

## Scandinavian Christmas Traditions

Get into the holiday spirit with activities that can be passed down to the next generations.

BY TAYLOR HUGO

From powdery snow and handmade gifts to caroling and the smell of lefse baking on the griddle, there is something so magical about Christmas. With the abundance of family gatherings throughout the winter season, it's also the perfect time to teach little ones about Scandinavian holiday traditions, and maybe even create some of your own — while sipping a toasty beverage (*gløgg* for you, hot cocoa for the kids).



To see Family Matters pages from previous issues, go to [sonsofnorway.com](http://sonsofnorway.com), log in and select "Cultural Programming" then "Family Matters."

### Activities for Young People

#### PRESCHOOL

##### Read Together

Embrace the Icelandic tradition of *Jolabokafloð* (Christmas Book Flood) by gifting and reading books to your little ones on Christmas Eve.



##### EXPAND IT

Learn and practice other Scandinavian Christmas terms throughout the season, such as *Julenissen* (Santa), *God jul* (Merry Christmas) and *juletre* (Christmas tree).



#### ELEMENTARY AGES

##### Decorate the Tree

Make ornaments for the Christmas tree by weaving paper, felt or velvet ribbon together to form a traditional Scandinavian woven heart (see resources at right).

##### EXPAND IT

These woven hearts form a basket when done — help your child fill them with treats and hand out to their friends to get into the giving spirit of the holiday.

#### TEENAGERS

##### Bake a Cake

Mix up some fun in the kitchen while crafting a *kransekake* with your teen. The traditional, tiered holiday dessert is sure to be the showstopper of your Christmas spread.

##### EXPAND IT

Encourage your teen to lead a family and friend dessert exchange with other Scandinavian Christmas delicacies, like *krumkake* or *pepperkaker*. Have each participant include a card with the recipe and a short lesson on the history of the dessert.



### Learn More

#### "Handmade Scandinavian Christmas"

by Hege Barnholt

#### Scandinavian Woven Heart Template

[northpole.com/craftcottage/scandinavian-woven-hearts](http://northpole.com/craftcottage/scandinavian-woven-hearts)

#### Sons of Norway's Language Lesson 15: Christmas Words

[sonsofnorway.com](http://sonsofnorway.com)

#### Kransekake Recipe

[sweetpaulmag.com/food/kransekake](http://sweetpaulmag.com/food/kransekake)