



Holiday Guide

2024

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Holiday Recipes



GRANDMA RUTH'S SWEET POTATOES WITH APPLES

Ingredients:

1 40 oz can Princlla Yams in Light Syrup (brand is important, substitutes won't work right)
2 large Macintosh Apples
Cinnamon
1 round oven safe baking dish

Directions:

Drain the can of yams and mash until smooth.
Layer half the yams in the baking dish and spread flat.
Peel and slice the Macintosh apples as thinly as possible, lay out in a fan pattern, starting at the edges and working toward the center, overlapping slightly.
Sprinkle with cinnamon until apples are thoroughly covered.
Gently layer the remaining mashed yams over the apple layer, careful not to disturb the pattern.
Layer the remaining sliced apples over the top and sprinkle with cinnamon until apples are thoroughly covered. (It should look like the photo)
Bake at 350 for approximately one hour or until the apples are soft (start checking around 40 minutes)

Tips:

Be sure to use Princella (the other brand will be too stringy)
Be sure apples are sliced paper thin
You can substitute Granny Smith apples

GRANDMA'S APPLE CRISP, AN ORAL TRADITION

"I watched her make apple crisp a million times. As with all recipes handed down by watching - it is all by sight. Very specifically, you must use only Cortland apples, cut in 6ths (not 4s, not 8s). Some white sugar & cinnamon over the apples. The 'crisp' is just a stick of butter, a handful of flour, pinch of salt, brown sugar and cinnamon, hand mixed until it forms big clumps (like

pebbles, not sand). Bake in an 8x8 pan @350 until the topping is crispy."

PERNIL, A TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS DISH FROM PUERTO RICO

Submitted by Angelica Crosby

Pernil is a slow-roasted pork roast, usually a shoulder, butt or leg. It is also a classic dish in the Dominican Republic and Cuba, but



Lori Grable and Marques Crosby serve a Christmas Lechón (Layout: there's an accent over the o) whole pork roast in 2023. Last year, Angelica Crosby's family decided to prepare a whole pig (Lechón) instead of a shoulder or leg (pernil). Both are traditional Puerto Rican dishes enjoyed during the holidays. Crosby's family celebrates both Christmas and Kwanzaa. Courtesy photo

with a few differences. Here is the Puerto Rican recipe.

Note, this recipe calls for you to apply a rub the night before cooking.

Ingredients
1 (7-pound) bone-in or boneless pork shoulder
¼ cup vegetable or canola oil
12 cloves garlic minced
¼ cup fresh oregano leaves
1 tablespoon dried oregano
2 tablespoons Adobo seasoning (powdered

canned)
1 tablespoon paprika
1 teaspoon kosher salt plus more for seasoning at the end
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper plus more for seasoning at the end
Juice of 2 lemons and 1 orange

Instructions

Score the fat on the pork shoulder in a crisscross hatch fashion. Then, cut deeply once in each direction across the pork, like you are going to cut it into four quarters, but then leave them attached at the bottom. Use a sharp knife to make about 20 slits, about 1 inch deep, all over the meat. Place the meat in a 13 x 9 baking pan, or another shallow baking pan large enough to comfortably hold the meat with some space around it.

Combine the oil, garlic, fresh and dried oregano, Adobo, paprika, salt and pepper. Rub the mixture all over the meat, working it all over the surface and into the slits. Cover the pork with foil and refrigerate overnight.

Bring the pork to room temperature, about 1 hour. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 300°F. Bake the pork, covered for 3 hours, then remove the foil and bake for another 3 to 4 hours at the same temperature, until the pork is fall-apart tender. The internal temperature should be at least 165°, but it may be higher, which is fine – it's most important that the meat is super tender. If you would like a crustier exterior, turn the heat to 375°F and bake for another 20 to 30 minutes, until the outside of the pork has a nice browned crust.

Let the pernil sit for at least 20 minutes, then use your fingers (if it's not too hot; some people like to wear kitchen gloves to protect their fingers from the heat), or two forks to pull the meat into chunks. Sprinkle the meat with the lemon and orange juice, season with additional salt and pepper, and serve hot or warm.

Source: themom100.com/recipe/pernil/

Recipe and photo submitted by Angelica Crosby, whose family celebrates both Christmas and Kwanzaa

PEPPERMINT MOCHA COOKIE BARS

Submitted by Jen Schofield

These fudgy peppermint mocha cookie bars are infused with peppermint and espresso flavors, making them reminiscent of a popular holiday-time drink.
Prep Time: 20 mins
Cook Time: 25 mins
Cool Time: 30 mins
Chill Time: 1 hr
Total Time: 2 hrs 15 mins
Servings: 16
Ingredients:

White Chocolate Frosting:
1/2 cup white chocolate chips
1/3 cup heavy cream
1/8 teaspoon peppermint extract
Cookie Bars:
2 tablespoons instant espresso powder
2 tablespoons hot water
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
1 large egg, at room temperature
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
1/4 cup finely crushed peppermint candy canes, plus more for decorating

Directions:

Place white chocolate chips, heavy cream, and 1/8 teaspoon peppermint extract into a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave at 50% power in 30 second intervals, stirring after each interval, until melted and combined. Place mixture, uncovered, in the refrigerator until completely chilled, about 1 hour. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Line an 8x8-inch square pan with enough parchment paper to have overhang on all sides.

In a small bowl or measuring cup, stir espresso powder and hot water together until dissolved.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder, salt, baking soda, and baking powder until thoroughly combined.

Beat butter, white sugar, and brown sugar together in a large bowl until light and fluffy. Add in egg and beat until thoroughly combined. Add in espresso mixture, vanilla extract, and 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract and mix until combined. Pour in half of the flour mixture and mix until just combined. Add in remaining flour mixture and mix until just combined (dough will be somewhat thick). Stir in chocolate chips and crushed candy canes. Spread dough into the prepared pan in an even layer. Bake in the preheated oven until the bars look just set, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely in the pan, about 30 minutes.

Remove chilled white chocolate mixture from the fridge. Whip on medium-high speed with an electric mixer until mixture holds stiff peaks. Spread white chocolate frosting in a thin even layer over the top of the cooled bars and sprinkle with additional crushed candy canes. Cut into 16 bars.

Source: www.allrecipes.com/peppermint-mocha-cookie-bars-recipe-8423140

KRANSEKAKE (ALSO KNOWN AS "WREATH CAKE")

Submitted by Rebecca Williamson

Kransekake is a traditional Scandinavian dessert cake made of almond cookie rings stacked in a cone shape and held together with icing. The tower of rings stands 18 layers tall and makes a lovely Christmas tree form.

Ingredients

Dough

8 ounces (2 cups) sliced blanched almonds
3 cups confectioners' sugar
½ teaspoon coarse salt
2 large egg whites
Unsalted butter, softened, for molds

Royal Icing

1 pound confectioners' sugar
3 large egg whites or 5 tablespoons meringue powder mixed with ½ cup water
Paste or gel food coloring (optional)



Kransekake, or wreath cake, prepared by Rebecca Williamson. Courtesy photo

Directions

Dough: Place almonds in a food processor and process to form fine crumbs, about 2 minutes. Add sugar and salt and process until well combined and powder-like, about 1 minute. Add egg whites and process until a dough forms (it will have the texture of cookie dough). Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Preheat oven to 300°F with oven rack in the middle. Brush a set of 6 kransekake molds with butter. Divide dough in half. Working with one half of dough at a time, cut into small portions and roll into ropes that are slightly thicker than the diameter of a pencil (about 3/8-inch-to-1/2-inch thick). Fit ropes into rings of 3 molds, trimming to fit. Place molds on an unrimmed baking sheet and bake until puffed and lightly golden brown, about 30 minutes.



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Edible Gifts

If you're looking for quick and easy edible gifts, here are a few suggestions.

Spiced Nuts

Ingredients:
2 cups mixed nuts (almonds, cashews, pecans, walnuts)
1 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp maple syrup or honey
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)
1/4 tsp sea salt

Instructions:
Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
In a bowl, toss the nuts with olive oil, maple syrup, cinnamon, cayenne pepper (if using), and salt. Spread the nuts evenly on the baking sheet.
Roast for 15-20 minutes, stirring once or twice, until golden and fragrant.
Let the nuts cool completely before packaging in small jars or bags.

Homemade Hot Cocoa Mix

Ingredients:
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 cup cocoa powder
1 cup powdered milk
1/2 cup mini chocolate chips or finely chopped chocolate
1/4 tsp salt
Mini marshmallows (optional)

Instructions:
In a large bowl, whisk together the powdered sugar, cocoa powder, powdered milk, salt, and chocolate chips.
Store the mix in an airtight jar or container.
To make hot cocoa, stir 3-4 tablespoons of the mix into 1 cup of hot milk or water.
For a fun presentation, layer the mix in a jar and add a small bag of marshmallows on top. Tie with a festive ribbon.

Cranberry Almond Granola

Ingredients:
3 cups rolled oats
1 cup sliced almonds
1 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup honey or maple syrup

Instructions:
Preheat oven to 325°F (163°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
In a large bowl, combine oats, almonds, cinnamon, and salt.
In a small saucepan, warm the honey and coconut oil together until melted. Stir in vanilla.
Pour the wet mixture over the oat mixture and stir until everything is evenly coated.
Spread the mixture evenly on the prepared baking sheet.
Bake for 20-25 minutes, stirring halfway through, until golden brown.
Let the granola cool completely, then stir in dried cranberries.
Package in mason jars or cellophane bags tied with ribbon.

Caramel Popcorn

Ingredients:
1/2 cup unsalted butter
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/4 cup corn syrup
10 cups popped popcorn (about 1/2 cup unpopped kernels)

Instructions:
Preheat the oven to 250°F (120°C) and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Stir in brown sugar and corn syrup.
Bring to a boil and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Remove from heat and stir in vanilla and baking soda. The mixture will bubble up.
Pour the caramel over the popped popcorn and toss to coat evenly.
Spread the popcorn in an even layer on the prepared baking sheet and bake for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes.
Let it cool completely before breaking into pieces and packaging in gift bags or jars.



Be mindful of pets during the holiday season

The magic and wonder of the holiday season can be enthralling for people of all ages. There is so much to see and do during the holiday season, making it easy to forge lasting memories.

With so much to do in December, life at home can sometimes feel a little hectic, especially for the family pet. Although the holidays can be exciting, the season can induce anxiety in pets. Pets like cats and dogs often thrive on routine and familiarity. Switch up that routine and various behavioral issues can arise, including having accidents in the home. Pets also may become more destructive, chewing or clawing at items to release pent-up tension and anxiety. Pet owners who want the season to be festive for their pets can consider the following strategies.

- Gradually introduce new items. Gradually decorate living spaces so pets can grow acclimated to their newly decorated environs. Add a few pieces to rooms each day until you finally have all of your decorations out for display. This way pets can sniff around the decorations and realize they

do not pose a threat.

- Keep familiar pet belongings. Try not to upset the apple cart too much in regard to pets' cherished possessions.

For example, do not move the dog bed from the living room and place the Christmas tree in its place. Pets need that familiarity and having some

of their items with familiar smells can make for a smooth adjustment to holiday decorations.

- Designate a pet-safe zone. If you will be inviting people over during the holidays, set aside a room for pets so they can be in relative quiet away from boisterous crowds. Locking pets away also helps prevent their escape from the home as guests come and go.
- Secure the tree and other decorations. Pets are often curious about new things, and they may climb or paw at items to try to understand them better. Decorative items may end up being knocked over by curious pets. Secure the tree using a string and an anchor to the ceiling or wall like you might secure a large screen TV to prevent it from

tipping over. Keep breakable ornaments and other trinkets behind display cases or beyond the reach of pets.

- Discourage pets from using decorations as toys. Repri-mand pets or move them away from holiday decor so they don't get the idea that these items are now their toys.
- Be careful with holiday foods. Holiday foods and desserts are rich and full of ingredients that may not be healthy for pets. Keep a secure lid on trash pails and remind holiday guests that pets should not be fed table scraps.

Pets may need some time to adjust to the changes that come with holiday decorating and celebrating to keep them happy and safe.





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www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
 It's the Holidays, Maysa
 Snowfall, Ramsey Lewis Trio
 The Holly and the Ivy, George Winston
 The Little Drummer Boy, Kenny Burrell
 Jingle Bells – Remastered 1999, Frank Sinatra
 Storm King, Big Tree
 Little Saint Nick – 1991 Remix, The Beach Boys
 Sonny Boy's Christmas Blues, Sonny Boy Williamson II
 Santa Never Brings Me a Banjo, Kate Rusby
 Christmas Wrapping, The Waitresses
 Plum Puddin', Ramsey Lewis Trio
 I Want An Alien For Christmas, Fountains of Wayne
 2000 Miles – 2007 Remaster, Pretenders
 Dreydl, Canadian Brass
 Skating, Vince Guaraldi Trio
 Soul Cake, Sting
 Riu, Riu, Chiu, Chanticleer
 Kwanzaa-Umoja-Uhuru, Sounds of Blackness
 Pass the Candle, Michelle Citrin
 Boogaloo Navideno, Pete Rodriguez
 Den Trawler, The Spinanes
 Father Christmas, The Kinks
 In Dulci Jubilo, Pittsburgh Symphony Brass
 Carol of the Bells, Harry Simeone Chorale
 Ding! Dong! Merrily on High, XVI Century French
 Friday Afternoons, Benjamin Britten
 House of Broken Gingerbread, The Monkees
 Umoja: The First Day of Kwanza, Valerie Coleman
 O Tannenbaum, Vienna Boys' Choir
 Collage of Koleda Carols, Kitka
 The Shortest Day, Susan Cooper
 Christmas Time is Here, Khruangbin
 Snow, Bing Crosby
 Little Drummer Boy, Dave Grohl
 Rorate coeli desuper, Custer LaRue
 Les Anges Dans Nos Campagnes, Bruce Cockburn
 Louisiana Christmas Day, Aaron Neville
 Jingle Bells, William Shatner
 This Year, The Mountain Goats
 Aspenglow, John Denver
 Solstice Hymn, Jay Ungar
 Little Bright Star, The Supremes
 River, Joni Mitchell
 Auld Lang Syne, The Cast

Traveling for the holidays? A Pre-travel checklist

If you're traveling during the holidays, here is a checklist that might help you rest better while you're on vacation.

Before you leave:

- Doors/windows. Make sure all doors and windows are closed and locked.
- Lights. Leave some on, consider timers and motion-activated lights inside and outside.
- Thermostat. Adjust the heat/air to "away" or a low temperature.
- Appliances. Make sure all are turned off or set to "vacation" mode.
- Refrigerator. Discard any food that might go bad while you're away.
- Dishwasher. Run and unload before your leave.
- Garbage disposal. Deep clean it before you leave.
- Washer/dryer. Make sure there are no damp clothes in either.
- Water. Make sure faucets and toilets are not running. If appropriate for the climate, consider turning off the main water supply.
- Pipes. If you expect frigid temps while away, ask a neighbor or friend to run the hot water occasionally.
- Electronics. Unplug all.
- Fireplace/candles. Be abso-

- lutely sure that all flames have been extinguished.
- Shades and curtains. Leave them as you would when you're home.
- Plants. Water your plants.
- Lockbox/safe. Consider a household safe for your valuables.
- Mail. Put your mail on vacation hold.
- Delivery services. If you expect any packages while you're away, make arrangements with someone to pick them up.
- Newspaper. Pause your subscription.
- Trash. Empty household trash.
- Trash pickup. If you put your trash cans out, ask a neighbor to bring them in for you.
- Yard. Mow the lawn before you leave. If wind could be an issue, secure yard furniture, etc.
- Snow. If you expect it to snow while you're away, arrange for someone to plow or shovel your driveway.
- Driveway. If possible, keep a vehicle in the driveway while you're gone (or consider asking a neighbor to park there).
- Neighbors. Share your plans with your neighbors.
- Spare key. Leave a key with a trusted neighbor in case of



emergencies.
House sitter. If you have a house sitter or a pet sitter, share the information with your neighbors.
Pets. If you have someone

- checking on your pets, make sure they have enough food and supplies while you're gone.
- Police/fire. Don't hesitate to let your public safety officials know you'll be away.
- Security cameras. Make sure all are charged.
- Alarm. Remember to arm your alarm system.

While you're away:

- Don't post photos of your trip on social media; wait until you return.
- Ask a friend to stop by on occasion or stay overnight.

Plan for your return:

- Plan for the first meal you'll need when you get home.
- Tidy the house before you leave (vacuum, wipe down counters, clean bathrooms, etc.)
- Change bedsheets before you leave.
- Consider plug-ins etc. to keep the house smelling fresh.

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Holiday Happenings

Editor's note: This list is not meant to be exhaustive. These are the events of which we were aware of at press time.

THROUGH DEC. 25

• Gillette Stadium, Foxborough, times vary. Magic of Lights drive-through experience showcases dozens of displays, festive favorites and captivating digital animations, all brought to life with millions of LED lights, ensuring a memorable holiday experience for the whole family. Pre-purchase tickets. www.patriot-place.com/events/magic-of-lights/?utm-hero

THROUGH DEC. 29

• Southwick's Zoo, 2 Southwick St., Mendon. Winter Wonderland: New England's premier holiday lights display. Take a magical journey through Southwick's Zoo with friends and family to view spectacular holiday lights and handcrafted displays. southwick-szoo.com/winter-wonderland/
• The Breakers, Newport, RI. Sparkling Lights at The Breakers, timed tickets required, Now in its fifth season, this event

brings the magic of the holidays inside and outside this landmark Gilded Age mansion. You'll stroll along a half-mile-long path glittering with hundreds of thousands of holiday lights while music fills the winter air. See illuminated displays and sparkling surprises along the way. Tour the opulent interior of The Breakers decorated in holiday splendor. www.newportmansions.org/events/sparkling-lights-at-the-breakers-2024/

• The Garden at Elm Bank, 900 Washington St., Wellesley. Celebrate the season at the Garden at Elm Bank with dozens of trees, Snow Village model trains, garden lights, hot cocoa, and s'mores- dates and times vary. www.masshort.org/festival-of-trees

THROUGH JAN. 1, 2025

La Salette Shrine, 947 Park St., Attleboro, open daily, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Christmas Festival of Lights. Photos with Santa on Fri., Sat.,

and Sun. in the Welcome Center. Carousel, hayride, and ride to Bethlehem on Fri., Sat., and Sun. Visit the International Creche Museum, and/or the Judea, Jerusalem, and Galilee at the Time of Jesus" display. For details, visit lasalettetattleboroshrine.org/christmas-festival

THROUGH JAN. 4, 2025

• Winterlights sponsored by The Trustees - timed tickets required, various locations. Experience the sparkle of the holiday season as Winterlights returns to three special places: Naumkeag in Stockbridge, Stevens Coolidge House & Gardens in North Andover, and Eleanor Cabot Bradley Estate in Canton. Enjoy dazzling light displays, festive music, seasonal treats, and time outside among the trees and snow. Event runs through Jan. 4. thetrustees.org/program/winterlights-massachusetts/

THROUGH JAN. 5, 2025

• New England Botanic Garden, 11 French Dr., Boylston. Night Lights: Color Cascade at New England Botanic Garden - 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Immerse yourself in the magic of the season with a breathtaking winter light display that is unmatched in the region. This year, prepare to be amazed by Night Lights: Color Cascade, a one-of-a-kind winter experience where visitors embark on a spellbinding journey through a mesmerizing array of a quarter million radiant, glowing lights in every imaginable color. nebg.org/nightlights/

DECEMBER

• Dec. 1, 6-8, 13-15, 20-23, 27-30, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., Olde Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge. Christmas by Candlelight, tickets required. Experience the history of Christmas festivities, relish old traditions and create new ones. [www.osv.org/event/christmas-by-](http://www.osv.org/event/christmas-by-candlelight/)

candlelight/
• Dec. 1, 8 a.m. to noon, Saint Blaise Church, 1158 S. Main St., Bellingham. Breakfast with Santa.
• Dec. 1, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Fri. and Sat.), 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Sun.). Worcester Center for Crafts, 25 Sagamore Rd., Worcester. Holiday Festival of Crafts is a one-stop holiday shopping opportunity for unique, handmade gifts in a range of prices for men, women, and children. worcestercraftcenter.org/events/holiday-festival-of-crafts-331/
• Dec. 1, 1:30 p.m., Norwood Town Common, Holiday Tree Lighting. Celebration includes a reindeer dash, horse-drawn hayrides, and entertainment. The afternoon concludes when Santa and Mrs. Claus make their dramatic entrance and light up the

EVENTS

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EVENTS

continued from page 8

Norwood Town Common at 3:45 p.m. Free.
• Dec. 1, 3:30 p.m., Hillcrest Village, Rockwood Rd., Norfolk. Santa Parade and Holiday on the Hill. Featuring King Philip HS Marching Band, Santa & Mrs. Claus, Rudolph, Santa's elves, Frosty the Snowman, the Grinch, Buddy the Elf, Norfolk police and fire departments, scouts, color guard, varsity and chief Cheerleaders, town officials, and more. Photos with Santa at 4 p.m., Norfolk Public Library community room, BYOCamera.
• Dec. 1, 4 p.m., United Presbyterian Church, 51 Cottage St., Whitinsville. Cookies and Carols. Kick off the Advent season with the singing of Advent and Christmas Carols led by a guest organ player (William Cudmore, who has played for the Woo Sox) and pianist (Eileen Straub, the church's Minister of Music). There will be activities for the kids and singing of seasonal songs. For more information, call 508-234-8220.
• Dec. 1, 7 p.m., Vaillancourt Folk Art's Blaxton Hall Theatre, Sutton. "A Christmas Carol" performed by his great-great-grand-

son, Gerald Charles Dickens. The two-hour performance, including an intermission, will ignite the wonderment of the season through the immortal words of Dickens' classic ghost story. Gerald Charles Dickens adopts different voices, expressions, and mannerisms to portray each of the story's twenty-six characters in this acclaimed one-man show. Due to the complexity of a one-man performance, the show is not recommended for children under the age of 8 years old. Tickets range from \$35 - \$100. bit.ly/4h8aw42
• Dec 4, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Upton Public Library, Upton. Make a winter hat with paper, coloring materials, scissors, and cotton balls to make our winter creations. For ages 3+. No registration required. While supplies last.
• Dec. 5, Dean College, Awpie Way, Franklin. Holiday Lighting Ceremony to include lighting of a Christmas Tree, a menorah, and a Kwanzaa kinara. Entertainment and performances by Dean students. www.dean.edu
• Dec. 7, 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., Saint Joseph's Parish Center, 145 Holliston St., Medway. Santa Breakfast. Food, activities, crafts

for kids, silent auction, pictures with Santa. Cost is \$11 for adults; \$8 for seniors and kids; kids under 3 are free. Family max is \$31. Pictures with Santa are \$20, and each family will receive a thumb drive with 3 to 5 photos on it.
• Dec. 7, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John's Episcopal Church, 237 Pleasant St., Franklin. Christmas Fair. Fresh wreaths and greenery, crafts, raffle, silent auction, gift baskets, cookie walk, snack bar, and more. www.stjohnsfranklinma.org
• Dec. 7, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Christopher Church, 950 W. Boylston St., Worcester. Christmas Festival featuring fun for the whole family. Games, raffles, food, and more. For more information, call 508-853-1492.
• Dec. 7, 9:30 a.m., Waters Farm Preservation, Sutton. Breakfast with Santa, sponsored by Sen. Ryan Fattman. Breakfast, photos, crafts. Free but reservations are required. <https://bit.ly/breakfastwithsantatickets>.
• Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., United Parish of Upton, 1 Church St. Holiday Bazaar. Vendors, gift cards silent auction, fresh baked pie table, soul fuel café, raffles. [imluetke-](mailto:imluetke-meyer@earthlink.net)

meyer@earthlink.net
• Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., various locations, Sutton. Sutton Chain of Lights. Celebrate Christmas in historic Sutton with businesses, churches and organizations in town for the annual Christmas and holiday season celebration. Hop on a free trolley for rides to more than three dozen locations to do shopping, enjoy delicious food, kids' activities, hay rides and animals. The Sutton High School Band plays traditional carols and Christmas tunes at 5:30 p.m. on the Town Common, then head into the First Congregational Church for its famous Lake Ripple Roast Beef Dinner. Seating is from 5-7 p.m. with tickets available at the door. suttonchainoflights.weebly.com/
• Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Bancroft Memorial Library, Hopedale. A stop on the Winter Stroll. The library will display photographs of the library through the years as it celebrates its 125th anniversary. There will be treats and activities for kids in the Children's Room. The Friends of the Hopedale Library will have commemorative glass sun-catcher ornaments for sale along with books and homemade crafts. At 2 p.m., local acapella group Holiday Harmony Quartet will fill

the Library with songs of the season while guests enjoy hot cocoa and mulled cider.
• Dec. 7, noon to 4 p.m., 6 Cherry St., Ashland. Downtown Holiday Stroll. Take a delightful stroll through downtown to shop and enjoy holiday festivities! As you wander, you'll discover a plethora of local boutiques and pop-up shops, creating the perfect opportunity to check off your holiday shopping list. Also check out activities at The Corner Spot! Roast marshmallows at the fire pit, buy a wreath from the Boy Scouts, grab some cookies from the Girl Scouts, tell Santa what you want for Christmas, and enjoy hot chocolate, cider, and noodles from Doragon Eatery. And don't forget to collect stamps as you shop. www.facebook.com/events/8146977692075799/?_rdr
• Dec. 7, noon to 7 p.m., downtown Hopedale. Annual Hopedale Winter Stroll & Shop Hop. The stroll takes place at many stops along Hopedale St. and Dutcher St. including many historic buildings such as the

EVENTS
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Draper Gym, Hopedale Community House, Bancroft Memorial Library, Hopedale Unitarian Church, Union Evangelical Church, and the Little Red Shop Museum. Shop Hop list will also include stops all over Hopedale to visit, shop, eat, and enjoy. friendsofhistoric-hopedale.com/winter-stroll

- Dec. 7, 4:30 p.m., Auburn High School to City Hall, Auburn. Lighted Santa Parade & Tree Lighting. Live music begins at 4 p.m. at City Hall, parade begins at 4:30 p.m. After parade ends, at City Hall there will be a tree lighting, a visit from Santa, and live music. bit.ly/AuburnSantaParadeTreeLighting2024
- Dec. 8, 7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., Charles River Masonic Hall, 37 Cottage St., Medway. Breakfast with Santa plus free photo. Tickets for adults \$12, children \$8. Bring two non-expired canned goods for the Medway Food Pantry and receive \$1 off one adult breakfast. Also collecting tabs for Shriners Hospital Boston.
- Dec. 7, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., St. Gabriel's Church Christmas Fair, 151 Mendon St., Upton. The fair has a wide variety of fresh balsam wreaths, cemetery baskets and table top arrangements. Raffles on theme baskets, gift certificates, a \$200 Amazon gift card and a Scratch Ticket raffle valued at over \$450 are available. A New Gift Boutique featuring new and "like new" items, "Old Time" Christmas decorations, Gems and Jewels

and a Christmas Holiday decor section will have selections to interest everyone. The Bake Table offers an assortment of cookies, pastries, candy, jams and jellies. Enjoy coffee, tea, cold drinks and breakfast pastries or lunch with an assortment of finger roll sandwiches and chips.

- Dec. 7, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Annual Christmas Bazaar, St. Joseph's Parish Center, 68 Central Street, Auburn. Come and enjoy an old fashioned Christmas Bazaar and check out the Collectibles, Attic Treasures, Jewelry, Plants, Knit Goods, Holiday Décor, Toys, Candy & Baked Items and so much more! Take a chance on one of our many raffles. There is something for everyone! Free Admission. Plenty of parking available. Handicap accessible.
- Dec. 8, 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Placentino-Miller Cafetorium, 235 Woodland St., Holliston. Breakfast with Santa to benefit Holliston Lions Charities and the HMAPA. Tickets (cash or Venmo) are \$7 for ages 2-11 years, and \$10 for ages 12 and up. Under age 2 are free. If you bring a donation for Toys for Tots or the Holliston Pantry Shelf, you will receive \$1 off photos. For more information, contact valwani@hotmail.com
- Dec. 8, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Grafton Common, Grafton. Grafton Celebrates the Holidays. Frost Stops, Craft & Vendor Fair, and other fun holiday happenings. www.grafton-ma.gov/809/Events-Activities
- Dec. 8, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Grafton High School, 24 Providence Rd., Grafton. Craft & Vendor Fair. Over 75 vendors featuring

Sparkling Lights at The Breakers from Nov. 22 to Dec. 29

In its fifth season, Sparkling Lights at The Breakers in Newport, RI, will be on display from Nov. 22 through Dec. 29.

This event brings the magic of the holidays inside and outside this landmark Gilded Age mansion. You'll stroll along a half-mile-long path glittering with hundreds of thousands of holiday lights while music fills the winter air. See illuminated displays and sparkling surprises along the way. Tour the opulent interior of The Breakers, which is decorated in holiday splendor.

Enjoy holiday treats and adult beverages for purchase at the back terrace and The Breakers Welcome Center.

Timed tickets are required.
Source: www.newportmansions.org/events/sparkling-lights-at-the-breakers-2024/



A photo from Sparkling Lights at The Breakers in Newport, RI. The opulent mansion is decorated inside and outside during the holiday season. Photo credit: Nancy Jones of Norfolk

baked goods, home décor, jewelry, wood-working, and more. www.graftonrec.com

- Dec. 8 at 10:30 a.m., various locations, Millbury. 25th annual Millbury Chain of Lights, a town-wide event to celebrate the holidays with local food, shopping and entertainment! Enjoy nearly 40 stops

in town for live music, holiday shopping, holiday figures like Buddy the Elf and the Grinch, raffles and food. Old-fashioned trolleys provide free transportation throughout the day. The event is sponsored by local businesses and concludes with a tree lighting and appearance by Santa Claus at the Millbury bandstand. www.facebook.com/millburychainoflights/

- Dec. 8, 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. - The Unitarian Church at 3 Grafton Common is having a traditional Church Faire. Listen to music while enjoying a hot lunch, including chili, cornbread, and apple crisp. Enjoy free kids crafts and shop at our local holiday market.
- Dec. 8, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., 371 River St., Weymouth. Holiday Festival & Winter Sleigh Rides is an inclusive family event

featuring sleigh rides through the park, live music, pictures with Santa, arts and crafts, refreshments, and more. arcsouthshore.org/news-events/event-calendar.html/event/2024/12/08/4th-annual-holiday-festival/466985

- Dec. 11, 6 p.m., Upton Public Library, Upton. Winter Paper Trees. Elementary school-aged patrons can share a winter story and then use construction paper and paint to create beautiful skylines of winter trees. For ages 5 to 12. Pre-registration is required.
- Dec 12, 6 p.m., Upton Public Library. Gingerbread Clay Pots. Tweens and teens will use small terracotta pots, hot glue, and

EVENTS


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paint to make an adorable gingerbread man. For ages 10 to 16. Pre-registration required.

- Dec. 12, 7 p.m., Franklin Federated Church, 171 Main St., Franklin. "Blue Christmas," a service for those who are having a hard time with the "merry" aspect of Christmas, whether due to grieving or loneliness. The event includes candlelight and comforting songs, readings, and reflection.
- Dec. 14, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Maggiano's Little Italy, 4 Columbus Ave., Boston. Autism Eats Brunch with Santa. The group will have their own private room and delicious buffet. The event is entirely autism family friendly and all behaviors are welcome. Autism Eats gives autism families an opportunity to enjoy restaurant meals without the stress that often accompanies these outings. It is a way to spend time with other families in an autism-friendly non-judgmental environment. www.spedchildmass.com/event/autism-eats-brunch-with-santa-boston/?instance_id=25787
- Dec., 14, 10:30 a.m., First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Rd., Sutton Center. Jingle Jaunt 5K, must pre-register. Information available at howie189@verizon.net, fccs@suttonfirstchurch.net, and 508-865-0198.
- Dec. 14, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., MIT Endicott House, 80 Haven St., Dedham. Holiday

Afternoon Tea. Enjoy a traditional afternoon tea in the splendor of our old-world cha-teau-style mansion, majestically decorated with holiday tidings of joy! Special culinary delicacies of the season to be served with warm holiday teas, returning the Endicott House to its days of former glory when Boston's notable family hosted their most elite guests. www.mitendicotthouse.org

- Dec. 14, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Douglas Winter Stroll, Douglas. Do some holiday shopping, listen to carolers, explore the Museum and take part in special events, and treats at the Library (special guest appearances, too!), visit the Orchard, get your trees and wreaths, grab an app or meal...best of all, take in the holiday lights on Main Street up to the Common. For more information, email allyssamanyak@gmail.com.
- Dec. 18, 4 p.m., Hanover Theatre, 2 Southbridge St., Worcester. Sensory performance of "A Christmas Carol," one show only. This performance is intended for guests who are neurodiverse, have sensory sensitivities and need additional accessibility accommodations. * House lights are kept on but dimmed for the entirety of the performances and sounds are lower in volume and intensity. thehanovertheatre.org/event/a-christmas-carol-sensory-friendly/
- Dec. 20, 7 p.m., Valley Chapel, Uxbridge, Christmas Brass Concert. The Birch Alley Brass Ensemble, directed by William Moffett, is made up of 35 student and

professional musicians from area towns including Uxbridge, Upton, Hopedale, Mendon, Northbridge, and Milford. Featuring Christmas music from around the world. Free. Public welcome.

- Dec. 21, 7:30 p.m. Celebrate the Winter Solstice with Christmas in New England, hosted by the Grass Roots Coffeehouse and the Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Road, Northbridge. Karen Wilber, Amy Gallatin, Roger Williams, JD Williams, Dave Orlomoski, Krissy & Bob Dick will present a night of traditional, contemporary, original Christmas and Holiday/Seasonal songs. Prior to the show, come have a bowl of soup or chili, and at intermission have dessert. Proceeds go to the Church. Also we'll have our Cookie Walk at intermission. Buy a box for \$10 and fill it up with cookies baked by the congregation. Admission to the show is \$15 at the door only. Doors will be open at 6:30. Seating is at a first come/first serve basis.
- Dec. 24, 5 p.m., Franklin Federated Church, 171 Main St., Franklin. Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols" includes Bible passages about the Christmas story as well as non-Bible poems and reflections interspersed with Christmas carols. Worshipers will share the light, passing one candle to the next, in the final carol, "Silent Night."

Wassail

This is a historically inspired Wassail recipe. Traditionally, this is served from a warm pot on the stove, but here we have directions for the crockpot. This is a crowd pleaser and is traditionally served before caroling.

Wassail (similar to mulled cider)

- 1 bottle ruby port
 - 4 cups apple cider
 - 12 ounces lager (ex: Sam Adams Winter, or something dark)
 - 1 cup nut brown ale (ex: Samuel Smith's)
 - 1 apple sliced
 - 2 cinnamon sticks
 - 10 cloves
 - nutmeg to taste
 - fresh orange peel for garnish
- Heat all ingredients (save orange peels) into a crockpot on high until bubbling, then switch to low for however long the punch lasts. Garnish with orange peel.
- Cooking tips:** Be aware that the longer the wassail cooks, the stronger the spices become. Leaving the spices in the slow cooker too long may make the wassail bitter.
- If serving later, remove the whole spices from the slow cooker after the wassail has cooked. If yours has become too strong add a splash or two of cranberry or orange juice. You can keep wassail on the warm setting of your slow cooker for up to 4 hours.
- Serving tips:** Place out mugs or paper

cups for the wassail. Whipped cream and caramel are great toppings for wassail.

Historical information:

The word 'wassail' comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase 'waes hael', which means 'good health'. Originally, the wassail was a drink made of mulled ale, curdled cream, roasted apples, eggs, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and sugar.

One legend about how Wassailing was created, says that a beautiful Saxon maiden named Rowena presented Prince Vortigen with a bowl of wine while toasting him with the words 'waes hael'.

Over the centuries, a great deal of ceremony developed around the custom of drinking wassail. The bowl was carried into a room with a great fanfare, a traditional carol about the drink was sung, and finally, the steaming hot beverage was served.

The person offering the drink would say "wassail" (good health) and the recipient would reply "drinkhail" (drink good health). From this, it developed into another way of saying Merry Christmas to each other!



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