



# BACK IN TIME

*Polish festivals and traditions*

## A quick guide to Polish St. Andrew's Day (Polish Andrzejki) future predicting customs



At the weekend which is the closest to 29th of November, in Poland there are St. Andrew's parties. You will not only dance or drink there, but also you will have your future foretold.

*Predictions of the future using wax* – the most well-known divination technique based on pouring wax. You have to melt wax and then pour into cold water. It is not so easy, because the wax must go through the hole in a key. At the end you take the wax figure (or something you just created) and look at the shadow of it, as it is a prophecy for the next year.



*Shoes race* – everyone in a group take off their shoes. Your next task is to go to the furthest wall from the doors and by putting one shoe at a time in front of each other in the direction of the door. The first shoe which crosses the doorstep belongs to the person who will soon change their marital status.





# Śmigus-Dyngus, Easter Monday in Poland

In Poland, Easter Monday is known as Wet Easter Monday or Lany Poniedziałek and is celebrated as Śmigus-Dyngus Day.

It is a tradition in which people use bucket pails or water guns to soak each other with water.

This is a wonderful day of fun. It was traditionally the day when boys tried to drench girls buckets of water. The more a girl is sprayed with water, the higher her chances are that she will get married.

There is conflicting information as to the origin of this tradition. Some say it was a pagan ritual and that the pouring of water symbolized springtime to cleanse and purify. There are others who think that Dyngus represented renewal of the sacrament of baptism after Christ had risen. Another theory suggests that Wet Monday is connected with Polish ruler Prince Mieszko I who was baptized in 966 on Easter Monday.



## Blessing of the Easter Food Baskets



In Poland the blessing of the baskets is known as *święcenie pokarmów wielkanocnych*, a practice dating to the 15th century or earlier, and one which is still maintained by most families in Poland on Holy Saturday.

The basket is traditionally lined with a white linen or lace napkin and decorated with sprigs of boxwood, the typical Easter evergreen. Inside the basket there are: eggs, sausage, bread, lamb, horseradish, salt and pepper.

