EXHIBITION: 1521, THE TRADITION OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Selestat



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+ Description

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"Item 4 schillings den förstern die meygen an sanct thomas tag zu hieten"

The town of Sélestat carefully preserves in its Municipal Archives an account book which records that, on 21 December 1521, a payment of 4 shillings was made to the forest rangers to guard the communal forest on St Thomas's Day, the day on which fir trees were traditionally felled.

If the town of Sélestat had to manage and protect its forest by making such an expenditure, this suggests that the practice of cutting down a tree in the forest and then decorating it at this specific time of year had become a relatively popular tradition. The work of historians, as well as later writings dated 1546, 1555 and 1557 respectively – and equally carefully preserved in the town's archives – corroborate this fact.

Over the centuries, the fir tree has become a true symbol of the Christmas festivities. Whether richly or modestly adorned, its decoration has never ceased to evolve over time. It is now a firmly established tradition, both in Alsace and far beyond our borders.

This exhibition presents a facsimile of the iconic account book from 1521, as well as two other works from 1555 and 1600, which mention the tradition of the Christmas tree.

Special opening hours on 24 & 31 December: 10.00–12.30 and 13.30–16.00.

Closed on 25 & 26 December.

Horaire(s) d'ouverture

From 21/11/2026 to 23/12/2026
Tuesday from 10:00 to 12:30Tuesday from 13:30 to 18:00
Wednesday from 10:00 to 12:30Wednesday from 13:30 to 18:00
Thursday from 10:00 to 12:30Thursday from 13:30 to 18:00
Friday from 10:00 to 12:30Friday from 13:30 to 18:00
Saturday from 10:00 to 12:30Saturday from 13:30 to 18:00
Sunday from 10:00 to 12:30Sunday from 13:30 to 18:00
24/12/2026
Thursday from 10:00 to 12:30Thursday from 13:30 to 16:00
From 27/12/2026 to 30/12/2026
Tuesday from 10:00 to 12:30Tuesday from 13:30 to 18:00
Wednesday from 10:00 to 12:30Wednesday from 13:30 to 18:00
Sunday from 10:00 to 12:30Sunday from 13:30 to 18:00
31/12/2026
Thursday from 10:00 to 12:30Thursday from 13:30 to 16:00

+ Price lists

Prices (events, products, etc.) : Free access to the exhibition, access to the museum with a fee

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