

# Condé Nast Traveler

TRUTH IN TRAVEL // DECEMBER 2013

## NOT HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

*THE (UN)TOURIST  
GUIDE TO NYC*

*LAST-MINUTE  
NEW YEAR'S GETAWAYS*

  
+  
GIFT  
GIVING  
ON  
THE GO

Tea for two at The Plaza  
hotel's Champagne  
Bar in New York City.

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YOUR DAILY TRAVEL INTELLIGENCE





# NEW YORK, NEW TRADITIONS





Who can resist holiday season in New York?

Certainly not us (nor millions of tourists, for that matter).

It's when the city is at its buoyant best,

when everything seems most shimmering and magical.

In honor of our favorite time of year, we rounded up the places you'll want to visit after the places you came to visit.

So welcome to our city—because this month, it's your city too

LET'S FACE IT—IF YOU'RE IN NEW YORK DURING THE HOLIDAYS, you're going to find yourself doing one of the things every tourist does. You (or someone in your crew) will want to try out the ice skating rink at Rockefeller Center. You'll go to *The Nutcracker* at Lincoln Center. You won't be able to resist the sparkling Christmas tree in Washington Square Park.

Nor should you. After all, Christmastime in New York is all about these beloved traditions, for tourists and, yes, us locals as well. But we wanted to give you some new traditions you'll love as much as

the old ones. And so we opened our little black books to share the restaurants, bars, best-kept secrets, and moments we know you'll adore, whether it's the oysters-and-stout happy hour at the John Dory Oyster Bar (one of the city's best deals, and just steps from Macy's gloriously vibrant windows) or the perfect cozy place to rest your feet (with a martini, of course) after an always-awe-inspiring (and always-exhausting) day at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. All you need is a good pair of shoes, a good deal of stamina... and this guide. Who knows? You may even see one of us right there with you.



# 1



Must Do

## "THE NUTCRACKER" AT LINCOLN CENTER

... and while you're there

1. Rooftop cocktails at the **EMPIRE HOTEL** are possible even in sub-freezing temperatures thanks to a retractable glass roof. Bask in the glow of the hotel's iconic neon sign, up since 1973 (44 W. 63rd St.).
2. Stop at **ÉPICERIE BOULUD** to pick up chef Daniel Boulud's gourmet-fare-to-go, including sausages and salads (1900 Broadway), or sit down for chicken tagine at **BOULUD SUD** (20 W. 64th St.; 212-595-1313; entrées from \$22).
3. Dream of long-gone summer days over lobster rolls and cold beer at **ED'S CHOWDER HOUSE** (44 W. 63rd St.; 212-956-1288; entrées from \$26).
4. Refuel with a ham-and-cheese baguette from **BOUCHON BAKERY** at the Shops at Columbus Circle. Tip: The bathrooms on the second and third floors are clean and well stocked (10 Columbus Circle).
5. Duck into the **HUDSON NEW YORK LIBRARY BAR**, which feels like an old English estate—complete with fireplace and billiards table (356 W. 58th St.).
6. Book a table at **LINCOLN** for a taste of chef (and Per Se alum) Jonathon Benno's spaghetti pomodoro. The restaurant is right at the northern end of Lincoln Center (142 W. 65th St.; 212-359-6500; entrées from \$23).



# 2



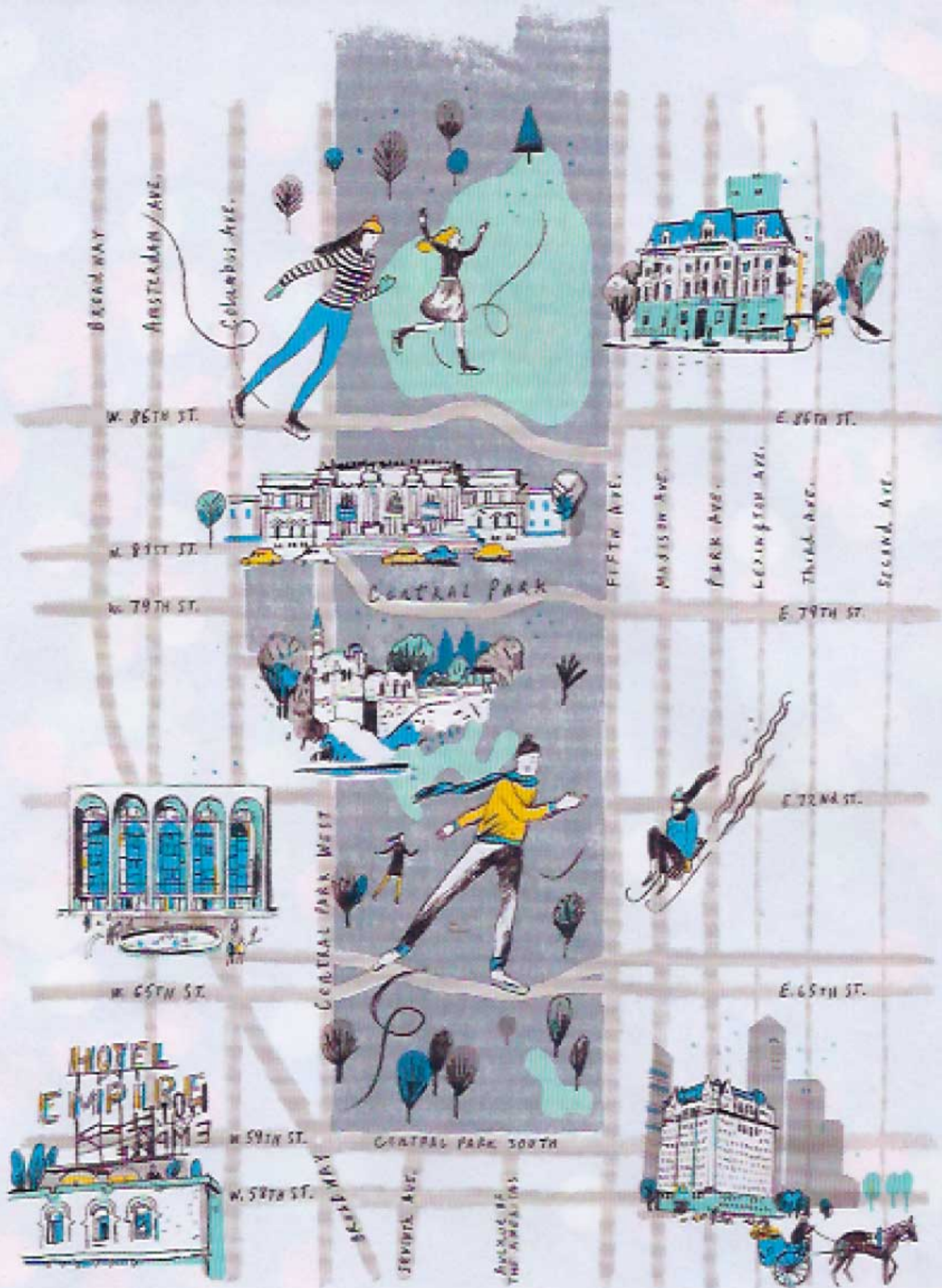
Must Do

## ICE-SKATING IN CENTRAL PARK

... and while you're there

7. Some of the city's best restos have outposts at the **PLAZA HOTEL'S FOOD HALL**—stop by Sushi of Gan for spicy tuna rolls, then grab truffles for dessert at La Maison du Chocolat. Kids will love the Rawther Fancy Teas with Santa, an hour-long tea party in the Eloise Shop (212-546-5460; Fridays in December).
8. Got a hankering for a "Compost Cookie"—an NYC cult favorite made with ground coffee beans, potato chips, and graham cracker crust? Swing by **MOMOFUKU MILK BAR** to sate your craving (15 W. 56th St.).
9. Sidle up to the **KING COLEBAR** at the St. Regis Hotel, the alleged originator of the Bloody Mary. The mural by Maxfield Parrish, after which the bar is named, was recently spiffed up thanks to a \$100,000 cleaning (2 E. 55th St.).
10. The chopped salad's a power-lunch classic, but you're really at **FRED'S AT BARNEYS NEW YORK** for the prime people-watching. Think ladies who lunch and Gossip Girl wannabes (660 Madison Ave., 9th Fl.; 212-833-2200; entrées from \$19).
11. Warm up with a croissant and a mug of Counter Culture organic coffee at **A CAFÉ AT AKA CENTRAL PARK** (42 W. 58th St.).
12. Like a Route 66 roadside greasy spoon, **BURGER JOINT** always hits the spot. It's cleverly (and incongruously) tucked behind the velvet curtains in the lobby of Le Parker Meridien (212-708-7414; entrées from \$8).
13. Go to **SERENDIPITY 3** for the famous frozen hot chocolate—and for the best chance of catching Beyoncé and O'Jays on a play date (725 E. 80th St.).
14. For a midday snack, grab a table in the bar area at **BENOIL**, where you can plot your next move over a bowl of mussels (60 W. 55th St.; 646-943-7173; bar menu plates from \$12).





# 3

Must Do

## THE CHRISTMAS TREE AND NEAPOLITAN BAROQUE CRÈCHE AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

... and while you're there

**15.** One of the most beautiful rooms in the city, **CAFÉ SABARSKY** also serves tasty Glühwein (mulled wine) and Viennese dark chocolate cake. It's inside the fabulous Neue Galerie, which houses twentieth-century German and Austrian art (1048 Fifth Ave.).

**16.** Need a last-minute gift? The one-of-a-kind

baubles and objets at **DE VERA** are nothing short of exquisite (26 E. 81st St.)

**17.** Sit counterside at **VIANO** and skip the menu: Just order the legendary hot open turkey sandwich and an egg cream... it is the holidays, after all (673 Madison Ave.; 212-751-6622).

**18.** Split a panna cotta at **VIA QUADRONNO** (25 E. 73rd St.) or, for something more sceney, stroll to **SANT'AMBROGIO**, the Manhattan fashion set's café of choice (1000 Madison Ave.; 212-570-2211; entrées from \$18).

**19.** Maybe it's the carolers or the piano player crooning Christmas songs, but it just isn't a

Manhattan Christmas without a visit to **BEMEL NANS BAR** in The Carlyle hotel (35 E. 76th St.).

**20.** Lost your makeup bag? Need stocking stuffers? You'll find high-end beauty products you never knew you needed from the world over at the old-fashioned apothecary **Clyde's** (926 Madison Ave.).



5

Must Do

## THE HOLIDAY WINDOWS AT MACY'S HERALD SQUARE

... and while you're there

6. Not only is **KEENS** the oldest steak house in town, it's also the most evocative of old New York. Check out the dark wood paneling, the oil paintings, and the thousands of clay pipes lining the ceiling (72 W. 36th St.; 212-947-3636; entrées from \$26).

7. Caffeine junkies, you're in the right neighborhood. Great coffee can be found at **STUMPTOWN**, in the Ace Hotel (18 W. 29th St.), as well as at **CULTURE ESPRESSO** (72 W. 38th St.).

8. Head a few blocks south of Macy's to the heart of Koreatown for a bowl of oxtail soup at **GAHMNI OAK** (43 W. 32nd St.; 212-695-4113; entrées from \$17), or go for traditional bibimbab at **HAN BUN** (53 W. 35th St.; 212-629-5588; entrées from \$11).

9. Oxtail and bibimbab too adventurous? If so, go to the **JOHN DORY OYSTER BAR** for happy hour: a half-dozen oysters or clams and a glass of sparkling wine or pint of oyster stout is just \$18 (1196 Broadway; 212-792-9000).

10. For an Italian ale, visit Mario Batali's version of an urban beer garden at **LA BIRRERIA**, on the roof of Eataly, his mega Italian grocery store (200 Fifth Ave.; 212-937-8910; entrées from \$15).

4

Must Do

## THE TREE AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER

... and while you're there

1. Settle in with an old-fashioned at **MONKEY BAR** and guess who's who in the Edward Sorel mural depicting New Yorkers from the 1920s and '30s (60 E. 54th St.).

2. You don't go to **SARDIS** for the food. You go for the dry martinis... and to do some star spotting (234 W. 44th St.).

3. Of the city's ethnic enclaves (Little Italy, Chinatown, Koreatown, and Little Portugal),

the tiniest (it's just one block long). See it for yourself and do lunch at **VIA BRASIL**, which is known for its feijoada completa, a black bean stew with pork that's the national dish of Brazil. It's a guaranteed stamina-booster (34 W. 46th St.; 212-997-1158; entrées from \$16).

4. Coffee and a tip. First, sample the superlative West Coast brew at **BLUE BOTTLE COFFEE** on the con-

er Center (1 Rockefeller Plaza). Next, continue underground, avoiding the crowds and the cold, to Fifth Avenue, where you'll emerge directly across the street from Saks Fifth Avenue's holiday windows.

5. Nothing beats the chill like a steaming bowl of noodles. Want proof? Try the miso ramen at **SAPPORO** (152 W. 49th St.; 212-869-8972; entrées from \$8).







# 6

Must Do

## THE CHRISTMAS TREE BENEATH THE ARCH IN WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

... and while you're there

**1.** Remember your New York City holiday whenever you look at your delicate handblown ornament from the quaint **MATT MCGHEE** gift shop (174 Waverly Pl.).

**2.** You may not be able to score a table at Italian hot spots **Lorrisi** or **Carbone**, but you can buy a mozzarella oozing hero at the restaurants' sandwich shop, **PARM** (248 Mulberry St.; 212-993-7180; entrées from \$9).

**3.** Shop for the literary types on your list at one of the city's top indie bookstores, **MCCALLY JACK-**

**SON** (52 Prince St.), or snag an antiquarian cookbook at charming **IDANNE HENDRICKS COOKBOOKS** (488 Greenwich St.).

**4.** Think you're too cool for Rockefeller Center's skating rink? If so, head to the **STANDARD ICE RINK**. It sits at the base of The Standard hotel, beneath the High Line (848 Washington St.; 212-645-4646).

**5.** Just east of Washington Square is **THE SMILE**, a super-hip café where you just may spot an Olsen twin (or two) over a plate of ricotta and cherry tomatoes on toast (26

Bond St.; 646-329-5836; entrées from \$15).

**6.** Cocktails go couture at **PEGU CLUB** (77 W. Houston St.) and **TEMPLE BAR** (332 Lafayette St.).

**7.** Teatime at the **CROSBY STREET HOTEL** is best summed up as British eccentric charm with a twist—and the spectacularly wallpapered bathrooms alone are worth the visit (79 Crosby St.).

**8.** Skip the cheesy gift fair in **UNION SQUARE** and make a beeline for Migliorelli Farm Stand's apple cider doughnuts and hot mulled cider (Union Square Farmers' Market).

**9.** Visit Washington Square Park (at right) on the night of December 14 to take part in **UNSILENT NIGHT**, a communal caroling procession through Greenwich Village wherein participants use iPhones or cassette players to play different parts of a Phil Kline composition. Meet at 6:45 p.m. at the arch in Washington Square (above left).

**10.** Ward off the sniffles with an Immunity shot packed with echinacea and goldenseal from **JUICE GENERATION** (171 W. Fourth St.).

**11.** The best macaron south of 14th Street? It's at **KEE'S CHOCOLATES** (80 Thompson St.).

**12.** Downtown's answer to a Paris bistro is **RAOUL'S**, where steak au poivre and a bottle of red is the ultimate winter dinner (180 Prince St.; 212-966-3518; entrées from \$24).









# 7

Must Do

## BROOKLYN & THE BRONX

... and while you're there

1. You've made it all the way to the South Street Seaport! Celebrate with a hot toddy at the **DEAD RABBIT** (30 Water St.) before grabbing a cab for the five-minute drive across the Brooklyn Bridge to catch a ride on **JANE'S CAROUSEL** (below), a

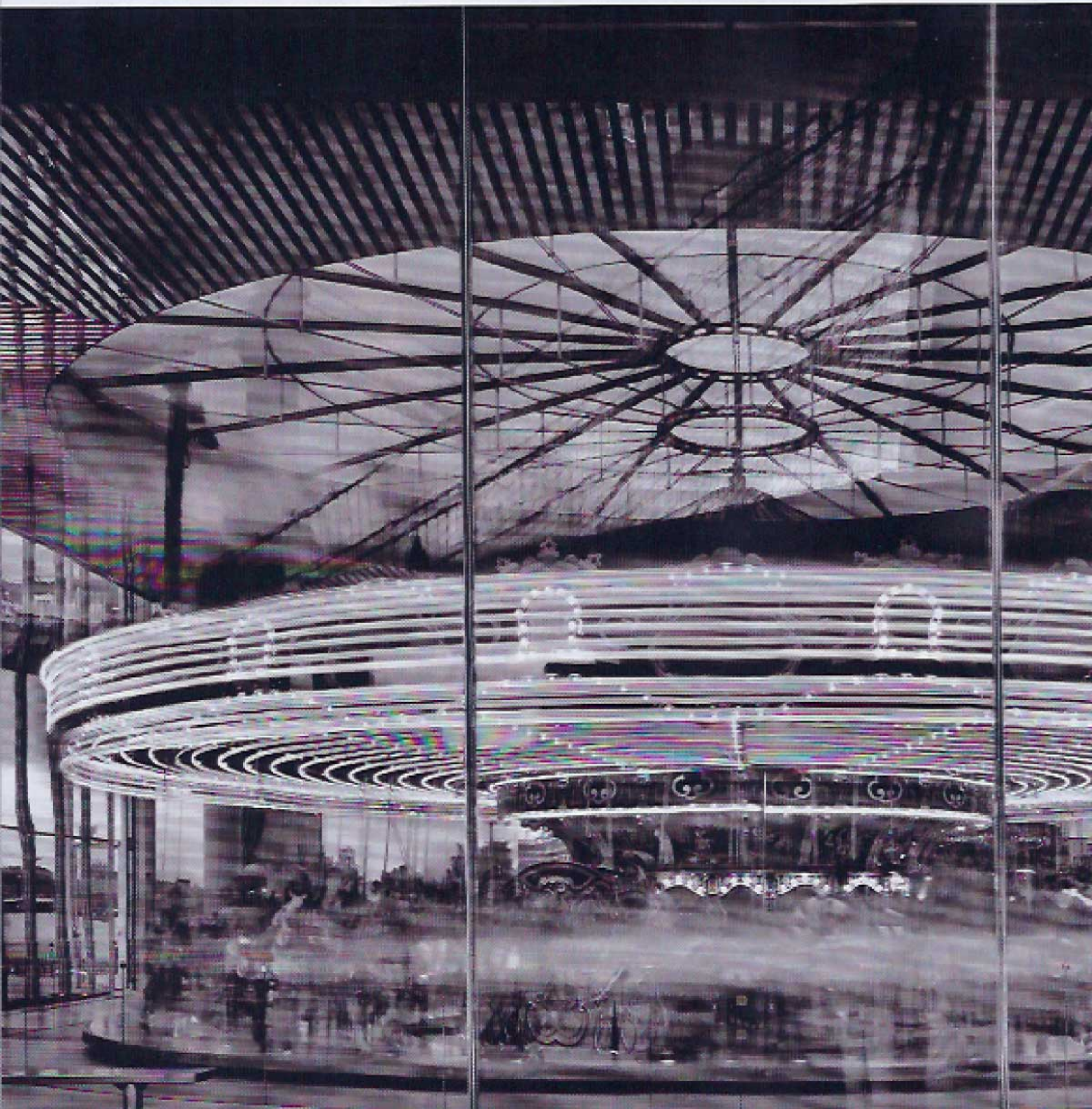
beautifully restored merry-go-round from 1922 that's housed in a glass structure in Brooklyn's DUMBO neighborhood. Kids will love the old-fashioned horses; you'll love the views of the snowy skyline ([janescarousel.com](http://janescarousel.com)).

2. Don't leave DUMBO without treating yourself to the most decadent hot chocolate of your life at **JACQUES TORRES CHOCOLATE** (66 Water St.).

3. No need to stick to Central Park for sledding—**PROSPECT PARK** has some of Brooklyn's best

hills. Head to the eastern side of Lookout Hill for sled-worthy slopes (enter the park at 16th St. and Prospect Park SW).

4. Asian-fusion favorite **VALUE** is just a few minutes' stroll from Prospect Park, and a good place to reload on carbs.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTIJA PELLISSY  
COURTESY JANE'S CAROUSEL GALLERY



Try the addictive pretzel-and-chive dumplings and oyster-and-bacon pad thai (369 Seventh Ave., 347-916-0031; entrées from \$19).

**5. DYKER HEIGHTS** isn't one of Brooklyn's touristed neighborhoods... except at Christmastime,

when the houses here—specifically 80th to 85th streets between 10th and 13th avenues—get covered from foundation to roof in Christmas lights and decorations.

**6.** Up in the Bronx, kids will get a kick out of the New York Botanical Gar-

den's annual **HOLIDAY TRAIN SHOW**, where model trains whip past replicas of more than 140 New York City landmarks, all set in a winter wonderland (718-817-8700).

**7.** On your way back into Manhattan, take a detour to **ARTHUR AVENUE**—or the "real Little Italy," as Bronx natives call it. Pizza lovers, see who has the best slice: **GIUVANNI'S SHRICK OWEN PIZZA** (2343 Arthur Ave., 718-933-4141), **MARIO'S RESTAURANT** (2342 Arthur Ave., 718-584-1188), or **ZERO OTTO MOVE** (2357 Arthur Ave., 718-220-1027). Finish your New York City adventure with a cannoli from **MADONIA BROTHERS BAKERY** (2348 Arthur Ave.). □

