

I'm Glad It Isn't Christmas Every Day!



'Tis the season to be jolly' So goes the song repeated ad finite at this time of the year and with less than a week now until Christmas Day, it's fair to say there is a fair amount of merriment around. However, this weary writer is going against the grain (there's a surprise – Ed), is now heartily sick of the Christmas festivities and is counting the days until January when life returns to some semblance of normality.

Now, I should clarify that I actually enjoy Christmas. At Christmas time. But this year – and perhaps this is just me and I'm out of kilter with the rest of the world – the festive period seems to have started even earlier than usual. And I'm now thoroughly 'Christmased' out.

The 12 days of Christmas have now been replaced by the 12 weeks. The Dome in Edinburgh's George Street is an excellent eating and drinking establishment, resplendent with its Graeco-Roman façade and Corinthian Portico. However, they feel the need to put up their lavish Christmas decorations in October. Indeed, the Dome's website states it is 'fully festive from 31 October'. The question that immediately comes to my mind is – why so early?

'Edinburgh's Christmas' has seen the city centre ablaze with light since 20th November. The impressive Street of Light in George Street is a sight to behold and there seems to be a more stylish decoration there than on Princes Street which has taken on a resemblance to Blackpool during the illuminations. Now, apparently, all this adds to the 'feel-good' factor which, during a troubled year, the country could certainly do with. But it's been on for weeks now and the hordes of Christmas shoppers, some of whom display anything but Christmas spirit with, at best, a lack of courtesy and, at worst, downright rudeness, descend on the centre of the capital city like vultures round a carcass.

It occurred to me that if some pedestrians drove their cars the way they

barge their way along pavements there would be carnage on the streets. I am particularly irritated by people (mostly women I should say) with handbags the size of a small animal slung over their shoulder, whacking anyone unfortunate to be in their path (this is also the case on buses whenever I am perched on an aisle seat – on almost every journey I am whacked by someone going past). And then there are people with children's buggies – there must be an unwritten law that states they have complete right of way at all times so you'd better move, pal, unless you want a buggy wheel riding roughshod over your ankle.



If you survive the relentless battle that is Christmas shopping, you stagger home, collapse on to the sofa and turn on the television. And you are immediately bombarded by Christmas commercials, Christmas themed shows and films (there's even a Christmas film channel which has been showing non-stop Christmas films since October) and an ever-increasing number of charity adverts urging you to spend 'just £5' to help people in need.

I should add that I'm not religious but it saddens me when I see what has happened to what is meant to be a Christian celebration. It is now, shamelessly, a commercial celebration with the aim of many to make as much money as possible from those gullible enough to spend as much money as possible.

Frankly, I'm fed up with it all. I long for a time when I don't have to battle with impatient, rude, highly irritating people on the streets of Edinburgh; for a time when Princes Street Gardens no longer resembles Blackpool Pleasure Beach and I can stroll past the Scott Monument in relative peace; for a time when Christmas isn't rammed down my throat on television and radio and on the internet (social media is also hammering home that 'it's the most wonderful time of the year' – has been since October)

Next Sunday is Christmas Day. Peace on Earth, as they say. Or, as I prefer to say, 'gie us peace'. I'm only glad it *isn't* Christmas every day!