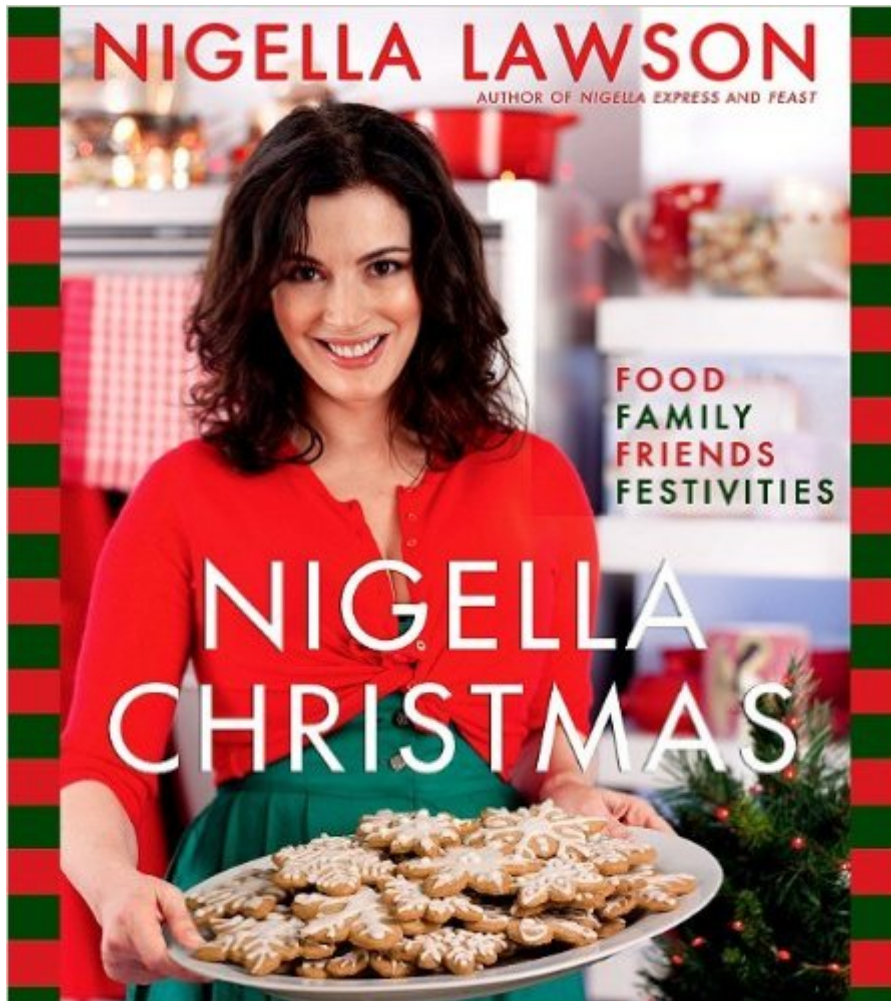


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Nigella Christmas: Food Family Friends Festivities



Synopsis

"Nigella covers just about all the quick bases in Express . . . this is a recipe collection that could get you through the holidays."--The Washington Post

"The recipes are a mix of dishes that are quick to prepare and cook--so you can have your dinner out of the grocery bag and on to the table in half an hour or so--and dishes that are easy to prepare early in the day and then are simply left to simmer slowly."--Good Housekeeping

"Nigella Lawson has conjured up a voluptuous volume of what she called 'fast food for those who love eating.' . . . it's a Nigella-style feast . . . A perfect choice for cooks who would rather sip wine than labor over a hot stove, Nigella Express is, as the British say, brilliant."--People

"A fast feast may seem like a concept at odds with itself, but the goddess of easy extravagance, Nigella Lawson, has figured out how to put together a lavish party menu in ultrashort order . . . That's what her latest cookbook, Nigella Express, is all about--time savers that don't compromise on flavor but are so effective you'll feel you got away with something."--O at Home

Christmas is a time for family and friends, for tradition and treats. But, let's face it, when the pressure to feed and entertain builds up, the festive season can start to lose its sparkle . . . That's where Nigella comes in. With her no-nonsense approach, her inspirational ideas, and her empathy for the practical realities of the season--combined here with reliable, easy-to-follow recipes and reassuring advice about planning and cooking ahead--Nigella Christmas is guaranteed to bring comfort and joy and make sure the season of good will stays that way. Here is everything you could wish for to make your life and your Christmas easy and enjoyable: from party canaps, cocktails, and manageable mass catering, to scrumptious Christmas cakes and puddings; from no-fuss brunches to quick-and-easy homemade presents (chutneys, preserves, and other delectable standbys) and edible tree decorations. There are mouth-watering recipes with a seasonal twist, and simple menus for feeding friends and family over the extended holiday season with minimum stress and maximum enjoyment. And, of course, exciting and inspiring variations for the Main Event itself--from her traditional super-juicy turkey with all the trimmings, to festive ginger-glazed ham and the Ultimate Christmas Pudding; from goose, rib of beef, and stuffed rolled pork, all the way to a special vegetarian Christmas feast, a chocolate pudding, a French Yule Log, an Australian Christmas Pudding, and The Boozy British Trifle. Nigella's cakes, as always, gladden the heart--and, like many of the recipes here, are at home all year round--but her At-a-Glance Christmas Lunch Countdown, together with make-ahead and freeze-ahead tips throughout, can help take the stress and strain out of the season. With its glorious illustrations, Nigella Christmas will surely be a perennial favorite--the book we will all reach for, for inspiration and reassurance, when Christmas comes around each year.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I should start out by saying that I don't cook Christmas dinner. That holiday is the province of my best girlfriend, though we are invited (ha! required!) to contribute to the meal. (If we didn't show up with appetizers and dessert there would be a lot of grumbling. Perhaps banishment.) However, we do plenty of cooking around the holidays (New Year's eve is our turn) -- and oh boy oh boy am I glad I have this new cookbook to inspire me. Because despite the title, Nigella could easily have called this book "Entertaining Without Losing Your Mind." Yes, a large part of the book is given over to recipes for "the main event," i.e. Christmas dinner. You'll find all the usual suspects (at least British style, such as a trifle rather than an apple pie). Certainly, if you're looking for a holiday cookbook, you will have reason to shout with joy. But unlike Thanksgiving, which means turkey to most people, Christmas has a lot more leeway in regard to what you serve. Ham, turkey, goose, whatever. As a result, plenty of these recipes are suitable for ANYtime you want to entertain a crowd (depending on what "crowd" means to you and the size of your dining table, that could mean as few as 6 and as many as 20). There are several all-inclusive menus, any of which I'd be pleased to put before my guests and which, given Nigella's sensible attitudes about cooking ahead and taking life easy, I might get to enjoy as the cook, too. For example, one of her Christmas dinners is rolled stuffed loin with rubied gravy (ruby being port in this case), Italian roast potatoes with garlic and thyme, Christmas sprouts, red beet orzotto, and panettone pudding. That's a great Christmas meal, sure, but it'd work equally well for Easter. Or for a birthday dinner. Another reason that this cookbook is useful far beyond the holiday season is that Nigella is clearly aware that people do not

show up on your doorstep on Christmas day and disappear that evening. It's a time when people move in for a week, and you have to think, "What the heck can I feed this crowd?" (The other things you think about your mother-in-law's arrival are... well, they aren't about cooking. Let's not go there.) Anyway, there are a whole bunch of recipes for "entertaining during the season" and they're going to be used year-round. First on my "make this now" list was a lamb and date tagine with pomegranete juice. (We don't eat lamb, so I made it with beef.) This was simply outstanding. The prep time for this stew (that's what a tagine is) was perhaps 15 minutes including pitting the dates; it baked quietly in the oven for two hours. And did I mention it was delicious? I love easy recipes like this, and I'm sure you do, too. (She serves a maple cheesecake with that menu; it would have gone with it perfectly.) I didn't wait to entertain, either. This fed the two of us for three very happy meals; that's among the virtues of a good stew. Next up on my "who needs a holiday?!" cooking schedule is her potato, parsnip and porcini gratin; or perhaps it'll be the parsleyed fish gratin ("the lazy person's answer to a fish pie"). The cookbook also has several chapters that are particularly welcome at this time of year, such as cocktails and appetizers; a Christmas brunch menu; edible presents and party preserves; and "a bevy of hot drinks." She also has several recipes for what to do with leftover turkey, which might be equally useful at Thanksgiving. Incidentally, you'll also find quite a few dishes that are suitable to serve to vegetarians, from butternut "orzotto" (risotto made with orzo) to a pumpkin and goat's cheese lasagna. And, of course, everything is kept simple... but not TOO simple. Which is why I've loved Nigella's cookbooks for years. I was initially a little concerned about ordering this cookbook because the UK site made it appear that several of the recipes are duplicated from her other books. I did spot a few that are repeats, but just a few, and most of them are variations. It might sound as though, if you already own *Feast*, you don't need this book. But this is absolutely unique and standalone, and if you made me choose between the two cookbooks... I would cajole you into changing your mind. Sure I can have both! What kind of friend are you? It's pretty obvious that I'm in love with this cookbook. I'm sure you will feel the same way.

As a devotee of all things Nigella, I'm ashamed to say it; but I nearly missed out on this wonderful book. I read an early review that said it was a rehash of all things *Feast*, and I took the reviewers "word" for it. Fast forward to this week, picked it up at the discount book store to peruse (and feel smugly superior) and was heartbroken to think of all of the treats I'd missed out on for the past year. The majority of the recipes are new, and those that are revisits are offered with several new variations on a theme. Delightful and Deliciously seductive read, and one that carries through with her unique organizational capture structure (I like the seasonally festive gift options) A welcome

addition to my Nigella collection. Can't wait to make everything!!!

My mother-in-law gave me this lovely book for Christmas and it's everything I had hoped it would be. I am a huge Nigella fan -- love her writing, love the recipes, love the gorgeous photographs. I am not the one in charge of my family's Christmas meals, but it appears that the recipes would also be suitable for other holidays, entertaining, or just because they are good.

Nigella Lawson is a superb author, no matter what subject she is writing about. All of her books are great! However, I have always felt that she is at her best when writing about Christmas, thus, I feel that this is her finest outing. The Christmas chapters in "How to Eat", "Feast", and "Express" were great...but this book is a homerun! The recipes are perfect for the season, and make you really want to get in the kitchen and invite friends and family over to celebrate. As always, the recipes are delicious, and they all work like a charm! They are all easy to prepare, but look and taste like something really special. The other great thing about this book (as many other reviewers have pointed out) is that these recipes and menus really work for any entertaining occasion in the fall and winter. I have happily used this book for Halloween, Thanksgiving and New Year as well as Christmas! It makes entertaining for crowds a real and fun possibility, no matter what the occasion. The recipes in here are absolutely some of my favorite. The Effortless Home Cured Pork (brined in apple juice, maple syrup and spices) is so easy, and yet the meat turns out oozing with flavor and is so tender (no small feat for grocery store pork!) The Lamb and Date Tagine is exotically spiced and the perfect thing to have when you have guests. The Bourbon glazed Ribs and Party Poussins are also completely wonderful and the perfect things for easy holiday entertaining. In fact, the whole festive supper chapter is worth the price alone. There are SO many things that have worked their way into my families traditions. We follow the Christmas day timeline for Thanksgiving and we have the Ginger Glazed Ham, Perfect Roast Potatoes, Braised Red Cabbage, and Spruced Up Vanilla Cake for Christmas night. The baking and desserts are, as ever, the stuff of dreams. Mince Pies, Pecan Plus Pie, Prodigious Pavlova, and the Boozy Trifle are all not to be missed. The homemade presents chapter is now a major part of my holiday push. The Chili Jam, Corn Chow-Chow, and Red Beet Chutney are all popular gifts. Other favorites include; Chestnut Soup, Red Beet Orzotto, Choc Chip Chili, Egg-Nog Syllabub, Pumpkin Lasagne, Maple Roast Parsnips, Pancetta Sprouts, Boston Baked Beans, Cheese and Onion Strata, Girdlebuster Pie, Maple Cheesecake, and Macaroni and Cheese Deluxe. I could go on and on. The book is jam packed with recipes for any and all festive eating and I haven't yet done one that wasn't fun to prepare and

delicious to eat! If all of the above weren't enough, the book is a wonderful presentation. It is filled with lots of beautiful photos that not only show you what the finished dishes should look like, but fill you with seasonal cheer. Of course it is also filled with Nigella's charming, tangle of adjective heavy descriptions. This is a book that will serve you well over the years. The food and entertaining ideas included really help make the holidays special. It's true that this isn't a book you could use every day, but when you do use it, it feels kind of like a stolen treat. It's the special nature of the recipes and their intended use that makes this my favorite cook book. I highly recommend it!

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