



Ricardo Riskalla is one of Australia's leading Fitness and Health experts. Contacting Ricardo is the first step to living a healthy lifestyle.

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# body+soul EXPERTS



## RICARDO RISKALLA

Personal trainer Ricardo Riskalla wrote our exercise guide to help you recover from the festive season and get ready for the new year

(page 6). How does he spend his Sundays?

"My Sundays are precious! I spend time with my kids, Allegra and Dominic, and my wife Kate. Cooking healthy meals is another hobby of mine, so usually lunch and dinner involves a lot of cooking creations. I also like to run really late at night in summer. An 11pm run on a summer night is beautiful and refreshing."

## SARAH McMAHON

Psychologist Sarah McMahon is a co-director of BodyMatters Australasia, which specialises in eating

issues and adolescent mental health. This week, she shares her advice on surviving the festive season (right). She is spending Christmas at her family's beach house on the NSW north coast. "I'd love to have another overseas adventure next year, perhaps to Laos and Cambodia, or a white Christmas in Europe."



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## LIFESTYLE



# Putting the merry into Christmas

THE FESTIVE SEASON IS A TIME OF FUN, BUT FOR MANY IT CAN ALSO BE STRESSFUL. HERE'S HOW TO MAKE THIS YEAR'S YOUR BEST EVER. BY Donna Duggan

**F**or many people, Christmas Day and the holiday season can be stressful or lonely. Apart from the Christmas Day pressures of choosing the right gifts, catching up with friends and family and preparing food, it can also be a time of disappointment, financial strain, family feuds, stressful travel and being alone or far away from loved ones.

Instead of enduring another stressful festive season, psychologists Sarah McMahon and Tracey Hassan share their advice on how to put the merry back into Christmas.

### THERE IS ALWAYS A FIGHT BETWEEN FAMILY MEMBERS

#### ■ Solution: Change the routine.

"Family relationships can be like a predictable dance," Sarah McMahon says. "If there is a particular pattern of relating, this will likely continue until someone changes their steps."

"If your family consistently ends up fighting, consider the things you can do differently this Christmas to change the routine. Are there conversation topics you could avoid? Could you listen more effectively? Should you be establishing different boundaries? Are

there triggers (such as drinking alcohol) that you could avoid? How can you circumvent interactions or people that press your buttons? Could you remove yourself or bite your tongue before you find yourself embroiled in a fight?"

McMahon says while Christmas can seem like an excellent time to talk about what you would like to change in your relationships, it is recommended that you address issues at a more neutral time.

When dealing with in-laws, Tracey Hassan says this is a time when you and your partner