

The Norse Code

2015 Holiday Edition



Hanukkah

This year, Hanukkah started on December 6th and went until December 13th. It is the festival of lights and goes on for eight days and eight nights. Hanukkah started because when the Macabees were in the temple, there was only enough oil to last in the lantern for one day but it lasted for eight.



Kwanza

Kwanza is a holiday celebrated by African Americans and it is a holiday that lasts for five days. Kwanza means first fruits in Swahili. They decorate their houses with African art and there is a special candle holder that holds seven candles, colored red, black and green. Red symbolizes the struggle for freedom, black is for their race, and green is for the future.



Christmas



Christmas is a holiday in which the birth of Jesus is celebrated. There was no room in the inn for Joseph and Mary, so they went to the first place they could find which was a manger. Mary gave birth and laid the baby Jesus in a manger. The shepard, the three kings, many animals, and the wise men were there to celebrate. The wise gave the gifts of gold, myrrh, and frankincense. Today we give gifts to others as a symbol of the gifts given by the three wise men to the baby Jesus on Christmas. Today many symbols of Christmas include lights, trees, and Santa Claus. Every year, just after thanksgiving, children all over the world write letters to Santa Claus about what they want for Christmas. Christmas Eve Santa delivers the presents to all of the houses for good girls and boys. The children make sure to leave him cookies and milk. Some even leave food for the reindeer.

By: Alicia Monaco



Top 5 Christmas Presents of 2015

1. DreamWalker



2. Pie Face



3. Frozen



4. Minions



5. Shopkins



By: Kaitlyn Reilly

Top Ten Most Common New Year's Resolutions

1. Get in shape



2. Travel more



3. Save money



4. Better time management



5. Stop smoking



6. Get involved



7. Get organized



8. Volunteer more



9. Spend more time with family



10. Eat healthy



By Maria Marabito

“What Christmas Means to Me”

What Does Christmas Mean to You?

With Christmas being just around the corner, many people have started becoming excited for the holiday. We chose five different students at East and asked them what Christmas means to them. We received many different responses and it was very interesting to see what excites people most about the Holiday season.



Kristen Sapone:

Me: What does Christmas mean to you?

K: It means I get to spend quality time with my cat, Boots, and my dog, Roxy.

Me: And what else?

K: Well you get to decorate your Christmas tree and make cupcakes.

Me: What's your favorite part about Christmas?

K: Well all the stuff.

Me: Does your family come over for Christmas?

K: Well my family, wait....do you know where I live?

Me: No.

K: Okay then show me another question.

Me: Well then what would you like for Christmas?

K: Wow, easy, pictures for my concentration, boot socks, and Dunkin' Donuts gift cards.

Nick Monaco:

Me: What's your favorite thing about Christmas?

N: I like putting up the lights.

Me: What are you looking forward to?

N: My family coming to visit.

Me: Who comes over to visit?

N: My grandpa, my cousins, my aunts, and my uncles.

Ariana Galante:

Me: What does Christmas mean to you?

A: Listening to Justin Bieber's Christmas album... and seeing my sister.

Me: What do you want for Christmas?

A: Justin Bieber concert tickets.

Me: What else are you looking forward to?

A: Spending time with family.

Marisa Betz:

Me: What does Christmas mean to you?

M: Baking cookies with my Mom.

Me: What are you looking forward to the most?

M: My sister coming home and spending time with my family.

Me: What else do you like about Christmas?

M: When we put the tree up!

Jared Franz:

Me: What does Christmas mean to you?

J: I like spending time with my family and giving back to others.

Me: What's your favorite part?

J: When it snows and I can build a snowman.

Me: What do you want under the tree?

J: New running shoes.

Me: What's your favorite food to eat during the holidays?

J: Uhhmmm cookies and candy canes.



Recipes

Gingerbread Men

Ingredients

1/2 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/3 cup molasses
1 egg
2 tablespoons water
2-2/3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon each ground cinnamon, nutmeg
and allspice

Directions

In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in molasses, egg and water. Combine flour, ginger, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half. Cover and refrigerate 30 minutes or until easy to handle.

Preheat oven to 350°. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion of dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 4-in. cookie cutter. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Reroll scraps.

Bake 8-10 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool completely. Decorate as desired. Yield: about 2 dozen.



Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter,
room temperature
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 cup packed light-brown sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
2 large eggs
2 cups (about 12 ounces) semi-sweet and/or milk chocolate chips

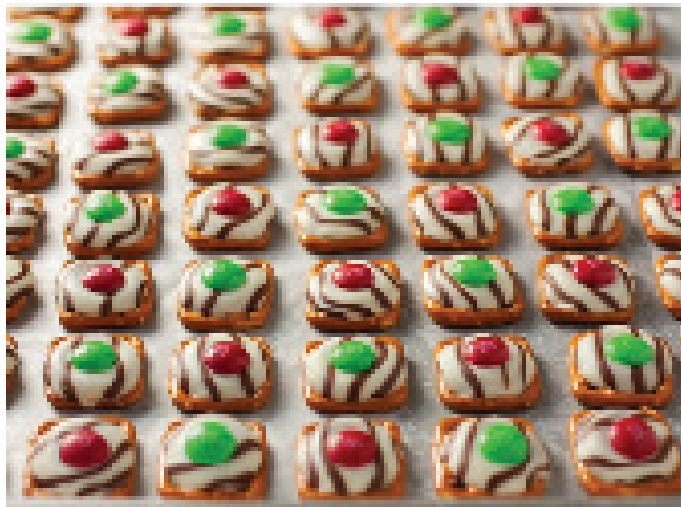
DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a small bowl, whisk together the flour and baking soda; set aside. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the butter with both sugars; beat on medium speed until light and fluffy. Reduce speed to low; add the salt, vanilla, and eggs. Beat until well mixed, about 1 minute. Add flour mixture; mix until just combined. Stir in the chocolate chips.

Drop heaping tablespoon-size balls of dough about 2 inches apart on baking sheets lined with parchment paper.

Bake until cookies are golden around the edges, but still soft in the center, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from oven, and let cool on baking sheet 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack, and let cool completely. Store cookies in an airtight container at room temperature up to 1 week.

By: Alicia Monaco



Pretzel M&Ms

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Bake Time: 5 minutes

Servings: makes 70 pieces

Ingredients:

- 70 square pretzels (do NOT use butter snaps)
- 70 Hershey's Hugs chocolates (from nearly 1 full 12 oz package), unwrapped
- 70 Milk Chocolate M&M's, I used the red and green Christmas package

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with a Silpat or parchment paper.
- Align pretzels on cookie sheet in a single layer then top each pretzel with one Hershey's Hug chocolate.
- Bake in preheated oven for 4 - 5 minutes, until the chocolate is shiny and soft (but NOT melting, the chocolates should still hold their shape).
- Remove from oven and carefully place one M&M in the center of each soft Hug and press down on M&M to spread the chocolate. Place in refrigerator and allow to rest until chocolate has set, about 5 minutes. Store in an airtight container.



Sugar Cookies

Prep Time: 15 min

Bake Time: 10 min

Ingredients:

- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.

In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients. Roll rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into balls, and place onto ungreased cookie sheets.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before removing to cool on wire racks.

By Maria Marabito By: Kaitlyn Reilly



Music

Top Ten Christmas Songs

1. White Christmas

White Christmas is a popular Christmas tune due to the fact that many people long for snow on Christmas. It is common to hear people talking about how they want nothing more than a Christmas where it snows. The song itself is such a beautiful song that one cannot help but get it stuck in their head!



2. Silent Night

Silent Night is a beautiful Christmas hymn. This song is especially sung at religious services and it talks about the beauty of the season and the true religious reason for the season. Many church choirs sing this particular song.

3. Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas was first sung in the musical Meet Me in St. Louis by Judy Garland, and has been a Christmas favorite since. The song was also recorded by superstar Frank Sinatra at the time, and since has been reinvented by multiple artists, such as Christina Aguilera. The sweet song will remain a holiday favorite for many years to come, just as it has in past decades, and hence is placed in the top three of this compilation.

4. All I Want For Christmas Is You

Mariah Carrey's All I Want for Christmas is You is one song that EVERYONE knows and loves, even if they won't admit it and it is hard to not love it. It's upbeat tempo is very catchy and gets people in the Christmas spirit. It is without a doubt, one of the most popular Christmas songs of this decade.

5. You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch

This tune from the popular children's story and the movie How the Grinch Stole Christmas has been running through the minds of Christmas enthusiasts everywhere since 1966.



6. Happy Xmas (War Is Over)

Happy Xmas (War is Over) is a moving song by John Lennon and Yoko Ono. It was written in 1971 as a Vietnam protest song and is still popular today. It is meant to capture the beauty of the season and convey optimism, even during a time of war.

7. Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)

Christmas (Baby Please Come Home) is a Christmas love song in which the singer is singing to his love and says that it isn't Christmas without them. It is similar to All I Want for Christmas is You because both are about only wanting to be with their loved one for the holidays and nothing else really matters to them.

8. Jingle Bell Rock

Jingle Bell Rock is an incredibly upbeat song. It is also featured in everyone's favorite movie, Mean Girls. It is the kind of song that gets stuck in one's head and they can be found humming it to themselves all throughout the Holiday season.

9. Little Drummer Boy

This Christian song has been sung by churches and Christmas carollers alike for a very long time. This 1941 classic tells the tale of a poor boy who has no gift for the infant Jesus, and instead plays his drum for the Virgin Mary's approval. The song has been recorded many times since, most recently by music group Pentatonix, and has also been used in movies and short films.

10. Santa Claus is Coming to Town

Santa Claus is Coming to Town is a popular song because it is about Santa coming to bring presents to the good little boys and girls which is a very important theme during Christmas, especially for little kids. Also, this song is so popular, that almost every Christmas album has this song featured.

By Alicia Monaco



Entertainment

The Best Christmas Movies of All Time

To most people, getting into the Christmas spirit means watching Christmas movies. From National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation, to The Year without Santa Claus, to Frosty the Snowman; everyone enjoys sitting down on the couch, snuggling into a blanket, and watching Christmas movies. There are so many great Christmas movies out there, but everybody has their favorites. Here at the Norse Code, we have our favorites as well. Below are our top 5 favorite Christmas movies. Hopefully, you will agree with our choices of these fun seasonal films! After sharing many laughs, immersing ourselves in the Christmas spirit, and believing in the magic of the Holidays we have chosen our top 5. Our favorite Christmas movies from least to best are:

5. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer



4. Home Alone



3. How the Grinch Stole Christmas



2. Santa Clause is Comin' to Town



1. The Santa Claus



These are my top five favorite Christmas movies. You may not agree, but that is okay. I hope that this holiday season you are able to watch your favorite movies whether they be on this list or not.

By: Kaitlyn Reilly

Extras



Winter!

By Kristen Sapone

Winter is such a great time!
It is my favorite season of
all.

Not just because of the holi-
days, but because I can spend
time with my family
This is the reason for the
season

Everyone should be thankful
for this
Rejoice and be glad!

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