

New York Magazine Holidays

Holiday Exhibits and Tours

Train shows, gingerbread houses and candlelit tours spruce up the season.

By [Catherine LeFebvre](#) Published Nov 20, 2005

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The Holiday Train Show

The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx River Parkway at Fordham Road, Bronx; 718-817-8700; nybg.org.

For the fourteenth year, the Botanical Garden puts on its holiday show. Trains and trolleys run across the galleries of the conservatory—over bridges and through tunnels—and by intricate re-creations of famous city scenes made entirely out of plants and foliage. More than a hundred landmarks like the Apollo Theater, Yankee Stadium, and St. Patrick's Cathedral have been crafted from berries, mushrooms, pinecones, and twigs.

- November 19-January 8; 10am-5pm; Christmas Eve, 10am-3pm; closed Monday; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.
- Free with admission: Adults, \$13; students and seniors, \$11; children 2-12, \$5; children 2 and under, free.

Ye Olde Christmas Stroll

Big Onion Walking Tours; 212-439-1090; bigonion.com.

On Christmas Eve, Big Onion leads a tour of Greenwich Village, focusing on local sites as well as the evolution of Santa Claus and New York's role in the invention of Christmas. The tour ends in the garden of St. Luke's Church, where there will be a reading of Clement Clark Moore's *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. (Moore was a church warden at St. Luke's when he wrote the poem.)

- December 24; 1 pm. Meet at the [Washington Square Arch](#), Fifth Ave at Waverly Pl.
- Adults, \$15; seniors, \$12; students and [New York Historical Society](#) members, \$10.

The Jewish Lower East Side on Christmas Day

Big Onion Walking Tours; 212-439-1090; bigonion.com.

What better way for a Semite to spend Christmas Day than strolling through more than 350 years of Jewish history on the Lower East Side? The tour combines religious sites, politics, and people. Its been an annual event for the past 15 years and has become popular enough for many of the neighborhood shops to stay open that day to cater to it.

- December 25; 1pm, meet at the southeast corner of Essex and Delancey Sts.
- Adults, \$15; seniors, \$12; students and [New York Historical Society](#) members, \$10.

Candlelight Tours at Historic Richmond Town

Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave., Staten Island; 718-351-1611; historicrichmondtown.org.

Experience the holiday traditions of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries as your guide, dressed in period clothing, leads you through candlelit homes and public buildings. Taste freshly prepared holiday treats, bask in fireplace warmth, and partake in old-fashioned games and carols.

- December 10 and 17, first tour at 4:50pm, last at 8:30pm.
- \$27.50 prepaid reservation required.

Festival of Light and Sound

World Financial Center Winter Garden, 220 Vesey St., nr. West St.; 212-945-2600; worldfinancialcenter.com.

The World Financial Center kicks off its festival of free holiday events with the annual illumination of 100,000 lights, accompanied by the Grammy-winning Brooklyn Youth Chorus singing Hanukkah songs, medieval carols, and other music, spanning traditions and eras.

- November 29, 6:30pm
- Free.

Posadas Y Pastorelas: A Traditional Mexican Holiday Celebration

Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. at 103rd St.; 212-534-1672; mcny.org.

Experience a *posada*, a singing holiday procession with dancers in pre-Columbian and folklórico style, plus the traditional shepherds' play known as *La Pastorela*. The party ends with refreshments and the breaking of piñatas.

- December 18, 2pm.
- Free with museum's suggested contributions: Adults \$7; senior citizens, students and children, \$5; families (maximum of 2 adults), \$15.

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