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is published by
New Jersey Hills Media Group
100 S. Jefferson Road, Ste 104
Whippany, NJ 07981
(908) 766-3900

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

The spirit of the holidays can mean different things to different folks—for some it's sharing time-honored traditions like baking, decorating, and gift-giving, while others engage through compassion for others, small moments of togetherness, and even self-care. When I think about holiday spirit, the one thing that's universal to me is joy. People gravitate toward what brings them joy, whether they celebrate a specific holiday (or not), and this issue of *Elegant Lifestyles* is all about elevating seasonal joy for everyone.

Party Prep

First things first: festive foods and drinks are the cornerstone of the "celebration season." This month's wine editorial features top picks for your holiday table, and our "Eat, Drink & Be Merry" write-up spotlights make-ahead drinks and appetizers for your holiday gathering—because you deserve to enjoy the party, too!

If you want to treat your tresses to a pre-party update, check out "Holiday Hair" for the latest styles and accessories for the season.

Gifts to Give

Look to "The Gift of Giving" for different ways to give back to your community, and our annual "Holiday Gift Guide" lets you peruse plentiful presents for everyone on your list from the comfort of your home.

Festive Fun

If you want to get out and about locally, "Holiday Hoopla!" lists both indoor and out-door seasonal happenings throughout the month. And don't forget to bundle up! "Baby, It's Cold Outside" highlights the latest cold-weather gear, perfect to give or get.

No matter your plans, we wish you a wonderful season filled with family, friends, and everything that brings you joy.

Happy holidays and see you in the New Year!

Kara Sibilia, *Editor*

In this issue: special features

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he holidays are festive and fun, but before greeting the season, parties must be planned, travel must be arranged, homes must be decorated, cookies must be baked, and presents must be purchased. Filled with suggestions for Athletes, Foodies, Homebodies, Musicophiles, Techies, and Travelers, this year's Gift Guide is meant to make shopping a little easier.

Athlete

Hit a home run with presents that are specific to a sport or outdoor activity. High Country Ski and Tennis in Livingston is the place to go for ski and snowboard rentals, clothes and gear along with tennis and paddleball racquets. Metro Swim Shop in Stirling carries all things swim. Shop at Sneaker Factory in Basking Ridge, Florham Park, or Millburn for running shoes, clothes and accessories. Categories at Ramsey Outdoor in Ramsey and Succasunna include "Camp & Hike," "Fish," "Paddle," and "Rock & Snow." Bikeland in Chatham and Caldwell and Hilltop Bicycles New Jersey in Cranford,



"Modern Jewish Baker: Challa, Babka, Bagels & More" by Shannon Sarna

by

Matt Groark

Madison, and Summit offer a large selection of bikes and gear. Other athletic best bets are waterproof gloves, winter beanies, warm socks, lightweight backpacks, weighted vests, and the Yeti ROADIE® 32 Wheeled Cooler.

Foodie

Cook up a tasteful gift for a home chef, baker, or gourmand. From cookbooks, to classes, to kitchen gadgets, there are many options on the menu. Schedule an experience at The Cooking School at Ninety Acres in Peapack, Foodies' Cooking School at Sweet Expressions in Denville, or Healthy Italia, la buona cucina in Madison. For in-home cooking lessons, check out Brianna's Nutrition Kitchen, and for at-home, whole-'At the Kitchen family fun consider Ooni's Koda 12 Pizza Oven and Williams Sonoma's S'Mores Maker. Create a choice gift by combining cooking utensils and an apron with a cookbook, such as At the Kitchen Sink by local author Dina Deleasa-Gonsar. Box bakeware with Shannon Sarna's Modern Jewish Baker: Challah,

Cont. on page 10



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Cont.from page 8

Babka, Bagels & More. And for the grill-master, wrap grilling tools with The Meat Teacher Cookbook by another New Jerseyan, Matt Groark.

Homebody

Feather the nest of homebodies, from those who prefer to stay close to home to amateur decorators to new homeowners. Start with a stop at Hibernate Bedding in Bernardsville, where owner Pamela Nardone points out the store's "nice selections of sheets, and organic and plain pillows." They, along with towels, bathrobes and pj's, can be embroidered with a monogram or saying. Nardone suggests, "Wrap a [photo] of the gift to be" if the personalized present isn't in yet, and adds, "Toppers are great and something different." Nardone believes, "The best gift is a good night's sleep," and "a mattress is a great gift for a couple to themselves, a gift you give yourself, or for a child heading off on one's own."

Discover paintings from locally and nationally recognized artists at Great Brook Gallery in New Vernon. Owner and artist Justine Kovacs says, "Gifting art is an art in itself." She recalls a husband who surprised his wife with a painting "she'd fallen in love with." Kovacs recommends, "If you don't have the chance to shop with the person you are gifting, we'd be happy to arrange a private showing in home or office." A unique way for an artist to beautify his/her own home? A gift certificate for week-long painting workshop with John C.Traynor. Kovacs says, "We have one scheduled for this August at the Jersey Shore—there's a perfect gift surprise!" Art and furnishings dress up a home while mood-making gifts create ambience. Alexandra Daras, owner of The Pretty Pink Rooster in Bernardsville highlights the shop's luxe candles, "Nothing says 'holiday magic' quite like our Voluspa candles—each one poured in a gorgeous, giftable jar and ready to make any home smell (and look) like



Monogrammed sheets, pillows, and pajamas from Hibernate Bedding





"Late October Stream" by Jim Rodgers from Great Brook Gallery



"Bringing in the Oysters" by John C. Traynor from Great Brook Gallery

Luxury candles and gift sets from Voluspa®

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Christmas morning in candle form!" Daras's favorites include: "Gingerbread Chalet, Noble Fir Garland, and Crushed Candy Cane." Daras reminds shoppers about the boutique's "large hand-curated selection of PJ Salvage pajamas & lounge. We also are a Lilly Pulitzer specialty store, and their Holiday Collection is spectacular for whatever your holidays bring."

Musicophile

Turn up the volume with a gift that actually sounds great. Music (and musical) lovers will applaud tickets to a local theater, Broadway show, or concert. Many concert venues require guests to wear clear bags, so tuck tickets into lululemon's Everywhere Belt Bag Clear. How about going retro with records? Places to shop are The CD Store in Rockaway, Factory Records Shop in Dover, and Hidden Tracks Records in Boonton. Sweet Vinvl Café in Denville is a combo music shop and café, and Vinylking Records and Collectables in Lake Hopatcong is the place to go for hard-to-find vinyl records and collectibles. You'll hit a high note with the MT5 Precision Turntable available at Audio Video Synergy in Clinton or, on a smaller scale, the Morel Biggie, a portable Bluetooth speaker.



MT5 Precision Turntable (Audio Video Synergy)



Morel Biggie Portable Speaker

_____ Cont. on page 12





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Holiday Gift Guide

Cont. from page 10

Techie

Stay ahead of the curve with cutting edge gifts for tech enthusiasts. Music lovers and many more will appreciate wireless headphones like Bose Quiet-Comfort Ultra Headphones, Beats Fit Pro True Wireless Bluetooth Earbuds. and SHOKZ Bone Conduction Headphones. Need a gift for a techie teen? The HP Sprocket Portable 2x3"Instant Photo Printer prints photos from smartphones. Get a (green) thumbs up with the Click and Grow Indoor Herb Garden Kit from nordstrom.com. For the barista in the bunch, the Ninia Specialty Coffee Maker brews single cups to full carafes. Birdwatchers will love the NETVUE by Birdfy Smart Bird Feeder with Camera. Got a golfer? The Rapsodo Mobile Launch Monitor tracks swings. If you want your present to promote rest and relaxation, consider the Snooz Smart White Noise Machine. An all-in-one charging hub. such as the Baseus 10-in-1 Docking Station, is a great gift for all techies.

Traveler

Rack up points for a frequent flier. Avoid baggage claim with carry-ons that fit in overhead bins. Travelpro's Platinum Elite 21 Spinner from Square Luggage in Morristown is a small, fabric suitcase with an integrated USB port and drop-in garment bag. Or try The Carry On by Away, a small, lightweight, hard-shell suitcase. Another sky-high idea? A send-off package consisting of a neck pillow, eye mask, packable blanket like the Travelrest 4-in-1 Travel Blanket, and comfy hoodie or cardigan such as the Vickie Cable Oversized Cardi from Quartet in Chatham. Packing cubes, luggage tags, and Briggs & Riley Toiletry Hanging Kit from Square Luggage make for smooth sailing. Travelers stay hydrated with refillable hot and cold drinkware such as the Down The Shore Stainless Steel Drink Tumbler 22oz available at The Pink Pear in Madison.







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A sleek & polished shine ("glass bair"/runway gloss) is ultra-straight, mirror-shine hair that looks refined. With parties, festive lights, and elevated outfits, a high-shine finish adds glam and captures the sparkle of the season. Start by using a smoothing/shine serum or oil before styling. Straighten in sections with a flat iron and finish with a gloss spray. Always keep your hair healthy-looking so when it's smooth and well-conditioned, shine is easier to achieve. Styling tip: pair with a deep center part or a sleek high ponytail for maximum impact.

for the party season!

Elevated chignons and textural updos beautifully boost your look beyond the everyday ponytail. These styles are really no-brainers as they don't need to be touched upon

finally show off those statement earrings you've been wanting to wear! How to achieve it? For a

sleek high ponytail: smooth hair back, tie high on the crown, wrap a section of hair around the elastic to hide it, use a light holding spray for shine and control. For a textured ponytail: add waves or curls first, then gather into a ponytail. You might incorporate twists or braids or add a subtle volume at the crown. And for vintage vol-

ume: use teasing

or backcombing at the

crown, add mousse, then

gently smooth the top layer

Retro volume & soft curls are nothing but fun for the festivities! Think throw-back glamour with big curls, lots of volume, and textured waves that feel luxurious and festive. This look is elegant, and fits with any party/celebration mood.

enhance the look and make

it chic and holiday-appropriate.

Begin with a largebarrel curling iron or hot rollers to create big curls. After curling, gently brush through for loose waves or keep crisp for more structure. Add mousse or volumizing spray at the roots, and finish with a flexible

Bow Organica

Hair Pin; Photo Credit:

Ettika

Holiday Hair

hairspray to hold movement without stiffness.

Styling tip: If your outfit is simple, let the hair be the star; if your outfit is very bold (sequins/prints), consider slightly toning the curl or volume down to avoid visual overload.

Jubilant color trends are also headed for the party. Of note are: rich, dimensional brunettes with deep chocolate bases and warm highlights, giving a dramatic hue or champagne, beige blondes with a blend of creamy blonde and sandy beige for a shimmering, yet balanced look.

Styling tip: If you're going for a more severe color change, book it a few



weeks ahead of big events so your locks settle and are healthy for styling.

And if you're in a pinch and have a last-minute gala to run to—an elegant or festive headband will be your best

friend! According to *InStyle* magazine, "Headbands can elevate any hairstyle but they're especially fantastic when trying to showcase the face, create a crown-like style, or conceal day-two strands." With tons of variety, the party just might begin in front of your mirror choosing which one to wear!

Styling tip: For an effortlessly chic look, place the headband over your head, tuck it neatly behind your ears, and softly pull a few strands forward to frame your face.

For the 2025 holiday season, lean into one (or a mix) of these celebratory hair ideas and your tresses will be ready for all occasions!





hen we give, we create a connection. A small act, like sharing a meal or offering a word of encouragement, can touch lives in ways we may never fully see. And isn't that the point? The gift of giving is the simple yet profound idea that generosity can reward both the giver and the receiver and it reminds us to look beyond ourselves, especially during the holiday season when gratitude and compassion come into sharper focus. Here are some meaningful ways to give back, whether you're looking for community involvement, small acts of kindness, or creative ways to spread cheer.

Support Local and National Charities

• Donating to a food bank can make a huge difference - The Interfaith Food Pantry Network in Morris Plains is a great choice with its convenience in dropping off donations or volunteering without a long travel time. Food pantries like this provide direct service to local families in need. Call ahead to check current hours and donation needs (often non-perishable foods, hygiene items, holiday meal-kit components). Or ask about volunteer opportunities: sorting food, assembling boxes, helping with distribution. You can also visit feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank, enter your zip code, and it will list nearby food banks and partner pantries. Churches, community boards, and local libraries often post information about ongoing food drives and volunteer needs.

- *Gifts for a family or child* Programs through organizations like Toys for Tots or The Salvation Army can connect you with families in need.
- *Contribute to coat and blanket drives* Warm clothing, hats, and gloves are especially needed in colder months.
- *Support animal shelters* Donate food, toys, or blankets; volunteer to walk dogs or help with adoption events.

Volunteer Your Time

- *Visit senior centers* A short visit or small gift can brighten someone's day. The Senior Center of the Chathams in Chatham Township is a not-for-profit agency offering older adults a range of activities and services to promote connection, enrichment and community engagement. Simply spending time with seniors (sharing stories, listening, or playing cards) helps reduce loneliness.
- Help out at local schools or libraries -Offer to read holiday stories, wrap gifts, or help with children's activities.

Acts of Kindness

• Write boliday cards for deployed troops - Many service members spend the holiday season far from family and friends. A simple, heartfelt card or a kids' drawing can brighten their day and remind them that people back home appreciate their sacrifices and service. You can send cards through several established

programs that handle distribution to deployed troops. Visit operationgratitude.com for more information.

- · Hosting a boliday party? Make it a "giving gathering" - Instead of hostesses (or exchanging) gifts, have guests bring items to donate.
- Pay it forward Cover someone's coffee or parking meter. You'd be surprised how heartwarming this quick and easy gift is.

Support Neighbors and Community

- · Check in on elderly neighbors -Offer to help with shopping, snow shoveling, or even holiday decorating.
- Shop local Support small businesses, artisans, and markets in your town.
- · Donate gently used toys and books -Shelters or community centers are always ready to accept.
- Create "blessing bags" Craft small care packages filled with everyday essentials (socks, snacks, and hygiene

items) that you can hand out to people in need, especially those who are unhoused or struggling during the winter months. They're simple to make and deeply meaningful.

The true gift lies not in the material exchange, but in the warmth it sparks the smile you bring to someone's face, the relief you help provide, the hope you help restore. Giving is a reminder that generosity, in any form, has the power to light up the world—one thoughtful act at a time.

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Baby, It's Cold Outside

By Isabella Bickenbach

s the weather grows colder and days shorter, it can be so tempting to curl up in bed all day with a steaming mug of hot chocolate. However, it's more important than ever to remain active—doing so will decrease seasonal depression and strengthen your immune system. So, it's time to put away those cleats for skates, surf boards for snow boards, sandals for skis.

Best Winter Coats:

Not everyone likes a winter coat they're bulky and heavy and a pain to lug around—yet they're a necessity. Lululemon's Snow Warrior Down-Fill Parka is practical yet stylish. The coat comes in a cropped or non-cropped version, depending on the look you're going for. If you need something lighter, try Lululemon's Featherweight 900-Down-Fill Puffer. The Shelburne Parka Tonal Label, by Canada Goose, is another top pick. This high-quality coat will last you through all the winters yet to come. On their Thermal Experience Index (TEI), this coat lands a category three, meaning it's perfect to wear from 14 degrees Fahrenheit to negative 4 degrees. TEI is a five-point system indicating a coat's warmth. Try L.L. Bean's Ultrawarm Jacket for a pop of color, or Carhartt's Montana Parka for extreme warmth.

Ski and Snowboard:

Staying warm up in the mountains is no easy task. However, the following gear will keep you toasty while providing you the mobility necessary to tackle those slopes. The North Face's Lenado Jacket and THERMOBALL Snow Triclimate Jacket are a go to ski/snowboard coat. They also have plenty of ski pants,

hats, fleece, gloves and gaiters. You can also try coats from Arc'Teryx, such as their Rush or Sentinel Insulated jackets. As Charles De Mar famously said in the '80s cult-classic flick, *Better Off Dead*, "Go that way, really fast. If something gets in your way, turn." Skiing is probably more complex than that, but one thing that makes it a lot easier is quality skis. Nordica's Santa Ana 97 skis are suitable for any terrain and all conditions. They provide effortless stability and edge control to ensure a smooth descent.

spi wir par

Blizzard Tecnica's Black Pearl 94 will allow you to "arc, slice, dice and dance the day away." SkiEssentials' Salomon QST Lumen 98 is perfect for intermediate to expert skiers. Recommended terrain for these skies is all-mountain, freeride, or powder.

Prefer snowboarding? Nidecker's Sensor Team has the ideal width for stability and a light core to easily turn. Rome's Stale Fish Snowboard excels when showing off your skills and charging down tricky terrains. Bataleon's Whatever board is perfect for "park days, hot laps, or powder lines".

Ice Skating:

Ice skating is one of the most magical winter sports there is. Whether you're interested in recreational or professional skating, here are a few must haves. First off, you want to decide what type of boot and blade you're getting. Freestyle, skating involving jumps and spins, requires a higher boot and blades with toe picks. Dance, skating involving pattern dances, requires a lower boot with a shorter blade. For a beginner

pair, freestyle skates are recommended. Jackson Ultima or Riedell are both good brands to start with. If you're looking for something more advanced, Edea and Risport are both reputable options. These companies design their boots for maximum lightness—they feel like feathers! Oftentimes, boots and blades are sold separately. You can get them molded and

sharpened at a local ice shop.
Complete the look with a
festive sweater. Anthropologie's
Crew-Neck Fair Isle Sweater or

Antwerp Irelando Sweater offer cozy looks. Altar'd State's Ellen Wool Colette Chenille sweaters also fit the season. Another skating essential is the Kiss & Cry Angels bag – a small, boxy tote used to carry figure skaters' daily practice essentials (tissues, water, etc.). A few other necessities include gel socks (worn on ankles to prevent blisters), soakers (cover your blades when storing them), and guards (plastic coverings to keep blades clean). Make sure to take the guards off before you step on the ice though—been there, done that, not pretty.





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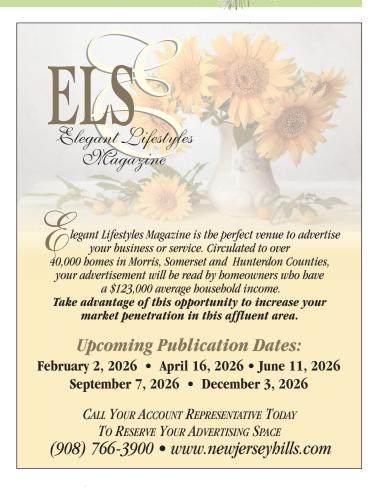
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hen planning a festive evening of fun for the holidays, it's certainly worth your while to entertain with make-ahead cocktails and appetizers. These recommendations allow you to serve impressive (and delicious!) fare without spending the entire party in the kitchen, as many can be prepared the day before or in stages.

An aperitif is often the first delight offered and welcomed and there are a multitude of tasty holiday drinks (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) that can be prepared ahead of time. Below are some ideas to raise your glass to.

Sparkling Cranberry Orange Margarita

Mix tequila, cranberry juice, fresh lime juice, and orange liqueur in a large pitcher. When it's time for drinks, pour the mixture over ice and top with sparkling water. Garnish with a lime wedge or fresh cranberries.

Citrus Holiday Punch (Non-Alcoholic)

In a punch bowl, combine cranberry juice, pineapple juice, and orange juice and chill for up to 24 hours in advance. Just before guests arrive, add the juice mixture to chilled ginger ale or lemon-lime soda and garnish with orange slices, fresh cranberries, and rosemary sprigs.

Martha Stewart's Classic Eggnog

Martha Stewart's recipe (courtesy of *Woman's World*) for her Classic Eggnog is a popular one this time of year and can easily be made a day in advance. Fair warning: this drink is indulgent—and potent—Martha advises limiting to "one per person." (makes 12 servings)

Ingredients:

- 6 large eggs, separated (pasteurized eggs are recommended)
- ¾ cup superfine sugar
- 2 cups whole milk
- 3 cups heavy cream, plus more for garnish
- ½ cup bourbon
- 1/4 cup each: dark rum, Cognac
- Freshly grated nutmeg, for sprinkling

Directions:

- 1. Beat the egg yolks until thick and pale. Then, gradually beat in sugar.
- Whisk in the milk, two cups of the heavy cream, and all three liquors. Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours.
- Just before serving, beat the egg whites and remaining cream separately until stiff peaks form, then fold both into the chilled eggnog. Sprinkle with nutmeg.

Mulled Wine

Combine red wine, brandy (optional), orange slices, cinnamon sticks, cloves, and star anise. Using a slow cooker, allow the mixture to simmer for 1-2 hours until warm and fragrant.

Eat, Drink, & Be Merry

Keep it on the "warm" setting throughout the party for a hands-off, self-serve station.

Slow-Cooker Hot Chocolate

Combine chocolate chips or chunks, milk, half-and-half, and peppermint extract for a festive twist in a slow cooker and heat on low for 2-3 hours, stirring occasionally until smooth and creamy. For an alcoholic version, add liqueurs like peppermint schnapps or Irish cream directly to individual mugs.

Now for the make-ahead bites. These appetizers are sure to please your crowd.

Classic Deviled Eggs

Boil and peel the eggs and prepare your choice of filling the day before. Just before serving, pipe the filling back into the egg whites and top with paprika, chives, or bacon bits.

Caprese Skewers

Thread cherry tomatoes, fresh mozzarella balls, and basil leaves onto skewers. Drizzle with balsamic glaze just before serving. These can be assembled hours in advance.

Prosciutto-Wrapped Melon

A simple, elegant appetizer that requires no cooking. Wrap slices of prosciutto around pieces of fresh melon. Assemble up to a day in advance.

Shrimp Cocktail

The shrimp can be boiled a day in advance, chilled, and served with cocktail sauce.

Both a Spinach Artichoke Dip and a Crab Dip can be prepared a day or two in advance and stored in air-tight containers and refrigerated. Add 5-7 minutes to the baking time when you're ready to serve just before your guests arrive.

Meatballs

Cook meatballs and sauce in a slow cooker up to a few days in advance. Simply reheat them and serve them warm.

Enjoy the evening filled with these timesaving, scrumptious treats knowing you're already ahead of the celebration!





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I cannot recommend "Neat By Natalie" highly enough! Her expertise and efficiency made our decluttering process before the move an absolute breeze! In just a short time, she worked wonders, helping us clear out and organize our space for the movers to pick up. Her professionalism and skill are unmatched, and she made what could have been a stressful experience incredibly smooth and even enjoyable. If you're looking for someone to help declutter and organize, Natalie Niemeyer is the absolute perfect choice! You will be glad you hired her and her team! - NaMO (Old Bridge, NJ)

Contact me for a consultation:
908.358.5452 neatbynatalienj@gmail.com







By Chris Cree MW, Cree Wine Company

Start Festive: Pop the Champagne!

During the holidays, with festive dinners and celebrations in full swing, I like to step up the wine selections to reflect the season while sticking to the classics. For starters, there's nothing like true French Champagne to bring a celebratory element to any occasion.

Produced only in the cool northern region of France from which it takes its name (anything else is sparkling wine), Champagne is the result of a unique combination of factors. First, the cool climate yields grapes—mainly Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier—that struggle to ripen, producing tart, high-acid wines. Then comes the winemaking magic: a second fermentation in the bottle, sparked by the addition of yeast and sugar (liqueur de tirage). Capped and sealed, the carbon dioxide can't escape, creating those signature bubbles—and voilà, Champagne!

Pairing Champagne is easy—it goes with almost everything. Appetizers, oysters, shrimp, sushi, crudo, caviar—it all works with Champagne's magic.

Most Champagnes are a blend of grapes and vintages, and come in a wide range of styles. There are dry versions—Brut, (dry), Extra Brut (drier), or Zero Dosage (very dry)—

Vintage Champagnes (must be from grapes from a single vintage), Blanc de Blancs (100% Chardonnay—crisp and focused), Rosé Champagne (fuller, fruitier), Blanc de Noirs (made from Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier), Extra Dry (confusingly less dry), and more.

Fuller styles can even carry through an entire multi-course meal. However you serve it, my only rule is: have plenty of Champagne on hand this time of year!

Classic White Wines

Cool-climate whites like Chablis, Sancerre, Muscadet, and Pouilly-Fumé are ideal with seafood, oysters, and lighter fare. For richer dishes like scallops or lobster, or roasted chicken or turkey, I reach for white Burgundy especially from Chassagne-Montrachet, Meursault, or Puligny-Montrachet—and for more value, try a well-made Bourgogne Blanc. California offers a wonderful range of Chardonnay as well!

Red Wines

Elegant, medium-bodied reds are perfect for many traditional holiday menus. Wines made from the Pinot Noir grape are perfect for roasted pork loin, veal, duck breast, or game birds—and of course, the traditional Thanks-

giving turkey or even a Prime Rib



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Roast for Christmas. Oregon's Willamette Valley, California's Sonoma Coast or Sta. Rita Hills, and of course Burgundy, France for Old World finesse are some of the best expressions of Pinot Noir in the world!

For hearty meals and winter fare and classics like Roast Beef or Beef Wellington, venison and game, I reach for bold reds from the Left Bank Bordeaux (Saint-Julien, Pauillac, Margaux—bigger boned with more Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend), Right Bank Bordeaux (Saint-Émilion, Pomerol with higher percentages of Merlot), Napa Valley or Washington State Cabernet Sauvignon, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Hermitage or Côte-Rôtie from France's Rhône Valley.

Finally, the holidays are a great excuse for serving a wealth of sweets, desserts and other treats, providing the perfect time for Ports & dessert wines.





Ports & Dessert Wines

Cap off a great dinner with a glass of Vintage Port—declared only in top years, aged in bottle often for decades, and is perfect with chocolate desserts, or all on its own in front of the fire! Old Ports should be allowed to settle upright for a day or two before serving if possible, and dedicated so the sediment from aging doesn't end up in your glass.

Tawny Port, aged in cask and ready to drink upon release, is often bottled by age (10, 20, 30, 40+ years), lasts for weeks or more once opened, and requires no decanting.

Other great dessert wine choices include Sauternes (Bordeaux), Riesling Beerenauslese or Eiswein (Germany or Canada), or Vin Santo (Tuscany).

These pair beautifully with crème brûlée, panna cotta, fruit tarts, all kinds of cookies, or light pastries. With the season's abundance of sweet treats, it pays to have a few dessert wines on hand.

Mix up a case or two of these tried-and-true classics and you'll be ready for whatever the season brings. Whether it's an intimate dinner or a lively celebration, the right wines will elevate and enhance your holiday entertaining! Cheers!

Chris Cree MW

Founder & Managing Partner, Cree Wine Company Chris Cree is New Jersey's only Master of Wine (MW) and one of just 56 in the U.S. With over 40 years in the wine industry, bis experience spans retail, wholesale, importing, education, and consulting. He has been a featured lecturer and educator, a guest on MSNBC, Martha Stewart Radio, and more.

In 2021, Chris opened Cree Wine Company at the historic Perryville Inn, bringing his passion and deep wine expertise

to the community through curated experiences and world-class selections.

Cree Wine Company has a Wine Spectator award-winning wine program, and is a unique combination of wine retail (on premise and online), a full restaurant and wine bar, wine school, and event space that's perfect for all kinds of gatherings Visit: www.creewine.com.



Scarf? Check. Mittens? Check. Coat? Check. Cheer? CHECK!

Time to bundle up and stroll these local, festive streets and take in all of the glorious Holiday* Hoopla.

Roxbury's Home for the Holidays is an annual family-friendly festival happening on December 6th from 11am to 3pm. The much-loved event will take place on Main Street in Succasunna, with most activities located

inside the Roxbury Public Library and the two, neighboring adjacent churches. This year's fun will include: performances by local groups, including the Roxbury High School Choir and band ensembles, Irish step dancers from An Clar School of Irish Dance and tap dancers from Generations of Dance, vendors and crafters selling holiday items at the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, and holiday stories in the library's children's section.

But you and your family won't be the only jolly attendees—Santa
Claus arrives at 11am! Photos with him are available for a minimum of a \$5 cash donation to benefit
Roxbury Social Services.
Appointments can be made, but walk-ins are also welcome after 12:30pm. All other activities are free of charge! For more details, visit roxburynj.us.

the magic and wonder of the holiday season on the town's beloved Green. Transformed into a nostalgic winter wonderland, this 100+ year tradition has the Green sparkling with thousands of twinkling lights and festive décor throughout the month-long celebration. Children can enjoy holiday crafts, rides on a miniature train, and visits and photos with Santa himself!

The festival runs from November 30th to December 21st. Family activities, live entertainment, and Santa visits will take place each Saturday and Sunday from 12 to 7pm through December 21, as well as on Fridays, December 5th, 12th, and 19th, from 3 to 8pm. All activities are free to the public, except for Santa photos, which are available for a \$15 fee. For more information, visit morristownnj.org/christmasfestival2025.

Get ready for a full day of holiday cheer with *The Winter Market* and *Christmas Tree Lighting in Basking Ridge* on December 6th from 12 to 7pm. Festivities will take place at Bishop Janes United Methodist Church. With more than

Holiday Hoopla

30 local vendors and artisans, it's the perfect spot to shop for unique gifts, holiday décor, and seasonal treats. Christmas trees and wreaths will also be available for purchase to help bring the festive spirit home. The Christmas Tree Lighting celebration will begin at 5pm with live performances, holiday music, and the big countdown as the tree lights up the night. Ol' Saint Nick will be greeting visitors on the front porch of Ridge Family Dentistry, so be sure to stop by for a photo and share your holiday wishes. It's a great way to kick off the holidays in the heart of Basking Ridge! For more information, visit brbanj.org.

Chester is certainly a great town to celebrate the holidays! Starting on December 7th from 5 to 7pm join the fun for the Annual Tree Lighting at Municipal Field Gazebo! Enjoy live music by the West Morris Mendham High School Choir and Band, free refreshments, and special appearances from the local Volunteer Fire Department, the Chester Police Department, Chester First Aid Squad ... and the one and only Santa! On December 17th at 6:30pm, head to the Gazebo once more for the Annual Chanukah Celebration. Enjoy refreshments, live holiday music, and the beautiful lighting of the menorah. Visit chesterrecreationnj.org for more information.

Enjoy this magical time with loved ones and soak in the cheerful spirit of the season!

*Dates/times subject to change. Please check websites listed for any updates.



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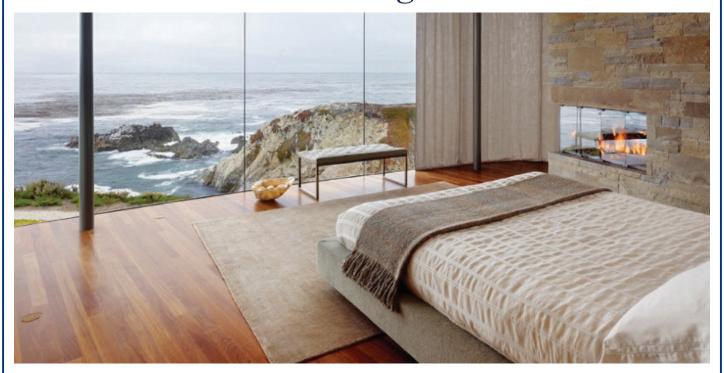
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