

= All I Want for Christmas Is You =

" All I Want for Christmas Is You " is a song performed by American singer and songwriter Mariah Carey , and written and produced by Carey . It was released by Columbia Records on November 1 , 1994 as the lead single from her first holiday album and fourth studio album , Merry Christmas . " Christmas " is an uptempo love song that includes bell chimes and heavy back @-@ up vocals , as well as use of synthesizers . The song 's lyrics declare that the narrator does not care about Christmas presents or lights ; all she wants for Christmas is to be with her lover .

Two music videos were commissioned for the song : the song 's primary music video features grainy home @-@ movie @-@ style footage of Carey , her dogs and family during the holiday season , as well as Carey dressed in a Santa suit frolicking on a snowy mountainside . Carey 's then @-@ husband Tommy Mottola makes a cameo appearance as Santa Claus , bringing Carey a gift and leaving on a red sleigh . The second video was filmed in black and white format , and features Carey dressed in 1960s style in homage to The Ronettes , alongside back up singers and female dancers . Carey has performed " All I Want for Christmas Is You " in a slew of live television appearances and tours throughout her career . In 2010 , Carey re @-@ recorded the song for her second holiday album , Merry Christmas II You , titled " All I Want for Christmas Is You ( Extra Festive ) " . Carey also re @-@ recorded the song as a duet with Canadian singer Justin Bieber for his 2011 album Under the Mistletoe , titled " All I Want for Christmas for You ( SuperFestive ! ) " . The song has also been covered by many artists over the years .

In the years since its original release , " All I Want for Christmas Is You " has been critically lauded and has become established as a Christmas standard ; it was once called " one of the few worthy modern additions to the holiday canon " in The New Yorker , and continues to surge in popularity each holiday season . The song was commercially successful , reaching the number @-@ two position on the singles charts of Australia , Japan , the Netherlands , Norway , and the United Kingdom , and the top 10 in several other countries . The Daily Telegraph hailed " All I Want for Christmas Is You " as the most popular and most played Christmas song of the decade in the United Kingdom . Rolling Stone ranked it fourth on its Greatest Rock and Roll Christmas Songs list , calling it a " holiday standard . " In December 2015 , the song peaked at 11 on the Billboard Hot 100 , making it its highest peak since its original release .

With global sales of over 14 million copies , the song remains Carey 's biggest international success and the 11th best @-@ selling single of all time . As of 2013 , the song was reported to have earned \$ 50 million in royalties .

= = Background and writing = =

Following the success of the singer 's 1993 career best @-@ selling album Music Box , Carey and her management at Columbia Records began devising ideas and strategies for subsequent projects . Carey 's then @-@ husband , Tommy Mottola , head of Columbia 's parent label Sony Music Entertainment , began mapping out possible follow ups for the singer during the pinnacle years of her career . During initial discussions regarding the thought of doing a Christmas @-@ themed album with Carey and her writing partner of over four years , Walter Afanasieff , fear arose that it wasn 't commercially expedient or wise to release holiday music at the peak of one 's career , as it was more often equated with a release towards the end of a musician 's waning career . Afanasieff recalled his sentiments during initial discussions for a holiday record : " Back then , you didn 't have a lot of artists with Christmas albums . It wasn 't a known science at all back then , and there was nobody who did new , big Christmas songs . So we were going to release it as kind of an everyday , ' Hey , you know , we 're putting out a Christmas album . No big deal . ' " Ultimately , with Mottola 's persistence and Carey 's initiative to be a " risk @-@ taker " as Afanasieff put it , the song and its parent album , Merry Christmas , began taking form in early @-@ mid 1994 . Recording for the album began in June , while the Carey @-@ Afanasieff songwriting duo penned " All I Want for Christmas Is You " in late @-@ August . Often referencing herself a festive person and demonstrating a usual penchant for her love of all things Christmas , Carey began decorating the

home she shared with Mottola in upstate New York ( which also came equipped with a personal recording studio ) with Christmas ornaments and other holiday @-@ inspired trinkets . In doing so , Carey felt she could capture the essence and spirit of what she was singing and make her vocal performance and delivery more emotive and authentic . The songwriting pair carved out the chords , structure and melody for the song in just a quarter of an hour : " It 's definitely not ' Swan Lake , ' ' admits Afanasieff . ' But that 's why it 's so popular ? because it 's so simple and palatable ! " . At first , Afanasieff admitted that he was puzzled and " blanched " as to where Carey 's wanted to take the melody and vocal scales , though she was " adamant " in her direction for the song . In an interview with Billboard , Afanasieff described the type of relationship he and Carey shared in the studio and as songwriters for the song and in general :

It was always the same sort of system with us . We would write the nucleus of the song , the melody primary music , and then some of the words were there as we finished writing it . I started playing some rock ' n ' roll piano and started boogie woogie @-@ ing my left hand , and that inspired Mariah to come up with the melodic [ Sings . ] ' I don 't want a lot for Christmas . ' And then we started singing and playing around with this rock ' n ' roll boogie song , which immediately came out to be the nucleus of what would end up being ' All I Want For Christmas Is You . ' That one went very quickly : It was an easier song to write than some of the other ones . It was very formulaic ; not a lot of chord changes . I tried to make it a little more unique , putting in some special chords that you really don 't hear a lot of , which made it unique and special .

Then for the next week or two Mariah would call me and say , ' What do you think about this bit ? ' We would talk a little bit until she got the lyrics all nicely coordinated and done . And then we just waited until the sessions began , which were in the summer of ' 94 where we got together in New York and started recording . And that 's when we first hear her at the microphone singing , and the rest is history .

Afanasieff flew back to California where he finished the song 's programming and production . Originally , he had a live band play the drums and other instruments with the thought of giving it a more raw and affective sound . He was unhappy with the results of the recording and subsequently scrapped the effort and used his original , personal arrangement and programmed all the instruments heard on the song ( with the exception of the background vocals ) including the piano , effects , drums and triangle . While Carey continued writing material in her rented home in The Hamptons , Afanasieff completed the song 's programming and awaited to rendezvous with her a final time in order to layer and harmonize the background vocals . In touching on several aspects of what excited her to record and release a Christmas album , Carey went into detail on what writing and recording the song and album meant for her : " I 'm a very festive person and I love the holidays . I 've sung Christmas songs since I was a little girl . I used to go Christmas caroling . When it came to the album , we had to have a nice balance between standard Christian hymns and fun songs . It was definitely a priority for me to write at least a few new songs , but for the most part people really want to hear the standards at Christmas time , no matter how good a new song is . "

= = Composition and lyrics = =

" All I Want for Christmas Is You " is an uptempo song , composed with pop , soul , R & B , gospel , dance @-@ pop and rhythmic adult contemporary influences and stylings . By early August , Carey already had two original songs written alongside Afanasieff ; the " sad and balld @-@ y " " Miss You Most ( At Christmas Time ) " and the " Gospel @-@ tinged and religious " " Jesus Born on This Day " . The third and final original song the pair planned to write was to be centered and inspired and in the vein of a " Phil Spector , old rock ' n roll , sixties @-@ sounding Christmas song " . Critics have noted the song 's 1940 's , 1950 's , and 1960 's influences , and in conjunction with Carey 's voice and its simplistic melody , heralded it as its recipe for success . In discussing the song 's chord progression and stylistic approaches , Slate 's Adam Ragusea hailed the song as " the only Christmas song written in the last half @-@ century worthy of inclusion in the Great American Songbook . " The A.V. Club 's Annie Zaleski attributes the song 's enduring appeal to its ambiguity in being able to pin it down as belonging to a specific era . The song begins with a " sparking " bit of

percussion " that resembles an antique music box or a whimsical snow globe . " After Carey 's a capella style vocal introduction , the song introduces other seasonal percussive signifiers including ; celebratory church @-@ like bells , cheerful sleigh bells , and " an underlying rhythmic beat that sounds like the loping pace of a horse or reindeer . These sounds echo religious and secular musical touchstones , without veering blatantly too much in either direction , and give the song an upbeat , joyous tone . " In an interview in 1994 , Carey described the song as " fun " , and continued : " It 's very traditional , old @-@ fashioned Christmas . It 's very retro , kind of ' 60s . " Afanasieff went further in breaking down the song 's musical elements : " A lush bed of keyboards , reminiscent of a small @-@ scale Wall of Sound , cushions the song 's cheery rhythms , while a soulful vocal chorus adds robust oohs , tension @-@ creating counter @-@ melodies , and festive harmonies . Most notably , however , the song 's jaunty piano chords and melody keep the song merrily bouncing along . " Critics noted the song a tad reminiscent of the works of Judy Garland and Nat King Cole , while also describing it as hearkening back to " ' 60s and ' 70s Motown covers of prewar Christmas classics , such as The Jackson 5 's [ and ] Stevie Wonder " . Slate 's Ragusea conceded that " All I Want For Christmas Is You " " sounds like it could have been written in the ' 40s and locked in a Brill Building safe . "

Lyrically , the song focuses on the yearning desire to be with a loved one for Christmas , regardless of whether they have to forgo the usual commercial aspect of the holiday season such as ornamental lights , trees , snow and presents . The song incorporates various instruments , including piano , drums , violin , oboe , flute , bell chimes , bass effect , and cowbells . The song layers background vocals throughout the chorus and sections of the bridge . According to the sheet music published at Musicnotes.com by Sony / ATV Music Publishing , " All I Want for Christmas Is You " is set in common time and in the key of G major . Carey 's vocal range in the song spans from the note of G3 to the high note of G5 . Carey wrote the song 's lyrics and melody , while Walter Afanasieff arranged and produced the piece with synthetically created computerized equipment . Slate 's Ragusea counts " at least 13 distinct chords at work , resulting in a sumptuously chromatic melody . The song also includes what I consider the most Christmassy chord of all ? a minor subdominant , or ' iv , ' chord with an added 6 , under the words ' underneath the Christmas tree , ' among other places . ( You might also analyze it as a half @-@ diminished ' ii ' 7th chord , but either interpretation seems accurate ) . " According to Roch Parisien from AllMusic , the song contains " The Beach Boys @-@ style harmonies , jangling bells , and a sleigh @-@ ride pace , injecting one of the few bits of exuberant fun in this otherwise vanilla set . " In a piece on the song in Vogue , a writer felt the song 's lyrics helped solidify its status over two decades later : " those lyrics could have been sung by Frank Sinatra ? well , maybe not Frank , but another singer back then . I think that ? s what gives it that timeless , classic quality . "

= = Critical reception = =

" All I Want for Christmas Is You " was critically acclaimed by music critics . Parisien called the song " a year @-@ long banger " , complimenting its instrumentation and melody . Steve Morse , editor of The Boston Globe , wrote that Carey sang with a lot of soul . According to Barry Schwartz from Stylus Magazine , " to say this song is an instant classic somehow doesn 't capture its amazingicity ; it 's a modern standard : joyous , exhilarating , loud , with even a hint of longing . " Schwartz praised the song 's lyrics as well , describing them as " beautifully phrased , " and calling Carey 's voice " gorgeous " and " sincere . " Kyle Anderson from MTV labeled the track " a majestic anthem full of chimes , sleigh bells , doo @-@ wop flourishes , sweeping strings and one of the most dynamic and clean vocal performances of Carey 's career " . While reviewing the 2009 remix version , Becky Bain from Idolator called the song a " timeless classic " and wrote , " We love the original song to pieces ? we blast it while decorating our Christmas tree and lighting our Menorah . " In his review for Carey 's Merry Christmas II You , Thomas Connor from the Chicago Sun @-@ Times called the song " a simple , well @-@ crafted chestnut and one of the last great additions to the Christmas pop canon " . Shona Craven of Scotland 's The Herald , said , " [ it 's ] a song of optimism and joy that maybe , just maybe , hints at the real meaning of Christmas . " Additionally , she felt the main reason it was

so successful is the subject "you" in the lyrics, explaining, "Perhaps what makes the song such a huge hit is the fact that it's for absolutely everyone." Craven opened her review with a bold statement: "Bing Crosby may well be turning in his grave, but no child of the 1980s will be surprised to see Mariah Carey's sublime All I Want For Christmas Is You bounding up the charts after being named the nation's top festive song." In a 2006 retrospective look at Carey's career, Sasha Frere-Jones of *The New Yorker* said, the "charming" song was one of Carey's biggest accomplishments, calling it "one of the few worthy modern additions to the holiday canon". Dan Hancox, editor of *The National*, quoted and agreed with Jones' statement, calling the song "perfection". In 2010, *Rolling Stone* ranked "All I Want for Christmas Is You" fourth on its Greatest Rock and Roll Christmas Songs list, calling it a "holiday standard".

= = Commercial performance = =

In the United Kingdom, the song entered the UK Singles Chart at No. 5 during the week of December 10, 1994. The following week, the song peaked at No. 2, staying there for the final three weeks of December (held out of the coveted "Christmas No. 1" honor by East 17's "Stay Another Day"). As of July 18, 2016, it had spent seventy-two weeks on the UK Singles Chart. As of December 19, 2013, "All I Want for Christmas Is You" has sold one million copies in the UK. On December 11, 2015, it was certified double platinum by the British Phonographic Industry for shipment of 1.2 million units (including streams) and remains Carey's best-selling single in the UK. In 2010, "All I Want for Christmas Is You" was named the No. 1 holiday song of the decade in the United Kingdom. The song peaked at No. 2 on the Australian Singles Chart and was certified triple platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA), denoting shipments of over 210,000 units. In Denmark, it peaked at No. 4, staying in the chart for sixteen weeks and being certified gold by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI). "All I Want for Christmas Is You" became Carey's best-selling single in Japan. It was used as the theme song to the popular drama *29 sai no Christmas* (29-sai no Christmas, lit. "Christmas in 29 Years, 29th Christmas"), and was titled *Koibito tachi no Christmas* (恋ひとちのクリスマス, lit. "Lovers' Christmas"). It sold in excess of 1.1 million units in Japan. Due to strong sales and airplay, the song re-charted in Japan in 2010, peaking at No. 6 on the Japan Hot 100. The single has been certified the Million award by the Recording Industry Association of Japan (RIAJ) on two different formats (compact disc and ringtone), in 1994 and 2008, respectively.

In the United States, in the first week of January 1995, "All I Want for Christmas Is You" peaked at number six on the *Billboard* Hot Adult Contemporary and at No. 12 on the Hot 100 Airplay chart. The song placed on these two charts again in December 1995 and in December 1996. The song was ineligible for inclusion on the *Billboard* Hot 100 during its original release, because it was not released commercially as a single. This rule lapsed in 1998, however, allowing the song to chart on the *Billboard* Hot 100 (peaking at No. 83 in January 2000). The song topped the *Billboard* Hot Digital Songs chart in December 2005, but it was unable to attain a new peak on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart because it was considered a recurrent single and was thus ineligible for chart re-entry. Every December from 2005 to 2008, the song topped the *Billboard* Hot 100 Re-entries chart. In 2012, after the recurrent rule was revised to allow all songs in the top 50 onto the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart, the single re-entered the chart at No. 29 and eventually attained a new peak of No. 21 on the week ending January 5, 2013, however dropping out the following week. In December 2013, the song re-entered the *Billboard* Hot 100 at number 26. It has become the best-selling holiday ringtone, and it is the first holiday ringtone to be certified double platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). Additionally, of songs recorded before the year 2000, it is the nineteenth best-selling digital single and the best-selling digital single by a woman, and is also the overall best-selling holiday digital single. In December 2015, the song peaked at 11 on the *Billboard* Hot 100, making it its highest peak since its original release. As of December 2012, Nielsen SoundScan estimated total sales of the digital track at 310,000 downloads.

= = Remixes and re @-@ releases = =

When the song was first released as a single in 1994 , no remixes were commissioned except for the instrumental version , however this version was not released on the single that year . Carey re @-@ released the song commercially in Japan in 2000 , with a new remix known as the So So Def remix . The remix contains new vocals and is played over a harder , more urban beat ; it features raps by Jermaine Dupri and Bow Wow . The remix appears on Carey 's compilation album Greatest Hits ( 2001 ) as a bonus track . In 2009 , a remix produced by Carey and Low Sunday , called " Mariah 's New Dance Mix " , was released . The mix laid the original 1994 vocals over new electronic instrumentation . The remix garnered a positive response . MTV 's Kyle Anderson wrote that " it 's difficult to improve perfection , " but that the remix " does dress up the song in a disco thump that should make your office Christmas party 28 percent funkier than it was last year . " Idolator 's Becky Bain praised the song 's catchiness .

In 2010 , Carey re @-@ recorded the song for her thirteenth studio and second holiday album , Merry Christmas II You . Titled " All I Want for Christmas Is You ( Extra Festive ) " , the new version featured re @-@ recorded vocals , softer bell ringing and stronger drumming , and an orchestral introduction that replaced the slow vocal introduction . Steven J. Horowitz from Rap @-@ Up wrote that the new version " sound [ ed ] just as enjoyable as it did in 1994 . " While the song was praised , it drew criticism for being too similar to the original . Thomas Connor from the Chicago Sun @-@ Times wrote that the new version " just seems to add a few brassy backup singers to the exact same arrangement . " Caryn Ganz from Rolling Stone agreed , writing that it was " hard to figure out what 's ' extra festive ' " about the new version . Dan Hancox , editor of The National , also felt the new version was unnecessary . In 2011 , Justin Bieber also recorded a version of the song as a duet with Carey on his holiday album , Under the Mistletoe .

= = Live performances = =

Carey has performed the song during concerts as well as live televised performances . It was part of the set @-@ list during the Japanese shows of Carey 's Daydream World Tour ( 1996 ) , Butterfly World Tour ( 1998 ) , Charmbracelet World Tour ( 2002 ? 03 ) , and The Adventures of Mimi Tour ( 2006 ) . Additionally , Carey performed the song at the 2004 Walt Disney World Christmas Day Parade , which aired on ABC . Carey sang the So So Def remix version at the opening night of her Angels Advocate Tour on New Year 's Eve . On November 9 , 2010 , Carey taped a live Christmas Special featuring the song , which aired on December 13 , 2010 on ABC . Additionally , Carey performed the song alongside " Oh Santa ! " airing on ESPN and ABC throughout the day on Christmas Day of 2010 . On December 3 , she performed both songs at the Walt Disney World Resort theme park , Magic Kingdom , in a performance that was taped and aired part of the Walt Disney World Christmas Day Parade on ABC . She performed them again in a music video promoting the day 's NBA games that aired on both networks . Carey also included the track as the encore to her sold out , first annual Christmas concert series at the Beacon Theater in New York City . The show was entitled All I Want For Christmas Is You , A Night of Joy & Festivity .

= = Music videos = =

There are three music videos for " All I Want for Christmas Is You " . The first , primary video was shot in the style of a home video ; it was directed and filmed by Carey during the Christmas season of 1993 . The video begins with Carey placing holiday ornaments on a Christmas tree and frolicking through the snowy mountainside . Outdoor scenes were shot at the Fairy Tale Forest in New Jersey , where Carey 's then @-@ husband Tommy Mottola made a cameo appearance as Santa Claus . It continues with scenes of Carey getting ready for her album cover photo shoot and spending time with her dog Jack . It concludes with Santa Claus leaving Carey with a bag of presents and waving goodbye . In the song 's alternate video , inspired by The Ronettes , Carey dances in a 1960s @-@

influenced studio surrounded by go ? go dancers . For a 1960s look , the video was filmed in black and white , with Carey in white boots and teased up hair . This video was also directed by Carey . There are two edits to this version of the video .

Another video was created for the So So Def remix , but it does not feature Carey or the hip @-@ hop musicians that perform in the song . Instead , the video is animated and based on a scene in the video from Carey 's " Heartbreaker " ( 1999 ) . It features cartoon cameo appearances by Carey , Jermaine Dupri , Bow Wow , Luis Miguel ( Carey 's boyfriend at the time ) , Carey 's dog Jack , and Santa Claus . Kris Kringle is credited with directing the music video . Since 2009 , the song has been included in a music video accompanying ESPN 's ( and their sister station , ABC ) Christmas Day coverage of the NBA . The music video for the duet featuring Bieber was filmed in Macy 's department store in New York , and features Bieber shopping with his friends whilst Carey is seen singing in the background .

= = Book adaptation = =

Carey released a children 's book based on " All I Want for Christmas Is You " on November 10 , 2015 .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications and sales = =

= = List of cover versions = =