

HOLIDAY GUIDE 2021



THE ORACLE

INDEX

Editor In Chief

Leda Alvim

Advertising sales

Christina Loizou

Teodora Tavares

Cover Art

Christina Loizou



Events in Tampa, Page 4

Shopping on a budget, Page 6

Holiday playlist, Page 8

Christmas in November, Page 9

Vegan holiday options, Page 10

Writers

Gesar Molano

Gabriela Menez Ghahade

Madison Reedy

Lanie De La Milera

Katherine Maily

Now Open

LOOK

DINE-IN CINEMAS

#LookDineInTampa | www.lookcinemas.com



\$5.00 Student Pricing

**Complimentary Admission
for You + A Guest**

Present this flyer at the box office before December 31, 2021
to receive two free admissions. Some studio restrictions and
seating availability may apply.



THIS MUST BE THE PLACE.



**BRAND NEW APARTMENTS
NEAR USF. COMING IN 2022.**

**SCAN TO FIND
YOUR PERFECT
APARTMENT.**



HUB 
TAMPA

HUBTAMPA.COM | @HUB_TAMPA | (813) 282-2132

Winter wonderlands to visit across Tampa

By Cesar Molano
CORRESPONDENT

The winter season has finally arrived and the Tampa Bay area has brought about a flurry of new holiday-themed activities for all ages, from boat parades to holiday music concerts. While there won't be a white Christmas in town, anyone can enjoy the season and get into the holiday spirit.

Busch Gardens Christmas Town

Amusement park goers may have noticed Busch Gardens' transformation. Until Jan. 2, it will be celebrating the holiday season by hosting the Christmas Town event.

The park has been decorated with millions of festive lights since Nov. 12. This event brings holiday shows like Christmas on Ice and the Holiday in the Sky Firework.

Christmas on Ice tickets cost \$9.99 and can be reserved on select days from Dec. 2 to Jan. 2. The production starts every two hours from 2-8 p.m. The Holiday in the Sky Firework Show is every Saturday night, from Dec. 2. to Jan. 2, and is free with admission to Busch Gardens. The shows are on a first-come first-serve basis, so be sure to arrive early.

After the show, drop by one of Busch Gardens' food and beverage locations. During the Christmas Town event, the park will also be adding holiday plates to its menu such as Christmas cookies, hot cocoa, winter donuts and frosty floats.

Then, finally hop aboard the Holly Jolly Express for a Christmas-themed train ride across the park with a view of the enclosed wildlife area with rhinos, zebras and giraffes.



This winter season Tampa residents won't have a problem finding festive activities to fill their holiday spirit. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/UNSPLASH

Winter Village

Guests can enjoy an evening of ice skating most days from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. or browse some of the local boutiques at Winter Village in downtown Tampa. Located at Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park, the village will be open until Jan. 2.

During Sunday evenings, you can also enjoy the Winter Village Express, a holiday-themed streetcar journey from Whiting Station to Ybor City.

Holiday Music Concert

Music lovers rejoice — the Straz Center for the Performing Arts will be presenting the Holiday Music Concert on Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. The Patel Conservatory Chamber Strings ensembles, the choir Vocal Arts and Suzuki Strings will be performing Christmas favorites such as songs

from the TV special "A Charlie Brown Christmas." A negative COVID-19 test or a vaccination card is required for entry as well as a face mask.

Holiday Lighted Boat Parade

The Tampa Holiday Lighted Boat Parade contest, taking place Dec. 18 at 6 p.m., is another must-see event this winter season. Boats decorated with festive lights and props will sail on the north side of Davis Islands and travel up to Tampa Heights. The boats will travel toward Sparkman Wharf where the judges will decide on the winners of the contest based on the decorations..

Victorian Christmas Stroll

History buffs will surely enjoy the Victorian Christmas Stroll at the Henry B. Plant Museum. From Dec. 1-23, visitors will be

able to get a look at the display of holiday-themed rooms filled with historical decorations such as tiny antique trees, vintage Santa decorations and snow baby ornaments. They may also take a look at the 14-foot tree decorated with antique ornaments.

The Victorian Christmas Stroll event will also have a live theater activity each Sunday at 2 p.m. from Dec. 5-19. Guests will be greeted by early 20th century characters who will recount their life and struggles as a staff member of the historic Tampa Bay Hotel. Adult entry tickets are \$16 and youth \$10.

River of Lights Holiday Boat Tour

If you want to see the Tampa Bay area in all its holiday beauty be sure to check out the River of Lights Holiday Boat Tour. Up until Dec. 30 you can catch

a 45-minute ride along the Hillsborough River and get a look at Tampa Bay's holiday lights from the river.

The cruise departs from the Tampa Convention Center. Tickets, which start at \$25, have to be reserved and include a narrated water tour of downtown Tampa.

Riverwalk Holiday Hunt

Those with an itch for adventure should make their way to the Tampa Riverwalk for the Riverwalk Holiday Hunt. This scavenger hunt is free for the public and will run from Dec. 17 to Jan 2. Participants will be tasked with solving puzzles, completing holiday challenges and answering trivia.

In order to participate, groups need to download the app Mobile Adventures and visit the Tampa Riverwalk to scan the QR codes spread around the area.

Classic Movies

Finish off your holiday season with the Holiday Classics Showing at the Tampa Theater. Running on select nights until Dec. 26, the Tampa Theater will be presenting various holiday classics from It's A Wonderful Life to Will Ferrel's Elf. Tickets can be purchased at the box office or online at the Tampa Theater website.

No matter how you celebrate the holidays, don't forget that there is something for everyone this season. Whether you're a music lover, an amusement park goer, a history junky or a fan of the big screen, there is certainly an event out in the Tampa Bay area waiting for you.



SUBSCRIBE SUBSCRIBE

usforacle.com TO THE WEEKLY ROUNDUP



Love horses and interested in joining the club? Interested in representing USF at competitions against other universities? Add us on BullsConnect at Equestrian Club at USF for more information and upcoming meetings!

**SUBMISSION
DEADLINE
*EXTENDED!***

Thread Magazine has extended their submission deadline. Send in your creative writing or art up until **JANUARY 1** to be considered for publication in **VOLUME 16.**

Visit our website for submission guidelines.
Direct all questions to
threadmagazineusf@gmail.com.

THREAD MAGAZINE
USF'S UNDERGRADUATE
LITERARY & ARTS PUBLICATION



threadmagazine.wixsite.com/thread



'Tis the season for savings

By Gabriela Menez Chahade
CORRESPONDENT

Holiday shopping season — a time where a lot of unrealistic expectations stir up both stress and excitement — is here. While some are eager to get presents for friends and family, it's not uncommon to feel strained due to a tight budget.

This could be the first year many college students will experience the holiday season as adults. The deeper you dive into adulthood, the more the meaning of a holiday spirit shifts. College students who are living on a budget may find it difficult to financially navigate gift-giving, especially for large families or groups of friends.

The connotation of gift exchange changes as one gets older. Reciprocity begins to be expected by gift-givers. So before hitting stores, make sure your wallet can endure it.

The average holiday shopper plans to spend \$637 on gifts this year, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers. People often feel obligated to buy gifts for all of their family members and close friends, even if that causes a drain on their finances.

In 2020, a third of all consumers took on debt to pay for holiday expenses, according to a December 2020 MagnifyMoney survey.

Gift shopping doesn't always have to be stressful or result in debt. There are several tips and tricks that could help you enjoy the holidays without emptying your wallet.

It begins with keeping yourself organized. Making a list of where and what to buy for each person will help keep you under a self-



There are steps you can take to wow your friends with holiday gifts without breaking the bank. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/FLICKR

imposed budget.

It's crucial to plan ahead. Last-minute shopping will ultimately be more costly than buying ahead. If purchasing presents online, ordering too late may lead to paying extra money for expedited shipping, and many big box stores increase their prices prior to the holidays as demand for certain products increases.

A great way to plan ahead for your holiday shopping is to create a Pinterest board that you can add to throughout the year as you think of gifts for the special people in your life. Then, you can keep tabs on those items and watch out for any sales or price decreases.

Researching where to get the best deals and assigning how much money will be spent on each gift will also help manage

costs. For instance, using discount-finding software like Honey while online shopping is a quick and easy way to save big bucks on holiday gifts.

In that vein, many coupon apps like Groupon exist to help save money on not only material gifts, but also trips and services.

Websites like Shopzilla allow you to search for a specific item and compare prices on that item from across the internet, ensuring that you're buying it for the best price. If you'll be shopping in person this year, many stores have printable coupons available online.

Another way to follow a budget when holiday shopping is reward stacking. Using multiple reward programs, at stores like Macy's and JCPenney, will help maximize discounts and rewards for the gifts purchased.

There are also steps you can take amongst your friends and family to minimize cost for everyone involved.

Organizing a gift exchange program with friends and family with a set price range can reduce stress and keep you on a budget. With large groups of friends and family, purchasing a specialized gift for every single person will be costly. Gift swaps such as a Secret Santa will help alleviate some pressure on your pockets, while also serving as a fun holiday activity for your family and friends.

Another way to reduce holiday costs among your friends and family is to simply be honest with your loved ones about your financial constraints. The pandemic impacted many people's income, and being honest about your budget with

those you plan on buying gifts for is essential.

Informing loved ones of your budget constraints beforehand will prevent disappointment and lessen the pressure on you to purchase outside of your financial comfort zone.

Sign up for a free account and subscribe to newsletters from your favorite stores so you can receive coupons and offers. Some offers can make you save some bucks and even get you some freebies.

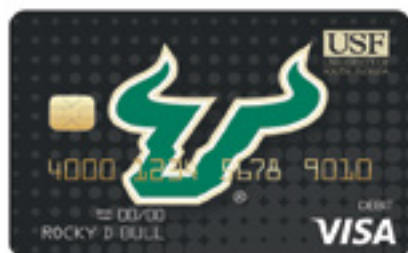
Although holiday shopping can be stressful, these tips can help reduce some financial stress and make the holiday season more enjoyable. While it's easy to get lost in the material aspects of the holiday, it's important to focus on what's really important, the memories made with families and friends.

Bank Local... Anywhere

On Campus • Across the Country • Around the World

With the USF Bulls VISA® debit card.

Use for gas, travel, groceries, entertainment, online purchases and more.



- Free mobile and online banking
- 5,000 branches nationwide for easy deposits*
- 30,000 fee-free ATMs*



* Through the CO-OP network. Federally insured by NCUA.

Students with Disabilities Services is now Student Accessibility Services

usf.edu/sas

Working with students, staff, and faculty to promote equitable and accessible education, meaningful self-advocacy, awareness of disability issues and inclusiveness for the USF community.



42 | NORTH

WHERE
YOU'RE FREE
TO Be Different

LEASE FOR FALL
2022 AT OUR LOW
RATES AND SAVE
\$300 WITH WAIVED
ADMIN FEES!



42-NORTH.COM | 813.327.7508
14502 VALOR CIRCLE | TAMPA, FL 33613



WANT TO LEARN HOW TO PROGRAM?

Everyone is talking about Python, and for good reasons. Python is useful and growing in popularity in just about every industry. Netflix uses Python in everything from their content delivery network to their monitoring systems. Guess what - you can learn Python in the CGS 2060 course! Not only can this course provide you with an easy introduction to programming (no prior experience required),

but it is a USF General Education course that can meet your State Computation Requirements (6AM). That's a double win!

So what's your next step? See your advisor to find out if this course can fit into your eight-semester graduation plan. This could be a great fit for first and second year students who are enrolled in a broad range of majors.



Do you want even more information about CGS 2060 and how it can fit into your academic program? If so, please contact Marjorie Fontalvo (fontalvo@usf.edu), Department of Computer Science

Holiday songs to rock around the Christmas tree



Ensure your holiday playlists set the mood by pressing play on one of these hits. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/PIXABAY

By Madison Reedy
CORRESPONDENT

One of the most crucial aspects to a festive atmosphere is the music. That warm, fuzzy feeling you get listening to holiday music during this special time of year is a universal joy. So beef up your playlists whether it's for a party or sipping hot cocoa with the family.

Any holiday playlist should include the classics so the whole family can enjoy and sing along.

Essential tracks include "It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" by Andy Williams, "Jingle Bell Rock" by Bobby Helms and "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree" by Brenda Lee. These songs are all merry and bright, and are sure to bring some holiday cheer.

Mariah Carey's "All I Want For Christmas Is You" is a universal Christmas song that most people hear everywhere they go during the holidays. With its infectious

joy and infamous whistle notes at the climax of the song, this holiday favorite is a critical addition to any playlist.

Beyond playlists, some holiday songs have found their glory in certain popular films such as "Mean Girls." "Jingle Bell Rock" has graced the screens in the beloved scene featuring Lindsay Lohan, Amanda Seyfried, Rachel McAdams and Lacey Chabert. The actors dance in their famous Santa outfits to the song, while eventually improvising it on their own when the speaker falls off the stage.

If you're a grinch about Christmas, Dr. Seuss' character The Grinch has the perfect song for the season. "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch," featured in mostly all film and television adaptations of the character, provides the right blend of holiday loathing and cheer for those whose opinions on Christmas lay somewhere in the

middle.

If kids are present, "Frosty the Snowman" by Jimmy Durante and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" by Gene Autry would be great additions. Both songs tell tales of favorite Christmas characters and keep the energy lively.

Children can also sing along to "Jingle Bells," a classic that was first recorded by Will Lyle in 1889 and since then has been covered by artists such as Barbra Streisand and Dolly Parton.

Outside of the classics, there are a lot of great holiday songs that are lesser known. Hidden gems such as "White Winter Hymnal" by Fleet Foxes is a folky and upbeat tune that will add some spice to your playlist.

Other outside of the box songs include Yo-Yo Ma's orchestral cover of "Happy Xmas (War is Over)" and Haley Reinhart's jazzy cover of "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas."

Pop songs that spread the holiday spirit are also a must. Your friends and family will love holiday hits such as the jazzy and heartwarming cover of "Winter Wonderland" by Bryson Tiller and his daughter, or the upbeat and festive "Santa Tell Me" by Ariana Grande.

The romantic and R&B influenced "Mistletoe" by Justin Bieber or his comforting "The Christmas Song" featuring Usher can be great additions to your playlist and bring joy to your get-together.

For older souls, Michael Bublé's holiday album, titled "Christmas," has encapsulated listeners since its release in 2011, mostly due to Bublé's infamous warm and inviting voice and catchy renditions of famous holiday songs. Some of his most popular covers on the album include "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

Another tip is to not add too

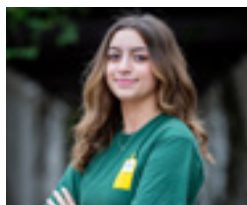
many sad songs. Many people want to listen to energetic and cheerful holiday music, not something that brings them down. "River" by Joni Mitchell is a great song, but you don't want too much of that in the playlist.

If you have lots of holiday songs you love but don't go together, you can always make separate playlists for different moods.

Maybe you want to create a playlist for a road trip you will take or for a holiday party you will host, but regardless of the occasion, you should always come prepared to match the mood of whatever event you are present at.

Overall, keeping the audience and mood in mind and having a variety of music will guarantee that your holiday playlist is banging.

When is it too soon for some holiday cheer?



Lanie De La Milera

STAFF WRITER

Everyone has their own timeline when celebrating the holidays. Whether they begin decorating for Christmas right after Halloween or wait until after Thanksgiving, traditions vary from person to person.

Many students at USF go the traditional route, celebrating with the calendar. It is either the way they were raised or how they just personally feel.

Sophomore Skyler Wildrick and her family follow the natural timeline of the holidays.

"The only way I feel like you should start decorating and doing things for Christmas is after Thanksgiving," she said. "It's odd starting the festivities before Thanksgiving passes and having Christmas decor everywhere at dinner."

For freshman Carleigh Benedict, the Christmas spirit must also be put on hold until after the final Thursday in November.

"After Thanksgiving for sure, there is no other way to do it," Benedict said.

There are many circumstances that can change someone's mind about the timing of holiday celebrations.

Although sophomore

Mackenzie Higgs doesn't feel strongly about putting up Christmas decor before Thanksgiving, she said her household is forced to do so.

"My family and I usually fly out to California for Thanksgiving and by the time we come back, we already have so much to do, so we start doing certain things and decorating beforehand," she said.

It may not be by choice, but she said it helps the holidays move smoother without the stress that it can bring.

Although not a common response, some in the USF community believe the opposite. The moment spooky activities come to an end on Nov. 1, junior Gabe Marshall rings in the Christmas season.

"Nov. 1 is the first day of [the] Christmas season," Marshall said. "We take a break at Thanksgiving to practice cooking for Christmas dinner and say our thanks, then promptly resume Christmas celebrations."

Some families and students are extremely passionate about certain holidays more than others and that plays a huge effect on when they think certain holidays should begin.

At the end of the day, the holidays are a special time to be with loved ones, and it doesn't matter when celebrations begin. It's all about bringing people together and being thankful for what you have.

THE ORACLE IS NOW ON TIKTOK



Follow us
@usforacle



LocalShops1

Buy Local, Tampa Bay!



buylocaltampabay.com

Vegan tips for a 'berry' Merry Christmas

By Katherine Mailly
STAFF WRITER

As the popularity of veganism grows, it's becoming more likely you'll find a vegan celebrating the holidays with you, and you may be at a loss of how to accommodate them.

One of the greatest concerns non-vegans have for hosting vegans is the food. Vegans don't eat any food product that came directly from an animal or involved animals in its creation. This includes meat, fish, eggs, honey and dairy.

Excluding products such as these which are embedded in the average American diet may seem strange, or hard to implement. Fortunately, vegan food is often not as exotic as it's made out to be, and non-vegan food can be easily modified to be vegan.

For example, coconut oil can often be substituted for butter in essentially any recipe — including baking — with little difference in taste and texture compared to the original recipe.

You'll likely want to look for refined rather than virgin coconut oil, where refined has been processed more and has lost the coconut taste and virgin is less refined and will still hold a little bit of flavor. This will lend itself well to general cooking as well as baked goods.

Baking cookies is a beloved tradition for the holidays, but even those ingredients that look safe for vegans will need a reevaluation. One product that actually isn't vegan is sugar, due to the bleaching process that most sugar undergoes which involves bone char.

This includes all forms of sugar — white, brown, sugar syrups — if it came from cane



Refer to this guide for tips and tricks to create a holiday atmosphere vegans can enjoy. SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE/FLICKR

sugar, you should assume it isn't vegan.

One method to make sure the sugar being used is vegan is to buy organic. The Food and Drug Administration requires all cane sugar labeled organic to undergo minimal processing to maintain its purity. With this, you can continue your holiday traditions without worrying about the origins of your ingredients.

You can also stock your cabinets with some essentials if you're hosting vegan guests for several days. Most grain products are vegan, including a majority of bread, pasta, flour, rice, cereal, granola, popcorn and chips. Finish it off with some condiments like hummus, salsa or tomato sauce and you have a

vegan pantry.

When it comes to holiday dinners themselves, there is an abundance of vegan recipes online. Some helpful websites are Six Vegan Sisters, Plant Based RD and No Meat Athlete. Pinterest is also an excellent resource where vegan recipes for virtually anything can be found.

When buying gifts for someone who is vegan, there are a couple products that you will want to avoid because they might involve animal exploitation. Since food is one of the greatest ways that we consume animal products, it can be easy to forget that they contribute to other goods as well.

Avoid leather and wool when gift-shopping. Due to their

animal origins, they will not be appreciated by vegans. Candles, another common holiday gift, should be purchased with care, as many candles have animal-based ingredients including stearic acid or beeswax. However, there are also many vegan alternatives made from soy-based wax.

The same goes for skincare and beauty products, which often contain animal-derived products or have been tested on animals. To make sure a product is vegan, it's best to look for a certification from Vegan.org — the characteristic little "V" inside of a heart.

Otherwise, you may have to peruse long lists of complicated-sounding ingredients that may or may not have come from an

animal. A great brand for vegan skincare and beauty is Pacifica, which offers 100% vegan products.

The greatest way to provide for a vegan this holiday season is to communicate with them. Ask them what they want to eat, what recipes are vegan or if they want to prepare a dish themselves.

When it comes to gifts that aren't food, it's probably best to do a quick search to see if the brand or product is vegan, or find a list of vegan gifts to peruse. The number of vegan products available is increasing and there will be an option for almost anything.

Things TO do

A Christmas Carol

Through Dec 18, 8:00 PM
Carrollwood Players Theatre

Enchant Christmas - The Mischievous Elf

Through Jan 2
Tropicana Field-St. Pete

Busch Gardens® Christmas Town

Through Jan 2
Busch Gardens Tampa Bay

Santa's Workshop Holiday Escape Room

Through Jan 2, 6:00 PM
Time Trap Escape Room

Adventure Climb

Sat, Dec 4, 10 AM – 1 PM
USF Riverfront Park

Tampa Bay Wellness Festival

Sat Dec 4, 10 AM - 6 PM
Water Works Park Tampa

Festival of Lights

Sun Dec 5, 4 PM - 9 PM
Main Street Zephyrhills

Christmas Light Show!

Nightly, 6 PM - 11 PM
Temple Terrace

Gardening for the Community

Wed. Dec 8th, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Register on BullsConnect for location

Christmas Party by Friends of Internationals

Thu, Dec 9, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM EST
USF BCM

The Greatest Showman: A Christmas Remix

Dec 9 & 10, 7P-9P, Dec 11, 3P-5P, 7P-9P
Crossover Church

Live Creation Music & Art Festival

Sat Dec 11, 1 PM - 10 PM
Red Star Live

The Love All, Serve All Drag Queen Brunch

Sun, December 12, 10:00AM - 1:00PM
Hard Rock Cafe

**USF Men's Basketball vs APSU
Ugly Sweater Day**

Tue, Dec 14, 7 PM – 10 PM
Yuengling Center

USF Women's Basketball vs Stetson

Education Day
Wed, Dec 15, 11 AM – 2 PM

Holiday Lighted Boat Parade

Sat, Dec 18, 6 PM
Hillsborough River in Downtown Tampa

Full Moon Yoga

Sun, Dec 19, 7 PM - 8 PM
Armature Works

James Lloyd - Live on New Year's Day

Sat Jan 1, 7:30 PM
Wild Rover Brewing Company



SHOPPING

Burlington • Dillard's • Grand's
100 + additional stores!

We're 100% Open for Business
Come Join The Uptown District Movement!

UPTOWN

A Mixed-Use Research & Development Village

2200 East Fowler Avenue, Tampa, FL • 813.971.3465