

News

## How Catalan volunteers celebrate Saint George's Day around the world?



04/11/2017 - 11:07

Author: Rubén Escobar (iWith.org)



BookAndRoses flyer. Image: BookAndRoses.



Streets full of books for Saint George's Day. Photo: Wikimedia.

**#BooksAndRoses** takes an ancient tradition to the world, so that everybody can celebrate literature with a smile. 23 April is the day when books, roses and love come together in the context of an ancient tradition celebrated in Barcelona / Catalonia that is going global.

It all started with the legend of a sainted knight, a princess and a dragon. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century giving a rose to the women you love on 23 April (*Sant Jordi*) became a tradition in Catalonia. In the 1920s giving a book to the men you love was added.

Tradition has come a long way and nowadays it is books and roses for everybody. At some point a group that included some Catalan publishers approached UNESCO and in 1995 the date **23 April** was proclaimed

**World Book and**

Graphic design from BookAndRoses. Image: BookAndRoses.

23 April is UNESCO World Book and Sant Jordi (Saint George's Day), the love and literature day massively celebrated all over Catalonia. Many groups of Catalan people living abroad are organizing different non-profit activities.

23 April is [UNESCO World Book](#) and **Sant Jordi** (Saint George's Day), the love and literature day massively celebrated in Barcelona and all over Catalonia. The event is a great opportunity to either buy a best-seller or give a fluffy rose as a gift. In the past years the tradition has broken borders and now it is also celebrated in many cities around the world, where **thousand of Catalan people** are either studying, working or just traveling.

Nowadays, it is the day when more than 1.5 million books and more than 6 million roses are sold in Catalonia. In recent years, all this has gone global: **150 events** organized by volunteers in **50 countries** bringing charm to Collioure, Zurich, Krakow, Bahia Blanca, Mexico City, Tokio and London, among many others. Thanks to different volunteers, bookshops, libraries, expat communities, cultural centers, Catalonia-related offices abroad, individuals and groups, different activities such as concerts, theatre plays and conferences are held to commemorate the Book Day.

The [#BookAndRoses](#) campaign (website, hashtag, social media) showcases the great diversity of organizers and events. Everybody is entitled to share pictures, videos and thoughts on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April joining this campaign. The website is run by the [Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia](#), a non-profit public-private partnership based in Barcelona. The original idea of gathering event information on a global, one-stop website was launched and curated by the North-American publisher Liz Castro in 2013.

[Many tools have been designed](#) to spread the word: a greeting card to be shared on social media, a flyer for easy print and hand out to explain what #BooksAndRoses is all about, a social media avatar, a template for a photo frame, templates for event posters and bookmarks, etc. The campaign materials are public domain tools everybody can reproduce and adapt freely. Moreover, adding a new event on the website is a piece of cake: you just have to provide information about the event, contact information and also information about the organizers by filling a form.

Through an **interactive online map** you can see all the events that have been created. United States is the country that will host more events for Saint George's Day, a sum of 9 activities in cities such as Houston, L.A, Washington D.C and New York. Behind the USA, Germany is holding 7 events registered in Stuttgart, Hamburg, Cologne and Berlin. In Cologne there will be a paella, a literary contest and performances. In Stuttgart there will be a concert in the Botnang district. Europe is so far the continent where more events are taking place. It is followed by both North and South America. Japan in Asia is the only country that at the moment has joined the campaign. No one in Oceania yet.

Non-profit organisations such as the [Catalan Center in Quito](#), [Amics de Catalunya a Itàlia](#) (Catalan Friends in Italy), the [Catalan Center in Brussels](#) or [Little Catalans in Berlin](#) are making possible that on the 23rd of April different cities around the world enjoy Saint George's Day. It is also important not to forget volunteers and Catalan community that are getting involved to live and experience this tradition as a different and special one.

**Tags:** [Saint George's Day](#)  
[Saint George](#)  
[books](#)  
[literature](#)  
[Nonprofit](#)  
[Catalonia](#)

## Links of interest

- [About us](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Legal terms](#)
- [Cookies policy](#)

## Follow us



[Visit us on Twitter](#)



[RSS](#)

**Source URL:** <https://nonprofit.xarxanet.org/news/how-catalan-volunteers-celebrate-saint-george%E2%80%99s-day-around-world>