

= A Very Gaga Thanksgiving =

A Very Gaga Thanksgiving is a Thanksgiving television special that originally aired on November 24 , 2011 , in the United States on ABC . Conceived and directed by Lady Gaga , it discusses her personal life and the inspiration behind her music . Development for A Very Gaga Thanksgiving immediately surfaced in November 2011 , when it was announced that Gaga would host a television special on Thanksgiving . Principal photography took place at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in New York City .

It features guest appearances from Katie Couric , Art Smith , and Tony Bennett . Gaga performed stripped down , acoustic versions of four songs from her second studio album , Born This Way , along with two Christmas songs and a duet with Bennett . The special received critical acclaim and gave ABC its best ratings in four years for its respective time slot on Thanksgiving Day . At the 2012 Dorian Awards , the special was nominated in the category of Best TV Musical Program of the Year , but did not win the award . A live EP of performances from the special , titled A Very Gaga Holiday , was made available for purchase from the iTunes Store . The EP debuted on the Billboard 200 chart at number 52 .

= = Synopsis = =

Couric interviews Lady Gaga about her life and the inspiration behind her music at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Manhattan , the school she attended as a child . Gaga also performs nine songs to a small audience of friends and family , including " Born This Way " , " Marry the Night " , " You and I " , " Hair " and " The Edge of Glory " , as well as covers of Irving Berlin 's holiday classic " White Christmas " and Nat King Cole 's " Orange Colored Sky " . She also sings " The Lady Is a Tramp " , originally from the 1937 musical comedy Babes in Arms , as a duet with Tony Bennett . The duet also featured the work of Gaga 's trumpeter , Brian Newman . Gaga sings " Bad Romance " onstage in a different scene . American chef Art Smith accompanies Gaga with a turkey dinner and waffles . In another scene , a small group of children gather around her as she blows glitter on them .

= = Production = =

A Very Gaga Thanksgiving was conceived and directed by Gaga herself , while it was produced by Steven Johnson , Rudy Bendar , and David Saltz . Principal photography took place at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in New York City . Gaga told Women 's Wear Daily : " My dad will be so excited . I actually directed it . It 's the first of two things I directed . I directed this as well as the video for ' Marry The Night , ' my new single ... So we 'll be watching that and eating turkey and doing what all New Yorkers do , which is getting ready for every window to be filled with Christmas cheer the next day . "

Gaga received dresses designed by Giorgio Armani , Stéphane Rolland , Azzedine Alaïa , and Martin Grant . A promotional photo of Gaga was released that shows her " going full ice princess " , which Erin Strecker of Entertainment Weekly presumed will be her primary apparel . In a press statement early in November 2011 , Couric commented that the special 's story will amaze viewers and show a different side of Gaga :

This is a chance to see more of who she is beneath the wild costumes and staged musical numbers ... Lady Gaga as a high school student still bruised by being excluded from the party , Lady Gaga as a devoted daughter and caring sister , Lady Gaga as a 25 @-@ year @-@ old woman embracing fame and fortune that seemed to come overnight . She will impress you , delight you and surprise you .

Smith commented , " It 's important for people to see that this amazing woman [ Gaga ] has a family that supports her . " A 30 @-@ second preview of the special premiered on November 20 , 2011 on Lady Gaga 's YouTube channel . It revealed the appearances of Bennett , Couric and Smith . After watching the preview , a staff member of Idolator commented that it " reminds us of our own family

Turkey Day get @-@ together : there are people running around in ridiculous attire , someone ? s crying and the hostess is a ( Mother ) Monster of sorts . " In a three @-@ minute teaser trailer , Gaga makes crafts and shares holiday food with third @-@ grade children . The full TV special premiered on November 24 , 2011 , at 9 : 30 pm ET .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

A Very Gaga Thanksgiving initially aired on November 24 , 2011 in the United States on ABC . It attained 5 @.@ 749 million viewers and garnered a 1 @.@ 8 / 5 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic in its first hour . Gaga 's special aired simultaneously with the reruns of The Simpsons on FOX , Person of Interest on CBS , and The Secret Circle on The CW . In its second hour , total viewership and ratings slightly declined to 5 @.@ 388 million viewers and a 1 @.@ 6 / 5 ratings in the 18 ? 49 demographic , despite airing simultaneously with a recap of the Macy 's Thanksgiving Day Parade on NBC and a rerun of The Mentalist on CBS . A Very Gaga Thanksgiving failed to beat other Thanksgiving specials in the ratings , including A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving . A Very Gaga Thanksgiving had the highest rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic in its time slot , and total viewership increased by 23 % ( 1 @.@ 3 million viewers ) from its predecessor , singer Beyoncé 's 2009 concert , I Am ... World Tour . It subsequently gave ABC its best ratings in four years for its respective time slot on Thanksgiving Day .

= = = Critical response = = =

It was met with general acclaim from television critics . Calling it engaging , Ken Tucker of Entertainment Weekly opined that A Very Gaga Thanksgiving was " disarmingly direct , sincere , and unpretentious . " Tucker praised Lady Gaga 's performances in the television special , expressing that they were a " warm , low @-@ key collection of solid performances of her hits and pop standards . " Dave Itzkoff of The New York Times deemed the television special as a " dream or a hallucination . " The Guardian journalist Hadley Freeman wrote , " It was all inoffensive , silly and knowing , and laid down the groundwork for what looks likely to be the singer 's next career : as America 's in @-@ house eccentric , fearless enough to satirize the country 's traditions but canny enough to know that while you can deface as many Irving Berlin songs as you like , the turkey is non @-@ negotiable . " In contrast , A Very Gaga Thanksgiving was critically panned by Jen Carlson of Gothamist , who felt that it was a " very transparent marketing ploy for the new Gaga holiday release . "

The Washington Post 's Sarah Anne Hughes stated that she was shocked at how traditional Gaga was in the television special . Cavan Sieczkowski of International Business Times asserted that A Very Gaga Thanksgiving was a " charming throwback to holiday specials of times past . " Sieczkowski praised the outfits , and drew comparisons to those of Elizabeth Taylor and Ava Gardner . In concurrence , Joe Drake of Ology wrote : " This special was [ fabulous ] . I have nothing bad to say about it . Lady Gaga proves , yet again , that she is the artist of our generation . Her talent , beauty , personality and spirit make her such an incredible person to look up to and respect . " At the 2012 Dorian Awards , the special was nominated in the category of Best TV Musical Program of the Year , but lost to Glee and Gaga 's own concert special , Lady Gaga Presents the Monster Ball Tour : At Madison Square Garden .

= = Music = =

On November 22 , 2011 , iTunes Store began selling a live EP of performances from the special , which included " White Christmas " , " Orange Colored Sky " , " You and I " , and " The Edge of Glory " . The EP was made available for purchase from the iTunes Store only . Titled A Very Gaga

Holiday , the release entered the Billboard 200 chart at number 52 selling 22 @, @ 000 copies , and number nine on the Top Holiday Albums chart . The same week , the special also had an impact on Gaga 's second studio album , Born This Way , which moved up the Billboard 200 chart from 72 ? 21 , with sales of 47 @, @ 000 copies ( up 416 % from previous week ) .