

My Top 5 Non-Food Christmas Delicacies

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Welcome to my Monthly “Top 5.” Every month my goal is to roll out five tried-and-true ideas, observations, suggestions or hunches that you will find **creative, useful and brief.**

At Christmas, I turn into a committed softy. Over time, I’ve learned that it’s best to just indulge my sentimentality by whole-heartedly and intentionally watching, reading and listening to stuff that I know will help me to a) laugh, b) be child-like, c) have tears to my eyes and quietness to my heart or d) all of the above.

And I love recruiting others to join me.

Now that you know that about me, and maybe share my fondness for embracing human sweetness along with your Christmas cookies, this month I’m revealing my **“Top 5 Non-Food Christmas Delicacies”**:

1. I listen to **John Henry Faulk’s ‘Christmas Story’**. First recorded and played on National Public Radio over thirty-five years ago, they still get requests for it. Some think it’s a little politically incorrect, but it makes my list anyway. Every year. Here’s the link: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1115979>. Bet you’ll cry too.
2. I watch “A Christmas Story”. Produced in 1983, it’s the story of a nine-year-old imaginative dreamer in the weeks before Christmas in the mid-1950s. This will make the most sense for you if you’re over forty-five years old. You’ll remember.
3. I read—aloud with friends if I can pull an audience together (takes about forty-five minutes)—[The Best Christmas Pageant Ever](#) by Barbara Robinson. How do the ‘worst kids in the history of the world’ end up in the church Christmas pageant? And why can’t anyone stop them from participating? And how is it that everyone (including firefighters, church ladies, the Reverend and the sanctimonious) ends up calling it ‘the best Christmas pageant ever?’ The book is better than the movie. You’ll laugh.
4. I watch “A Charlie Brown Christmas”. First produced in 1965, the music is right up there in my book with my favorite Carols. If you want to follow along, the Christmas Story Linus reads is found in the Bible in Luke Chapter 2. If possible, watch this with a child.
5. And in case you thought she could only be a cynical wise cracker, a young Dorothy Parker wrote in 1928, “The Maid-Servant at the Inn.” (i.e. the inn that had no room for Mary and Joseph):

**“It’s queer,” she said, “I see the light
As plain as I beheld it then,
All silver-like and calm and bright—
We’ve not had stars like that again!**

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*“And she was such a gentle thing
To birth a baby in the cold.
The barn was dark and frightening—
This new one’s better than the old.*

*“I mind my eyes were full of tears,
For I was young, and quick distressed,
But she was less than me in years
That held a son against her breast.*

*“I never saw a sweeter child—
The little one, the darling one!—
I mind I told her when he smiled
You’d know he was his mother’s son.*

*“It’s queer that I should see them so—
The time they came to Bethlehem
Was more than thirty years ago;
I’ve prayed that all is well with them.”*

Here’s to a Holiday season that invites us to experience all of the loveliness and poignancy of this wonderful life we’ve been given.