

Catching
Up With

MRS. CLAUS

We've been busy this holiday season, but there's no contest when it comes to Mrs. Claus' schedule during this time of year. The vivacious, talkative, and warm woman fills her hands with everything from creating ceramic art, participating in a book club, overseeing the elves, being the other half to Christmas' success and joining Santa on his Harley to cruise Michigan's country roads.

Regardless, Mrs. Claus always makes time for family, friends and bringing kindness to all throughout the year. She even made time to visit us at WLM to answer the curiosities of our Facebook followers. You'll be surprised to learn what Mrs. Claus is doing when she's not up to her elbows in production at the North Pole.



BY BRI KILROY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TWO EAGLES MARCUS

WLM: What's your first name?

Mrs. Claus: I never meant it to be such a mystery, but after some time, Santa and I realized we've just never revealed my first name. You could say I like keeping it a mystery, especially because I enjoy reading what the Internet thinks my name might be. Most recently, it was "Bae."

What are you wearing?

I am wearing a brand of Coco Chanel exclusive to the North Pole called SnowSnow Chanel. The fashions are very similar to Coco's haute couture style, except everything in the SnowSnow collection is lined with a thick layer of fleece.

Do you have any great North Pole recipes to share?

I specialize in a lot of cookie recipes, many inspired by cookies Santa has tasted during his rounds around the world, but I also make a delicious vegetarian dish with beans, green peppers and onions that my family requests every year.

How did you and Santa meet?

Santa's father and my father were actually business partners. Santa was just two years old when I was born and his father told him, "It's time to go see the new baby." That was the first time we met.

Was it love at first sight?

Well, he was two and I was still figuring out how to use my eyes, so no.

How did you end up becoming the holiday's most popular pair?

It's actually a great story: We didn't see each other a lot growing up—our dads would tell us things the other was doing, but we never hung out. It was after we were both out of college; I was living in Boston and he was in Illinois working on developing a mechanism that would allow him to make deliveries all over the world in record time. One year, I planned on celebrating Thanksgiving with my friend in Chicago, but she canceled! Since I was in the area I thought, "I wonder what that Santa kid is doing." I called his father who told me his son was visiting his family in Cleveland for the holiday. I made the first move and gave him a call, and we met in Cleveland over coffee and cookies on Christmas Eve. That was our first date.

Did you both live together in Cleveland, then?

No, I still lived in Boston while we were dating. We managed to go on seven dates in a three-month period. By the end of those three months, we were engaged and got married the following Christmas.

How did you know he was the one?

I wasn't sure at first, but there was a time where I had to say goodbye to him and, when he was off on his merry way, I just started crying. I called my mom to ask her what this feeling was and what it is like to be in love and she told me, "You know you're in love with someone when you trust them implicitly with your entire life." That's exactly how I felt, so I knew that he was the one.

Do you and Santa spend Christmas together?

Always! We turn on all the Christmas lights in and outside our home, put on Christmas music and drink my famed hot chocolate. It's a nice period of relaxation after he wraps up the big trip, and it gives us a chance to celebrate our anniversary.

What is Santa's favorite meal before his big Christmas trip?

Spaghetti with meatballs and I make sure he has a good, nutritious salad that will rationalize all of the cookies he's going to eat that night; however, he uses syrup as salad dressing, so maybe it's not as nutritious as it should be (*laughs*).

What would someone find on your Christmas music playlist?

Frank Sinatra, Elvis, Diana Washington, Chuck Berry and Windham Hill's *A Winter Solstice* album.

What do you do while Santa is out delivering toys all night?

I'm always busy. My motto is "Reinvent, reinvent, reinvent!" I do a lot of art with ceramics and am part of a book club. We like to do something different for the month of December, so I think we will plan gathering together for a nice dinner.

Has Santa ever gotten stuck in a chimney?

(*laughs*) So many times, but we have an app for that now.

Where do all of the elves go when they're not working in Santa's workshop?

[At the North Pole] we have a beautiful, log cabin lodge made for the elves. It's a wonderful place for them to relax after a successful holiday season, converse with other departments, and there's a vending machine with unlimited eggnog and hot chocolate. The lodge also has a school that the elves love going to so they can keep learning throughout the year.

Which reindeer is the most loveable?

Vixen because he gets into mischief. He does things like steals treats from the other reindeer, and it reminds me of myself as a child—I was the youngest of six, so I had to be pretty mischievous at times.

How many chances do you give a "naughty" child?

Many chances. Santa always says, "If you've done something wrong, you have a whole year to make it right."

What are some of your favorite hobbies on the off season/when you aren't helping prepare for Christmas?

Santa and I like to get on his Harley and ride along hilly, country roads. We also like to be on the boat, which we don't get to do often in the North Pole because of the glaciers, so we go to our cottage in northern Michigan. I also do a lot of traveling. I've been to Ireland, Peru, Iceland, Turkey and many other European countries. Mrs. Claus gets around too! (*laughs*)

Catching up with The Claus Couple

Santa and Mrs. Claus are all over the world this month and you can follow them on their Facebook page, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus-Grand Rapids. We know you'll try to get a glimpse of them Christmas Eve, but don't forget to keep your eyes open for the festive pair cruising by on their Harley.



Bri Kilroy is a Grand Valley and AmeriCorps alumna who learned to type through vigorous Mavis Beacon trainings. She also passes as an artist, illustrator and author of this bio.

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