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## All I want for Christmas...

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*Rugby sevens player and winner of Love Island 2019*

*'All that matters is that you spend Christmas with your loved ones'*



**What was your perfect childhood Christmas?** Getting woken up really early by my eldest sister, Laura. Then opening Santa presents around the tree. Then we would all go to my grand-aunt's house to meet the extended family. Finished off by a lovely dinner cooked by my mother.

**Does Christmas live up to or fall short of expectations?** It never falls short but it changes a lot as you get older. My appreciation has changed from the materialistic things associated with Christmas to appreciating who you spend it with. One of my sisters, Jessie, now lives abroad and visits her husband's family so we aren't always all together but that's life. I will always love Christmas.

**What's the essential ingredient for Christmas?** Family.

**What's the one thing that can spoil Christmas?** Getting the man flu or having training on Stephen's day. My father used to love making my rugby team train on this day!

**What's the perfect Christmas present?** A trip away. One year my parents surprised us with a trip to Paris, and even though we were a bit young to understand how cool it was, looking back it was an amazing present that included the whole family.

**What's the perfect Christmas dinner?** The ham and stuffing combination, of course. Also, Christmas crackers are a must at the table!

**What's the perfect Christmas dinner guest list?** My entire extended family, including my sister's dog, Cali.

**Are you a Christmas perfectionist?** I'm not going to lie, my mother is such a perfectionist and takes care of absolutely everything. What a woman!



**Are we bombarded by images of the perfect Christmas?** I do think there is a lot of pressure on families to have an extravagant 'perfect' Christmas, but that isn't financially realistic for the majority of people. I think all that matters is that you spend Christmas with your loved ones – everything else is a bonus.

**What's keeping you busy this Christmas?** This Christmas is the first year without my nana, who sadly passed away this year after struggling with dementia. In her honour, I have joined [the Alzheimer Society of Ireland](#) as an ambassador for their Memory Ribbon campaign to help raise some vital funds for people who have dementia and their families around Ireland. I'll spend Christmas day with my family and enjoy the holidays!

*Greg O'Shea is the winner of Love Island 2019 and an ambassador for the Alzheimer Society of Ireland. The charity has ethical Christmas items for sale including 'A Taste to Remember' cookbook (€15) and 12 Christmas cards of six designs (€8.50). The proceeds go directly to supporting dementia services provided by ASI countrywide. Both items are available to purchase via the online shop on [alzheimer.ie](#). The Alzheimer National Helpline is open six days a week (Monday-Saturday) 1800-341 341 or [helpline@alzheimer.ie](mailto:helpline@alzheimer.ie)*

*In conversation with Kevin Courtney*