



The people around you

On Christmas, the people you surround yourself with can often impact your holiday experience even more than your surroundings themselves. They can form and mould your environment, and even your mood.

Traditionally, Christmas is spent with family. A wonderful way to catch up with loved ones you haven't seen in a while over a homely meal and gift-giving. However, making Christmas a bit different should not be off-putting, even though keeping traditions is important to many.

If one knows that they would be happy surrounded by people beyond their family,

such as friends, colleagues, etc, why not celebrate with them?

More than 8 million adults in the UK are expected to be alone during this festive period, and some of them might be just those people that you would like to be surrounded with.

So, this Christmas, consider inviting someone over who you normally wouldn't think to invite - the lovely elderly neighbour that always says 'hi', the colleague that won't be travelling home for Christmas, or that old friend you bumped into recently - let's make Christmas even more special for each other this year. →

→ **By Isobel Moran**

Create the perfect Christmas.

From the food to family, Christmas can vary over the years. Striving for better roast potatoes or worrying everyone is content. Rest easy, as we bring you some top tips on how to create the perfect Christmas.

← Tips for A Festive Feast

The secret to the perfect Christmas dinner is about proper planning, smart shopping, and staying calm on the big day. To help you create a delicious stress-free feast this year, we've put together some Christmas dinner top tips.

Seasoning can often make all the difference - from a bland meal to one full of flavour. So rather than seasoning your Christmas dinner once it's out of the oven, make sure to salt it gently as you go, as this will help build layers of flavour and depth.

Good ingredients matter so much that the most important cooking decisions are made in the supermarket! However, supermarkets aren't the most reliable for fresh fruit and veg, so try and shop at the local farmers market for your Christmas dinner if you can. Regardless of which bird you're choosing to roast on Christmas day (if any), there are a few rules to follow for it to turn out just right.

- Brining your meat in a salt and water solution before cooking will tenderise the meat and also keep it nice and juicy as it absorbs some of the liquid.
- Trussing is another key step in a Christmas roast, as tying the bird up will help it cook evenly.
- Next, applying fat over the bird's exterior will help to keep it nice and crispy - this can be goose fat, butter, or olive oil. During the cooking process, make sure to baste the bird regularly with the liquid that has accumulated in the roasting tray to add even more flavour.
- The final step is often neglected but is equally as important as the others - resting. Once out of the oven, rest the meat under foil to retain extra moisture before serving.

When it comes to gravy, people care! Make the most of your roasting tray this Christmas, by straining the veg and meat juices off once cooked and adding to your gravy for extra flavour.

And don't forget, the freezer is your friend. You can make a lot of Christmas sides and sauces in advance to save you the stress of making them on Christmas morning. Prepare your cranberry and bread sauce a month in advance if you have to. Pigs in blankets and stuffing can also be made in advance and frozen, too!

"The secret to the perfect Christmas dinner is about planning, smart shopping and staying calm on the big day."

And if you're opting for a vegan Christmas dinner this year, there are loads of options too. For the main event, why not consider a wellington using a filling of mushroom duxelles and pea protein - high in antioxidants and 100% vegan. Alternatively, if you like tofu as a meat substitute, try a balsamic caramelised onion or slow cooker maple herb 'Tofurky'! Or if you want to embrace the power of veg, try a stuffed squash recipe or vegan lentil nut 'meatloaf'.

Tips for gift wrapping like a pro

Wrapping up all the Christmas gifts you've carefully picked out can not only be expensive but time consuming too as you try to wrap awkward shaped presents as neatly as possible. That's why we've put together some savvy top hacks from US-based lifestyle blogger 'Kallie Branciforte' to make your Christmas wrapping a whole lot easier!

Tip 1:

Wrap diagonally to use less paper. If it looks like you're running out of wrapping paper or just want to save some money using less wrapping paper, place your gift diagonally in the middle of the paper and pull up the sides to cover each side of the box.

Tip 2:

Make a gift bag out of wrapping paper. If you don't have a gift bag to hand or you don't want to fork out for one - you can make your own! Start by cutting enough wrapping paper to cover the gift. Fold in each side and use double-sided tape to stick together. Next create 2 triangle shapes which will then fold together to form a base, securing together



Below: Creating the perfect Christmas dinner takes time, planning and staying calm on the day.

Right: Wrapping like a pro can take a little longer, but the results are worth it.

Far right: Picture perfect decorated Christmas tree (As shown on our cover.)

Far right below: An FSC certified Christmas tree farmer, plants trees for the future.



with tape. Stand it up, then place your item inside the bag and fold it over the top. You can then either tape the top closed or poke 2 holes in the top.

Tip 3:

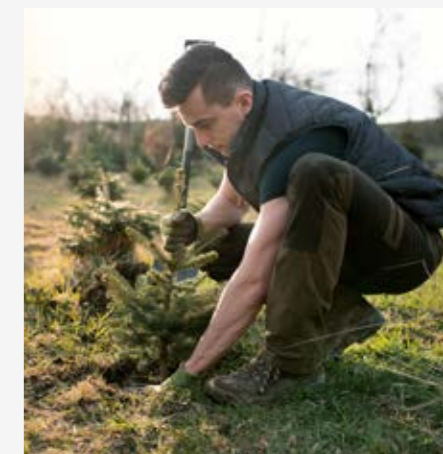
Using double-sided sticky tape instead of Sellotape can make the world of difference when it comes to making your wrapping look neater. Place your double-sided sticky tape on the inside of your seams so you don't have any tape exposed.

Tip 4:

Make a jewellery box out of a toilet paper tube! This is perfect for small gifts such as jewellery or earrings. To start, fold in the corners of the tube to create flaps that close in to create a box. Wrap a piece of paper around the centre of the box and finish off with a bow!

Tip 5:

Use an old Pringles container as a gift box! Wash the entire thing out, then wrap



the whole thing in some wrapping paper, secured with glue or tape. Perfect for gifting items such as nail polishes, lipsticks or small posters and prints. Then, glue a bow onto the top of the lid to add the finishing touches!

A more sustainable Christmas

From buying second hand to picking out the Christmas tree, there's lots of ways to show your loved ones and the planet a little love this Christmas.

Whether you're choosing a real or fake tree this Christmas, you can make sure to shop wisely. If you're sourcing a real tree, look out FSC Certification that will confirm that your tree has been sourced sustainably. And whenever you choose to dispose of your tree, take it to your local tip where it will eventually be turned into something new.

There's so much we can do and not all of it means changing your Christmas drastically. For more tips on how to make your festive period a little more eco friendly, visit: realhomes.com/advice/10-tips-for-an-eco-friendly-christmas →



Left: A resident enjoying our Christmas day lunch.
Below: Our Lifestyle Coordinators getting into full festive swing.
Bottom: Our carers consider our residents as extended family.



← Surrounded by love

Now that we've given you some top tips on how to build your perfect Christmas at home, here's a bit about how we build the perfect Christmas here at Wellburn.

This year has been like no other, but one thing is for sure - our staff will once again be pulling out all the stops to make this Christmas a very special one for our residents. It's important for us all to understand that Christmas can be a difficult time for some of our residents who can't spend Christmas with or get in contact with family or loved ones. That's why we make a huge effort to involve all residents to get them in the Christmas spirit. We've got lots of exciting activities planned for both our residents and staff, so we're going to tell you just how our residents like to celebrate Christmas across all 14 of our care homes.

Our dedicated Lifestyle Coordinators across all our homes make sure there's an activity for everyone to enjoy. Alongside festive themed baking, decorating, and singalongs this Christmas, our homes are

taking part in the '12 days of Christmas', where they'll be celebrating different days such as Christmas jumper day, national gingerbread house day and Christmas quizzes to get us all in the Christmas spirit. There's some activities for staff, too, like a Christmas pudding bake off alongside a nativity scene competition in which all the homes will compete against each other to win a prize!

For our carers at Wellburn, our residents are just like extended family to them, meaning they're surrounded by love and happiness not only during the festive period but all year round. Each year, our staff spend quality time with our residents on Christmas day, helping them get in touch with their loved ones and making sure they have a special day to remember.

We'd like to say thank you to all of our staff and care workers across the country who'll be swapping Christmas at home for their uniforms and heading off to work to care for those who need it most this Christmas.

"As always, our staff will be pulling out all the stops, to make this a very special Christmas for all of our residents."

And although Christmas is an extra special time of the year, care workers are present all year round 24/7 to deliver the best possible care and enrich the lives of our residents. To find out what we're up to at Wellburn at any time of the year, visit Wellburn Care Homes on Facebook and @wellburncare on Instagram for all the latest news, activities and goings on. ■



Life

f @wellburncare

To keep up to date with what's going on across all of our homes, visit:

[→ wellburncare.co.uk/life](https://www.wellburncare.co.uk/life)

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