

WINTER FUN

Tropical Spokane – Ease into an unexpected tropical paradise twinkling with thousands of holiday lights at Manito Park's Gaiser Conservatory. Exotic tropical, subtropical and temperate plants from around the world fill the greenhouse to the rafters. www.manitopark.org

Victorian Christmas – In the late 1800s, Inland Northwest mining magnate Amasa B. Campbell commissioned renowned architect Kirtland Cutter to build an English Tudor Revival mansion for his family in Spokane's Browne's Addition. Operated by the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, the stately Campbell House is open for tours and offers a glance into life at its finest during Spokane's Age of Elegance. The holiday season is especially festive when huge evergreen wreaths and decorated trees turn the scene into a Victorian Christmas. www.northwestmuseum.org

Lake Coeur d'Alene Holiday Lights – travel 40 minutes east to Lake Coeur d'Alene and hop aboard a 107-foot long enclosed cruise boat for a holiday lights extravaganza. Over 1.5 million lights strung along the waterfront create the largest on-the-water holiday light show in America next to the world's tallest living Christmas tree, towering at 161 feet. Chug across the lake where Santa and Mrs. Claus greet young and old alike from the deck of their lake house. Tours operate from the day after Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. www.cdaresort.com/activities/holiday_lights

An Ornamental Shopping Spree – The two-century-old tradition of hand crafting molten glass into holiday ornaments is alive and thriving at Old World Christmas. Spokane residents Tim and Beth Merck revitalized the art of mouth-blown fine glass ornaments over 20 years ago and their business has become one of the world's leading distributors of these holiday treasures as well as vintage-style night lights and nostalgic greeting cards. www.oldworldchristmas.com

Disney on Ice – Figure skaters dressed as Disney cartoon characters whirl and skim across the ice in a holiday performance that leaves adults and kids wide-eyed and enthralled. A new show hits the ice at the end of November. www.spokanearena.com
A Christmas Classic – Let the Sugar Plum Fairy usher in the holiday season with a performance of Tchaikovsky's beloved Nutcracker Ballet. Fifty Spokane-area dancers join nearly 40 performers from the Alberta Ballet Company backed by the renowned Spokane Symphony. www.spokanesymphony.org

Not Your Momma's Christmas Tree – Imaginations run wild as local businesses create elaborate holiday trees with themes as diverse as Victorian confections or outdoor hobbies. Each of the opulent Christmas Tree Elegance confections is surrounded by gifts, food items, travel vouchers and more, and the whole array is raffled off as a fundraiser for the Spokane Symphony. The spectacular trees grace

the atrium of the historic Davenport Hotel from late November till early December. www.spokanesymphony.org

Ring in the New – For a decade, First Night Spokane has turned the city into a giant multi-block party on New Year’s Eve. Dozens of indoor and outdoor venues host art exhibits and demonstrations, musicians, dancers, performing artists, a film festival, rail jam and abundant food and drink options. Families are welcome to this alcohol-free event and the kids have their own party center complete with face painting, arts and crafts and games. A midnight fireworks show welcomes in the New Year. www.firstnightspokane.org

Snow Sports – Five ski resorts are an easy two hours or less from downtown Spokane. Our slopes boast fast-moving lift lines, challenging and beginner runs, consistently solid snowfall, alpine, cross country, snowboarding, tubing and snowshoeing. www.skinwrockies.com

Homegrown – So much more than a nursery, especially during the holidays, Mel’s Nursery is a Spokane company that started out as an outdoor fruit stand 40 years ago. Today Mel’s carries an expansive selection of home décor, gifts, garden items and more including Vera Bradley handbags, Brighton and Pandora jewelry. www.shopmels.com

Sleigh Rides – How about an old-fashioned sleigh ride in the beautiful Spokane countryside? Rocking K Ranch, an eclectic equestrian center and event facility 25 miles north of the city, harnesses a team of massive Belgian draft horses for a nostalgic ride along snowy country roads. Refreshments and hot drinks are served. Be sure to dress warmly. www.rockingk.com

Holiday on the Farms – Create an unforgettable holiday group experience at Green Bluff Growers, a collection of farms and country stores scattered across over 700 rolling acres. Join families who flock to Green Bluff to cut Christmas trees, take photos with Santa and shop for unique food, sweet treats and wine. Do your holiday shopping here for one-of-a-kind Inland Northwest gifts. www.greenbluffgrowers.com

History and Intrigue - Enjoy a holiday lunch at the F. Lewis Clark House on Hayden Lake, Idaho, 45 minutes from Spokane, and step into a local mystery. Wealth, power, love and intrigue surround the mansion built by powerful F. Lewis Clark and his wife Winifred in 1910. Their 15,000 square-foot home was elaborately furnished and the 12-acre grounds once held a private zoo. In 1914, Lewis disappeared, never to be heard from again. Enjoy an elaborate lunch at the refurbished country inn, hear Lewis’ story and learn Winifred’s eventual fate. www.clarkhouse.com

Chocolate Fantasies - What better way to warm up a winter day than a visit to a shop specializing in the world’s favorite comfort food? Chocolate Apothecary, housed in the historic 1895-era Flour Mill, operates under the belief that fine chocolate is the

medication of choice for...well...anything. Indulge in gourmet chocolates, steaming coco drinks or chocolate cake. Yum. www.chocolateapothecary.com

Gourmet Goodness– Foodies rejoice when they see the array of culinary utensils, gadgets and must-have items at The Kitchen Engine. Shopping isn't the only delicious option here, however. Schedule a private cooking demonstration or an epicurean tasting (options include Chicken Saltimbocca, burnt crème, hand-rolled wine truffles and many more delicious choices). The Kitchen Engine, located in the historic 1895 Flour Mill, is lovingly owned and operated by two generations of the Frickle family. www.thekitchenengine.com

An Art Deco Evening – the Holiday Season at “The Fox,” as locals lovingly call the Martin Woldson at the Fox Theater, is a feast of performances from the Spokane Symphony to special holiday fetes. The 1931 Art Deco masterpiece is a bit of a scene stealer itself, with a story of its own. Thanks to a \$3 million donation from an anonymous benefactor, the Fox was saved from the wrecking ball in 2007 and painstakingly restored to authentic period quality. Elderly Myrtle Woldson eventually came forward saying she made the donation to honor her father, the late Martin Woldson. www.foxtheaterspokane.com

Oh, Holy Night – Group tours are welcome at the stunning Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist on Spokane's South Hill. One of the few examples of classic Gothic architecture in the United States, St. John's has held its lofty peak overlooking the city since the 1930s, serving as a parish, cultural event venue and the official seat of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane. Check the church calendar for a list of holiday concerts. www.stjohns-cathedral.org

Divine Performance –Every year the Singing Nuns, Sisters of Mount St. Michael, perform a limited number of holiday concerts, thrilling audiences with their “heavenly” voices, a dash of humor and boatload of talent. Thirty years ago the nuns at the St. Michael's Academy, a private K-12 school in Spokane, put their trust in Divine Providence and organized a musical troupe whose performances would help supplement the school's coffers. Holiday carols sound especially sweet when performed at an historic Spokane theater by the musical Sisters clad in their traditional full length blue habits. www.singingnuns.com

Go Nuts! – Since 1952, the Nut Factory has roasted everything from pecans to pistachios in their unique copper pots, insuring that the treats you buy here are fresh and tasty. During the holidays, the elves at the Nut Factory fill holiday tins and fancy boxes with gourmet candies and nuts, packing the shelves with memorable gift items. www.thenutfactory.com

Holiday Tea with a Purpose - Enjoy an elegant holiday tea ensconced in history and good works at Angelica's Bed & Breakfast on Spokane's South Hill. Surrounded by pine and maple trees that were planted when the Kirtland Cutter mansion opened its doors in 1907, the sprawling brick inn and event center covers two city blocks

with old world charm. Holiday teas are served in the Taste and See Tea Room, where women from area homeless shelters prepare and serve food, learning valuable skills as they transition to self-sufficiency. www.angelicasbedandbreakfast.com

International Christmas Scenes – From the Americas to Zimbabwe, dozens of traditional and unusual nativities are displayed at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints temple during the annual Nativities From Around the World display and concert. See a Japanese nativity made entirely of origami and another the size of a thimble alongside more typical scenes and take in an international holiday concert with performances from the Pilgrim Slavic Baptist Church Brass Orchestra and the Concordia Choir of the Spokane German-American Society. Location, Dec 1-6, www.spokane.latterdaysentinel.com

Neighbors Light the Streets – Lighten your mood and get into the holiday spirit with a tour of Spokane neighborhoods decorated with enough lights to give Chevy Chase in the movie *Griswold Family Christmas* a run for his money. www.visitspokane.com

Davenport Hotel Gingerbread House – Grown-up imaginations run wild when local businesses and chefs create elaborate gingerbread houses, all to benefit Christ Kitchen, a ministry dedicated to empowering women in poverty. Just before Christmas the gooey confections are displayed at the Davenport Hotel, adding to the lavish decorations and holiday atmosphere. www.thedavenporthotel.com

Red Hat Society Holiday Hat Luncheon – “The Red Hat Society began as a result of a few women deciding to greet middle age with verve, humor and élan,” says Sue Ellen Cooper of the Red Hat Society. “We believe silliness is the comedy relief of life, and since we are all in it together, we might as well join red-gloved hands and go for the gusto.” The holiday season is a perfect excuse for the ladies to dress up and celebrate (as if they needed a reason), and most years they hold a gala luncheon and fashion show at the Davenport Hotel. Nothing is set in stone, however, so contact the society for details. www.redhatsociety.com and www.thedavenporthotel.com

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