

DECEMBER 2025

gem state.

CHRISTMAS

HOLIDAY GUIDE

kid edition



The GEM STATE'S MOST EXCLUSIVE SANTA ENCOUNTER AND PHOTO EXPERIENCE

CONTENTS



HOLIDAY STYLE GUIDE

The holiday season is upon us, and it's time to start thinking about capturing those perfect holiday photos.

5



DELECTABLE SANTA TREATS

Spread Some Cheer with These Festive Treats for Santa Claus

12



FESTIVE FUN

3 Easy Christmas Craft Ideas for Kids

15



CHRISTMAS IN IDAHO

Must Do Christmas Activities And Events In Idaho

18



SANTA ENCOUNTERS

The Gem States Most Exclusive Interactive Santa Encounter

22

Gem State Collective

[www.gemstatechristmas](http://www.gemstatechristmas.com) · hello@gemstatecollective.com



Co-Founder
Elizabeth Burgess

Designer & Curator
Owner Of Hidden Gem
Events

Owners of Gingerbreads
Homes By E

Co-Founder
Amber Miraya

Photographer & Artist At
Amber Miraya Fine Art

Owner Of Miraya
Creative And Doggo
Idaho

gem state. CHRISTMAS

WELCOME TO GEM STATE CHRISTMAS



Welcome to Gem State Christmas! We specialize in creating a truly one-of-a-kind Christmas experience and photography session for families. This right-of-passage experience brings families together and creates memories that last a lifetime. With our Guided Santa Encounter and photography session, you can experience the true magic of Christmas in a way that is both fun and unforgettable.

Our Guided Santa Encounter is an experience like no other. Children and families will have the opportunity to meet and interact with Santa Claus for 60 minutes! Our team of professionals will guide you through the entire process, ensuring that every moment is special and memorable. From the decorations to the music, every detail is designed to create a magical atmosphere that will leave you feeling warm and fuzzy inside.

At Gem State Christmas, we believe that every child and family has the right to experience the wonder and joy of the holiday season. We take pride in offering a unique and unforgettable experience that your family will rave about. Whether you are visiting us for the first time or are a returning guest, we promise to make your visit to Gem State Christmas a truly magical experience that you will cherish for years to come.

Amber & Elizabeth
FOUNDERS AND CREATORS



01



02



03

SANTA TRAINING SEASON

Santa has been busy getting ready for the holiday season. He's been spending lots of time in his workshop, staying on top of his lists and reading his favorite books.

01

WORKING IN HIS WORKSHOP

02

CHECKING HIS LISTS

03

READING HIS FAVORITE BOOK

HOLIDAY PHOTO

STYLE GUIDE



A Guide to Styling Your Kids for the Festivities

The holiday season is here, and it's time to start planning those festive outfits for your little ones!

Whether you're in search of trendy looks, color and pattern combinations, or textures, we've got you covered.

Here's a holiday style guide for children that will help your kids look their best this season.



Here are five style examples/themes for the perfect holiday photo look for boys and girls:

1. **Classic Cozy** - There's nothing quite like a classic cozy look for the holiday season. Think chunky knit sweaters, scarves, and hats in warm, rich colors like burgundy, forest green, and navy blue. Pair with jeans or leggings and some comfy boots or sneakers for a timeless look.

In terms of color and pattern, red and green are always a classic choice for the holiday season. However, you can mix it up with jewel tones or even some unexpected hues like blush or navy.



holiday pajama



Holiday Pajama Party

For a fun and cozy holiday photo idea, have everyone dress in matching holiday-themed pajamas. This is a great option for family photos or



pictures with friends.

Choose from classic holiday prints like plaid or festive patterns like reindeer or snowflakes. For a timeless look opt for rich solids in velvet.

3

festive formal

FOR A MORE FORMAL HOLIDAY PHOTO LOOK, CONSIDER DRESSING UP IN FESTIVE ATTIRE. BOYS CAN WEAR A SHARP SUIT OR BLAZER WITH A HOLIDAY TIE, WHILE GIRLS CAN OPT FOR A SPARKLY DRESS OR SKIRT AND BLOUSE.



- Choose colors that are associated with the holiday season such as red, green, gold, or silver. These colors will add to the festive vibe of the photo.
- Make sure that the clothes fit well and are comfortable to wear. You don't want to be fidgeting or adjusting your outfit during the photo session.
- For boys, consider wearing a vest under the suit jacket for an added layer of style. A pocket square in a complementary color can also be a great addition.
- Girls can accessorize with a statement clutch or a pair of holiday-themed earrings. A faux fur stole or shawl can be a great addition to the outfit, especially if the photo is taken outdoors.
- Don't forget about the shoes! Boys can wear dress shoes while girls can opt for heels or flats depending on their preference.
- Hair and makeup should also be considered. A sleek updo or soft curls can complement the festive formal look. For makeup, a bold lip color or glittery eyeshadow can add to the holiday glamour.



Plaid is the ideal pattern for your family's holiday photos, and in this blog post, we'll tell you why...

First and foremost, plaid is a timeless pattern. It's been around for centuries and has remained popular for good reason. It's classic, it's versatile, and it's never going out of style. When you look back on your family's holiday photos in the years to come, you'll be glad you went with a pattern that won't look dated or out of fashion.

Secondly, plaid is a pattern that can be easily coordinated. One of the biggest challenges of family photos is ensuring that everyone looks good together. With plaid, you have a pattern that comes in a variety of colors and styles, so you can mix and match to your heart's content. Whether you want to go for a classic red and green plaid or something a bit more subdued, there's a plaid out there that will work for your family's photo.

Finally, plaid is simply a festive pattern. It evokes feelings of warmth, coziness, and holiday cheer. By choosing plaid for your family's holiday photo, you're not only ensuring that everyone looks great, but you're also setting the tone for a joyous and festive holiday season.



*Ruffles, velvet
and metallic*

For girls, ruffles, velvet, and metallics are all the rage this season. Ruffles add a playful touch to any outfit, while velvet and metallics give off a luxurious and festive vibe.



For a classic look, pair a ruffled blouse with a plaid skirt and tights. For a more glamorous look, opt for a metallic or velvet dress with a pair of sparkly shoes.



*all images by Gem State Christmas

In terms of color and pattern, red and green are always a classic choice for the holiday season. However, you can mix it up with jewel tones or even some unexpected hues like blush or navy.

Accessories play a crucial role in pulling any outfit together. For girls, a headband or hair clip can add a touch of whimsy, while a statement necklace or bracelet can add some sparkle. For boys, a tie or bowtie can elevate any outfit, while some fun socks can add personality.

With these tips in mind, you can rest assured that your little ones will look confident, classy, and professional this holiday season.



Spread Some Cheer with These Festive Treats for Santa Claus

The holidays are here, and what better way to celebrate than whipping up tasty treats for Santa Claus? Here are five delicious cookie and dessert recipes that will make Santa's visit all the more magical:

1. **Peppermint Bark:** This festive treat combines creamy white chocolate with crunchy peppermint candy. Melt the chocolate, stir in crushed candy canes, and spread the mixture onto a baking sheet. After it cools and hardens, break it into pieces and serve to Santa.

2. **Gingerbread Men:** These cute little cookies are shaped like people and flavored with ginger, cinnamon, and molasses. Roll out the dough, cut out the shapes, and decorate them with icing and candy. Santa will appreciate the effort you put into making them.

3. **Apple Pie:** This classic dessert is perfect for the holiday season. Make a flaky crust and fill it with sliced apples, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Bake until the filling is bubbly and the crust is golden brown.



DELECTABLE SANTA TREATS

Indulge in the magic of Christmas with these delicious kid and Santa friendly treats



4. Hot Cocoa: Okay, it's not a cookie or dessert, but who doesn't love a warm, cozy cup of hot cocoa on a cold winter night? Mix together cocoa powder, sugar, and milk, and heat until steaming. Top with whipped cream and a sprinkle of cocoa powder, and serve to Santa with a plate of cookies. He'll be grateful for the sweet treat and the chance to warm up before continuing on his journey.

5. Classic Chocolate Chip Cookies: You can't go wrong with this timeless recipe. Mix together butter, sugar, eggs, flour, and chocolate chips, and bake until golden brown. Santa Claus will love the warm, gooey goodness of these cookies.

Again, choose engaging photos and graphics to accompany your words, as these also help catch your audience's eye.

Santa can expect a pint of Guinness along with his cookies when delivering toys in Ireland.

Today in the United States, leaving out a plate of cookies (Oreos and classic chocolate chip are popular choices) and a glass of milk for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve is a well-established tradition among children. But it hasn't always been that way. According to one theory, the cookies-and-milk custom is derived from an older tradition, when families would stuff stockings with goodies for Santa and hang them by the chimney, his preferred mode of entrance, as a welcoming gift. Now, however, those stockings are usually chock-full of treats and smaller gifts for the family members themselves. Leaving cookies and milk for Santa—and perhaps a few carrots for his reindeer—took off as an American holiday tradition in the 1930s, during the Great Depression. In that time of great economic hardship, many parents tried to teach their children that it was important to give to others and to show gratitude for the gifts they were lucky enough to receive on Christmas. Some 80 years later, many children still set out cookies and milk for Santa, whether out of the goodness of their hearts or (in less wholesome cases) as a bribe to receive more gifts from the jolly bearded man in the red suit.



The original roots of this holiday food tradition go back even further—all the way to ancient Norse mythology. Odin, the most important Norse god, was said to have an eight-legged horse named Sleipner, which he rode with a raven perched on each shoulder. During the Yule season, children would leave food out for Sleipner, in the hopes that Odin would stop by on his travels and leave gifts in return. Such a tradition continues today in countries such as Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands, where children still believe that horses carry Santa's sleigh instead of reindeer. On Christmas Eve, they leave carrots and hay—sometimes stuffed into shoes—to feed the exhausted animals. In return, they might hope to receive such holiday treats as chocolate coins, cocoa, mandarin oranges and marzipan.

Over the years, different countries have developed their own versions of the cookies-and-milk tradition. British and Australian children leave out sherry and mince pies, while Swedish kids leave rice porridge. Santa can expect a pint of Guinness along with his cookies when delivering toys in Ireland. French children leave out a glass of wine for Père Noël and fill their shoes with hay, carrots and other treats for his donkey, Gui (French for “mistletoe”). In Germany, children skip the snacks altogether and leave handwritten letters for the Christkind, a symbolic representation of the Christmas spirit who is responsible for bringing presents on Christmas. Though many German kids mail their letters before the holiday—there are six official addresses for letters addressed to the Christkind—others leave them out on Christmas Eve, decorated with sparkly glue or sugar crystals. On Christmas morning, the letters have been collected, and gifts left in their place.

Citation Information

Article Title

Don't Forget Santa's Cookies and Milk: The History of a Popular Christmas Tradition

Author

[Sarah Pruitt](#)

Website Name

HISTORY



FESTIVE FUN

3 Easy Christmas Craft Ideas for Kids

The holiday season is the perfect time to get creative with your little ones. Crafting together not only brings out the holiday spirit but also creates cherished memories. If you're looking for simple and delightful Christmas craft ideas for children, we've got you covered. These three easy projects are sure to bring joy to your home this holiday season.



Popsicle Stick Christmas Trees

Materials Needed:

- Popsicle sticks
- Green paint
- Assorted decorations (e.g., glitter, sequins, pom-poms)
- Craft glue
- Yellow construction paper (for stars)
- Ribbon or string (for hanging)

Instructions:

1. Let your child paint the popsicle sticks green and leave them to dry.
2. Once the sticks are dry, arrange them in a triangle shape to create the tree.
3. Glue the sticks together and let them dry completely.
4. Decorate the popsicle stick tree with glitter, sequins, and pom-poms.
5. Cut out a small star from the yellow construction paper and glue it to the top of the tree.
6. Attach a ribbon or string to the top of the tree to hang it on the tree or around the house.

Paper Plate Santa Claus

Materials Needed:

- Paper plates
- Red and white construction paper
- Cotton balls
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Googly eyes (optional)

Instructions:

1. Have your child paint the bottom half of a paper plate with red paint or crayon to create Santa's iconic suit.
2. While it dries, cut out a small circle from the white construction paper for Santa's face and a rectangle for his belt.
3. Once the paint is dry, glue Santa's face at the top of the plate.
4. Add cotton balls for Santa's beard and hat trim. If you have googly eyes, use them to give Santa a jolly look.
5. Attach the paper belt just below Santa's face.
6. Use markers or crayons to draw Santa's eyes, nose, and mouth.

Handprint Reindeer Ornaments

Materials Needed:

- Brown craft paint
- Plain glass or plastic ornaments
- Googly eyes
- Red pom-poms (for noses)
- Brown or black pipe cleaners (for antlers)
- Glue
- Ribbon (for hanging)

Instructions:

1. Pour a small amount of brown craft paint into a shallow dish.
2. Have your child dip their hand into the paint and press their handprint onto the ornament.
3. Once the handprint is dry, glue googly eyes onto the thumbprint area and a red pom-pom for the nose.
4. Create antlers by twisting small pieces of brown or black pipe cleaner and attaching them above the eyes.
5. Tie a ribbon through the ornament's loop for hanging.



CHRISTMAS IN IDAHO



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 1

Idaho Botanical Garden

Each holiday season the [Idaho Botanical Garden](http://www.idahobotanicalgarden.org) is transformed into a twinkling wonderland with over 600,000 lights! Explore the beautifully-lit scenery complete with live choirs, Santa's cottage, free hot cocoa, fire pits, and plenty of holiday music.

Winter Garden aGlow is the Idaho Botanical Garden's biggest yearly fundraiser and helps keep the Botanical Garden open year-round. Tickets are limited and must be purchased in advance.

More info at:

www.idahobotanicalgarden.org/wintergardenaglow

MORE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS! 2

Winter Wonderland at Indian Creek Plaza

Every year, [Indian Creek Plaza](http://www.indiancreekplaza.com) in Caldwell, Idaho transforms into a real-life winter wonderland from the weekend from late November through the first week of January. The Winter Wonderland at Destination Caldwell features over 1 million holiday lights that cover the entire area, including trees, buildings, the scenic bridges, and more. Children, families and couples can also skate under the lights at Idaho's only, and the seventh in the nation, ice skating ribbon in view of the huge Christmas tree. Skate rentals are available as well.

Indian Creek plaza is also home to farm to fork restaurants and merchants perfect for some last-minute shopping.

More info at the [Indian Creek Plaza website](http://www.indiancreekplaza.com).

IDAHO STATE CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING 3

This long standing tradition usually takes place the Monday following Thanksgiving. Find more information: <https://cms.idaho.gov/tree/>



SCENTSY TREE LIGHTING 4

Scentsy headquarters in Meridian decks out their grounds with almost a million Christmas lights, including their fun, signature light tunnel! Check out their official lighting ceremony on November 11th and grab a bite to eat from a food truck, or visit any night from sunset to sunrise through mid-January to see the lights.

Be sure to check out the official [Scentsy Facebook page](#) for 2025 & updated times full event lineup.

Give your family the gift of treasured memories this holiday season. Gem State Christmas offers Santa Encounters for families who understand the value of making moments last forever. Reserve your spot now!



WINTER LIGHTS PARADE

Winter Lights Parade & Community Christmas Tree Lighting

Friday, December 6, 2024
downtown Meridian



FESTIVAL OF TREES

Mark your calendars for November 26 (Gala), November 26-November 30 (General Exhibition) and December 1 (Fashion Show). Let's celebrate!



BOISE CHRISTMAS SHOW

At Idaho Expo December 6-8. Check out hundreds of vendors offering thousands of Christmas items, decor, and gifts.
<https://www.boisechristmasshow.com>



GINGERBREAD PARTIES

Fun for the whole family!
Guests will have their own freshly baked gingerbread home, frosting and a few extra gingerbread decorations.
<https://fb.me/e/3B2It2VFr>



CANYON COUNTY CHRISTMAS SHOW

A Fantastic Array Of Gifts • 3 Days Of Christmas Splendor November 21-23, 2025 at Ford Idaho Center, Nampa.

<https://www.canyoncountychristmas.com>



CHILDRENS WINTERWONDERLAND FESTIVAL

Get ready for a magical holiday experience at the Children's Winterland Festival, Hosted by Meridian Parks & Recreation - Saturday, December 13th 10AM-2PM



SANTA

ENCOUNTERS

60 Minute Experience

Build A Toy In Santa's Workshop

Step into Santa's workshop, where the magic of toy-making comes to life. Children will have the chance to assemble their very own holiday toy.

Decorate a Gingerbread House With Santa

Join Santa in a delightful gingerbread decorating session. Each family member receives their gingerbread house to adorn with icing, candy, and sprinkles.

Read A Christmas Story With Santa

Gather 'round as Santa reads a beloved Christmas tale. His storytelling brings the magic of the season to life!

Milk And Cookies With Santa

End your Santa Encounter on a sweet note by sharing a cozy milk and cookies moment with Santa Claus himself.

gem state. CHRISTMAS

Your Holiday Tradition
BEGINS HERE

The **Gift** of Memories

Give your family the gift of treasured memories this holiday season. Gem State Christmas offers Santa Encounters for families who understand the value of making moments last forever. Limited availability. Reserve your spot now.



SCAN TO SEE MORE

- Behind The Scenes
- Santa In Action
- Sneak Peak Of Santa Encounters

www.gemstatechristmas.com



gem state.
CHRISTMAS

TIME TO BELIEVE IN MAGIC



FOR FAMILIES WHO KNOW THAT THE TRUE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS LIES IN THE HEARTS OF THEIR CHILDREN, GEM STATE CHRISTMAS BRINGS SANTA CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE. BOOK YOUR SESSION AND CREATE MOMENTS OF WONDER.

[LEARN MORE](#)



