

cherry menlove



All is calm, all is bright...



Christmas in my home is celebrated for the entire month of December. That is when the Christmas music starts, the sweets are placed by the front door and the lights shine from every corner of the house.

By now the plan is to have all of the gift-wrapping completed, except for some last minute items, and for them all to be tagged and under the tree. The chap that delivers our firewood has made his last drop off of the year and the pile of logs both inside and out has to last us the entire month. By now any decorations or gifts that I'm making by hand should be completed, but that isn't always the case. Still, there's something lovely about sitting up late in the month of December finishing off a craft project, only to be able to hang it directly on to the tree the moment it's done.

The house takes on a different feeling in December during the build up to Christmas, all is well, I make sure of it. There is a cinnamon smelling sense of anticipation that fills the air and creates a buzz of excitement that fills each and every day. I've learnt how to do this from my parents, both of whom love Christmas, and made it very special for us as kids growing up. We would highlight the shows we wanted to watch in the Radio Times and eat breakfast with carols on the radio. My mum would do a huge clean of the house when she wasn't working and we'd come home from school to find her with a big red Christmas bow in her hair. If it snowed Dad would make us a sledge in what seemed like seconds flat and we'd head off to the nearest hill and fly!

All year long I am a responsible adult, with children to look after and people who depend on me. 2011 has been a tumultuous but enriching year and right now I feel like joining my kids on the floor and remembering what it was like to be a child. Christmas time is



so perfect for that. It's a time when there's every excuse in the world to snuggle down under a blanket and watch a Doris Day movie with a mug of hot chocolate in your hands. It's a time when it's okay to have the whole house strewn with wrapping paper as long as you and your loved ones had fun wrapping up. It doesn't matter if you burnt the mince pies because my super easy recipe lets you rustle up another batch. Nothing matters at this time of year except for peace, love, goodwill and fun.

Christmas is no longer about getting in to debt to have a good time and we have the handmade/ grow your own/ make do and mend revolution to thank for that. People aren't focused on getting the best of everything anymore, as what we are really searching for is authenticity. We want warmth and good conversation. Someone who will listen and pop round with a tin of mince pies at the most unexpected moment. We want to be able to look out of our window and have hope that the next year is going to be our best yet and my belief is that the journey towards that starts in December.

Have a wonderful, simple, heartwarming Christmas and let's all look forward to the most creative and fulfilling 2012 we could have ever hoped for.

I'll leave you with a ditty:

"If, when you go up the stairs to bed on Christmas Eve, all is calm and all is bright, then you, my dear friend, are going to be alright!"

Lots of love Cherry x

(who has promised not to take up poetry in the new year!)

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