

THE ALISON McLENNAN CHRISTMAS IN BRISBANE:



As the big day draws near the humidity skyrockets and tempers flare in the shopping centres, then there's car park rage and I watch the Santas in the Mall trying their best to **"HO, HO, HO"** whilst they sit in front of an industrial size fan! I feel sorry for them, it's not the best job at this time of year. However despite all that I love Christmas and won't allow anything to take the shine off it for me.

A lot of Brisbanites head to the beach for picnics or inland to the dams and then camp over the holiday period. However, planning any outdoor activity this time of year is not always the best option due to the unpredictable weather. Already this year the Summer storms have arrived and they can be very severe bringing large hail stones, high winds and incredible lightening causing considerable chaos. I should be used to this by now but they still frighten the life out of me.

So, rather than take the chance, we just love to be at home to relax and enjoy it with all the family around. However we were out for our annual pre Christmas Party over at the Boat Club on South Stradbroke Island. Santa was there having arrived by boat much to the delight of the children. It was a great fun weekend as always with thankfully no disrupting storms for a change, so we were all happy!



So, generally, on Christmas Eve we usually have a cold spread with seafood/salads/fruit and lots of chocolate which we have to eat immediately before it becomes a melted blob on the table - but I can manage that! Later in the evening we take a walk around the streets so see the light displays on the houses and the grandchildren just love that. There always seems to be a calm atmosphere by then and all the neighbours come out with sweets and goodies for the children.

Even with the weather like it is we still prepare a hot roast dinner on Christmas Day, my neighbours think I'm mad but we wouldn't have it any other way. We do however cook outside so as not to heat the house up and that makes it so much more bearable. All the family arrive around 10am ready for the present opening and by the time that's over our roast lunch with all the trimmings is ready. After lunch most have a swim or sleep - depending on how much or what has been consumed!

At the end of the day when the family have left we plonk ourselves down in front of the TV to watch the Christmas Carols and all the lovely Christmas re-runs that are pulled out each year - I just love it.

So, I guess not much different to Christmas elsewhere, so whatever the weather and wherever you are, "a Merry Christmas" to you all, I hope it's a joyous time and may you have a happy, prosperous New Year

Alison McLennan
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