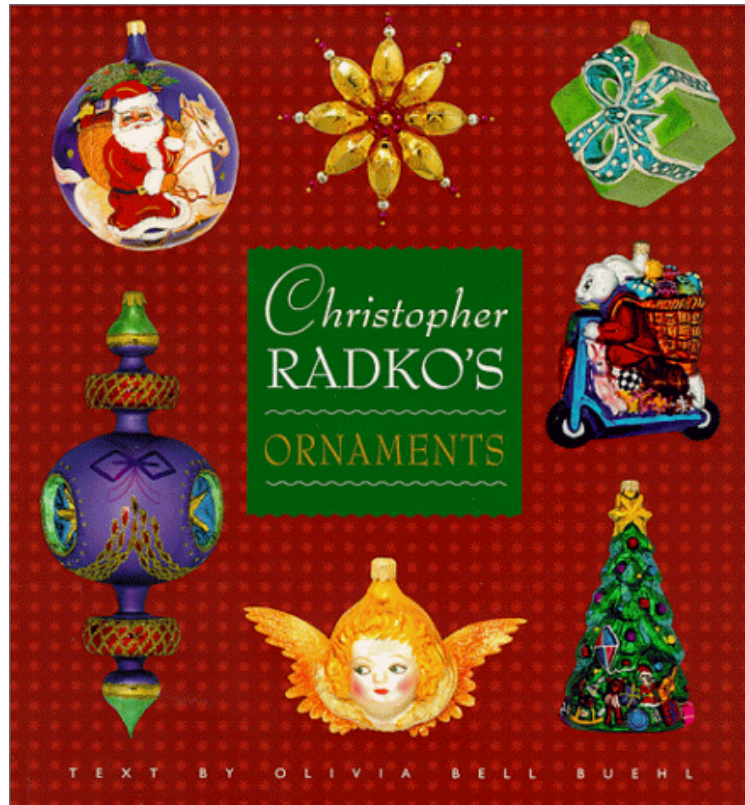


*Christopher Radko, Olivia Buehl*  
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## Christopher Radko's Ornaments

**Christopher Radko, Olivia Buehl : Christopher Radko's Ornaments** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Christopher Radko's Ornaments:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Buy It Only For The PicturesBy Christmas GuyI may be a little more jaded than most, as I work in the Christmas biz, but I only recommend this work for the beautiful photos. The text is mostly the same old trite, oft heard Radko propaganda and marketing BS.....If you want a picture book to flip through and get you ramped up for Christmas, this will well fill the bill....If you are a serious Christmas collector/businessman, ignore much of the text, as it will only insult you...."The man who single handidly saved the blown glass ornament from extinction"? Oh, please....0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great purchase with added surprise.By CustomerGot this book for my Christopher Radko loving friend. It is wonderful and I know he will love it. Recieved from Dougheidibooks via and could not be happier with their service. As an added surprise bonus my copy is signed by Christopher Radko himself. My friend will LOVE that and I will look like best gift giver EVER. Recieved it just days after I ordered.Book is beautifully illustrated and well written. win win.Thanks Dougheidibooks.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Two StarsBy Wayne RittInteresting book but would have liked some values

When his family's Christmas tree stand collapsed, shattering their collection of 2,000 vintage European glass ornaments, Christopher Radko suffered a double loss. Not only were the irreplaceable treasures gone, but with them vanished a tangible link to past holidays and warm memories of family and friends. Searching for replacements, he

realized they were difficult to find, and began a business that almost single-handedly revived the all-but-forgotten European tradition of mouth-blown, hand-painted glass ornaments. Now hundreds of these "memories in the making," as Christopher calls them, are on display in Christopher Radko's *Ornaments*, the first book devoted to all fourteen years of his delightful designs. Each chapter is dedicated to a different category of ornament, from traditional styles to new ones inspired by the world's far-flung cultures, from jolly representations of Santa in all his guises to charming depictions of people, food, and animals of holiday lore. Throughout the book, sidebars offer an array of Christopher's own tips on how to light and trim a tree and decorate the entire house with ornaments, as well as fascinating information on the ornaments themselves. Lavishly illustrated with more than 275 full-color photographs and packed with personal anecdotes, Christopher Radko's *Ornaments* captures the heart of Christmas and encourages us to celebrate its message of giving and caring, one ornament at a time.

From the Back Cover "Christopher's ornaments are so beautiful. They bring magic to my tree every year."-- Elizabeth Taylor "If it doesn't say Christopher Radko, it just isn't Christmas."-- Whoopi Goldberg "Christopher's work is unmistakably the best. It gives us the feeling of the true spirit of Christmas--sharing, loving, and joy."-- Robert and Grace De Niro "The ornaments designed by Christopher lift our spirits, making a difference in the lives they touch."-- Elton John "Christopher's ornaments bring the magic of Christmas home."-- Arnold Schwarzenegger "WOW! These ornaments are really extraordinary." -- Katharine Hepburn "A book as delightful as his work itself."-- Warren Buffett

About the Author Dubbed "the Czar of Christmas Present" by the New York Times, Christopher Radko has been designing and producing holiday decorations of the highest quality for more than fourteen years. His ornaments, available at more than 3,000 retail outlets, have been showcased in *People*, *Biography*, *House Garden*, and *Traditional Home*, among many other magazines, as well as in every leading newspaper in the nation. Christopher and his holiday decorations have also appeared on *Today*, *Good Morning America*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Olivia Bell Buehl is the former editor in chief of *Home and American Homestyle Gardening*, and writes on decorating and architecture. She is also the author of *Tiles*. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

When pressed to name his favorite ornaments, Christopher concedes that the Santas occupy a special place in his heart. And nowhere has his limitless imagination found more fertile territory than in his depictions of Mr. Claus. Each year his collection of ornaments totals close to one thousand, and about a hundred of these represent the figure that almost single-handedly exemplifies the holiday season. Like many beloved and legendary figures, he goes by many names. Whether you call him Father Christmas, Pre Nol, Kris Kringle, St. Nicholas, or Santa Claus--as he is usually known in the United States--Santa has come to personify the gift giver specifically and Christmas in its entirety. To Christopher, Santa represents the spirit of generosity that is the best aspect of the holiday season. "Santa is all about love, about sharing and good cheer," he says, "and not just material things. He symbolizes the best part in each of us, the nurturing, benevolent person we want to be." Indeed, Christopher loves to dress up as Santa, complete with flowing white beard, fake potbelly, and wire-rim glasses, and bellow, "Ho, ho, ho!" when he signs ornaments for collectors.

Gift giving has always been an integral part of any celebration. Ancient northern European Celts exchanged gifts on New Year's Day. During the harvest festival of Saturnalia, Romans gave gifts of fruit, while the traditional gifts at Calends, their New Year, were branches of bay, olive, myrtle, holly, ivy, rosemary, or fir. Called *strenae*, these greens were considered symbols of life, health, and vigor. Later, *strenae* included anything sweet--fruit, cakes, nuts--or anything golden, which promises wealth, making gilded nuts and fruits popular. Norse myths held that winter gifts came from their god Wodan. Berchta, an early Germanic goddess of the hearth, was another legendary gift giver. Usually portrayed as a hag and accompanied by elves and sprites, she rode through the land on winter nights at year's end, giving blessings and curses as appropriate to the recipient. Good children received gifts, bad ones lumps of coals or switches. People were supposed to leave out a feast for Berchta and her companions. Christians later renamed her Befana, and she became associated with the three gift-bearing Magi. When Christianity spread to northern Europe, the Church fathers felt that the gifts should come from a Christian instead of a pagan, so the job fell to St. Nicholas. The American press played a large role in popularizing Santa Claus. Tall, thin, and dressed as a bishop, a rather stern St. Nicholas was depicted by Washington Irving in 1809 in his *History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty*. Clement Clark Moore's poem *A Visit from St. Nicholas* (now known as "Twas the Night Before Christmas"), first published in 1823, described Santa as "a right jolly old elf, . . . [with] a little round belly," a tiny sleigh, and eight reindeer. But it wasn't until 1863, when a Thomas Nast cartoon of Santa as a jolly, plump, bearded elf with a retinue of helpers was published in *Harper's Weekly*, that our present-day image of the jovial figure evolved. In 1931, paintings of Santa by Haddon Sundblom advertised Coca-Cola in *Look and Life* magazines and eliminated the elfishness, making Santa a grandfatherly giant over six feet tall. This Americanized version of Santa is now popular around the world. To Christopher, the divergent ideas of a rather formal figure and a jolly one represent what he calls the European and the American sensibilities of Santa Claus. This divergence is apparent in his ornament designs for the two kinds of Santa. The European Santa is slim and wears a long robe trimmed in fur. He was the one most often depicted by the original glass-ornament makers: stern, dressed in old-style robes with his arms tucked in his sleeves or holding a pine tree. In contrast, the American Santa is usually plump,

wears a short, fur-trimmed red jacket, and often is laden with gifts. "I see the jolly Santa," says Christopher, "as the idealized grandfather we all wish we had, someone who holds you on his knees and tells you stories, someone who is generous with hugs." Unlike the stern Euro-Santa, this roly-poly figure would never carry a switch or threaten children with punishment. However, when it comes to fashion, the European figure leaps and bounds ahead of his American cousin. European-style Santa ornaments come in a dazzling array of magnificent robes, ranging from winter white to tuxedo black, princely purple, even aquamarine, recalling priestly robes worn on holy days. Their names are equally regal: "The Bishop," "Westminster Santa," "Romanov Santa." To this day, Santa continues to change his name, and literally change his colors. For example, under Communism, Santa Claus was persona non grata in the Soviet Union. Instead there was "Grandfather Frost," who resembled Santa but often wore a white or light blue coat.