



# The Krampus



- The Krampus is probably the most popular and polarising tradition in Austria
- It is a very old mythical tradition in the middle of the alps including East-Croatia, Upper-Italy (South Tyrolia), Switzerland and Bavaria in Germany. But the „true home“ of the Krampus is Austria.
- The Krampus is so old that nobody knows exactly how old it is. It goes far back into the dark middleage of the church where everybody was believing in bad ghosts, myths and legends.



- Before the people became Christians the Krampus was part of another tradition called „Perchten“ which should defend the bad ghosts and exorcises the dark cold winter. You can compare it a little bit with the Carneval..





- With the Christianisation the „Prechten“ have been forbidden for a long time but the Church changed their mind and started “catechetical Games” to represent the fundamental idea of the Christians – God believes in the good of you and it’s never too late to return to the right way.
- The Saint Nicholas and the Krampus are born.



# Saint Nicholas

The Saint Nicholas was a Bishop in Myra, Turkey. He is the patron of the sailors and children. The legend says that he gave 3 golden apples to three poor girls and he saved the sailor's life in a very stormy night on the sea.

Saint Nicholas is the „big boss“ of a Krampusgroup and he is a kind of a judge. With his great book he knows all the good and bad things which the children have done.

For the children it's always a very special moment when Saint Nicholas enters the room with a beautiful angel and his faithful servant who carries all the good sweets, apples and nuts in his huge basket.





# The Krampus

The Krampus plays the „dark part“ of this game. He is not really the devil but obviously he comes from hell. His home is high up in the mountains of the alps. Most important thing to know the Krampus is just a kind of servant. So nothing happen without the command of St. Nicholas.

Basicly the Krampus runs around screaming, making a loud noise with his bells to scare the bad ghosts and playing tricks on the people. It's really funny to ruffle up the hairs of the „beautiful“ girls. He has also a horsetail and/or a birch-rod to hit people but not in a painful way. This part has a real old histroy which says you will get a lot of children very easy.

The Krampus is a threat and a reminder of God what will happen if you don't regret you bad actions → you will turn to the Krampus...



# The Krampus-Event

All the Krampus Events are around the 6th of December and nearly every single village in Austria has one. There are a few big ones with thousands of spectators . Most of the time the people meet at a huge place where all the different groups perform their show with a short story, firework and music.

Although people get scared by the Krampus they really like it bc you meet your friends and it's quite spectacular. Especially for the small „strong“ boys it's a test of courage to protect the girls of the Krampus. You can say it's a huge game for everyone. For young little children not to be afraid to touch the krampus or to get back their hat which he has stolen, for the girls, which are the favourite aim of the Krampus, for the boys, which are trying to be strong enough not get pulled down to the floor, for the older one, which are trying to find who's that under the masks, for the families, to get some sweets of St. Nicholas, every man is trying to get the phone number of the girls who are playing the angels and so on. It's a huge event were everybody is coming together, enjoying themselves and want to take a photograph with the Krampus .

See some impressions on the following pages...











# The Krampus Mask

- Carved out of „soft“ wood (easy to carve)
  - Wymouth pine, cherry, lime tree,...
- No limits of creativity
  - from human faces to monsters from a horror movie
- very traditional masks have horns of goats and/or rams
  - But we use all different kinds of horns as long it looks good
- Coloured with wood stain and varnish paint
- Weight and price depends on how many horns and „other stuff“
  - 3kg -15kg/ > £200







1



2



3

## ***How to do a Krampusmask***

You just carve away which doesn't look like a Krampus. Easy right? ;)

7 →

4



5



6







A  
B

Handwritten text on a wooden plaque, possibly a name or date.





# Other equipment...



For children the most important thing – the huge basket full with sweeties!

The top of St. Nicholas's scepter...



# 2 different ways of Krampus-Groups...



Groups who choose the more old and traditional way. Bigger Masks are heavier bc more horns from goats and rams. Krampus wears skins from goats and sheeps and is looking more massive. Whole equipment can have up to 30kg.

Groups who choose a more modern variation of the Krampus. Masks are quite lighter and smaller and have „non-european“ horns as well. They wear more latexbodies than an overall of goatskins. These groups are looking more human and usually they prefer to use more pyrotechnical effects.







In the end you just can say to be in Krampus-Group does mean a lot of fun with your friends and it never gets boring. You do lot of various thing over the year like organising a small event in summer to make some money to sponsor your group, thinking about a new performance, working on your equipment or just hanging out. But make your own impression and visit Austria at the 6. December!!





# And some videos..

- A very traditional performance in a small restaurant
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7ddgBNFOPg>
- Our video of the year 2011 with some carving impressions
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAu796-BFrI>
- For more videos check out youtube for „Trigua Pass“, „Krampus“, „Nikolaus“ and so on.....