**Christmas in China  **

1)In China, only about one percent of people are Christians, so most people only know a few things about Christmas. Because of this, Christmas is only often celebrated in major cities. In these big cities there are Christmas trees, lights and other decorations on the streets and in department stores. Santa Claus is called 'Shen Dan Lao Ren' and has grottos in shops like in Europe and America.

2)In Chinese Happy/Merry Christmas is 'Sheng Dan Kuai Le or 圣诞快乐' in Mandarin and 'Seng Dan Fai Lok or 聖誕快樂' in Cantonese.

3)In China, Santa is known as 'Sheng dan lao ren' (Traditional: 聖誕老人, Simplified: 圣诞老人; means Old Christmas Man).

4)Only a few people have a Christmas Tree (or celebrate Christmas at all!). If people do have a tree it is normally a plastic one and might be decorated with paper chains, paper flowers, and paper lanterns (they might also call it a tree of light). The Christmas Trees that most people would see would be in shopping malls!

5)Christmas isn't that widely celebrated in the rural areas of China, but it's becoming more well-known.

6)The strange thing is that most of the world's plastic Christmas Trees and Christmas decorations are made in China, but the people making them might not know what they are for!

7)A tradition that's becoming popular, on Christmas Eve, is giving apples. Many stores have apples wrapped up in colored paper for sale. People give apples on Christmas Eve because in Chinese Christmas Eve is called "Ping'an Ye" (平安夜), meaning peaceful or quiet evening, which has been translated from the carol ‘Silent Night’. The word for apple in Mandarin is "píngguǒ" (苹果) which sounds like the word for peace.

8)Some people go Carol singing, although not many people understand them or know about the Christmas Story. Jingle Bells is a popular Carol in China!

9)People who are Christians in China go to special services. Going to Midnight Mass services has become very popular.