

A Very Merry Christmas



Plan The Perfect Holiday Season This Year!

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Introduction

Everyone knows what Christmas is all about. It's the most magical, wonderful, and happiest time of the year. It is the time where everyone will rejoice, spend time with family, both give and receive gifts, and simply reflect on the closing of another year while looking forward to the next. The popularity of Christmas usually depends on the country and their customs but it is generally considered to be the most popular and most celebrated holiday in the world.

There are different reasons for celebrating Christmas. This particular holiday is specifically celebrated by Catholics who firmly believe that this is the day when the Saviour, Jesus Christ was born. Roman Catholics opt to share whatever blessings they have with other people during this time.

In other countries such as in Japan, Christmas is typically celebrated with a person that you love. This is the day where couples spend their time together.

As you already know, Christmas generally involves a lot of gift giving and reunions but there is far more which one can do to enjoy this festive time. This guide will certainly provide you with some great ideas on how to make your Christmas truly special this year.☺

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What to do on Christmas?

Christmas is practically considered the golden time of the year. There are a lot of ways for you to spend this season and as you view your options in selecting the best way to have fun during Christmas, take the opportunity to weigh the pros and cons of such options to ensure that you will have an adventurous and fun time during the holiday season.

Most people during Christmas Season tend to visit old friends, relatives and colleagues through Christmas gatherings and parties. As Christmas is a time of happiness, it's normally the most positive setting for people to really catch up with each other after a long time apart.

If you're not generally fond of parties and meeting with people, you may opt to spend the day at home instead with the rest of your family which is what the majority of people do tend to do. It is an opportunity to be able to bond more with your children and partner.

Try to build a snowman outside your home, or perhaps go to the church whenever possible to thank God for the graces you and your family received. You may also opt to decorate your home to let the ambiance of Christmas enter. To top it off, you may also play a few Christmas Carols while doing your house design.

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On the flip side, if you think partying at home is simply not for you, you may even opt to go out and have a very long vacation in a warmer climate. For most people who are in the working people bracket, the Christmas holidays serve as a special opportunity for them to go out of town or perhaps the country in order to take a breather from the day to day grind.

Special Christmas Activities: Reach Out and Help

For a family, spending Christmas is vital. Most people are lucky enough to have their family with them, but there are those who are less fortunate with either bad or irreparable family relations who are having a hard time and may not be able to spend Christmas in a loving environment. At present, various government projects are being made in order to help make these people feel the spirit of Christmas in their own way.

Sharing what you have and being thankful are some of the things people wish to spread during the holiday season. One way of doing so is to reach out to those who are in need and helping them feel at least some semblance of Christmas, especially when they are not able to share in the joy and happiness of those around them.

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What to Consider in Preparing a Christmas Party

A Christmas party is a great opportunity for people to enjoy Christmas together with their colleagues, friends, loved ones, and family members. It is for this reason why most people would want to make a Christmas party as pleasant as possible.

However, in preparing for a party, there are two main things you should take into consideration. These factors could either halt or push your plans into action when it comes to organizing a party.

The first thing you should consider is who you plan to invite. Who are the people you truly want to spend Christmas with at this party? Are these really your friends and colleagues who are decent and caring people? The number of guests you intend to invite shall also determine the other factor you will need to consider when organizing a party which is the budget. By properly determining the number of expected guests and what kind of people they are, you will be able to push through with organizing your party in the smoothest way possible without a hiccup.

In regards to your budget, it may or may not become a barrier to your planning so it's important to prepare a budget schedule before putting any plan into action. Make sure to

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stick to your budget no matter what. Racking up a significant bill could likely result in your regretting of having hosted a party in the first place and could completely ruin your Christmas altogether. The main purpose of a Christmas party is to spend time with people you really love and respect.

Preparing for the Season: The Checklist

In preparing a party to celebrate Christmas with your family, there are things that you must take into consideration and prepare for. These points are necessary to ensure that you will be able to organize a fun party while at the same time being able to preserve the spirit of Christmas in everyone's lives.

a. The Theme.

The most important factor of all when it comes to any type of party is the theme. It is important for you to determine what type of party you are planning to have. First and foremost, you should determine whether your party should either be formal or informal. You may also opt for a special themed party, such as a white Christmas party and enjoy a cold Christmas with your guests. A pool party or a garage party may also be ideal, depending on your preference and desires as the organizer.

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b. Location and Venue

For location and venue, it is obviously necessary to find a place which is readily accessible to everyone whom you intend to invite. It must also be a place that will be able to easily manage your target number of guests and must have enough space for other activities depending on the types of activities you have planned. Make sure of course that the venue of your party will be fully decorated and designed in accordance with the theme of your Christmas Party. The venue may be in a rented function room. This is mostly done in hotels or restaurants. Some opt to have their Christmas parties done at their own home. Either way, the location should be easy for the guests to find, especially with the possibility of inclement weather during Christmas season which makes for bad driving conditions. Also, remember to make the necessary decorations in order for the venue to have the Christmas ambiance.

c. Date

Choosing the best date is often the biggest problem, especially during such a season where festivities are practically everywhere. Choose a date where---if not everyone, then most of your guests are able to attend, preferably a weekend. The time itself is not as much of a factor as people are generally open with their schedules on weekends. Evening hours are generally the best.

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d. Menu

The menu often depends on the agreement of the organizer and its attendees. In a simple Christmas gathering, people go for pot-lock style, wherein everyone attending the party brings a food to share with everyone. Others meanwhile go for buffet. You may also opt to cook the food you intend to serve. Either way, make sure that it is something that will be enjoyed by the guests and not just because it's something you personally like. Despite this, you should also make sure that the menu you are planning to serve must be enough to satisfy not only your guests but also your budget. Always keep in mind that despite the importance of food at the party, it must not compromise the rest of the budget and must also compliment the theme of the party you are having. It should also contain certain special dishes that are in accordance with the season.

e. Entertainment

In preparing any party for that matter, it is important that you prepare a program which everyone will be able to participate in and enjoy. Try to come up with an itinerary with an estimated schedule, in order to make sure that there will be enough time to conduct the entire program properly and accordingly without making it look like a rushed party.

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If the party you are conducting is meant for children, make sure to have parlour games so that the children will be able to enjoy the event. If the party is for your colleagues on the other hand, make sure to have some form of entertainment through various performances that will keep them happy and entertained especially while they are enjoying their meal.

f. Dress code

Most often, party themes will dictate the dress code. Are you planning to have a formal party, or perhaps a costume party? Your dress code must conform to the theme that you opt to have. A formal party would usually require cocktail dresses and smart casual clothes, while an informal party would require casual clothing which everyone will feel most comfortable wearing, especially if they are participating in games.

You may also opt for a costume party where your guests will be able to dress up in their preferred costumes and portray their favourite characters. Either way, the dress code must be arranged in accordance to the theme of the party.

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Christmas Parties for Kids

While most people find Christmas as a time for festivities and a get-together, many people also consider Christmas as a special time for children to enjoy. At school and other communities, Christmas parties are often held in order to make the children happy and feel fulfilled in the spirit of Christmas.

When preparing a Christmas Party for kids, you should make sure that the children will be able to appreciate and feel the spirit of Christmas. One way for them to enjoy the party is by having significant figures present in the party like Santa Clause. Have him give away special gifts especially to those children who are well behaved at the party.

The food you will prepare must also conform to the taste of the children. Avoid preparing dishes that will be enjoyed by the adults alone; try to prepare a lot of sweets, spaghetti, chicken, and everything that tastes delicious and yummy for the kids.

Also, prepare a lot of activities that will be enjoyed by the children. Try to come up with different parlour games with lots of freebies and prizes in order to encourage the children to join and socialize with other kids in the party.

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Most of all, you can teach them a valuable lesson in a manner that they will appreciate and enjoy during Christmas and that is through gift giving. Giving gifts is all about being thankful to the people who played a positive part in your life. Kids showing their friendship amongst one another through gift-giving is a great way for them to realize the importance of developing and keeping friendships with their peers as they grow older.

Decorating Your Home This Christmas

One of the most anticipated activities for families during Christmas season is preparing the interior decorations to get the holiday spirit going. People search for the best pine tree available and shower it with Christmas balls, flowers and ribbons. Garlands and Christmas lights are everywhere and figurines of the Holy Family are placed in special places in your house. Here are some simple tips in decorating your home and letting the spirit of Christmas be felt all over the place.

First and foremost comes the Christmas tree. Find the best pine tree that is suitable to the comforts of your home, obviously making sure it fits in the space you've allotted inside your home. It should be as green as it can be, and its trunk must be healthy and thick. Do not over-decorate the tree with unnecessary decorations; try to fill it with ribbons, flowers and Christmas balls.

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Recycle your decorative materials from the previous years or at least try to do so going forward if you haven't. At such a time where the recession is felt, you would want to save as much money as possible without compromising your home decorations. One good example is the Christmas balls you would normally hang on your Christmas trees or perhaps those glass balls placed on the table. You could redecorate and revive the dull looking balls by covering them with glitters or perhaps repainting them to have a new look that would suit your chosen Christmas theme for the year.

Try to give colour to your house by placing red, white and green curtains and table cloth. You may also opt for various combinations that would pair well with your other decorations, like red and gold or silver and green—depending on your theme.

Do not leave your house plants bare and nude. Try to dress them up with ribbons and other decorations. Placing Christmas lights all over it is also a good way of giving life to the plants, especially at night.

You may also want to place aromatic candles and fresheners all over your home. This will keep the ambiance cool and relaxing. It also brings a sense of comfort, helping you and your family to adapt better to the spirit of Christmas.

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Keep your dining table and coffee table occupied with cookies and various Christmas treats that the children will surely enjoy. Fill them with chocolates and candy canes; the two types of sweets that definitely represent Christmas the best.

Most of all, give life to the walls of your house with Christmas lights. Make your home as bright as possible. Some people opt to fill every inch of their walls with Christmas lights. Whatever you prefer should be fine, as long as it is something that is fulfilling and brings comfort to you as the owner of your home.

Ideal Christmas Menus

While others believe that celebrating Christmas through parties is a wonderful approach, there are also people who prefer to celebrate Christmas in private within the comfort of their own home. Of course, as it is a special day, it calls for special treats that your family will surely enjoy. For that, here are some important reminders when it comes to preparing menus that you may want to prepare for your family this coming Christmas.

Plan a perfect menu that is balanced, healthy, and festive at the same time. A usual Christmas menu includes ham, turkey and candies such as candy canes and cranberries. Sandwiches, cakes and ice creams are also often seen on the dining table.

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Pair your meat with delicious carbohydrates such as pasta and pesto rice. To top it off, prepare special dishes that you would want to serve and prepare exclusively during Christmas like Chestnut and turkey dishes. Food that contains Chocolates are also appreciated and loved during this time.

Sample Christmas Menu

In the South, Christmas is valued and is typically celebrated with family. It is for this reason that a typical Southern Christmas menu is usually full and plenty. It is also a type of menu that family members of all ages would enjoy and love. A usual Southern Christmas dinner must always have a Baked Ham. It is usually paired with Mashed Potatoes, Roasted Turkey, a pie, and Macaroni & Cheese—a crowd favourite.

Eggnogs and Devilled Eggs are usually in the dining table as well. Other sweets such as Biscuits, candies and salads are also served to make the children pleased with the menu. Finger foods are also served especially during the time when family members simply gather and socialize with each other. Homemade cakes are mostly given as a dessert after such a hearty meal.

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Popular Christmas Carols and Stories

After a hearty meal shared with everyone, one activity that is often engaged in by family members during Christmas is to sit around the fireplace and let the spirit of Christmas shine upon them through Christmas stories and carols. This is the time when all the kids will be able to showcase their talents and make their parents and grandparents happy and proud. To sing, to dance, and to listen to stories while sitting comfortably in front of the fireplace is one of the usual activities during this season that helps strengthen the bonds of a family.

Christmas Carols have always been a part of this special holiday. Who would ever forget the moments when your grandfather would request for you, his lovely granddaughter, to sing a Christmas Carol to everyone? Jingle Bells, Angels We Have Heard on High, Deck the Halls, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Silent Night, and Winter Wonderland are some of the old favourites that will never be forgotten. These songs, despite the progressing years, remain the same and appreciated by many.

Apart from the Christmas Carols, the wonderful Christmas Stories are also often heard and shared by the elders. The parents and grandparents would tell the children the story of the Holy Family, of how Jesus was conceived and how Mary gave birth to Him in a manger, or perhaps the story of the Nutcracker, and perhaps who is Santa Clause and



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what the children should do to make him visit them in the middle of the night with marvellous gifts. And who would forget the Christmas Carol and the Grinch Who Stole Christmas? These stories are those that are never forgotten and are passed on from generation to generation, giving enough feel-good moments to every listener.

These songs and stories played a significant role in the lives of every family during Christmas. It is also an opportunity for everyone to simply sit together, to bond and have time for each other as a family. Throughout the years, Sharing stories and songs has been a part of Christmas. This simply strengthens one of the important matters considered and valued during Christmas which is preserving family ties and keeping them together and happy all throughout.

Gift Giving

As mentioned earlier, gift giving is an essential part of Christmas. This is to express the feeling of joy, love and gratitude to other people. This is also the time to remind them of how important they are in your life. Because of this, people often prepare for this prestigious gift giving activity by ensuring that they are able to provide and satisfy their loved ones with their selected presents.

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When giving gifts for children, toys are often appreciated. But toys are not the only options as presents for children. Most often, children appreciate nonmaterial objects that will provide them adventure and happiness, such as taking them to parks and activity centres on such a special day. You may also opt to give books especially to those who love to study and read, and clothes for those who love fashion.

Gift giving is also for your loved ones. For your brothers or sisters, giving them cool, popular gadgets are the best types of presents. You may opt to give them cell phones, laptops or game consoles. For your boyfriend or girlfriend, you may consider giving them promise rings and jewelleries. You may also opt for simpler yet sweet things such as cute bears and roses if you want to give a gift for your girlfriend, or perhaps signature items like perfumes. Some also prefer to give pets for presents, which for them is living proof of their love and gratitude for each other.

Gift certificates are ideal presents for parents, especially if those are the types of certificates that will provide them pampering and comfort. Parents are also very sentimental, so an item like a digital photo frame is also a good option as a Christmas gift. Another gift in relation to their sense of sentimentality is an antique collection that they will surely cherish and value. Giving them presents related to their hobbies are also good, such as knitting patterns for your mother or fishing gear for your father.

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During gift-giving, it is not the value of the gift, but the thought of giving that counts. For a person who simply appreciates the thought of you thinking of them, any present would do, as long as they can see and feel that you love and care for them. Although that may be the case, you should also somehow consider the items you are giving. It would have been better if you will be able to give them presents that they will be able to appreciate and at the same time make use of.

You may also opt to give consumable goods if you think it is more practical than giving gifts for sentimental purposes. In this manner, you will not only be able to show your gratitude and celebrate Christmas in a practical sense, but you will also be able to save enough money all throughout the season with the confidence in knowing your gifts did not go untouched.

Where to Go for Christmas Vacation?

If you want to go away from home this Christmas for a change, then you will be happy to know that there are places all over the world where Christmas is celebrated in its own unique manner and still enjoyable nonetheless. Here are some places where you can definitely enjoy spending your Christmas vacation.

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Go Native by Tracing Your Roots. If you are someone who spent most of your life in the city, then you may want to go out and trace your roots. This is the perfect time for you to know your relatives and socialize. This is practically a reunion as mentioned several times in this guide, but this reunion allows you to celebrate your time with your relatives.

Las Vegas. Obviously, Las Vegas is a city that never sleeps. But despite its reputation, Vegas also has different gimmicks that will perk the interest of the spectators, such as setting up a huge Christmas tree in the middle of the plaza. Apart from such specific Christmas special events, there are also a lot of places where you could definitely indulge in including events, concerts, casinos, etc.

Disneyland. Inside Disneyland or Disney World, you will become enamoured with the world of make-belief very quickly! Disney resorts often emit an aura that allows you to be happy and appreciate life. During Christmas, one can only appreciate the resort and feel the spirit of Christmas. As they say, there are few happier places to be at than Disneyland.

Christmas Facilities. There are places which are designed and made specifically to entertain guests for Christmas. They are often seen at malls, parks and places that are always visited by people.

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The Advantages of Going out on Vacation for Christmas

Not everyone goes away for vacation during Christmas season. For them, Christmas is ideally spent at home with family while leisurely spending time in front of the fireplace. Most adventurers take advantage of this fact and go all out during Christmas to have fun.

One advantage of going out on a trip during Christmas vacation is that, as mentioned earlier, there is less competition. Unlike summer vacation where everyone would like to travel, most people would prefer to just stay home. This provides a less crowded environment. Also as opposed to going to various places, most people will be at the malls, doing their last minute gift shopping.

There is also less distraction during Christmas season. The entire working place would go on vacation, leaving you plenty of time for yourself. Networking sites would also quiet down and be less active at this time of the year, as the people would be more focused in organizing their own Christmas parties than posting on the internet.

And most of all, vacation during Christmas will provide you more time for yourself—a special event that you could practically consider a gift. You could consider this as your own treat this season. This is a chance for you to relax, unwind and simply have fun.

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Celebrating Christmas During The Recession

No matter how much you want to spend Christmas in the most extravagant way you could imagine, money has become a big road block to many peoples' organizing and planning. One big factor attributed to such is the recession and for that, people are forced to tighten their belts in order to survive everyday life. So what can you do in order to celebrate Christmas in a frugal manner without worrying about money?

The key in Christmas-spending during recession is budget planning. For most people, Christmas is a special time and it is simply inexcusable to not have at least a couple of dishes in the dining room on the very day. To make sure that you will be able to have something for Christmas without ending up broke, you must be able to reserve and calculate the money you have accordingly. Make a specific budget on how much you are willing to spend for Christmas.

Separate your budget between necessity and leisure. You should keep the amount of money you will need for your bills, so that you will not be tempted to try spending them unnecessarily. This will only lead to more financial trouble so it's important to manage your budget.

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Try to look for gifts that are useful and affordable. If a specific item would probably cost more than what you might have expected, then try to analyze if the item is actually worth the money you will spend. Try to go for consumable goods instead if you want to make sure that it will be something that will definitely be used by the person whom you are buying the gift for.

Christmas sales are practically a pitfall. Avoid falling into such bait, since it will only lure you into buying more things that would probably end up being unnecessary and inessential. You should rationally think about the things you will buy before buying.

Look for options. Avoid being a compulsive buyer who will immediately buy an item on sight. Try to look around first and see if there are better, less expensive products that will perk your interest and would be more suitable as a gift.

And most importantly, prepare the right amount of food for your family. Avoid spending unnecessarily. Do not prepare food for twenty people when there are just ten of you who will be sharing the food.

In this manner, despite a recession, you will be able to spend Christmas in a fun, yet frugal way without any worrying over money.

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The Final Message

Christmas is a special season; the final holiday before New Year. Everyone anticipates this holiday, and everyone simply loves this moment. It is natural for a person to want to make sure that Christmas will be an unforgettable day on their part. But you should always keep in mind that at such point in time, it is important for you to be frugal and practical.

Over the years, Christmas has become an outlet of the people who are facing everyday problems in life. This is the only day of the year where people are allowed to simply be happy and have fun.

But despite all of the planning, all the desire to want to go out or to have a party, never forget the true reason for celebrating Christmas. Always remember that Christmas is all about the birth of Jesus Christ. Remember that Christmas is about being able to reach out to other people and express never-ending feelings of gratitude and love. This way, everyone will be able to celebrate Christmas both emotionally, and spiritually.

So to you, the reader of this guide, enjoy the holiday season to the fullest. A Merry Christmas to you!