



First time in a long time

— ❄ —
Let's make Christmas count!

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CHARMING CHARAMICOS:

There aren't many pine trees in the Dominican Republic, so crafty artisans make their own out of dried branches, vines and twigs. They weave these into different shapes like balls, stars, and cones, then decorate them with paint, glitter and even fairy lights. Now it's your turn. Try making your own charamicos this year.



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HOME BEAUTIFUL:

Many families bake and decorate gingerbread houses at Christmas. Start your own tradition this year! You'll need to bake gingerbread slabs to build your house, then use plenty of sweets, chocolates and icing to decorate your creation. Let your imagination run riot! If you've never tried this before, it's a lot of fun and houses disappear so quickly it doesn't matter if your decorations are a disaster. For seasoned bakers, try competing with family or friends and nominate a judge to keep things interesting.

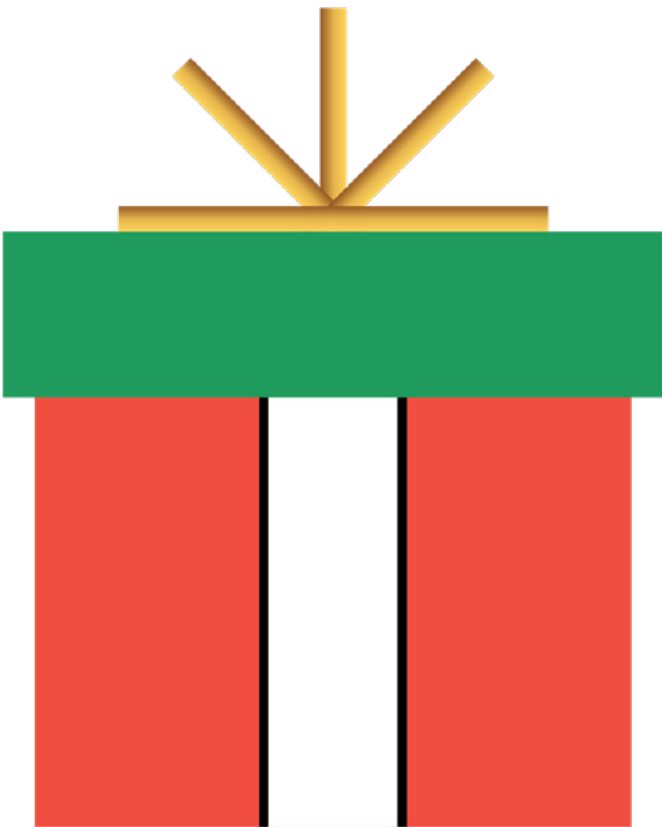


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FOLLOW THE STAR:

In the Philippines, people make paper lanterns called parols at Christmastime to symbolise the star of Bethlehem. Traditionally, they're star-shaped and made with bamboo and rice paper. Try making your own paper lanterns and stringing them up around your house, with LEDs inside to light them up. PS: An easy way to do this is by using paper bags or cardboard and tape. Attach a string to the top and add a candle. Just make sure your base is steady so you don't start a fire!





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GRANDFATHER FROST:

Christmas isn't widely celebrated in Mongolia as most people are Buddhists. However, the week leading up to the New Year is an important event where Mongolians put up trees and decorations, prepare gifts for their loved ones, while Grandfather Frost and Snow Maiden hand out presents to children. Share this story with your loved ones and surprise them with an [online photo](#) of this legendary figure who looks just like Santa!

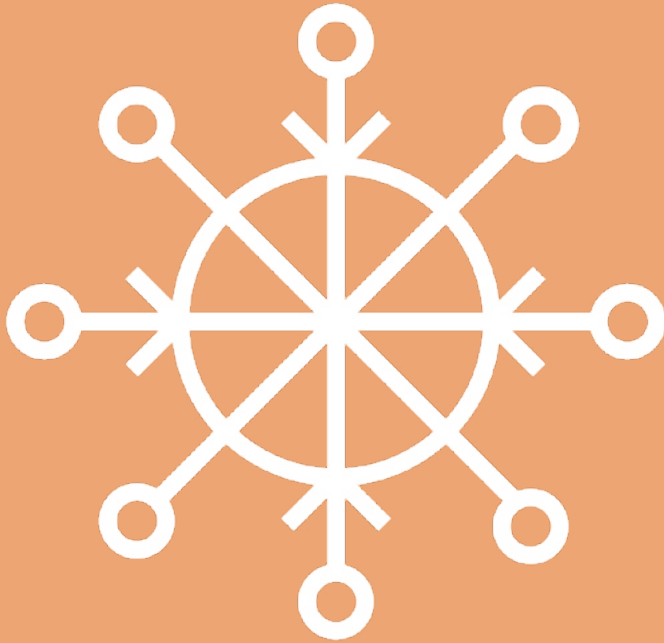


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A TASTE OF ROMANIA:

On Christmas eve, Romanians bake traditional delights, such as Cozonac – a marbled sponge cake with nuts, cocoa and Turkish delights. Christmas dinner includes roast pork, pickled vegetables, beef salad, and homemade wine. Why not look up a **[Cozonac recipe](#)** and give it a go? If this doesn't sound appetising, what about trying a completely new recipe you think you'll love?





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CHRISTMAS HUNT!

If you are big or small, this is just as much fun. Grab the kids or your crew and ask everyone to collect five items that look, sound, taste, smell and feel like Christmas. Hopefully, your conversations go in fun and unexpected directions.





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DID SOMEONE SAY MARATHON?

There's nothing better than time to relax with friends and family at Christmas time. Put all your (other) devices aside, sit on the sofa together and watch a Christmas movie with a friend, as a family or with a group of friends. A die-hard movie fan? Make a list of everyone's favourites and watch one every week from now until Christmas. If you can't get together, make it virtual!

P.S. Need to take a break from TV? What about a board game marathon instead?



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