

# Christmas tree tips

When the time comes to bring the Christmas tree inside, it's best to take a few precautions to ensure the tree and its ornaments last through the season.

• **Keep away from heat:** Make sure the tree is kept away from sources of heat, such as heating vents, fireplaces, (keep a reasonable distance

away from flames), and even sources of direct sunlight so the tree can remain healthy.

• **Ward off all pets:** Cats, in particular, have exhibited a puzzling desire to jump into Christmas trees. If you can't keep pets out of the room entirely, use a ceiling hook to keep the tree from falling over should

a pet bump into it.

• **Turn lights off** when leaving the house or going to bed: Trees are a fire hazard even when the lights aren't on, and that risk only gets greater if lights are left on when you're not home.

• **Place heavier ornaments** near the top: Keep heavier and fragile ornaments higher up on the tree to lessen the risk of them breaking at the hands of curious kids.

# My most memorable Christmas

## We didn't always have a lot but Christmas was always good

By Justina Pembleton

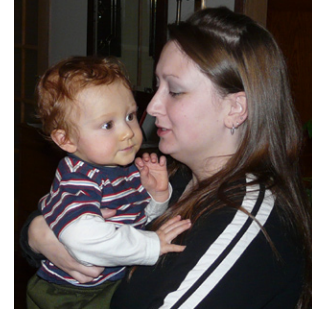
When Hartley asked all of us to write about our happiest, saddest or funniest Christmas last week for the Christmas issue, I began racking my brain straight away, going through 27 years of memories.

But I couldn't pick just one Christmas. I can say that regardless of the circumstances of our lives throughout the years, Christmas was always really good for us.

My parents split up when I was seven years old, so we had to divide Christmases between my mom and my dad's. But we never felt disgruntled about it. Sure, we'd miss having dinner with each family every other year, but both sides were so great, that Christmas was always such a happy occasion, no matter where we were.

I guess mom taught Jason and I that over the years. We didn't always have a lot, but we did things together to make the Christmas season a good one. We'd always decorate the house and tree together, never without one of us. We'd bake Christmas cookies together, or, one year, Christmas truffles.

And we always kept traditions in the family



Justina Pembleton

going: music and wrapping on Christmas Eve, breakfast with Bev and Trevor Christmas Day, Jason always playing Santa and handing out the gifts in the morning. I've always been like a six year old when it comes to Christmas morning. I could never sleep past 6 a.m. and I'd lie in bed trying to get back to sleep until 7 rolled around. Then I'd always get up, wake mom and Jay, tell them I'd make them tea and coffee, but they had to get out of bed to get it. Every year on Christmas Eve, to this day still, Jay would say to me, "Do not get up before 8 tomorrow morning." I could never do it.

As we got older, we started having friends over throughout the night of the 24th for a drink of Bailey's. By the time all the people had made their way through, we'd be feeling pretty good

and have no wrapping done. So Christmas Eve was an all night, literally, event for us.

With all of our traditions and the excitement we feel, my family almost needs a holiday after Christmas. And this year, I feel, is going to be a whole lot crazier. Jay and his girlfriend had Aidan last January, the first grandchild in our family. The excitement already of wanting to make sure this Christmas is so great for him has been incredible. And wanting to make sure every tradition is followed so that he will know them from Christmas number one is all of our first priority.

If any Christmas can be thought of as the best, I think it will be this one. Who wouldn't enjoy babies first Christmas, whether he's your son, grandson or nephew. Especially since he's almost a year and will understand more. I'm looking forward to watching him rip all the paper and play in all the boxes.

Join us on  
**December 21<sup>st</sup>**  
for Hot Chocolate and Cookies

**Merry Christmas!**

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**A Child is Born.**

On this day we celebrate with joy the birth of a Child who would become our Savior. May you live in the light of his love and follow His message of peace and hope for all.

**Daniel Varanelli CGA, CFP**

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*Yesterday, Today and Forever,  
Celebrating Jesus,  
The Son of God,  
Who came to set us free  
Merry Christmas  
and  
A Blessed New Year*

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**Merry Christmas**

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**NOTICE**  
Our Garage & Gas Bar will be closed on Dec. 25, 26 and New Years Day, Jan. 1 so our family can enjoy the Holidays.