



## Tis the Season 2016

by  
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Well, thus far, 2016 has been the mildest winter I can remember Manitoba ever having. I could almost get used to this, except, and I don't mean to complain, but I do dearly miss the sun. I'm not sure how BC does this every year, never mind up north, where a long cold winter's night has a whole different meaning from what we are used to.

At any rate, here we are in December, and it is time once again for my annual holiday season rant. For those of you who haven't heard it before, it goes something like this. Being a big fan of Christmas, I have gotten very tired of our politically correct society where we have to worry about how to greet people for fear of offending them. I have done some studying and came to the conclusion that there are so many holidays being celebrated in December that we, as a multi-cultural country, should be able to use any and all of them equally and without fear of reprisal. Let me show you what I mean.

This year both Christian and Jewish people get to share December 25<sup>th</sup> as both Christmas and Chanukah are on the same day for the first time in years, although technically, Chanukah begins on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup>. Mind you, for many children, so does Christmas. So whether you say Merry Christmas or Happy Chanukah, either applies to the same day this year; feel free to use both with equal exuberance. For those of you who are really into celebrating, keep in mind that the 25<sup>th</sup> signifies both the last day of advent and the first day of Chanukah, so with careful planning, all you need to do is switch your stocking cap for a yarmulke and you can keep the party going for an additional eight days.

Canadian Muslim's will be celebrating the Prophet's Birthday on December 12<sup>th</sup>. The Winter Solstice is on December 21<sup>st</sup>. Many Buddhists will celebrate Bodhi Day or Rohatsu, the Day of Enlightenment, on December 8<sup>th</sup>. In the USA and Canada, Hindus celebrate Pancha Ganapati from December 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, while African Americans and Canadians celebrate Kwanzaa from December 26<sup>th</sup> to January 1<sup>st</sup>. Some prefer the pagan celebration of Yule, which runs from mid-December to early January, and I can certainly see the advantages in a tradition that involves sitting in front of a warm fire on a cold winter's night.

The non-conformists of you may choose to celebrate Festivus, an alternative 'holiday' on December 23<sup>rd</sup> originated by the TV series Seinfeld. Snowbirds will be celebrating vacation season by heading to warmer climates (Feel free to take me along, I travel well). And let us not forget New Year's Eve whether, for you, it falls on December 31<sup>st</sup>, or sometime in January.

The way I see it, as Canadians, we are so multicultural that, instead of arguing over whose holidays are more important, we should embrace all of our diverse traditions. In

fact, I think we should simply declare the entire month of December a National Holiday and take the whole month off. Anybody with me?

I apologize if I have missed your traditional holiday, but as you can see, there are far too many to list. The simple fact is that December truly is a Holiday Season, and it is and always should be a season of peace and goodwill to all.

So from my family to yours, however you celebrate it, have a safe and happy holiday season.

