# 2020 Flotiday Entertaining and Suff Simile

AN/ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE FOREST BLADE



Swainsboro, you can relax and enjoy shopping for Christmas. Whether it's a gift for the kids or for the whole family, we can help structure a holiday loan that will not break your budget. You can afford to make this Christmas very special. Stop in today to learn more about how a holiday loan from Citizens Bank can make your Christmas jolly and bright.

> Don't forget about about our Mobile **App Benefits during** the holidays!

#### **MOBILE APP BENEFITS:**

- Pay a Person
- Customizable home page
- Instant access from any mobile device
- Lock & secure your debit card in seconds
- Enhanced data security
- Saves time and money
- Easy deposits and transfers

DOWNLOAD OUR APP TODAY!

Available on the App Store Google Play

At The Citizens Bank of Swainsboro, Our "Prime Interest" is You...

## ZENS BANK **SWAINSBORO**

121 North Main Street • Swainsboro • 478.237.7001 1210 Hillcrest Parkway • Dublin • 478.272.7775 101 W. Jackson Street, Suite B • Dublin • 478.272.7775 1101 Brampton Avenue • Statesboro • 912.623.2500 www.cbs-lc.com • #BankLocally





# Five tips for surviving Christmas

Christmas is upon us! As well as being a joyous time of eating, drinking, and being merry, for many, the festive season can also be one of the most stressful. What can you do to survive the season and come out the other end actually feeling you have had a break rather than feeling in desperate need of one? See the 5 tips below to ensure you get the most out of the festive season and make it through relatively unscathed...

#### 1. Plan ahead.

Too many people spend weeks worrying about getting the shopping done—it's far easier to do it when you first start thinking about it. Start stocking up with the supplies as soon as possible. Try getting a few items over the remaining weeks leading up to Christmas along with your regular shopping. As for presents, a great tip is to have an emergency supply, just a few small gifts to save you from embarrassment in the event of someone arriving unexpectedly with a prezzie for you.

#### 2. Don't embarrass yourself at the work Christmas party.

Our partying generally starts with the work's Christmas party. Of course, it is the time to let your hair down—but not at any cost! All too often people go a bit too far, then live to regret it. If you don't

care what an idiot you make of yourself, go ahead, just make sure you are not causing a nuisance to anybody else. However, if you're the type who is going spend the next six months red faced after kissing the office nerd, then just remember to take things easy.

#### 3. Don't over-inflate your expectations.

Don't expect to create the "perfect" Christmas as it's near likely to fall short of your expectations. The most important thing is for you and your family to have fun. That does not mean landing yourself in debt for the next 12 months by buying expensive gifts; just spending a bit of time together can be the best present. Remember, if something does not go quite to plan, it really is not the end of the world.

#### 4. Don't try and do everything.

If you are responsible for cooking and hosting the Christmas Day activities, don't take it all upon yourself. Why not ask other family members to bring different parts of the meal, such as snacks, salads or desserts? Don't be afraid to ask for help. You could even rope in the kids to help out. Make sure you have some time for you, even if it's just allowing yourself to watch one special TV (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



# Fun Christmas games the entire family can play

Who's ready for some festive competition? Read on to find gaming suggestions inclusive for the whole crowd!

#### 1. Ring the Reindeer Antlers

Consider this game the holiday version of ring toss. Pick up a reindeer antler headband or make your own if you're feeling crafty. Twist red and white pipe cleaners together to make candy cane-striped rings, then have one person put on the headband, while the rest try to toss the rings onto the antlers. This game works great for indoors or outdoors, if you live in a warmer climate or even want to enjoy a little Christmas in July.

#### 2. Christmas Scavenger Hunt

Instead of sitting around the TV after Christmas dinner or while waiting for the roast to cook, send the crew on a holiday-themed scavenger hunt. Bonus points if you come up with items that have special meaning for your family.

#### 3. Christmas Guess Who

Personalize the iconic game of Guess Who and give it a holiday twist by making cards that relate to various family members or using Polaroid photos as cards for an easy, vintage twist. Then, to guess the correct person, use holiday prompts like, "Who makes her signature Christmas dessert?" or "Who's celebrated the most holidays in our family?" When you're done, incorporate the pictures into your decor.



#### 4. Christmas Dance Freeze

Turn "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" into a game by holding a holiday dance-off. Throw it back to your elementary school days by playing dance freeze. Turn on the music and get groovin', then shut it off without warning and shout, "Freeze!" Whoever stops moving last is out.

#### 5. Oven Mitts Game

Have you ever tried opening Christmas gifts while wearing oven mitts? Get ready to giggle, because it's just as hard as you expect and often has hysterical results. Besides, it will make your kids slow down and savor the moment when opening presents on Christmas morning. That's what we call a win-win!

#### 6. Christmas Movie Bingo

When there's a Hallmark movie marathon on, there's just one thing to do: Pop a big bowl of popcorn and attach your bum to the couch. Turn your marathon watching sesh into a game with a bingo board to turn it into a fun family activity.

#### 7. Snowman Bowling

Save a stack of uniform-sized containers, like tissue boxes or shipping packages, then paint them like a snowman and add a paper hat and nose, painted features and some other accessories. Grab a ball and you're ready to bowl! The kids will have a blast putting it together, and you can recycle some of that holiday packaging.

#### 8. Gingerbread House Competition

Gameify your gingerbread house project by turning it into a competition. Challenge each construction team to build a replica of their own home or one from a favorite movie or to craft the zaniest structure they can. Don't eat too many of your materials along the way!

#### 9. White Elephant

If you've never played White Elephant, you've got to add it to your repertoire. Everyone places their wrapped gifts in a pile, then draws numbers to decide who picks an incognito gift first. The first guest grabs a present from the pile, then each subsequent player can either "steal" a gift from someone else, or take one that hasn't been chosen. You can either unwrap gifts as you go, or at the end to make the big reveal even more exciting.

## Five tips...

#### (FROM PAGE 3)

show that you really want to see.

#### 5. Everything in moderation.

Christmas seems to be all about excess—but there is not much enjoyment in feeling the size of a padded Santa suit or as stuffed as the festive turkey! The best advice is moderation—apply it to everything you eat and drink. Drink moderate amounts of alcohol and try to alternate soft drinks or water with alcoholic ones. As for food, have a bit of what you fancy but try not to stuff your face if you can help it!

### RECIPE: HOMEMADE EGGNOG

This holiday season, let's skip the store-bought cartons and additive-laden jugs and have our eggnog the old-fashioned way: with real eggs. This stuff is incredible, and it couldn't be easier to make. As long as you have eggs, sugar, milk, and cream in your fridge, you can have eggnog anytime the craving hits. Here's a step-by-step recipe to guide you to eggnog bliss.

#### Ingredients

- 6 large eggs
- 1 c. granulated sugar
- 2 c. whole milk
- 1 c. heavy cream
- 1/2 to 1-1/2 c. bourbon, rum, cognac, or a mix (optional)
- Freshly grated nutmeg for serving

#### **Directions**

Separate the eggs, placing the yolks in a medium bowl and the whites in a large bowl. Cover the whites and refrigerate until needed or freeze if aging the eggnog for longer than a day. Add the sugar to the yolks and whisk by hand or with a mixer until the mixture is smooth, creamy, and lightened to a lemon-yellow color. Add the milk, cream, and liquor (if using) and whisk until combined.

Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. The more liquor you add, the longer it will keep—non-alcoholic eggnog should be consumed within 1 day; eggnog with 1/2 to 1 cup of liquor will keep for several days, and eggnog with 1-1/2 cups of liquor will keep for several weeks and continue aging and thickening quite nicely. (If aging for longer than a few days, transfer the eggnog to a sealed glass container or a mason jar.)

Just before serving, whisk the reserved egg whites in a stand mixer or with a hand mixer at high speed until the whites form stiff peaks. Transfer the beaten egg whites to the bowl with the

eggnog and gently fold or stir the whites into the base. This gives the eggnog a frothy, extra-creamy texture. Some of the egg whites will also float to the top, like cappuccino foam.

Transfer the eggnog to a pitcher or punch bowl. Serve in individual glasses with a grating of nutmeg over top.

#### **Recipe notes**

Raw eggs: This recipe contains raw eggs. Use very fresh, organic eggs if at all possible. Be aware that consuming raw or undercooked eggs can increase your risk for certain food-borne illnesses, especially if you have a medical condition.

Cooked eggnog: If you'd prefer to cook your eggnog, follow these instructions. Warm the milk and cream in a saucepan over medium heat until just starting to bubble around the edges. Meanwhile, whisk the egg yolks together in a separate bowl. Slowly whisk the warm milk into the eggs, then return the mixture to medium heat and continue to cook, stirring gently, until thickened to your eggnog-y liking. Serve immediately or chill for up to 3 days before serving. For extra thickness, whip up 1 cup of heavy cream and fold into the eggnog before serving.

Even richer eggnog: Feel free to play with the proportions of whole milk to cream, keeping 3 cups total dairy. Heavy cream will make your eggnog thicker and creamier. Boozy eggnog will also continue to thicken in the fridge as it ages.





1110 Canoochee Bypass • Twin City 289-9506 • 494-9506 • Fax 237-2226 • Clay Johnson



# Top trends for Christmas home decor for 2020

It is never too early to start thinking and planning for Christmas! Here's a look at some of the current home decor trends for your tree.

#### 1. Navy

The pantone color for 2020 is Classic Blue. This color had a significant influence on the home décor industry, as you see it in furniture, accessories, paint, and even Christmas décor! Navy pairs beautifully with so many colors, including white and/or silver, gold, platinum/champagne, blush, and even red. If you have navy accents in your home, definitely consider bringing navy into your holiday décor!

#### 2. Platinum

Platinum has taken over the industry as the neutral of choice! This tone falls between silver and gold and tends to be a little softer. An elegant accent, it can be paired with virtually any color—red, navy, blush, taupe, black, and so on. Add it with ivory or onto a flocked tree for an exquisite glam look. You can include it in your wilderness themes to create a touch of rustic elegance. You can't go wrong adding platinum to your tree!

#### 3. Metal

This fun element is great to add in your hol-

iday cheer. Think large oversized jingle bells, tabletop pieces, and tin ornaments. Not feeling brave enough to add some large-scale pieces to your tree? Consider doing a mixed metal theme and focus on golds, silvers, and platinum.

#### 4. Buffalo check

This trend isn't exactly new, since buffalo check plaid is just a good, solid choice around the holidays! You can find items in both red and black or white and black. For a new take, pair some burlap with your white and black buffalo check.

#### 5. Gingerbread

Gingerbread men and houses are a classic when it comes to Christmas, but this year you will see a resurgence of playful pastels and fun colors—which is a new take on an old favorite. Think cupcakes, ice cream cones, marshmallows, and all the tasty treats that will make your Christmas decor that much sweeter.

#### 6. Nutcracker

This is one of our favorite new trends in Christmas decor ideas for 2020! The nutcracker theme takes on a whimsical elegance, as it incorporates fun colors of red, green, gold, and navy. Consider

placing nutcrackers into the body of your tree or bringing in a playful plaid or nutcracker ribbon. This look is sure to inspire dreamy images of sugar plum fairies and dazzling Christmas parties.

#### 7. Farmhouse

The farmhouse trend is still going very strong and is sure to incite feelings of nostalgia this Christmas. Farmhouse elements include cozy plaid prints, rustic details like berries, natural woods, and even aged metals. This trend can consist of a more neutral palette or be full of bright red berries.

#### 8. Neutral decor

Neutral color palettes are all the rage. With trends in home decor being inclusive of soft gray tones, white and greige, it makes sense that neutral color schemes would have a place in Christmas decor. Popular looks are soft glam tones or a rustic woodland look. There you have it, the top trends in Christmas home decor for 2020! You'll see these looks from living rooms to wrapping paper motifs and Christmas stockings. We've taken you on a Christmas tour of elegant platinums and cozy farmhouse elements to whimsical pastels. What are your favorite trends?





## A look at the top home decor trends



NAVY DECOI



PLATINUM DECOR



METAL DECOR



BUFFALO CHECK DECOR



GINGERBREAD DECOR



NUTCRACKER DECOR



**FARMHOUSE DECOR** 



NEUTRAL CHECK DECOR





121 S. Green St., Swainsboro beside Ellington Insurance

Rent the Banquet Hall for Holiday Parties • Receptions Business Meetings • Much More!

#### A Unique Gift for Anyone on Your List!

Antiques • Arts • Crafts • Home Decor & Much More!











# How to pick gifts even better than Panta

In this article are eight fun, easy, creative, and scientifically-proven tips for how to pick gifts that you'll be proud to give and that that lucky someone will truly treasure.

#### 1. Give problem-solvers.

One of the biggest mistakes we make when buying gifts for others (and for ourselves) is thinking that giving more stuff makes people happier. That's backwards! Happiness doesn't come from adding positives. It comes from removing negatives, so when it comes to how to pick gifts, find a problem in your recipient's life and solve it with your generosity.

#### 2. Don't give them more problems.

People don't like having to make decisions, so don't pick a gift that makes them decide. Don't buy gift cards. When you buy someone a gift card, you're giving them a problem by passing the decision-making burden to them. Give cash if you have to. "Mo' money, mo' problems," sure, but most people prefer those problems' flexibility over having to make a decision. Don't gift experiences without a date attached. If you gift a massage or cooking lessons, schedule it, too. Even if the recipient's forced to reschedule, they're forced to do so. They don't have to decide. Better that than have your card/certificate to sit in the recipient's wallet staring at them for months. When they see it they don't think, "Oh yeah, Jane was so generous for gifting me that." They think, "Uggh, right. I have to use this thing Jane gave me."

#### 3. Be practical, not flashy.

Our choices in gifts tend to be selfish. We want the glory of being great gift-givers, so we buy presents with a maximum bedazzlement factor. Flashy flowers, for example. The problem is the flash fades away and the recipient's left to deal with what's left. To be selfless, a better strategy for how to pick gifts is to buy practical presents that last. Plants, for example. You may get fewer bedazzlement benefits, but they get continuous rewards. Studies have found they outweigh the one-time hit of a flashy gift.

#### 4. Don't be so thoughtful.

As gift-givers, we want to show off how well we know someone, but you know who knows the recipient even better than you? The recipient! So when they tell you what they want, don't stupidly try to outsmart them. Give them what they want! It may feel thoughtless to you, but it doesn't to them. According to surprising studies, gift recipients say the most thoughtful gifts are the ones they asked for.

#### 5. Do this when they say, "I have everything I need!"

Moms are especially famous for saying, "I have everything I need. Just having you with me for my birthday is enough." And we're infamous for misinterpreting that as, "You better to be extra generous and creative with my gift to show me how much you love me, kiddo." It's not. Don't buy her a new iPad she won't be able to figure out how to play bridge on. If you want to be extra generous, give her more of what she asked for: you! As Grant Sabatier says in a quote, "Time is more valuable than money. You can always get more money, but you can't get more time." If you feel compelled to spend money, too, plan quality time together over a nice dinner or a small trip, or by buying tickets to visit if you live in different cities.

#### 6. Give gifts that keep on giving.

"It's the thought that counts" may be somewhat true, but the thought only counts once. For gifts that keep counting up brownie points, seek sentimentality. It's not as hard as you think. Give something useful. Studies show that people value a useful item more if they receive it as a gift than if they buy it for themselves because novelty wears off but sentimentality doesn't. A printed collection of your favorite recipes, or a paint-(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)

#### RECIPE: HAM ROLLS

These popular little ham sandwiches are delicious and a guaranteed party hit. They can be easily assembled in advance, stashed in the refrigerator, and popped into the oven just before serving. Then, in a mere 15 minutes, you will have delicious, pull-apart mini-sandwiches oozing with melty cheese.

#### **Ingredients**

- 3/4 c. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbsp. prepared yellow mustard
- · 2 Tbsp. poppy seeds, plus extra for garnish
- 2 Tbsp. minced yellow onion (optional)1
- tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 24 pull-apart dinner rolls, about 1 pound, such as King's Hawaiian rolls
  - · 12 to 16 oz. deli ham, very thinly sliced or shaved
- 12 slices (or 1-1/2 c. shredded) American Swiss cheese or cheddar cheese

#### **Directions**

Gather ingredients. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the butter. Set aside 1/4 cup of the melted butter for brushing the rolls. Add the mustard, poppy seeds, onion (if using), and Worcestershire sauce to the remaining butter in the saucepan. If using onions, cook over low heat until the onions are translucent and tender.

Without separating the pull-apart rolls, halve the block of rolls horizontally. Spread both cut-sides evenly with the butter mixture. Arrange the ham evenly over the bottom half of the rolls and then evenly lay or sprinkle the cheese over the ham. Cover the sandwiches with the top half of the rolls. Brush the top of the bread rolls with the reserved melted butter and sprinkle with additional poppy seeds.

Lightly spray a piece of foil, large enough to wrap the rolls, with nonstick cooking spray. Tightly wrap the rolls in the foil and refrigerate until 30 minutes before serving time. Heat oven to 375° and place foil-wrapped rolls on a baking sheet. Transfer to the oven and bake until the rolls are thoroughly heated and the cheese has melted, about 15 minutes. Serve and enjoy!



ing, print, or ceramic work to decorate their new apartment are great examples of sentimental gifts. Capture the moment. Make the gift of an experience more sentimental by capturing the moment. For example, if you buy an experience like a cooking class or a weekend away, make a photo album.

#### 7. Put the "present" in presentation.

Even if what you're giving isn't particularly thoughtful (at least in your mind), you can make it extra special with how you give it. A special presentation of your present elicits emotion and forms memories that attach to the gift to give it extra value. Examples A letter. Write a thoughtful letter full of sentiments that are corny in regular life but much-appreciated on special occasions. Fun wrapping. Disguise a small gift in a giant package, make it a scavenger hunt, or wrap a gag gift and reveal the real one afterward.

#### 8. Always buy the best.

If you decide to buy someone a physical item rather than an experience, make sure it's best in class. If you can't afford the best, pool together funds with other gift-givers, who'll be grateful for the opportunity to pitch in and not have to think of a gift, or think smaller. Recipients will get more long-term value out of an exceptional small gift than an average big one.





605 W. Main St., Swainsboro

478.237.7032





# Gifts basically everyone will want

Just remember these are gifts and not meant for you (but we won't tell anyone if you decide to gift yourself). Some of these recommendations are brand-specific while others are not. A quick Google search of the bolded introductory terms will help get you on the right track if you prefer to shop online. However, absolutely nothing beats shopping in our local stores, many of which will have some of these very products or at least ones similar enough to score you equal amounts of brownie points with the recipient!

- **1.** An Amazon Fire TV Stick they can use to stream all their favorites from the comfort of their sofa. This will be especially handy when new series hit on Netflix. Available for as low as \$49.99.
- **2.** A 100% cotton weighted blanket designed to offer the gentle sensation of being held, which encourages a deep, healthy, restful sleep. Available online for as low as \$36 in up to 14 sizes and 35 colors.
- **3.** A dishwasher-safe airtight cold-brew maker that'll help them get their morning pick-me-up right out of their fridge. Get it online for \$16.99 in two sizes and three colors.





**318 S. Main St. • Swainsboro** (478) 237-2121

**111 N. Railroad Ave. ● Twin City** (478) 763-2121

www.durdenbc.com

4 ATM Locations: Swainsboro, Twin City, Metter, and Millen

- **4.** A programmable Instant Pot that can act as a pressure cooker, slow cooker, rice cooker, steamer, sauté, yogurt maker, and food warmer helping them prepare a delicious dinner all those holiday guests will love. Available online for \$59.99 in two different sizes.
- **5. Refreshing and rejuvenating collagen face masks** you can use as fantastic stocking stuffers for everyone you know. A pack of 16 is available online for \$9.99 in three different sets.
- **6. A Disney+ membership,** which might just be a pretty awesome gift for anyone obsessed with the magical world. Get it for \$6.99 per month or \$69.99 per year.
- **7.** A bubbling HoMedics foot spa which features a toetouch control, integrated splash guard, raised nodes at the base (for a gentle massage), and a removable pumice stone so they can treat themselves from the comfort of their home. Available online for as low as \$23.13. Throw in the salts for extra points!
- **8.** An LED-light essential oil diffuser designed to give their home a relaxing and calming aroma. Available online for \$14.99 in four different colors. Throwing in a set of essential oils, too? Even better.
- **9.** A spiral-bound collection of the best New York Times crosswords, because it's their favorite way to spend a Saturday morning. Available on Amazon for \$11.69. Different sets are available for different days with varying degrees of difficulty starting with the easiest daily edition produced by The Times, Monday, working up to The Times' hardest daily edition, Sunday
- **10.** A pack of wine filters designed to remove sulfites and histamines from their favorite beverage and maybe even the headaches they get the day after. Get a pack of three on Amazon for \$11.99.
- 11. A cast-iron skillet so they can make so many delicious dishes just like their favorite restaurants. Available online for \$8.50+ in nine sizes with a cover. A silicone handle, a pan scraper, cast iron oil, and a stainless steel cleaner will pair well with this gift.
- **12.** An absolutely and totally comfortable lounge set they'll wear all the time and think of you every time they do. Several colors, styles, and brands available online and in-store.
- **13. A mini Sega Genesis console** complete with 42 games, two wired controllers, and all the cables and adapters they'll need. This would be a great gift for someone who grew up on the original Sega. Available online starting at \$49.97.
- 14. A magically inspired copy of The Unofficial Harry Potter Cookbook filled with the recipes that all your favorite wizards would probably love. Available on Amazon for \$10.95.
- 15. A delicious box of British treats filled with 10 of the (CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)



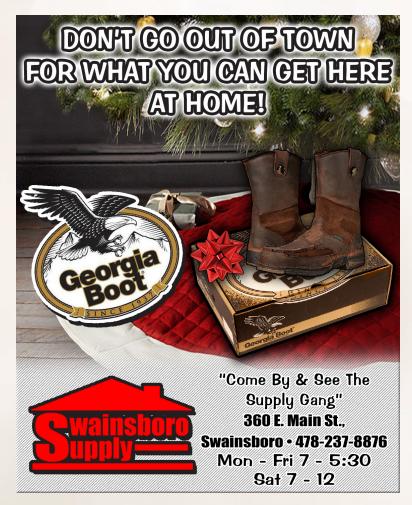
#### (FROM PAGE 10)

top-selling Cadbury British chocolate bars that they may or may not eat in one sitting. A big bag or box can be ordered on Amazon for \$19.99+.

- **16. A set of glass beaker shot glasses** for all those chemists out there who need to unwind. Get it online for \$19.98.
- 17. A fantastic Jack Black Triple Play Set complete with their Pure Clean Daily Facial Cleanser, their Double-Duty Face Moisturizer (with SPF 20), and their Turbo Wash Energizing Cleanser for Hair & Body all of which come in an elegant tin box you can use for a million things. Perfect for any man in your life at a relatively affordable price point, \$41.65 from Nordstrom.
- **18.** A three-piece pizza grilling set they can use to make the kind of oven-fresh pizza that'll have people asking, "Is that delivery or DiGiorno?" But it won't be either! 'Cause it's homemade! Get it for your grillmaster for \$33.99 off Amazon
- 19. An encouraging little copy of *Gmorning, Gnight!:* Little Pep Talks for Me & You filled with affirmations to help remind them just how awesome they are! Available online on Amazon for \$12.66. Also available in Spanish.
- **20.** A bottle of sweet and slightly spicy Mike's Hot Honey that they're really going to want to have on hand year-round. Available online for as low as \$9.99.
- **21. A 52-week gratitude journal** filled with prompts and space to write out everything they're thankful for because sometimes we're so focused on what we don't have that we forget about everything we do have. Find it online as cheap as \$6.99.
- **22.** An awesome beginner's guide to calligraphy that'll help them upgrade their penmanship game by teaching them five different alphabet styles and uppercase and lowercase letters, plus give them some design and composition tips. Again, available online as cheap as \$6.99.
- 23. A pair of light-up Star Wars chopsticks for when they need the help of The Force to get them through a meal. Perfect for any Star Wars nerd you know and love. Available online for about \$13.
- 24. A very cool and splurge-worthy PIX Backpack that has an awesome programmable screen that lets them light up the world with nearly any pixel art they can think of! One of the pricier gifts in our guide, coming in at \$188 available online in four colors.
- **25.** A pair of Apple AirPod Pros designed with active noise cancellation, transparency mode for hearing the world around you, and three sizes of soft, tapered silicone tips for a perfect fit they're also sweat- and water-resistant and have a wireless charging case that has more than 24 hours of battery life. Basically they're really cool and if you like anyone enough to throw down this kind of cash... Well, lucky them. The most expensive gift in our guide at \$199.99 online. For cheaper alternatives, check out the classic AirPods.
- **26.** A pair of ultra-cozy flannel pajamas, because while everyone else is getting all dressed up, the dress code for where they're going is a little more lax. Get them on Amazon

for \$32.99 in seven different sizes and 17 different colors.

- **27. An ion-generating Revion one-step airbrush** capable of drying, straightening, and giving your hair the volume you dream of with just one tool. With promising reviews, the price tag of \$41.99 is a steal. Available online and in retailers.
- **28.** A seven-color silicone night-light so adorable, so precious, so cute not even the monsters under their bed will be able to stay scary. Available online as low as \$16.99.
- **29.** An ergonomic and compact Shiatsu back and neck massager to help relieve the pain they probably developed from hosting their entire family this holiday season. Priced online at \$49.95.
- **30.** A super cute portable mini fridge. With so many people working from home now, how awesome would it be to help elevate their home office set up with an easy way to access their favorite snack?! Plus, it's great for beauty lovers who want a cool place to store their products. Available on Amazon for \$60.
- **31.** A copy of *Nevertheless, She Wore it,* an illustrated chronicle of 50 iconic and historic moments in fashion. A perfect \$17 gift for all the fashionistas in your life.
- **32.** And last but not least, a super entertaining whodunit Titanic Murder Mystery game perfect as a last-minute gift because you can download and print right from the comfort of your home. Find it on Etsy for \$19.95.











10 N. Leroy St., Metter, GA 30439 912-685-5411

6020 Hwy. 21 S., Rincon, GA 31326 912-826-1997

www.bandmpools.com



## More holiday survival tips

Continuing our master list of survival tips for the holiday season, below are three more tips (plus a bonus!) to help you keep your sanity throughout Christmas and into the New Year.

#### 1. Sleep.

Sleeping is the time when our bodies recover from the excesses of life. Drinking and eating too much can severely affect our sleep patterns, as can the frequent late nights that are a regular occurrence during the festive period. Over Christmas and New Year, many people are sleep-starved leaving them not fit for much after a few late nights, let alone being the life and soul of the party. Therefore, make sure you get some quality sleep, even if it is just a few hours.

#### 2. Take time off.

If possible, plan your holidays so that you are not forced into going into work over the festive period. Many people try burning the candle at both ends, combining parties and work, and end up completely knackered. Time off in the run up to Christmas will prevent you from being overworked and overstressed by the time it arrives, so you will be in a better position to enjoy the whole experience.

#### 3. Don't be on your own.

If you are concerned about being lonely over Christmas, either being single or unable to spend it with family, then do something about it now. Think about inviting a few others over who are in the same boat as you and consider offering your house as a venue for the event. Also, try not to turn down any invitations to other festive events, provided that you are giving yourself a chance to recover in between!

#### A final word...

Christmas should be fun but if you find that previous years have not been enjoyable, consider doing something about it-try something different. One way would just be to get away from it all and remove the majority of the hassle from the whole festive experience. Although – we all know how stressful preparing for a holiday can be!

#### RECIPE: SANTA HAT BROWNIES

Looking for a festive homemade treat to gift to your friends and coworkers or serve at your holiday party? Look no further!

#### **Ingredients**

- 1 pan of your favorite brownies, cut into rounds
- 12 to 16 small strawberries, washed and hulled
  - 1 batch vanilla-mascarpone buttercream (Recipe below)

#### Vanilla buttercream

- 1/2 c. (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 8 oz. mascarpone cheese, room temperature
- 2-1/2 to 3 c. powdered sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt

#### **Directions**

Using a stand mixer with a paddle attachment, beat butter and mascarpone cheese until light and creamy, about 2 minutes. Add vanilla extract and salt. Add 2-1/2 cups of sugar, half a cup at a time, and continue beating until smooth. Add more sugar if needed to reach desired consistency and sweetness.

To assemble, pipe a ring of vanilla buttercream on top of each brownie. Cut off the base of each of the strawberries so they lie flat and place upside down on each brownie, pushing slightly to secure in place. Tap the tip of each strawberry with a dot of buttercream to finish the Santa hat.



## Ptaying safe during the holidays amid coronavirus

Here are tips to help navigate the fall and winter holidays, per infectious-disease experts and the official guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

**Do:** Consider alternative ways to celebrate the holidays to limit the risk of contracting or spreading the coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19. The anticipated fall spike in coronavirus infections and hospitalizations has begun in much of the country. **Do:** Limit in-person gatherings in size and duration. The more people involved and the longer the event, the greater the risk.

**Don't:** Participate in a holiday gathering if you have symptoms or believe you have been recently exposed to the coronavirus.

**Do:** Pay attention to the coronavirus infection rates in your community and in places from where out-of-town guests are coming. When planning to host a holiday celebration, you should assess current COVID-19 levels in your community to determine whether to postpone, cancel, or limit the number of attendees, the CDC states.

**Do:** Understand who has increased risk of a severe outcome from COVID-19. That includes older adults and those with chronic health conditions, such as heart disease, obesity and diabetes. The CDC recommends that people at increased risk of severe illness participate remotely, rather than in person, in holiday gath-

erings involving people from outside their household. People who live or work with someone at increased risk should also not participate in such gatherings, the CDC advises.

**Do:** Get together outside rather than inside if possible. If forced to be indoors, try to open windows and maintain good air circulation.

**Do:** Wear a mask, stay at least six feet apart, and practice good hand hygiene.

Do: Bring your own food, drinks, and utensils to gatherings.

**Do:** If reaching into a common bowl or dish, make sure to use hand sanitizer afterward.

**Don't:** Assume that if you wear a mask you do not need to be physically distanced. Interventions such as masks, distancing and hand-washing are meant to supplement one another to reduce risk of infection.

**Don't:** Assume that you are not infectious if you feel healthy. The coronavirus can be spread by people who are asymptomatic.

**Do:** Talk with family members and friends in advance to create a plan that everyone can abide by and be comfortable with. Be prepared to decline invitations. Think long term—the pandemic won't last forever.

Don't: Just wing it.













# How to host a holiday party with ease

One of the things people look forward to most as the holiday season approaches? The set of holiday parties that come along with it: It's a wonderful time to celebrate with friends and family. However, there's no denying that hosting a holiday party, should that responsibility land on your shoulders, is generally associated with some level of stress. As the host, you may feel all sorts of pressure—financial, social, and beyond. Before you know it, the well-meant invitation you extended to those you love becomes one you come to regret.

While there's a lot that goes into hosting loved ones during this festive season, it is possible to host an easy holiday party—one that doesn't make you feel overwhelmed and out of the control (two details that aren't compatible with the spirit of the season). To do so, it's important to give yourself enough time in advance of the celebration to plan out as many details as you can so you don't feel overworked on the day of. Prep little by little each day so you're not making last-minute décor adjustments or just-in-case side dishes with just minutes to spare before your quests arrive.

Of course, there's more to executing a seamless holiday celebration than simply preparing the food or your home's decorations ahead of schedule. Ahead are even more best-kept secrets for pulling off an easy and enjoyable party.

#### 1. Send invitations early.

You might not start thinking about the holidays until Halloween has come and gone, but your friends and family's seasonal calendars will

fill up fast, especially on the precious few Saturday nights in December. Inviting them with advance notice ensures the guests you really want there are available. You can always send invites via an online invitation service, which is faster, easier, and cheaper than sending invitations by mail.

#### 2. Choose a theme—and stick with it.

Whether it's a color scheme, a seasonal fruit, or even a holiday song, choosing one design element to lead the rest will create cohesion throughout your event. For example, if cranberry is your common thread, choose floating cranberries and candles on your tablescape, a cranberry spritzer cocktail upon guest arrival, and a goat cheese and cranberry tartlet for dessert. Nothing has to be too matchy-matchy, but if you have two or three nods to your theme, it will look so thoughtful to your guests.

#### 3. Utilize what you already have in your house.

Before you spend hundreds on groceries and party supplies, take a look at what you might already have in your pantry, cabinets, and storage spaces. Whether it's the fancy plates you received from your wedding or the stack of holiday cards on the table, make it easier on yourself and use what you have on hand for décor. If you do have to purchase new décor, don't go overboard. Take advantage of empty wall space and displaying garlands on the wall using removable (CONTINUED ON PAGE 15)





#### (FROM PAGE 14)

clips.

#### 4. Always overestimate when buying food and beverages.

The last thing you need to worry about in the midst of entertaining is running out of food or drinks, leaving your guests hungry and thirsty. Sure, you may wind up with a heaping pile of leftovers, but sending your guests home with them in take-out boxes or donating remaining meals to the nearest shelter (that's certainly one way to give back this season) are both great fixes for that.

#### 5. Don't stretch yourself too thin in the kitchen.

Even if you love to cook, attempting to make everything for your party from scratch is a recipe for disaster. Whip up a couple of signature dishes, but make your life easier and buy the rest. The same goes for cocktails. You can prepare a wonderful holiday punch in advance, which also makes for a great visual, but all your other bar elements can be placed on a table for guests to help themselves or make their own cocktails. This should free up some time that can be reinvested in decorating your holiday table and bar.

#### 6. Arrange the party wisely.

Just as wild animals gather at the watering hole, your guests will always gather around food. Put your food stations where you want your guests to socialize. If you put the food in the kitchen, people will stay in the kitchen. she says. For the best flow, place appetizers in different locations, forcing people to move around and mingle.

#### 8. Ask for help.

Once friends and .family hear that you're hosting a holiday party, chances are they'll shortly begin asking how they can help. Accept your

RIBS - PULLED PORK - BRISKET - CHICKEN AND REL

CALL NOW TO ORDER

METTER - 912.685.4421 | VIDALIA - 912.805.2500

PAPABUCKS.COM

aunt's gracious offer to bring her best cookies and your best friend's suggestion that she arrive early to help you set up. You could also consider hiring outside help, such as a cleaning crew. Being open to an extra pair of hands will help you relax and enjoy the party (and its aftermath) much more.

#### 9. Stick to a timeline.

Even if you're not the type to follow a schedule, it's smart to incorporate some kind of plan for the day (or night) of the event. This will help make the party feel seamless."From the time that guests arrive to when dessert will be served, you'll feel calmer if you plan ahead and stick to your schedule. While we can't always plan for the unexpected, you can tack on a few minutes for any interruptions that might occur.

#### 10. Don't forget the music.

There's no reason to hire a DJ for your holiday party, but you also don't want to forget about music completely. If you're looking for holiday-themed songs, you can use an app like Spotify or Pandora to play a fitting playlist. That way, you don't have to think about what to play—and you'll always have melodies in the background to enhance the festive mood.

#### 11. Provide plenty of trash cans.

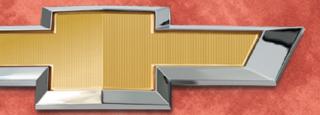
Make cleaning up that much easier by strategically placing small waste cans throughout the party area—one by the buffet, one by the bar, and one in the restroom. Place extra liners in the bottom of the waste cans before you secure the liner to be used over them so you can easily remove the top bag, take one of the extras from the bottom, put it in place, and move on.





# DANIELS - BISHOP CHEVROLET

CHEVROLET



FIND NEW ROADS"