Charles Brown - Cool Christmas Blues (1994)

1.Merry Christmas, Baby (04:49) 2.Santa's Blues (03:26) 3.Blue Holiday (04:36) 4.Silent Night (04:56) 5.Christmas Comes But Once a Year (04:20) 6.Please Come Home for Christmas (03:19) 7.A Song for Christmas (06:20) 8.Stay With Me (04:47) 9.To Someone That I Love (04:51) 10.Christmas in Heaven (04:00) 11.Bringing in a Brand New Year (05:31)
Personnel: Charles Brown (vocals, cello, piano); Danny Caron (guitar); Clifford Solomon, Bobby Forte (tenor saxophone); Johnny Otis (vibraphone); Gaylord Birch (drums).

Charles Brown is responsible for one of the bluesiest Christmas tunes ever, "Please Come Home for Christmas." Countless individuals and groups have covered this heartbreak classic because it so readily embraces the theme of being home for the holidays with loved ones. Brown's golden hit is just one of the highlights on his 1994 Christmas album, along with "Merry Christmas, Baby," a blues tune almost as popular as "Please Come Home for Christmas." Some of the newer tunes he's written for this record are almost as savory, including "Christmas Comes but Once a Year," a rockin' little number featuring the legendary Johnny Otis on vibes; the jazzy, six-minute-plus meditation on the holiday "A Song for Christmas"; and a couple of forthright love songs, not to mention "Christmas in Heaven" and "Bringing In a Brand New Year." --Martin Keller, amazon.com

Long recognized as the perennial top contender when it comes to Yuletide R&B, Brown salutes the holiday season in his own inimitable manner. Naturally, there's the umpteenth remake of his seminal "Merry Christmas Baby," along with several more that he's been crooning every December since before most of us were born. But nobody does 'em better. –Bill Dahl, Rovi

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