Saturnalia

Ancient Romans celebrated “Saturnalia”, a festival in which slaves and their masters would switch places.

It was held on the 17th December and later expanded with festivities through to 23rd December. The holiday included parties, a public banquet, and private gift giving. During this time, Roman societal norms were often overturned. For instance, gambling was permitted. The poet Catullus called it “the best of days”.



*Saturnalia* by Ernesto Biondi (1909), in the Buenos Aires Botanical Gardens