



Italy is a mosaic of tiny realities different from each other in any respect, other than **Catholic traditions** – so much so that we can't help identifying religion with the **Vatican**. This is not the case with most of Europe, which has been characterized by less homogenous religious national identities (see the coexistence of Protestants and Catholics in France or Switzerland, for instance). You can wish a happy Christmas to your Italian business partners, then, because this is customary here. By contrast, wishing a happy Christmas to foreign partners may be trickier – and this suggestion has less to do with being politically correct than with avoiding sounding **parochial**. It implies that you have travelled so little that you don't even entertain the possibility of a non-Catholic celebration. If you feel safe wishing happy Christmas to a European, then remember that most of Western Europe clings to Christian traditions less than we do: Christmas is a **family celebration**, so we usually only send our **season's greetings**.

