

Christmas Checklist

By Bianca Hendriks

- September
 - Plan holiday travel if you intend to visit out of town relatives.
 - Research hotels and transportation.
 - Schedule trips and accommodations as early as possible.
 - Book tickets to see a Christmas musical or show.
- October
 - Set budget.
 - Make list of gift recipients.
 - Shop for gifts Buy presents for work colleagues, friends, family and unexpected guests.
 - Think of ideas for entertainment and decorations.
 - Order online early.
 - Schedule a couple weekends to do deep cleaning projects.
 - Select holiday wines for the entire season, then purchase by the case.
 - Shop for cards and wrapping paper.
 - Start baking things you can freeze.
- November
 - Shop for clothing and accessories.
 - Mail gifts to friends living abroad no later than Thanksgiving.
 - Check dishes and glassware for holiday entertaining.
 - Decide menus for month of December.
 - Decorate house with lights the weekend after Thanksgiving if possible.
 - Get out ornaments and decorations.
 - Create a master schedule of all events and activities for the season.
 - Schedule down time Very important for maintaining sanity.
 - If planning to videotape events, check camera.
 - Start addressing holiday cards.
 - Clear out your fridge and cupboards.
- December
 - Complete major shopping by the first week of December if at all possible.
 - Decorate house.

- Buy and put up Christmas tree.
- Buy flowers and plants for your home.
- Two weeks before Christmas' mail packages for all domestic recipients.
- Do baking and traditional family cooking.
- If traveling, check car and make sure there's plenty of gas.
- Set out clothes.
- Deep clean your house.
- Set tables, buffet, etc.
- Prepare food and drinks.
- Dress for occasion, if necessary.
- Aim to finish a full half hour before you expect guests to arrive.
- After Christmas
 - Review what worked and what didn't.
 - Take down tree and recycle if fresh.
 - Throw out broken or damaged ornaments.
 - Sort decorations and keep only what you love for next year.
 - Store all holiday decorations, wrapping supplies, dinner and glassware together in the same location.
 - While the memory is fresh, start your holiday plan for next year!