



Special Edition: A Christmas Celebration!

Christmas Traditions & Memories

Christmas traditions can bring nostalgia and give us something to look forward to. Here are some traditions and memories we have from Christmases past...

- * Baking cookies.
- * "Pickle ornament" - if you have a few people in your house, put a pickle in the tree Christmas eve after everyone else goes to bed. The first person to find the pickle in the tree gets a special gift!
- * Waking up early as kids. And then waking up our parents.
- * Snow! Two of us grew up without snow, and two of us grew up with snow every year!
- * Driving around town to see Christmas light displays.
- * Christmas Caroling. This is a tradition we hope will come back!
- * Receiving a bicycle. Isn't that a classic Christmas present?

What is your favorite Christmas tradition or memory?

Christmas Activities!

- * Already mentioned above: Bake cookies! Your home will smell great, your taste buds will be pleased, and you'll be sure to get in the Christmas spirit! We've included our favorite recipes on the next page!
- * Decorate! You can do this as simply or elaborately as you want. For simple decorations, consider dehydrating orange slices (you can use your oven or a dehydrator), stringing beads or popcorn on a string, clipping fresh branches from a tree.
- * Visit a live nativity! Small and big towns alike provide opportunities for live nativities. Check your area to see if one is near you!
- * Watch Christmas movies. Our favorites include *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Grinch that Stole Christmas*, *The Santa Clause*, *Saving Christmas*, & *A Charlie Brown Christmas*.
- * Play in the snow! Those of you that are snowbirds may not get the opportunity to do this, but for those that live in an area that does snow, or a nearby mountain, bundle up and make a day of it!
- * Make hot cocoa and popcorn and enjoy it with your movie or after a day in the snow!



Family Recipes

Baking cookies has become a tradition for all of us. Below are our top two favorites!

Ginger Snaps

2 c flour	3/4 c butter
1 Tbsp ginger	1 c sugar
2 tsp baking soda	1 egg
1 tsp cinnamon	1/4 c molasses
1/2 tsp salt	1/3 c cinnamon sugar



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Stir flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, salt. In a separate bowl, cream butter and sugar together. Beat in egg and molasses. Add flour mixture, 1/3 at a time, until blended. Roll into 1" balls. Roll in cinnamon sugar, place 2" apart on baking sheet. Bake 10 mins, until tops are slightly cracked.

Whipped Shortbread Cookies

1 c unsalted butter, softened	3/4 tsp table salt
3/4 c powdered sugar	2 c all-purpose flour
1 tsp vanilla extract	2 Tbsp cornstarch
Nonpareils, jimmies, or colored sanding sugar for decorating, optional	



Preheat oven to 325 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Set aside. Combine butter and powdered sugar and beat on medium-high speed until light in color, fluffy, and creamy, at least 5 min. If needed, pause occasionally to scrape the sides to ensure all of the butter and sugar are being well creamed. Add vanilla extract and salt, stir until combined. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour and cornstarch. Turn mixer speed to medium-low and gradually add flour, stirring until just combined. Scoop dough in tablespoon sized scoops, rolling between your palms to make smooth balls. Place on prepared baking sheet, spacing cookies 1-2 in. apart. Use a fork to slightly flatten each cookie. Sprinkle with nonpareils, jimmies or sugar. Bake for 12 minutes. Allow to cool completely before removing from baking sheet.

