



KRUUSTKRUUT

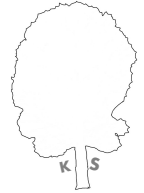




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Kruustkruut (Platt-german); Gruenkohl (german) - curly kale is the indigenous cabbage of the north. There it is also known as the 'Green Gold' or 'Northern Palmtree'. Traditionally eaten beginning in mid-november after the first frost, when it is said to taste sweeter, and gradually harvested during the whole winter. As a winter vegetable it is not only a very nutritious vegetable but symbolizes regional cultural identity and provides a festive dish for many occasions.





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In the grey and cold winter months of January and February Kale parties - Kohlfahrten/ Pinkelfahrten take place all over north western Germany around the region of Oldenburg and Bremen originally to celebrate the cabbage harvest.

Departing from some point outside the town or city, they are always undertaken in a group, consisting of colleagues from work or a club. The atmosphere is relaxed, casual, and very jolly.



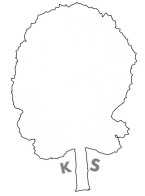




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First on the kale party agenda is to walk over the 'flat land' to the chosen restaurant. Equipment is deemed essential for this ritual and is previously agreed upon among the group. Everybody carries a drinking vessel, attached to a ribbon and hung around the neck. The cup identifies the bearer as a participant of a kale party.

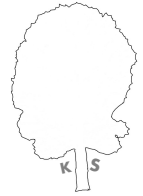




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Beverages, above all Korn (clear grain schnapps), but also all kinds of other spirits as well as beer and mineral water, coffee, or tea, are carried in an old pram or handcart, decorated with balloons and kale stalks.

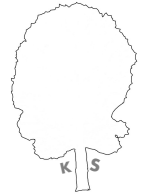




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Large, colored dice made of foam or wood are brought along to determine the drinking order. A Mess- or Sauflatte consists of several eggcupps attached to a wooden slat, all filled at once and ideally emptied by a group of people of the same height.

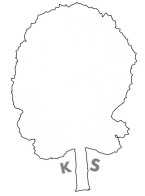




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On the way many games are played which have their regional differences. Where I am from we used to have a broomstick-long-distance competition along the whole way of the tour. Sometimes they are thrown into the ditches alongside the walkway.





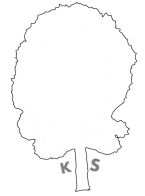
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At the destination, chosen according to the location and the reputation of its food and service, a meal of kale is served, garnished with Pinkel (a pork sausage containing oats), bacon, Kasseler (cure pork), Kochwurst (scolded, finely ground pork sausage), as well as boiled or fried potatoes, all in unlimited quantities.









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Speeches, songs, and the appointment of a kale king or queen, decorated with a Fressorden (a medal for gluttony), provide entertainment. The day may finish with dancing or bowling.



All Photographs and Images
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