

ARTS & VARIETY

Non-Christmas Movies for this Holiday Season

BY ALEXANDRIA GOSEN

IT'S COMIN' ON Christmass; there's cutting down trees, there's arguing about which movies to watch before Christmas Eve! It's easy to get caught up in the chaos of Christmas movies. For some, even early December is too early to watch "The Grinch." Some simply are not fans of Christmas films. And that is totally fair, but it is still fun to cinematically celebrate the snowy season. I have compiled a list of four of the best, most superb, cinematically acclaimed non-Christmas Christmas films for even the pickiest film connoisseur.

You've Got Mail (1998) –

You've Got Mail, starring Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks is a wonderful film that circles a year in New York. We follow Kathleen Kelly (Ryan), a small bookstore owner on the verge of ruin, and Joe Fox (Hanks) the CEO of a large book chain— think Barnes & Noble— who opens a store across the street from Kathleen Kelly's small shop. The two have each been experiencing a budding romance online, but they do not know the true identity of their pen pal. This movie is not always snowy, but it does always evoke the warm, cozy feeling one might have felt Christmas morning. This film is available on HBO Max.

Love, Actually (2003) –

This star studded cast tells several stories of several relationships over the course of a few weeks around Christmas time. Featuring Colin Firth, Emma Thompson, Liam Neeson, Hugh Grant, and the late Alan Rickman, as well as many others. This movie is funny, heart-felt, and at times incredibly random. It is rated R, so I wouldn't recommend young children watching it. However, if you are interested in dysfunctional relationships, and over the top, dramatic plot lines executed in hilarious ways, I highly recommend this not-quite-Christmas flick

Die Hard (1989) –

This movie also stars the late Alan Rickman who is famous for the infamous "Christmas, non-Christmas movie" debate. This is perfect for action fans, and follows an NYPD officer on his venture to save his wife, who was abducted at a Christmas party. This is available for streaming on Starz.

Barbie in the Nutcracker (2001) –

My personal favorite non-christmas movie is *Barbie in the Nutcracker*. Yes, this is intended for four year old girls, and yes the animation is—for lack of a better

phrase: trash. However, the nostalgia of this film makes me feel so at home, and the childish story, cringey dialogue and again, poor animation, make for a meme-of-a-time. Also, Tchaikovsky slaps, and anyone who says otherwise needs to shush.

As anyone can see, there are plenty of movies to watch this season, whether you are a true Grinch or in love with the season. The important thing is finding a movie that brings you joy. Happy Holidays!

Restaurant Review: The Nicollet Diner

BY RICHARD MAHLE

THE NICOLLET DINER opened its doors in September of 2014. Since its opening date, the diner has been open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. There was an extreme dedication to the customers by giving them a place that was open at all times. They have a full bar that operates from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. daily because it is five O'clock somewhere. Nicollet Diner was originally located on 15th and Nicollet. However, due to circumstances and the diner outgrowing their location, they relocated and partnered with Rox's Cabaret. Now the restaurant thrives even more than before!

My partner and I used to go to the old location all the time, so we did not hesitate to try out the new location. This experience was absolutely awful. From the completely burned fried pickles that would have cost me \$11 if they had not comped it to the burned hockey puck burger that was ordered pink. The saving grace of the restaurant is its breakfast menu and that they are able to make basic eggs extremely well. If you want to pay \$15 for an egg dish that would cost you \$5 or \$6 to make on your own, go ahead. I also forgot to mention that making it on your own would take less time because we waited about 40 minutes to get our food which would not be terrible if they did not slash their portion sizes and overcooked food.

The most positive thing on their menu would be their milkshakes and malts. While they will run you \$10 minimum, they are pretty all right in quality. Their dessert is decent for a 24-hour run business. However, if you like toppings in your milkshakes and malts,

be aware that they are stingy with how much that gets put in, so you will most likely spend twice as much for not a lot of toppings.

The prices of the food are not very great. As a college student, sometimes food can't be too expensive because we just don't have a huge expendable food budget. This diner will run you \$15 minimum for medium to low-quality food. I recommend taking your business elsewhere. Perhaps the team had an off night because I have had nothing but positive memories of the Nicollet Diner throughout my time here in Minnesota. Just be warned that they slashed portion sizes, increased prices, and lowered the quality of the food. A real 4.5-star restaurant really performed like a 2 or 3-star restaurant.



Photo Credit: Hans Vivek