

FAMILY HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

By John S., Creative Director at Shutterfly

My wife and I have always wanted to craft holiday traditions for our family, but we never seemed to have the time to sit down and plan what we should do each year. Making a Family Traditions Photo Book was our way of capturing the personal meaning of the season for us and our 8-year-old daughter, Miranda. This way we gather the memories of past holidays—and relive what gave us joy.



Here's how I did it:



1. Selected a Book: I selected a 12x12 Memory Book in the new Snowflakes holiday style. This large-size hardcover book let me put a title and date on the spine, and looks great on our bookshelf. Each year we can celebrate the season with the traditions that we have started and have come to love. It's almost like a playbook for holiday cheer. For the first one, we included cookie recipes and "how to decorate the living room" based on last year's mantle display of holly and candles.

2. Chose Photos: I chose approximately 60 photos from my Shutterfly albums from last holiday. I wanted to show all the things we have done that make each holiday a special time. I even chose close-ups of our favorite family tree ornaments.

3. Customized Pages: It was fun to create this traditions book—and making the book is a new family tradition. I easily added my photos to the inside pages using the drag-and-drop feature that displays pictures in a strip at the bottom of the page. I used the background designs and chose the right number of pictures for each page. For the two pages about tree trimming, I used layouts with five pictures each to show all the details of our tree.

Other inspiring ideas:

- I made a special section of celebration pictures with family and friends, including some very precious moments with Dorothy, Miranda's grandmother, who turned 84 this year.
- We each wrote down our memories of what made the holiday special for us, and then we selected photos to illustrate them. Miranda chose the image of her opening the package that contained her digital camera—and then I added the first photos she took. I also included the shots I took of her taking those pictures.

4. Personalized the Cover and Spine: For the front cover, I chose a picture of Miranda sitting surrounded by her gifts, the wrapping paper strewn all around. The smile on her face is radiant, and a moment my wife and I cherish.

5. Ordered and Shared: I ordered the book and surprised my wife and daughter with it. They wanted to share it right away. We had Shutterfly mail copies directly to grandparents, and shared an online copy with relatives and friends who were able to order their own books. We've heard that everyone wants to make the "iced spice gingerbread santa" cookies.

