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## Visit Exclusive Nantucket For The Annual Christmas Stroll



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Travel

*Former editor of Robb Report, I've never met a luxury I didn't like.*

The original Nantucket Christmas Stroll was devised to prevent islanders from escaping to Cape Cod, 30 miles across the Sound, to do their holiday shopping. Rewind to 1973, a year when local merchants, to boost the island's holiday purse, kept shops open late the first Friday in December, inviting locals to holiday shop on-island. That initial Stroll, christened by merchants as a "Christmas Shoppers Stroll" a mere three hours in duration, was proclaimed a huge success. Shopkeepers entertained shoppers with wine, hot chocolate, tea, mulled cider, fruitcake, and holiday cookies while they perused crafts, books, clothes and wares, and other holiday gift items. In subsequent years, the event grew exponentially, drawing larger crowds until it became a nationally- and, ultimately, internationally-renowned holiday event. Read on and book your hotel now to avoid disappointment -- the annual event is a stunning success.



Gorgeous holiday lights decorate Main Street, Nantucket, for the annual Christmas Stroll. MICHAEL GALVIN

The picturesque island of Nantucket has been a popular destination for Boston's elite, and Hollywood stars alike for generations. In 2016, for example, Kourtney Kardashian, with her family in tow, vacationed in a \$50 million Airbnb. The picturesque island attracts the glitterati in the world of entertainment and business, including boldfacers such as Jack Welch, Katie Couric, Bill Gates, and Joe Biden, along with celebrities such as Drew Barrymore, Ben Stiller and James Franco. In the first three months of 2018, for example, the average price for a single-family home was \$2.3 Million.

In other words, the island is the perfect place to fly your private jet. Stroll occurs when the large air carriers have shut down for the season (jetBlue, American, etc.) so private aviation plays an outsized role in getting people to the event. (Put that big bow on your Gulfstream right now.)

## It's A Beautiful Stroll In The Neighborhood

This year's Christmas Stroll event is themed "**A Beautiful Stroll in the Neighborhood**" to commemorate the 50th Anniversary debut of *Mister Rogers Neighborhood* on PBS. It likewise pays homage to longtime summer resident Fred Rogers, whose iconic "Crooked House" in Madaket is a historic island landmark, and whose legacy of gentle, caring acceptance of all people remains undimmed.

Of course, what is a Christmas event without Santa? Santa arrives to the island by boat, with the help of the Coast Guard. His arrival is signaled by the Nantucket Town Crier, who leads everyone down to the wharves to see him. From there, Santa and Mrs. Claus hop on an antique fire truck and ride to the Jared Coffin House (more on that in a minute) to meet with children. Santa's elves also distribute hot chocolate and candy canes as children ready their "wish lists" for Santa.



Hear Ye! The Town Crier heralds in the annual Christmas Stroll on Main Street, Nantucket. MARK SNIDER



Here's a brief rundown of just a few of the other highlights.

Friday, November 30 features the 36th Annual Holiday House Tour. At \$50 per ticket, it includes House Tour, admission to Whaling Museum, Festival of Trees and reception at the Nantucket Whaling Museum.

Saturday, December 1. 10AM-3PM. You can visit Nantucket's own Christmas marketplace. Wander through a Christmas Market and celebrate the season. Indulge in the aromas of delectable food and beverages as you view handcrafted gifts and merchandise sold by Chamber members and non-profit organizations.

10AM-1:30PM. "People's Choice Award" and Tree Decorating Contest. You'll admire the decorated trees and storefronts. You can also cast your vote for the best decorated tree.



Holiday decorations turn up everywhere on Nantucket, during the extravaganza Christmas Stroll MIKE GALVIN

1:00PM-3:00PM. Entertainment at Nantucket's historic Jared Coffin House . History buffs love it. The Main Building of the hotel was built by Jared Coffin, a prominent whaling ship owner of his time, in the mid-1800s as a family residence. A stately, three-story, brick mansion is the centerpiece of the inn, which offers a range of room types and sizes. The adjacent Daniel Webster House offers additional accommodations and is open year-round. Located in the heart of the Old Historic District, Jared Coffin House is just steps from Nantucket's Main Street and within easy walking distance of ferry landings. Each of the 43 air-conditioned rooms is furnished with period antiques and reproductions, creating the feeling of a bygone era. Here, get ready for the he musical acts that include Nantucket's own Accidentals & Naturals, and the Victorian carolers.

1PM-3:00PM. Visit the magical Talking Tree. Kids of all ages have been enchanted by the mysterious Talking Tree, beautifully decorated for Stroll by local designer David M. Handy.

3:00PM Join in the Ugly Sweater Contest You know you have one, so why not get a prize for wearing it?

4:30PM-5:15PM Sing along with community caroling on Main Street.



Get out your bonnet and get into the action with the Yuletide carolers at the Nantucket Christmas Stroll MICHAEL GALVIN

Sunday, December 2, marks the showing of *Won't You Be My Neighbor*. It's a special viewing of Mr. Rogers' documentary at the Dreamland Theater.

### **Where To Stay For The Stroll**

The [White Elephant](#) is offering a Christmas Stroll package, which includes two festive scarves, in-room mistletoe, Nantucket Sleigh ride, local wine, and daily breakfast for two. Rates start at \$2,145 for three nights. For the best room in the house, stay at the White Elephant Loft at 32 Main Street, which offers guests direct access to all Nantucket's downtown area has to offer: Acclaimed restaurants, quaint boutique shops, and art galleries. This 2,500 square foot pied-à-terre-style loft is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of a 19<sup>th</sup> -century brick building, featuring a gourmet kitchen and keys to a BMW hybrid-SUV for use for the duration of your stay.

Bettina Landt, General Manager of the White Elephant, says, "Christmas Stroll is such an incredible event. Mostly because Nantucket itself is such a special place. The island has a unique history steeped in whaling that dates back to the 1800s. My number one tip for visitors? Plan ahead!"