

# Holiday Gift Guide

## 7 Last-Minute Holiday Shopping Tips

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MILFORD — Despite best efforts, it's sometimes inevitable to get caught up in the rush of the holiday season and fall behind on holiday shopping.

At least you're in good company. According to a survey last year by the National Retail Federation, only 12 percent of shoppers had completed their gift purchases by Dec. 12. On top of that, 66 percent of shoppers didn't plan to purchase their last gift until Dec. 18 or later.

Whether you've spent the past month traveling, you're waiting to score last-minute deals or you're simply a perennial procrastinator, it's not too late. Here are some tips to help you find the perfect gift for everyone left on your list without busting your budget.

**1. Buy online if you can**

The top reason to avoid last-minute holiday shopping never changes: the crowds. Stores are packed, traffic is terrible and what you intended to be a short trip can easily turn into a day-long affair.

Skip the crowds and look online first. Many stores offer expedited shipping (though some may come at a higher cost) to ensure your gifts arrive on time, even up to Dec. 20 or beyond. Amazon Prime customers can take advantage of one- and two-day shipping as well. But don't risk cutting it too close; order as soon as possible to avoid any delivery issues.

Also double and triple check order deadlines. You don't want

to finalize your purchase only to find out in the confirmation email that delivery is expected on Dec. 27.

**2. Save your receipts**

One savvy trick that can work in your favor this time of year is taking advantage of price adjustment policies.

Many stores will offer to pay the difference if an item is marked down within a certain number of days after your purchase, says Jeanette Pavini, savings expert at Coupons.com.

"If you are shopping close to Christmas, it's likely items you purchase will go down in price starting on Dec. 26," she says. "Most stores just require you to bring in the receipt, not the items, to get the adjustment."

Remember to read the fine print and make sure the retailer doesn't adjust or eliminate this policy during the holiday season. And, as always, keep your receipts.

**3. Shop the stores and avoid crowds**

If you do need to go to a brick-and-mortar store, look for stores that offer extended hours during the holiday season to avoid the crowds. Retailers want to keep your shopping experience as

stress-free and enjoyable as possible, so some are making it easier by extending hours and hiring more seasonal staff.

Even if you're not an early riser, dedicating a day to wake up before dawn to complete your shopping can help you beat the midday rush and raise your chances of scoring low-stock items before they're gone.

Another way to avoid crowded aisles is in-store pickup options. "It will allow you to shop from home on your computer or phone and head down to the store to grab it once you get the email telling you it's ready, typically within an hour or two," says Kyle James, founder of Rather-Be-Shopping.net.

**4. Look out for Super Saturday**

Super Saturday is the last Saturday before Christmas, which is Dec. 22 this year. While this is one of the most popular shopping days all year, it's also one of your last chances to check off your gift list.

"You'll find deals on toys, electronics and apparel," on Super Saturday, says James. Last year's Super Saturday deals included 20 percent off coupons at Macy's and Kohl's, cash-back offers with purchase minimums

at Belk, PetSmart and Dick's Sporting Goods and even a few exclusive offers for early-bird shoppers at stores like J.C. Penney, according to USA Today.

"The discount may come in the form of a coupon," Pavini says. "So be sure to follow your favorite retailer's social media. Check in on their Facebook page to find out what they are offering."

**5. Hunt for coupons and clearances**

Almost every store you buy from this time of year will have some sort of sale or discount.

"Keep and eye on retailer friends-and-family," says Kim Miller, chief marketing officer at Ebates. "Keep an eye on the flash sales and the one-day events that typically crop up this time of year as retailers try to move inventory in slightly different ways."

Online coupon sites and apps, store emails and even print ads can be great resources for these last-minute coupons and flash sales.

"Many popular retailers do their clearance markdowns and add new items to the clearance rack on specific days of the week," James says, so

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## History Of Christmas Trees

MILFORD — Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had a special meaning for people in the winter. Discover the history of the Christmas tree, from the earliest winter solstice celebrations, to Queen Victoria and all the way to the annual lighting of the Rockefeller Center tree.

### How It All Got Started

Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had a special meaning for people in the winter. Just as people today decorate their homes during the festive season with pine, spruce, and fir trees, ancient peoples hung evergreen boughs over their doors and windows. In many countries it was believed that evergreens would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits, and illness.

Did you know? Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states including Hawaii and Alaska.

In the Northern hemisphere, the shortest day and longest night of the year falls on December 21 or December 22 and is called the winter solstice. Many ancient people believed that the sun was a god and that winter came every year because the sun god had become sick and weak. They celebrated the solstice because it meant that at last the sun god would begin to get well. Evergreen boughs reminded them of all the green plants that would grow again when the sun god was strong and summer would return.

The ancient Egyptians worshipped a god called Ra, who had the head of a hawk and wore the sun as a blazing disk in his crown. At the solstice, when Ra began to recover from the illness, the Egyptians filled their homes with green palm rushes which symbolized for them the triumph of life over death.

Early Romans marked the solstice with a feast called the Saturnalia in honor of Saturn, the god of agriculture. The Romans knew that the solstice meant that soon farms and orchards would be green and fruitful. To mark the occasion, they decorated their homes and temples with evergreen boughs. In Northern Europe the mysterious Druids, the

priests of the ancient Celts, also decorated their temples with evergreen boughs as a symbol of everlasting life. The fierce Vikings in Scandinavia thought that evergreens were the special plant of the sun god, Balder.

### The "Real" Deal With Fake Christmas Trees

Germany is credited with starting the Christmas tree tradition as we now know it in the 16th century when devout Christians brought decorated trees into their homes. Some built Christmas pyramids of wood and decorated them with evergreens and candles if wood was scarce. It is a widely held belief that Martin Luther, the 16th-century Protestant reformer, first added lighted candles to a tree. Walking toward his home one winter evening, composing a sermon, he was awed by the brilliance of stars twinkling amidst evergreens. To recapture the scene for his family, he erected a tree in the main room and wired its branches with lighted candles.

Most 19th-century Americans found Christmas trees an oddity. The first record of one being on display was in the 1830s by the German settlers of Pennsylvania, although trees had been a tradition in many German homes much earlier. The Pennsylvania German settlements had community trees as early as 1747. But, as late as the 1840s Christmas trees were seen as pagan symbols and not accepted by most Americans.

It is not surprising that, like many other festive Christmas customs, the tree was adopted so late in America. To the New England Puritans, Christmas was sacred. The pilgrims' second governor, William Bradford, wrote that he tried hard to stamp out "pagan mockery" of the observance, penalizing any frivolity. The influential Oliver Cromwell preached against "the heathen traditions" of Christmas carols, decorated trees, and any joyful expression that desecrated "that sacred event." In 1659, the General Court of Massachusetts enacted a law making any observance of December 25 (other than a church service) a penal offense; people were fined for hanging decorations. That stern solemnity continued until the 19th century, when

the influx of German and Irish immigrants undermined the Puritan legacy.

In 1846, the popular royals, Queen Victoria and her German Prince, Albert, were sketched in the Illustrated London News standing with their children around a Christmas tree. Unlike the previous royal family, Victoria was very popular with her subjects, and what was done at court immediately became fashionable—not only in Britain, but with fashion-conscious East Coast American Society. The Christmas tree had arrived.

By the 1890s Christmas ornaments were arriving from Germany and Christmas tree popularity was on the rise around the U.S. It was noted that Europeans used small trees about four feet in height, while Americans liked their Christmas trees to reach from floor to ceiling.

The early 20th century saw Americans decorating their trees mainly with homemade ornaments, while the German-American sect continued to use apples, nuts, and marzipan cookies. Popcorn joined in after being dyed bright colors and interlaced with berries and nuts. Electricity brought about Christmas lights, making it possible for Christmas trees to glow for days on end. With this, Christmas trees began to appear in town squares across the country and having a Christmas tree in the home became an American tradition.

### Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree

The Rockefeller Center tree is located at Rockefeller Center, west of Fifth Avenue from 47th through 51st Streets in New York City.

The Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree dates back to the Depression Era days. The tallest tree displayed at Rockefeller Center came in 1948 and was a Norway Spruce that measured in at 100 feet tall and hailed from Killingworth, Connecticut.

The first tree at Rockefeller Center was placed in 1931. It was a small unadorned tree worked by construction workers at the center of the construction site. Two years later, another tree was placed there, this time with lights. These days, the giant Rockefeller Center tree is laden with over 25,000 Christmas lights.

## Millennials To Baby Boomers, Gifts That Grow Are All The Rage

By Melinda Myers

MILFORD — It's a jungle in there. Every window, surface and brightly lit corner is filled with decorative or edible greenery. There is no doubt what to gift this person for the holidays. More of the same.

A lack of outdoor growing space, limited growing seasons, and time constraints have many people filling their apartments and homes with fiddle leaf figs, palms, succulents, herbs and vegetables.

And you have probably heard of the houseplant craze amongst millennials. Perhaps the need to destress after a long work day, concern for purer air, an interest in safe fresh food and a desire to be close to nature contribute to this craze. No matter the reason, gifting a millennial a trendy houseplant is sure to be a hit.

No matter your age, living in a green space and tending plants has many benefits. It reduces stress, improves one's mood and provides a sense of emotional well being. Planting seeds and watching them grow generates feelings of hope. It's edible, even better. Indoor herb and vegetable gardens provide fresh, nutritious food to harvest and enjoy.

Newbies and those making the gardening transition indoors may find it challenging. Limited light, a different pallet of plants and variable watering regimes

can be intimidating. Those who have killed philodendrons and succulents in the past may have given up, but fortunately there are solutions and easy-care options for those looking to expand their indoor green spaces.

Take the guesswork out of watering with hydroponics. Water and nutrients are available and delivered via a wick or similar system to the plants when needed. Colorful Mason-type canning jar planters fitted with hydroponic grow kits are perfect for starting seeds and growing plants on windowsills or countertops. Add a sleeker touch with a colored glass cylinder like Modern Sprout's Hydroponic Tumbler Grow Kit.

Give them all they need; seeds or plants, container and growing media. Make it yourself or buy a ready-made kit like the Wax Planter Grow Kit (modsprout.com). This gift is sure to provide a sense of satisfaction from planting to harvesting their first sprig of basil or decorating the spruce tree they grew from a seed.

Brighten up growing spaces with indoor lights. Supplementing natural light or providing light in a windowless space can make the difference between success and failure. Energy efficient LED grow lights provide the light plants need, while saving on energy costs. Attractive options and space saving systems blend



(Photo By Modern Sprout)

Growhouse lighting systems provide a greenhouse and grow light all in one unit.

in nicely to any home. Complete lighting systems, like the Growhouse, are designed to fit small spaces and make watering easy while protecting surrounding surfaces from water damage.

Match the plants to the light conditions and the recipient's gardening skills. Succulents are trendy and perfect for busy gardeners with sunny windows or grow light setups. They thrive with benign neglect; as do snake plants, Chinese evergreens, Anthuriums and ZZ plants in low light conditions. Orchids and bonsai make the perfect gift for those ready to take their indoor gardening to the next level. For the most fool proof winter option, gift an amaryllis or paperwhite bulb kit.

No matter the recipient's age or experience level, the gift of gardening will provide immediate and lasting enjoyment.



### ... 7 Tips

(Continued from page 13)

knowing when stores move inventory can help you score further clearances. In the week leading up to Christmas, for example, he advises shopping stores like Macy's and Anthropologie on Monday but waiting until Wednesday to go to Best Buy and Saturday for Kohl's.

### 6. Take advantage of loyalty programs

Retailers don't just want you to shop their products this season — they're also trying to build brand loyalty to have you return throughout the year. As a result, loyalty program sign-up offers and coupon codes may be especially lucrative.

Beware of any programs tied to store credit cards, though. "You don't want to add more credit card debt to 2019," Pavini says.

Retail cards are generally not a great deal, so "just open it if you will save a good amount of money and you can pay it off by the due date," Pavini says.

Instead, stick to retailers that offer rewards programs not tied to credit cards, like Sephora's Beauty Insider program or REI's Co-op member rewards.

### 7. If all else fails, go with gift cards

Gift cards are perfect for procrastinating gift-buyers. And you can even score great deals on them if you shop smart.

"You can actually pay 8 to 20 percent less than the gift card's face value by using websites like GiftCardGranny.com, CardPool.com, Raise.com and GiftCards.com," James says.

If you're looking to give restaurant gift cards, you can find great deals leading up to and even after Christmas. Currently, Benihana is offering a \$10 promotional card with every \$50 gift card purchase through Dec. 31, and Longhorn Steakhouse has a \$5 bonus card deal with every \$25 gift card purchase.



## DJ FE's Birthday & Ugly Sweater Party

PORT JERVIS — Come celebrate our very own DJ FE's Birthday with us! Ugly sweater contest & drink specials all night! DJ JOE ATCH will be spinnin' all your favorites to keep this party jumping! On Friday, December 21, music starts 9 p.m., FREE ENTRY, must be 21+ with a valid I.D.



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PORT JERVIS, NY — Story Time at The Loft at Foundry 42. No reservations needed, 42 Front St. Free story time, music & Craft every Wednesday and Saturday at 10:30 a.m. Dec 22: "The Polar Express" with a very special surprise reader and Christmas craft. Dec 26: "Santa's Stuck" with a very special reader and craft. Dec 29: "What Snowmen Do At Night" with a special guest reader Councilwoman Kristin Trovei and snowman craft. For info call 845-858-4942.

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# Christmas Trees Around the World

MILFORD — Christmas trees around the world are used differently around the world, here are some ways how other countries use them.

**Canada**  
German settlers migrated to Canada from the United States in the 1700s. They brought with them many of the things associated with Christmas we cherish today—Advent calendars, gingerbread houses, cookies—and Christmas trees. When Queen Victoria's German husband, Prince Albert, put up a Christmas tree at Windsor Castle in 1848, the Christmas tree became a tradition throughout England, the United States, and Canada.

**Mexico**  
In most Mexican homes the principal holiday adornment is el Nacimiento (Nativity scene). However, a decorated Christmas tree may be incorporated in the Nacimiento or set up elsewhere in the home. As purchase of a natural pine represents a luxury commodity to most Mexican families, the typical arbolito (little tree) is often an artificial one, a bare branch cut from a copal tree (Bursera microphylla) or some type of shrub collected from the countryside.

**Britain**  
The Norway spruce is the traditional species used to decorate homes in Britain. The Norway spruce was a native species in the British Isles before the last Ice Age, and was reintroduced here before the 1500s.

**Greenland**  
Christmas trees are imported, as no trees live this far north. They are decorated with candles and bright ornaments.

**Guatemala**  
The Christmas tree has joined the "Nacimiento" (Nativity scene) as a popular ornament because of the large German population in Guatemala. Gifts are left under the tree on Christmas morning for the children. Parents and adults do not exchange gifts until New Year's Day.

**Brazil**  
Although Christmas falls during the summer in Brazil, sometimes pine trees are decorated with little pieces of cotton that represent falling snow.

**Ireland**  
Christmas trees are bought anytime in December and decorated with colored lights, tinsel, and baubles. Some people favor the angel on top of the tree, others the star. The house is decorated with garlands, candles, holly, and ivy. Wreaths and mistletoe are hung on the door.

**Sweden**  
Most people buy Christmas trees well before Christmas Eve, but it's not common to take the tree inside and decorate it until just a few days before. Evergreen trees are decorated

with stars, sunbursts, and snowflakes made from straw. Other decorations include colorful wooden animals and straw centerpieces.

**Norway**  
Nowadays Norwegians often take a trip to the woods to select a Christmas tree, a trip that their grandfathers probably did not make. The Christmas tree was not introduced into Norway from Germany until the latter half of the 19th century; to the country districts it came even later. When Christmas Eve arrives, there is the decorating of the tree, usually done by the parents behind the closed doors of the living room, while the children wait with excitement outside. A Norwegian ritual known as "circling the Christmas tree" follows, where everyone joins hands to form a ring around the tree and then walk around it singing carols. Afterwards, gifts are distributed.

**Ukraine**  
Celebrated on December 25th by Catholics and on January 7th by Orthodox Christians, Christmas is the most popular holiday in the Ukraine. During the Christmas season, which also includes New Year's Day, people decorate fir trees and have parties.

**Spain**  
A popular Christmas custom is Catalonia, a lucky strike game. A tree trunk is filled with goodies and children hit at the trunk trying to knock out the hazel nuts, almonds, toffee, and other treats.

**Italy**  
In Italy, the presepio (manger or crib) represents in miniature the Holy Family in the stable and is the center of Christmas for families. Guests kneel before it and musicians sing before it and musicians sing before it. The presepio figures are usually hand-carved and very detailed in features and dress. The scene is often set out in the shape of a triangle. It provides the base of a pyramid-like structure called the ceppo. This is a wooden frame arranged to make a pyramid several feet high. Several tiers of thin shelves are supported by this frame. It is entirely decorated with colored paper, gilt pine cones, and miniature colored pennants. Small candles are fastened to the tapering sides. A star or small doll is hung at the apex of the triangular sides. The shelves above the manger scene have small gifts of fruit, candy, and presents. The ceppo is in the old Tree of Light tradition which became the Christmas tree in other countries. Some houses even have a ceppo for each child in the family.

**Germany**  
Many Christmas traditions practiced around the world today started in Germany.

It has been long thought that Martin Luther began the tradition of bringing a fir tree into the home.

According to one legend, late one evening Martin Luther was walking home through the woods and noticed how beautifully the stars shone through the trees. He wanted to share the beauty with his wife so he cut down a fir tree and took it home. Once inside he placed small lighted candles on the branches and said that it would be a symbol of the beautiful Christmas sky. Hence, the Christmas tree.

Another legend says that in the early 16th century, people in Germany combined two customs that had been practiced in different countries around the globe. The Paradise tree (a fir tree decorated with apples) represented the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden. The Christmas Light, a small, pyramid-like frame, usually decorated with glass balls, tinsel, and a candle on top, was a symbol of the birth of Christ as the Light of the World. Changing the tree's apples to tinsel balls and cookies; and combining this new tree with the Light placed on top, the Germans created the tree that many of us know now.

Today, the Tannenbaum (Christmas tree) is traditionally decorated in secret with lights, tinsel, and ornaments by the mother and is lit and revealed on Christmas Eve with cookies, nuts, and gifts under its branches.

**South Africa**  
Christmas is a summer holiday in South Africa. Although Christmas trees are not common, windows are often draped with sparkling cotton wool and tinsel.

**Saudi Arabia**  
Christian Americans, Europeans, Indians, Filipinos, and others living here have to celebrate Christmas privately in their homes. Christmas lights are generally not tolerated. Most families place their Christmas trees somewhere inconspicuous.

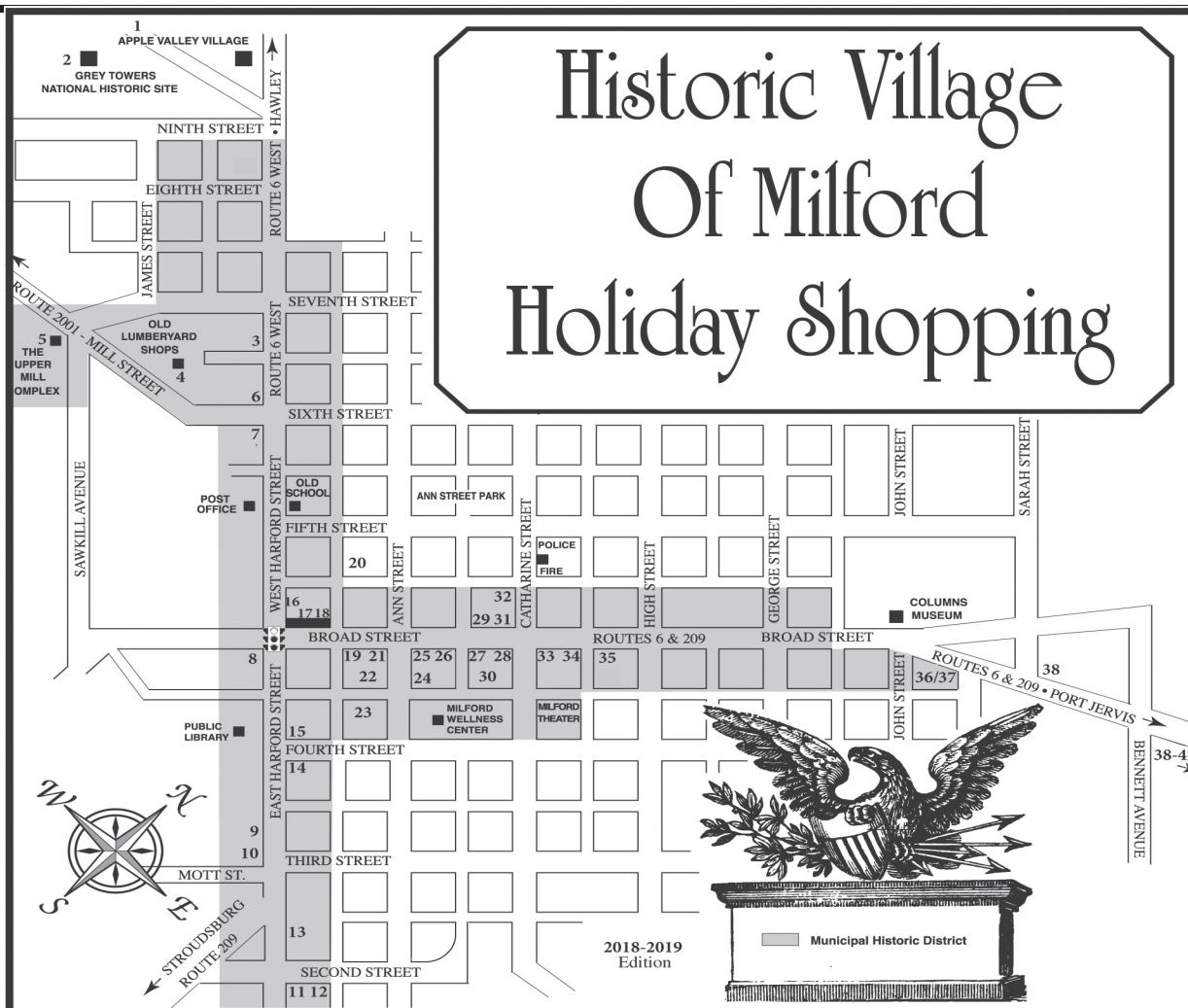
**Philippines**  
Fresh pine trees are too expensive for many Filipinos, so handmade trees in an array of colors and sizes are often used. Star lanterns, or parol, appear everywhere in December. They are made from bamboo sticks, covered with brightly colored rice paper or cellophane, and usually feature a tassel on each point. There is usually one in every window, each representing the Star of Bethlehem.

**China**  
Of the small percentage of Chinese who do celebrate Christmas, most erect artificial trees decorated with spangles and paper chains, flowers, and lanterns. Christmas trees are called "trees of light."

**Japan**  
For most of the Japanese who celebrate Christmas, it's purely a secular holiday devoted to the love of their children. Christmas trees are decorated with small toys, dolls, paper ornaments, gold paper fans and lanterns, and wind chimes. Miniature candles are also put among the tree branches. One of the most popular ornaments is the origami swan. Japanese children have exchanged thousands of folded paper "birds of peace" with young people all over the world as a pledge that war must not happen again.



**Christmas Eve Dinner**  
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| <p><b>Fine &amp; Casual Dining</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apple Valley Restaurant &amp; Village</li> <li>4. John's of Arthur Ave</li> <li>5. Waterwheel Cafe, Bakery &amp; Bar</li> <li>8. Jorgensons at the Dimmick Inn</li> <li>25. Milford Diner</li> <li>33. Bar Louis at Hotel Fauchère</li> <li>34. 403 Broad</li> <li>41. Balch's</li> </ol> <p><b>Art Galleries &amp; Framing</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Beveled Edge Custom Frame Studio</li> <li>18. ARTery, Fine Art &amp; Craft Gallery</li> <li>26. Golden Fish Gallery &amp; Museum</li> </ol> <p><b>Home And Garden</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Luhr's- True Value</li> <li>14. Ambience Furniture &amp; Fine Gifts</li> <li>17. Upriver Home</li> <li>31. SOS Fuel</li> <li>28. Willow</li> </ol> | <p><b>Historic Places Of Interest</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Grey Towers National Historic Site</li> <li>5. The Upper Mill</li> <li>33. The Hotel Fauchère</li> </ol> <p><b>Specialty Foods And Sweets</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. 84 Country Store</li> <li>9. Tequila Sunrise</li> <li>10. Log Tavern Brewery</li> <li>21. Fretta's Italian Food Specialties</li> <li>20. Ghiggeri's</li> <li>22. Irene's Kitchen</li> <li>36. Frisky Goat Coffeehouse</li> <li>42. Green Valley Farms</li> </ol> <p><b>Antiques</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Old Lumberyard Antiques</li> <li>18. Forest Hall Antiques</li> <li>23. Ann Street Antiques</li> </ol> <p><b>Specialty Shops</b></p> <p><b>Books And Booksellers</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Milford Pet Foods &amp; Supply</li> <li>5. Earthly Treasures</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Waterwheel Guitars</li> <li>12. Nani's Closet</li> <li>15. The Craft Show</li> <li>16. Milford Underground</li> <li>17. Upriver Home</li> <li>24. Enchanted Gifts &amp; Books</li> <li>27. Silverstar</li> <li>29. Karenina's Boutique</li> <li>30. Golden Gifts</li> <li>32. JEM Screenprinting</li> </ol> <p><b>Sporting Goods</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Sawcreek Outfitters</li> <li>37. Action Bikes &amp; Outdoor</li> </ol> <p><b>Day Spas &amp; Salons</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Lacquer Nails &amp; Spa</li> <li>11. Second Street Salon</li> <li>35. Badae &amp; Soul</li> <li>38. TLC Salon</li> <li>40. DYE Hard Salon</li> </ol> <p><b>Lodging</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Harrington House Bed &amp; Breakfast</li> <li>8. Jorgensons at the Dimmick Inn</li> <li>33. The Hotel Fauchère</li> <li>39. Myer's Country Motel</li> </ol> |
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## New Year's Eve At The Hotel Fauchère

MILFORD — Welcome 2019 with an elegant dinner in the Delmonico Room on New Year's Eve with acclaimed cabaret pianist Ray Weeks and holiday decor. Black tie is encouraged. Dinner comes with an optional wine pairing. Click here to see the menu and here to view our new cocktail and wine list.

10:30 p.m. with featured à la carte specials, along with the regular menu. At midnight, we'll celebrate the new year with festive hats, streamers, noisemakers and good cheer! Join us for the fun!  
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Completely free/no charge and open to the community. Join us December 21 and 22 at 6 p.m.



**Tradition Of Carols – Tri-State Chorale Christmas Offering**

MILFORD – The Tri-State Chorale, a primarily summer chorus, has decided to debut a Christmas concert this season after a well-attended free end-of-summer concert. The Christmas concert will take place on Thursday, December 20 at 7 p.m. in Milford’s St. Patrick’s Church.

The Tri-State Chorale would like to thank its sponsors, Milford Present and the Greater Pike Community Foundation, for allowing this concert to be free to the public.

“It was amazing to see the communities come out and support us in August for our free concert,” said Matthew Rucpich Director

of the Chorale. “We wanted to give more to the communities we serve and thought spreading some Christmas cheer was the perfect opportunity.”

Attendees can sing along to their holiday favorites as the concert will be a traditional sing-along accompanied by an organ and brass quintet. The Tri-State Chorale will be joined with the Delaware Valley High School Chamber Choir and the Dingman-Delaware Children’s Choir.

For more information and updates on the concert, head to Tri-State Chorale Facebook page for more information or email [tristatechorale@gmail.com](mailto:tristatechorale@gmail.com).

**Free Holiday Movie**

MATAMORAS – Flagship premium Cinemas Matamoras Presents: Our 2018 Free Holiday Movie! The Polar Express at 10 a.m. on Monday December 24 ONLY!

\*\*\*Doors will open at 9:30 a.m.\*\*\*

This event is FREE to everyone! Perfect entertainment for the whole family!

This feature is rated G, 1 hour 40 minutes long.

\*\*\* Seating is limited and guests will be seated on a first come first serve basis! Reservations NOT accepted. Tickets are NOT available in advance.\*\*\*



**Christmas Eve Services**

MATAMORAS – United Methodist Church of Matamoras will hold Christmas Eve Services on Dec. 24 with Family Candlelight Service at 7 p.m. and Candlelight Song and Scripture at 11 p.m. 209 Ave H. For more info call 570-491-4727. Pastor Diane Sommers.



**Christmas At The Ranch**

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# Dingmans

## Holiday Shopping And Dining Guide

### Santa Visits Children

**LORDS VALLEY**— The Blooming Grove Fire Department and Hemlock Farms Fire & Rescue will help Santa visit children in Lords Valley on December 22, from 12 to 3 p.m. Santa will arrive on a fire truck only at the homes that sign up. Each child receives a small gift from Santa.



This event is sponsored by Patty Magie and Hemlock Realty. You **MUST** pre-register for a visit so call Hemlock Realty Group at 570-775-9890. Hemlock Farms Fire & Rescue will cover the Hemlock Farms Community; Blooming Grove Fire Department will visit anywhere else in Blooming Grove Township. If you don't live in the areas listed here but have family or friends that do and have children please share this information with them.

### Legend of St. Nicholas

**DINGMANS FERRY** — The legend of Santa Claus can be traced back hundreds of years to a monk named St. Nicholas. It is believed that Nicholas was born sometime around 280 A.D. in Patara, near Myra in modern-day Turkey. Much admired for his piety and kindness, St. Nicholas became the subject of many legends. It is said that he gave away all of his inherited wealth and traveled the countryside helping the poor and sick.

One of the best known of the St. Nicholas stories is that he saved three poor sisters from being sold into slavery or prostitution by their father by providing them with a dowry so that they could be married. Over the course of many years, Nicholas's popularity spread and he became known as the protector of children and sailors. His feast day is celebrated on the anniversary of his death, December 6. This was traditionally considered a lucky day to make large purchases or to get married.

By the Renaissance, St. Nicholas was the most popular saint in Europe. Even after the Protestant Reformation, when the veneration of saints began to be discouraged, St. Nicholas maintained a positive reputation, especially in Holland.

### Candlelight Services

**DINGMANS FERRY** — The Dingmans Ferry United Methodist Church on 115 Myck Road will host 2 **CANDLELIGHT SERVICES** on Christmas Eve at 7 and 11 p.m. Christmas Eve is on Monday this year with a regular afternoon service at 4 p.m.

These are wonderful Holiday services engaging in the old-fashioned tradition of incorporating

candlelight with Holiday Hymns. This is truly a memorable event for the entire family and a beautiful way to share in the celebration of Christmas.

For more information, schedule changes, and inclement weather updates, please check the church website at [www.dfumc.com](http://www.dfumc.com) or call the church office at 570-828-2288, weekdays between 9-12.

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# Shop New Jersey

**Home For The Holidays Concert**  
 NEWTON — Sussex County natives Scott Mello & Jessica Arnold join forces on Saturday, December 22, at 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. to ring you into the holiday season with traditional, folk, musical theater, and pop tunes - something for everyone! The proceeds from this concert will benefit the launch of the inaugural Sussex Festival, August 1-4, 2019 in Newton, NJ. Purchase tickets online.

**Christmas Facts**

- Each year, 30-35 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States alone. There are 21,000 Christmas tree growers in the United States, and trees usually grow for about 15 years before they are sold.
- Today, in the Greek and Russian orthodox churches, Christmas is celebrated 13 days after the 25th, which is also referred to as the Epiphany or Three Kings Day. This is the day it is believed that the three wise men finally found Jesus in the manger.
- In the Middle Ages, Christmas celebrations were rowdy and raucous—a lot like today's Mardi Gras parties.
- From 1659 to 1681, the celebration of Christmas was outlawed in Boston, and law-breakers were fined five shillings.
- Christmas was declared a federal holiday in the United States on June 26, 1870.
- The first eggnog made in the United States was consumed in Captain John Smith's 1607 Jamestown settlement.
- Poinsettia plants are named after Joel R. Poinsett, an American minister to Mexico, who brought the red-and-green plant from Mexico to America in 1828.
- The Salvation Army has been sending Santa Claus-clad donation collectors into the streets since the 1890s.
- Rudolph, "the most famous reindeer of all," was the product of Robert L. May's imagination in 1939. The copywriter wrote a poem about the reindeer to help lure customers into the Montgomery Ward department store.
- Construction workers started the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree tradition in 1931.

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# 11 Reindeer Facts To Share

MILFORD — Beyond their sled-pulling capabilities and discrimination towards those with red noses, what do you really know about reindeer?

**1. Reindeer and caribou are the same thing**

Historically, the European/Asian reindeer and American Caribou were considered to be different species, but they are actually one and the same. There are two major groups of reindeer, the tundra and the woodland, which are divided according to the type of region the animal lives in, not their global location. The animals are further divided into subspecies, ranging from nine to thirteen depending on who is doing the classification. At least one subspecies, the Arctic Reindeer, is already extinct.

**2. They go by many names, all of which seem appropriate**

Reindeer comes from the Old Norse word "hreinir," which means "horned animal." Caribou is based on the French word for "snow shoveler," in reference to the animal's habit of digging through the snow for food. In many Eastern European languages, the root word for the creature is "Mashia," which comes from an Iranian word meaning "cattle." This makes sense given that the animals were semi-domesticated in these areas and used for meat, fur, milk and transportation.

**3. Santa's reindeer are most likely the R.t. platyrhynchus subspecies from the Svalbard islands off of Norway**

We know that because Clement C. Moore's poem, "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," which first introduced the world to Santa's reindeer, describes them as tiny. The only reindeer that could really be considered tiny are the Svalbard subspecies, which weigh about half as much as the average reindeer species and are at least a foot shorter in length—that definitely proves useful when landing on roofs.

Strangely, you'll almost never see these guys in depictions of Santa, as live-action films usually use full-sized reindeer and animations usually draw the creatures as a cross between a regular deer and a reindeer.

**4. It's not always easy to tell the sex of a reindeer**

In most deer species, only the male grows antlers, but that's not true for most reindeer. Although the females in certain

populations do not have antlers, many do. During certain times of year, you can still tell the sex of a reindeer by checking for antlers. That's because males lose their antlers in winter or spring, but females shed theirs in the summer. The females are significantly smaller than the males, but you may get thrown if you come across a particularly large female or a small male.

**5. Santa's reindeer may or may not be female**

Since reindeer shed their antlers at different points of the year based on their sex and age, we know that Santa's reindeer probably aren't older males, because older male reindeer lose their antlers in December and Christmas reindeer are always depicted with their antlers. That means Santa's sled either has to be pulled by young reindeer, constantly replaced as they start to age, or Santa's reindeer are female. Do you want to imagine a rotating crop of sleigh pullers or an all-female lineup? It's up to you.

**6. Reindeer were originally connected to Santa through poetry**

Before Moore wrote "A Visit from Saint Nicholas" (aka "The Night Before Christmas") in 1823, no one thought about reindeer in conjunction with Santa Claus. Moore introduced the world to Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Dunder and Blixem (the last two of which were later changed from Dutch to German, becoming Donner and Blitzen). While the first six names all make sense in English, the last two actually mean "thunder" and "lightning," respectively.

As for little Rudolph, he wasn't introduced until Robert L. May wrote a children's book in verse for Montgomery Ward in 1939 titled "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Rudolph's name means "famous wolf" in German.

**7. Just recently, researchers at University College London discovered reindeer are the only mammals that can see ultraviolet light**

While human vision cuts off at wavelengths around 400 nm, reindeers can see up to 320 nm. This range only covers the part of the spectrum we can see with the help of a black light, but it is still enough to help reindeer see things in the glowing white of the Arctic that they would otherwise miss. Things like white fur and urine are difficult, even impossible, for humans to see in

the snow, but for reindeer, they show up in high contrast.

**8. Reindeer are ideally designed for life in hostile, cold environments**

Life in the tundra is hard, but reindeer have it easy thanks to their amazing evolutionary enhancements. Their noses are specially adapted to warm the air they breathe before it enters their lungs and to condense water in the air, which they then use to keep their mucous membranes moist. Their fur traps air, which not only helps provide them with excellent insulation, but also keeps them buoyant in water, which is critical being as how they often travel across massive rivers and lakes while migrating.

Even their hooves are special. In the summer, when the ground is wet, their foot pads are softened, providing them with extra traction. In the winter, though, the pads tighten, revealing the rim of their hooves, which is used to provide traction in the slippery snow and ice.

**9. While not all reindeer migrate, some of them travel further than any other migrating terrestrial mammal**

A few populations of North American reindeer travel over 3,100 miles per year, covering around 23 miles per day. At their top speed, these reindeer can run 50 miles per hour and swim at 6.2 miles per hour. During spring, the migration herds range from 50,000 to 500,000 individuals, but during the winter the groups are much smaller as the reindeer have entered mating season and competition between the bucks begins to split up the crowds. Like many herd animals, the calves learn to walk fast—within only 90 minutes of being born, a baby reindeer can already run.

**10. Reindeer played an important role in the survival of many cultures**

In Scandinavia and Canada, reindeer hunting helped keep tribes alive, from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods all the way through modern times. In Norway, it is still common to find reindeer trapping pits, guiding fences and bow rests dating from all the way back to the Stone Age. And in Scandinavia, reindeer is still a popular meat, sold in grocery stores in fresh, canned and dried forms. Almost all of the animal's organs are edible and many are crucial ingredients of traditional dishes in the area.

In North America, the Inuit people still use the creature as they have for thousands of years, for food, clothing, shelter and tools. Many of these tribes still follow traditional practices that prevent selling the meat and limit the number they may kill on each hunting trip.

**11. They used to live a lot farther south**

While reindeer now live exclusively in the northern points of the globe, when the earth was cooler and humans were less of a threat, their territory was larger. In fact, reindeer used to live all the way down in Nevada, Tennessee and Spain during the Pleistocene area. Its habitat has shrunk considerably in the last few centuries. In the 19th century, reindeer still lived in Southern Idaho.

As for how 9 reindeer manage to fly while pulling a sled carrying presents for every child in the whole world, science still hasn't worked that out.



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