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Foreword

This collection brings together three classic Christmas songs: a swinging rendition of a festive classic, a quirky arrangement of a pop favourite and a fast-paced, lively traditional carol.

Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer started life in 1939 as a cartoon character in a colouring book created by Robert L. May, only later being turned into the song that we all know and love. Look out for the groovy 'Take five' middle section – if you relax and enjoy it, the 5/4 metre should come naturally. The gentle opening section works well as a solo, so do encourage a confident singer to take this on.

Santa Claus is comin' to town was first sung on Eddie Cantor's radio show in November 1934. Over the years it has been performed by numerous recording artists: Bing Crosby, Justin Bieber and Michael Buble, to name but a few. You'll find that this arrangement has a slight twist on the original, as I have varied the metre between the usual 4/4 time signature and a 3/4 waltz-time. This may need a little practice, but you'll be rewarded with a really unique arrangement of this popular song – like you've never heard it before!

We wish you a merry Christmas started life as sixteenth-century English carol. At this time, it was traditional for wealthy people of the community to give Christmas gifts to the carollers on Christmas Eve in the form of treats such as figgy puddings. Aptly, this carol was often the last song that carollers would sing on their rounds, wishing listeners all good tidings and happy spirits at Christmastime. Enjoy the feet stamping from bar 68, and your pianist can bring out the hints of *Jingle bells* and *Deck the halls* that surface towards the end!

Alexander L'Estrange, July 2014

Editorial notes

Choral Basics has been devised to provide arrangements and original pieces specifically for beginner choirs.

Vocal ranges: the arrangements don't explore the extremes of the voice, but aim to stretch the vocal range from time to time in the context of a well-placed musical phrase. Small notes indicate optional alternatives: 1) where the main notes may fall out of comfortable range for some singers, 2) where certain singers on the male-voice part, which mainly falls in the baritone range of a 10th (B–D), wish to explore the tenor or bass register, or 3) where a doubling within a part is suggested.

Breathing: singers should aim to follow the punctuation of the text, and breathe accordingly. However, commas above the music suggest places to breathe where not provided for within the text.

Piano accompaniments: the simple yet imaginative piano parts have been written to support the vocal lines. Small notes in the piano part are intended to help support singers while learning the piece; however, once more confident you may choose to omit the notes, or just to play them very gently.

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Santa Claus is comin' to town

Words by Haven Gillespie

Music by J. Fred Coots

Jaunty waltz ♩ = c.172 poco rall.

SOPRANO/
ALTO *mf*

PIANO *mf*

9 *a tempo*
cheerfully

just got back from a love - ly trip a - long the Milk - y Way. _____

17 S.
I stopped off at the North Pole _____ to spend a ho - li - day. _____

A.
I stopped off at the North Pole _____ to spend a ho - li - day.

MEN *mf*

I stopped off at the North Pole _____ to spend a ho - li - day. I

We wish you a merry Christmas

Trad.
arr. Alexander L'Estrange

Eagerly moving forward ♩ = c.136 much slower

mf cresc. *f*

SOPRANO/
ALTO

MEN

Mer - ry, mer - ry, mer - ry, mer - ry

PIANO

p *mf cresc.* *f*

rall. a tempo

7 *mf* *cresc.*

with a smile with a smile *mf* *cresc.*

Christ-mas! We wish you a mer-ry Christ-mas, We wish you a mer-ry

rall. a tempo

mf

8th Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

12 *f*

Christ-mas, We wish you a mer-ry Christ-mas, and a hap - py New Year!

f *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped.