

DEC 2022

BLOT



Comfort Foods for the Holidays

From macaroni and cheese to Mexican cuisine, here are the best comfort food recipes

Cozy Gifts for Homebodies

There is no better time than now to shop for your home-loving friends

Winter Fashion As Seen on Campus

A look into how Vandals stay warm and chic



THE HOMEBODY ISSUE

Blot Magazine

DEC 2022

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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,

As temperatures drop and daylight recedes into darkness earlier and earlier, you may find yourself relying on the solace of your home and familiar company. This issue is dedicated to the Homebody, an individual who finds comfort in the routine and familiarity of home, indulging in hobbies, improving their personal space, and above all, prioritizing self-care. We at Blot find this to be more important than ever as the wintry conditions may cause a sense of sadness, feelings of stress, or loss of motivation for our staff and audience. Find joy in this issue as our writers reminisce on the diverse holiday traditions celebrated at the peak of this season, enlighten you on the delicate art and skill of board games and video games, fill you in on the latest winter fashion trends on campus, advise you on the very best presents to gift a Homebody, guide you through the recipes of our favorite comfort foods and holiday dishes and reflect on the thoughts and feelings associated with the winter season with original poetry. Grab a cup of cocoa, sit back in your favorite cozy pajamas, and enjoy the Homebody edition.



Katarina Hockema

Editor in Chief



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Holiday Traditions Around the World

Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's... there is something for everyone to celebrate

Story By **VANESSA WERNER**

Illustrations By **JACQUELINE WALKER**

Design By **LEILANEE TAYLOR**

In the United States and around the world, there are many different religions, meaning that everyone has different holidays to celebrate. Even here at the University of Idaho, there are people who come from different countries and cultures, so they have different traditions to observe every year.

To begin, Christmas is one of the most common holidays to celebrate, especially in communities such as Moscow that host a larger Christian population. Every year, people put up and decorate Christmas trees, customizing them to be real or fake depending on their personal taste. Listening to festive music, watching Christmas movies and specials, making gingerbread houses, and exchanging gifts with family and friends are also common traditions.

“Every year, my family watches ‘Rudolph’,” freshman Anya Carpenter said. “My dad has a rule that we can’t watch it before Christmas Eve, and the whole family has to watch it together.”

“Rudolph” is a classic Christmas movie. Other Christmas-themed movies include “The Grinch”, “The Polar Express” and “Elf”. These movies have become classics through annual audience viewing, fitting well within the holiday spirit due to their messages of love, friendship, generosity, spirit, and kindness.

Besides Christmas, there are several other holidays that students and families celebrate annually.

Freshman Rowan Zerza celebrates Wicca, which is a paganist holiday.

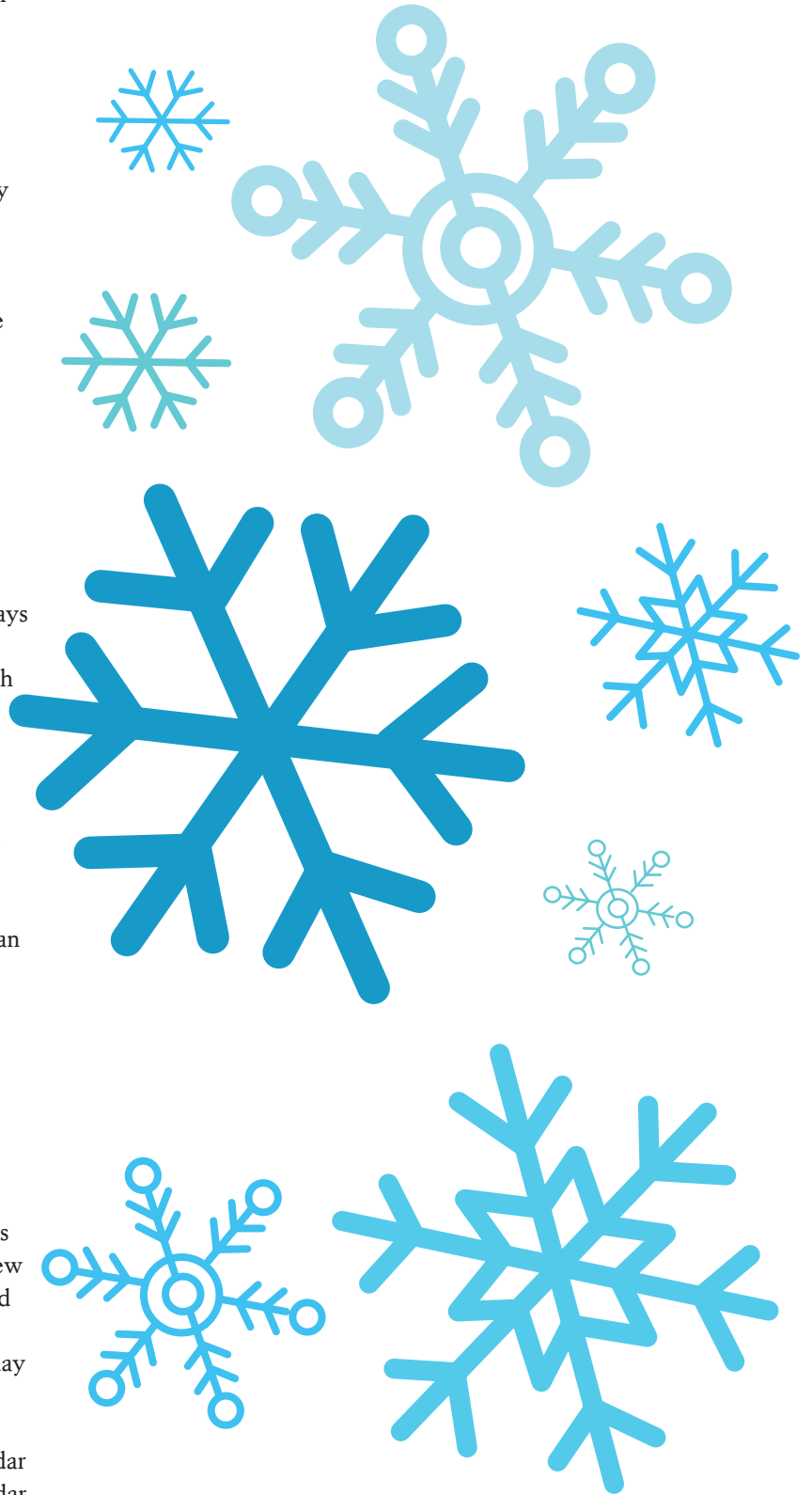
“I don’t necessarily celebrate it as a religious holiday,” Zerza said. For her, more of spiritual recognition and celebration.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Wicca is the largest-recognized Pagan or Neo-Pagan religion. Wiccans, as they are known, identify primarily as “witches” and draw inspiration from the pre-Christian religions of Europe.

“People set goals for themselves to complete in the new year, known as resolutions.”

The day after Christmas is Boxing Day, which is celebrated in countries such as Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Originally, Boxing Day served as a day to give presents to low-income people in a community, but it is now known as a shopping holiday among the citizens of these countries.

Soon after Christmas and Boxing Day is New Year’s. This includes New Year’s Eve, the last calendar day of the year, and New Year’s Day, the first calendar day of the coming year. On New Year’s Eve, people will typically stay up until midnight, and many people set goals for themselves to complete in the new year,



known as resolutions, such as eating healthier and drinking more water, exercising more, and spending time with friends and family.

Another holiday that people celebrate is Hanukkah. Hanukkah is the Hebrew word for “dedication. This celebration, also known as the Festival of Lights, lasts for eight days, and a candle on the menorah, a traditional candlestick in Jewish culture, is lit for each night. According to Life in Messiah, Hanukkah recognizes the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in the Second Century B.C. Gifts are exchanged every night of the holiday. Practicing Jewish people also play the dreidel game for entertainment and make various



traditional foods such as latkes, kugel, brisket and sufganiyot (jelly filled donuts).

Though it is more of a cultural holiday than religious, Kwanzaa is celebrated by many individuals around the globe. People who celebrate Kwanzaa come from different religious and cultural backgrounds- especially African cultures throughout the continent. The holiday lasts for seven days, wherein those celebrating will light candles (one for each night that it lasts, similarly to Hanukkah) and eat delicious food, such as catfish, collards, and macaroni and cheese, as well as jerk chicken, gumbo, and accras.

As described by Food Network, “Kwanzaa gets its name from the Swahili (East African) phrase *matunda ya kwanza*, meaning “first fruits of the harvest.” It started in the late ‘60s as a holiday of cultural affirmation inspired by sub-Saharan African harvest

festivals. Over the decades, as the holiday entered the African-American mainstream, African foods got less emphasis, and celebrants increasingly turned to more familiar foods of the African diaspora.”

Muslims, or those who practice Islam, celebrate Ramadan, which is a sacred holiday. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, where people fast from dawn to sunset every day during the entire month. Prayer, reflection and community are all important aspects of

Ramadan. According to Islamic sacred texts and history, Ramadan recognitions began when the Angel Gabriel appeared to Prophet Muhammad and revealed to him the Quran, the Islamic holy book. That revelation, *Laylat Al Qadar*—or the “Night of Power”—is believed to have occurred during Ramadan.

The University of Idaho has several students originally from Nepal. A holiday that Nepalis (and Hindus elsewhere in the world, such as Myanmar) celebrate is Dashain. Dashain is a time for families to spend time together and exchange gifts and blessings, and there is a festival to celebrate the power of good over evil. As stated by Nepal Tourism

“The holiday lasts for seven days, wherein those celebrating will light candles each night... and eat delicious food”

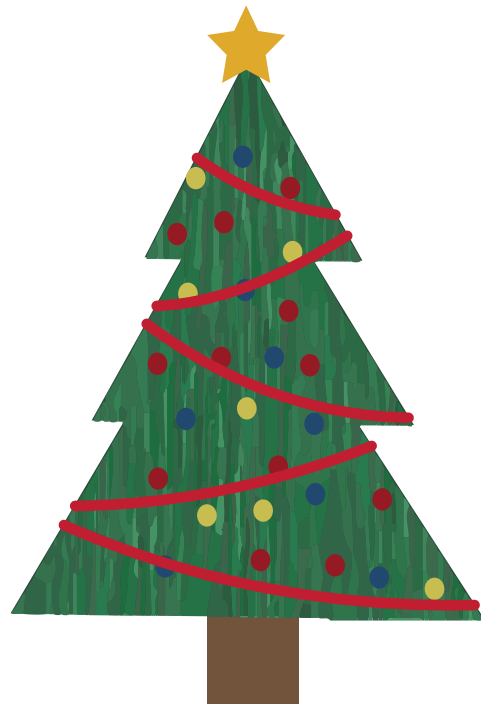
Board, Dashain honors the Goddess Durga, who was created out of the shakti or energy of all the gods, armed with weapons from each of them.

There are also many students at UI who are from India. Just one of the many holidays celebrated in India is Diwali, which is also known as the Festival of Lights. It is celebrated by Hindus and Sikhs, followers of Hinduism and Sikhism respectively, and it is one of the most important festivals in the country. According to National Geographic, the festival gets its name from the row (avali) of clay lamps (deepa) that Indians light outside their homes to symbolize the inner light that protects from spiritual darkness.

While there are many religious students on campus, some people may be atheists or not affiliated with a religion. They may celebrate non-religious holidays such as New Year's and Thanksgiving or participate in traditionally religious celebrations without recognizing the more faith-based aspects and practices of these religions and holidays.

No matter what religion you belong to, if any at all, there are holidays and traditions for everyone to recognize and celebrate this year.

“One Holiday celebrated in India is Diwali, which is also known as the Festival of Lights”



GAME NIGHT



Story By **DAKOTA BROWN**
Photos By **DAKOTA BROWN**
Design By **MEGAN SCHWARTZ**
Illustration By **MEGAN SCHWARTZ**



Thursday nights are “D&D” nights. This is the highlight of my week—starting at 7 PM, I get to

become immersed in a fantasy world with my best friends. We battle monsters, save cities, and dangle between the definitions of heroes and villains.

Games have always had a huge role in my life, especially now that I have adult money. I own a silver plastic card that lets me justify my shopping addiction because I can watch my credit score skyrocket into the realm of badassery. I regularly subject my friends to game nights that consist of us learning one or two in the new stack and falling back on our favorites. Our current obsession is a board game called “Villainous”. Each player takes on the identity of one of the big bads in the Disneyverse, hoping to be the worst of us all. The objective of this game is simple—complete your task before anyone can beat you and try your best to ruin it for your rivals.

I think my obsession with games started with my family. We are a competitive bunch, and for the grandkids—this manifested in obsessions with gold medals in sports, academia, and the

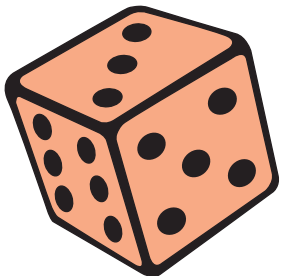
desire to

dominate our areas of interest. The

latter two are my specialties. Grade reports became tokens of achievement, resume building—a Friday-evening enthrallment, and game night? An opportunity for greatness.

We are an “UNO” household with a mantra that is embarrassing to say outside of the dinner table, “Everybody loves a winner, that’s why I’m in love with me”. It’s safe to say that our confidence was built up over the years with mottos like that, but over time, this song became so much more than a silly saying—it’s a pedestal. The ultimate game of achieving perfection. This might seem awfully self-centered to other folks, but to us, it’s a reminder that winning is a mindset. Winning is our everything—it holds us together, not just as a family, but our own individual identities are heavily wrapped up in the world of chasing the next success. We are often too driven, too ambitious, too dramatic...always in excess.

One of my favorite table games to play is “Quirkle”. My grandma and I will pull out the small canvas bag with dozens of tiles of different colors and shapes to challenge each other after picking flowers in the garden or a random visit on a Tuesday. She always makes fun of me for keeping track of the score with





tally marks,
 “I just don’t understand why you don’t add them up as you go...it’s easier to keep track of who’s ahead!”

I am pretty sure that grandma and I are making up the rules at this point.

If you are a closeted introvert like me, game night offers a safe and interesting escape. Even as the host of a sea of people for these events, I find that once the session begins—everything else hardly matters. We could be arguing over property in “Monopoly”, defeating the traitor in “Betrayal at the House on the Hill”, or getting our armies’ crushes in 1v1 duals for “Magic the Gathering”. The best thing about these get-togethers is the endless potential for enjoyment and imagination.

Over the past year, my significant other has slowly been

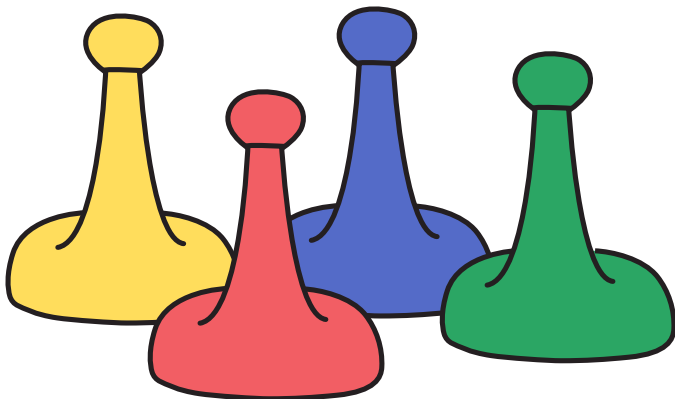
turning me toward the dark side. The transition to video games has been a slow process. In my youth, I would beg my mom to let me borrow her computer after school to explore the virtual lands of “Pixie Hollow” or “Pet Park”. I have found that my game style has not changed with exposure to ‘newer’ virtual games. I still have the same objectives as ten-year-old me.

- **Run around in circles.**
- **Collect all touchable items.**

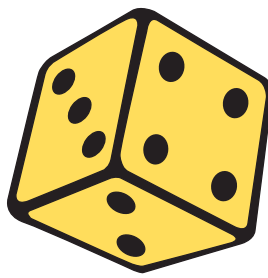
This has worked out in my favor for my introduction to “Stardew Valley”. I have yet to romance a single character in the game and have spent over 100 hours chopping trees, feeding ducks, and hiding behind my friends in the mines so they can fight the slimes while I grab all the shiny things. Now, here is the part where I should give myself more credit for helping, but more than once I have set off a bomb on myself in the mines and been sent home with a fat bill from Dr. Harvey.

I am just better at grabbing the cool stuff. “Animal Crossing” understands this about me. “Minecraft” does not, or at least it didn’t until I discovered creative mode.

Within the past two years, my assortment of games has crept in the 50+ range. I have learned the ways of “Catan”, cultivated the required luck for “Love Letters”, and beaten “Plague” on hard mode. I have found it much too easy to fall into



despair with games like “Episode” where you have to pay for the best option. As if my competitive self has any control to not select the best option. I bought “Bitlife God Mode” so I could create perfect people and live out their lives. What does that say about me?



Everything in my life has been attached to games.

How many books can I read in a year? We’ve lost track.

How long can I hold my breath underwater? With practice, over a minute.

How many jobs can I fit in-between classes? You’ve had six at once.

How many days can I go without my cat reminding me I’m depressed? Zero. She smells it.

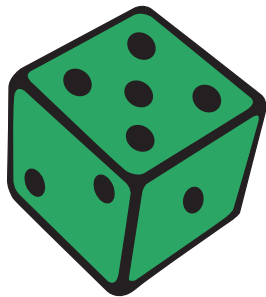
How many parties will I have before I realize I hate parties? You like the idea of parties.

How many games does it take to satiate our shopping addiction? You think this value is infinite.

How many times can you say I love you before bed? An extremely obnoxious amount.

How many times will you forget the rules and make up your own? It’s easier to win that way, and before you get mad—the entire “UNO” fandom collectively decided that draw 4’s are stackable and this was deemed against the rules by the game creators. We’re all cheaters.

Everything is countable. Every action can be spun into a new story for success. My therapist once told me that the first step to a better mindset is to reframe your thinking.



Teach your mom how to roll for initiative.

Teach your dad foils versus standards.

Teach your grandpa how to stack draws.

Teach your grandma how to count tiles.

Teach your best friend how to let go of reality.

Teach your love how to love you.

Little does he know that I already do this in many areas of my life, an almost unhealthy amount. It becomes less complicated to excuse the behavior of loved ones and yourself if you become a negotiator of the finish line.

I have always set ridiculously high expectations of everyone around me. There is a small voice in the back of my head that reiterates the potential seen in others. This is nice for the part of me that wants to become a teacher, but it can be lethal in high doses. Even small successes at times can feel like failures. Another nice feature of games—in most of the ones that I play, the ability to win is easily available and out in front of you. It is attainable.

In “D&D”, if I want my character to develop in a new area, I can gain experience and take a level.

In “Quirkle”, if I want to strategize my last play, I can count and know grandma’s final hand.

In “Stardew Valley”, if I want to frolic around collecting resources—I can do so and still do well.

In “Plague”, if I infect the Icelandic port, I am a freaking unstoppable god virus.

In “UNO”, if the table agrees, I can stack draw fours.

I think everyone should have a game night. Now, I am not saying that you need to be obsessive about winning or anything along those lines. I believe these get-togethers hold a lot more power than people give them credit. Game nights are a time when we can come together to learn new stories and bond over something that is meant to encapsulate the essence of fun and friendly competition. Life should not be evaluated as a game, so don’t steal that from me—but please, give your loved ones a call. I am sure they would love to spend some time with you.



Winter Fashion As Seen on Campus

A look into how Vandals stay warm and chic

Story By **ZINNIA SHRESTHA**

Photos By **ZINNIA SHRESTHA AND RITIKA SHARMA**

Design By **GENESIS CORTEZ**

Do you ever have one of those days where you would much rather stay in bed, curled up like a ball in pajamas with warm fuzzy socks on? Unfortunately, that is rarely a feasible option as full-time college students when you have to get up and go to class everyday. Although winter fashion seems to be much more practical than any other seasonal trends, college students are always in style and ready to take on the cold, snowy weather. Here are some of the best winter looks as spotted around campus.

Too cold outside but too hot inside? Layer up your graphic t-shirt with a comfy black jacket like Samuel.



Quick grocery run to the market in style!
The cutest winter jacket ever that looks and feels
like a literal cloud.



What's better than a shacket? An extra
long shacket making it the cutest comfiest
winter outerwear staple.

"I have never seen two best friends
dressed in the same aesthetic". Well, now you
have! Here, Suhail and Jeewan have paired
a sweatshirt and jacket with sweatpants and
white sneakers for everybody's go-to winter
look.





Michael knows that accessories can take any outfit to the next level! Here, he pairs his gold stud earrings with a blue baseball cap that matches his blue jacket perfectly.

Two best winter trends? Corduroy and puffer jackets. But what is even better? A corduroy puffer jacket like Shriza's.

Toluwani is hitting all the right trends with this one! Puffer jacket? Check. Cargo pants? Check. Beanie? Check.

Layer up! Ritika dresses a comfy Nike hoodie with a basic black jacket for some extra warmth and comfort.

Toluwani (left) throwing two thumbs up in comfy winter gear



North Face puffer jackets are another winter statement piece. They keep you warm, and the extra length on this one makes it especially cozy.

Orange hair, green jacket, purple Dr. Martens and a tote bag to bring it all together! Ava is great at pairing the right colors perfectly.

Ripped jeans and grey Vans. More closet staples from Perla!

You are never fully dressed without a smile! Even better if the smile is paired with such great outfits.



Hopefully, all these creative outfits from students have inspired you to create your own and rock this winter in style! Since winters in Moscow are snowy and mostly cloudy, it is better to leave your homes well prepared. So, we would also recommend always carrying a beanie and a pair of gloves in your backpack in case it gets too cold.



CERAMICS AVAILABLE AT ESSENTIAL ART GALLERY.



CHRISTMAS DECOR PURCHASED FROM A LOCAL THRIFT STORE AND TARGET.

Story and Photos By **ROSE OWENS**
Design and Illustration By **JACQUELINE WALKER**

Cozy Gifts for Homebodies this Winter Season

There is no better time than now to shop for your home-loving friends

It is always fun picking out the perfect gifts and watching friends and loved ones open them. But there are always those people that are difficult to shop for, this is often when you just pick out a random gift card. Unfortunately, then there are the people who prefer to stay in during this season, and their gift card will most likely expire before they get a chance to use it. However, homebodies make a perfect opportunity to get creative with your gift giving. There are things such as decor, cozy apparel, and homemade items that you can gift to show these friends you care.

“homebodies make a perfect opportunity to get creative with your gift giving.”

Have you ever walked into a home and were immediately surrounded by an intense yet pleasant aroma? You most likely were in the house of a homebody or someone with homebody characteristics, they take

pride in making their place inviting. The culprit of the lovely odor was most likely a candle, or multiple candles. Candles are a timeless gift that anyone can appreciate, and you can never have too many candles. It's a good idea to scope out your friend's home to see what candles they already have and find ones that fit their vibe.

Every couch potato loves a good cozy blanket, but even better than



GIFT IDEAS AT ESSENTIAL ARTS GALLERY.

that is a weighted blanket. The benefits of weighted blankets are described by the National Library of Medicine.

“Weighted blankets are used in occupational therapy practice to assist with emotional and physical regulation... Weighted blankets may be an appropriate therapeutic tool in reducing anxiety.”

Shopping locally is also a good idea. Essential Art Gallery is a place to check out, conveniently located on Mainstreet. Their “Playfully Elegant,” Gallery displays artwork from all across the United States, and new items arrive weekly. There are hundreds of pieces that could be gifted to just about any homebody.

“From glass tumblers and nightlights to chocolate and socks, we’ve got a lot of great gifts here that won’t break your bank,” gallery manager Ana Blaisdell said.

Another special gift to give is one that isn’t bought. Making a gift can be rewarding and more meaningful than something store-bought. But, not everyone is super crafty or has the supplies at home to make something a homebody would like. At UI, the Apparel, Textiles and Design Club hosts on multiple workshops a semester, where students can learn to make fun items to take home. This semester they have done tapestry weaving, upcycling bags, and jewelry-making workshops.

“We try to offer people these activities to learn

“Another special gift to give is one that isn’t bought.”



A VIEW OF THE ESSENTIAL ART GALLERY FROM MAIN STREET.



THE GALLERY SELLS CHOCOLATE THAT IS SHIPPED FRESH FROM THE CHOCOLAT BAR LOCATED IN BOISE, IDAHO.



A COTOPAXI INSPIRED BAG MADE FROM TENTS DONATED TO ATD, MADE BY A SENIOR ATD STUDENT.



A HAT MADE FROM A CRANKING HAND KNITTING MACHINE.

skills they normally wouldn't get to do... where they get to go home with something cool," ATD club president Ellie Hafer said.

Next semester, they anticipate having a felting workshop. The prices are \$5 per workshop, \$10 per semester, or \$20 per year. The club will also be putting on a clothing swap in the spring.

Ellie Hafer explained that a good gift idea is to give someone resources to make something themselves, such as a kit from Amazon.

"Yarn Underground offers classes, like spinning classes, so buying someone a ticket to one of those things to offer them an experience so that they can learn new things is a fun gift idea," Hafer said.

There are countless options when it comes to finding the right gift for a true homebody. Anything that you can find that helps them live out their coziest fantasies will work.



ESSENTIAL ART GALLERY SELLS A VARIETY OF JEWELRY.



Here Are The Best Comfort Foods To Make This Holiday Season

From macaroni and cheese to Mexican cuisine, here are the best holiday comfort food recipes

Story By **KATARINA HOCKEMA**

Design By **RITIKA SHARMA**

Illustrations By **RITIKA SHARMA**

Picture this: snow is falling in torrents outside, the soft light of your living room is reflecting on the pitch blackness surrounding your windows, and faintly, you can hear winds whistling around your home as the storm churns on outside your walls.

Festive lights adorn your furniture, and perhaps you have music playing to bring the mood up and get yourself into the holiday spirit.

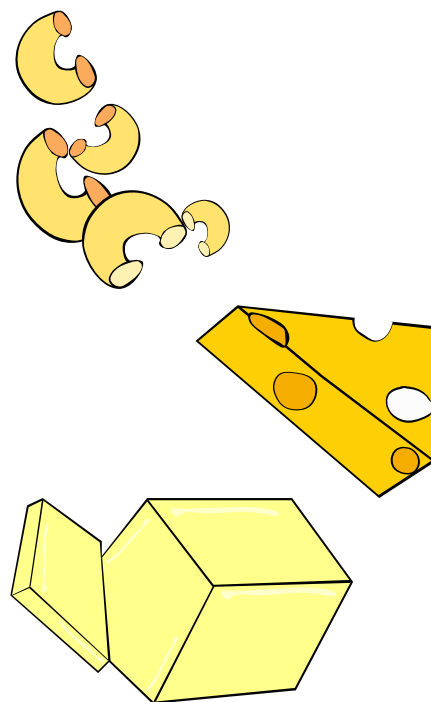
The only thing missing in this scenario is something to chow down on.

While different holidays have their repertoire of holiday foods that are made on an annual basis, there seem to be a few dishes that make a showing throughout the season despite the beliefs or traditions of the people enjoying them.

Macaroni and cheese, often abbreviated to mac and cheese or simply mac, is a staple holiday side dish for both Thanksgiving, Christmas, and even New Year's celebrations.

To make a delicious mac, start with either premade noodles, or take the time to make your own macaroni using home staples like flour. To have a more uniform shape, use a pasta add-on to your home mixer.

Boil noodles in salted water according to the package instructions, slightly less for fresh noodles.

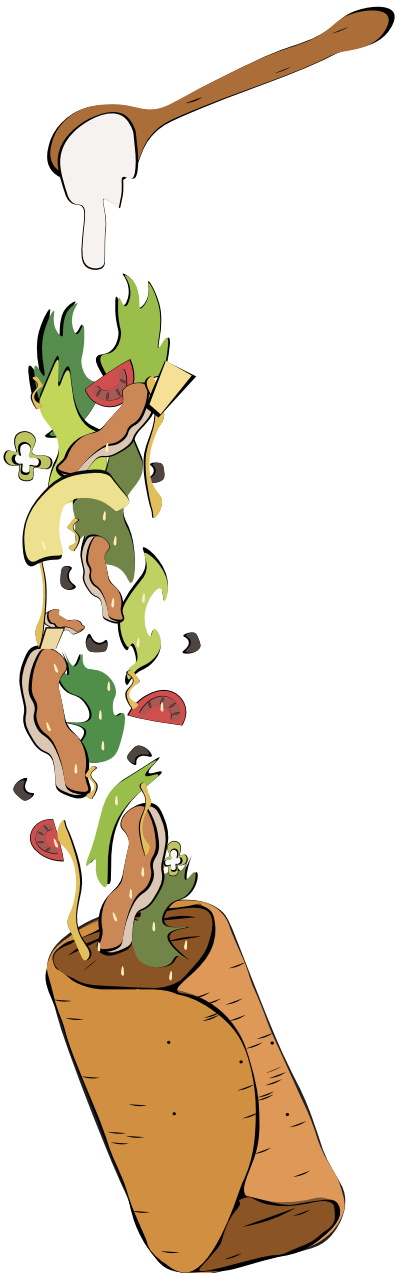
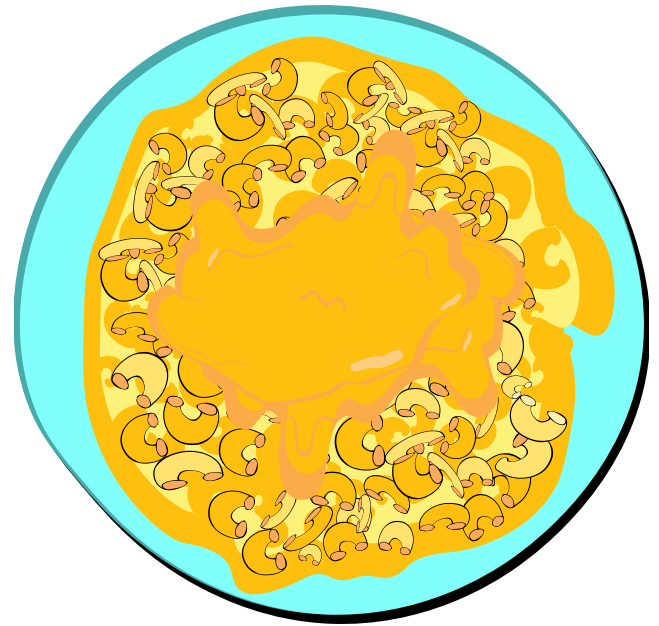


To make a delicious cheese sauce, you can melt down a variety of cheeses based off your tastes, and the cooking method you're using, whether that be stovetop melting, baking, or another strategy.

The most common cheeses include cheddar, monterey jack, or a blend, often paired with heavy cream, butter, cream cheese, or other dairy products to help with a smooth texture and rich flavor.

Combine the sauce and cheese together, top with more shredded or cubed cheese of your choice, and bake to create a crispy top and creamy texture!

This classic comfort food will be sure to please as your next holiday side or simple cozy meal.



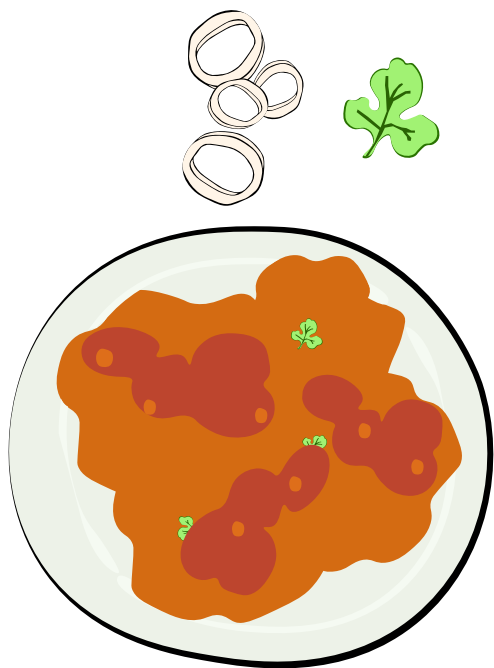
“This classic comfort food will be sure to please as your next holiday side or simple cozy meal.”

If you are looking for something that fits within Hispanic and Latin cuisine, consider making burritos for a comforting meal.

Burritos are most traditionally made by combining a protein, usually beef or pork, but often chicken or seafood as well, along with vegetables, condiments, and cheese in a flour tortilla to create a deliciously convenient hand-held meal. These tortillas can be store-bought or can be simply made at home with a few pantry staples as well.

Common vegetables can include bell peppers, jalapenos, serranos, onions, garlic, tomatoes, (in this case, considered a vegetable!) lettuce or cabbage, and herbs such as cilantro. Add tang with lime juice, or add spice with traditional tabasco and green chiles. Different varieties of rice and beans, as well as a fatty avocado can be added to make for a more well-rounded meal.

Assembly is fairly simple: cook the meat, prep the vegetables and grains/legumes if you have them, place on the tortilla, and rock and roll!



Finally, we can explore traditional Chinese cuisine through dumplings, offering a wide variety of different types and cooking styles, varying on whether the dumplings use a wheat or rice wrapper, whether they are boiled, steamed, or fried, and what ingredients are used in the filling.

According to The Spruce Eats, there are seven traditional Chinese dumplings to try.

“In general, there are two broad categories of Chinese dumplings: gao, or crescent-shaped dumplings; and bao, or round, purse-shaped dumplings,” The Spruce Eats stated.

Starting with a dumpling wrapper, you can find a grand selection at your local grocery store, or

“In general, there are two broad categories of Chinese dumplings: gao, or crescent-shaped dumplings; and bao, or round, purse-shaped dumplings,” The Spruce Eats stated.

hand-make these as well for a fresher wrapper.

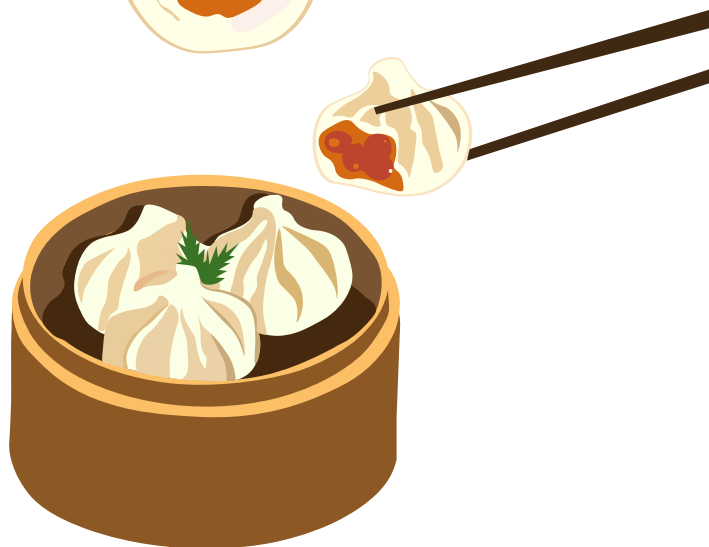
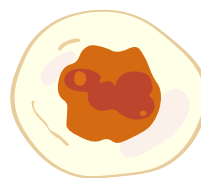
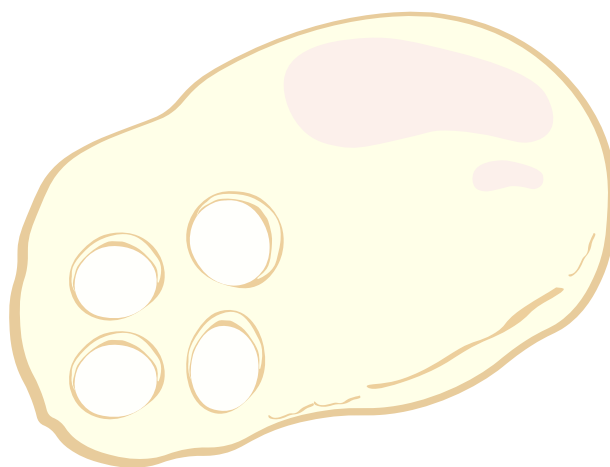
Ingredients such as cabbage, spring onions, scallions, chives, garlic, ginger, and proteins such as chicken, pork, and beef can be easily prepared for dumplings, but must be meticulously combined in small quantities to result in even flavors and good distribution of the ingredients. No chunky dumplings here!

Jiaozi, otherwise known as pork dumplings, are extremely popular worldwide. They are traditionally wrapped in a dough wrapper and contain a filling of pork, cabbage, and scallions or chives.

Dipping sauces are just as crucial as the dumpling itself. Most sauces have a base of ponzu or soy sauce, often enhanced with chili oil, sesame, rice vinegar, or other traditional flavors and ingredients.

For the best dumpling eating experience, serve and eat immediately with your prepared sauce.

The next time you find yourself feeling festive, craving a warm meal to stave away these cold winter nights, refer to this list to find the best comfort dishes, and food for thought.



BLEEDING SKY

Amidst the setting sun and the rising moon,
the sky bleeds red today.
And as the golden cools into shiny silver,
I catch the last glimpse of this bleeding sky.
But the moon on the other side is calling me.
Oh, how I love embracing the moon
but why do I have to let go of the sun so soon?
But oh, the moon is calling me,
and I have to go, let you go.
But I promise that when the night is done,
I'll be right here, waiting for the sky to bleed red again.
As the silver warms up to golden tomorrow.
Amidst the setting moon and the rising sun.

NIGHTFALL

I hear chaos in an empty room, in dead silence
Escape into full space looking at the beaming light of
the full moon as the night dims into darkness
Staring at the ground from 60 ft above, the never-
ending sky as my rooftop
My chest finally lightens as I let out the weight on my
shoulders with a deep breath
I like it here, when the only company I have is me
An escape from reality, my excuse of being busy
Waking up on 4 hours of sleep every day, a puffy face,
my swollen lips
Yet coming back to this mistake every single night
I have no regrets.

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