

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS – 2 Weeks to Go

Wow, can you believe we only have two weeks now to Christmas? It always seems so far away, and then suddenly it is upon us. Many people complain when you start talking and thinking about Christmas in November, but my guess is they aren't the ones who do most of the shopping and preparations!!!

Presents: How are you getting on here? Hopefully you are well on top of it, and only a few left to get, and with many shops reopened this week, remember to shop local and stay safe when you are out and about.

Christmas Cards: Assuming you got your cards and parcels off to Australia, the US and other parts of the world, now it is time to think of the ones closer to home. Remember the last day for cards to Europe is 17th, UK is 18th and Republic of Ireland is 21st December. We still have Lakers cards available in our online shop www.lakers.ie/shop if you need any.

Plan your Dinner Menu: It would be a good idea to sit down now and totally



plan your meals for over the Christmas. Are you having Turkey, or maybe Goose, or a Vegetarian or Vegan option? What side dishes do you like? Brussel Sprouts (fried with bacon bits is the best!), Red Cabbage, Roast Potatoes? And what is your preferred dessert? Christmas Pudding, Sherry Trifle, Ice Cream? Once you decide what you want to have on the table, it is much easier to write a comprehensive shopping list and avoid panic buying! And if there is

anything you can prepare in advance and freeze, get that done this week. But also, do remember, it is just a slightly bigger Sunday dinner, please don't worry too much. And if someone's reference is for turkey with tomato ketchup, let them! If you want to make a Birds Trifle for dessert – go for it. Whatever makes life easier.

Cooking & Baking: This week I have a recipe for Mince pies that you can make together at home, so they are good fun. <https://youtu.be/DWBruzOfRvE> They freeze really well. You pop them into freezer bags in 6s or 12's and they will defrost quickly when you want them over the Christmas. If you want to just buy your pastry for making these, that is perfectly fine. But if you want to have a go yourself, have



a look back at my video for making pastry and apple tart here on YouTube <https://youtu.be/J89YEvoerhc>

Batteries: This is a good time to stock up on batteries. We seem to use an awful lot at this time of the year. They go into sets of lights, those Christmas decorations that sing! And there may be presents that Santa brings that need batteries, so we are best keeping a supply in the house. You may need AA, AAA and even C cell batteries, so check them out.

Table Settings: Hopefully we will be able to have some family round for dinner this Christmas, so just make sure you have a table that can seat everyone, enough chairs, crockery, cutlery and glasses. If you are like me, half of your knives and forks can disappear during the year. Check now so that if you need to buy anything new, you still have time.

Self Care: Once we get into the last week of preparations, we don't usually have time for ourselves. So maybe this week is a good time to think about yourself and take some time out to relax. Whatever it is that makes you feel good. Maybe you have an appointment at the hairdressers, get out for a coffee with some friends who live locally, get your nails done (Ladies and gents), take a day for a long hike and fresh air. Whatever it is that you like to do, well - go and do it. 😊

See you all next week for our last few tasks.