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HOSPITALITY
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PREFACE

As we bring Hospitality Academy Magazine to a close, we're excited to wrap up our six-month journey with a holiday edition that celebrates the season—and the global traditions that make it truly special. For this final issue, we're exploring the unexpected, from unique holiday customs across the world to winter wellness essentials and festive cocktails that will elevate any celebration.

Though our time has been short, our commitment has been to deliver insightful, uplifting content that inspires you—whether you're just beginning in hospitality or are well into your career. **Each article has aimed to enrich your perspective on hospitality, helping you connect with a world of possibilities and celebrate the joy of this industry.**

In this last edition, you'll find tips to keep your holidays both budget-friendly and meaningful, advice for staying well through winter's chill, and some dazzling cocktail recipes to bring extra sparkle to your celebrations. As we part, we hope these pages offer both practical guidance and a bit of seasonal magic to carry forward.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. May this season be filled with warmth, inspiration, and endless reasons to celebrate.

With gratitude,
The Hospitality Academy Team





Holiday Traditions You Haven't Heard Of:

Global Celebrations from Around the World

The holiday season isn't just about snowflakes, Christmas trees, and New Year's fireworks. From **every corner of the globe**, people gather to celebrate with **unique customs and festivities that reflect their cultural heritage, community values, and regional flavors**. This December, let's take a journey to explore fascinating holiday traditions that might just inspire you to add a global twist to your own celebrations!

1 Las Posadas Mexico

In Mexico, the **nine days leading up to Christmas** are marked by **Las Posadas**. From December 16 to December 24, families reenact Mary and Joseph's search for shelter in Bethlehem. Each night, two individuals dress as Mary and Joseph and lead a candle-lit procession to neighbors' homes. Traditional carols, or villancicos, are sung along the way, and each procession ends with the hosts offering tamales, hot drinks, and piñatas for children. The celebration fosters **a spirit of community** and **kindness**, bringing families and neighbors together.



Takanakuy 2 Peru

On December 25, some communities in the **Andean region of Peru** celebrate **Takanakuy**, a unique tradition that **blends celebration with settling old grievances**. People gather for ritualized combat, where participants (who often wear colorful costumes and masks) challenge one another to friendly fights. The purpose is to **release tensions, resolve conflicts, and start the New Year with a clean slate**. After the fights, everyone joins in a communal feast, dancing, and celebration, leaving past disagreements in the ring.





3 Caga Tió Catalonia, Spain



Catalan households have a quirky holiday tradition called **Caga Tió**, or the **"pooping log"**. Starting in early December, families care for a small log with a face, covering it with a blanket and "feeding" it treats. On Christmas Eve, children hit the log with sticks while singing a special song, encouraging it to "poop" out small gifts and candy. This **whimsical custom adds a bit of lighthearted fun to the festivities** and is a beloved tradition among children.



Fanal Senegal 4

In Senegal, particularly in the **coastal city of Saint-Louis**, **Fanal** is a unique Christmas-time celebration that **merges Christian and Senegalese traditions**. Participants create fanals, elaborate lanterns made of paper and wood, often shaped like ships or large animals. These fanals are lit at night and paraded through the streets in a captivating display. The procession is accompanied by singing, dancing, and drumming, and it serves as **both a celebration of Christmas and a symbol of hope and resilience**.



5 Omisoka Japan



Omisoka, celebrated on December 31, is Japan's New Year's Eve tradition. Families gather for a **toshikoshi soba meal** (long noodles) to **symbolize crossing from one year into the next**. Many people also clean their homes thoroughly as part of a custom called **ōsōji**, which represents purifying the home and starting fresh. As midnight approaches, **temples across Japan ring bells 108 times**—a Buddhist tradition symbolizing the cleansing of worldly desires. Omisoka is a **quiet, reflective celebration** compared to the lively countdown parties elsewhere.

Top 3 Cocktails

To Try This Season

The holiday season calls for **indulgence, warmth**, and a **touch of sparkle**, and what better way to set the mood than with a **beautifully crafted cocktail**? A great drink has the power to elevate any occasion, whether you're hosting a festive gathering, enjoying a cozy family moment, or unwinding by the fire. Here are a few standout drinks to make your celebrations **merry and bright**:



Chocolate Peppermint Martini

For those who love the combination of **chocolate** and **mint**, the Chocolate Peppermint Martini is a **sweet, festive treat** that's perfect for after dinner. It's like **dessert in a glass!**

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ounce of peppermint schnapps
- 1 ounce of chocolate liqueur
- 1 ounce of vanilla vodka
- 1/2 ounce of heavy cream
- Crushed peppermint candies for rimming glass
- Whipped cream for garnish

RECIPE

1. Rim a martini glass with crushed peppermint candies.
2. In a shaker, combine peppermint schnapps, chocolate liqueur, vanilla vodka, and heavy cream.
3. Shake with ice and strain into the prepared glass.
4. Garnish with a dollop of whipped cream and a sprinkle of crushed peppermint for an extra festive touch.

Warm Spiced Apple Cider

Sangria

If you're looking for a drink that embodies the **coziness of the season**, look no further. Perfect for a winter evening, this drink combines **the richness of red wine** with the **comforting warmth of spiced apple cider**.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups apple cider
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 4 cloves
- 1 orange, sliced
- 1 apple, sliced
- 1 pear, sliced
- 1 bottle red wine (*Zinfandel or Merlot works well*)
- 1/4 cup orange liqueur (*Cointreau or Grand Marnier*)

RECIPE

1. In a large pot, combine the wine, apple cider, brandy, orange liqueur, cinnamon sticks, and cloves.
2. Heat the mixture over low heat for 20–30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Do not boil.
3. Add the sliced orange, apple, and pear, allowing the fruit to infuse the drink.
4. Serve warm in heatproof glasses or mugs.





Holiday Old Fashioned



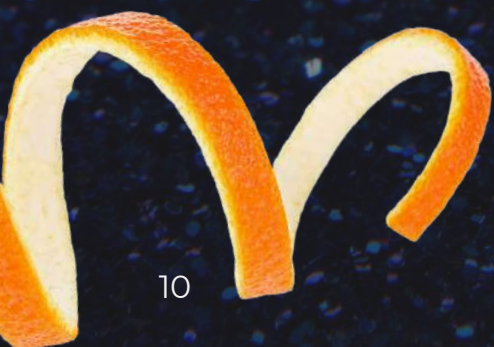
Give a classic Old Fashioned a **seasonal twist** by adding a **dash of cinnamon** and **orange zest**. This cozy cocktail brings a **warm, spicy kick** to your **winter celebrations**.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ounces of bourbon or rye whiskey
- 1/4 ounce of maple syrup
- 2 dashes of Angostura bitters
- 1 orange peel
- 1 cinnamon stick
- Ice

RECIPE

1. In a mixing glass, combine the whiskey, maple syrup, and bitters.
2. Add ice and stir until well chilled.
3. Strain into a glass with a large ice cube.
4. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and an orange peel for a festive finish.



Winter Wellness

A Student's Guide to Staying **Healthy** During the **Festive Season**

The holiday season and winter months bring chilly days, festive celebrations, and the tempting call of indulgent treats. For students juggling studies, travel, and holiday plans, it can be **challenging to maintain a healthy lifestyle**. But with a little planning and creativity, staying well doesn't have to be **expensive or overwhelming**.

Here's your ultimate **guide to keeping healthy and energized** while enjoying all the season's magic.



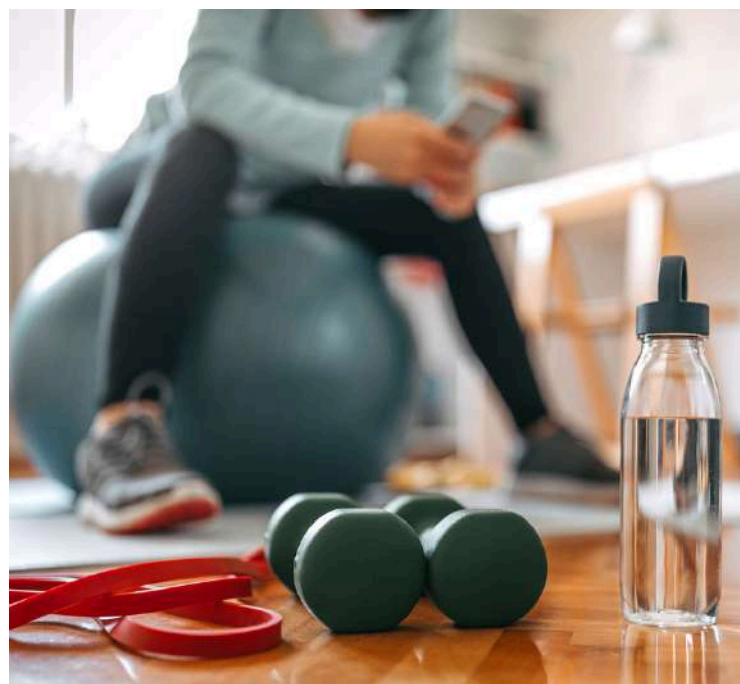
Eat Smart and Practice Mindful Eating

Fuel your body with **nutritious, seasonal foods** while enjoying **festive flavors** in a **balanced way**. Affordable superfoods like sweet potatoes and other root vegetables provide fiber and vitamins—perfect for roasting or mashing with a sprinkle of cinnamon for **a holiday twist**. Add citrus fruits like oranges and clementines for a Vitamin C boost, and start your mornings with oats, a versatile and warming breakfast option topped with nuts, fruit, and **festive spices like nutmeg or ginger**.

While indulging in holiday treats, practice mindful eating to maintain balance. Eat slowly to savor each bite and recognize when you're full, and balance your plate with a mix of proteins, veggies, and carbs for a satisfying, nutrient-rich meal. Keep healthy snacks like nuts or popcorn handy to curb cravings, and avoid overindulging on sugary treats during study sessions or festive gatherings.

Stay Active & Build a Healthy Routine

Start your day with a **quick stretching session** to wake up your body and mind. Stay active with 10-minute breaks during study sessions, or bundle up for brisk walks to enjoy fresh air. Explore free online workouts like yoga, HIIT, or dance classes on YouTube, and incorporate body weight exercises like squats, push-ups, and planks to stay fit, even while traveling.



In the evening, **unwind with a warm bath, soothing music**, or a **skincare routine** to improve sleep and recharge. Staying active boosts fitness, lifts your mood, and helps combat the winter blues. By incorporating **movement** and **self-care** into your routine, you'll maintain energy and resilience throughout the season.



Budget-Friendly DIY Treatments for Winter

Pamper your skin with a **spa-like hydrating facial mask** made from honey to moisturize, yogurt to soothe, and cocoa powder for antioxidants to combat winter dryness. Create a soothing shower experience by hanging eucalyptus to release calming essential oils, perfect for relieving stress and congestion after a long day.

You can also try to make a **homemade hand scrub** by mixing sugar, olive oil, and essential oil to soften and hydrate your hands; relax with a warm foot soak using Epsom salt and peppermint oil. Quick tip to enjoy to the fullest: **create a soothing atmosphere** with aromatherapy by diffusing lavender or orange essential oils.



Manage Stress with Mindfulness

The winter season can be both **exciting** and **stressful**, with exams, deadlines, and holiday preparations piling up. **Balancing mindfulness with fun and festive wellness activities** can help you stay centered, reduce stress, and fully enjoy the season.

Incorporate **daily meditation** or **breathing exercises** using apps like Headspace to reduce stress, and engage in journaling or gratitude practices to **foster positivity and motivation**. Take a **digital detox** to avoid comparison stress and focus on meaningful activities with loved ones or hobbies.

You can enjoy the winter and festive season without neglecting your health goals. By **eating nutritious foods, staying active, practicing self-care, and managing stress**, you can maintain the balance. Prioritize nourishing meals, movement, and relaxation to stay energized. Embrace the season's joy **while staying healthy**, leaving you ready for **the new year ahead**.





Christmas New Year & On a Budget

Affordable Plans
and Destinations

The holiday season often **comes with the pressure of overspending**, but with a little planning, you can enjoy Christmas and New Year in vibrant cities without breaking the bank account. From delicious budget-friendly meals to festive activities, here are three affordable destinations perfect for celebrating the holidays on a budget.

Detroit, Michigan:

A Winter Wonderland with Classic Charm

It offers a delightful mix of culture, food, and fun, all while keeping costs low.

- **Dining:** Start your day with a classic Detroit-style coney dog at Lafayette Coney Island, where prices range from just \$3 to \$5. For comfort food, head to Union Street Detroit with hearty dinners around \$12.
- **Activities:** Head to Campus Martius Park for ice skating at \$12, plus a \$5 rental fee. For a festive shopping experience, visit the Eastern Market Holiday Markets, where browsing is free, and you can grab inexpensive holiday snacks. Art lovers can visit the Detroit Institute of Arts, which offers free admission to residents and a minimal fee for others.
- **Bars:** After a day of exploring, relax at The Bronx Bar where drinks are around \$5-7, or check out Old Miami, an eclectic bar known for affordable drinks and holiday events.

Sample Itinerary:

- Morning: Coffee and pastry at Avalon International Breads (\$5).
- Afternoon: Stroll through Eastern Market (free).
- Evening: Dinner at Lafayette Coney Island (\$5).
- Night: Ice skating at Campus Martius (\$17 total); drinks at The Bronx Bar (\$5).

Estimated Daily Cost:

\$30-40 per person.



Washington, D.C.:

Festive Cheer on a Dime

A city brimming with holiday cheer and offers plenty of free attractions.

- **Dining:** Grab a delicious chili dog at *Ben's Chili Bowl* for \$5-8. For a heartier meal, *Busboys and Poets* offers dishes starting around \$12-18.
- **Activities:** Visit the *Smithsonian Museums*, which are free to enter and feature festive exhibits during the holiday season. Be sure to check out the *National Christmas Tree* and the *Pathway of Peace*, where you can enjoy the beautiful lights at no cost. Explore the U.S. Capitol grounds, which are beautifully decorated for the season and free to wander.
- **Bars:** *Duffy's Irish Pub* offers happy hour drinks starting at \$4, and *Red Derby* is a popular spot for rooftop cocktails with prices around \$5-6.

Sample Itinerary:

- *Morning:* Visit the National Christmas Tree (free).
- *Afternoon:* Smithsonian Museum of American History (free).
- *Evening:* Dinner at Ben's Chili Bowl (\$8).
- *Night:* Drinks at Duffy's Irish Pub (\$4).

Estimated Daily Cost: \$20-30 per person.



Phoenix, Arizona:

Sun, Sand, and Seasonal Cheer

A city brimming with holiday cheer and offers plenty of free attractions.

- **Dining:** *The Coronado* serves vegetarian meals starting at \$10-15, while *El Norteño* offers tasty and budget-friendly tacos for just \$3-5.
- **Activities:** *Papago Park* offers scenic hikes and stunning desert views for free. The *Glendale Glitters* light display is a must-see during the holidays, and it's entirely free. You can also explore *Roosevelt Row Art District* to see colorful murals and holiday street art at no cost.
- **Bars:** For a drink, check out *Valley Bar*, where the drinks are around \$8, or visit *The Little Woody*, a cozy bar with cocktails for \$5-7.



Sample Itinerary:

- Morning: Hike at Papago Park (free).
- Afternoon: Explore Roosevelt Row (free).
- Evening: Dinner at El Norteño (\$5).
- Night: Drinks at The Little Woody (\$7).

Estimated Daily Cost: \$20-30 per person.



No matter your destination, **celebrating the holidays doesn't have to come with a hefty price tag.** Detroit, Washington D.C., and Phoenix offer plenty of affordable options for food, fun, and festive cheer, making them perfect choices for a budget-friendly holiday getaway.



Looking for more tips on spending the holidays in the U.S.?

Download our **free** guide "***Home for the Holidays (Sort Of!): Spending the Season Abroad***" for all the **details** and **inspiration**.

[GET IT HERE](#)





Host a Cozy Holiday Movie Night

with Festive **Food Pairings**

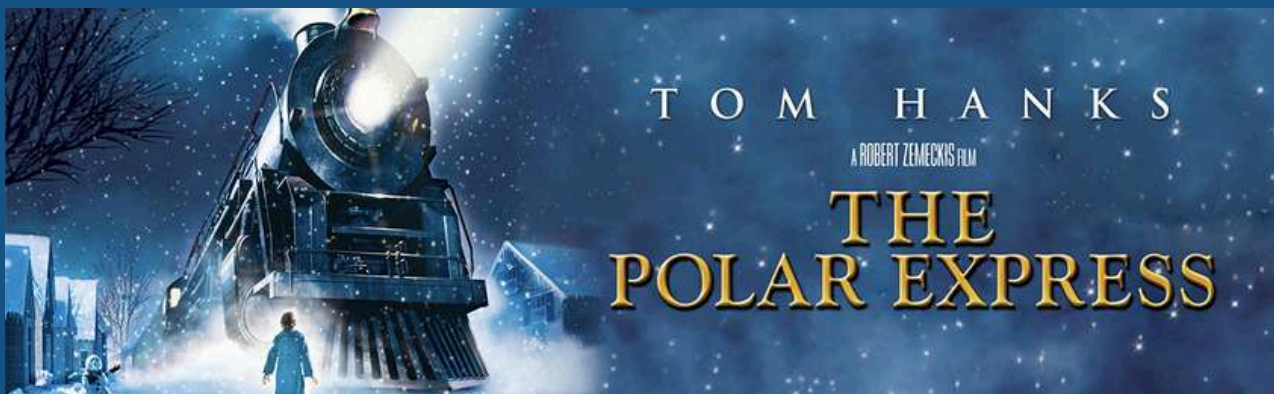
The holiday season is the perfect time to gather friends and family for a **cozy movie marathon**. A great holiday movie, whether a timeless classic or a new favorite, **deserves a meal that perfects the experience**.

Here are **four iconic holiday films paired with delicious food ideas** that will make your movie night unforgettable.



Home Alone **Cheese Pizza & “Kevin's Ice Cream Sundaes”**

Nothing says “Home Alone” like **Kevin's love for cheese pizza and ice cream**. Recreate his memorable solo feast by serving up a classic cheese pizza, just like Kevin's favorite. For dessert, set up a DIY sundae bar with vanilla ice cream and all the fixings: chocolate sauce, whipped cream, sprinkles, and candy. It's the perfect way to indulge while watching Kevin outsmart the burglars.



The Polar Express **Hot Chocolate & Christmas Cookies**

Inspired by the magical train ride to the North Pole, this movie calls for a steaming cup of creamy hot chocolate, just like the kids enjoy in the film. **Pair it with a tray of festive Christmas cookies** -sugar cookies with colorful sprinkles or gingerbread will bring the magic of the season to life. As you sip and nibble, you'll feel like you're on the Polar Express, headed for a Christmas adventure.



The Grinch



“Roast Beast” Sliders & Grinch Punch

Get into the mischievous spirit of the Grinch with mini “roast beast” sliders. A hearty bite-sized sandwich made of tender roast beef, these sliders will have everyone saying: “Ah, the roast beast!”. For the drink, mix up a fun Grinch-inspired punch using **lemon-lime soda and green sherbet**, and **serve in glasses with red sugar rims** for a festive touch.



Love Actually



English Tea & Mini Sandwiches and Scones

Transport yourself to the charming world of “Love Actually” with an elegant English-inspired tea spread. **Serve mini sandwiches filled with cucumber, smoked salmon, or ham and cheese.** Add freshly baked scones, served with clotted cream and jam, to bring a taste of the British countryside to your movie night. Complete the experience with a pot of English breakfast tea, or for extra holiday cheer, perhaps a glass of bubbly.



Start the Year Right

Rituals to **Welcome the New Year**

As the clock ticks toward midnight on New Year's Eve, millions around the world prepare to **bid farewell to the old** and **embrace the promise of a fresh start**. Beyond the parties and champagne toasts, this time of year is perfect for personal rituals that purify your space, refresh your energy, and set a positive tone for the year ahead. Here's how to **infuse meaning into your New Year's Eve** with practices that **inspire mindfulness, wellness, and clarity**.



Declutter Your Space

A clean environment is the foundation of a clear mind. Before the festivities begin, **take time to tidy up your living space.** Donate items you no longer need, toss expired products, and organize your belongings. Once the clutter is gone, cleanse your space energetically by burning sage, palo santo or incense. Open the windows to let in fresh air, symbolizing a clean start.



Take a Moment to Set Your Intentions

Taking time to **meditate on New Year's Eve helps ground you** through the excitement. Find a quiet space, light a candle, and sit comfortably. Focus on your breathing, releasing tension and visualizing your goals for the year ahead. Consider incorporating a guided meditation centered on new beginnings or writing down affirmations that **align with your aspirations.**



Create a Vision Board or Journal Your Intentions

Capture your dreams and goals for the coming year in a creative and tangible way. A vision board filled with inspiring images and words **can serve as a daily reminder of your aspirations.** Alternatively, write in a journal about your hopes for the year, reflecting on what you want to leave behind and what you're ready to welcome.



Practice Gratitude

Before the clock strikes midnight, take a moment to reflect on what you're grateful for. **A gratitude list shifts your mindset to one of abundance and positivity, laying the groundwork** for a year filled with joy and fulfillment.

This New Year's Eve, make your resolutions more than just words. By incorporating these rituals into your celebration, you'll start the year with a clean space, a clear mind, and renewed energy to achieve your dreams.



Cheers to a fresh start!



From all of us **to all of you:**

MERRY
Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

May your holidays be filled with warmth, wonder, and a few new ways to **wish everyone happiness, health, and joy.**



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