

make it better

Make It Better December 2012: Better Gifts

EVENTS

RECOMMENDED events

BY KELLY GOURD



editor's pick: downtown family shows

It's the holidays, so make a day of it! Pick the family up and head downtown to visit these hot spots in a single day-long adventure. Start with...

1 Christkindl Market

Through December 30
Daley Plaza, Chicago
christkindlmarket.com

After the museum, make your way to Daley Plaza for schnitzel, potato pancakes, marzipan and sweet cheese fritters. And while you are chowing down, check out the gorgeous glass ornaments and other holiday must-haves.

1 "Unboxed: Adventures in Cardboard" ▶

Ongoing | Chicago Children's Museum, 999 N. Dearborn
museum.org

Everyone knows when you're young, the best thing about the holidays is the box the gift comes in. Let the kids get cozy in the Cardboard Studio, travel their way through a box maze and more.



1 Chicago Trolley & Double Decker Co. Holiday Lights Tour

Chicago | December 20 | chicagotrolley.com

Let someone else do the driving this year—take a trolley ride through and to Chicago's biggest "light" views, including the Lincoln Park Zoo lights, the Mag Mile, State Street and even the windows at Macy's. Special 30-minute stops are incorporated at the Christkindl Market and Lincoln Park Zoo.

1 An Evening with Mandy Patinkin and Nathan Gunn

December 11 | Fine Arts Center Hall
30 Arts Center Dr., Evanston | evanstonartscenter.org

"Hello, my name is Mandy Patinkin." Everyone has their favorite Mandy Patinkin performance, from Broadway to Hollywood—and Nathan Gunn's baritone will blow you over. Don't miss this exclusive North Shore appearance that benefits the Over the Rainbow Association.

1 Beesdale Craft Fair

December 1 & 2 | Franklin Park
Hobbyland, 1419 W. North Ave. S., Chicago
mymidwest.com

Serious fun for artists, collectors and...

this is not your run-of-the-mill craft show. Expect big crowds, great food and drink and gift ideas that'll impress even the biggest carnalists on your list this year.

1 Everson Dance Ensemble: The Line, the Witch and the Wardrobe

November 20 - December 2
Lincoln Park Zoolights, 20 Arts Center Dr.
eversondanceensemble.org

Mix up the holiday routine with a visit to Narnia this weekend—the Everson Dance Ensemble has been in business since 1992 and never fails to entertain—it's top-notch dance theater on the North Shore.

4 Judith Owen & Harry Shearer's Holiday Sing-a-Long

December 1 | 11:30-2 | 201 Chicago Ave., Evanston | evanstonartscenter.org

Can't sing to tune? We doubt anyone will care at this fun-filled evening with the former "Saturday Night Live" star and his AcappellaTrio with Paul...there's even a super secret special guest.

5 Winter Wonderwalk

December 5 | Windy City Walking of the South Loop, 2011 | 201 Chicago Ave., Lakeview | windsycitywalking.org

Get into the holiday spirit with a holiday house walk and gift boutique. Want a little inspiration? Check out Home Editor Sale. Guaranteed to inspire our November issue.



6 Click Conco and Gary Burton

December 15 | North Perry Center for the Performing Arts
northpercy.org

Jazz fans, rejoice—Click Conco and Gary Burton are in town this holiday season with the "Hot House Tour with the Harlem String Quartet."

6 One of a Kind Show and Sale

December 6 - 9 | Millennium Station
Chicago | oneofakindshow.com

It's a one-stop shop for everyone on your list, with more than 600 artists, craftspeople and designers on hand at this popular show. Grab a gift and head downtown for the day, see the sights, enjoy the lights and get that shopping done!

7 Lyric Opera of Chicago: "Hansel & Gretel"

Open December 7 | JVA's Walker 18, Chicago | lyricopera.com

Time for a new family experience—a night at the opera. Introduce your kids to a classic cultural event with this family-friendly production, complete with food lighting action.

9 Holiday

December 9 | Blue Box Art Center
4312 Illinois St., Chicago
blueboxart.com

A festive and fashion-forward at the perfect time of year to indulge—go crazy and shop for friends, family...even yourself!

12 Dave Spector Holiday Blues Party with Tad Robinson

December 12 | SPACE, 530 Chicago Ave., Evanston | evanstonartscenter.org

Get into a holiday groove with frequent blues guitar guest Dave Spector.

15 Jeffrey Elliot: Nutcracker Family Dinner

December 15 | Palmer House Hilton
17 East Monroe St., Chicago
jeffreyelliot.com

Hint: "The Nutcracker" celebrates its 25th anniversary with a one-of-a-kind experience. Spend the day in style, with a breakfast buffet and a family dinner at the Palmer House that includes fun activities for the kids, too.

15 Randolph Street Holiday Market

December 15 - 16 | Evanston, Ill.
1341 W. Randolph Ave., Chicago
evanstonmarket.com

A last-minute shopper's paradise, especially when your list includes that hard-to-buy-for cine. From fun to funky, it's all under one roof.

22 Oliver!

December 20 - 31 | Lakes Auditorium
400 Evanston, Evanston
lakesauditorium.org

Is theater a holiday tradition for your family? Light Opera Works continues its own tradition of putting on family-friendly theatrical programming during the holiday season with this favorite musical rendition of a Charles Dickens classic.

