

# How we eat now

## Have a happy hipster Christmas



Are your festive rituals a bit stale? Want to break with tradition? Let **Emma Freud** show you how the cool kids are doing it

@emmalfreud

**H**ipsters love Christmas. You can understand why: the birth of Jesus was the first recorded fashionable glamping experience; the Three Wise Men had the sort of names millennials give their kids (Balthazar, Melchior and Caspar); candlelight is very hygge; and hipsters love anything to do with shepherds (beards, vintage clothes, crooks). But Christmas for this uber-cool, street-smart, indie generation comes with its own new traditions, and if you're unsure of them, allow me to fill you in – I don't want you putting your tastefully weathered Converse boot in it.

### DECORATIONS

A hipster's house is decorated with edge. Regular Christmas trees are old school: this generation create deconstructed ones from fir branches stuck in a tree shape to a sitting room wall, or build literary ones from decreasing piles of books. Radicals might risk everything with a tree decorated only in baubles of one colour – it's almost retro enough to be back in – or choose an ironically small one and cover it with popcorn garlands and strings of coloured cereal (Lucky Charms work well). A crib is on message, especially Modern Nativity's 'millennial figurine set', which has Mary and Joseph taking selfies with baby Jesus, a shepherd playing on his phone and the Wise Men on Segways bearing boxes from Amazon Prime.

### DRINKS

Millennials are excellent at finding fun things to do with alcohol – going in a whole new direction from the car-key games of their parents. Top of the chalk-board menu is a hot spiced drink made by infusing cider with star anise, bay leaves, clove-studded tangerines and bourbon. Beer will be flavoured with pumpkin (yuck) or maple (double yuck). They're fond of festival cocktails involving a bottle of vodka steeped with juniper berries, orange peel and a sprig from a Christmas tree (Blue Spruce ideally, but make sure it hasn't been sprayed). Leave for two days, then strain into a Kilner jar before use.

Forget about glasses – these drinks are served in mismatched vintage china cups, cans or American red plastic cups. For non-drinkers, Juice Club sells a seasonal Brussels sprouts juice – that's a party on its own right there. In fact, you might be better off drinking that one on your own until it's been fully digested.

### A NIBBLE (& MORE DRINKS)

For a pre-meal snack, soak red and green gummy bears in bourbon (hipsters love bourbon) for 24 hours, drain and serve as an aperitif. Mix the booze with apple juice, cinnamon and lemon to make festive whisky sours (served in copper mugs, naturally).

### MAINS

A full turkey dinner is too on-the-nose for hipsters – it has retro chic, but as it hasn't yet been out of fashion, it can't be sardonically levered back in. Instead, consider a table of freshly cooked 'leftovers' and a pile of sourdough or quinoa bread so guests can make their own turkey, stuffing and cranberry sauce sandwiches. Or a big overstuffed brioche bun containing barbecued pulled turkey (ironic) with Brussels sprouts coleslaw (green) and beetroot pickles (red, tick).

The phenomenally successful food truck-turned-restaurant-chain Meat Liquor do an XXXmas dog: bacon-wrapped chipolatas with turkey gravy and stuffing in a hot dog roll. Their vegetarian option is Xmac And Cheese, which involves deep-fried stilton and a port and cranberry dip. They also serve a Pinot Grinchio cocktail (hipsters love puns), which has a stripey sugar candy cane for a stirrer.

### PUDS

Unadulterated Christmas pudding is too basic, so the culinary millennial might crumble it into vanilla ice cream along with a rippled shot of Baileys, or make Advocaat snowball jellies in mini Kilner jars, served with cherry brandy marshmallows. There's a great recipe on [cookiescupcakesandcardio.com](http://cookiescupcakesandcardio.com) for a lumberjack cake – a four-layered confection that looks like a log on the outside, with a bold tartan (hipsters love it) design of multicoloured vanilla sponge when you cut into it.

### GIFTS

Of course, gifts will be homemade. Foodie ideas include a Mason jar of butterscotch sauce; hot chocolate powder using single origin dark chocolate and vanilla marshmallows; or my incredible Christmas cookie mix packed in a Kilner jar, which you'll find on the opposite page. If you don't have time to make something, a mini teepee for a dog is obviously the perfect present. If the recipient doesn't have a dog, that's fine – in fact it's even cooler.

It may be a lot of effort, but gifts should appear as though you haven't tried at all (hipsters love trying hard not to try hard). And a final word of warning: if hipsters are of the long-bearded persuasion, they may decorate their facial hair with small woodland animals made of felt, sprigs of mistletoe, or tiny, shiny, beard baubles – I'm not even joking – purchased for £4.99 on [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk). Happy Hipmas.

**4** Good Food contributing editor Emma Freud is a journalist and broadcaster, director of Red Nose Day and a co-presenter of Radio Four's *Loose Ends*.

Photographer: PETER CASSIDY | Shoot director: MARTIN TOPPING | Food stylist: JACK SARGESON | Stylist: LUIS PERAL

### THE COOLEST XMAS PRESENT: hipster Christmas biscuits in a jar

Possibly the loveliest gift you can give this year: a pretty jar containing almost everything you need to make 24 malty white chocolate & cranberry

Christmas biscuits. To make things easier, I've done the measurements in cups. You can use any size cup – just make sure you use the the same one for all the ingredients.



**LAYER 4**  
1 cup of soft brown sugar with 1 tbsp of flaky sea salt.

**LAYER 2**  
1 cup of dried cranberries.

**LAYER 1**  
1 cup of wholemeal flour with 1 tsp of baking powder.

**LAYER 5**  
1 cup of large white chocolate chunks with 1 heaped tbsp of Horlicks.

**LAYER 3**  
1 cup of rolled oats with 1 heaped tsp of cinnamon.



**My dearest friend: these are the greatest biscuits of all time.**

Here's what you do...

**MAKES 24 PREP 10 mins COOK 11 mins EASY V**

- 1 Whisk an **egg**, **150g soft butter** and **1 tsp vanilla extract** in a bowl using an electric whisk until the mixture is smooth and creamy, about 5 mins.
- 2 Add the contents of this jar and mix together gently to form a dough.
- 3 Butter two baking sheets. Put 12 golf-ball-sized spoonfuls of the dough onto each. Bake in the oven at 180C/160C fan/gas 4 for 11 mins until you have delicious chunky soft golden oaty malty white chocolatey cranberry cookies. Remove from the oven, then leave to cool a bit on the baking sheets. Eat them all while they're still warm, and think of me.

**I love you. Happy Christmas xx**

These layers should bring you to the top of a 1-litre Kilner jar. Just print the label (right), stick it on, pop a ribbon round the top and you should find that Bob is genuinely your uncle.

**PER BISCUIT** 173 kcals • fat 8g • saturates 5g • carbs 21g • sugars 13g • fibre 2g • protein 3g • salt 0.8g