



Lights in the Heights

Some neighborhoods in the United States like to share the holidays with their neighbors and friends by creating a Christmas festival. My neighborhood in Houston is called the Heights, because it was built on the highest elevation in town (which is not very high because Houston is very flat.) Each year, the Heights hosts a celebration called “Lights in the Heights.” Neighbors begin early in December putting up lights to decorate their houses and baking cookies.

On December 8, all houses turn on their lights and put their cookies on the sidewalk to offer passers-by. The entire neighborhood celebrates by walking from house to house looking at lights. Many homeowners invite local entertainers to play music from their porch or put on a small show. Events have included jazz concerts, ballets, and choirs.

At the end of the night, there is a parade that marches down every street. Residents create floats that can look like Santa’s sleigh or other Christmas icons, and they offer candies and hot cider to spectators.



My family does not participate in many Christmas traditions, but this is one that we can’t resist!

Also, because Texas is so close to Mexico, Texans incorporate many Mexican traditions into their Christmas celebrations. For example, my family eats Tamales for dinner every Christmas eve. A tamale is made with steamed corn meal, and is filled with meat, cheese, or vegetables. It is then wrapped in a

husk of corn before it is cooked. Tamales are eaten usually with salsa or mole. I’m glad I could share a little of a Houston Christmas with you. To learn more about the history of Tamales how to cook them, check out this link: www.sonofthesouth.net/tamales/.

