



Christmas 2017 Planner

Last Week of October

Make your Christmas Cake - I use Delia Smith's Traditional Christmas Cake recipe and it works every time. I make my cake now so that I have plenty of time to "feed" it in the following weeks as I hate dry fruit cake and the more brandy you put in, the more moist it will be.

Make your Christmas Puddings - I also make them at the end of October, again Delia Smith's recipe, and then wrap them and store them in a cool dry place ready for December 25th.

Go Through Your Christmas Card and Gift List - Good idea to check your names and addresses for your cards and create a list for the gifts you need to buy, set a budget especially if any of the gifts are sought after for the year, or you need to order anything with long delivery times. Also work out how many cards you will need and if you have any left over from the previous year.

Second Week of November

Book Visit to Santa and any other Trips - Now is the time to sort out any trips that need booking. Most places these days sell tickets rather than just turn up so if your children want to go somewhere in particular get it booked. Don't forget to schedule time for yourself as well, so if you are a Spa girl make sure you get your appointment booked and get five minutes to yourself, also any hair appointments required as they get booked up quickly too.

Start Adding Extras to your Weekly Shop - As the shops seem to have Christmas things in by the end of September now, you can begin to add things to your weekly shop to spread the costs. Especially those little extras that the family love which have long shelf lives such as biscuits, crisps (chips), sweets, chocolates. It is also a good idea to sort out your freezer and make room and add things to your shopping which can be frozen for Christmas, including milk if you have lots of family for the holidays.

Family/Friends to Stay - If you are having guests to stay for the holidays work out where they are all going to sleep and make sure you have enough bedding/pillows/quilts. Now is the time to also think about cleaning. Rather than leave everything to the week before Christmas when everything is busy plan on doing a room a week and then by the time Christmas Eve arrives and all the guests descend, when you open the door you and your home are ready!





Christmas 2017 Planner

Third Week of November

Christmas Present Shopping - If you are a person who does all their Christmas shopping in one go, schedule a day to go shopping. If you work full time then consider having a day off and making it a great day by getting the presents you need, having a nice lunch and enjoy looking at all the Christmas displays. Go with a friend and have fun helping each other with those difficult gifts for Dad/Grandad/Nephew, you know those men in your life!

Writing Your Christmas Cards - This can be a solitary job or get the whole family involved, depending upon how many cards you send. I always tend to write the family/friends cards and DH (My Darling Husband!) gets to write the business cards we send out. Usually I set aside a Friday or Saturday evening to do this, making sure I have enough cards and stamps. I also make the job easier by printing the address labels on the computer with a cheerful Christmas picture on them. As I send out over 100 this does save time.

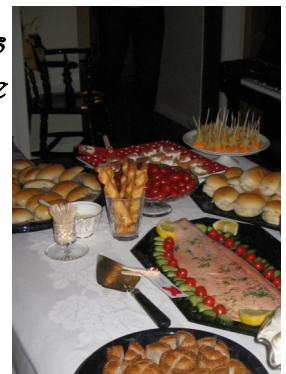
Wrapping Your Gifts - Again set aside an evening to get the Gifts wrapped, especially if you are having to mail any, and find out last posting dates so you don't miss the deadlines. If you have small children then you can get their gifts wrapped when they are in bed, but as they get older you may have to be creative about when it is done. Perhaps whilst they are at school.

Diary any Events - Make sure you get the children to let you know all the dates of plays, Nativities, Carol services, Christmas markets, concerts, presentation evenings etc. If they are little make sure you find out all the dates and put them in everyone's calendar who needs to go.

Fourth Week of November

If you have managed to get the above done you are now in a great place heading towards the big day.

Time to see Friends/Relatives - Now is the time to sort out visits to friends and family that you won't get to see over the holidays. This can be done over one weekend or over a few weekends or evenings during the next few weeks. It also means that you get to spend quality time with them without sitting there the whole time panicking about what there is still to do.





Christmas 2017 Planner

First Week of December

Decorating the House - Now everyone has their own traditions of when to decorate the house and in our family it was always the beginning of December, so when we married we carried on doing the same. We always have a real tree and I love the decorations and so want them up as long as possible. Our Boys have always loved helping decorate the tree and our home and it can be a great day with the family.

Ordering your Shopping - If you use shopping delivery services they usually release the next four weeks by now so make sure you book the dates now so you don't miss out. If you go to the supermarket/store to do your shopping, plan to try and go when it is quiet, some start to open earlier and close later and it may be better than say the middle of the day or a weekend. If you find yourself shopping in the middle of the day and it is heaving, keep a smile on your face and wish people Merry Christmas, even if they are in a foul mood it doesn't mean you have to be.

Donating Unwanted Items - I always got the Boys to go through their toys/books/games to sort out anything they didn't want/use and donate them either to a Toy Drive, if in good condition, or to the Charity Shop if a little worn or thrown out if definitely wrecked. Making space for anything new that Santa brings. I also go through our things and do the same.

Our Four Legged Friends - Do you need to send your Four Legged Friend to the groomers for a wash and brush up before the big day? Treacle always goes but if you have a dog who does not need to be groomed you can always do-it-yourself and give them a bath. This all depends upon the size of your dog and how strong you are feeling. Don't forget the cats and give them a good grooming, again if they are happy. If they like toys don't forget to get them some Christmas Presents.

Second Week of December

Baking - Now is the time if you have made your Christmas Cake to marzipan it and after a few days ice it. Also getting any other baking done and stored in air tight tins and spares in the freezer.

This is when the days seem to fly by with lots of activities with the children and work events and seeing friends but don't forget to enjoy the moment and breathe!





Christmas 2017 Planner

Third Week of December

Overdrive - This is the week where it can all go smoothly and you are organised and on top of everything and actually enjoying the run up to Christmas. Or you now feel it is not worth doing all this for one day of the year and feel like throwing the quilt over your head and never coming out again!!!! Breathe!

If it has been a manic year for you and your family and everything has been left to the last minute don't panic it can all be done in this last week before the day.

Not done your cards - Don't. There are lots of online places now to send an electronic card if you don't want to spend that sort of money then compose an email with some Christmas pictures and send that.

Christmas Cakes & Puddings - We can't all be Martha Stewart and even she isn't with all her chefs and staff so don't try! The stores have lots of lovely cakes and puddings to buy and cookies/mini pies etc so buy them.

Buying Presents - Okay this may take a little time but again make a list of things that each person would like. If you have no clue then buy them something they can use, like food/soap etc, that they won't have to find a place for afterwards. If you are really stuck cinema gift cards are great, buy two bags of popcorn/sweets/drinks and box it up great gift. Men are always the worst to buy for but if you know their hobbies then get something to go with that or if they use shower products go for that. It really is the thought that counts not the gifts.

Organising and Cleaning Your Home - Do a normal clean and tidy any other rooms which are going to be used. Your family and friends are there to see you and will not notice if you have not cleaned behind the radiator! When your Christmas decorations are up your home always looks so much better anyway that people will see that instead.

Socialising - If you haven't managed to get around to see family and friends think about getting everyone together for a winter walk, if the weather is fine and then stop somewhere for drinks and cake. Spending time together is far more important than who has the best dressed home, wrapped presents and iced cake!





Christmas 2017 Planner

Christmas Week

The Final Bits of Food Shopping - You need to get your fresh food now; vegetables, Turkey/Meat, cream and anything else you will need for the days you and your family are home.

Work out a list of meals for the days you need food so that you know how much to buy. We always have no breakfast on Christmas day, snacks for lunch and dinner early evening but it all depends upon your family. Work out the timings for Christmas Day of when you want to eat and work back from there for cooking times. Again don't panic, it is just Sunday Lunch with a festive table.

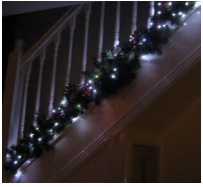
Christmas Eve - Hopefully by now you will have everything you need and be in a happy place relaxing with a tall glass of something. At the end of the day, sad but true, the shops are only closed for one day so if you really do need something you can get it on December 26th. Me? I don't set foot in any shop or store for over a week and not even then if I can help it!!!!

Our Christmas Eve tradition was that you could open one Gift from under the tree on Christmas Eve and it always was a new pair of PJ's and a book. That way at least the children look fairly presentable on Christmas morning pictures!!! The Book was always something Christmassy and I am sure it was my parents way of getting me into bed early.

Don't forget with the little ones to put something out for Santa and the Reindeer, in our home it was a glass of sherry and mince pie for Santa and a carrot for the Reindeer, but it can be anything you want. Also they are to put their sacks out. Santa always delivered the gifts to their sacks by the fireplace in the sitting room but again whatever your tradition is.

Christmas Day Has Arrived - Again this can seem fraught but don't let it be. If you have worked out your timings of when you want to eat you will know when everything needs to be done by. If you have a house full then delegate some of the jobs as everyone wants to feel that they can help and if it is just you (as is often the case in our home) then slip away and do things when the children are occupied with their new things. Usually in our home Santa's gifts are opened first and then gifts from family and friends are opened later or after dinner which helps to spread the magic and also the children get chance to appreciate everything they are given. Also handy to have a notepad and pen when they are opening family/friends gifts so you know who has sent what for those all important thank you notes afterwards.





Christmas 2017 Planner

Christmas Day

By the time 8,00pm has arrived, hopefully if they are little, the children are in bed sound asleep (or if they are older they have disappeared to their rooms with the latest PS4 game!) and you can take some time for yourself knowing that you have pulled Christmas off again and the Children will remember it forever. Even if it has been a sprint and not everything happened as it should or it was a marathon and this year was the most perfect ever, you did it and I hope that this Planner has made it a little easier for you.

If not there is always next year to have another got!!!!

Hugs, Susie

X

