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2014 Holiday Guide



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12 Days of Holiday Safety

It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these tips. Tackle one a day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!

ESFi
Electrical Safety Foundation International

Day 1 **What's that noise?** Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they hear them.

Day 2 **What a shocker!** Before use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage.

Day 3 **Two's company, three's a crowd.** Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

Day 4 **Is it working?** Test your ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.

Day 5 **Ouch!** Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high traffic areas.

Day 6 **Kids eat the darndest things!** Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.

Day 7 **Thirsty?** Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree poses less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

Day 8 **Make a wish!** Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.

Day 9 **Nice and warm.** Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn—decorations, trees, gifts, and curtains.

Day 10 **Can't touch this!** Consider installing tamper-resistant outlets/receptacles to prevent kids from inserting objects into the slots.

Day 11 **Escape Route:** Share your family fire escape plan with overnight guests.

Day 12 **Hot stuff!** Keep children away from cooking areas; use back burners and turn pot handles in away from little hands.



There's no greater gift you can give your family than a safe and happy holiday! Learn more at holidaysafety.org.



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Holiday Happenings

Christmas Parades:

Lawton – Holiday in the Park Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony, 7 p.m. Nov. 22, Elmer Thomas Park.

Walters – Theme is “A Christmas Card Christmas.” 6 p.m. Dec. 6. To be eligible for cash prizes, parade participants must fill out a form available at Walters Bank & Trust.

The Walters Chamber of Commerce is also sponsoring a Christmas decorating contest that includes the whole town. There is no form to fill out, simply light up your home and it will be included in judging on Dec. 13.

Cache – 5:30 p.m. Dec. 13. Caroling, pictures with Santa, hot chocolate and more following the parade in Cache City Park.

Duncan – Theme is “A Christmas Story.” 3 p.m. Dec. 13.

Marlow – 10 a.m. Dec. 6. Interested entries are asked to contact the Marlow Chamber of Commerce office, 580-658-2212, for exact line up locations and times.

Holiday Events:

Chickasha Festival of Light shines for the 21st year from 6 to 10 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays and until 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays in Shannon Springs Park beginning Nov. 22.

This nationally recognized symbol of community spirit draws more than 250,000 visitors annually. It has won numerous awards as a top attraction since its beginning in 1993. More than just a light show, the experience includes horse-drawn carriage rides, photo opportunities with Santa.

Kick off the holiday season at the annual **Main Street Duncan Holiday Stroll** from 5-9 p.m. Nov. 22. Enjoy live holiday music as well as the smell of funnel cakes wafts through the air. Santa will be on hand to go over wish lists, and merchants will offer free refreshments and gift wrapping.

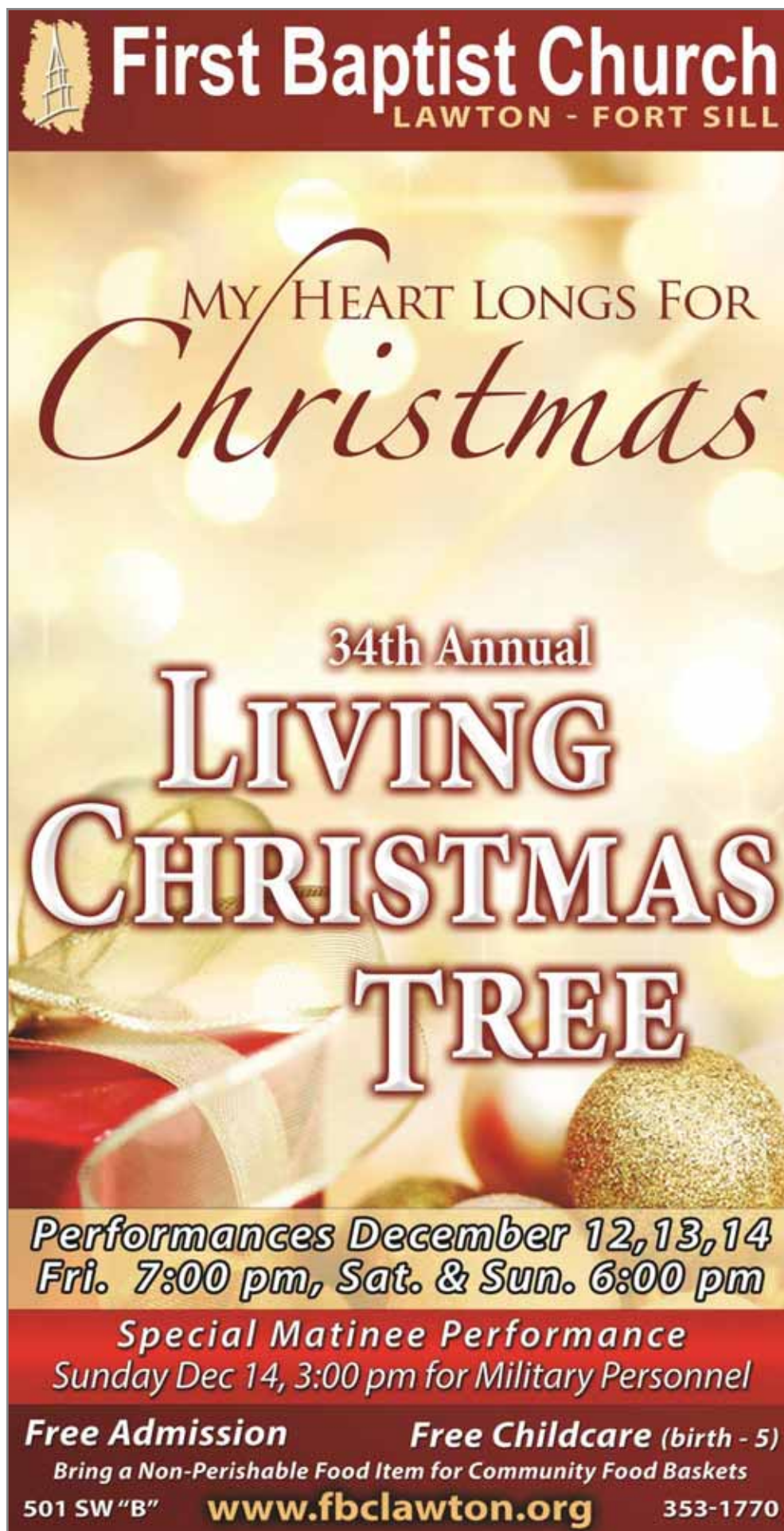
Duncan Kiwanis Christmas tree and stand sales begin Nov. 28 in Kiddieland in Fuqua Park. Trees range from \$10 to \$95. Hours are 2 to 8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays; 10 to 7 p.m. Saturdays; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays.

Enjoy an **evening of Christmas cheer** and festivities beginning at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 29 at the Rock Island 905 Museum in Fuqua Park in Duncan. Munch on cookies, sip hot chocolate and take in the decorations and nostalgia while waiting for the Lighting the 905 ceremony. Drop by the caboose to visit with Santa. At 7 p.m. sharp, the 905's bell will ring and the locomotive will light up.

Tree-lighting festivities are scheduled for 6-8 p.m. Dec. 1 at CU-Duncan and on Dec. 2 at Cameron University in Lawton. The come-and-go events will include horse-drawn carriage rides, cookie-decorating stations for kids of all ages and the lighting of a fully decorated tree. Refreshments will be served.

A performance of **Handel's "Messiah"** begins at 8 p.m. Dec. 13 in McMahon Memorial Auditorium. This is a free concert sponsored by the Lawton Schubert Music Club, Fort Sill's New Post Chapel and the CU Department of Music. For information, call the Cameron University Department of Music at 580-581-2440.

Stephens County Community Christmas Dinner is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 25 at Stephens County Fair & Expo Center. Call 580-255-3231 to make your reservation.



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Don't take the merry out of your Christmas

Before your family puts up a tree or hangs the stockings this holiday season, start a new tradition. Put safety at the top of your list. Too often, the twinkling lights people see are on top of a fire truck or ambulance—the result of holiday accidents that could have been prevented.

Trees and lights are danger-prone holiday decorations. According to the United States Fire Administration, Christmas trees start an average of 260 house fires each season, resulting in more than \$16 million in property damage. Another 150 house fires are sparked by holiday lights and decorative lighting, costing \$8.9 million in damage. Typically, all of these fires are more severe and damaging, resulting in twice the injuries and five times the fatalities per blaze compared to average winter home fires.

Unsafe practices while putting up decorations are to blame for even



Check decorative lights for damaged cords, plugs and sockets. Replace anything that's frayed, cracked or broken. Buy cords that are certified by Underwriters Laboratories; look for the UL symbol on the package.

more injuries. Nearly 6,000 individuals visit emergency rooms each year for falls that occur. Four thousand more are

treated for injuries associated with extension cords.

But safety steps don't end with bright

decorations. Gifts trigger injuries, too. Toys that are not used as intended or used without proper supervision lead to avoidable accidents. Electrical shocks, burns, or injuries from sharp, pointed, or moving parts are to blame for many of these injuries according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

When it is time to deck your halls, take these precautions to ensure the safety of you, your family, and holiday guests:

TREES

Real or artificial, short or tall, Christmas trees are often the culprit for danger. Incorporate these safety guidelines in your decorating routine:

- Make sure an artificial tree is labeled "fire resistant." Be aware that "fire resistant" does not mean "fire proof." Exercise caution when it comes to your tree.

- Make sure a live tree is fresh and

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green. Dry, brittle limbs and shedding needles are a breeding ground for sparks. Water a live tree regularly to prevent it from drying out.

- Place any type of tree away from heat sources such as fireplaces, vents, and radiators.

LIGHTS

Festive lights give homes a magical glow both inside and out. When decorating this season, a few simple safety tips can keep your spirits bright.

- Do not overload electrical outlets. Most lights are designed to connect no more than three strands. Inspect the wires periodically to make sure they are intact and not warm to the touch.
- Never leave lights on overnight or when no one is home.
- Use only lights that have been approved by an independent testing laboratory.
- Replace any strands that show signs of damage, such as bare or frayed wires, broken bulbs, or loose connections. Faulty lights can send an electrical charge through a tree and electrocute anyone who comes in contact with a branch.

GIFTS

The thrill of holiday presents is quickly forgotten when a gift leads to injury. Here are a few suggestions to keep children safe:

- Select gifts that are age appropriate for the recipient. Toys recommended for older children pose too many risks for younger children to use safely.
- Educate children on electrical safety when using any new toy or product that requires an electrical connection.
- Review all instructions and safety guidelines included with new products before you allow the child to use it. This ensures the safety of the child and protects the integrity of the product.

Make sure safety ranks at the top of your “to do” list this holiday season. Like the old Christmas song says, there is no place like home for the holidays—especially when your family is safe and your home is filled with good cheer.

Sources: United States Fire Administration, Consumer Product Safety Commission



One of the riskiest holiday behaviors is overloading your electrical outlets. Plugging strand after strand of outdoor or tree lights together, plugging them into an extension cord and plugging that into an outlet will overload the outlet. Plugging multiple strands of cords into a power strip does not add any juice to the electrical circuit that powers the outlet you plug the strip into.

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'Tis the season to make sure your Co-op Connections Card is always nearby



As we all know, Santa and his elves are always up-to-date with the latest gadgets. Santa's had a smart phone since they came into vogue and his favorite app can be found at Connections.Coop.

That's right, The Big Guy went to Connections.Coop and downloaded the Co-op Connections mobile app. With it, he can check for money-saving deals in Walters, Lawton, Duncan or wherever he may be shopping.

The Man in Red travels a lot and he always uses the app to look for the best deals in lodging, sleigh or car rentals and restaurants.

When he's shopping online, the Jolly Old Elf goes to Connections.Coop first. He signed up for the Cash Back Mall plan and uses that portal to enter web-

sites for national retailers such as Bass Pro Shops, Macy's, Target and Walmart. He piles up plenty of cash rewards that way and when he hits \$25, he gets a check!

Cotton Electric members can save a bundle during the holiday shopping season with Co-op Connections Cards, too. There are 60 local businesses offering discounts in the Cotton Electric service area, and hundreds of offers available across the nation. Using the keyword "gift" at www.connections.coop brings up countless deals! The retail category ranges from flowers to electronics to jewelry to toys and beyond.

Co-op Connections is just another benefit to being a member of your local electric cooperative.

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Holiday cooking efficiency tip:

Every time you open the oven door to check that dish, the temperature inside decreases by up to 25 percent! Hold off on peeking inside so that your oven doesn't have to work harder than necessary to heat holiday treats.



COTTON

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Gift yourself with winter energy savings

It's that special time of year when we spend a great deal of time with friends and family, either in the kitchen or out and about shopping for the perfect gift. As you find yourself wrapped up in the holiday excitement, Cotton Electric Cooperative reminds you of a few ways to be energy efficient during this busy time of year.

Cooking efficiently

- Be kind to your oven. Every time you open the oven door to check on that dish, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees. This forces the oven to use more energy in order to get back to the proper cooking temperature. Try keeping the door closed as much as possible.

Also, remember to take advantage of residual heat for the last five to 10 minutes of baking time – this is another way to save energy use. If you're using a ceramic or glass dish, you can typically set your oven 25 degrees lower than stated, since these items hold more heat than metal pans.

- Give your burners some relief. The metal reflectors under your stovetop burners should always be clean. If not, this will prevent your stove from working as effectively as it should.

- Use small appliances. During the holidays, the main appliances used are the oven and stovetop. Try using your slow cooker, microwave, toaster oven or warming plate more often. This will result in substantial energy savings.

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Festive Holiday Decor!

Home efficiency

• Take advantage of heat from the sun. Open your curtains during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.

• Find and seal all air leaks. Check areas near pipes, gaps around chimneys, cracks near doors and windows and any unfinished places.

• Maintain your heating system. Schedule services for your heating system before it gets too cold to find out what maintenance you may need to keep your system operating efficiently.

• Eliminate “vampire energy” waste. When you are not using an appliance or an electronic, unplug it to save energy. Power strips are definitely a good investment for your home.

Efficient shopping

• Purchase LED holiday lights. A

string of traditional lights uses 36 watts of power and a string of LED lights uses only 5 watts. They can even last up to 10 times longer!

• Ask for Energy Star-rated TVs and appliances. This will save you a lot of power use because the standby-mode is lower and the device will use less energy overall.

• Combine errands to reduce the number of small trips. To-do lists seem to pile up around this time of the year. Believe it or not, several short trips in the winter can use twice as much fuel as one longer trip covering the same distance as all of the shorter ones.

Being energy efficient is usually not top priority when celebrating the holidays, and most of us don’t realize the lack of efficiency until the next bill comes in. Prevent your post-holiday shock this year by thinking creatively and remembering all of these tips!

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Get organized for easy holiday decorating

Celebrations go a long way toward making the holiday season a special time of year. Each holiday offers the opportunity to transform both the interior and exterior of a home into a holiday wonderland blending both store-bought and handcrafted decorations and ornaments.

As families grow, many amass various holiday trinkets and decorative items that become part of their holiday traditions. Some decorations hold special sentimental value, while others are standard decorations found in homes across the globe come the holiday season.

It's easy to get overwhelmed by holiday decorations, but organizing such items can make the process of giving your home a holiday facelift that much easier.

Color-coding

Storage bins are the unsung heroes

of holiday decorating. Such bins keep treasures safe and out of the way in attics, basements and closets. Employing a color-coding system to organize holiday decorations will make it easier to identify items and their corresponding holidays. Christmas objects can be housed in red or green storage containers, while Halloween decorations can be placed in orange containers, and so on. Investing in durable, plastic bins with lids will keep items clean and orderly.

Designate a storage spot

Hunting and pecking around the house for holiday decor can make the process of decorating that much more time-consuming. Not knowing where the strings of lights or extra extension cords are stored can drag out the time it takes to decorate. Establish a designated storage

area for ornaments, lights, wreaths, and other items used to decorate your home come the holidays. Out-of-the-way spots like attics or seldom-used closets make good storage spots for holiday decorations, guaranteeing that such items won't get in the way throughout the rest of the year.

Sort and replace as you go

Take the time to periodically go through decorative items, removing anything that is broken or worn beyond repair. It takes time to go through items piece by piece, but this will save time next year when decorations are taken out again. The longer you wait to sort items and do a little cleaning, the more time it ultimately takes to clean house.

Keep a running list

Although you may have a general idea of the items you have packed away, some things may be forgotten. Keep an informal inventory of decorations and supplies so you don't purchase any duplicates.

If you notice your list is lacking some items, shop pre- or post-season sales when items tend to be less expensive. Try to avoid shopping for holiday decorations right around that holiday, when stores are running out of stock and prices are typically at their highest.

Decorating for the holidays can be fun, and it's even more fun when homeowners take the time to carefully organize their decorations.



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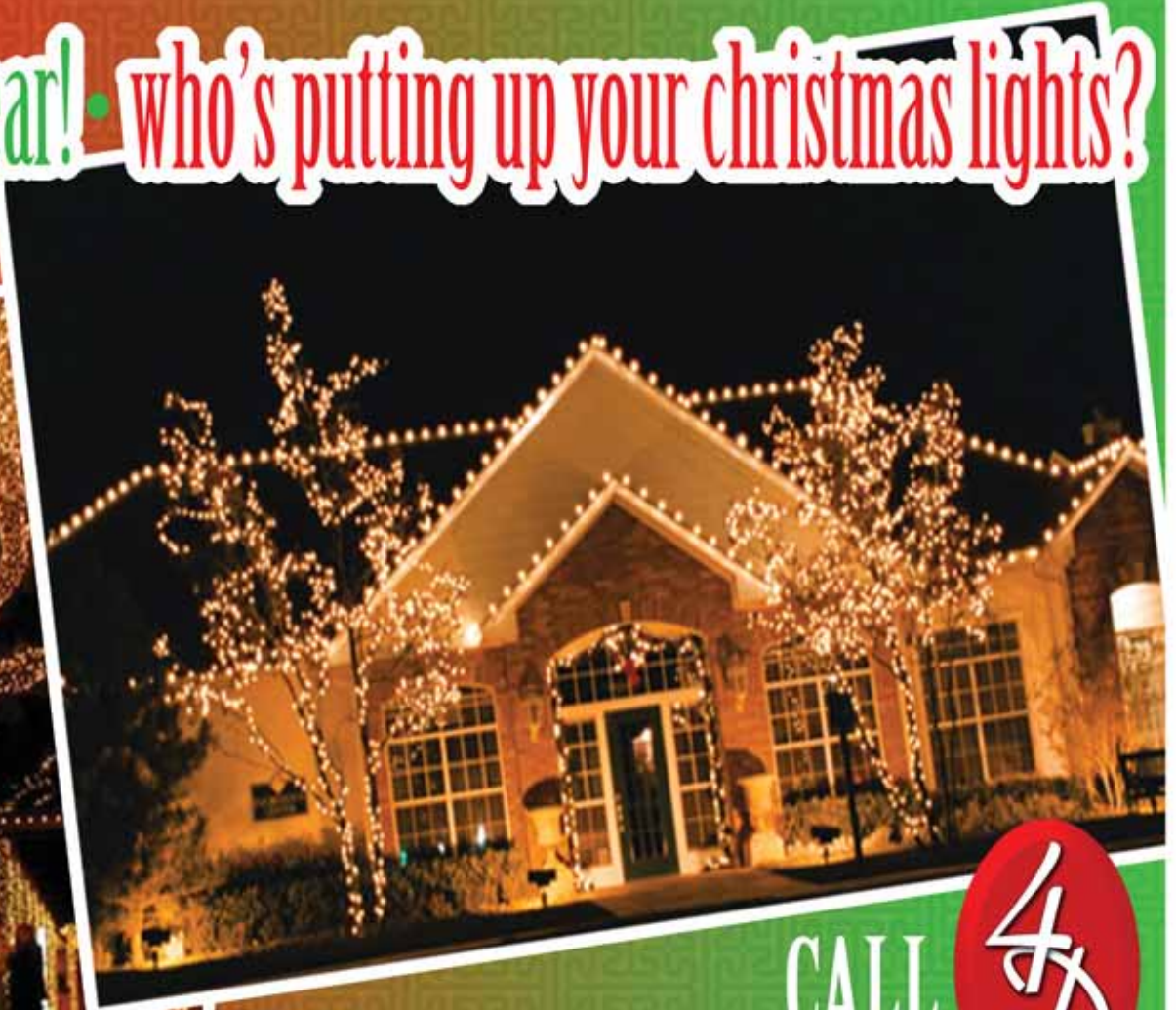
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it's almost that time of the year! • who's putting up your christmas lights?



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Gift exchanges have a few dos and don'ts

Chanukah, Christmas and New Year's Eve are right around the corner. That means neighborhoods, buildings and stores will soon be awash in holiday splendor. Social schedules will be full, and men and women everywhere will shuffle to complete their holiday shopping.

Grab bags are a staple of this season of giving, and the following are a few dos and don'ts to ensure participation in gift exchanges is fun and friendly for all involved.

DO set a gift amount limit. Holiday grab bags are more about having fun and exchanging a little something with friends and family members than walking away with amazing prizes. Establish a spending limit so everyone receives a gift of roughly the same value and no one feels slighted or left out.

DON'T exceed the spending limit. It can be tempting to spend more to make your gift appear more impressive. But overspending defeats the purpose of the gift exchange. Grab bags typically are anonymous, so being overly generous will not win you any style points.

DO make it a game. Tossing gifts in a bag only to have others reach in and grab one is certainly effective. But the concept can be even more fun if you make a game out of it. Try passing wrapped gifts around in a circle to a holiday song. When the music stops, the gift you are holding is the one you open. Experiment with your own variations to make gift exchanges more fun.

DON'T let anyone see the gift you bring. The idea is to keep things as secretive as possible so as not to sway the selection of presents.

DO ensure your gift is unisex. Unless you know specifically that only men or women will be opening the presents, select items that will appeal to both genders. Food, gift cards, music, or home staples make great grab bag gifts.

DON'T forget to consider ages as well. Gift exchanges may include both children and adults, so include gifts that appeal to all ages when necessary. When the exchange has ended, allow participants to swap gifts if they want to.

DO expect some grab bag gifts to be gag gifts. Such gifts are entertaining and may make up the majority of the grab bag gifts. Keep your sense of humor and you're likely to enjoy grab bags a lot more.

DON'T regift items to use as grab bag picks. Should the person who gave you the gift participate in the grab bag, he or she can trace that gift back to you and may be offended.

DO make sure everyone is aware that there will be a grab bag gift exchange, as there needs to be an equal number of gifts to participants so everyone gets a treat. Hosts may want to have a few extra wrapped gifts around just in case someone forgets to bring their contribution.

Gift exchanges in the form of grab bags, auctions, swaps, and other games make for fun additions to holiday festivities. They also can be a part of any family or friends gathering to add excitement and entertainment to the occasion.



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Look for 'fun-ctional' unique gifts for kids

(Family Features) If you're looking for a unique alternative to the traditional trucks and dolls, a holiday gift that is both fun and functional is an ideal way to treat the kids on your shopping list this year.

A present that is fun and has a purpose lets you get creative as you tackle holiday shopping, and feel good about giving a gift that can be used rather than being added to the already overwhelming mountain of toys and gadgets gracing most kids' bedrooms.

Start by gathering some basic details about the kids you're buying for: favorite colors, sports teams, activities and so on. Ask parents for ideas that fall more toward "needs" than "wants" and you'll be on your way.

For some added inspiration, consider these unique but usable kid-friendly gift ideas:

Bedding: For a child who has recently transitioned from a crib to toddler bed or toddler bed to big-kid bed, sheets are a way to honor this exciting milestone. Choose an appealing design, such as a beloved character, to maximize the fun factor. You can easily find sets under \$30 at nearly any major retailer.

Pain management: Help soothe little ones' pain and reduce fever in a lovable, non-threatening way with kid-friendly cuddly cooling and huggable heating packs. Thermal-Aid Zoo stuffed animals are available in seven different familiar animal characters that kids will embrace when it comes time to treat an ailment. Find your favorite zoo animal at <http://www.buythermalaid.com>; a current promotion lets you get two for about \$15 plus shipping and handling.

Storage: You can now find a wide range of storage solutions that appeal specifically to kids. From canvas cubes bearing funny critter faces to brightly colored bins and shelves, there are numerous options that help contain kids' stuff in fun and funky containers. Prices vary widely, but can range from as little as \$10 or less and up to \$100 for larger units at most big box retailers.

Outdoor gear: After months back in school, the holiday break may be the first extended period the kids on your list get to spend outside. Send them out to the elements in style with outerwear appropriate for your climate, such as matching scarf and gloves, new snow boots or a warm and cozy coat. You're sure to find what you need at nearly any price point, from \$5 for gloves up to \$50 or more for a quality coat at most general retailers, clothing or sporting goods stores.



Thermal-Aid Zoo stuffed animals are kid-friendly cuddly cooling and huggable heating packs.

Activity books: Make learning fun with age-appropriate books that offer interactive activities such as connect-the-dots, coloring, mazes and more for toddlers, and phonics, math and other subjects for the older kids. For an added touch, throw in a whimsical set of markers or crayons (parents will thank you if they're washable). A book or two will run less than \$10 at most major retailers.

Regardless of your budget, you can find fun and functional gifts for the youngest kids on your holiday shopping list that they'll be excited to receive and you can feel good about giving.

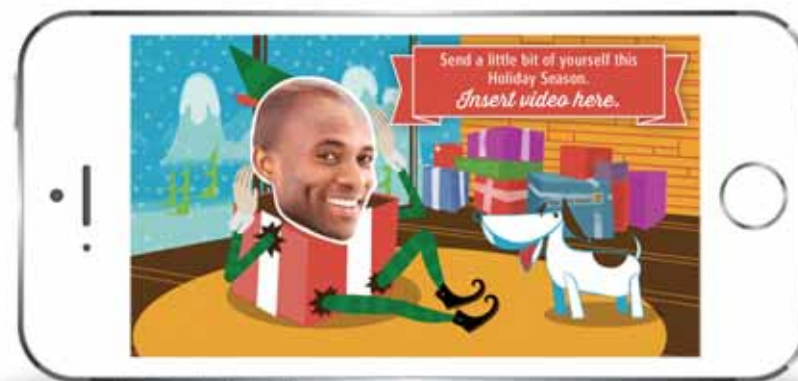
Santa's List

REVEALED

Unique gifts for him, her and more

FAMILY FEATURES

This holiday, take some tips from the big man with the jolly red hat. Whether shopping for family and friends young or old, you're sure to find something for everyone on your list with these gifts, specially selected from Santa himself.



A Personalized Touch

This holiday season, ship your gifts with The UPS Store to send a little bit of yourself to friends and loved ones. Starting mid-November, use the Delivering Holiday Happiness App to create a personal video your gift recipient can watch when they receive their package. Plus, the Pack and Ship Guarantee delivers extra confidence, so you can have more peace of mind. Happy Holidays from The UPS Store. For more details, visit happiness.theupsstore.com.



Down Home Comforts

Give a special gift to someone who loves where they come from. Customized with your choice of U.S. state, both items are sure to warm anyone's heart this season. The Personalized Home State Embroidered Cotton Throw Pillow is priced at \$47.00 and the Personalized Embroidered Home State Throw in gray or ivory is priced around \$50.00. Perfect for a hostess gift or the person proud to show off their chic taste in decor. To purchase, visit www.Overstock.com.



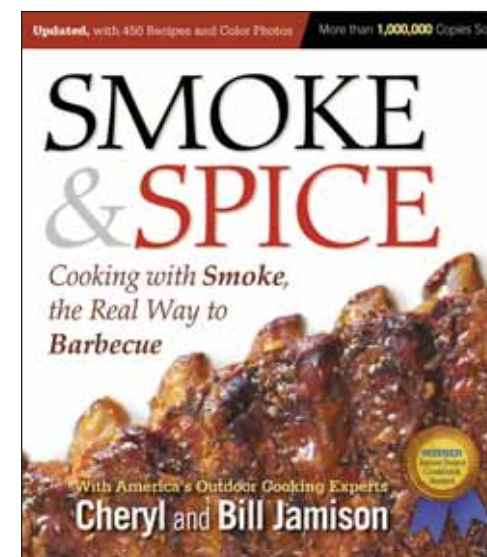
Safety, Fun in a First Phone

Give the gift on every kid's list with added peace of mind for parents. The new TracFone LG Optimus Fuel Android smartphone with the SpongeBob bundle comes with content for kids, including fun wallpapers and videos. More importantly, it includes a free one year trial of the Family Guardian parental control app, allowing parents to manage and monitor usage for a safer experience. For more information on TracFone, visit TracFoneParents.com



Light Up Her Holiday

Give the gift of stellar style with sparkling crystals and celestial designs. PANDORA's new Winter Collection offers charms, pendants, rings and earrings inspired by the starry beauty of the night sky. Create and combine expertly crafted, hand finished jewelry in .925 sterling silver and 14-karat gold to celebrate the wonder of the season. For more gift ideas or to locate an authorized retailer, visit www.pandora.net.



A Book for Your Cook

In this new full-color edition of Smoke & Spice, the definitive book on smoke-cooked barbecue, outdoor cooking experts Cheryl and Bill Jamison serve up many new and updated recipes, lots of color photos, and loads of BBQ wit, wisdom and lore. Completely revised throughout, this James Beard Cookbook Award-winning title, which has sold more than one million copies, has the latest information on the tools, fuels and techniques of first-rate "Q." For more information, visit www.harvardcommonpress.com.

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Photo courtesy of Getty Images

TIPS
FOR

HASSLE-FREE HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Looking to take the stress out of your holiday shopping this season?

(FAMILY FEATURES) Planning ahead and taking steps to protect yourself and your purchases can relieve a lot of shopping-induced stress, according to Jeff Unterreiner, a senior vice president with Assurant Solutions.

“While it’s easy to get overwhelmed by holiday shopping, the good news is that it only takes a few basic steps to make the process easier on your pocketbook and your peace of mind,” said Unterreiner.

Unterreiner offered these tips to help ensure your shopping this Christmas season is hassle-free:

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Happy Holidays from Stanley Steemer!



3 P's of Smart Shopping

PLAN

A smart shopping plan begins with a budget. Decide what you're willing to spend on all holiday-related items, including travel, decorations and holiday meals. A budget will keep you disciplined and ensure you have enough money to pay your bills come January.

PURCHASE

Focus your gift giving on what the person will like the most, not on the amount you think you should spend on that person. The best gift might not be the most expensive one; it's truly the thought that counts.

PROTECT

The most wanted gifts this season — electronics and jewelry — also are the most vulnerable to breakage and theft. Including an extended protection plan will ensure your gift keeps on giving for a long time to come. You can buy one at the checkout or from a third party like Assurant Solutions, which offers plans on Amazon.com.

Budget planning

The easiest way to overspend is to approach your shopping without a budget. Determine ahead of time what you can afford to spend overall, and make sure the gifts on your list fit within your means. A smart strategy: leave yourself a little padding to accommodate potential budget-busting treasures you discover along the way.

Shop early

Start your shopping well ahead of Christmas to spare yourself the headache of unending lines and sold out shelves. Doing so can also help you save money. Starting earlier will give you more time to look for sales and promotions. When it comes to larger purchases, be sure you know the return policy and keep an eye on sales even after you buy. If the item is offered for a lower price within a certain timeframe, you may be able to get the difference refunded.

Reward programs

Take advantage of the many reward cards and incentive programs that let you earn cash back, goods and discounts. The holiday season is a great time to sign up, as many retailers offer bonus programs and extra perks for shoppers. In some cases those rewards can be used immediately to trim your shopping budget or find something nice for yourself as a reward for being a savvy shopper.

Protect purchases

Many of the most-wanted gifts this season, like electronics and jewelry, are also the easiest to break or lose. Ensure your gifts keep giving long into the future by protecting your purchases with extended service plans, such as those offered by Assurant Solutions. These plans offer a range of protection from things like mechanical breakdown, accidental damage, loss and theft, as well as services such as tech support. And this protection can last long after the manufacturer's warranty expires.

Beat fraud

The frenzy of the Christmas season can make you vulnerable to theft. Be sure you're using a debit or credit card that offers protection in the event of unauthorized purchases. If you don't already, now is also an ideal time to pay closer attention to your transaction log so you can quickly address any unfamiliar charges.

For more ideas to help take the stress out of holiday shopping, visit consumerview.assurantsolutions.com.

Don't forget to use your Co-op Connections Card. More information on Page 7.





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M ake your holidays sweeter

(Family Features) From neighborhood parties to cookie exchanges with your closest pals, the holidays are all about sharing the sweetness of the season.

This year, resist the urge to dust off those same old recipe cards and spread some holiday cheer with creative, new recipes featuring the fruity goodness of Lucky Leaf Pie Fillings. With three classic offerings of cherry, apple and blueberry, you're sure to find the perfect flavor for all of your seasonal baking needs.

From this cherry chocolaty thumbprint cookie to a quick and easy crisp dessert you can make uniquely your own, these recipes all feature the premium quality of Lucky Leaf Pie Filling. These sweet treats are the perfect desserts to bring to a holiday gathering, or use them as inspiration to start your own family tradition of baking together any time of year.

For more recipe ideas to make your holiday jolly, visit LuckyLeaf.com.



Chocolate Cherry Thumbprints

Prep time: 20 minutes

Bake time: 12 minutes

Servings: 3 dozen cookies

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 cups flour
- 1 cup cocoa
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 (21-ounce) can Lucky Leaf Cherry Pie Filling
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Mix in eggs, one at a time. Add vanilla and mix until combined. Add flour, cocoa, salt, baking soda and baking powder. Mix until combined.

Roll dough into two-inch balls. Place on greased baking sheet or baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Press thumb into center of cookie to make well. Place cherries into each cookie.

Bake for 12 minutes. Allow cookies to cool.

Melt chocolate according to package directions. Drizzle over cookies. Let chocolate set and serve immediately or store in airtight container.



Fruity Custom Crisp

Prep time: 10 minutes
 Bake time: 30 minutes
 Servings: 10-12

2 (21-ounce) cans of Lucky Leaf Premium Pie Filling of your choice (Apple, Cherry or Blueberry)

1/2 cup butter, softened

1 1/2 cup quick oats

1 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup finely chopped or sliced nuts of your choice

Other various toppings, such as coconut, chocolate chips, etc.

Pick your favorite pie filling flavor.

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Pour two cans of pie filling in bottom of 9-by-13-inch pan.

Blend softened butter, oatmeal, brown sugar and nuts until crumbly. Add in your favorite toppings, such as coconut, chocolate chips, cinnamon chips, dried fruit, if desired. Sprinkle mixture over pie filling.

Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown.



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Time to talk turkey

Few foods receive the fanfare of turkey come the holiday season. The National Turkey Federation says Americans eat 46 million turkeys each Thanksgiving and another 22 million on Christmas. An additional 19 million enjoy turkey as part of their Easter celebrations.

Though turkey is enjoyed throughout the year, it is most popular during the holiday season. Some celebrants may want to know more about this beloved bird before sinking their teeth into their next holiday meal. The following turkey tidbits may surprise you.

- Turkeys are large game birds that are closely related to chickens, pheasants and quail.

- The turkey's scientific name is "meleagris gallopavo," which is the wild turkey from which the domesticated turkey many people eat descends. There is another species of turkey known as the ocellated turkey, which is native to the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico.

- By the early 1900s, the wild turkey neared extinction. Restoration projects have increased the number of turkeys from approximately 30,000 birds back then to nearly seven million now.

- Despite their size, turkeys can fly in the wild. They often perch in trees to sleep to protect themselves from predators. Some domesticated turkeys may not fly because they have been bred to be overly large to produce more breast meat.

- The heaviest turkey ever raised was 86 pounds.

- A male turkey is called a "tom" or a "gobbler," while female turkeys are referred to as "hens." Only the male will make the familiar gobbling sound, which is used to attract mates.

- A hen is smaller than a gobbler and does not have the distinctive beard of modified feathers that gobblers have on their breasts. Males also have sharp spurs on their legs for fighting.

- Both genders of turkey have snoods (the dangling appendage on the face) as well as red wattles under their chins.

- A hen can lay 10 to 12 eggs over a period of two weeks. The eggs will incubate for 28 days before hatching. Baby turkeys are called "poults."

- Turkeys have excellent vision due to their eyes being located on the sides of their head. This gives the birds periscopic vision.

- The gizzard is a part of the turkey's stomach that contains tiny stones that the bird has swallowed. The stones facilitate the digestion process.

- Benjamin Franklin did not support the bald eagle as the nation's symbol, feeling the turkey would be a better choice. In a letter to his daughter, he wrote, "He [bald eagle] is a rank coward; the little king-bird, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours."

- Turkeys will have 3,500 feathers at maturity. Rumor has it the costume worn by the "Sesame Street" character "Big Bird" is made of turkey feathers.

- Despite an abundance of turkeys being eaten between November and January, June is National Turkey Month.

Take turkey leftovers beyond sandwiches

(Family Features) After spending hours roasting your turkey to perfection, it (and you) deserves more than a sandwich the day after. With a little creative pre-shopping and stocking of refrigerators and cupboards, you can take your day-two turkey from boring to amazing – and nutritious.

Enjoying delicious meals doesn't have to mean blowing the bank on calories. Simple, fresh ingredients that are full of nutrition and flavor can take leftover turkey to a different level, says Marisa Paolillo, nutritionist with NuVal.

When planning for the big harvest meal (and the day-after dishes to follow), you can rely on tools such as the NuVal Nutritional Scoring System. Many grocery retailers now provide these scores on the shelf tag to help shoppers find more nutritious food choices. Based on a scale of 1 to 100, foods and beverages are scored based on their nutritional content, with the most nutritious choices scoring highest.

The experts at NuVal suggest putting these power-packed foods on your Thanksgiving grocery list. Both fresh and nutritious, these ingredients create new menu options for turkey leftovers.

Spice it: Pair reheated turkey with baked spiced apples. Core and slice fresh apples (NuVal 100) and combine with raisins (NuVal 88), chopped pecans (NuVal 71), cinnamon and lemon. Roast for 30 minutes at 375 degrees. No need to add sugar. The apples provide all the sweetness you need.

Wrap it: For a lighter take on the traditional leftover turkey sandwich, chop cold turkey in small pieces and layer with raw vegetables, avocado (NuVal 88), mustard, Romaine lettuce (NuVal 100), tomatoes (NuVal 100), sliced red or green bell peppers (NuVal 100), shredded carrots (NuVal 100) and cucumbers (NuVal 100) in a tortilla wrap.

Curry it: Need a quick 30-minute post-Thanksgiving meal that is both savory and sweet? NuVal's pick is Curried Turkey with Raisins and Mushrooms. The recipe works really well with leftover turkey and it's simple to make. The meal combines protein-rich turkey with the earthy flavors of mushrooms and the sweet, spicy tones of raisins and curry.

Find more recipes and ideas for nutrient-rich ingredients to spice up your holiday dishes at www.nuval.com.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

Curried Turkey with Raisins and Mushrooms

- | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 | teaspoons extra virgin olive oil (NuVal 18) | 1 1/2 | tablespoons curry powder |
| | | | Basil leaves, chopped (NuVal-100) |
| 12 | ounces boneless, skinless turkey breast diced into one-inch cubes (NuVal 57) | | |
| 2 | cups fresh white mushrooms (NuVal 100) | | |
| 2 | cups sliced cremini mushrooms (NuVal 100) | | |
| 1/2 | medium red or green bell peppers, chopped into squares (NuVal 100) | | |
| 2 | cups chicken or turkey broth | | |
| 1 | cup raisins (NuVal-88) | | |
| 2 | cups instant whole grain rice (NuVal-91) | | |

Heat extra virgin olive oil in large saute pan. With heat on medium high, heat up leftover turkey in pan. If turkey is raw, cook turkey strips at least five minutes.

Add mushrooms and peppers and cook for three to four minutes. Add broth. Mix in raisins, rice and curry powder. Bring to boil then reduce heat and cover. Simmer until rice is done.

Fluff with fork, remove from heat. Let sit three to five minutes and garnish with basil before serving.

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FAMILY FEATURES

Sharing family recipes is a treasured holiday tradition for many, but every holiday table needs a mix of cherished family dishes and new culinary creations.

This year, honor those special memories and reminisce over platters of family favorites while introducing new and delicious items to your holiday spread. From juicy pork tenderloin to nutty and tart pound cake, these delightful dishes are sure to bring joy to your dinner table this season.

Whether your kitchen contribution is a family recipe or a new dish to introduce to your relatives, it all begins with a kitchen that is well-stocked with essentials such as salt, pepper and other pantry staples. With a wide variety of products, including olive oils, vinegars, cooking wines and cooking sprays, Pompeian has all of the basics you need for any holiday dish. Pompeian is also the first and only extra virgin olive oil to carry the new USDA Quality Monitored seal — ensuring you're using only the best quality ingredients to feed your family and friends.

To celebrate the season and honor these special family dishes, Pompeian is helping consumers immortalize their favorite family recipes. Visit [Facebook.com/Pompeian](https://www.facebook.com/Pompeian) to design a custom bottle of extra virgin olive oil special enough to gift to a loved one or to keep for your own holiday table.

For product and nutritional information or to view more holiday recipes, visit Pompeian.com.

Pork Tenderloin with Balsamic Roasted Vegetables

Servings: 4

- 1/2 cup Pompeian Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1/2 cup Pompeian Balsamic Vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons mixed dried herbs, such as thyme, rosemary, oregano or marjoram
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 pork tenderloins (10–12 ounces each)
- 2 red, yellow or green bell peppers, cored and cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 medium yellow onions, cut into 3/4-inch wedges
- 1 small eggplant, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Pompeian Extra Virgin Olive Oil, for drizzling

To prepare marinade, combine olive oil, balsamic vinegar, garlic and herbs in bowl. Whisk until blended; add salt and pepper to taste.

Place 2 pork tenderloins in large sealable plastic bag. Pour in half marinade and refrigerate for 1 hour or overnight, turning bag occasionally.

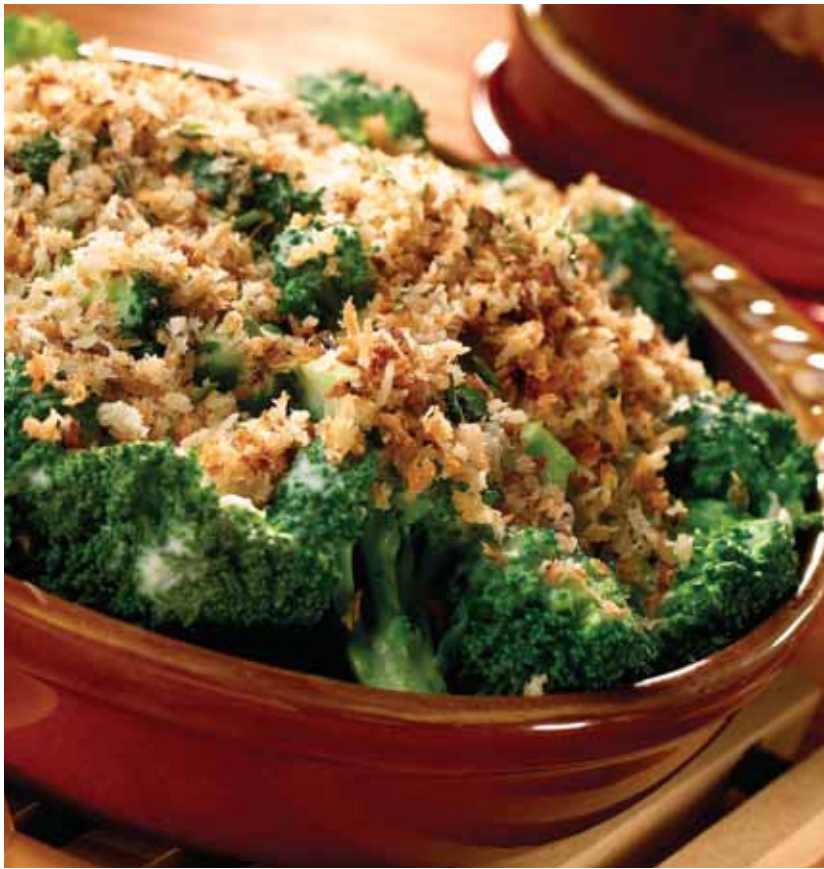
Preheat oven to 400°F.

Pour remaining marinade over peppers, onions and eggplant and toss. Arrange vegetables in large oiled roasting pan. Roast in preheated oven 15 minutes.

In meantime, heat large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Remove pork from marinade. Add to skillet and brown on all sides.

Transfer pork to pan of roasted vegetables. Return to oven for 20–25 minutes or until pork registers 155°F on meat thermometer. Slice pork and serve with roasted vegetables. Drizzle olive oil over finished dish.





Broccoli Gratin with Crunchy Herb Topping

Servings: 4

- 1 bunch broccoli, cut into florets
- Sea or kosher salt, to taste
- 1/4 cup Pompeian Extra Light Tasting Olive Oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups low-fat milk
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons Pompeian Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves, finely chopped
- 6 tablespoons bread crumbs

Bring large pot of water to rapid boil. Add broccoli and salt to taste. Blanch for 3 minutes. Drain and refresh under cold water and drain again. Pat dry with paper towels and transfer to bowl. Preheat oven to 400°F. Oil small gratin pan.

For sauce, heat extra light tasting olive oil in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook until tender. Add flour and stir until foamy. Pour in milk and cook, stirring continuously until mixture comes to boil and thickens. Stir in Parmesan cheese and parsley and cook until cheese is melted. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Coat broccoli evenly with sauce. Transfer broccoli to gratin pan.

For topping, heat extra virgin olive oil in nonstick skillet. Add garlic and thyme and cook until garlic is golden. Add breadcrumbs and toss until lightly browned. Sprinkle topping over baking dish and bake for 20 minutes until hot and bubbly. Serve immediately.

Cranberry Walnut Pound Cake

Servings: 12-16

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
or 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 4 large eggs
- 1 1/3 cups granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup Pompeian Extra Light Tasting Olive Oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup low-fat sour cream
- 1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts
- 3/4 cup fresh cranberries, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously coat Bundt pan with olive oil.

In small bowl, combine flours, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon.

In large bowl, beat eggs with handheld mixer until light and slightly increased in volume. Add sugar slowly while continuing to beat. Mixture will become light and fluffy. Add olive oil and vanilla extract and beat another 2 minutes.

Alternately add dry ingredients and sour cream to batter, beating between additions. Gently fold in chopped nuts and cranberries.

Transfer batter to prepared pan.

Bake at 350°F for 60-65 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean.

Cool in pan on wire rack for 10 minutes. Then invert pan onto rack to remove and cool completely.



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