



# GUIDE TO A PERFECT HAPPY MODERN TRADITIONAL FINNISH FAMILY CHRISTMAS: THE BASICS



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## PROLOGUE

Christmas, as we know it, is a rather family orientated holiday. This guide will demonstrate how to spend a traditional Finnish Christmas. Instructions are intended for stereotypical Finnish family, which includes one to two parents, and more than zero kids. Relatives of all sort are included, from pet dogs to second cousins.

If you are not in such situation, we advise you to get into one. For further instructions, check out our 'Manual For Starting Off A Family' (Group Four, 2017).

By following the steps presented in this guide, you will know how to create a proper Christmas atmosphere. Detailed information about preparing the Ham, finding the Christmas tree, how to correctly act (around) Santa, and other essential Christmas elements are included. In this guide, we address the proper instructions for households, private persons, leaving out the public spaces and figures.

It is strongly recommended to follow and go through every step of each chapter, this is the only way to achieve a REAL and JOYFUL Christmas.

# CHRISTMAS HISTORY

Christmas is originally an annual festival about the birth of Jesus Christ. Billions of people still celebrate it around the globe. Christmas Day is a public holiday in many of the world's nations, is celebrated religiously by a majority of Christians, as well as culturally by many non-Christians.

In the Finnish tradition, the Christmas period has usually been considered to start on Tuomas's name day on December 21 and to continue until St. Knut's Day on January 13. However, the preparations begin weeks earlier.

The Finnish Christmas has acquired some characteristics from the harvest festival kekri, that used to take place around the old All Saints' Day. In Sweden and Finland, Joulupukki (Christmas goat) was a man who dressed as a fertility rite character, a goat. He put goat horns on his head as in shamanistic tradition to look like a goat.

Feeding small birds at Christmas is an old tradition and the peasant culture's ritual that brought good luck to farming. The purpose of the barley or oat sheaf was to keep the birds away from the crop in the summer. The Finnish pagans may have believed that the dead birds celebrated the mid-winter holiday with the living.

Decorations have been part of Christmas since the middle of the 1800s, when the Christmas tree tradition came to Finland. Having a sauna is an old tradition. People washed in the Christmas sauna before the festivities, and food and drink gifts were left there for the elf. People in wealthy families started giving each other presents at the beginning of the 1800s. Christmas calendars arrived in Finland after the second world war.

All of these old traditions still exist in the Finnish Christmas, along with many new ones. By browsing through this guide, you will learn about the contemporary Christmas and its numerous details.

# CHRISTMAS ATMOSPHERE

Atmosphere are the things which can arouse your feelings to remind you christmas is coming. For anyone who wants to master the spirit of "Christmas", there's one thing you need to keep in mind—the key point of Christmas is not only to celebrate the certain day of December, but to enjoy everything happened before it, around it or caused by it.

It always starts in November, or sometimes even in October, you heard the first Christmas song when you walk down the street, you know this is it, the Christmas is coming.

There are also some visual notifications and signs to remind you about it. For example, the specific color series: red, green, silver, gold. And all the patterns and decorations with symbols hanging on the window of every store. We included the Christmas calendar, the snowman, the celebration on christmas street. The nervousness starts rising when family hangs up the Christmas calendar, the count down means you're getting closer to the big day. As for the gingerbread house, the most important role of it is to spread the smell of sugar to make this holiday more like a fairy tale.

On Christmas night all wishes come true. No-one can be left aside at Christmas time, we should cheering with joy, singing carols and enjoying Christmas meal with family. This is why we made a clear declaration at the beginning of this book at Prologue(page1): If you want to have a REAL and HAPPY Christmas, family are the essential elements you need to have, at least for this holiday.



# CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

## INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

Christmas calendar, originally known as Advent calendar is special calendar used to count the days of Advent in anticipation of Christmas. Since the first day of Advent varies, (first of 4 Advent Sundays) has the calendars beginning varied accordingly. Christmas calendar has evolved into non/less religious countdown to anticipate Christmas eve, beginning in the first of December.

Christmas calendar is usually upheld by the parents of the family. A proper Christmas calendar is a homemade board/ object/ alternative solution with 24 windows, one for each day before Christmas eve (which is also included as the 24th window). Every window or box is filled with a small gift, treat or a tip telling where to find such things.

## INSTRUCTIONS HOW TO USE CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

1. Become the child of the family. If you have already been through that, you may try to maintain that position in the family. This might require some convincing. Stay strong.
2. Get really excited about Christmas. Mention the holiday at least 3 times a week, starting from beginning of November. This will give your care-givers time to design, build, and plan the Christmas calendar. Remember, they need to have enough time to buy all the gifts and treats, too!
3. 1st of December. Get up early, so you won't be late from kindergarten, school, work or other duties. Open the first box/window of the calendar. Enjoy the free stuff! Be sure not to peak to next days box. Good manners will gain more gifts for Christmas eve.
4. Repeat section 3 22 times, once every day.
5. It is the 24th of December. Get hyped, you may scream, run or jump if you feel like it. Christmas Peace won't be announced for a couple of hours. Open the last box. Remember, there will be a gift ceremony later that day. Keep up the good spirit.

# SNOWMAN

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPT OF SNOWMAN

Snowman is a snow sculpture, often made by children, appear in the snowy parts of the world. Despite its common noun, Snowman has no gender, unless the artist decides to express it somehow. Snowman consists of snow, and is often decorated with a carrot, hat, a scarf or other small artefacts. In many places, typical snowmen consist of three large snowballs of different sizes with some additional accoutrements for facial and other features. Due to the sculptability of snow, there is also a wide variety of other styles. Low-cost and availability are the common issues, since snowmen are usually abandoned to the elements once completed.

## INSTRUCTONS TO SCULPTING A SNOWMAN

1. Prepare yourself. Put on warm clothes, it is cold outside! It might not be extremely cold, (since snowmen can not be sculpted unless the snow is close to 0 celsius degrees) yet you may freeze and get sick. That is not the goal here.
2. Get familiar with the material - first make a proper snowball, the size of a fist. Knowing and understanding the material helps you to express yourself more openly.
3. Make sure there is enough of white snow around. You may want to keep away from yellow or sandy snow. Watch out for occasional flying snowballs, your fellow sculptors may get excited and start a snow fight out of nowhere.
4. Take a good armful of snow and 'hug' it into a ball or other shape. The shape does not have to be that dense yet. You will build your snowman around this.
5. Place the lightly hugged snow shape on to a fresh snow. Start rolling it around it's own axel on the snow surface. You will see that the shape starts to grow, as if it was glueing the snowflakes it touches to itself.
6. Roll the shape around until it feels large enough. Usually the bottom part is from knee high to waist. This concerns those who have chosen to sculpt a traditional three-ball snowman. Make sure that you end your rolling to a spot where you would like for the ready sculpture to be.
7. Start over. This time you want to make a smaller one. It will be the snowman's torso, ball between head and 'legs'. Make sure to prepare the torso dense enough, you have to lift it on the first ball. Here you might ask for help of a fellow

sculptor.

8. Repeat this act and place the third ball on the top. You may want to strengthen the joints of the balls with some extra snow, that you can adapt with your hands.
9. The basic form has now been made. Take a moment to check that you, and your fellow sculptors are alive and well. No one has buried under a pile of snow, or frozen to death.
10. Collect rocks, pieces of wood or other around a button -sized elements to interpret the buttons of the snowman's invisible jacket. Place the button replicas to a vertical line, in the middle of the ball in the middle. Create eyes and a mouth with such elements, if it fits your artistic view.
11. Find a carrot, and place it to the head part. The carrot is supposed to represent a nose. A volunteer will give up her/his hat to the snowman, as well as a scarf.
12. Observe the sculpture from inside of your house. Let it melt, as the spring arrives.

## CHRISTMAS MUSIC

### INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Christmas music comprises a variety of genres of music normally performed or heard around the Christmas season. Music associated with Christmas may be purely instrumental, or in the case of many carols or songs may employ lyrics whose subject matter ranges from the nativity of Jesus Christ, to gift-giving and merrymaking, to cultural figures such as Santa Claus, among other topics. Performances of Christmas music at public concerts, in churches, at shopping malls, on city streets, and in private gatherings is an integral staple of the Christmas holiday in many cultures across the world.

Music associated with Christmas is thought to have its origins in 4th century Rome, in Latin hymns such as *Veni redemptor gentium*. By the 13th century, under the influence of Francis of Assisi, the tradition of popular Christmas songs in regional native languages developed. Christmas carols in the English language first appear in a 1426 work of John Awdlay, an English chaplain, who lists twenty five "caroles of Cristemas", probably sung by groups of 'wassailers' who would travel from house to house. In the 16th century, various Christmas carols still sung to this day, including "The 12 Days of Christmas", "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen", and "O Christmas Tree", first emerged.

The Victorian Era saw a surge of Christmas carols associated with a renewed admiration of the holiday, including "Silent Night", "O Little Town of Bethlehem", and "O Holy Night". The first Christmas songs associated with Saint Nicholas or other gift-bringers also came during 19th century, including "Up on the Housetop" and "Jolly Old St. Nicholas". Many older Christmas hymns were also translated or had lyrics added to them during this period, particularly in 1871 when John Stainer published a widely influential collection entitled "Christmas Carols New & Old". Few notable carols were produced from the beginning of the 20th century until the Great Depression era of the 1930s, when a stream of songs of often.

American origin were published, most of which did not explicitly reference the Christian nature of the holiday, but rather the more secular traditional Western themes and customs associated with Christmas. These included songs aimed at children such as "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town" and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer", as well as sentimental ballad-type songs performed by famous crooners of the era, such as "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "White Christmas", the latter of which remains the best-selling single of all time as of 2018.

Popular Christmas music produced from after World War II until the present day has generally remained thematically, lyrically, and instrumentally similar to the songs produced in the early 20th century. Since the dawn of the rock era in the mid-1950s, much of the Christmas music produced for popular audiences has had explicitly romantic

overtones, only using Christmas as a setting. Exceptions such as “The Christmas Shoes” (2000) have re-introduced Christian themes as complementary to the secular Western themes, and a plethora of traditional carol cover versions by various artists have explored virtually all music genres.

## HOW TO IMMERSE IN CHRISTMAS MUSIC ALL THE TIME

1. Walking around the street: Generally speaking, by the beginning of November, retail stores, shopping malls, department stores, and restaurants start to play Christmas music. You just need to do all your daily routines during this season, you can immerse yourself in this joyful music while you’re shopping, eating or walking on the street.
2. When you are in a place without Christmas music: There’re some situations that you have to stay in a place without any Christmas music, the easiest way to fix this problem is to open a Christmas radio[a]. Most of the radio stations began adding some Christmas-themed selections to their regular playlists shortly in November each year, and some even making the switch as early as October.
3. Prepare your own palylist or any non-stop Christmas music radios for Christmas Eve/Christmas day! It is a MUST on December 24–25. You have to play non-stop Christmas music for at least 36–48 hours to create this fabulous atmosphere at home, or it wouldn’t count as a REAL Christmas at all.

## HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN PLAYLIST FORM CHRISTMAS

1. Create a youtube, Spotify or other music channels on the internet, and added all your favorite songs in “Christmas non-stop playlist”.
2. Download all the Christmas songs to set a playlist in your computer(iTunes and others) just in case of some technique issues happened on the Internet connection in Christmas day.
3. For a more secure way is to record songs in CDs, USB drivers, and also copy on the cloud. (Trust me, you’ll feel super embarrassed if the music stops at the middle of Christmas dinner.)
4. To choose the right songs.
  - Traditional Christmas carols[b]
  - Most popular Christmas songs through years[c]
  - Songs have nothing-related-to-Christmas but appear in Christmas day[d]
  - Most-hated Christmas songs[e]

[a]. Christmas radio

Christmas radio In Finland

Jouluradio is a network media produced by the mass media in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and its own changing staff, which also includes FM and cable networks around Finland. In Jouluradio, the first Epiphany of Epiphany pacific Christmas music without speech or commercials.

Jouluradio started its operations in the metropolitan area in December 2003. In 2004, the radio was also listenable via the internet. 2006 Jouluradio expanded from the Helsinki metropolitan area to Tampere and Oulu, and a year later, the regions of Rovaniemi, Seinäjoki and Turku joined the analogue listening. Approximately 4.2 million people lived in the analogue area of the channel in 2017. Radio was in 23 different regions from Helsinki to Rovaniemi.

[b]. Traditional Christmas carols list

In Finnish

01. “En etsi valtaa, loistoa” (“Give Me No Splendour, Gold, or Pomp”)
02. “Joulun kellot” (“Christmas Bells”)
03. “Joulupuu on rakennettu” (“Christmas tree has been built”)
04. “Tonttu”
05. “On Hanget Korkeat Nietokset “
06. “Varpunen Jouluaamuna” (Sparrow on Christmas Morning)
07. “Sylvian Joululaulu” (Sylvia’s Christmas song)

The Most Depressing Finnish Christmas Songs

01. “Varpunen jouluaamuna”
02. “Tuikkikaa oi joulun tähtöset”
03. “Sylvian joululaulu”
04. ”Me käymme joulun viettohon”
05. ”On jouluyö, nyt laulaa saa”
06. ”Konsta Jylhän joululaulu/ Konstan joululaulu”
07. ”Kaksi kynttilää”

In English

01. “Angels We Have Heard on High” (in the UK the text of “Angels from the Realms of Glory” is sung to this tune)
02. “Away in a Manger”
03. “Deck the Halls” (Deck the Hall)
04. “Ding Dong Merrily on High”
05. “The First Nowell” (The First Noël)
06. “Go Tell It on the Mountain”
07. “God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen” (God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen)
08. “Good King Wenceslas”
09. “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

10. "I Saw Three Ships"
11. "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"
12. "Joy to the World"
13. "O Christmas Tree" (O Tannenbaum)
14. "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (Adeste Fideles)
15. "O come, O come, Emmanuel"
16. "O Holy Night" (Cantique de Noël)
17. "O Little Town of Bethlehem"
18. "Once in Royal David's City"
19. "Silent Night"
20. "The Twelve Days of Christmas"
21. "We Three Kings of Orient Are"
22. "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"
23. "What Child Is This?" (Greensleeves)
24. "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks"

[c]. Most popular Christmas songs through years

Most-performed Christmas songs (U.S.):

The top thirty most-played holiday songs for 2015, from 1/1/15 through 12/31/15.

01. "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" J. Fred Coots, Haven Gillespie
02. "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" Ralph Blane, Hugh Martin
03. "Winter Wonderland" Felix Bernard, Richard B. Smith
04. "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" Sammy Cahn, Jule Styne
05. "The Christmas Song" Mel Tormé, Robert Wells
06. "Jingle Bell Rock" Joseph Carleton Beal, James Ross Boothe
07. "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" Edward Pola, George Wyle
08. "Sleigh Ride" Leroy Anderson, Mitchell Parish
09. "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" Johnny Marks
10. "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas" Meredith Willson
11. "White Christmas" Irving Berlin
12. "A Holly Jolly Christmas" Johnny Marks
13. "Carol of the Bells" Peter J. Wilhousky
14. "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" Johnny Marks
15. "All I Want for Christmas Is You" Mariah Carey, Walter Afanasieff
16. "Frosty the Snowman" Steve Nelson, Walter E. Rollins
17. "Blue Christmas" Billy Hayes, Jay W. Johnson
18. "(There's No Place Like) Home for the Holidays" Bob Allen, Al Stillman
19. "The Little Drummer Boy" Katherine K. Davis, Henry V. Onorati, Harry Simeone
20. "Do You Hear What I Hear?" Gloria Shayne Baker, Noël Regney
21. "Silver Bells" Jay Livingston, Ray Evans
22. "Baby, It's Cold Outside" Frank Loesser
23. "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" Tommie Connor
24. "Feliz Navidad" José Feliciano
25. "Christmas Eve/Sarajevo 12/24" Jon Oliva, Paul O'Neill, Robert Kinkel

26. "Last Christmas" Wham!
27. "Here Comes Santa Claus" Gene Autry, Oakley Haldeman
28. "Santa Baby" Joan Ellen Javits, Philip Springer, Tony Springer, and Fred Ebb
29. "Happy Holiday" Irving Berlin
30. "Wonderful Christmastime" Paul McCartney

The top ten most played Christmas songs in the UK based on a 2012 survey conducted by PRS for Music.

01. "Fairytale of New York" The Pogues with Kirsty MacColl
02. "All I Want for Christmas Is You" Mariah Carey
03. "Do They Know It's Christmas?" Band Aid
04. "Last Christmas" Wham!
05. "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town" Harry Reser
06. "Do You Hear What I Hear?" Bing Crosby
07. "Happy Christmas (War Is Over)" John Lennon
08. "Wonderful Christmastime" Paul McCartney
09. "I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday" Wizzard
10. "Merry Xmas Everybody" Slade

[d]. Songs have nothing-related-to-Christmas

In case you feel lost when you really listen to the lyrics and found out they have nothing related to Christmas at all. They are, at best, winter songs. And yes, they also what we called Christmas music.

01. "My Favorite Things" Julie Andrews
02. "Let it Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" Dean Martin
03. "Jingle Bells" Frank Sinatra
04. "Sleigh Ride" Arthur Fiedler
05. "Frosty The Snowman" Leon Redbone And Dr. John
06. "Winter Wonderland" Felix Bernard and Richard B. Smith
07. "Baby It's Cold Outside" Frank Loesser
08. "Marshmallow World" Carl Sigman and Peter DeRose
09. "Hard Candy Christmas" Dolly Parton
10. "River" Joni Mitchel

[e]. Most-hated Christmas songs

To prevent you to put the wrong songs in your list, or to create another list to play when there are some annoyed visitors at Christmas

According to Edison Media Research's 2007 survey

01. "Jingle Bells?" Barbra Streisand
02. "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" the Jackson 5
03. "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" Elmo & Patsy's
04. "O Holy Night" as performed by cartoon characters from Comedy Central's "South Park".

# CHRISTMAS STREET

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTMAS STREET

Aleksanterinkatu (Swedish: Alexandersgatan) is a street in the centre of Helsinki, Finland. In the city plan by Carl Ludvig Engel, it was the Decumanus Maximus, the main east-west street in the city, crossing the Cardo, Unioninkatu (Union Street) at the corner of the Senate Square. At Christmas time, Aleksanterinkatu is traditionally decorated with elaborate Christmas lights.

The Christmas season traditionally begins in Helsinki with the opening of the Christmas Street, which takes place around the end of November every year. (There's a saying that it's starts earlier each year)

## IMPORTANT EVENT ON THE CHRISTMAS STREET

1. Switching on of the Christmas lights along Aleksanterinkatu: The event begins on 25 Nov 2018 at 2pm at Senate Square.
2. Charity market: Charity market starts at 2pm where visitors can find Christmas treats, such as Christmas porridge, mulled wine and pastries.
3. Santa Claus: Santa Claus will arrive at Senate Square aboard a historic tram and switch on the Christmas lights at 4 pm.
4. Christmas Parade: After the lights switch on, a Christmas Parade will proceed along the streets Aleksanterinkatu, Mannerheimintie and Pohjoisesplanadi.
5. Then visitors will have the chance to see Santa and enjoy the Christmas atmosphere.

# GINGERBREAD HOUSE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE GINGERBREAD HOUSE

A gingerbread house is a novelty confectionery shaped like a building that is made of cookie dough, cut and baked into appropriate components like walls and roofing. The usual material is crisp ginger biscuit made of gingerbread – the ginger nut. Another type of model-making with gingerbread uses a boiled dough that can be moulded like clay to form edible statuettes or other decorations. These houses, covered with a variety of candies and icing, are popular Christmas decorations, often built by children with the help of their parents.

The gingerbread house is one of the most important thing everyone should make at home for Christmas. Most Finns make it 3 weeks before Christmas, and eat them in Christmas day or New year Eve. It's not just a decoration at home, but also an essential sweets to spread.

Christmas smells in the air (butter, sugar and cinnamon), these smells are the magical elements to create a Christmassy feeling for your house.

You should follow this instructions precisely and cautiously if you want to create a perfect gingerbread house. Or if you're wise enough you can even practice it in the summer vacation to upgrade your skills in advance.

## PREPARATION FOR GINGERBREAD HOUSE

### INGREDIENTS

For the biscuits

- Butter: 300 grams
- Sugar: 500 grams
- Baking powder: 1 tablespoon
- Honey: 100 grams
- Flour: 1 kg
- Water: 200 ml
- Cinnamon: 2 tablespoons
- Cloves: 1 tablespoon
- Ginger: 1 tablespoon
- Cardamom: 1 tablespoon

- Black pepper: 1 teaspoon

Tips: The biscuits are made by a ginger flavored dough which is then modeled in the shape of an house

For the royal icing

- egg whites: 4
- Powdered sugar: 800 grams
- Fresh lemon: 2 drops

You can also use chocolate, candies, sugar or any other things you think it's good to make our house perfect.

## HOW TO MAKE A PERFECT GINGERBREAD HOUSE

1. Melt the butter then add the sugar and the honey, stirring well.
2. Mix the spices, the flour and the baking powder and add the melted butter. Add the water to get a homogeneous mixture that does not stay attached to the fingers (it may take less or more of the recommended dosage, depends on the type of flour you're using and its strength).
3. Mix everything well and, when ready, wrap it in plastic wrap and refrigerate for about 7 hours.
4. After 7 hours take the dough out of the fridge, roll it out to a maximum height of 3 cm and cut shapes for the house using special molds or just your imagination.
5. Place in the oven and cook for up to 7 minutes at 180° (or 356°F) being careful not to burn the biscuits and also not to overcook them otherwise, when they are going to stick, they will break. Once cooked, let them cool.
6. Prepare the royal icing beating the egg whites and lemon until stiff then add the powdered sugar a little at a time. Continue to beat until the frosting comes up without lumps and it appears quite lucid.
7. Compose your gingerbread house attacking the various parts made of biscuits to each other using royal icing as glue and use glasses for supporting the various parts of the house waiting for them to stick together. Allow to stick for at least 2 hours.
8. Once curdled, decorate the house as you prefer using royal icing to glue the

pieces (candy, colored buttons, etc etc). Leave coagulate all other elements for at least 1 hour.

## TIME MANAGEMENT

The making of the gingerbread house requires more than 12 hours, depends on the size and how delicate it is, so you should start in the morning then it will be ready by the end of the day.

Here are some tips for you:

1. You can store the cookie dough in the freezer for at least a month.
2. Instead of making the icing yourself you can just buy edible (and eventually colored) glue to be used to compose your house.
3. Always let your gingerbread house dry before decorating it. If you want to decorate the pieces one by one then you've to make sure all of them are completely dry before gluing them together;
4. Keep your gingerbread away from any sources of moisture and heat otherwise it will soften up very easily;
5. You can also use melted sugar as the glue;
6. Cut your dough using a pizza cutter for a better effect.

After you make the gingerbread house, place it at the most important and untouchable spot in your house, to show everyone your fabulous work, and wait for at least a month to eat it. (stand by and check it all time to make sure it stays in the best shape till Christmas)

# CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Christmas is a season of light, gifts and decorations. For a lonely person, we recommend to quickly get married and have children, or have an alternative Christmas, such as traveling abroad. It is strongly family dependent season. Christmas has a few basic elements that every household should have. It is a season with an unique atmosphere, apart from the religious origin (the birth of Jesus Christ) it is the time of relaxation, warmth and family, in the heart of the winter. To create an according atmosphere, you should decorate your house from floor to the ceiling.

You should begin to plan your Christmas decorations, food preparing, cleaning and gifts latest at the beginning of November. Christmas season lasts at least two months, including the preparations and the aftermath.



# CHRISTMAS TREE

## INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTMAS TREE

Christmas tree is a decorated tree, usually a spruce, or an artificial tree of similar appearance. Tree is usually placed in the living room of an apartment, where the celebration of Christmas takes place. It is usually carried inside on the first day of Advent (Advent Sunday, also called the First Sunday of Advent or First Advent Sunday, among the Western Christian Churches, is the first day of the liturgical year and the start of the season of Advent.), or latest at Christmas eve, 24th of December. Depending on the tradition, the tree is decorated instantly, or in the morning of 24th. The tree is often placed in the middle of the room, and the presents appear around it. Singing Christmas songs and dancing around the tree might happen.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FINDING A CHRISTMAS TREE

It might be the First Advent Sunday, some random day on December, or Christmas eve; regardless of the tradition, the following rules must be taken account of.

1. Put on warm clothes; boots, a scarf, big jacket and mittens. Don't forget to cover your head. The weather is probably a lot below zero, and snow at least knee high.
2. Go to the shed and pick your hand saw with you. You might want to look around for a pedestal for the tree, you will need it later.
3. If you have a flashlight or a torch of some kind, be sure to carry it in case of a sudden darkness. If there is still sunlight left, take a good look, enjoy, it might not appear again for another two months.
4. Constantly keep moving, to prevent freezing. Running away from wild animals might keep you warm.
5. Once you get to the area with spruces, look for a young one. The tree has to be symmetrical, perfectly green and the right height - remember it has to fit to your living room! Do not hesitate to climb to a bigger tree, if there is a suitable treetop.
6. Remember to watch out for bears and other wild animals - you are in their territory.
7. Once you find a beautiful individual, take a stabile squat and start sawing the tree in a 90 degree angle, close to the ground. If you are in a treetop, make sure to hold tight to prevent falling.

8. Carry the Christmas tree in to your house. Be careful to keep it's beautiful branches unharmed.

## PLANTING THE TREE TO YOUR HOME

1. Make sure there is a large unoccupied area in the middle of your living room. If someone or something is threatening this, you can always tell that no one is supposed to disturb the Christmas Peace (Christmas Peace is announced every 24th of December). That way you will always win an argument.
2. Get a stabile support/ pedestal to your tree. You don't want it to crash down with all the decorations. Usually a good base for a tree is a cast iron, too heavy for one person to carry, three legged object. Every household should have one.
3. Sprinkle the needles of the tree to the floor, make sure that all of the cleaning was a waste of time.
4. Once you have carefully lifted the tree to its position on the pedestal, take a step back and check if it stays vertical. If so, you have completed the task.

## DECORATION IN/OUTSIDE OF HOUSEHOLD

Christmas decorations are usually lights, colorful plastic balls, snowflake variations, which may often be crafted by children of the household, and a star (The Star of Bethlehem, or Christmas Star), on top of the tree.

A Christmas decoration is any of several types of ornamentation used at Christmastime. The traditional colors of Christmas are red, white, yellow, Gold and silver also appear in the decorations repeatedly. Typical decoration subjects are snowflakes, Baby Jesus (even among non-religious households), Santa Claus, christmas star.

Candles, artificial and traditional ones take place in and outside of the household. In the western countries, it is traditional to decorate the outside of houses with lights and sometimes with illuminated sleighs, snowmen, and other Christmas figures. Typical treat of the season, gingerbread, can also be part of the decorations.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR DECORATION

1. If you haven't yet, go to the supermarket to buy at least the following; (if you have, you can skip to part 2.) You might want to take a quick stop to a craft shop, too.
  - Christmas star (also known as the Star Of Bethlehem)  
(The star should also contain a light, but it is not necessary)
  - Plastic balls, shiny, colorful, some might be glittery and some not.  
(The more the better)
  - Plastic snowflakes
  - Paper snowflakes
  - Candles, different sizes, colors, smells
  - Artificial candles, different sizes, colors
  - Christmas tree (if not from forest, from supermarket)
  - Glitter ribbon
  - Paper, different colors
  - Deers made from straw
  - Elves made from straw
  - Plastic deers
  - Plastic elves
  - Any decoration made from straw
  - Colorful lights

2. Go to your Christmas tree. Place the star on top. Make sure the light goes on.
3. Place artificial candles around the tree, from the top to bottom. Continue placing the candles around the house. Be sure to cover the surroundings of windows.
4. Carefully place the glitter ribbon around the tree, similar to the candles. You might place the glitter the opposite direction to avoid too symmetrical appearance. Left over ribbon may be placed around doorways.
5. Plant the plastic balls, deers and elves to the branches of the tree. There is no such thing as 'too much'.
6. Repeat section 5 with straw elements. Be sure to cover the tree carefully. You don't want the actual tree to appear!
7. Randomly plant deers, elves and other small artifacts around the house.
8. Fold a colorful paper, and randomly cut holes to it. Tape / glue it to a window.
9. Repeat.
10. Teach this to the children of the house.
11. Go outside of the house, plant lights all over the facade. Be sure to mix all colors and cover the whole wall. Windows may be left undecorated from outside.
12. Plant candles on the doorway outside of the house, so Santa will find his way to you.
13. Make sure the in & outside of the house is covered with decorations. You do not want your walls to be uncovered.

# SHOW YOUR LOVE DURING CHRISTMAS TIME



## CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Above all, Christmas cannot be a real Christmas without gifts! It is extremely important to have all the gifts ready to be placed at the base under the Christmas tree by the night of the 24th of December. More the better.

Please keep in mind during Christmas everyone must be nicer than usual, so put aside all those frictions and tensions accumulated during the year. Your brother starved to death your cat during the past summer holidays? Forget about it, it was old and soon or later everyone has to go anyway.

Your husband forgot to water your beautiful orchids in the bathroom. That cousin, the one who calls you when he is in trouble only, well, after all he is your cousin and if he is so often in trouble, a nice gift for Christmas will remind him that you are there for him.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Research is essential to be acknowledged about the latest trends, every year some colours are more hip than others, some toys are must-to-have and high tech is running faster than ever. No one wants to wear an outdated shade of grey cardigan, takes a selfie with the last year mobile phone camera or have your own children bullied at school because the don't have the latest Peppa Pig toy.

Be sure to pay with your credit card so you won't risk to ruin your holidays when the bank statement arrives at the end of December. After all January is the first month of the year and who troubles at the first of the year, well you know how it goes.. There is February to worry about it anyway.

Please keep in mind that on December the year tax refund will be paid back. There will be some extra fund to make your Christmas even more special.

## GIFTS METHODOLOGY

1. It is advisable to start to think about Christmas gifts towards the end of the summer, right after summer holidays so that every each of them can be well thought during the next four months.
2. October: Research about latest trends regarding:
  - Fashion
  - Toys

- High Tech
  - Colors
3. List people who need to receive gifts among family, closer relatives, far away relatives, closer friends, not so close friends, acquaintances, pets.
  4. Double check no one has been forgotten from your list.
  5. Carefully analyse every single social network profile of each person on the list. There will be evidence of what they need, what they would like to receive, and so on. Cross check these infos with the latest trends and you will notice the vast majorities of the people on your list are utterly retro and you do not like any of the present they would need or they would like to receive. Once you gathered all these info you will be ready to buy what you want. Keep in mind it is important what you would like to give them, not what is actually needed or what they would like to receive. You want to be sure to buy what you think they need and what you think they would like to receive. After all Christmas shopping can be quite stressing especially if you need to buy present you don't actually like. Unfortunately there will be always people who doesn't understand why they receive present they don't need. Just in case, think about a second gift for every person on your list. After all, the more present under the Christmas tree the better.
  6. During the first days of November, when luminaries are up and Christmas songs are played around, it is right time to wander around shops. From now on it is advisable to save at least a day per week to visit the shops.
  7. Keep in mind those relatives/friends who live abroad and cannot make it for Christmas, In these cases e-commerce would be the easiest way to proceed. Be sure to double check when is the deadline to ship the presents so that they arrive on time, on the 24th of December.
  8. Remember to buy wrapping paper, ribbons and name tags.
  9. Set your hideout where to place the presents so that nosy kids or relatives can find them.
  10. Black Friday, towards the end of November, would be an exceptional way to save some money because of the great deals offered. Keep in mind it is better to get 2 presents with a discounted presents than only one.
  11. At the beginning of December, after the Independence Day, it is really time start to buy some of the presents.
  12. Be sure to go shopping with your own car, you don't want to question yourself about how do I bring home all this stuff?
  13. Whenever there are doubts between 2 presents, do not lose precious time, buy them both.

14. Be sure to buy presents before the sales begin, it can be extremely embarrassing to wander around the city with the TARJOUS bags
15. On the night between the 22nd and the 23rd of December you have the last chance to think if you have forgot something or someone
16. It is time to wrap the last gifts, tag them, write the greeting and tie the ribbons. In case you are willing to make a breathtaking set for your Christmas tree it would be advisable to wrap the all the gifts with the same wrapping paper.
17. Place all the presents under the Christmas tree, the layer of them should reach at least the lower branches of ur spruce.

## GIFTS TYPOLOGY

### GIFTS FOR KIDS

You don't want to risk your children cries to ruin your favourite Christmas song. Just buy whatever they wished on their Santas list.

### GIFTS FOR LOVED ONES

Love is not about money, but sometimes it helps. After all it is just once per year.

### COURTESY GIFT

This category of gifts is aimed to those people that for some reason you cannot avoid to buy a present. These are usually relatives that you hear or see during Christmas only, work colleagues, girlfriends/boyfriend of ur best friend and so on.

After all it is good to be polite and, for the sake of Christmas, buy these people something. A box of chocolate, a bunch of flower, Santa's magnet or a key-holder will do the job.

### LAST MINUTES GIFTS

Just grab whatever you can and buy it, everything is better than nothing.

## PREVIOUS YEAR GIFTS

You remember how difficult it was to put up a smile on your face when you unwrapped them, and despite all the effort to force yourself to like them you never succeeded. Unfortunately everyone will receive some Christmas presents that made you speechless.

## CHARITY CARDS

These cards are the best solution for those people to whom you don't have a clue about what to get for Christmas.

They also work in case you must buy a present to someone you dislike. If that is the case, the charity cards save you to result impolite and rude. On the contrary they give you the possibility to look kind and thoughtful and, at the same time, to feel good with yourself because you are giving money for a good cause.

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

It is tradition to send Christmas cards for greetings and wishes, especially to those who cannot join you for the celebrations. Despite the new technologies would reach the achievement faster, it is a good thing to keep up these ancient tradition which dates back to 1611! Here there is the chance to use in all its length the traditional 'Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year'.

## CHRISTMAS CHARITY

In order to fulfil the Christmas spirit it would be great to make some donations to one, or more, among those NGO in need of money to help more unfortunate people than you. So, please stop as many times as you need to feel good with yourself and make plenty of donations. The more you spend the most you will look kind-hearted when you will tell you friends about your donations.

## WISH FOR GIFTS

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHILDREN

It is customary for the children to write a letter for Santa to let him know what they would like to receive for Christmas. Writing a letter to Santa is a super fun Christmas tradition! A well written letter shows Santa you are polite, plus it makes it easier for him to get you the presents you want.

Here are a few helpful tips:

1. Start by thinking what you really want. Remember Santa's magical elves can make you anything you want, so write down even your wildest wishes.
2. If you have a hard time coming up with ideas, browse through toy magazines and watch commercials or Youtube videos for inspiration!
3. When you know what you want to wish for, write a polite letter, telling a little bit about yourself, saying how much you love Santa and of course listing your wishes.
4. Then decorate the letter with drawings, paintings, stickers, lots of glue and everything you can find.
5. Leave the letter outside with some gingerbread cookies and the elves will do the rest!
6. Waiting for Christmas eve can be hard but crying to your parents about it every night helps a little bit.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADULTS

As an adult, wishing for gifts can be tricky. You don't want to seem greedy, but obviously you don't want be left without gifts either, nor is it fun to receive something you have to return later. You have to put in a little more effort than just writing your wishes down, to get what you need. There are a few different helpful techniques described below. Use them accordingly, depending on the occasion, your wish and the person you want to direct it to.

### THE QUILT-TRIP -TECHNIQUE

This technique is the most useful of the three, and works almost every time. It works

best if started around a month before Christmas and maintained weekly. This technique also works on bigger groups, that could possibly combine their funds to buy you a more expensive gift.

1. Start by describing to your person (or group) of choice how much you have been working, both at work and at home (really go to the extremes here, to make it effective).
2. Say that you spend all of the little free time you have buying gifts for others.
3. Wonder, jokingly, if you have been good enough this year to receive any gifts.
4. Continue by saying that you of course don't need anything but perhaps it would be nice to get some recognition of your hard work.
5. State your wish.
6. Emphasize again that you don't need or even really want it and follow up by saying that you just thought it might cheer you up after all of the Christmas stress.
7. If done correctly, this technique should ensure that the people around you see you as a humble, selfless person, which should increase their willingness to buy you gifts.
8. When you receive the gift, remember to act almost mad that people got you something and tell them that they absolutely didn't need to. Continue by saying how you feel embarrassed because the gifts that you gave them were so bad.

#### THE MANIPULATION-TECHNIQUE

This technique should be started almost right after Christmas and maintained until next Christmas. So it requires some perseverance but will give you good results in the end. Basically the key is knowing what you want and who you want it from. Then just talk about it to them constantly.

1. Pick the gift you want to wish for.
2. Pick the person you would like to receive the gift from.
3. Describe to them how you have wished for it for years but never gotten it.
4. Also incorporate the need into everyday life situations. For example using phrases like: "Oh, how this coffee would taste sweet from that fancy coffee cup I showed you." or "Oh, if I only had that new handbag now, it would make everything so much easier"
5. Sooner or later, the idea should be planted in their brain, and if you have really mastered this technique, they might even think it was their own idea all along.

6. Don't forget to look very surprised when you receive the gift and wonder theatrically how the giver was able to know what you wanted.

#### THE STRAIGHTFORWARD-TECHNIQUE

Use this technique with caution or you'll risk people thinking that you are greedy and selfish. Should only be used with closest friends and relatives. This technique is simple but perhaps the hardest to execute.

1. Pick the gift you want to wish for.
2. Pick the person you would like to receive the gift from.
3. Ask the chosen person to buy you the gift.
4. When you receive it on Christmas eve, look at the giver meaningfully through the crowd.
5. Wonder sarcastically: "How did Santa know?"

This technique can also be used if someone asks you what you wish for Christmas. Just remember to use this exact phrase structure to answer: "Oh, I don't need anything, Christmas is more about the atmosphere for me (laugh), but I guess (insert your wish) would be nice". This ensures that you don't come across too greedy.

# SANTA CLAUS

Santa Claus, also known as Saint Nicholas, Kris Kringle, Father Christmas, or simply Santa, is perhaps the most important symbol of Christmas. His origins are in Western Christian culture and he is said to bring gifts to the homes of well-behaved (“good” or “nice”) children on Christmas Eve (24 December) and the early morning hours of Christmas Day (25 December). Santa Claus is generally depicted as a portly, jolly, white-bearded man—sometimes with spectacles—wearing a red coat with white fur collar and cuffs, white-fur-cuffed red trousers, a red hat with white fur and black leather belt and boots and who carries a bag full of gifts for children. This image became popular in the United States and Canada in the 19th century due to the significant influence of the 1823 poem “A Visit from St. Nicholas” and of caricaturist and political cartoonist Thomas Nast. This image has been maintained and reinforced through song, radio, television, children’s books, films, and advertising. Santa Claus is aided by his elves, who make the toys in his workshop and his flying reindeer, who pull his sleigh. He is commonly portrayed as living at Korvatunturi, and often laughing in a way that sounds like “ho ho ho”.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTS

1. Get physically and mentally prepared to maintain the elaborate lie that is Santa Claus. You will have to go to extremes like staying up whole nights and possibly cramming yourself through the chimney to make sure your children can experience the true magic of Christmas.
2. If your children write letters to Santa Claus, as instructed on page x, and leave them outside, remember to collect them and take notes.
3. After this it is best to burn the letters so that your children will not find them.
4. Find someone in your family willing to spend their Christmas eve dressed as a fat old man for the amusement of children.
5. Dress them up in red clothes and add stuffing (for example pillows) until the desired body shape is achieved (see diagram A).
6. Find the biggest sack you own (or make one out of an old duvet cover).
7. Stuff all of your pre-bought, pre-wrapped gifts in the sack and give it to the designated “Santa Claus”.
8. Make the Santa Claus wait outside until the right moment.
9. Gather all of your children and announce the arrival of Santa Claus. The

announcement should be received with excitement, nervousness and even fear.

10. The next part is entirely in the hands of your “Santa Claus” (see “Instructions for the designated Santa Claus”).
11. After Santa Claus has done his duties, you should encourage your children to sit on Santa’s lap or sing for him, disregarding their resistance, crying and fear. Remember they will thank you later for providing them this magical experience.
12. In the end it is customary for the children to offer Santa some gingerbread cookies after which Santa is free to leave.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SANTA CLAUS

1. When the door opens, you have to get in character and stay in it for as long as you step out the door again. (It would be best if you had some acting background.)
2. You should practice, and master the signature laugh in advance. Sell it to them!
3. Remember you are representing the embodiment of Christmas. It is Santa Claus that can make or break the celebration and all the celebration to come.
4. Santa Claus should always be jolly, happy and cheerful, no matter how he is received.
5. Generously give out compliments to even the naughtiest of kids.
6. Once the general introductions are over with, (and the parents have persuaded the horrified children to stay in the same room with you), it is time for the main event: gifts!
7. Open your giant sack and start handing out the gifts. Read out the name on the gift theatrically and tell the child how good they have been behaving the whole year. If you read a name wrong, don’t worry, just cover it up by doing the signature laugh and stating that you are very old and very forgetful.
8. If the children start opening their gifts right away it is important for you to wrap it up quickly and leave as soon as possible because it is you they will blame if they don’t get what they wished for.
9. If the children (=the parents) start to sing for you, smile and really show them that you cherish every moment of it, even if it would be bad.
10. If the children give you cookies, eat them all while smiling and laughing.
11. After everything is done according to the instructions, you are free to leave and return to the celebration as your plain old self. Remember that the children must never learn the truth about your alter ego, so take extra care hiding the outfit and

coming up with a solid alibi.

Want to take this Santa Claus thing a bit further? maybe earn some money with it? Then keep reading!

## HOW TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL SANTA CLAUS

1. If you have mastered the points mentioned before and your debut went well, becoming a professional Santa is a walk in the park.
2. The key to success is advertising. You can advertise your services across all social media, or more traditionally, on the message board of the supermarket.
3. A reasonable fee is 70-100 euros per 10 minutes.
4. If you don't own a sleigh and some reindeer, it is best to walk all distances so that children won't see Santa driving a car.
5. Remember the competition is fierce, so you might need to upgrade your outfit and performance regularly to stay in the game. You need to make sure you are peoples number one choice year after year.
6. There can only be one Santa in the suburb, so if you see other professional Santas working in your area, feel free to use any means necessary to chase them away.
7. Never let the children down, even if you are sick or injured.
8. Now you are ready to start your career, good luck!



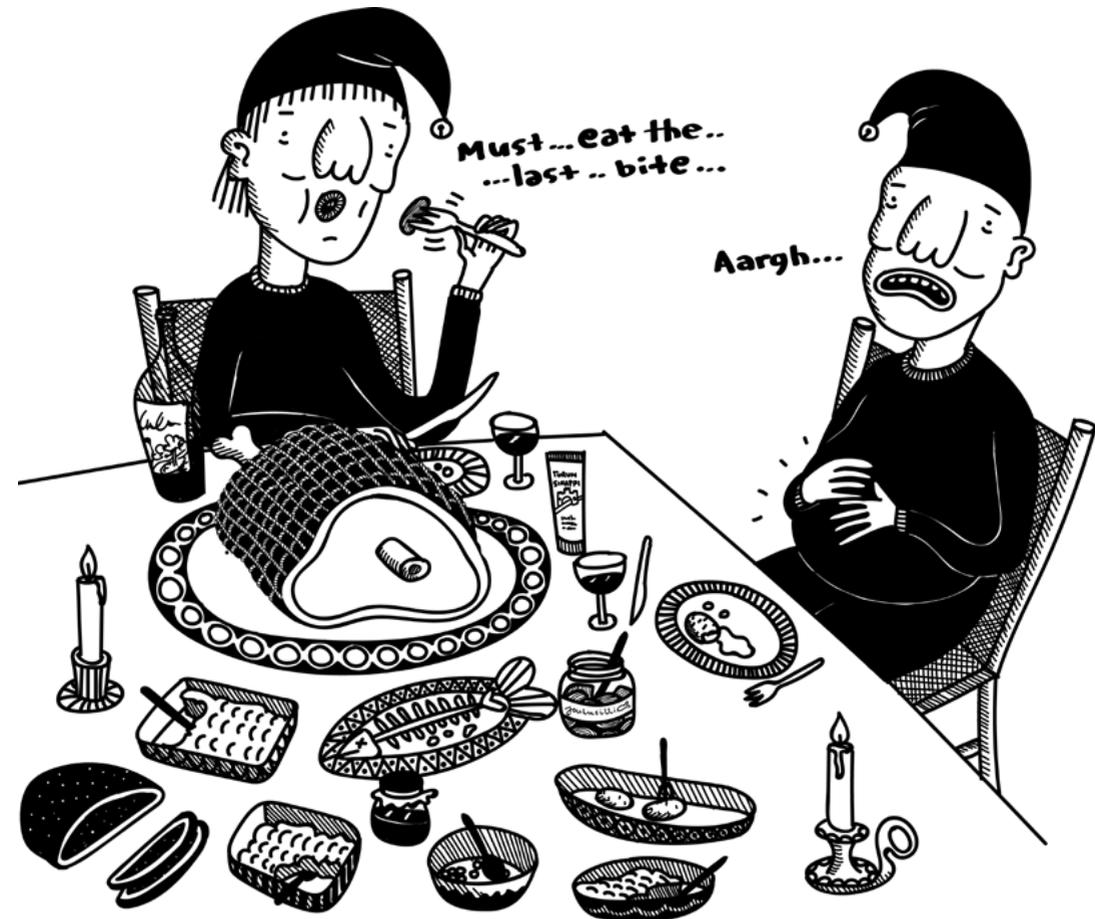
# CHRISTMAS MEAL

One of the most important things in Christmas is the Christmas meal. Traditionally Christmas is the time to eat well, and that means eat until your stomach explodes. In the old days Christmas was the only time you could eat at night and no one would lay a bad look. Christmas meal has changed a lot but at the same time the frame of it has stayed the same. Maybe nowadays it has become more fancy and detailed with a lot of imported foods as well; oranges, raisins, almonds, spices, turkey (for some families). It used to be so that the Christmas meal was left on the table for the whole night so home elves and other hungry creatures could go and have a bite.

Spices used to be some sorts of status symbols - the spicier the food, the richer the family. Christmas spices have a long tradition. They were brought to Finland from the furthest places on earth and in people's minds they were associated with luxurious life. Many spices used to be worth as much as gold and gemstones.

The traditional Christmas meal is built around a big ham, that is roasted in the oven overnight. Different sorts of casseroles are also a big part, such as liver-, carrot-, potato- and turnipcasserole. Gravsalmón, cold smoked salmon, warm smoked salmon, lutefisk and different sorts of herrings are served as well. Traditional baked goods are Christmas tarts and gingerbread biscuits. Chocolate is also a big part of Christmas traditions, one can not avoid getting at least one chocolate box as a gift from someone. Traditional drink is glogg, glögi in Finnish, other drinks to drink are red and white wine, vodka, and different sort of sodas.

There are so many Christmas foods that you should make, so we only chose some of the main things and recipes to explain. For more information you can go to the library or internet and do your own research. But remember that there is a LOT of foods to make so prepare yourself.



# HAM

## HOW TO GET A NICE HAM

There are three ways to get yourself a nice ham for your christmas meal.

1. Buy one from a supermarket
2. Buy one from a farmer
3. Kill one

## BUYING HAM FROM THE SUPERMARKET

1. Save up some money during the fall. The slab of meat is actually quite expensive, especially if you have a huge family to share it with. Also if you want to appreciate the tradition, you have to buy a ham that is waaay too big for your family and then you have to toss some of it away after christmas. This goes for all the options, whether you buy it from a farmer or from a supermarket.
2. When the time is right - and that time is when the hams start to arrive to the shelves of supermarkets - you need to decide if you want to buy a ham that is frozen or an unfrozen ham from the refrigerator. The more common one to buy is the frozen one, so you can buy it weeks before and then just melt it before putting it in the oven. The refrigerated one is preferable in situations such as; you forgot to buy a ham before 23.12. or you forgot to take the frozen one out of the freezer and now it doesn't have time to melt properly.
3. Go to a supermarket to see the rows of hundreds of pig buttocks. Now from these you must choose the one that you think best suits to your households christmas. Remember that you must choose a ham that is too big, so you will have the regular amount of wasted food after the holidays. The best one according to some people is the ham with the bone in it, it is juicier and more tasty than the ones without the bone. AND then there are hams with different salting methods, which frankly don't have a noticeable taste difference.

Here's a tip: if you want to save money, you can move your christmas to start on the 27th, because then the hams are already sold half price.

## BUYING HAM STRAIGHT FROM THE FARMER

Buying one straight from the farmer might be the best way and maybe also then you know what kind of conditions your christmas ham had to spend it's life in. Plus side is also that the farmer gets the money straight from you and without any supermarkets ripping them off.

1. Do a research about the farmers in your area. Choose wisely, prefer organic and small farms instead of huge piggeries with poor conditions.
2. Call the farmer and let him/her know what sized ham you want and how would you like it to be, with or without the bone in it etc. Settle a day for picking up the ham.
3. Pick up the ham.
4. Now for the salting of the ham. You have options here as well. You can choose to soak the ham in salt water or you can inject the salt with needles. With the soaking you put the pig in cold salt water and wait for up to a month depending on the size, and with injecting the salt water you first inject the salt water in the meat and then soak it in salt water for one and a half days. Remember to have your pig in under +4 celsius during the whole process of salting.

## KILLING AND PREPARING YOUR OWN HAM

Well then we get to the messy and troublesome option of killing and preparing the pig on your own.

1. Research the local farmers and ask around who would be willing to sell you a pig and let you kill it. Or maybe buy one in the spring and lie to the farmer about it being just a pet and not a christmas ham.
2. Take the pig home and choose one of your rooms to be the Dexter-styled plastic covered slaughtering place. After choosing the room, cover it thoroughly with plastic, so you don't have blood on your walls.
3. Look the pig in the eyes, can you still do this?

If not.. get it back to the farmer and go to a supermarket to buy a frozen one or maybe think if you should be eating the ham at all.

If yes.. do it quickly and as painless way as possible.

4. Cut the pig in to pieces, remember that you only need the ham (the ass and thigh) of the pig. What to do with the rest of it is up to you, sell it if you don't need it, freeze it and eat it later if you have the space to put it.
5. Now for the salting again. As you may remember, you can choose to soak the ham in salt water or you can inject the salt with needles. But as repeating is the

mother of learning here are the instructions again; with the soaking you put the pig in cold salt water and wait for up to a month depending on the size, and with injecting the salt water you first inject the salt water in the meat and then soak it in salt water for one and a half days.

## HOW TO PREPARE THE HAM

### BEFORE PUTTING THE HAM IN THE OVEN

1. Remember to take the ham out of the freezer to melt. It takes quite a long time to melt a frozen meat clump, depending of the size of course. The ham should be melted under the temperature of +8 celcius. You can also do this in you car's trunk or on your balcony, depending on the weather outside. Watchout for the birds and car thieves, you don't want to loose your yummy (and remember, very expensive) ham to them.

Here are some hints of the amount of time it takes to defrost a ham:

- 2-4 kg ham should melt in the refridgerator/trunk/balcony for 2-3 days
  - 6-8 kg ham should melt in the refrigerator/trunk/balcony for 3-4 days
  - 10-12 kg ham should melt in the refridgerator/trunk/balcony for 4-5 days
2. You should also buy a meat thermometer for the steps to come, around christmas you can find these things in any grocery store. And yes of course you will need a roasting bag to put your ham in, so all the fat that renders from under the skin won't drip to your oven tray. The amount of fat that comes out of the meat during roasting is a lot, it doesn't look nice, but don't you dare throw it in the sink! There are instructions coming later on how to deal with all that pork fat.
  3. Take the meat to room temperature some hours before putting it in the oven. You should get the temperature to +10 celcius before you can start roasting the meat. If you miss this step it might be that you paid a lot for a dry, horribly chewy meat that no one wants to eat.
  4. Put the ham in a roasting bag and try to get the thermometer stuck to the meat so that it measures the temperature in the middle of the thickest part of the ham. That way you'll know when it's cooked thoroughly.
  5. Put the whole package to a baking tray.

### PUTTING THE HAM IN THE OVEN AND ROASTING IT

After you have completed the list about what to do BEFORE putting the ham in the oven,

you can now take a deep breath and then panic and start to stress about roasting the ham properly, so that it's juicy and soft and still cooked through.

1. Set the oven to 200°C and wait until it reaches that temperature.
2. Put the ham in the oven in the lowest holders.
3. Roast the ham in 200°C for 30 minutes.
4. After the 30 minutes lower the oven temperature to 100-125°C.
5. Keep checking the ham regularly to make sure it doesn't overcook.
6. Roast until the inner temperature has reached.

## MUSTARD

With the ham people traditionally eat mustard. Usually it's either from the labels Turun sinappi or Kotisinappi. Turun sinappi is more savoury one with different levels of hotness that are mild, strong and hot and the Kotisinappi tastes milder and sweeter and has more grainy texture. Many people also make the mustard themselves. Here are couple of recipes for making tasty mustard yourself if the options above don't seem appealing to you.

### EASY CHRISTMAS MUSTARD

Ingredients:

- 2 dl mustard powder
- 2 dl fine sugar
- 2 dl cream
- 1 tsp potato flour
- 2 eggs
- ½ tbs vinegar

Instructions:

1. Boil all the ingredients together in a kettle, stirr all the time so it won't burn!
2. Let the mixture cool down
3. Add the vinegar and mix
4. Put in to a nice jar and it's ready to be served.

## GRANDMOTHER'S SUPER HOT MUSTARD

### Ingredients:

- 1 tsp white pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 7 tsp sugar
- 4 tl oil
- 2 tsp white wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp cognac
- 6-8 tbsp cold water
- 100 g Colman's mustard powder

### Instructions:

1. Mix the dry ingredients and the oil, white wine vinegar and cognac together.
2. Add water according to how thick you want the mustard to be, about 6-8 tea spoons should be ok.
3. Please note that this mustard is very very strong!

## CASSEROLES

Ok then, for these "delicious" casseroles. They are the main side dishes of christmas. They look, taste and smell a bit strange and are definitely the dishes to divide people into two groups; some people love them and some people hate them. But they are the essential thing to have on your christmas table if you want the real experience. These mushy and mashy foods are not too hard to make, but are very time consuming and that might be the reason that so many people buy the ready made ones.

### HOW TO GET NICE CASSEROLES

So there are again options to choose from:

1. Buy them ready made from the grocery store
2. Make them from ready made vegetable mush
3. Make them yourself from fresh vegetables

#### BUY THEM READY MADE FROM THE GROCERY STORE

Buying the casseroles from the grocery store is most definitely the easiest way to go. If you are a lazy person, this is the way to go. You go to the store and pick the most appealing packaging, all though the packages look very unappealing, some of the ready made casseroles are actually quite good. If you want to make these taste a bit better and fool people that you made them yourself, you can buy some cream and breadcrumbs and mix some cream to the casserole, move it into a nice looking bowl, make some pattern to the surface with a spoon and sprinkle some breadcrumbs on top. Then before service you can roast them in the oven for a while to get the nice golden surface.

#### MAKE THEM FROM READY MADE VEGETABLE MUSH

If you like cooking and if you are not as lazy as the people buying the ready made casseroles, you might decide to make them yourself from the already mashed vegetables, that is an easy way too. You can find these mashed vegetables from fridges and freezers from the grocery store.

## MAKE THEM YOURSELF FROM FRESH VEGETABLES

So this is the most difficult option, but maybe the most rewarding of them all - depending of the end result that you can make with your cooking skills of course. For this you need to head straight to the vegetable section in your nearest and dearest grocery store and choose the best carrots, potatoes and turnips. And there are a lot of things to buy, and that might be the reason that so many people rely on the first option.

The recipes included tell you all the things you need to know when you start preparing your casseroles.

## HOW TO PREPARE THE CASSEROLE

### CARROT CASSEROLE

This is out of the three casseroles maybe the children's favourite one. It's little bit sweet and has a nice orange color

Here is the recipe for making this mushy mess of a food:

Ingredients that you must have:

- 5-6 medium-sized carrots
- 3,5 dl brown rice, cooked
- 5 dl milk or cream
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp dark brown sugar or molasses
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 – 4 tbsp butter
- 1 dl bread or cracker crumbs
- 1 tsp nutmeg (optional)

Directions for you on how to prepare this side dish:

1. Set your oven temperature to 175 c
2. Peel the carrots and shred the carrots (this will make a mess and the small pieces of carrot will be stuck to your walls forever)
3. Add the cooked rice, milk, eggs, salt, brown sugar, and optional nutmeg, stirring until ingredients are mixed evenly.
4. Pour the carrot mixture into a greased casserole dish.

5. Melt the butter and combine it with the bread or cracker crumbs. Sprinkle the crumbs over the carrot mixture.
6. Optional: Once the casserole is fully prepped to go into the oven, you can decorate the dish by making shallow, patterned indentations with the tip of a spoon.
7. Bake for about 45 minutes, until crumbs are golden brown or until no liquid drains from the casserole when the edge is pulled away from the side.

### TURNIP CASSEROLE

Ingredients for making this weird tasting and looking dish:

- 3 large carrots, cubed
- 1 large turnip, cubed
- 3 tablespoons softened butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 0,5 dl all-purpose flour
- 0,5 dl white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 dl milk
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Instructions:

1. Preheat an oven to 175 c. Grease a casserole dish.
2. Place the carrot and turnip cubes into a large pot and cover with salted water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes. Drain and allow to steam dry for a minute or two.
3. Return the carrots and turnips to the pot, and mash well with the butter, salt, flour and 0,5 dl of sugar. Whisk together the eggs and milk in a bowl, then stir into the mashed carrot mixture until blended. Scrape into the prepared casserole dish. Stir together 2 tablespoons of sugar with the cinnamon in a small bowl, and sprinkle over the top of the carrot mash.
4. Bake in the preheated oven until the carrot mash has slightly firmed and the top has begun to turn golden brown, about 45 minutes.

## POTATO CASSEROLE

### Ingredients:

- 1,3 kg potatoes, peeled, cut into 2 cm cubes
- 0,5 dl flour
- Potato water as needed
- Milk if needed
- Salt to taste
- 4 tablespoons chilled butter
- 1 ½ to 2 tablespoons dark syrup

### Instructions:

1. Put potatoes in a large pot. Add water to cover and cook until tender, 20 to 25 minutes.
2. Drain, saving the potato water.
3. Mash potatoes.
4. As you mash the potatoes, add flour and some of the cooking water if needed to keep the mixture light and fluffy.
5. Put into a buttered casserole dish that has a cover.
6. Preheat oven to 175 C.
7. Bake, covered, in preheated oven 5 hours, checking occasionally to see that the potatoes do not dry out and the whole thing doesn't burn to ashes. Add milk if needed to keep mixture moist.
8. While baking, potatoes should become yellow in color and gain a flavor similar to sweet potatoes. Add salt if needed.
9. After the 5 hours, remove from oven. Remove cover.
10. Dot top with butter and drizzle with dark syrup.
11. Increase oven temperature to 200 C and bake 15 minutes or until browned on top.
12. Serve hot.

## CHRISTMAS TARTS

Now for the sweet stuff. YUM YUM YUM you might think, but don't expect too much, because the finnish pastry is not so famous for being moist and super delicious. The christmas tarts are a good example of a thing you eat every christmas, but it really is not so good after all. Traditionally people start to bake them in november and get tired of them before the main day arrives. Usually these tarts are made of puff pastry dough and are filled with plum jam, but nowadays there are options like raspberry jam and apple cinnamon jam and if you are a wild one you can choose to fill your tarts with chocolate or nutella, but they might make the tarts taste very good and that is not what the finnish christmas tarts are supposed to taste like. Keep in mind that DRY is the end result you want to achieve. When you take the "goodies" out of the oven, remember to sprinkle some icing sugar on top, it at least adds some flavour to the tarts.

### HOW TO GET NICE CHRISTMAS TARTS

For these you also have three options that you can choose from

1. Buying already baked tarts
2. Buying ready made puff pastry dough and jam
3. Making the puff pastry and/or jam yourself

#### BUYING ALREADY BAKED TARTS

If you want to make this easy for you, you can buy the tarts that are baked already. The thing here though is that this will cost you a lot more than baking them yourself, but if you have money then go for it. There are also raw already folded and filled ones in the grocery stores freezers. They only need to go to the oven to 225 C for about 15 to 20 minutes. Then just some icing sugar on top and they are ready to be eaten.

#### BUYING READY MADE PUFF PASTRY DOUGH AND JAM

This is the most common way to do this. No one really these days want to spend too much time baking and sweating in the kitchen so this is a way to avoid that. Just buy some dough from the nearest grocery store - torttutaikina or lehtitaikina is the name in finnish - and some jam and take it home. At home you take the sheets from the packaging to melt. The dough sheets are made so that by dividing one sheet in half, you have base for

two tarts. So when you have waited about 15 minutes for the dough sheets to melt, you start cutting them in half and then start to follow the recipe from the section 6 onwards.

### MAKING THE PUFF PASTRY AND/OR JAM YOURSELF

This is the most time consuming way of course, but if you enjoy baking and SWEATING in the kitchen then go ahead, we won't stop you. It's just maybe not worth it to go through all this trouble for an end result that might not be as good as the ready made ones.

## THE PRUNE PLUM JAM

You need to do this first so you have the jam ready when you start filling up your tarts.

Ingredients:

- 500 g of dried plums
- 1 dl sugar
- 2 ½ dl water
- 1 cinnamon stick
- pinch of vanilla powder or 1 tsp of vanilla sugar
- 3 tbsp of cognac

Instructions For the Jam

1. Measure the plums, water, sugar, cinnamon stick and the vanilla in to a kettle. Bring to a boil and let simmer on low heat.
2. Let the plums brew for about 20 minutes or until they start to break down.
3. Take out the cinnamon stick and puree the mixture with a hand blender.
4. Add the cognac and mix.
5. Let the mixture cool down and use it as the tart filling.

The jam stays good in your fridge for weeks if you put it into a airtight jar. So you can make it in advance if you don't want to spend the whole christmas in the kitchen.

## THE PASTRY DOUGH

### INGREDIENTS FOR THE PASTRY

- 250 g butter
- 3 dl cream
- 6,5 dl wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- To Make the tarts you will also need
- 2,5 dl prune jam or some other jam
- 1 egg, lightly beaten (for smearing the tarts before oven)
- Powdered sugar (for dusting the finished tarts)

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DOUGH

1. Whip the cream, don't over whip so you won't end up with clumpy mess.
2. Mix wheat flours and baking powder together.
3. Mix the flour mixture with softened butter and add the whipped cream. Don't stir too much so the dough won't be too chewy and ruin the tarts for good.
4. Shape the dough to a rectangle shape and wrap it in to a plastic wrap. Let it sit in the fridge for at least one hour.
5. Roll the dough into a thin sheet that is about 3 mm thick.
6. Divide the pastry in even sized squares about 9 cm x 9cm. In each square, make four cuts, one from each corner, each going 1/2 - 2/3 of the way to the center of the square.
7. Divide the jam evenly to the middle of the tarts. You can also add the jam later after shaping the dough.
8. Shape the tarts by folding one slice from each corner to the middle. (Add now the jam to the middle, if you didn't do it before.)
9. Smear the tarts with the egg and bake them in 200 C for about 8 minutes.
10. After taking them out of the oven and letting them cool down a little, sprinkle some icing sugar on top and "enjoy".

# GLOGG/GLÖGI

## INTRODUCTION TO THE GLOGG

This glogg or as finnish people call it -glögi- is a drink you enjoy hot. It's a spicy juice based drink that often has alcohol in it, either red wine or something stronger or maybe sometimes both if the situation has gotten so bad. For kids and absolutists there are alcohol free options too and many times they are better tasting than the ones with alcohol mixed in them. And it's highly recommended for you as an adult to drink also the alcohol free version to make sure you won't be too drunk and ruin the christmas spirit for your family.

You can again buy glogg from a grocery store or if you want the version with alcohol, then you have to go to Alko to buy it.

If you decide to go wild and try making this spicy drink yourself then here are some recipes for that:

## RECIPES FOR GLOGG

### EASY AND CHEAP GLOGI

Ingredients:

- 8 dl strong juice
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 star anise
- some orange zest

Instructions:

1. Put the juice in a kettle and heat it up
2. Add cinnamon stick and star anise
3. Wash the orange well
4. Take a slice of the orange zest
5. Add the zest to the mixture
6. Serve the glogg hot with raisins and almonds

### SPICY APPLE GLOGI

Ingredients:

- 4 dl applejuice
- 1 dl water
- 2 tsp honey
- ½ tsp cinnamon and ginger
- 2 cloves
- 1 star anise
- pinch of lemon juice
- slices of lemon for decoration

Instructions:

1. Measure all the ingredients to a kettle except the lemon slices
2. Bring the mixture almost to a boil
3. Taste and add ingredients if needed
4. Decorate with the lemon

# CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas eve is the day before Christmas day. It is celebrated on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December but it is not an official holiday. Every Finnish family has their own specific traditions and schedule for this day and they can differ from each other drastically. This is the day when Santa Claus visits the homes of well-behaved children and brings them gifts. It is also customary to watch Joulupukin kuulinja, The Snowman (a short animation based on Raymond Briggs' book of the same name) and the declaration of Christmas peace on television. Of course you can also attend the peace declaration in real time in your own city. The most important thing to do in order to achieve the perfect Christmas eve is to prepare and plan ahead. Below you will find helpful tips as well as an useful schedule to start from.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

If you have followed this guide religiously, you should have all the preparations pretty much done by now. But it is important not to lose focus. You are responsible for your family having the best experience possible so planning should not be taken lightly. But most importantly, this is the happiest day of the year, so make sure there is a big smile on your face all the time and that you are really feeling the Christmas spirit and passing it on to the people around you (see chapter: Immerse in the Christmas atmosphere). Learn to smile, even if you would feel tired and stressed to the point of breaking. Say "Merry Christmas" to everyone in the beginning of each conversation. Don't talk about anything negative and in fact it is best to not talk about anything that is not related to Christmas. Suitable topics for example are Christmas preparations, Christmas traditions, Christmas memories (positive ones), favorite Christmas songs, the color red, snow, and the list goes on. Also make sure that you talk all the time to avoid awkward silences. Hug everyone when you meet them the first time and tell them you love them and that you have missed them, even if it wasn't true. Remember that white lies are like the snow, covering the ugly brown ground on Christmas and making it magical. On this day it is also especially important to keep your Santa hat on at all times. Stick to the schedule found below, or you'll risk ruining everything.

## PERFECT FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

4.30 am: If you have followed the instructions, your ham should be ready now. Take it out of the oven.

4.35 am: You could go back to sleep but you probably won't be able to fall asleep anyway because you're just so excited. So go through all the points mentioned on the Christmas cleaning section one more time, just to make sure everything is perfect.

5.00 am: Walk nervously around the house or get some fresh air, you'll need it. You can also think through all the things on your to do list on a loop to make sure everything is perfect.

6.00 am: start preparing the rice porridge according to instructions on page x.

7.15 am: Start playing Christmas songs extra loud. (This might even allow you to skip the next three steps. Also light a lot of candles.

7.30 am: Wake up the children for the first time and tell them porridge is ready. Also put Santa hats on their heads.

7.45 am: Wake up the children for the second time using a more pointed tone.

7.55 am: Wake up the children for the final time (if necessary) using any means necessary.

8.00 am: Have porridge together as a family. Remember to seize the moment, this is Christmas eve morning after all.

9.00 am: Warm the sauna and make all the necessary Christmas sauna preparations. While the sauna is warming you can instruct the children to watch some television. Make sure they are still wearing their Santa hats.

9.20 am: Now you have some free time to double check everything and maybe decorate your house some more, light some more candles.

10.00 am: Go to the sauna. While in there, you can discuss about the schedule for the rest of the day, to get prepared mentally.

11.00 am: Put on your special Christmas clothes.

11.10 am: Start preparing glogg and other treats to have while watching the Declaration of Christmas peace on TV. Or if you decide to go see it physically, put the glogg in a thermos and pack all the treats with you.

12.00 pm: See the declaration of Christmas peace

12.30 pm: Start preparing for the celebrations. Prepare the food, clean if necessary and call relatives to make sure they are able to stick to the schedule. If you have to visit some relatives (dead or alive) you can also do it now. But it is highly recommended to just invite everyone to come to your house later to keep it simple. Visiting will also reduce the time you have for all the preparations.

13.00 pm: Make sure the children are wearing their Santa hats and maybe ask them to help in some little tasks. This way they too can get delightfully immersed in the Christmas atmosphere.

13.30 pm: Turn the volume of the Christmas songs up just a bit more.

14.00 pm: It is normal to get a little Christmas burn-out around this time. Time seems to run too quickly, you have so much to do and the children are fighting and throwing food. Don't stop. Just pull yourself back together, SMILE and keep going. You've come too far to quit now.

14.30 pm: Keep going! It all depends on you.

15.00 pm: Change your special Christmas clothes to your almost as special Christmas clothes because they got dirty.

16.00 pm: Welcome your Christmas guests with a big smile and tell them how nice it is to see them again after a long time. If they bring you some small gifts, tell them that you don't deserve anything and that all the preparation was super fun, quick and easy.

16.10 pm: Interact with the guests as instructed.

16.30 pm: Ask everyone to come to the table and eat. If they praise the appearance of the food (as they should if everything is prepared according to the instructions), tell them it's nothing and that you whipped everything up in 10 minutes. Also warn them that

everything is probably burnt, done wrong or just tastes bad.

17.00 pm: It is important to make sure everyone has enough of everything all the time. Constantly ask if they want more food or drink and if they are enjoying it. Make sure everyone has a Santa hat on, music is blaring and candles are burning. Also keep the table conversation alive and stick to the topics listed in "Instructions for Christmas eve". Softly direct the conversation back to these topics whenever it starts to turn to more serious topics.

17.30 pm: Start clearing the table. Make sure everyone has had enough of everything. If so, put the food away and wash the dishes.

17.45 pm: Take the food back out because one of the children wants more of something after all.

17.50 pm: Tell the children that you have a feeling Santa is on his way.

18.00 pm: It is time for Santa Claus to arrive and do his part. You also have to act along convincingly to make the show more believable to the children.

18.20 pm: After Santa has left it is time to open the presents. Remember to follow the instructions mentioned on the Gifts-chapter.

18.30 pm: Open your gifts fast and start preparing glogg and treats for the guests. Also ask around if anyone wants tea or coffee.

19.00 pm: Serve the glogg and treats for the guests. If someone says that you should also relax for a while tell them that you just love Christmas so much you can't stay still.

20.00 pm: At this time, the guests may express their willingness to leave, but you must insist that they stay a bit longer for more glogg and treats. Keep the conversation bubbling as instructed before.

21.00 pm: The guests may ask again, politely, if they could leave. Insist again that they stay but not as firmly as before. Finally give in and allow them to leave.

21.30 pm: Sit down for a while and ask your children if they had a nice Christmas, what was the best part and what could you have done better. Take notes. Also ask which gifts they liked and which they didn't (even though they wished for them all).

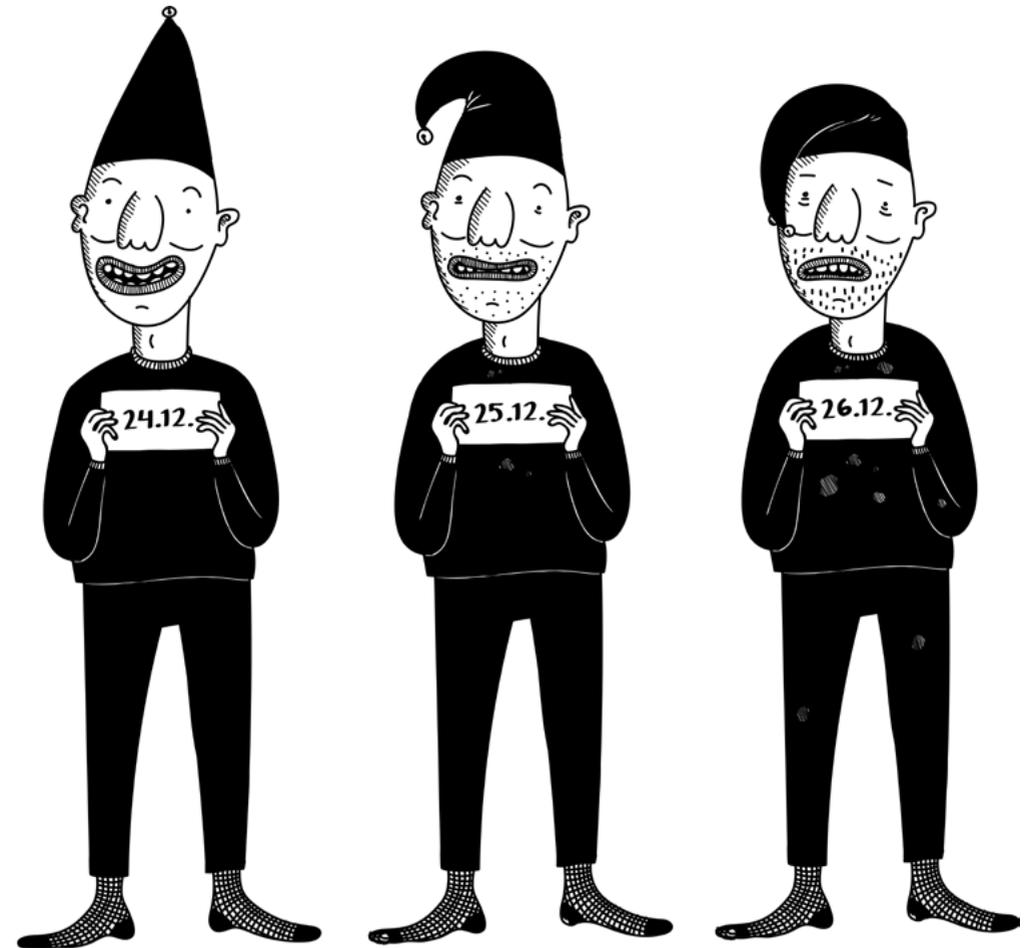
21.40 pm: Start cleaning everything and wash the dishes needed to eat porridge the next morning.

22.30 pm: Put the kids to sleep. Prepare to face some resistance because they would prefer to keep playing with their new toys and they are probably over energetic from all the sugar they have been eating.

23.30 pm: Turn of the Christmas music, but it is not time to rest just yet. Go through the whole day and think what things you succeeded in and what could be improved upon. Remember that the guests' feedback of the night cannot be trusted, because they feel obliged to compliment you out of courtesy. Write notes for next year and maybe it is a good idea to already sketch next year's schedule too.

2.00 am: Take of your Santa hat. You did it! You may not be proud of yourself but remember the next Christmas is only a year away! It will be a chance to right all wrongs. Now it is time to sleep but don't forget to wake up in 4 hours to prepare the breakfast porridge. If you feel particularly tired, it is ok to have breakfast an hour later on Christmas day.

# AFTER CHRISTMAS



## CHRISTMAS DAY

Even though Christmas Day is the day Christmas is celebrated in a lot of countries, in Finland the day after Christmas Eve is not really special. It is usually spent recovering from the stress, laying down and watching television. And of course trying to dispose of enormous amounts of food by eating, so that none of it would go to waste. There's not a strict schedule you have to follow on Christmas Day which might seem sad and confusing for the true Christmas people like you, but don't worry, repeating the schedule from yesterday is not unheard-of. You only need to exclude the visit from Santa and you're pretty much good to go! The most devoted might even repeat the schedule again on Boxing Day. And absolutely remember to wear your Santa hat!

## WHAT TO DO WHEN CHRISTMAS IS OVER?

Christmas decorations are usually taken down on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January which also marks the official end of Christmas. It is important to stick to this day or you'll risk people thinking you are crazy or lazy. You can be sure that your neighbors are keeping track of your habits and evaluating you based on them. Maybe you could invite them over before you take the decorations down to show them that your Christmas was better than theirs. You can also tell them about your perfect family Christmas traditions and how you are truly blessed to have such a perfect life.

But no amount of bragging can fill the all-encompassing emptiness left in your soul by the Christmas-past. So what to do now? Start by throwing out all the remaining Christmas food, it has gone bad and nobody is going to eat it or make pizza from it. Accept the fact that it's gone and make even more next year. Also now is a good time to finally return those gifts because you are not going to learn to like that ugly sweater, it's just not your color and your great aunt will never know. It is also a possibility to save some of your unwanted gifts for next year to give to someone else. This however requires good organization skills because if you accidentally give someone the gift they gave you last year, it's all over. You should also start planning for next Christmas if you didn't already start right after Christmas eve. It might feel like a long wait but Christmas will come again, closer and closer, day by day, and you will run out of time again.

# TROUBLE SHOOTING

## ANSWERS TO COMMON CHRISTMAS PROBLEMS

### CHILDREN DON'T BELIEVE IN SANTA

Ask your designated Santa Claus to rattle outside the windows of their rooms at night. This will make them so scared they are forced to believe.

### DESIGNATED SANTA PASSES OUT IN FRONT OF THE CHILDREN

Tell the children Santa has a mosquito on his face and slap him.

### SANTA'S OUTFIT IS NOT RED ENOUGH

Spray-paint it.

### SANTA'S CHEEKS ARE NOT RED ENOUGH

Spray-paint them.

### NO SNOW FOR SNOWMAN

Take some beach balls or exercise balls and spray-paint them white. Glue everything together.

### THE SEXLESS NATURE OF THE SNOWMAN IS MAKING YOU ANXIOUS

Construct some genitalia of your choice and attach it to your snowman.

#### NOT ENOUGH SKILLS TO SCULPT A SNOWMAN

Try abstraction.

#### FAMILY WANTS TO TURN DOWN THE CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Put the radio inside a safe which you have previously drilled full of holes. Include a durable battery.

#### KIDS WANT TO TAKE OFF THEIR SANTA HATS

Attach ribbons into the hats and tie them tightly under their chins or just tell them that Santa won't come unless they have their hats on.

#### KIDS ARE FIGHTING

Tell them Santa won't come unless they are nice.

#### KIDS ARE NOT HELPING YOU

Tell them Santa won't come unless they are nice.

#### DON'T KNOW WHICH CHRISTMAS SONGS TO PLAY

Play them all.

#### NOT FEELING HAPPY

Draw the corners of your mouth up using lipstick or a red marker.

#### NOT FEELING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Write a list of one thousand reasons why Christmas is the best holiday.

#### GINGERBREAD HOUSE KEEPS COLLAPSING

Make a post-apocalyptic gingerbread diorama.

#### NOT ENOUGH TIME TO DO EVERYTHING

Cut back on sleep. The human can function surprisingly long with just four hours of sleep per night.

#### THE CHRISTIAN ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS IS MAKING YOU ANXIOUS

Just pretend it's the birthday of Santa.

#### CAN'T FIND A CHRISTMAS TREE

Steal one from your neighbor. If you're lucky it might even be already decorated.

#### YOUR HOME DOESN'T LOOK FESTIVE ENOUGH

Buy two to three more of every decoration you have.

#### SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY DOESN'T LIKE CHRISTMAS

Erase their name from the family tree.

#### SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY IS VEGETARIAN

Tell them to stop being rude and eat their ham.

#### SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY IS GLUTEN-FREE

Tell them to stop being rude and eat their food.

#### SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY HAS ALLERGIES

Tell them to stop being rude and eat their food.

#### SOMEONE DOESN'T LIKE THE GIFT YOU GOT THEM

Tell them it's ok and don't get them anything next year.

#### YOU FEEL EXHAUSTED

Stick your face (or whole naked body) to the snow for a couple of minutes.

#### STILL NOT FEELING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Listen to Christmas music on headphones while you're sleeping.

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