

Destinations

NIGHT LIFE

Blues, beaches, head-banging

DEC. 3-5
CHICAGO
Chicago Bluegrass and Blues Festival: The city celebrates its mood indigo with this annual gathering. What is most refreshing about Chicago's take on the blues is its mix of artists, and the addition of bands that have a distinctly modern view of the genre. This year's festival includes sets from indie pop acts such as Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros, the Giving Tree Band, and Grace Potter and the Nocturnals. They are joined by old school acts such as David "Honeyboy" Edwards, and the Skatalites. The festival has three venues around the city, with prices from \$12-\$35. [cbbfestival.com](#)

DEC. 11
SETOSA, Singapore
ZoukOut: The country's popular club Zouk takes the party outside to Siloso Beach for an all-night, sand-in-your-toes, hands-in-the-air celebration of some of the world's top DJs. David Guetta headlines the 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. party, along with Tiesto, Hans-Peter Lindstrom, Midnight Juggernauts, and Buka Shade. Last year, nearly 30,000 people partied on the beach. That number should rise this year as more partygoers swarm the beach to celebrate the event's 10th anniversary. Advance tickets \$60. [www.zoukout.com](#)

DEC. 27-29
GOA, India
Sunburn Goa: Headlining DJs Ferry Corsten, Axwell, and BT play this year's festival, which attracts more than 20,000 dance music enthusiasts annually to Goa's Candolim Beach. Other acts include Sultan and Ned Shepard playing a live set, Richard Durand, GMS, Pete Gooding, and Aly and Fila. This year, the festival attempts to branch away from music with the addition of a fashion show. Three-day pass \$132. [www.sunburn-festival.com](#)

DEC. 30-Jan. 1
PHILLIP ISLAND, Australia
Pyramid Rock Festival: This scenic area of Victoria, south of Melbourne, hosts an eclectic mix of dance, indie rock, hip-hop, and electro bands to help ring in the new year. Pharrell Williams's band N.E.R.D. headlines, along with acts such as Canada's Chromeo, 1990s hip-hop hitmakers Arrested Development, and plenty of homegrown Australian acts such as the Temper Trap, and a man who was once voted "Sexiest Vegetarian," Xavier Judd. There is camping on the massive festival grounds for those who want to welcome 2011 in a tent and sleeping bag. Three-



Grace Potter and the Nocturnals are on the lineup for the Chicaco Bluegrass and Blues Festival.

day pass \$300. [www.thepyramidrockfestival.com](#)

PLAN AHEAD

APRIL 6-10
SAN DIEGO TO CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico
Sammy Hagar Cabo Wabo Cruise: If your idea of a good time is spending a week at sea sipping tequila and head-banging, you'll be in paradise on this luxury liner stuffed with fans of Sammy Hagar and Van Halen. The cruise leaves from San Diego, and Hagar

meets passengers in his beloved Cabo San Lucas. There is also a Hagar trivia contest, Hagar karaoke, a private Hagar concert, and a special bon voyage cocktail party. The cruise is nearly sold out, but there are rooms available starting at \$799. [www.rosetours.com/sammy](#)

CHRISTOPHER MUTHER

Events are sometimes canceled, rescheduled, or sold out; check online. Christopher Muther can be reached at muther@globe.com.

Currents

Let e-books be your guide

All iPad users: Leave that hefty travel tome at home and download an interactive electronic guidebook for your next adventure. Lonely Planet has released e-books for three cities and a dozen countries, including Japan, Britain, Thailand, Italy, and New Zealand. Each e-book features thousands of hyperlinks that direct you to hotels, restaurants, and attraction websites and detailed maps with imbedded points of interest. You can bookmark pages, take notes on travel highlights, and search for specific information. The only catch: You need to be online to access all links. You can download the e-books through iTunes. Prices from \$12.99 to \$17.99. [www.lonelyplanet.com/ebooks](#)

Rating beach resorts

CheapCaribbean.com has launched its new Bazaarvoice Ratings and Reviews feature to benefit the beach-bound. Travelers looking for feedback on a resort can visit its main page at CheapCaribbean.com and find an overall "palm tree" rating (from one to five), a detailed ratings summary, and a link to reviews by fellow travelers. People booking a CheapCaribbean.com vacation are asked to rate their trip when they return, offering feedback on value, service, beaches/pools, dining options, and room comfort. They can even share photos and videos. The reviews cover hotels and resorts only in Mexico and the Caribbean. To date, travelers have provided more than 10,000 posts. [www.cheapcaribbean.com](#)

Sonoran Desert escape

For a winter getaway, head to Camelback Inn in Arizona's Sonoran Desert, where the daily highs average 75 degrees. Located on 125 acres in Paradise Valley, the inn offers private hiking trails and meditation areas and 453 guest rooms and suites. The Scottsdale property, a JW Marriott Resort & Spa, also has six all-weather lighted tennis courts, two 18-hole golf courses designed by Arthur Hills, and a spa offering loofah treatments, an adobe clay purification wrap, or a traditional massage. Five restaurants serve everything from Southwestern fare with a Mexican twist to American steakhouse cuisine with a French influence. Children can hang out at the kids' pool or playground. Rates from \$279. 800-242-2635, [www.camelbackinn.com](#)

KARI BODNARCHUK

There's a gift for everyone in New York for the holidays

► **NEW YORK**
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lumbus Avenue; end: 7th Avenue and 34th Street

Lighting the lights
Five days later, when the food coma wears off, the **Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree** will be lighted for the first time. From 7-9 p.m. on Nov. 30, the tree, traditionally a Norway spruce, is illuminated by 30,000 eco-friendly lights and crowned by a Swarovski crystal star. **West 49th Street between 5th and 6th avenues, [www.rockefellercenter.com](#)**
Hanukkah is the celebration of lights, so it follows that the lighting of the **Hanukkah Menorah in Grand Army Plaza** is a marquee event. Starting Dec. 1, Hanukkah's first night, a candle on the 32-foot-tall, two-ton menorah is set ablaze. On the eighth night there is live music, singing, folk dancing, and latkes. **59th Street and Fifth Avenue**

Season's shows
The Radio City Christmas Spectacular (through Dec. 30), which debuted in 1933, includes the world-famous Rockettes

performing their beloved March of the Wooden Soldiers, a living nativity, and magnificent special effects. **Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Avenue of the Americas, 212-307-7171, [www.radiocitychristmas.com](#), \$45 mezzanine-\$105 premium seating**
In its final season, **Cirque de Soleil's "Wintuk"** (through Jan. 2) follows a boy's search for snow. Weaving breathtaking acrobatics with theatrical effects, Wintuk's journey is a treat for all ages. **Theater at Madison Square Garden, 4 Penn Plaza, 866-858-0008, [www.cirquedusoleil.com/en/shows/wintuk](#), \$30 mezzanine-\$220 premium seating, children save 30 percent**
Each winter, the New York City Ballet inspires a new cadre of ballerinas with its staging of George Balanchine's **"The Nutcracker,"** the story of a little girl's flight through toy soldiers, cunning mice, a gifted nutcracker, and sugarplum fairies (through Jan. 2). **David H. Koch Theater, 20 Lincoln Center, 212-870-5570; [www.nycballet.com/nutcracker/nutcracker.html](#), \$200-\$225**
Based on the hit movie, **"Elf"** is the story of a North Pole or-

LIGHTS! ACTION!
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phan who embarks on a journey to New York to win over his family, and help the city remember the true meaning of Christmas. **Al Hirschfeld Theater, 302 West 45th St., 212-239-6200, [www.elfmusical.com](#), \$39 mezzanine-\$352 premium seating**
Weekend Caroling at South Street Seaport features the Big Apple Chorus, the New York City Gay Men's Chorus, the Young New Yorkers' Chorus, and Cantori New York on Fridays at 6 and 7 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays at 3 and 4 p.m. through Dec. 19. Free roving song at the Seaport might be the best deal going. [www.southstreetseaport.com](#)
Shopping
Unveiled in time for Thanksgiving, department stores like **Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, Lord & Taylor, Bergdorf Goodman, Macy's, and Barneys** never disappoint visitors with their stunning holiday-themed window displays. The huge sales



BART BARLOW/RCPI LANDMARK PROPERTIES

The Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center is illuminated by 30,000 lights and topped with a Swarovski crystal star.

— especially on post-Thanksgiving Black Friday — sweep shoppers through the doors once they have ogled the displays.
For original gift giving, **indoor and outdoor markets** such as those at Columbus Circle, Bryant Park, Union Square, and Grand Central Terminal feature the products of local craftsmen. Open between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve, handcrafted jewelry, fine art, clothes, handmade ornaments, and toys for all ages are in abundance.
Ice skating
The **Ice Rink at Rockefeller Center** has come to signify the quintessential New York experience. Every 90 minutes starting at 8:30 a.m., beneath the gilded Prometheus statue and with an urban backdrop like no other, New Yorkers and visitors alike strap on their skates. **5th Avenue between 49th and 50th streets, 212-332-7654, [www.therinkatrockcenter.com](#), adults \$19, children \$12.50, rentals \$9**
A twirl through **Central Park's Wollman Rink** offers a more natural skating environment. Open every day from 10 a.m., Wollman is located on the east side of the park, near the zoo. **59th and 5th Avenue entrance, 212-439-6900, [www.woll](#)**

manskatingrink.com, weekend prices: adults \$14.75, children \$5.75, rentals \$6.25
Visiting with Santa
Were you naughty or nice? **Macy's Santaland**, on the 8th floor of the Herald Square store, is open daily through Dec. 24. Photos with Santa are available for purchase. **151 West 34th St., 212-695-4400, [www.macys.com](#)**
South Street Seaport's Story Time With Santa is a different way to spend time with the man in red. Noon-2 p.m. on weekends through Dec. 20. **Pier 17 Atrium, 3d floor, [www.southstreetseaport.com](#), free**
For extra nice children, Santa and his elves are hosting **Breakfast at the Rock Center Café** through Christmas Eve. A skating session on the neighboring rink is included in the price. **20 West 50th St., 212-332-7620, adults \$45, children \$40, reservations essential**
Seasonal exhibits
At the **Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden** (through Jan. 9), explore replicas of over 100 historic New York landmarks, including the Brooklyn Bridge, Yankee Stadium, and St. Patrick's Cathedral, made entirely of plant materials, as

model trains speed by on a half-mile of track. **Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Bronx River Parkway at Fordham Road, 718-817-8700, \$20, under age 12 \$10**
The Jewish Museum will unveil **A Hanukkah Project: Daniel Libeskind's Line Of Fire** through Jan. 30. Libeskind, an international figure in architecture and design, created this installation with a selection of Hanukkah lamps from the museum's collection. **1109 5th Ave. at 92d Street, 212-423-3200, [www.thejewishmuseum.org](#), \$12, under 12 free, Saturdays free**
Through Jan. 9, the tony **Le Parker Meridien** hotel will host its second **Gingerbread Extraganza**, during which local bakeries display their tantalizing, large-scale confections. All proceeds will benefit City Harvest, an organization that feeds hungry New Yorkers. **119 West 56th St., 212-245-5000, [www.parkermeridien.com](#), \$1**

Christmas dinners
It's often hard to find a good meal when you're traveling over Christmas. Here are some sure-fire bets for the eve and day:
Downtown, Mario Batali's **Lupa** will be serving the Feast of Seven Fishes (La Vigilia) on Christmas Eve, as well as its regular menu. **170 Thompson St., 212-982-5089, [www.luparestaurant.com](#), \$85**
Off Union Square, **Tocqueville** is offering a three-course dinner on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day that focuses on Greenmarket-inspired French-American cuisine. **1 East 15th St., 212-647-1515, [www.tocquevilleraestaurant.com](#), \$95**
Housed in the Ritz-Carlton overlooking Central Park, **BLT Market** and chef Laurent Tourondel are featuring a three-course Christmas menu. **1430 Avenue of the Americas, 212-521-6125, [www.bltmarket.com](#), \$95**
Need more information? Drop by the Official NYC Information Center, which offers maps, brochures, Metro tickets, Broadway discounts, destination passes, and seasonal advice. 810 7th Ave. (at 53d Street), 212-484-1200, [www.nycgo.com](#)
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YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS

[www.visitazores.com](#)

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