

Hot or Cold ...

These holiday treat are sure to satisfy

When it's cold outside, start up the fireplace, get your favorite slippers on, wrap up in

a warm blanket and snuggle on the couch with this delicious White Hot Chocolate. Find more recipes at Culinary.net.

White Hot Chocolate

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups Half & Half
- 2/3 cup white chocolate baking pieces
- 1 3 inch cinnamon stick
- 1/8 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/4 tsp almond extract
- Ground Cinnamon (optional)
- Whipped Cream (optional)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan combine 1/4 of the half & half, white chocolate baking pieces, cinnamon stick and nutmeg.

Stir over low to medium heat until white chocolate is melted.

Add remaining half & half. Stir and cook until heated through. Remove from heat. Discard cinnamon stick.

Add in vanilla and almond extract. Stir until mixed through.

Pour into your favorite mug(s). Top with whipped cream and sprinkle with ground cinnamon.

Recipe adapted from Better Homes and Gardens Cookbook.

Try this healthy spin on a classic cookie treat.



Gingerbread Cookie Shake

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups vanilla protein shake
- 1 tbsp. molasses
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 frozen banana

- 1 tbsp. chia seeds
- 1/2 cup ice

DIRECTIONS

Add all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. Serve.



Celebrate The Miracle!



As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, we're reminded of the many blessings we enjoy, including the opportunity to serve good people like you.

Merry Christmas

From Jennifer & Ladd Pulliam and all the staff at



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A closer look at traditions of the season ...

CHRISTMAS BELLS

Church bells ring for many special services, including Christmas mass. During Christmas midnight mass in the Catholic Church, the altar bells may be rung while the priest says the "Gloria." Bells are part of caroling, and jingling bells are associated with sleighs and Santa's reindeer. Christmas is rife with traditions that date back ages.

Exploring the magical colors of



Special to the Herald

Decorations adorning homes and businesses in the familiar colors of red and green are popular come the holiday season. Even gift wrap, greeting cards and clothing tend to lean toward red and green as the holiday season hits full swing. It is difficult to think of Christmas without envisioning everything awash in these popular colors, broken up only by the inclusion of gold, white or silver accents.

The colors of Christmas are often taken for granted, and many celebrants are unaware of how these colors became symbols of the holiday season and why they remain so to this day.

Several theories exist as to why red and green became the hallmarks of Christmas. Prior to the arrival of Christianity, many cultures viewed the color green as the symbol of life. It is believed that, during harsh winters, evergreen trees were cut down and brought indoors to symbolize that life still exists

and thrives despite the cold and darkness of winter. Other pagan holidays featured the use of green, red and gold, including the festival of Yule.

As Christianity spread across Europe and eventually other parts of the world, red and green were linked to Jesus Christ. Green still represented life, but now this was the eternal life offered by Christ. Red was said to symbolize sacrifice, namely the blood of Jesus when he died on the cross. Some Christians believe that Jesus wore a crown of holly thorns whose berries were originally white. As Jesus' blood touched the berries, they turned red.

Some theorize that the red of the holiday season represents the apples on the tree of paradise in the Garden of Eden. Around the 14th century, the faithful would put on Paradise Plays on December 24 to share the story of creation with those who could not read. It is nearly impossible to find a fruit-bearing apple tree in the winter, so a pine tree adorned with red apples was

used instead. Bishops also wore red robes, further tying the color red to religious masses and celebrations.

Gold is frequently used in holiday decorations as well. Gold can represent the sun and light, both important ways to ward off the dark winter. In addition, gold was one of the gifts brought to baby Jesus, making it a color of significance within the Christian faith.

Red and green poinsettias also are a symbol of the holiday season, but they didn't start the colorful tradition. Poinsettias are a relatively recent addition to Christmas symbolism, as they were only first introduced to America in 1828, when they were brought back from Mexico by Joel Poinsett.

The holiday season is filled with many different colors that brighten up homes and businesses. Combined with the many twinkling lights used on displays, red and green decorations can add vitality to the dark days of December.



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We wish you all the best at the holidays and all year.



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