

# Enjoy December

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO ENJOYING AMERICA : DECEMBER 2012 ISSUE: 7

HAPPENINGS • FITNESS • NUTRITION • FOOD • DRINK • MUSIC • TRAVEL • HOME • MOVIES

THIS ISSUE IS  
BROUGHT TO YOU  
BY:



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Top U.S.  
NYE  
Destinations

... AND MORE!

# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN DECEMBER

DEC. 4:  
NATIONAL  
COOKIE DAY



DEC. 8:  
HANUKKAH  
BEGINS



DEC. 17:  
WRIGHT  
BROTHERS'  
FIRST FLIGHT  
(1903)

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

# IN



DEC. 21:  
WINTER SOLSTICE

DEC. 24:  
NATIONAL  
EGGNOG DAY

# DECEMBER



DEC. 25:  
CHRISTMAS DAY

DEC. 31:  
NEW YEAR'S EVE

# FITNESS TOP 10 HOLIDAY RUNS IN THE U.S.



**While December conjures up thoughts of cookies, eggnog, and buckle-busting holiday meals, it's also a month with some of the most fun holiday-themed races of the year!**

After a season of indulgence (many of us are still working off Thanksgiving dinner), you might just need that extra push to get some much needed exercise. This year, dust off that old Santa suit, and participate in a holiday run in your area.



Kirkland, WA  
10th Annual 12K's of  
Christmas Holiday Run

San Diego, CA  
Hot Buttered 10K Run

Denver, CO  
A Christmas Carol  
Classic 5K/10K

Phoenix, AZ  
Frosty's Run – 10 Mile  
Run & 2 Mile Fun Run/Walk

St. Paul, MN  
Jumping Jack Frost 5K

Chicago, IL  
Santa Hustle 5K

Nashville, TN  
32nd Annual Rudolph's  
Red Nose Run

New York, NY  
The Jingle Bell 5K  
Run/Walk for Arthritis

Burlington, NJ  
Race for the Hungry  
Holiday 5K

Boston, MA  
Bill Rodgers  
Jingle Bell Run

# FITNESS SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS IN 2013

**DO YOU TYPICALLY HAVE A HARD TIME KEEPING YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS? MAKE A CHANGE THIS YEAR! THESE TIPS MAY JUST HELP KEEP YOU ON TRACK TO A NEW YOU IN 2013!**

## Get Specific

Goals that are too vague - for example "be healthy" or "lose weight" - are generally harder to work towards, let alone achieve. Break down larger resolutions into smaller action items that you can complete on a daily or weekly basis. For example, if your resolution is to "go to the gym," commit yourself to going 2-3 times per week for a certain class or for an exact amount of time. These specific mini-accomplishments will keep you on track and help you meet your larger goal.

## Write Down Your Motivations

So why are you giving up fast food lunches anyway? To lower your cholesterol? Save a few bucks? Avoid the afternoon energy slump? Thinking about why you are making a change will help you avoid temptation in the moment. Write down these specific motivations and place them in a visible location, such as on your office desk or refrigerator. You can also include quotes and pictures to further inspire!

**FIND A FRIEND WHO HAS A COMMON NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION AND MAKE A COMMITMENT TO ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER ALONG THE WAY.**



## Share Your Goal

Reach out and find a friend who has a common New Year's resolution and make a commitment to encourage each other along the way. If a buddy system isn't your thing, simply telling your resolution to a friend can help create accountability and further motivate you.

## Get Mentally Prepared

While resolutions are never easy to keep, focusing on the negative will only program you for failure. Get an early start on reframing your thoughts in a positive way so that you become mentally sound. For example, replace "I hate going to the gym" with "I like feeling strong after I complete a workout."

## Get Started Early

Why wait until January when you can get started now? Using the month of December to ease into changes will help you to avoid roadblocks. Also, you just might see some motivating results ahead of schedule!



# NUTRITION DELICIOUS DECEMBER PRODUCE

## Seasonal Vegetables & Fruits

The leaves may have fallen from the trees, but that doesn't mean that you can't find seasonal produce in your local grocery store. Seasonal foods are tastier, fresher, more nutritious, and better for the environment. Plus, they give you an excuse to try new foods and experiment with seasonal recipes!



Artichokes  
Beets  
Belgian Endive  
Broccoli  
Brussel Sprouts  
Cabbage



Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Kale  
Leeks  
Mustard Greens  
Mushrooms



Parsnips  
Shallots  
Sweet Potatoes  
Winter Squash



Grapefruit  
Oranges  
Pears  
Pomegranates  
Tangelos  
Tangerines



### Seasonal Recipe: Apple-Cranberry Jam

**Yields:** 3 cups

#### What you'll need:

1 (16 ounce) bag fresh cranberries  
2 apples, peeled, cored and grated (Fuji, Gala and/or Golden Delicious)  
1 cup sugar  
1/2 cup fresh orange juice (about 2 whole oranges)  
1 teaspoon grated orange or lemon zest  
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

#### Directions:

In a medium sized saucepan over medium heat, dissolve the sugar in the orange juice.

Stir in the cranberries and the rest of the ingredients and cook until the cranberries start to pop and the apples soften (about 15 minutes).

Remove from heat and place mixture in a bowl. Jam will thicken as it cools.

Serve on toast or store in sterilized glass jars.

# FOOD CLASSIC HOLIDAY COOKIE RECIPES

## Old Fashioned Gingerbread Cookies

Yields: 36 Cookies

Let's be honest, one of the most anticipated (and scrumptious) parts of the holiday season is baking cookies. Whether you're giving or receiving them, classic holiday cookies are sure to warm the heart and create sweet memories.

### What you'll need:

5 to 5 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
3/4 tsp salt  
2 tsp ground ginger  
1 tbsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg  
1/2 tsp ground cloves  
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 cup packed light brown sugar  
1 large egg, room temperature  
1 cup unsulfured molasses  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
Cookie cutters (gingerbread man, stars, etc.)  
Icing (optional; see page 6 for icing recipe)

### Directions:

- Combine flour, baking soda, salt, and spices in a large bowl and set aside.
- In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the butter, brown sugar, and egg on medium until smooth. Add the molasses and beat until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the vanilla. Stir in the flour mixture 1 cup at a time, blending until smooth. The dough should gather into a semi-firm mass; if it's not firm, add another 1/4 to 1/2 cup flour (but not enough to make it crumbly).
- Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface. Divide in half. Flatten into disks and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or up to 1 week.
- After dough has been chilled, preheat oven to 350° F. On a floured surface, roll each disk to 1/8 inch thick. Use a cookie cutters to make shapes. Transfer them to a large, parchment-lined baking sheet, spacing them about 1 inch apart.
- Bake until firm to the touch, about 12 minutes. Cool slightly before transferring to a rack.
- Decorate with icing, if desired.





# Traditional Sugar Cookies

**Yields: 60 Cookies**

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## What you'll need:

1 1/2 cups butter, softened  
2 cups white sugar  
4 eggs  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
5 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp salt  
Cookie cutters  
Icing (optional)

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## Directions:

In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in the eggs and vanilla, then stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt. Cover, and chill dough for at least one hour (or overnight).

Preheat oven to 400° F. Roll out the dough on floured surface 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Cut into shapes with holiday themed cookie cutters. Place cookies 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets.

Bake 6 to 8 minutes in preheated oven. Cool completely before decorating with icing or serving.

## To make icing:

**Sift 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar into a small bowl. Whisk in 3 to 4 tablespoons milk, water, or lemon juice, 1 tablespoon at a time, until smooth and thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. If it's too thin, whisk in more sugar; if it's too thick, add more liquid. Add food coloring if desired.**

# DRINK DECEMBER 24TH: NATIONAL EGGNOG DAY

## HIGH- OCTANE HOLIDAY EGGNOG

**Yields:  
10-12  
servings**

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Cinnamon  
Sugar  
6 large eggs  
2 large egg yolks  
1/2 cup and additional 1/2 tbsp sugar  
1/4 tsp salt  
4 cups whole milk  
1 cup brandy, bourbon, or dark rum  
1 tbsp vanilla extract  
1/2 tsp nutmeg, plus extra for garnish  
3/4 cup heavy cream, chilled

### DIRECTIONS

Whisk the eggs, yolks, sugar, and salt together in a large saucepan. Slowly whisk in the milk until well combined. Cook the mixture over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 25 minutes.

**\*Tip: if you have an instant-read thermometer, use it to make sure the mixture hits 180°F, but do not allow it to exceed that temperature.**

Strain the egg mixture into a large bowl and stir in the liquor, vanilla, and nutmeg. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate until well chilled, about 3 hours.

Just before serving, whip the cream to soft peaks. Gently fold the whipped cream into the egg mixture, using a rubber spatula, until incorporated. Serve in a martini or cocktail glass. Sprinkle with nutmeg before serving.

**Optional:** Garnish with a cinnamon stick.

# MUSIC BEYOND THE CLASSICS: YOUR DECEMBER HOLIDAY PLAYLIST

Love it or hate it, the month of December brings 24/7 holiday-themed music chiming in from all directions. Since you're sure to get more than your fair share of the classics, here's a list of some unique renditions for your holiday playlist that includes both modern twists and old favorites.

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"I WISH IT WAS CHRISTMAS TODAY"

JULIAN CASABLANCAS

---

"PEACE ON EARTH / LITTLE DRUMMER BOY"

DAVID BOWIE AND BING CROSBY

---

"WONDERFUL CHRISTMASTIME"

PAUL MCCARTNEY

---

"FATHER CHRISTMAS"

THE KINKS

---

"GIVE PEACE A CHANCE"

JOHN LENNON

---

"BLUE CHRISTMAS"

ELVIS PRESLEY

---

"ANOTHER CHRISTMAS SONG"

STEPHEN COLBERT

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"THE CHIPMUNK SONG (CHRISTMAS DON'T BE LATE)"

THE CHIPMUNKS

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"CHRISTMAS (BABY PLEASE COME HOME)"

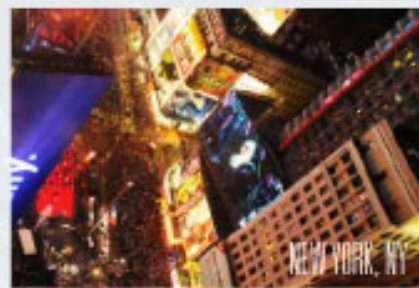
U2

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"HANUKKAH SONG"

ADAM SANDLER

# TRAVEL TOP U.S. NEW YEAR'S EVE DESTINATIONS



NEW YORK, NY

## **Times Square: New York City, NY**

Join Ryan Seacrest, host of New Year's Rockin' Eve, and thousands of others as they count down the seconds to the famous ball drop in Times Square. Merrymakers transform the metropolitan mecca into an all-night party scene.

## **The Strip: Sin City, Las Vegas, NV**

If you're looking for all-out excess to ring in the New Year, Sin City will not disappoint. The Las Vegas Strip becomes a pedestrian-only party with street performances, showgirls, and over-the-top pyrotechnics.

## **San Diego, CA**

The party gets started early on December 30 with the Holiday Bowl game and the Big Bay Balloon Parade, and continues through New Year's Eve with fireworks along the San Diego Bay. Spectators can enjoy views from Fisherman's Village and Burton Chace Park, but the best views are from the boats!



DENVER, CO

## **Scottsdale, AZ**

Scottsdale's annual NYE Ultimate Block Party takes over 3rd and 5th Avenues, and your ticket will get you access to live music, bars, midnight fireworks and an all-night party with over 7,000 people.

## **New Orleans, LA**

In New Orleans, the party gets started after midnight in Jackson Square when Baby Bacchus falls from the top of Jax Brewery. Partygoers can enjoy the fireworks over the Mississippi River and then move towards Bourbon Street where the celebrations continue until sunrise!

## **Denver, CO**

The Mile High City boasts downtown concerts and a beautiful fireworks display that sparkles over the city skyline and surrounding mountainscape.

## **Boston, MA**

First Night Boston, a huge arts and street festival held on December 31st, features ice sculptures, parades and midnight fireworks that are sure to impress! For a more exclusive party scene, head to the Resolution Ball, an annual NYE party event for the city's trendy, young professionals.



SEATTLE, WA

## **Chicago, IL**

The New Year's Eve Chicago celebration begins at 10pm in Grant Park with music and a dramatic countdown to the spectacular fireworks show at Navy Pier on Lake Michigan. From there, head downtown where bars and clubs will be celebrating all night long!

## **Space Needle: Seattle, WA**

This famous landmark becomes the center of a spectacular fireworks display launched from 75 surrounding locations. You can enjoy the show from the ground, but the best view is within the Space Needle itself - as long as you can brave the one minute long elevator ride to the top!

## **Disney World: Orlando, FL**

Looking for a NYE destination that the whole family can enjoy? Ring in the New Year with Mickey and Minnie in Epcot or the Magic Kingdom where you'll be surrounded by spectacular fireworks, dancing and your favorite character performances.

# HOLIDAY LIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

**Rockefeller Center in New York isn't the only place that sparkles during the month of December. Within the U.S. and around the world, cities showcase spectacular light displays and tinsel galore during the holiday season.**

## **Vienna, Austria**

Garlands of bulbs adorn Vienna's exquisite old world architecture, and shops are dressed with pine branches and silk ribbons. Giant chandeliers lead to St. Stephen's Cathedral, and in Rathausplatz, the City Hall Square glows like a fairytale castle surrounding the Christmas market.

## **Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen**

This world famous family amusement park and garden becomes an enchanted universe covered with bright lights and teeming with holiday goods. Visitors can get a fabulous view of the park's decorated structures, including the popular restaurant The Japanese Pagoda, by riding on the world's oldest running roller coaster, built in 1914.

## **Brussels, Belgium**

The "Winter Wonders" or "Plaisirs d'Hiver" season animates the heart of Brussels during the holidays. The Grand Place features breathtaking sound and light shows, an illuminated Christmas tree, as well as a large European Christmas market that extends throughout the cobbled streets surrounding the square.

## **Callaway Gardens, Georgia U.S.A.**

For over 20 years, visitors have enjoyed the 8 million lights that comprise Callaway Gardens *Fantasy in Lights*. The beautiful wooded landscape is adorned with holiday displays, including the *March of the Toy Soldiers* as well as moving lights that tell the story of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*.

## **Paris, France**

The "City of Lights" lives up to its name during the holidays, when the Avenue des Champs-Élysées glows with over a million lights. Visitors can enjoy nightly fireworks as well as the famous sparkling lights and animated window displays at Galeries Lafayette on the Boulevard Haussmann.

## **Gothenburg, Sweden**

This cozy river town becomes aglow with Santa Lucia's candles and over 5 million lights that glitter on the buildings and Christmas trees at Liseberg Amusement Park's Christmas Market. Visitor can sip Glögg and listen to choir music while strolling down the Lane of Light that leads to the harbor.

## **Hong Kong, China**

Looking for an over-the-top experience? In a city where the malls try to outdo each other with lighting displays, Hong Kong will be sure to overwhelm you with both glitz and glam. Enjoy Main Street in Disneyland and outdoor illuminated art exhibits, as well as a giant Swarovski crystal tree in the city center.

## **Gramado, Brazil**

This small mountain town has been transforming itself into an incredible winter wonderland with a two month long Natal Luz, or Christmas of Light, celebration since 1986. Activities include puppet theaters, holiday operas, light shows and a grand parade featuring skating angels and snow queens.

## **Niagara Falls, Ontario**

With all of its natural beauty and wonder, the Winter Festival of Lights in Niagara Falls may be the most dramatic holiday spectacle in the world. Over 3 million colored lights and more than 125 animated light displays illuminate a 5K route along Niagara Parkway, and transform the already stunning landscape into a magical winter wonderland.

# HOME HOLIDAY DECORATING MADE EASY



## Set the Mood

Candlelight always creates a warm ambiance and adding a natural element, like cranberries (in season by the way), can create a more festive arrangement. Simply take a basic colored rectangular plate and spread out a single layer of cranberries. Then, put three tea light candles lengthwise on the tray (or as many as you need to fit the size of the plate). Place the plate on a mantle or in the powder room for a warm accent.

## Don't Hide the Presents

Get the gifts out of the closets and use them as décor elements up until the time they are opened. Stacking presents together in little vignettes around the fireplace and living room creates bursts of color and visual points of interest.

## SET THE SCENE

### Time A Holiday Bloom

Paperwhite Narcissus flowers make wonderful decorations for the home. Plant the bulbs five weeks before your desired bloom date in a decorative glass bowl or vase. To plant, simply fill the container with about four inches of gravel, marbles, or glass beads and insert the bulbs - three or four per vase, space permitting. Secure the bulbs in place on top using the gravel (don't cover them entirely) and then add enough water to just touch the bottoms of the bulbs.

### Think White

Creating a white background will allow your holiday details to really pop. For example, using crisp white dishes and linens will showcase the color and texture in your holiday meals.

### Display Your Holiday Cards

Not sure what to do with last season's stack of holiday cards? Instead of throwing them away, create a card shutter display by painting a pair of discarded shutters in a seasonal color and attaching the cards to the shutters with wooden clothespins.



# DIY HOLIDAY WREATHS

## ALL WREATHS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL!

Since more traditional wreaths are what's expected, why not get creative and mix it up this year? Wreaths are simple to make (most supplies can be found or purchased at a craft store) and they are sure to brighten up your home during the holidays.

### Step 1

Start with a frame (can be wooden, foam, square, round, etc.)

### Step 2

Spray paint the base in a desired color or wrap the frame with a decorative ribbon and glue the ends to secure it in place (so that the base is not visible).

### Step 3

Follow the instructions for one of the wreath ideas below.

### Step 4

Allow 30 minutes for all of the items set/dry.

### Step 5

Attach a thick ribbon to the top backside of the wreath (tie in a bow if desired) and hang!

## Winterberry Branch Wreath

Cut approximately 40 branches of winterberries, each 10-15 inches long. Using one branch at a time, with green florist wire, attach the larger branches to a 14-16 inch wire frame, overlapping them one by one. Continue to add the smaller branches until the wreath is full. If needed, you can use a glue gun to keep in place.

## Cinnamon Stick Wreath

Use a glue gun to attach cinnamon sticks to a flat, circular wooden or foam frame. Continue to layer them on top of each other (2-3 layers) so that they fill out and radiate out from the center. This wreath also adds a nice holiday scent to your home!

## Cranberry Wreath

Start with a circular frame and enough cranberries to cover it completely. Using one berry at a time, affix them directly to the frame with a glue gun and continue until it is completely covered. It may be time consuming, but the end result will be sure to impress your holiday visitors!

## Nutcracker Wreath

You'll need enough nuts (in shells) to cover your wreath frame (walnuts, hazelnuts, brazil nuts, pecans etc.). Working in 5 inch long segments at a time and starting with the smaller nuts, glue them to the center or inside of the wreath. Use the larger nuts as you build outwards. Repeat until the wreath looks full and there are no gaps.



# LIFESTYLE THROW AN OFFICE WHITE ELEPHANT EXCHANGE

Not sure what to do with that gnome figurine that your uncle gave you last year? A white elephant gift exchange is a great way to rid yourself of a lingering tacky item and have fun with your work colleagues. Re-gift a kitsch or tasteless item in your life - and invariably gain a new one!

## 1. SET THE DATE.

Get a group of at least 6 people to participate and set a date for the exchange.

## 2. ESTABLISH THE RULES.

Let everyone know in advance whether this will be a re-gift exchange (recommended) or a purchased gift exchange, and then decide on a theme if you want to have one (for example: bad t-shirts, books, decorative objects, etc.).

## 3. FIND YOUR GIFT.

They often hide in the back of closets! After determining your gift, wrap it up and bring to the gift exchange. Don't tell anyone what it is!



## 4. DETERMINE GIFT ORDER.

At the exchange, everyone pulls a number from a hat. Count how many people are in the gift exchange and place that many numbers in a bowl (if you have 10 people you'll use numbers 1 through 10).

## 5. DRAW A NUMBER.

Everyone draws a number, and the person that chooses number 1 selects a gift and opens it.

## 6. STEAL OR KEEP GIFTS.

The next person (number 2) will make a choice of whether to open a new gift from the table or to "steal" an already opened gift.\* If they steal a gift, the person with the stolen gift has an option of stealing from someone else, or opening a new gift. Go to the next person in order and repeat.

\*NOTE: A gift can only be stolen 3 times and you cannot steal the gift that was just stolen from you.

## 7. CONTINUE THE EXCHANGE.

The exchange continues until every gift has been opened and the last person opens their gift.

# MOVIES NEW FLICKS IN DECEMBER

## HYDE PARK ON HUDSON

Genre(s): Drama

Release Date: December 7

Starring: Bill Murray, Laura Linney, Olivia Williams

Based on a true story, this drama tells the story of when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt hosted the reigning English monarch for their first ever visit to America in 1939. Told through the eyes of FDR's close neighbor, the unforgettable weekend reveals profound understandings of both domestic and international affairs.

## DINO TIME - 3D

Genre(s): Animation, Comedy, Family

Release Date: December 7

Starring: Rob Schneider, Melanie Griffith, William Baldwin

This kid-friendly flick tells the story of three curious children who accidentally turn on a time machine and then find themselves millions of years in the past - in the nest of a mother Tyrannosaurus Rex!

## THE HOBBIT: A MOST UNEXPECTED JOURNEY

Genre(s): Action, Fantasy

Release Date: December 14

Starring: Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage

From *Lord of the Rings* director Peter Jackson comes the adventure of Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit who sets off on a dramatic quest to reclaim the lost Dwarf Kingdom of Erebor from the dragon Smaug.

## ZERO DARK THIRTY

Genre(s): Drama, War

Release Date: December 19

Starring: Chris Pratt, Jessica Chastain, Joel Edgerton

From the producers of *The Hurt Locker* comes an intense and dramatic film that follows the story of the Special Ops SEAL Team Six as they hunt down Osama bin Laden.

## THIS IS FORTY

Genre(s): Comedy, Drama, Family

Release Date: December 21

Starring: Paul Rudd, Leslie Mann, Jason Segel

Considered the sequel to *Knocked Up*, this funny comedy follows up on Pete and Debbie and exposes the couple's challenges with their current lifestyle and getting older.

## LES MISERABLES

Genre(s): Musical, Drama, Family

Release Date: December 25

Starring: Suraj Sharma, Irfan Khan, Gérard Depardieu, Adil Hussain, Tobey Maguire

The popular stage musical, based on the 1862 novel by Victor Hugo, hits the big screen this holiday season. This timeless and bittersweet tale of survival of the human spirit, set in 19th century France, follows ex-prisoner Jean Valjean who agrees to care of the daughter of a factory worker.

## DJANGO UNCHAINED

Genre(s): Drama, Western

Release Date: December 25

Starring: Jamie Foxx, Don Johnson, Leonardo DiCaprio

Quentin Tarantino's latest movie takes place in the South two years before the Civil War, and follows the story of a slave who engages with an unorthodox bounty hunter looking for the murderous Brittle brothers. In exchange for his freedom, Django agrees to help him, however, their partnership extends well beyond the initial deal.



# Enjoy December

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