

Philadelphia where now

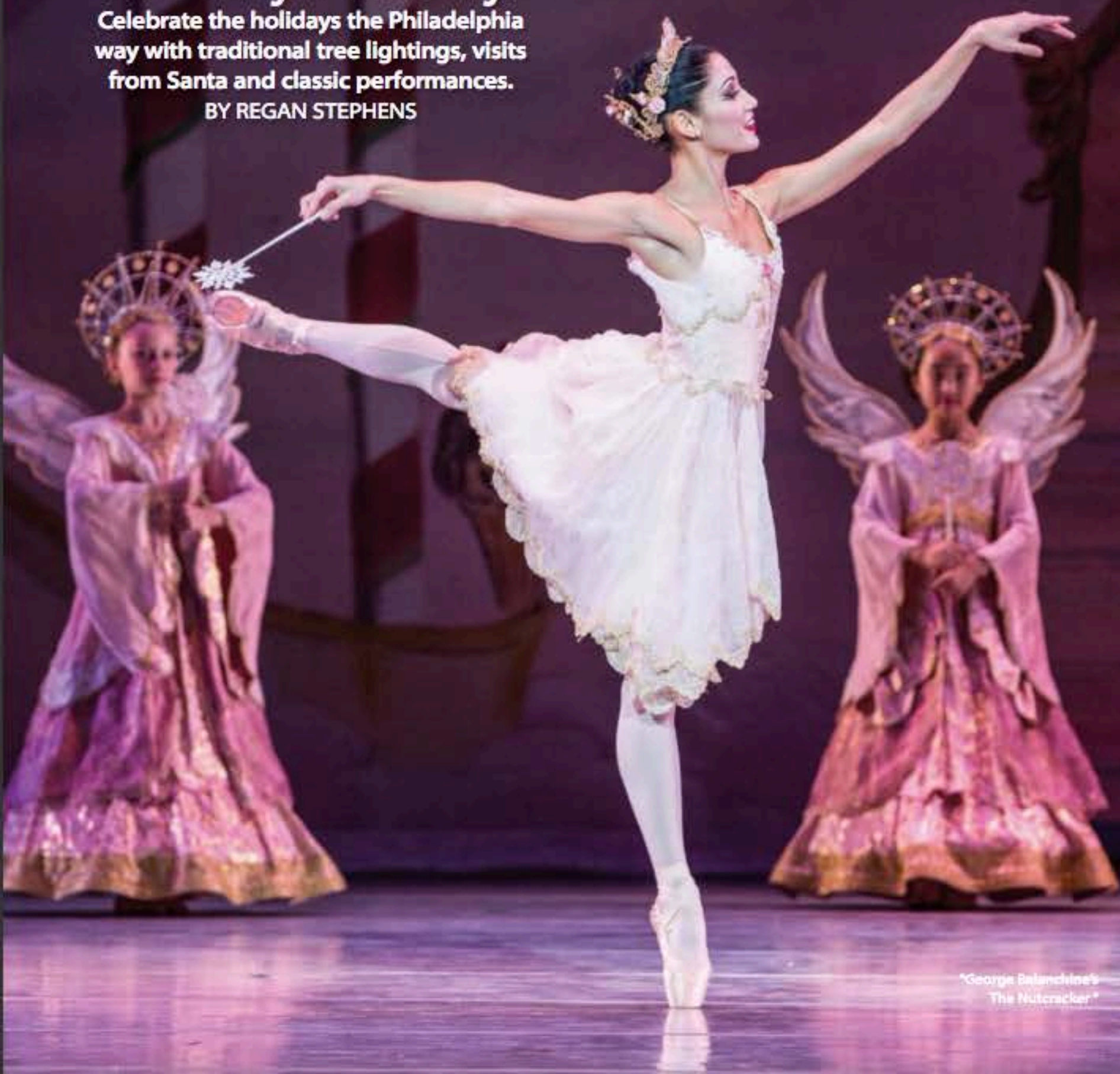
The savvy traveler's guide to finding fun in Philadelphia

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

A Philly Holiday

Celebrate the holidays the Philadelphia way with traditional tree lightings, visits from Santa and classic performances.

BY REGAN STEPHENS



*George Balanchine's
The Nutcracker*

BEST OF DECEMBER The Holiday Season is the most wonderful time of year most anywhere, but especially in the City of Brotherly Love. William Penn's squares are bustling with winter markets and festivals, delicious treats abound and neighborhoods across the city glow with some of the best and brightest light displays. There's so much happening, we've put together a convenient calendar for the month of December so you can make the most of the festive season in Philadelphia. To see the full December schedule, head to wheretotraveler.com/philadelphia.

December Dates

1 EAST PASSYUNK AVENUE TREE LIGHTING PARTY—

Kick off the holiday season with Passyunk Avenue Revitalization Corporation's annual Christmas tree lighting party. Gather at the Singing Fountain, enjoy hot cocoa and bites from restaurants on the Avenue and keep your eyes peeled for Santa.



2 FRANKLIN SQUARE HOLIDAY FESTIVAL—

The Holiday Festival is open until 8 pm (and 9 pm on weekends), so pop over to inject some holiday spirit into your week. The Winter Beer Garden features cold brews and warming fire pits and new this year is Ben's Sweets & Treats where you can decorate holiday cookies, watch gingerbread house demonstrations and fill up a goody bag of treats from the comfort of a heated tent. Plus, other surprises and fun, including mistletoe-decked "selfie stations" and train rides for the kids.

3 CHRISTMAS VILLAGE IN PHILADELPHIA—

Usually in LOVE Park, the village charmingly modeled after a traditional German holiday market is relocating to City Hall this year to accommodate the park's reconstruction. But fear not, the new location will still

showcase over 70 vendors selling wooden ornaments, jewelry and loads of other gifts and treats to make holiday shopping easier, and more fun, than ever. Daily until Dec. 24.

6 ROTHMAN ICE RINK AT DILWORTH PARK—

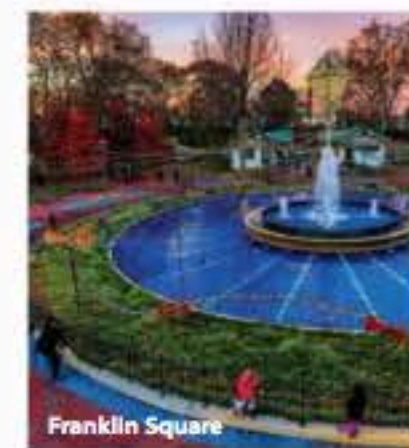
Channel a European winter getaway while ice-skating at Dilworth Park. With the magnificent City Hall backdrop, twinkling lights and city lights combine to illuminate the night for skaters and spectators alike.

8 CHRISTMAS LIGHT SHOW AT MACY'S—

For 60 years, the historic Wanamaker building has hosted the Macy's Christmas Light Show, complete with over 100,000 lights in holiday images like snowmen and reindeer, dancing on the four-story wall of the store's Grand Court Atrium. The show starts the day after Thanksgiving and happens throughout the day, seven days a week.

12 FRANKLIN SQUARE ELECTRICAL SPECTACLE HOLIDAY LIGHT SHOW—

Presented by PECO, the free show dazzles with more than 50,000 lights set to holiday tunes, including some by The Philly POPS. Shows start at 4:30 pm and happen every half hour until closing.



14 READING TERMINAL MARKET HOLIDAY RAILROAD—

Philadelphians can always find an excuse to stop into Reading Terminal Market, but the holiday beckons with a 500-square-foot model train display winding through a tiny Center City and snowy countryside. Plus, don't forget to pick up a few gifts while you're there.

18 SPOT YOUR SPOT WITH SANTA—

For an elevated experience with Santa, head to One Liberty Observation Deck between 11 am and 2 pm, where kids can have their photo taken and detail their wish list. Bonus: kids' admission is free (one child with one paying adult) for the month of December.

20 SHOPS AT LIBERTY HOLIDAY TREE—

The towering tree will be twinkling and on most Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in December, local school choirs will perform at noon, 1 pm and 2 pm. Catch a show and then stay to work through your gift list.

24 SEE THE NUTCRACKER—

Don't miss The Pennsylvania ballet deliver an enchanting performance of "George Balanchine's The Nutcracker." Continue a tradition or start a new one—visions of sugarplums will be dancing in your head long after the holidays are over.

26 A LONGWOOD CHRISTMAS—

Famous for their perennial displays of flowers and foliage, Longwood Gardens is extra special during the holidays. An 18-foot Fraser Fir, over 6,000 seasonal plants, dancing fountains, holiday tunes and over a half-million lights bedeck the grounds and make for a magical visit.

31 PLEASE TOUCH MUSEUM COUNTDOWN TO NOON—

Just because little ones can't quite make it to midnight doesn't mean they can't join in the New Year's celebration. Families can experience all of the revelry—including music, special activities and a proper countdown complete with a rain of confetti.