

THE FILM & TV SUBSTACKERS PRESENT:

A CHRISTMAS FILM GUIDE

FEAST





INSTRUCTIONS

watch one (or more!) of the holiday films we reviewed,

enjoy a holiday treat while you watch with one of our themed recipes,

pour one of our holiday drinks and let us know what you thought about the movie!

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**HOME (1990)
ALONE**

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*Flaming German
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Eggnog

Bailey's
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PIZZA

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A BAG OF
CHESTNUTS



Welsh rarebit &
Château d'Yquem

Spicy Christmas Rum
Sour



Boozy Cocoa



Submitted by:

Beth Lisogorsky

@Beth's TV & Film

Recommendations



IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

(A Holiday "Feels" Film)

*Follow me on
Letterboxd!*

***“You sent for me, sir
Yes, Clarence. A man down on earth needs our help.
Splendid. Is he sick?
No, it’s worse. He’s discouraged.”***

This opening dialogue between Clarence, the angel, and God in the iconic Frank Capra classic 1946 holiday film sets the heavy yet hopeful tone for our protagonist, Jimmy Stewart's George Bailey, in this life-affirming tearjerker.

George Bailey’s redemption arc is inspirational without falling into a saccharine, life-is-grand trope, which is common for post-World War 2 film fare. The film masterfully weaves together the harsh realities of economic depression, pre-vaccine health challenges, war tragedies, and class disparities, creating a timeless tale of resilience. The triumph of small-town America and the middle class over the greedy is a tale of all times, and its values are well represented.

George Bailey isn’t just every man; he’s every person. Or what every person should aspire to be, provided they have Donna Reed by their side.

Feuerzangenbowle Flaming German Rum Punch

***in a nod to Clarence's bar drink request of "Flaming rum punch and mulled wine"
(I dare you to say the drink's first word 10x in a row. Inevitably, followed by a "God bless you")
Here's to Bedford Falls!***



Ingredients:

- 2 oranges, unwaxed preferably, or wash to remove wax***
- 2 lemons, unwaxed, organic***
- 2 liters red wine***
- 3-4 sticks cinnamon***
- 5 whole cloves***
- 4-6 stars of anise***
- ½ tsp dash ginger, ground***
- ½ lb sugar loaf or piloncillo cone***
- 2-3 cups brown rum, at least 54% alcohol***

>> [Click here for the recipe](#)

Maria Banson
Brunello Bombshell



White Christmas

Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye team up as Bob Wallace and Phil Davis, two Army buddies who fought in World War II together and quickly become America's favorite singing-and-dancing duo upon their return home. When Wallace and Davis receive a letter from "an old friend from the Army" asking them to give a professional opinion on his sisters' new act, they end up following Betty and Judy Haynes (Rosemary Clooney and Vera-Allen) to a small inn in Vermont. What starts as a slight detour ends up as a kind gesture and a lesson in using public attention for a greater good.



We love the movie for its glamorous costumes, toe-tapping dance numbers, and the lush voices of Crosby and Clooney. The spirit of Christmas permeates the script, and you'll finish the movie with a renewed sense of selflessness and the power of a gift, small or large.

MOVIE SNACKS



Whip up a batch of eggnog substituting Vermont maple syrup for any refined sugar!

I'll be making [this recipe from Foraged Dish](#) this Christmas.

To spike this eggnog, you can nod to the French WWII battlegrounds where Wallace and Davis meet and throw in some cognac ([I like this one](#) for both cocktails and sipping neat).

Pair it with a liverwurst sandwich, and you'll fall asleep counting your blessings.



12 Angry Men.

The Old
Hollywood
Newsletter

Carnival



Review of 12 Angry Men (1957)



'12 Angry Men' is a 1957 American independent legal drama directed by Sidney Lumet. Set in 1957, it begins at the end of a New York City murder trial. The jury is starting their deliberations. A young man's future is on the line. Did he murder his father or not? What seems like an open-and-shut case quickly becomes an exercise in critical thinking. It's instigated by the always charming and believable Henry Fonda.

His insistence raises the ire of the other jurors. Yet, his reasoning is solid. The most extraordinary part of this film though, is the fact it takes place almost entirely in the jury room. It required outstanding performances from everyone and they deliver. Academy Award level stuff. Ignore the stilted acting style and you won't regret being a fly on the wall in this deliberation room.

Beverage of choice on a chilly holiday eve...

BAILEY'S & COFFEE

TO MAKE:

Brew strong coffee. Pour piping hot into a mug.

**Pour in as much Bailey's Irish Cream
as the mug can hold.**

**Optional: Add a dollop of whipped
cream on top.**

Get cozy, sip and enjoy.



CINEVIBEZ FANZINE



HOME ALONE

FOLLOW ME ON
LETTERBOXD!

"I WISH THEY ALL JUST DISAPPEARED."

NEXT, WE SEE THE WIND PICK UP AND KNOCK OUT POWER LINES. THE SPARKS FLY & JOHN WILLIAMS' AWARD-WINNING SCORE TURNS MENACING: KEVIN MCCALLISTER'S WISH HAS COME TRUE.

BUT THE LYNCHIAN NIGHTMARE BELOW THE SURFACE SOON REVEALS ITSELF. EVERYTHING IS BIGGER AND EXAGGERATED. KEVIN IS CONVINCED HIS NEIGHBOR BURIES VICTIMS IN THE FRONT YARD AND THE FURNACE TRANSFORMS INTO A FIRE-BREATHING MONSTER.

FORTUNATELY, KEVIN QUICKLY - LIKE VERY QUICKLY - OVERCOMES HIS REASONABLE FEAR OF ABANDONMENT AND SAVES THE DAY BY OUTWITTING THE WET BANDITS AND LEARNING CHRISTMAS IS BETTER SPENT TOGETHER.

... UNLESS YOU'RE THE WET BANDITS. THEN YOU'RE IN FOR GORE AND BODY HORROR THAT'LL MAKE CRONENBERG BLUSH.

A SLICE OF CHEESE PIZZA



ORDER TAKEOUT, BUT IF YOU MUST:

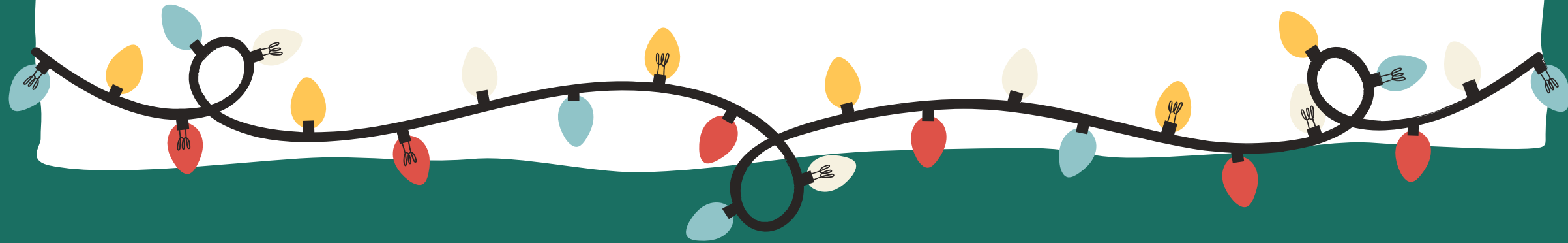
GATHER A FEW CUPS OF FLOUR, A TABLESPOON EACH OF YEAST AND SUGAR, 2/3 CUP OF WATER, AND A DASH OF SALT.

MIX IT ALL TOGETHER. KNEAD IT. ROLL IT. ADD TOPPINGS & CHEESE. COOK IN THE OVEN AT 375 DEGREES FOR 15 MINUTES.

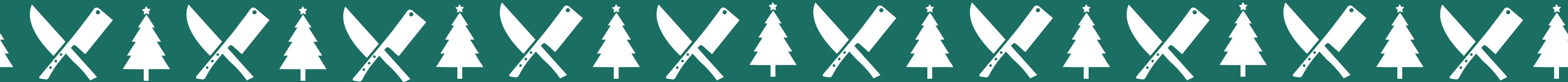
JUST DON'T USE A BLOWTORCH.



Better Watch Out



submitted by Joe's Video Club



IF YOU ENJOY A DASH OF MISCHIEF with your holiday movie diet, then you should watch *Better Watch Out* (2016). The story follows 17-year-old Ashley (Olivia DeJonge), who's babysitting the precocious 12-year-old Luke (Levi Miller). What starts as a typical night of babysitting quickly spirals into a devious, blood-soaked game of cat and mouse when an intruder targets them.



Blending psychological horror with dark comedy, BWO feels like a loving homage to the babysitter-in-peril subgenre, drawing influences from films like *When a Stranger Calls* (1979) and *Bloody Birthday* (1981). But this isn't just a retread—it's a cheeky, satirical take on the genre, full of twists and clever dialogue.

This is, without a doubt, one of the better Christmas horror films out there, packed with suspense, devilish chuckles, and just the right amount of holiday dread.

Pair It With... **SPICY HOT CHOCOLATE**



Ingredients

- 2 cups milk (I used 2%)
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cayenne (optional – you can omit this if you don't want it too spicy)
- 1 ounce bittersweet chocolate

Instructions

- In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, add milk, cocoa powder, sugar, cinnamon, vanilla extract, chili powder, and cayenne pepper.
- Mix together with a whisk, add the bittersweet chocolate and heat until the chocolate has completely melted and the mixture is hot, but not boiling.
- Divide hot chocolate into 2 mugs and serve with marshmallows, chocolate shavings and a cinnamon stick.

From the Yard
to the Arthouse



I'M DREAMING OF A

WHITE

DOMSDAY

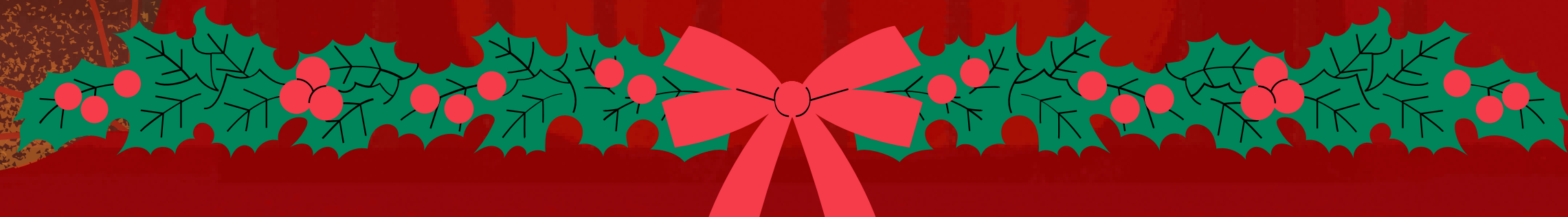
Carmina

In embarking on my project of catching underseen movies from 2014-2023, I wanted to find something wildly adventurous but also holiday appropriate. This year, Santa gifted me 2017's "I'm Dreaming Of A White Doomsday". Finally showing appreciation to the Venn Diagram of Yuletide lovers and fans of post-apocalyptic thrillers, the zero-budgeted movie finds a mother and son as they try to survive inside a bunker underneath a world annihilated by nuclear war.

The film basically has two locations. One is the cramped, dark bunker underground where mom weighs the pros and cons of suicide while her son plays with a Toxie action figure. The other is a repeated flashback (or dream?) of a fraught, pre-nuke family photo where a pushy photographer tries to negotiate peace with father, mother and their unruly child. All the while, trudging through the apocalypse, would you believe Santa Claus is coming to town? Come for the holiday trappings, stay for an entirely-humorless elegy for Christmas with maybe the bleakest ending of any holiday movie you could ever conjure in your imagination.

A BAG OF CHESTNUTS

In the event of an apocalyptic
doomsday, a bag of chestnuts will
have an excellent shelf-life



Phantom Thread

submitted by

that final scene



There's a specific kind of masochism required to watch Phantom Thread during that dead zone between Christmas and New Year's, when you're already questioning your relationship with food, routine, and family. But that's exactly why you should do it.

Paul Thomas Anderson's luxuriously deranged study of control and desire follows Reynolds Woodcock (Daniel Day-Lewis, temporarily ending his "retirement" to work with his son, because of course only family could pull him back), a couturier who treats breakfast like psychological warfare and romance like a military campaign. Enter Alma (Vicky Krieps, delivering career-best quiet menace), who takes one look at his perfectly constructed world and thinks "I can fix him" – if by "fix" you mean "systematically dismantle through elaborate mind games and questionable mushroom selection."

The film's hypnotic pacing and Jonny Greenwood's score hit differently when you're already in that liminal space where time has lost all meaning. Watch it while wearing your most dramatic robe, preferably after everyone else has gone to bed. Let Reynolds' complete meltdown over buttered toast make you feel better about snapping at your sister for breathing too loudly during Christmas dinner.



PAIR IT WITH

Welsh rarebit that you've prepared with suspicious intensity, and a glass of Château d'Yquem (Reynolds would accept nothing less). Just maybe skip the mushrooms unless you're ready to really commit to the bit.



'Twas the Fight Before Christmas

Submitted by
VICKI LESLEY
[@Meandering over the pebbles](#)

I'm the only person in America - probably the world - who has been banned by a federal court from decorating at Christmas

If you've ever wondered what would happen if Clark Griswold morphed into a freedom-lovin', gun-totin', festive avenger, hellbent on waging war on anyone getting in the way of his 'Christmas miracle' - aka an outsize Christmas lights event held on his property with hundreds of buses in visitors, a choir and even a resident camel - then this is the movie for you.

It's a wild ride. **And even more wild for being absolutely true.**

This Apple TV+ documentary tells the story of Idaho lawyer and Christmas obsessive Jeremy Morris, his long-suffering wife and the hitherto quiet community of West Hayden Estates, whose concerns over the scale of Morris' Christmas extravaganza unwittingly descend into an escalating, years-long legal battle that continues to this day.

Morris is **jaw-droppingly monstrous** but **totally compelling** to watch - the perfect antidote when you've simply had too much sugar & sweetness this holiday season.





What better companion for watching a right rum one turn the festive season sour than...

a spicy Christmas rum sour!

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice.

Add rum, lime juice, pineapple juice, sugar syrup, a small slice of red chilli and an egg white.

Shake hard for 10 seconds. Strain into a glass & garnish with a red chilli.



I Believe In Santa



submitted by
Amanda Kusek
@the90minutemovie

HO
HO
HO



Help!

I'm obsessed with a movie I should have never watched in the first place.

Intended for Netflix's annual holiday churn, *I Believe In Santa* (2022) sets itself apart by being made with so much (too much?) earnestness. That doesn't make it any less unhinged, but there is something to its conviction that is so endearing and entertaining that I have made everyone I know watch it. The movie stars John Ducey as Tom, a man who still believes in Santa, and Ducey's real-life wife Christina Moore as his girlfriend, Lisa, who "famously hates" Christmas. Ducey plays Tom with so much heart that you can almost forgive the script's hilarious premise and clear missteps. (Like when they attempt to equate believing in Santa with being a Muslim.) Listen, creativity goes a long way in a world of cookie-cutter Chabert vehicles and this just could be your new Christmas classic.





PAIR IT WITH BOOZY COCOA

Tom loves his famous "cocoa" recipe. I'm suggesting a boozy alternative so you can truly enjoy the fun of this film.

Make your typical hot chocolate recipe (from a packet, from scratch both are fine!) and then add 1oz of peppermint schnapps (30 or 60 proof, if you have a bottle of 100 proof, cut this in half!)

Stir into your cocoa and garnish with a candy cane and some whipped cream.

Make sure you stir the schnapps in **AFTER** you make the cocoa, so you don't burn the alcohol off.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM US!

YOUR FILM SUBSTACKS:

[Beth's TV & Film Recommendations](#)

[The Old Hollywood Newsletter](#)

[From the Yard to the Arthouse](#)

[Joe's Video Club](#)

[Meandering over the pebbles](#)

[Brunello Bombshell](#)

[the90minutemovie](#)

[that final scene](#)

[CINEVIBEZ FANZINE](#)