



These are a few of our favorite things...

By Soren Schwan

Favorite Christmas Memory or Tradition:

Pitt: Singing Christmas carols

Dan: Putting together a spaceship my wife got for the kids at 2am on Christmas morning without instructions. She told me the entire time there were no instructions. My wife found the instructions as the last piece was being put in place.

Jon: Being at home with my wife and our two kids and watching them come down the stairs on Christmas morning.

Diane: We spent Christmas 2018 at Disneyworld – one of our best trips to Disney as the kids recreated scenes from previous trips and we had family join us as a surprise!

Trey: Putting up the tree to kickstart the Christmas season is my favorite tradition

Blake: Child: Getting a motorcycle and riding it around the outside of the house on Christmas morning (...I still feel a little bit bad about tearing up the grass). Adult: Every year when the kids come down the stairs in the morning with such excitement and joy in their voices.

Shane: Made from scratch French onion soup

Dan Frost: Every year we make hot cocoa for the kids and go drive around and look at Christmas lights.

Elizabeth: I'll always remember getting Amy Grant tickets for Christmas when I was 9 years old. My mom "tricked" me by wrapping them in a small box inside another box, inside another box... like nesting dolls! I thought I was getting a GIANT present but ended up with tickets to my favorite singer at the time!

Kristin: My oldest daughter's first Christmas. Each passing year seems to get more and more special now that I have my own children to create Christmas magic and memories for. It gives our family the opportunity to continue old traditions and create our own new ones.

Audrey: A tradition of capturing our children dressed up in their Sunday best, posing in front of the Christmas tree has a multitude of my favorite Christmas memories. One year in particular, 2012, when they were age five and three, they broke into a pillow fight and there was some wrestling. At that moment, I captured some of the chaos on camera and every year since, I remind myself that the moments when things don't go as planned sometimes result in the best memories.

Soren: Christmas 2020. My daughter spent some time in the NICU after she was born but was discharged on Christmas evening. It was a long day of waiting but getting to take her home and finally introduce her to family for the first time made for the best Christmas present!

Ema: Every year my mom would hide a pickle ornament in our Christmas tree on Christmas Eve. On Christmas morning, whoever found the pickle first got a prize. This got pretty competitive with two brothers!

Amy: On Christmas Eve, when I was about 8 years old, I got up during the night to use the bathroom in the dark and tripped over a dollhouse Santa had brought me and woke the whole house up.

Favorite Christmas Cookies or Treats:

Pitt: Gingersnaps

Dan: Oatmeal cookies (all year long!)

Jon: Christmas Wreaths

Diane: [Chocolate Crinkle Cookies](#)

Trey: [Santa Hat Cheesecake Bites](#)

Blake: Sugar Cookie, shaped like Santa (no sprinkles)

Shane: [Lemon Cool Whip Cookies](#)

Dan Frost: Grandma Frost's Chocolate Cornflake Cookies

Elizabeth: [Thumbprint Cookies](#)

Kristin: White Chocolate Covered Pretzels

Audrey: [Chocolate Chip Snowball Cookies](#)

Soren: [Chocolate Star Cookies](#)

Ema: [Peanut Butter Blossoms](#)

Amy: Chocolate Oatmeal

Favorite Christmas Songs:

Pitt: "Blue Christmas" by Elvis, "Christmas From the Family" by Robert Earl Keene

Dan: "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve in the Church, "White Christmas" by Bing Crosby

Jon: "Silent Night"

Diane: "Little Drummer Boy"

Trey: "What a Glorious Night" by Sidewalk Prophets

Blake: Traditional: "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" by Frank Sinatra, Modern: "Cowboy's Christmas Ball" by the Killers

Shane: "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas" by Bing Crosby

Dan Frost: "The Christmas Song" by Nat King Cole

Elizabeth: "O Holy Night"

Kristin: "Mele Kalikimaka" (Merry Christmas) by Bing Crosby

Audrey: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Soren: "O Holy Night"

Ema: "Last Christmas"

Amy: "Carol of the Bells" by David Foster

Favorite Christmas Movies:

Pitt: Bad Santa

Dan: Christmas Vacation

Jon: Home Alone

Diane: The Holiday

Trey: Klaus

Blake: Die Hard

Shane: The Santa Claus

Dan Frost: Home Alone 2: Lost in New York

Elizabeth: Four Christmases

Kristin: Four Christmases

Audrey: Christmas Vacation

Soren: Elf

Ema: Home Alone

Amy: A Christmas Story

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