

Three Ways to Make This Christmas One for the Books - Santa has made his list

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With the first snow falling in some parts of the country and Thanksgiving long behind us, it's safe to say that Santa has officially made his list and is now checking it twice. If you've already bought your gifts, put up the Christmas tree and take the obligatory family photos. Check out some more ideas on how to make this December merry and bright!

Host a Cookie Decorating Party

This is an idea that works for the kids and the kids-at-heart. You'll need some holiday cookie cutters and a simple sugar cookie recipe like [this one](#). With some white icing, food coloring, and sprinkles, you'll have more than enough supplies to make dozens of different kinds of cookies. Make the dough beforehand and set the mood with some classic Christmas music. When your guests arrive, have them pound out the dough, cut the shapes and decorate them before baking to perfection. Your guests will have fun getting in touch with their creative side, and it'll give you a good excuse to invite co-workers or neighbors you've been wanting to get to know better. Just make sure to tell everyone to bring their own Tupperware so they can bring home their goodies afterward.



Go Caroling for Charity

Most people want to give more to charities around the holidays, and for good reason. Helping those in need is a great way to give back. Unfortunately, many charities become overwhelmed by clothing and food donations in December. Instead, opt to raise money for a charity of your choice by going Christmas caroling with your friends. Make sure you carry a bucket with the charity name printed largely enough for people to see it. Feel free to also bring along business cards for your local church and pass them out to all the houses you visit. (Bonus if you attach the cards to a treat!)



Give Other Churches a Try

In the days leading up to Christmas, you'll find that the churches near you have dozens of services and programs besides the typical Sunday sermon. This gives you a great opportunity to visit a new church and broaden your outreach network. If social gatherings with strangers make you feel shy, grab a friend and go together. Make sure you introduce yourself to at least one person. Maybe you can even invite that person to your cookie decorating or Christmas caroling parties!