

MODULE 1 – LISTENING TASK

Jan: How many Christmases did you spend in Poland?

Riya: I've spent two Christmases in Poland. This is going to be my third.

Jan: Oh, so you're not staying here for Christmas?

Riya: No, I'm going to spend it in Poland this year as well. Actually, I have a flight in the evening.

Jan: So what is your favourite Christmas tradition in Poland?

Riya: Well, what I like about Christmas there is that all people get excited about meeting their family and they spend very quality time with their family at their family homes. Whenever I talk to any Polish person about Christmas, they are always very excited about meeting their close and extended family.

Jan: That's true... But also get very excited when it comes to food. What is your favourite Christmas dish?

Riya: I have two of them! The first being the sweet creamy mushroom soup. I think it's called creamy mushroom soup. The second one is pierogi. Oh, and wait. I also really like the beetroot soup with dumplings.

Jan: My daughter told me that you used to live in Wrocław?

Riya: Yes, that's true.

Jan: I'm also from Wrocław! What do you like in Wrocław during Christmas?

Riya: Oh, I love the beautiful decorations around the city and I like how the Old Market Square is decorated. But not only the Square... different parts of the city are also decorated with lights. They are all so colourful... and during this time of winter, when everything is so cold and a little bit monotonous, suddenly there are these lights around and they are glittering and glowing. This gives a lot of positivity in the atmosphere.

Jan: How is Christmas here different from celebrations in your country?

Riya: I'm from India and India is a secular country, which means that the people are free to follow the religion of their choice and all religions are treated equally, so there is no official religion in India. Therefore, we get a very good chance to know and celebrate the festivals of different religions. We celebrate Christmas in a similar manner as we celebrate the festivals of Hinduism, Islam, or Buddhism. Christmas is the main Christian festival, we all celebrate it greatly.

Jan: So how is the celebration like?

Riya: We decorate our houses with Christmas trees, we put the lights and the stars. We bake and we have a holiday at that day so everyone is at home with their family. We also go to churches because they are beautifully decorated.

Jan: Oh! So it sounds a lot like in Poland.

Riya: I don't think that there is much of a difference between Christmas celebration in India actually. In India, we also have decorations in shop windows, we have Christmas discounts everywhere. All the main places in the cities are decorated in a similar manner as in Poland. The main difference is that in Poland almost everyone is Catholic so this is the main holiday for Polish people. There is a stronger feeling of festivity in Poland at this time of the year. Still, I wouldn't say that there is much of a difference.

Jan: Wow, you're a non-Catholic and you still celebrate Christmas?

Riya: Why not? We have Christmas celebrations in school. In the morning children gather and they enact the birth of baby Jesus, you know, like the whole scenario with Mother Mary, Joseph, angels, and saints. Then, every class has a Christmas party and maybe some teacher in the school dresses as Santa and gives sweets to children. The whole day is celebrated very enthusiastically. We have Christmas parties at work and at home with friends. We have music, dances... So, it's not that different!