs, and horseradish(each item having religious symbolism) and was carried to the church to be blessed. The family would then share the contents at breakfast on Easter Sunday.



St. Nicholas Leading Children

Winter (in Slovenian “Zima”) celebrations began on St. Nicholas Day “Sveti Miklavž” December 6th. The custom was that St. Nicholas would be accompanied by devils that would reprimand bad children. He passed out gifts of candles and fruit to good children. On Christmas Eve the family would gather around the nativity set to pray. Each room was then blessed with holy water and then the family attended Midnight Mass.

THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL HOME

Following WWII and the migration of native Slovenians to countries like Canada, Argentina, Australia and the United States, SLOVENIAN HOMES were built as cultural meeting places within Slovenian communities. These community centers fostered drama, song and socialization for Slovenian families. Moreover, some Slovenian population centers such as Cleveland, Milwaukee and Chicago had their own schools and churches which helped to bridge the cultural gap of Slovenian Americans.

Hopefully future generations of Slovenian Americans will continue to identify with these symbols of shared identity and be able to say that their lives have been shaped through this legacy of a rich Slovenian culture.



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
WWW.TWINCITIESSLOVENIANS.COM

CHILDREN, OUR PAST, AND OUR FUTURE



Kurentovanje Parade

The Slovenes today share a common culture characterized by its language, its cuisine, its music, and its traditions within their celebrations and holidays. Children are an important part of these traditions and celebrations as they carry the culture forward into the next generation.



Child-led Easter Procession

Maxim Gaspari, a Slovenian folk artist, popularized the culture through “postcard art” over the centuries. Whether the subject was national costumes, traditional holidays (Christmas, Easter) or a simple depiction of rural life, Gaspari presented these themes in “folkloric uniqueness” for generations to come.



Slovenian Classroom

The Slovenian language has kept the nation alive and united it as a culture over centuries of domination and brutality. In fact more than 70% of Slovenes speak 3 languages or more. Slovenian like English is an Indo-European language. Slovenian-American children would recognize such phrases as “lahko noč” (good night), “kam greš”(where are you going), or “gremo domo” (we’re going home).



Ron Setniker Family - Generations of Tradition

Slovenian style music especially folk music featuring the polka and the waltz have been a part of just about every Slovenian family. The diatonic accordion, “the button box” was a visible icon to many Slovenian families.

Matt Tribar, Lojze Slak, and Frankie Yankovic were household names in Slovenian music. Jokingly, as a Slovenian American teenager you would know the words of “moja dekle” (My Girlfriend) or repeat the refrain “Češčena si Marija” at a Slovenian funeral.



Traditional Slovenian Cuisine

Cuisine defines a culture and is based on tradition, geography, landscape and societal norms. Growing up in a Slovenian family meant eating how grandma cooked and to preserve this cooking tradition, Slovenian cookbooks tended to be passed from one generation to the next. Children grew up developing a taste for “kranjska klobasa”(Slovenian sausage), “krompir” (potatoes), “štruklji (dumplings) or “krvovica”(rice sausage) just to name some common Slovenian dishes.



Ben and Sam love Potica

The signature dessert that has been identified with the Slovenian culture is “potica” (po teet sa) a based walnut roll filled with a variety of savory fillings such as honey, walnuts, cheese and raisins.



Happy Children at Kurentovanje

Slovenian celebrations, festivals and traditional religious holidays (Easter, Christmas) have had a strong influence on succeeding generations of Slovenian families. Pictured above are children participating in what Slovenians call “Kurentovanje” (koo ran tow von ye), a rite of spring and fertility which marks the beginning of Shrovetide (lent) with an extravagant parade of adults and children dressed in elaborate masks. The central figure of the carnival, the Kurent, is believed to chase away winter and with its supernatural powers usher in spring.