

# Mums & Tots of Warsaw



**December/January 2009**

[www.MUMSANDTOTS.com](http://www.MUMSANDTOTS.com)

## ★ News and Reminders ★

Don't Forget the Children's Christmas party this **Friday, Dec 4th** at Hula Kula 9:30–11:30a! (pg 11)

Special Holiday Mums Night Out next **Friday, Dec 11th** at 8p at Qwai Restaurant. (pg 8)

It's not too late to become Santa for M&T charities (pg 9)

Congratulations Mums for raising a record 3853PLN at the M&T Christmas Bazaar!

## Celebrating the holidays in Poland

The Christmas holiday in Poland is a very important one, rich with many traditions and religious customs and quickly disappearing rural folklore. Newcomers to Poland can check out pages 6 - 7 for a look at how a traditional Polish Christmas is celebrated, traditional recipes and essential Polish vocab for the holidays.

### Mums and Tots 2009 M&T Newsletter Team:

General Editor: Rebekah Sundin [rsundin@gmail.com](mailto:rsundin@gmail.com)

General Editor: Marta Troicki [martaj@troicki.com](mailto:martaj@troicki.com)

Food Editor: Lisa James [lisajamesdesign@yahoo.com](mailto:lisajamesdesign@yahoo.com)

Events Editor: Diane Gates [diane\\_gates@hotmail.com](mailto:diane_gates@hotmail.com)

*We look forward to hearing from you!*

## Highlight of Events

Pregnant & New Mums  
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# Monthly Pregnancy / New Mum Tips

*“In Poland you are better to pick the hospital you’d rather give birth at and find a good doctor at that hospital rather than the inverse.” Ambra Dickie*

## Recommended doctors and midwives.

Dr. Niemoczynski (tel: 602211785) He works with the Mother and Child Institute (public Polish Obstetrics hospital with a good reputation, although very “Polish”) and at Damiana. ([www.niemoczynski.pl](http://www.niemoczynski.pl)) Rec. by Ambra Dickie

Maria Romanowska (tel: 501025322) Midwife, works for St. Sophia and she speaks French and English. She offers:supervision of pregnant women (instead of a doctor, if you want, but she cannot do the ultrasound); delivery in her birth giving center (some medical facilities, but not a clinic);and delivery in the Sw. Zofia hospital on ulica Zelazna. Rec. by Ambra Dickie and Lili Reyels

Dr. Wojciech Puzyna (tel: 668 052144) Director of Sw. Zofia, you are treated particularly well as one of his patients. Rec. by Ambra Dickie

Dr. Ewa Jagiełło (tel. (22) 654-24-64, 600-403-017), Great gynecologist, works for Sw. Zofia. Rec. by Emanuela Bove

Dr. Robert Makowski (tel:502-551-404) One of the best USG doctors in Warsaw. Rec. by Emanuela Bove

Andrzej Raczynski -fantastic doctor, speaks very good English. He works in 2 clinics - Individual Medical Care (IMC) at Damiana (22) 566-2271)and Junona Clinic (Grzybowska 2, (22) 330-9000). You can go and see Dr Raczynski there and he can arrange delivery at Damiana Hospital. Rec. by Miranda Barker

Dr.Ewa Barch – Gynecologist, she is great and speaks very good English, works for Medicover. Rec. by Paula de la Rua

Malgorzata Berndt - ul. Madalinskiego 67B, 02-549 Warszawa, (tel: 022 849 47 55) Gynecologist and Endocrinolog. She has a fully equipped office. She speaks very good English and even good German. Rec. by Elisabeth Rosak

## Pre-natal Classes

There is also a popular pre-natal class offered by the midwives from that hospital (although you don’t have to give birth at Sw. Zofia to take the classes). The contact for those is Magda Witkiewicz (tel. 0603404799). Rec. by Ambra Dickie

## Lactation specialists

Bonamater,(tel. 500 003 698) Unfortunately the web site is only in Polish, however the lactation specialists are all certified outside of Poland so there is a good chance that they speak other language than Polish. (bonamater.waw.pl) Rec. by Emanuela Bove

## Infertility doctor

Invimed - 22-856-5656;Dr Tomasz Rokicki (tel. 608-373-700) He speaks English and is to the point. My husband and I went through several years of trials and errors and experienced some different clinics and docs... this was definitely the best. Rec by Magdalena Garnarcz

## Web-site of the month:

<http://www.babycentre.co.uk/>

or

<http://www.babycenter.com/>

# Monthly Pregnancy / New Mum Tips (cont'd)

## Popular Hospitals in Warsaw

**Sw. Zofia (St. Sophia)** is a public/private hospital - clean, modern with private labor and recovery rooms. They prefer natural birth and while they won't push you to give birth without drugs, they are very happy to accommodate that wish, with water births, etc. and c-sections are done with hesitancy. In this hospital you work with a midwife, but you can also have a doctor attend your delivery.

**Damiana** is a private hospital that tends to push c-sections—for planning purposes—however women give natural births there also. It is otherwise the hospital I have yet to hear a bad experience about, with English-speaking staff. However, Damiana does not have an NICU and will not accept births before 38 weeks as a general rule.

**Medicover Hospital** in Wilanów is a private hospital that opened up recently, from what I have heard you get better treatment there than in Damiana. The Department of Women's Health, including Gynecology and Pathology of Pregnancy, specializes in comprehensive, fully coordinated treatment of women. The most important rule governing the activity of the Department is a team-based approach to the patient and her problems with the involvement of many specialists. If any of you mums stayed in this hospital and can review it for us please contact me at [martaj@troicki.com](mailto:martaj@troicki.com).

*If any of you mums delivered your babies in other hospitals (or the medicover) and would like to recommend or comment on them please contact me at [martaj@troicki.com](mailto:martaj@troicki.com).*

*Due to limited space in our newsletter and good amount of information that I have received from you mums (THANK YOU TO ALL) we need to split the doctor list into two issues. Next month I will supply you with information on dentists, pediatricians, and etc. I will also include a birth story, and from January on we will include one birth story a month in each newsletter. :)*

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## TOUCH

(contributed by Donatella Solda- Kutzmann)

*In the uterus, the touch is the first sense, which is apparent to the fetus. From the fourth month on the amniotic fluid, in which it bathes, allows it to receive tactile sensations. Skin messages are the first transmitted information.*

### The touch - an essential function.

The touch is the primary means of child's communication with the outside world: the skin is the largest sensory organ and it provides very strong stimulation to the child. So from birth the baby may through his sense of touch:

- be informed about the temperature, texture, and the environment around,
- establishes contacts with the people around him,
- expresses its needs to touch and need to be touched.

**Physical contact**, caresses and baby massages bring to the child emotional and physiological reactions that soothe and promote its growth and welfare. Contact with skin and heat are very strong stimuli, sufficient for him to stop crying.

### How to develop the sense of touch?

Even if the baby is already well developed at birth, the child may through you learn more by touching and being touched, with small daily habits:

- After a bath, put the naked baby on your chest (skin to skin) and put a warm towel (previously hung on the radiator) on his back;
- remember to wrap it in soft materials (Baize) and avoid towels which are rough, wet and cold;
- massage your child following baby massages techniques;
- let the baby bring objects to its mouth (not dangerous). This is the first way for him to remember shapes and textures;
- as soon as the baby starts walking, create for him/her a "sensation route" by placing on the ground: a fur, some plastic, a mat, a sandbox, and two of cold water and warm water.

[http://www.123boutchou.com/evolution\\_toucher\\_e\\_nfant.html](http://www.123boutchou.com/evolution_toucher_e_nfant.html)

# Tips and Recommendations from YOU

## Preventing Swine Flu

(contributed by Marie-Claude Fahrenholz)

*Dr. Vinay Goyal is an MBBS,DRM,DNB (Intensivist and Thyroid specialist) having clinical experience of over 20 years. He has worked in institutions like Hinduja Hospital, Bombay Hospital , Saifee Hospital , Tata Memorial etc. Presently, he is heading the Nuclear Medicine Department and Thyroid clinic at Riddhivinayak Cardiac and Critical Centre, Malad (W), Canada.*

The following message given by him about the swine flu (and all flu for that matter), makes a lot of sense and is important for all to know. While you are still healthy and not showing any symptoms of H1N1 infection, in order to prevent proliferation, aggravation of symptoms and development of secondary infections, some very simple steps, not fully highlighted in most official communications, can be practiced (instead of focusing on how to stock N95 or Tamiflu):

1. Frequent hand-washing (well highlighted in all official communications).
2. "Hands-off-the-face" approach. Resist all temptations to touch any part of face (unless you want to eat, bathe or slap).
3. Gargle twice a day with warm salt water (use Listerine if you don't trust salt). H1N1 takes 2-3 days after initial infection in the throat/nasal cavity to proliferate and show characteristic symptoms. Simple gargling prevents proliferation. In a way, gargling with salt water has the same effect on a healthy individual that Tamiflu has on an infected one. Don't underestimate this simple, inexpensive and powerful preventative method.
4. Similar to 3 above, clean your nostrils at least once every day with warm salt water. Blowing the nose hard once a day and swabbing both nostrils with cotton buds dipped in warm salt water is very effective in bringing down viral population.
5. Boost your natural immunity with foods that are rich in Vitamin C (especially citrus fruits). If you have to supplement with Vitamin C tablets, make sure that it also has Zinc to boost absorption.
6. Drink as much of warm liquids (tea, coffee, etc) as you can. Drinking warm liquids has the same effect as gargling, but in the reverse direction. They wash off proliferating viruses from the throat into the stomach where they cannot survive, proliferate or do any harm.

**Prevention is the best medicine!**

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## Recalled toys and baby products

- Drop-side Cribs recalled – drop side can be installed incorrectly or break causing dangerous crawl-space that can trap baby.
- Baby hammocks – hammock can flip over.
- “Bobby Chupete” and “My Baby Soother” pacifiers - concern that mouth guard is too small and can pose a choking hazard.
- Maclaren strollers – baby or child can get finger caught in stroller’s hinge mechanism.
- Art easels - MacPherson's has announced a recall of Young Artist easels due to high amounts of lead on chalkboard side.
- Roller blinds or any blinds that have long cords – cords pose a choking hazard to babies and small children.

For a list of more recalled baby products check out: <http://www.babycenter.com/child-safety-recalls>

# Children's Activities Page

## Activities Under Two

### Activity # 1: *Spinning Plate*

You will need: a plastic plate, and a piece of cloth to cover the plate with.

What to do: 1) Put the cloth inside the plate. 2) Get your child to sit on the plate. Delicately spin the plate. Your child will need to work on staying balanced while sitting in the plate and being spun. You can also put your baby on his/her back and spin the plate.

### Activity # 2: *Hanging Ball*

You will need: a soft ball and string.

What to do: 1) Using the string hang the ball on the ceiling so it hangs low enough that your child/children can reach it easy. 2) Get your child/children to hit it with different parts of their body. While they are hitting the ball you should name the parts of their body that they are using to hit it

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## Big Kids Holiday Activities

### Decorating with pinecones

Gather pinecones in all different sizes from your local park. Before you start your craft activity, the pinecones need to be either washed (soak for 20 min in warm soapy water and then rinse and dry) or baked (first line a baking sheet with foil and bake for about 20min at 200F) to remove or glaze the sap. Note that pinecones will open in a warm and dry atmosphere and will close in a cold and damp one so plan accordingly.

Decorating Ideas – (for Kids) First tie a string to the base of the pinecone for easy hanging after it has been decorated. Simply drip liquid glue (or paint) over your pinecone and decorate with glitter, you can add cotton for snow, decorate with beads, sequins and ribbons or add nuts and berries delicately into its wedges. (With Adult help) Make a pinecone tree, wedge dampened cones (moisture causes them to partially close) into a simple cone-shaped wire frame, glue the sides of them together interlocking in the form of a circle. Repeat making each additional circle smaller. Secure with dabs of hot glue. Or use plain pinecones around the house. Hang them upside down on fireplace by cinching a long wire around the stem end of each cone, then use thumbtacks to attach the strand to the mantel, finish off with a spray of pine scent. Adults can also dip the pinecones in colored wax or use a can of spray paint to give them a gilded look. Or secure plain pinecones to colored terra-cotta planters with hot glue. Finally make a fragrant holiday arrangement with pomanders, pinecones, and holiday greens. Score patterns on the oranges with a citrus striper or channel knife, make pilot holes with a small nail, then stud the oranges with whole cloves. (See pg 6 for illustration).



### Edible garland to hang around the tree or doorway

**String popcorn and cranberries** - The popcorn you string should be a day old, as fresh popcorn breaks too easily. Use a long stretch of heavy duty sewing thread or waxed dental floss for the string and begin with a thick knot at each end. If you don't want the kids to use a needle, try securing the string to a toothpick. Simply push the needle through the cranberry or popcorn kernels. Tie ends together when finished and hang the garland on the tree. **Variation:** Color the popcorn by adding food coloring to the oil that you pop the popcorn in (use small batches), or use a clean spray bottle to lightly spray on colored water. Popcorn garland is a nice treat for the birds off your terrace after Christmas.

**Hard candy garland** - Join one end of a candy wrapper with the end of the wrapper from another candy wrapper. Holding both pieces, wrap them together with a piece of ribbon and tie closed. Repeat this step until all of the hard candies are attached together with little pieces of ribbon.

**Take-home cookie garland** - To make this particular edible garland you will need lots of cookies, plenty of ribbon and a continuous roll of plastic wrap. Pull the plastic wrap to the length of the table, but keep it in a continuous roll. Place your first cookie on the plastic wrap, making sure the edge of the cookie is in the center of the plastic wrap. Fold the wrap over the cookie, overlapping it on the opposite edge. Tie a ribbon at the bottom of the plastic wrap, allowing about two inches of wrap to stick out at the bottom. Continue to add cookies, tying the ribbon both at the top and bottom of each cookie. When you have a long enough garland to span your doorway, cut the plastic wrap. You'll have one ribbon, one cookie, two ties with three or four inches of plastic wrap between the ties (so that you can cut individual cookies off and pass them out to guests as they depart), then another cookie, two ties, etc.

# Celebrating Christmas in Poland

Christmas in Poland is a very important family holiday for most Poles and replete with religious symbolism. By Christmas Eve, the entire nation seems to celebrate together as most cities and towns are barren except for foreign tourists as families gather together for the holiday.

For many devout Catholic, the Christmas season starts with a special church service on Advent symbolizing “the coming” of the long-awaited baby in the manger, starting four Sundays before Christmas (on November 29<sup>th</sup>). The countdown to Christmas is made more fun for children with chocolate advent calendars available at your local store. Other secularized religious symbols include the Advent wreath in church tradition made up of a circular evergreen with four candles (representing the four Sundays before December 25) surrounding one in the middle.



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**St. Nicholas Day, Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> or Święty Mikołaj.** This holiday celebrates a very charitable bishop from Greece, who was particularly kind to children. In memory of St. Nick, children leave out their shoes the night before, well-behaved ones expect to be rewarded with small gifts and candy whereas legend explains that misbehaved children will only receive sticks! We started this tradition here in Poland for the first time last year. My 4 year old was incredibly fascinated with this amazing shoe trick and very meticulously lined up his shoes for the next several days expecting a few leftovers!

## **Christmas Eve – Wigilia** (vee-GEEL-yah)

In times past Christmas eve was preceding by a final 24 hours of fasting before the solemn *Wigilia* dinner. The traditional table is laid with a white tablecloth representing purity and usually set with the advent wreath or other greenery and white candles. Tradition holds that an extra table place be set and a candle be placed in the window representing piety and preparedness in case the family is visited by a holy figure in the form of a stranger. A few strands of straw are also left on the table in the corner to represent the manger. Hanging mistletoe is also common, old folklore declared it would ward away evil spirits, though presently the mistletoe takes on its more well-known usage

entitling those who pass under to a kiss. The fasting is not broken until the first star appears in the night sky. It seems to me that the most important part of the holiday is then the breaking of the **opłatki** or very thin wafers impressed with religious designs similar to communion wafers, representing promise and renewal as this should be a time of forgiveness and well-wishes for all. (*Opłatki can be found in local stores and inside most Christmas cards sold here.*) The *opłatki* are typically part of the table's centerpiece and often rest on a bed of straw.



## **Wigilia traditional menu**

Technically *Wigilia* is still a day of fasting and a strict no-meat menu is kept in the vast majority of homes. Most families are also proud to keep the tradition of serving 12 dishes representing the 12 apostles, some even take this a step further making each dish with only 12 ingredients (such as the 12 fruit compote recipe that follows), all dinner guests are obliged to try all 12 dishes or forgo pleasure during the new year, similarly the more you eat the more pleasure you can supposedly look forward to in the new year!

Cold appetizers. In my experience the host can cheat on the 12 dishes by serving cold herring – **śledz** in several different sauces – most notable being a sour-cream based sauce as well as the ubiquitous “Greek” style herring, though my Greek friends complain that everything soaked in olive oil is not Greek. Veggie salad or **sałatka** (cooked veggies served cold with mayo), **galaretki** (fish and/or veggie terrine), and condiments including **borówki** (mushrooms served pickled), and **ćwikla** – strong horseradish with beets.

Hot soup. Regional traditions vary regarding the type of soup served on *Wigilia* though the most commonly served nationwide is **barszcz**, or beet soup served with floating mushroom ravioli called **uszki**, followed by **rosół** (chicken broth), and **zupa grzybowa** or mushroom soup.

The main dish in many Polish homes continues to be carp, though salmon and other prettier and more ‘upscale’ fish are becoming increasingly popular. Typical Polish side dishes of pierogi, potatoes and croquettes or **krokiety** typically stuffed with a tasty cabbage and mushroom filling are also served.

Various forms of poppy-seed desserts are usually served for dessert. Including **kutia** an old traditional sweet grain pudding dessert made from soaked wheat or barley,

# Celebrating Christmas in Poland

poppyseed, honey, and raisins or nuts), as well as two of my personal favorites **kluski z makiem** and **makowiec** (recipe below), as well as common Polish cakes like **sernik** (cheesecake). Wine may be present despite the fast though tradition calls for the meal to be served with **Kompot** made of dried fruits predominantly prunes (see recipe below).

Finally after the meal is finished, families exchange gifts, sing carols (**kolędy**) and/or take a midnight visit to the special **Pasterka** or Shepherd's mass at their local church.

**Christmas Day - Boże Narodzenie**, There seems to be less consensus on how Christmas Day should be celebrated except as a joyful family holiday. Dinner tends to feature a more anglicized menu with turkey as the main dish.

**St. Stephen's Day or drugi dzień Bożego Narodzenia** – Is considered the second day of Christmas and is the day

## PO POLSKU

Sylwester = New Years Eve  
Święto = holiday  
Szczęśliwych Nowy Roku =  
Happy New years  
Wesołych Świąt! = Happy Holidays  
Wszystkiego Najlepszego  
All the best  
Życzenia = wishes



## Traditional Christmas Kompot with a Spiked variation

Ingredients: 1/2 pounds dried fruits (prunes, apricots, figs, apples, peaches, pears, berries, raisins) usually comes pre-packaged; apples, cranberries, grapes, pitted plums, pitted sweet cherries, 8 cups water; 8 whole cloves; 2 cinnamon sticks; lemon zest, 1 cup sugar, or to taste

**Preparation:** In a large saucepan, place fruit, water, cloves, cinnamon, zest, if using, and sugar. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently, and simmer, covered, for about 20 minutes or until fruit is tender and syrup has thickened slightly. Add cherries, apples, and cranberries. Add more water if you like a liquid consistency or reduce by further simmering for thicker compote. 2) Cool in an ice water bath. Refrigerate for up to 1 week. **Spiked Variation** Soak the dried fruit first with dessert wine adding the juice of one orange. Set aside. Drain the fruit, reserving all the boozy liquor. 2) Heat the water and simmer the dried fruit in it for 15 minutes. Remove it from the heat, add the boozy mixture again and allow it to cool before serving.

designated for visiting and exchanging wishes with the extended family and friends. In rural areas, carolers sing or perform Biblical scenes from house to house and are usually treated to refreshments or a small offering.

**Epiphany or Dzień Trzech Kroli**, is the 12th day after Christmas celebrating the visit of the three wise men. On this day priests and carolers armed with a small nativity scene or **szopka** or other religious images, usually visit homes to bless them by writing over their doors, the initials of the three wise men - KMB (Kasper, Melchior and Balthazar) - in the belief that this will spare the homes from misfortune. The priests and carolers are usually given a small offering for their songs and blessing.

The Christmas season closes on February 2, known as **Candlemas Day** or **Dzień Matki Boskiej**. On that day, people take candles to church and have them blessed for use in their homes during storms, sickness and death.

## Poppyseed strudel – Makowiec

Ingredients: package active dry yeast, 2 cups warm milk, 8 cups all-purpose flour, 3/4 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, 5 eggs, 4 ounces (1 stick) butter, melted, 2 (11-ounce) cans poppyseed filling (or make your own, see below)

Poppyseed Filling Ingredients: 1 pound poppyseeds, 1 cup sugar, 6 ounces butter (1 1/2 sticks), 1 cup hot milk, 1 lemon rind, grated

**Preparation:** 1) If making your own filling, combine all filling ingredients. Beat well and set aside. 2) In a small heatproof bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/2 cup of the warm milk. 3) In the bowl of a stand mixer or a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, salt and eggs. Add remaining 1 1/2 cups warm milk, butter and yeast mixture. With the paddle attachment, or by hand, beat until smooth. Dough will be sticky at this point. 4) Scrape dough into a clean, greased bowl. Sprinkle the top with a little flour and cover. Let stand in a warm place for 1 hour or until double in size, or to cut the rise time. 5) Punch down dough and turn out onto a floured surface. Divide dough in half and shape each half into a rectangle. 6) Spread 1 can or half of the filling you made on each rectangle of dough and roll up like a jelly roll. Turn ends under so filling will not leak out. 7) Place on a parchment-lined or greased pan, cover and let rise again until double in size. 8) Heat oven to 350 degrees. Brush tops of rolls with additional melted butter. Bake 45 to 60 minutes or until rolls are golden brown. 9) Remove from oven and cool. Dust rolls with confectioner's sugar, if desired.



*As I recently wandered through my local gourmet supermarket Waitrose positively drooling over the choices and feeling rather forlorn for such lack of products under one roof in Warsaw (despite small respites in Marks and Spencers) my biggest regret was not having the availability of quick and fabulous ready meals (shameless I know..) Thus as you will all be overworked through Xmas here are two super quick recipes to get you through Xmas and bounce back after New Year celebrations!*

## Chocolate Ricotta Mousse 'Delia 's How to Cheat'

150g Dark Chocolate (70 - 75% cocoa solids)  
250g Ricotta Cheese  
1 tbsp Rum (omitable)  
2 tbpn soft dark brown sugar  
200ml tub Crème fraiche



Break 100g chocolate into heatproof bowl and place over pan of simmering water. Leave until chocolate melts and stir. Chop remaining chocolate. Blend cheese, rum, sugar and 2 tbsp of crème fraiche until smooth, add to melted chocolate. Finally, stir in all but 1 tbsp of chopped chocolate and divide between four cups, top with remaining crème fraiche and chopped chocolate and chill until ready to serve.

## Hangover Omelets - Stuart Gillies, The Times magazine.

Perfect with a bloody mary the day after to wake you up to the demands of children, and eggs are perfect partners to hangovers. Pregnant ladies and breastfeeders envy you not. (serves 2)

6 x large eggs, Sea salt, 100g butter, 1 x large chili deseeded and chopped (or 2 if you dare), 4 x spring onions -chopped, 1 x red pepper -sliced  
1 x garlic clove, crushed, 2 x large coriander sprigs, chopped, 100g yellow cheese grated

Break the eggs into a bowl and beat well, season. Brown the butter gently, add the chili, onions, pepper and garlic. Fry for 2 minutes, then add coriander and egg and mix well. Once eggs settle on the bottom sprinkle over cheese and when almost set release the edges and fold to serve

## **DECEMBER MUMS XMAS NIGHT OUT**

Is to be held at Qwai Restaurant at 8 pm on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Cost at 130 pln to include three courses, all non alcoholic drinks, wine and beer on an open bar and service. Secret Santa as usual - please bring a WRAPPED gift to the value of 25pln to exchange.

**Venue : KWAI - [www.kwai.pl](http://www.kwai.pl) - Ul. Marszalkowska 62**  
**Tel : 0048 22 621 2181**  
**Nearest Metro : Politechnika**  
**Friday, December 11, at 8pm**

I hope you can all join us to celebrate together before many of us set of home for the holidays, this celebration is particularly special and thus starts a little earlier so we have time to thoroughly relax and socialize...

Menu is set at 130pln a head and includes all soft drinks, tea, coffee and unlimited house wine and beer.

Please do bring cash in order to swiftly close the bill at the end of the night due to the number of mummies expected.

**SECRET SANTA** is in town again this year, please bring a WRAPPED gift to the value of 25 or 30 pln for another mummy to enjoy, gifts will be shared at the end of the evening.

Food served as a buffet:

### **Appetizers:**

spring rolls with sauces, satays with dips, mango salad, mandu (Korean dumplings), dim sum, tofu salmon tartar, gyutataki (Japanese style marinated beef tenderloin), shrimps (fried with garlic and ginger)

### **Main course in the bemars:**

thai green curry with chicken, pad thai (rice noodles, shrimp, chicken), chicken with cashew nuts, nam soul (korean spicy pork), stir fried seafood udon, jasmine rice, Yache guguma ( vegetarian noodles )

### **Desserts:**

Orange & Ginger mouse with chocolate heart, Coconut panna cotta, Exotic sorbet

**Please reply to me ASAP to confirm your attendance. Do be aware attendees who at the very last minute cancel or do not turn up may well be pursued for the cost. RSVP: [lisajamesdesign@yahoo.com](mailto:lisajamesdesign@yahoo.com)**

# LETTER TO SANTA

This is now the sixth year for Mums and Tots of Warsaw members, friends, colleagues and neighbours to participate in this wonderful action which takes place between December and the beginning of January. Every year since 2005 this has been a great success, making lots of children happy. Children from the orphanage in the village of Pacanow (3,5 hours drive out of Warsaw, 70 km. south of Kielce) not only believe but are sure that Santa loves them and every year makes their dreams come true. Another group is the children from poor families who hope that perhaps this Christmas Santa will remember about them as well. They all write their letters on handmade cards and open their hearts telling stories of their lives and ask for some presents, nearly always adding "Dear Santa, only if you can. I understand you have too many children who write to you."

**Photos from 2008:** [http://flickr.com/gp/eastern\\_traveller/b2FSn6](http://flickr.com/gp/eastern_traveller/b2FSn6). When you open the site there is a button enabling you to watch it as a slide show. More detailed information about things we have done for Pacanow can be seen on M&T's site <http://mumsandtots.com> charity section.

This year we will have about 90 children (35-40 related to the orphanage, 45-50 from the poorest families) to buy new presents for. Unfortunately we cannot give new presents for all the children in need, so I started to put together your donations into packages for about 10+ poor families, particularly the ones with very young children and babies. **Please can you help by taking a letter and being Santa for a needy child? THIS WILL BE ONE OF THE BEST THINGS YOU CAN DO THIS CHRISTMAS!**

To enable you to do this:

1. You will have a child's letter.
2. All available information about the child and sizes.
3. I will email you a photo if I have one.
4. Minimum PLN 150 – maximum PLN 300 per child.
5. Children ask for different things but the main principle for every Santa would be to buy:
  - something for education
  - something for pleasure and fun
  - something practical (shoes prevail over clothes)
  - something special
  - sweets
6. Presents need to be tagged with a child's name and delivered strictly by the 13<sup>th</sup> of January to one of the locations to be advised (Mokotow, Ochota, Wygladow, possibly Sadyba/Zawady).
7. We are travelling to Pacanow on the 16<sup>th</sup> January. I estimate we need up to 6 cars (presently 3 reserved). Please join us for the trip to see the children and help us to deliver the presents. You are welcome to travel with your children. It will be a wonderful experience you will never forget.
8. If anyone would like to participate but cannot do the actual shopping for some serious reason, there is an option to give money. I with the help of a few friends will do your Santa shopping for your child in January to get the best value for money in the sales with a note to you on things bought. However, please note we cannot perform this task for a large group, maximum 10.
9. Letters should be in Warsaw by the end of November, I will start to distribute them in December.
10. Good condition used or new unwanted things I need as early as possible to have enough time to sort out and pack for the right poor family.

If you wish to become Santa, please let me know:

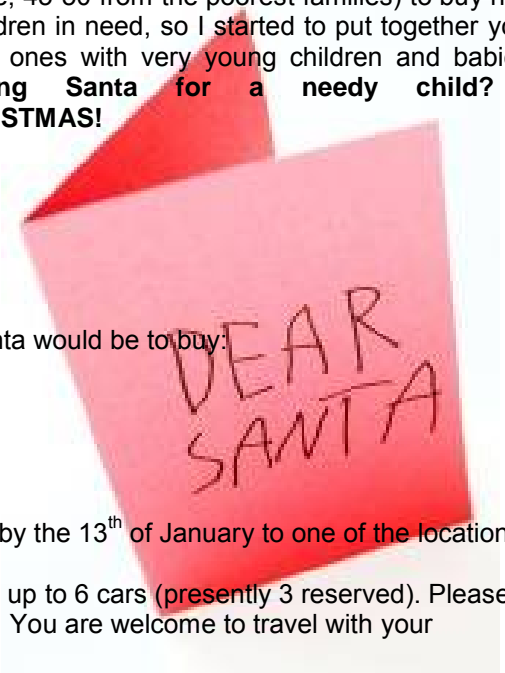
- Your full contact details, which groups you attend or at which school and class I can leave a letter for you.
- If you can take more than one child.
- If you are not a polish speaker, I will translate the letters
- If you can join for the trip on the 16<sup>th</sup> January

I hope to see lots of repeat Santas and meet many new. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

THANK YOU

Alia Radford

[Alia.radford@neostrada.pl](mailto:Alia.radford@neostrada.pl)





# Holiday events

## FOR KIDS/FAMILY

4 December – Children’s Christmas Party at Hula Kula from 9.30 – 11.30pm. ([www.hulakula.com.pl](http://www.hulakula.com.pl) for more information). Mums are encouraged to bring Christmas related treats. There is no age limit, and the cost is 14 pln per child.

6 & 13 December – Royal Theatre at Wilanow Palace Museum, ul. Stanislawo Kostki Potockiego 10/16 (<http://www.wilanow-palac.pl/> for further information)

17, 19, 22, 23 27 December – Ballet: The Nutcracker - Opera Club, Plac Teatralny 1 (<http://www.opera-narodowa.pl/> for further information)

## WHAT’S ON GENERALLY

1 Dec – 7 Feb – Exhibition: Zbigniew Liberia - Zacheta National Gallery of Art, pl. Malachowskiego 3 (<http://www.zacheta.art.pl/> for further information)

4-13 December – Watch Docs Film Festival Centre for Contemporary Art, Al. Ujazdowskie 6 (<http://www.watchdocs.pl/> for further information)

4 Dec – 7 Feb – My Life – Works by Jacek Malczewski - National Museum, Al. Jerozolimskie 3 (<http://www.mnw.art.pl/> for further information)

7-9 Dec – Beethoven’s Violin Sonatas - Warsaw Philharmonic, ul. Jasna 5 (<http://www.filharmonia.pl/> for further information)

8 Dec – Concert: Gogol Bordello - Stodola, ul. Batorego 10 (<http://www.stodola.pl/klub/?show=680> for further information)

14 Dec – 31 Jan – Exhibition: Bruce Nauman No/Nie - Centre for Contemporary Art, Al. Ujazdowskie 6 (<http://www.csw.art.pl/> for further information)

19 Dec – Concert: Handel’s Messiah – Great Ballroom, Royal Castle (<http://www.operakameralna.pl/> for further information)

21 Dec – 7 Feb – Exhibition: Beginningend - Centre for Contemporary Art, Al. Ujazdowskie 6 (<http://www.csw.art.pl/> for further information)

30 Jan Budka Suflera, one of Poland’s top all-time bands that opened for John Mayall, Hendrix and Led Zeppelin. Congress Hall Plac Defilad 1, 18:00



## Mums & Tots Schedule

### Mini Music

December 3rd	Lili Reyels
December 10th	Adriana Halpin
December 17th	Eva Chen

7 January – Cornelia Preidelt  
14 January Nicky Dicken  
21 January – Peggy Ferber  
28 January – Alia Radford

### Monday Toddler Group

7 December – Marija Clark  
14 December – Rita Danko

### Baby swim

Tuesday group: 08.12.09 - 16.03.10 to be held at 10.30am

There will be no class on the following days: 22.12.09, 29.12.09 (Christmas) and 09.02.10 (winter school break) (12 classes)

Monday group: 14.12.09 - 22.03.10 to be held at 16.00pm (or 16.30)

There will be no class on the following days: 21.12.09, 28.12.09 (Christmas) and 08.02.10 (winter school break) (12 classes)

If you miss your class at any point, you can arrange with the instructor to have it with another group. Payments will be made before the first class for the whole course.

### Kids Christmas party at Hula Kula

We can now confirm that Santa has agreed to join us at Hula Kula Christmas Party for children on Friday, December 4 (9:30-11:30).

Santa's helpers (i.e. mums) are asked to bring gifts for their children. Presents should be small in size with suggested price around PLN30. Please mark names of children CLEARLY. Please bring some Christmas delicacies with you so that our little ones have energy to dance around to the tune of Christmas carols. Entry PLN14 for all children.

Call me with any questions at 0600 186 574.

Olga Trzebińska



## Ballet: The Nutcracker



No holiday season is complete without the Nutcracker ballet and the memorable tunes of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. This fairy tale, written by E.T.A. Hoffmann, follows the Christmas adventures of little Clara whose eccentric uncle presents her with a magical nutcracker. When the nutcracker transforms into a prince, the pair dance from adventure to adventure meeting plenty of special characters along the way (such as the Sugar Plum Fairy). A performance suitable for the whole family.

## CHRISTMAS TIME IN WARSAW

Each year, the Christmas season is celebrated in Warsaw with colourful market stalls set up all over the Old Town. With baskets full of overflowing souvenirs, trinkets, honey, pudding, cheeses, cakes and more, it is but a frosting to the big bite of the Christmas season. A tall Christmas Tree is put up every year in the center of Zamkowy Square. Christmas lights guide night strollers as locals and tourists spread the joy of the coming Christmas day.

If you are in Warsaw on Christmas day and are looking for somewhere to have lunch and get into the Christmas spirit, you can try the following:

- Bristol Hotel – Christmas Eve buffet for 270zł and open for Christmas day for a series of buffet options that include Mediterranean, traditional and Polish. Prices range from 140-180zł, with extra charged for alcohol.
- The Sheraton should also be open for both days with prices ranging from 135-150pln.
- The Hilton is open Christmas Eve with celebrations at the Pistaccio Lobby Bar. Christmas day for 155zł buys guests Christmas Brunch in the Meza restaurant – with a Santa for the kids

## The Nutcracker for Kids



Children 3 years of age and up are invited to this pair of special performances of E.T.A. Hoffmann's The Nutcracker, with music from the ballet by Tchaikovsky. Actresses Alina Wieckiewicz and Maria Reif will tell the Christmas story of young Clara and her magical nutcracker with the help of a unique set of 18th century marionettes. This might just be the perfect way to spend a Sunday morning with the kids. Basic knowledge of the Polish language is recommended. Starts at 11am.





If you're in Warsaw on the 31st December whatever you do don't stay in! Just about every bar and restaurant in the city has their own party, although for some of the more popular venues you'd best grab a ticket in advance. One of the biggest bashes this year will take place inside the Palace of Culture where the BBC Big Band will be joined by Polish vocalists Edyta Górniak and Monika Dryl to perform the best in jazz and big band music from the 1930s until today. Two performances are scheduled - one at 7pm and one at 10:30pm, with the latter a little more pricey as it includes a break to welcome the New Year with drinks and food. If you'd rather experience a countdown to midnight with thousands of people and fireworks, the best place to be is Plac Konstytucji, where there's plenty in the way of live entertainment, all leading up to the final seconds of 2009 and a spectacular pyrotechnics show to greet 2010.

## Christmas/New Year's in Zakopane

- *Zakopane – known as the Winter capital of Poland, at the “Tatra Mountains Gate”*
- *It is the highest town above sea level – ground elevation at Ustup region is 750 metres above sea level*
- *Two downtown hotels: Giewont and Gazda are built 840 meters above sea level*
- *Gubałówka is 1220 meters above sea level.*

Poland, and in particular Zakopane, is wonderful at Christmas; the town is beautifully decorated and is usually covered with fresh fallen snow. Tiny coloured lights are entwined in mistletoe, Christmas trees, and anything else to produce a riot of colour. Even the churches are filled with Christmas trees.



New Year is welcomed outside with hundreds of bonfires held everywhere in the town. New Year's balls are organised in pensions, hotels and restaurants. At this time of the year the traditional sleigh rides or *KULIG* are very popular - horse drawn sleighs with torches are seen and horse bells heard everywhere in the town (<http://www.discoverzakopane.com/sleigh-ride.html> for more information).

If you decide to eat in a hotel or restaurant at Christmas, you must book in advance, with a deposit usually required from foreign tourists. You will also find that there aren't many people eating out, so if you want to be in the company of a large number of people, book a table at one of the larger hotels or restaurants. You will also find that the meal may be served as early as 5pm. There are still a considerable number of people walking about in Zakopane over Christmas. Limited cafes, restaurants and shops are open, with trading returning to normal after the public holiday period.



It is already white in Zakopane and the first skiers are now skiing on the slopes! All the tourists, who have decided to spend this unique time in here, will be coming to Zakopane very soon. The very last preparations to Christmas and New Year's Eve are taking place in Zakopane!

You are most welcome for Christmas and New Year's Eve in Zakopane, winter capital of Poland!