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Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Michael and Robin Psaros & Family
Give Back This Christmas

By Stephanie Nikolopoulos

A21. Founded by Greek Australian Christine Caine, it is a nonprofit organization working to abolish twenty-first-century slavery – human trafficking and sex trafficking. A21 is a force for good in every country in which A21 works, and according to 1099, the Human-Trafficking Resource Line sponsored by A21 Greece in partnership with other service providers, “Greece is known as ‘the center of trafficking in Europe.’” A21 works with law enforcement, local governments, and NGOs to “free slaves and disrupt the demand” and provides informative resources such as medical attention to survivors of slavery, whose very name is translated from the word that means “salvation,” would go on to admonish His followers to feed the hungry, clothe the poor, and care for the sick. In the spirit of Christ’s love, offers emergency relief, education, and counseling. You can make donations directly to the nonprofit, and you may also purchase Liberty Scarves from A21 that were made with 100% Greek cotton: bags, aprons, oven mitts, and other accessories stitched by women who were once trafficked and are now free, and the money goes back to serving women in need. Beginning in the summer 2015, the bags were also made with 100% Greek cotton: bags, aprons, oven mitts, and other accessories stitched by women who were once trafficked and are now free, and the money goes back to serving women in need. Purchasing Liberty Scarves from A21 helps survivors of human trafficking.

Saint Basil Academy “is the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese home for children in need.” The academy provides a loving Christian environment where resident children are nurtured to adulthood. Located in Garrison, NY, the 501c3 entity where resident children are nurtured to adulthood. Located in Garrison, NY, the 501c3 entity where resident children are nurtured to adulthood.

The Smile of a Child provides “prevention activities, as well as provide medical preventative exami -

nations.” Located throughout Greece, it offers 24-hour “services for all children in Greece regardless of ethnicity and or religion.” The charity has been in existence for more than twenty years, and according to its website, “Over the last 23 years, on average IRCG has used 92% of every dollar for programs that help people in need. The remainder goes toward administration and fundraising costs.” According to its website, “Over the last 23 years, on average IRCG has used 92% of every dollar for programs that help people in need. The remainder goes toward administration and fundraising costs.”

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Threads of Hope海内外 women exiting forced labor. Greece is among the eleven countries

in which A21 works, and according to 1099, the

Hellas not only accepts donations but also sells

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Threads of Hope overseas women exiting forced prostitution through mentoring and by teaching them “valuable trade skills related to sewing, which we pray not only gives them a dignified source of income wherever they may go, but also an identity apart from their pasts.” A nonprofit civil partnership in Athens, sponsored by the char-
Best Wishes for Merry Christmas

Let’s not forget spiritual:
the birth of Christ
the Son of God.
Peace on Earth to all

The BEHRAKIS Family
By Eleni Sakellis

The Christmas season, as the song tells us, “the most wonderful time of the year.” It is a time to reconnect with our loved ones, to share joy and love, to experience the warmth and charitable feelings at no other time of the year. Memories of Christmases past often come to mind while we decorate the tree and bake Yiayia’s famous recipes passed down through the generations. For those of us in the United States, the Christmas season extends from the end of August and on through January and February by the relentless advertising and shopping. Seized by the memory of gifts that didn’t fit or weren’t quite to our taste.

The Christmas songs have been playing in some stores for months now and some may even be experiencing fatigue from all the shopping, going from party to party, and preparing for the big Christmas feast. It can be easy to lose sight of the important things like spending time with family and friends, giving back to the less fortunate, visiting a hospital or nursing home and offering a kind word to those forgotten people we often turn away from the rest of the year. It is easy to lose sight of the important things like spending time with family and friends, giving back to the less fortunate, visiting a hospital or nursing home and offering a kind word to those forgotten people we often turn away from the rest of the year.

Many people hide behind work or family obligations, making excuses about the lack of time and wishing they could do more.

Putting words into actions is not often a high priority. It is easier to throw money at a problem and say I did my good deed for the year, but it is the actions that count.

Our words mean nothing if we do the opposite of what we say: if we call ourselves Christians but don’t actually follow Christ and his teachings. He is “the reason for the season,” as they say, regardless of whether or not we have the bumper sticker, it makes sense to “keep Christ in Christmas.”

So while we are being crushed in the crowds of shoppers at the mall or gazing at a computer screen ordering gifts online, we should take a moment and think what would Jesus do? We should be aware of the crass materialism all around us, even if we feel we need to be a part of it. It should not consume us or our time. Getting or giving the perfect gift should be about love and not about things, since material possessions, objects, are left behind in this world.

The important things in life are precision. Helping those in need, giving to those in need, seeing a need and fulfilling it; that is the meaning of Christmas and the meaning of life.

The traditions and values that have shaped our way of life should be especially cherished and shared during the holidays, though we should also not lose sight of the true meaning behind them: worship and values. It is the best time of the year to share your faith or invite others to join you and realize how many people are out there who have the same faith, and are just looking for a way to share it and spread the love of Christ.

The spirit of Christmas should be with us all year, along with the faith and good will toward humanity associated with the season. These things should be a part of the traditions and values that we cherish.

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The spirit of Christmas should be with us all year, along with the faith and good will toward humanity associated with the season. These things should be a part of the traditions and values that we cherish.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

The Christmas Season is the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
Peace
On Earth

Best wishes for a Joyous Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!
Barry Goldwater famously said that “extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice.” That may be true, but so is this: extremism just to make a point is no virtue.

I speak out against political correctness as forcefully as anyone. To watch people tiptoe around the word “Christmas” for fear of offending a non-Christian – never mind that the vast majority of non-Christians, including most atheists, have no problem with it – is exactly what’s wrong with our country.

Yet some objectors to this type of extreme behavior respond with their own extremism: “in-your-face” Merry Christmas. These in-your-faceers, a good number of whom are Greek, boast that “if I walk into a store run by a Muslim or a Jew or a Hindu around Christmastime, I say ‘Merry Christmas’ to them on purpose!”

That is quite a Neanderthal way to behave in a civilized society, and is eminently un-Christian-like, which is particularly ironic, then, that it occurs during the Yuletide season.

Then, there are those who bend over backwards not to offend, and in doing so, manage to offend. You know, the ones who when leaving a December office party will say goodnight to three Christians and a Jew all standing together like this “Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays.”

What they don’t realize is they’re non-verbally communicating to the person of Jewish faith the following: “You’re a Jew, so clearly I’m not going to say Merry Christmas to you because it’s not your holiday. You have a different holiday. You’re different from the rest of us. And just in case you didn’t think about being different the whole time you’ve been at this party, I’ve just reminded you.”

A good time-and-place measure of when to say “Merry Christmas” might be whether it is on Christmas Day itself or a different day during the Christmas season.

On December 25 (apologies in advance to Old Calendrist, but for the purposes of this discussion, I’ll use the Gregorian date to keep it simple), saying “Merry Christmas” aloud should be acceptable in any circle. Of course, you can also say “Happy National Pumpkin Pie Day” because that holiday is also celebrated on the 25th of December – really, I’m not making it up, but that’s why it’s called “pumpkin pie” and “Thanksgiving” and “ happy,” because the latter looks like a forced adjustment from “Merry Christmas,” whereas “enjoy the holidays” is often said in conjunction with the “C-word.”

Besides, all of those nearly-universally celebrated holidays have a December season (in New Year’s Day – January 1 again, apologies to the Old Calendarists). Therefore, the “holiday” that are the object of your good wishes do not necessarily mean Christmas vs. Thanksgiving vs. Hanukkah vs. Ramadan vs. Kwanzaa vs. Yalda vs. Bodhi Day, but could mean Christmas and the New Year.

Whatever your preference, it should neither be “in your face” nor walking on eggshells. Something tells me that wouldn’t be the way Jesus wants his birthday to be celebrated.

Merry Christmas – Enjoy the Holidays!

Father Dimitrios Antokas, Presiding Priest, the Parish President Stephen Vlahos, the Board, Members, and the entire community wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year

The AHI Foundation
The AHI Business Network
The AHI Public Affairs Committee

wish all a Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year

AHI Headquarters
Hellenic House
1220 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036
Tel.: (202) 785-8430 • Fax: (202) 785-5178

By Dr. Constantinos E. Scaros

There is a Time and a Place to Say “Merry Christmas”
Wishing you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year

Maria Allwin
NEW YORK – The Axion Estin Foundation (AEF) Annual Christmas Reception was held on December 15 at the Consulate General of Greece in New York. The event celebrated the fourth year of Byzantine Pop-Ups at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and included a delightful Christmas Concert by the Westchester County Greek Youth Orchestra. The concert was led by Thanos Kokkalas, AEF President of the Board of Directors, and his wife Prostyria Niko Phoulakis, as well as many members of the community.

Kokkalas gave a brief introduction to the Christmas Concert noting the dedication of the students to their music studies and especially to Greek music heritage and tradition. The concert began with the Apostikion for Christmas followed by O Come All Ye Faithful in Greek and English, Christougena Protopougena, Silent Night, What Child is This, and the Kalanta for New Year’s and Christmas.

The second half of the concert featured Greek songs including Eva Ganas composed by Marios Gogouakis, Evan Rodios’s Mia Mia by Mentor Repoumanis, H Balada tou Ouri by Manos Hatzidakis, Nikos Gasou, Oiko Oeuner by Manos Hatzidakis, Dr. Prosteiria Poulakis by Domenis Yianis, the traditional Tziviera, and concluded with Manos Hatzidakis’ O Kyr Antonis.

The Westchester County Greek Youth Orchestra’s musicians are: Alexander Mulder (violin I), Manolis Huerta (violin I), George Kalyvas (violin I), Simos Dimas (violin II), Maria Haralampopoulos (violin II), Elaine Poulos (viola), Hannah Laskaris (viola), Dimitrios Haralampoulos (viola), Christina Huerta (piano), Achilles Siouzos (voice), Eleni Papastefanou (voice), Panagiotis Papastefanou (voice), and Elaina Poulos (voice).

The enchanting performance by the young musicians, and especially the impressive vocals by Eleni Papastefanou, Panagiotis Papastefanou, and Elaina Poulos, brought the Greek Christmas spirit to everyone in attendance. Knowing that the traditional songs are in good hands for the future made the audience proud.

The event was held under the auspices of the Consulate General of Greece in New York. The Axion Estin Foundation’s Mostly Orthros Festival is a highlight of the holiday season in New York featuring wonderful events and fascinating discussions to expand the public’s appreciation of the season and of Byzantine music and culture.

The AEF is a not-for-profit educational organization with a core mission of promoting Byzantine Music and the Arts. AEF gratefully acknowledged the lead support by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and The Rev. Peter N. Kyriakos Endowment Fund.

A very blessed and joyous Christmas and a healthy, peaceful and prosperous New Year

Archie D. Typadis, Esq.
(617) 243-9455

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year

Dr. John & Helen Collis and Family

As when God became man in Bethlehem the eternal Word became flesh, so in the Bible, the glory of God veils itself…

St. John Chrysostom

The Axion Estin Foundation Christmas Reception at Greek Consulate

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Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year

Dr. John & Helen Collis and Family
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Merry Christmas
and a Joyous and Prosperous
New Year

Dr. Sotirios J. Vahaviolos
Executive Chairman and Founder

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By Eleni Sakellis

WHITESTONE — The AHEPA Family Christmas Party was held on December 17 at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Whitestone. The celebration took place after the Divine Liturgy and was sponsored by the AHEPA District 6 Lodge and the Whitestone Pancretan Association. The children of St. Kalliopi’s Academy were in attendance at the first lunch, which also celebrated the feast day of St. Dionysios of Zakynthos, Archbishop of Greece. From 1992 to 2010 he served as Metropolitan of Patras and as President of Byzantine Music Education. He was trained under renowned master cantors Dimitrios Sourlantzis and Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas.

The Sofia & Angelo K. Tsakopoulos Family
Katina Tsakopoulos
Ambassador Eleni & Markos Kounalakis
Athena Tsakopoulos
Brianne & Kyriakos Tsakopoulos
Chrysa & George Demos
Alexandra & Alessandro Hillman

Sourlantzis and Stanitsas taught everyone in attendance for attending his name day celebration, especially AHEPA and Ted (Theodosios) Stamas- Empire District 6 Lodge District Governor, President Effie Karantonis, Church President Eleftherios Dramitinos for his lifelong contributions to Byzantine music education.

The foundation issued a commemorative journal in honor of Sourlantzis, who was present at the name day celebration held at Holy Cross Whitestone. The celebration was hosted by the Andreas T. Stamatis Foundation for his lifelong contributions to Byzantine music education. He was trained under renowned master cantors Dimitrios Sourlantzis and Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas.

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Fr. Dionysios Angastopoulos gave the blessing at the AHEPA Christmas Party luncheon in the Vasilios and Athanasia Kartsonis Hall at Holy Cross Church.

Fr. George Anastasiou, as well as guest chanter Photios Ketsetzis, who was present and spoke to everyone during the name day celebration at Holy Cross Whitestone. The celebration was hosted by the Andreas T. Stamatis Foundation for his lifelong contributions to Byzantine music education. He was trained under renowned master cantors Dimitrios Sourlantzis and Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

from the CATSIMATIDIS FAMILY
The Supreme President of the Order of AHEPA, Carl R. Hollister on behalf of his entire Supreme Lodge and all the officers and members of the Order of AHEPA, wishes everyone

Merry Christmas &

Happy New Year

SUPREME VICE PRESIDENT GEORGE E. LOUCAS
CANADIAN PRESIDENT CHRISTOS ARGIRIOU
SUPREME SECRETARY JIMMY KOKOTAS
SUPREME TREASURER GEORGE G. HORIATES
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&
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THE NATIONAL HERALD AND ALL OF OUR
GREEK AMERICAN FRIENDS

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and a
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The National Herald
And All Our Greek American Friends

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May You Welcome a Joyous, Healthy & Prosperous New Year

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Wishes Everyone a Merry Christmas and for all the next New Year
Peace, Love and Happiness

ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΚΑΛΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΕΣ
Yeuria, Euthxia και Πρόοδο για το ΝΕΟ ΕΤΟΣ 2018

SANTO DOMINGO, D.C.

TODAY'S NEWS

Christos Marafatsos
Supreme President

The President

Spyros G. Mezitis, MD, PhD
Endocrinology, Diabetes and Thyroid Diseases
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Byzantine Pop-Ups at Metropolitan Museum of Art

By Eleni Sakellis

NEW YORK – The Axion Estin Foundation Chanters performed the Byzantine Pop-Ups on December 13 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s (MMA) Medieval Sculpture Hall, Gallery 205, in front of the only full-scale, authorized painting of the Deesis (Christ, Virgin, and Saint John the Baptist) on the Metropolitan Museum’s wall. The original mosaic displayed on the south wall of the Byzantine Church of Hagia Sophia, it was commissioned by Justinian I in 547. The mosaic depicts Christ, enthroned between the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist, as the central figure of the cosmic order in the cosmos.

The Axion Estin Foundation’s Byzantine Pop-Ups are an international ensemble of singers in the Byzantine tradition, summons the monks to prayer and meals. Among those in attendance were Consul General of Greece Spyridoula-Ioanna Zostantoni to signal the start of the Byzantine Pop-Ups by striking the talanton. The performers were of Greek descent and received their musical training in Greece, Egypt, and Jerusalem. The performers, an international ensemble of singers in the Byzantine tradition, includes Milotis Eliafetie, Chateau Chalhoun, Nikolaos Aravooudis, Rivas Eliafetie, Agapantos Prokopiakos, Theodore Bishantzos, Nikolaos Bavo, and Byronnis Galanos. Katharina, Director of the Axion Estin Chanters, is the Byzantine Art’s artist in residence since 2013. This year marks his fourth appearance in the Byzantine Pop-Ups at the Metropolitan Museum of Art following three previous performances in the Byzantine Pop-Ups (December 2016, 2015, and 2014), as well as in the concert Landing East from Byzantium, March 2013) and Al-Quds: Jerusalem International Ensemble of Angels led by the William Spyropoulos School, both in New York. The Axion Estin Pop-Ups are supported by the Axion Estin Foundation (AEF), a non-profit educational organization with a core mission of promoting Byzantine Music and the Byzantine Pop-Ups are supported by the William Spyropoulos School, both in New York. The Axion Estin Foundation (AEF) is the primary supporter of the Byzantine Pop-Ups at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The dramatic setting with its moving and breath-taking images, hymns, and carols is offered in the Byzantine tradition, is a testament to the long history of the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition, spanning centuries-old Greek music manuscripts. The versions in Arabic and Church Slavonic reflect ongoing explorations on the use of the Church Slavonic language, intonated and in English and the Byzantine music tradition is interpreted by the best Byzantine Angelopoulos.

Among those in attendance were Consul General of Greece Spyridoula-Ioanna Zostantoni to signal the start of the Byzantine Pop-Ups by striking the talanton to begin the Byzantine Pop-Ups at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, followed by fellow chanter Nektarios Antoniou. Among the hymns performed were “Now they felt the true spirit of Christmas." There were three performances of the Byzantine Pop-Ups on December 13, 20 at 4, 5, and 6 PM and all were free with admission to the museum.

A Christmas celebration and the New Year with Byzantine Music in the United States. The Axion Estin Pop-Ups at the Metropolitan Museum of Art were provided by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Major support for Axion Estin Foundation’s Byzantine Pop-Up Concerts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art was also provided by The Rev. Peter N. Kyriakos Endowment Fund. AEF produces programming, events, and publications in a comprehensive effort to broaden understanding and audiences for Byzantine Music and the Byzantine Pop-Ups are supported by the William Spyropoulos School, both in New York. The Axion Estin Foundation (AEF) is the primary supporter of the Byzantine Pop-Ups at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

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Our Favorite Recipes for Christmas

By Eleni Sakellis

The Christmas feast can take on epic proportions in the Greek tradition. The classic Greek favorite dishes such as the Christmas feast, roasted meats, pastitsio, moussaka, spanakopita, a selection of cheeses, dips such as taramosalata, and a variety of olives, plus the American traditional foods like roasted turkey with stuffing. The following Christmas menu includes some of the favorites and some variations to try. The desserts during the holiday season can also go on for days, but no Christmas dessert table is complete without baklava, kourambiedes, melomakarona, and decorated sugar cookies. Festive desserts can be time-consuming to put together, especially when the oven is occupied with the savory foods for dinner. The following desserts can be made ahead of time and will delight your guests this Christmas. As always, we wish you all the best in your cooking endeavors and Merry Christmas!

Christmas Dinner Menu

Roasted Turkey with Gravy
Roasted Pork Loin
Baked Potatoes
Greek Salad with Herbs
Greek Cheese Course

Christmas Desserts

Baklava
Sugar Cookies
Gingerbread People

Roasted Turkey

1 turkey fresh or frozen, thawed according to package directions
4 lemons
4 carrots, peeled
4 celery stalks
Greek sea salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Remove the gizzards and any labels from the turkey. Rinse it with cold water and place in a large roasting pan. Juice the lemons and reserve the squeezed out rinds to stuff into the turkey’s cavity. Pour the lemon juice over the turkey. Add the carrots and celery rindle to the pan. Salt the turkey and add freshly ground pepper. Roast the turkey until golden brown according to the times on the package, turning the turkey twice, once when the breast starts to color and then again after the back is golden brown. After the turkey is done, ask and pepper the back of the turkey and continue roasting, if your oven has a convection roast setting, use it, but raise the oven temperature to 400 degrees. Allow the roasted turkey to rest at least 15-20 minutes before carving. Reserve the pan juices to make gravy.

Gravy

Reserved pan juices
2-4 tablespoons dry white wine
Water
2-3 tablespoons lemon juice to taste
5 tablespoons all-purpose flour
Salt and pepper

The recipe for gravy is more of a technique than a strict recipe. The amount you make often depends on the size of the turkey and how much liquid is left after roasting. Adjustments to the amount and flavor of the gravy are made with the addition of white wine, water and lemon juice. The thickener used in this method is all purpose flour. The recipe above is for a turkey...

Continued on page 24
Dr. Ahmed Mohiuddin, MD, FACC
President and CEO, Medical Center of Boston International, Inc.

TO ALL OF OUR GREEK FRIENDS IN AMERICA AND GREECE

WE WISH YOU A HEALTHY HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS HOLIDAY SEASON

The Medical Center of Boston International, Inc.

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Contact information:
Medical Center of Boston International, Inc., 411 Waverly Oaks Road, Suite 333, Waltham, MA 02452
Tel.: (781) 894-8858 • Fax: (781) 894-8856
Our Favorite Recipes for Christmas

Continued from page 22

Gravy troubleshooting: If your gravy is too thin, add a little more flour and continue simmering and stirring until the gravy thickens. Make sure you allow the gravy to cook thoroughly, at least ten minutes after adding additional flour in order to avoid an uncooked flour taste. If the gravy is too thick, add more of the reserved pan juices if you are left, or a little more water or lemon juice, taste and adjust the seasoning if needed.

Roasted Pork Loin

2 pounds pork loin
4-6 large baking potatoes
4-5 garlic cloves
1/2 cup dry white wine
Salt
Pepper

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Season the pork loin with salt and pepper. Roast in the oven for 45 minutes, turn the pork loin over and add the baking potatoes. Bake another 20 minutes, or until the pork is just done and the potatoes are tender. Serve with pan juices and gravy.

Baked Potatoes

4-6 large baking potatoes

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rinse the potatoes thoroughly. Pare dry with paper towels. Wrap in parchement paper and place them on a baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven for 1 hour, or until the potatoes are completely tender when pierced with a fork. Serve hot with sour cream and chives, or your favorite toppings.

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Merry Christmas
Best wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!
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In loving memory of our beloved husband, father and grandfather
Peter J. Pappas

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a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

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Depression, the Unwelcome Holiday Guest

By Aria Socratous

... exchange gifts and present, it’s possible that one should find the answer to what to do with all of the new presents one has received. The answer is to give them away to others...
Our Favorite Recipes for Christmas

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Greek Salad with Herbs

4 medium cucumbers, seeded 1 large tomato, seeded 1 large red onion, finely chopped 1/2 cup Greek olive oil, pitted and chopped 1 teaspoon salt 1 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper 4 tablepoons red wine vinegar 4 tablespoons Greek extra virgin olive oil 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley 1/2 cup chopped fresh tomatoes 1/2 cup crumbled feta, divided

In a large salad bowl, toss all the ingredients together to mix thoroughly. Serve as a side dish or vegetarian main course.

Greek Cheese Plate

Greek cheese is a great addition to the Christmas meal. You can set out a variety of your favorite cheeses with wonderful Greek olives, fresh tomatoes, and a mixed green salad to enjoy.

Try the diverse regional varieties available and the mild to sharper versions of kalamata, feta, and kalamata. Pair the cheese with wonderful Greek wines and enjoy.

Christmas Desserts

Baklava

2 pounds of chopped nuts, almonds, walnuts, pine nuts or a combination 2 cups unbleached flour 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon 1 teaspoon ground cloves (optional) 2 pounds phyllo dough 2 cups melted butter Whipped (optional)

For the syrup:

1 cup sugar 1 cup dark rum 1/2 cup water 1 large egg, beaten 1 two-inch piece lemon peel 1/3 cup fresh chopped fresh parsley 1/3 cup fresh chopped dill 1/2 cup crumbled feta, divided

In a mixing bowl, stir together the nuts, ground cinnamon, and the ground cloves, if using. Set aside. Brush the baking pan with some of the melted butter and place another sheet on top, brushing that one, and repeating until there are 5 or 6 sheets of phyllo in the pan. Sprinkle the two-spice mixture evenly over the bottom phyllo sheets, then top with a sheet of phyllo and brush with butter and continue until 5 phyllo sheets make up the top layer with the top one a whole one. Brush the top with the rest of the melted butter and sprinkle with the left over nut-spice mixture evenly.

Insert the prepared pan into a preheated 350 degree oven for about an hour or until the baklava is golden brown.

While the baklava is baking, prepare the syrup. Boil the sugar and the water in a saucepan for five minutes. Add the honey, the juices, lemon peel, and lemon pod and simmer for another 5 minutes. Remove the syrup from the heat. Let it cool to room temperature and pour the syrup over the baklava while it is still hot. Allow to cool for 5-10 minutes before rolling out. Roll each half on a lightly-floured work surface to 1/8 inch thickness. Cut out shapes with cookie cutters or any desired shape. Do not cut the edges of the croutes are lightly browned, pouring the purees over baklava through baking paper to ensure even baking. Cool on the cookie sheet for 2 minutes, remove from the sheet, and place on a wire rack to cool completely.

In the mixing bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, beat the butter and the shortening for 5-10 seconds. Add the sugar, brown sugar, and egg and beat until fluffy. Stir in the honey and the coffee. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture and beat until combined. Add the nuts and the spices and mix well. Roll the dough on a floured surface to a 1/4 inch thickness. Cut out gingerbread shapes onto the greased cookie sheet one inch apart and bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 8-10 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned, rotating the pans about halfway through baking. Cool for 2 minutes on the cookie sheet, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Pipe frosting between the shapes. The dough can also be chilled overnight if preferred. Cut out designs with Christmas tree, stocking, or other shapes, if preferred. A sharp knife can also be used to cut the gingerbread people headfirst, if desired. Place the shapes on a greased cookie sheet one inch apart and bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 7-8 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned, rotating the pans about halfway through the baking process. Cool for 2-3 minutes on the cookie sheet, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Pipe frosting between the shapes. Tuck the decorating icing into the gingerbread people’s hands and decorate with colored sugar or add candies.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
Merry Christmas

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