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For the Foodie

Inn to Inn Cookie and Candy Tour celebrates with Trees, Treats and Treasures

The popular Mt Washington Valley, NH inn to inn holiday cookie tour will offer holiday decorating ideas & trees, recipe cards, collectors ornaments, prizes plus plenty of sweet treats

Mt. Washington Valley - "C" is for Christmas and also for cookies, candy, collectors' ornaments and cards with recipes this holiday season in Mt. Washington Valley. When innkeepers from the Country Inns in the White Mountains wish their guests sweet dreams on the second weekend in December they can guarantee that visions of sugar plums, holiday cookies and beautifully decorated trees will dance in their heads.

December 8-9, 2012 is the weekend the Country Inns in the White Mountains assure holiday revelers the ultimate in sweet dreams at the 16th Annual Inn to Inn Holiday Cookie and Candy Tour® held from 11 am to 4 pm on both Saturday and Sunday. Participants will not only tour inns decked in all their holiday finery offering signature decorations, holiday cookies and candies, but this year they will also view beautifully decorated trees created by local businesses in honor of their favorite nonprofit organization.

With a "Magic of Christmas" theme, the Country Inns in the White Mountains hope to coax a few more snowflakes this winter by offering a collector's brass snowflake ornament to each person visiting all participating inns.

Additionally, tourgoers go home with a collection of recipe cards featuring photos of the cookies from each inn. Chosen by editors of New Hampshire Magazine as "The Best Sugar High", here's one chance to participate in the ultimate cookie walk.

Each of the thirteen inns on the 16th Annual Inn to Inn Cookie & Candy Tour will feature original holiday cookies and candies, along with exquisite decorations offering tour goers the bonus of taking home holiday decorating ideas as well as scrumptious cookie and candy recipes for themselves. The participating inns have developed original recipes for everything from sweet to savory holiday treats, with each inn featuring a new recipe for this year's tour.

This year, local businesses are being recruited to create and sponsor decorated trees. Participating businesses will either internally create the themed trees or recruit artists or school groups to create them. Tour goers will then vote for their favorite, and the winning tree will receive $300, $200 or $100 donations for the non-profit organization to which the tree is dedicated.

The tour stretches from Harts Location, to Chocorua, NH, with thirteen inns opening their doors to those in search of fabulous holiday treats, recipes and decorating ideas. No inn is more than fifteen minutes from the next, with many much closer.

Each participating inn will offer a Cookie Tour package. Packages will include:

- Two nights accommodations
- Breakfast each morning
- Two Cookie Tour tickets (a $54 value)
- Color recipe collection

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Phone: **603-464-3388**
Cover photo: Nigel Manley, The Rocks Estates

For the Foodie

· A chance to win a drawing for a getaway gift certificate. Some inns have added dinners, extra nights, and gifts to their packages. For a complete list of cookie tour packages, go to http://www.countryinnsinthewhitemountains.com/holiday_cookie_tour_packages.htm.

Tour tickets are available in advance by reserving a lodging package from participating inns and this is the best way to secure a ticket for a weekend of cookie, candy and holiday tree fun. Those not wishing to reserve an overnight package may purchase tickets December 1-6, 2012 for $27 per person by calling 800-338-1356 or 603-356-2642. Tickets reserved by phone will be available for pick up at designated pick up locations. Tickets are limited. Any unreserved tickets will be sold for $27 per person on the day of the event at the 1785 Inn, Notchland Inn and Riverbend Inn.

Those interested in booking the Inn to Inn Holiday Cookie & Candy Tour package may make reservations at the inn of their choice. To learn more about the tour and the inns' lodging packages, call 800-338-1356 or 603-356-2642 or visit www.countryinnsinthewhitemountains.com .

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For the Foodie

Breakfast with Santa

12/8/2012 (8:00AM)

Breakfast with Santa Claus, at the Wolfeboro Inn. Children 12 years and younger bringing a new, unwrapped gift donation to the Wolfeboro Childrens Christmas Fund will have breakfast for free. 90 North Main Street, Wolfeboro, NH. Phone: 603-569-2200 Email: wolfeborochamber@conknet.com Website: wolfeborochamber.com

Cookies & Snow - A Taste of the Holidays

12/15/2012 (11:00AM)

Cookies baked fresh from local restaurants are distributed around the Town Square shops. Participants stroll through the shops and redeem a coupon for a different cookie at each place, then get to vote for their favorite. Other festivities planned for the day are a coffee tasting, Candy Cottage Workshop, candy cottages on display, Holiday ice-skating party, ornament making, Santa Claus reading a children's book, and balloon creations. 6 Village Road, Town Square, Waterville Valley, NH. Phone: 603-236-8175. Email: tsevents@waterville.com. Web: www.waterville.com

Farm Feast Breakfast & Open House/Open Trails

12/2/2012 (10:00AM)

Event Fee: Breakfast: $5-15 sliding scale donation Tour: Free. Come out to the farm for an all-you-should-eat farm fresh breakfast featuring our own organic eggs, sausage, potatoes, kale, maple syrup, and pancakes made with Vermont-milled flour! Join us at 1pm for a FREE tour of our gardens, grounds, animals, alternative construction, renewable energy projects, and permaculture homestead. 218 Streeter Woods Rd., Dorchester, NH.
Phone: 603-786-2366
Email: info@dacres.org
Website: www.dacres.org

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Christmas Tree Farms

Choosing the best Christmas trees

With so many options and a limited amount of time before those jingle bells start ringing, it's no wonder finding that perfect Christmas tree for your holiday setting as become more of a chore than a joy. So we've compiled some things to consider when shopping for your next tree and some helpful hints to get you through the selection process.

If you're looking at purchasing a real or live Christmas tree, before you go out on the hunt, make sure you have space for a live tree. Take measurements of your doorway as well, as unlike an artificial tree, real trees cannot be dissembled to fit through small spaces such as doorways or windows. After you decide a real tree is right for you, examine the tree from close up and a far to see how it looks. From a distance, make sure it has a shapely silhouette with unbroken branches and from close up, the tree should be clean, free of insects and have a vibrant & lush hue.

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If you're thinking about purchasing an artificial Christmas tree, you might consider spending a bit more, as you'll most likely be keeping the tree for several years. Look for realistic foliage in shades of green and a high concentration of branch tips, which creates a fuller and more realistic look. If you can see the center pole of the tree, it may be of lesser quality due to the lack of branch density. Look for hinged branches so help keep assembly and set up a painless process And finally, regardless if you go with a real or artificial Christmas tree, make sure you choose a tree with that will hold up well to heavy decorations and ornaments. It should not lean, but rather stand strong in its base. Follow these helpful guidelines, and this year, let the tree shopping be an enjoyable experience.

Common Tree Characteristics

WHITE PINE: The largest pine in the U.S., the white pine has soft, flexible needles and is bluish-green in color. Needles are 2½ - 5 inches long. White pines have good needle retention, but have little aroma. They aren't recommended for heavy ornaments.

FRASER FIR: The Fraser fir branches turn slightly upward. They have good form and needle-retention. They are dark blue-green in color. They have a pleasant scent, and excellent shipping characteristics as well.

COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE: Often used for stuffing pine-pillows, these sharp needles are 1 to 1 ½ in. in length. This species is bluish-gray in color. Needles have an unpleasant odor when crushed. This Christmas Tree has good symmetrical form and an attractive blue foliage. It also has good needle retention.

CONCOLOR FIR: These small, narrow needles are around 1 to 1½ in. in length and occur in rows. They have good foliage color, good needle retention, and a pleasing shape and aroma.

DOUGLAS-FIR: These soft needles are dark

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green to blue green in color and are approximately 1 to 1 ½ in. in length. Douglas-fir needles radiate in all directions from the branch. When crushed, these needles have a sweet fragrance. They are one of the top major Christmas tree species in the U.S.

BALSAM FIR: These needles are ¾ to 1½ in. in length and last a very long time. This tree has a dark-green appearance and retains its pleasing fragrance throughout the Christmas season.

SCOTCH PINE: Approximately 1 in. in length, these needles don't even fall when they're dry, providing excellent needle retention. The color is a bright green. The most common Christmas tree in the U.S., the scotch pine has an excellent survival rate, is easy to replant, has great keepability and will remain fresh throughout the holiday season.

Real Christmas Trees are Recyclable

After the holidays, don't throw your Real Christmas Tree in the trash or set it on the curb. Real Christmas Trees are biodegradable, which means they can be easily reused or recycled for mulch and other purposes. Here are some recycling options and tips on what to do with your tree after the holidays. Every community is different, but in general, you have these options:

Curbside pick-up for recycling: Most areas will collect trees during their regular pickup schedules on the two weeks following Christmas. There are often requirements for size, removing ornaments, flocking, etc.

Take your tree to a drop off recycling center: Most counties have free drop-off locations throughout the county. Usually, you may take up to two trees to a drop-off location at no charge.

Tree recycling/mulching programs: Tree recycling and mulching programs are a fast-growing trend in communities throughout the nation. Check with your local department of public works for information. They chip and shred the trees, then make the mulch available for use in your garden. Your hauler will notify you of pick-up dates in your area. Be sure to check with your local hauler.

Nonprofit pickup: Call for an appointment to have a nonprofit organization in your area pickup your tree. Some Boy Scout troops offer a pickup service for a small donation (often $5).

Soil erosion barriers: Some communities use Christmas trees to make effective sand and soil erosion barriers, especially for lake and river shoreline stabilization and river delta sedimentation management.

Fish feeders: Sunk into private fish ponds, trees make an excellent refuge and feeding area for fish.

Bird feeders: Place the Christmas tree in the garden or backyard and use it as a bird feeder and sanctuary. Fresh orange slices or strung popcorn will attract the birds and they can sit in the branches for shelter. (Make sure all decorations, hooks, garland and tinsel strands are removed). Eventually (within a year) the branches will become brittle and you can break the tree apart by hand or chip it in a chipper. See this article from Perdue University for more information.

Mulch: A Christmas tree is biodegradable; its branches may be removed, chipped, and used as mulch in the garden. If you have a neighbor with a chipper, see if he will chip it for you.

Paths for hiking trails: Some counties use the shredded trees as a free, renewable and natural path material that fits both the environment and the needs of hikers!

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www.therocks.org

At The Rocks Estate, it always feels like the holidays!

BETHLEHEM, N.H. - The Rocks Estate, with its neat rows of Christmas trees and spectacular views of the White Mountains, gets visitors into the holiday spirit like no place else. This year The Rocks has added a few new twists to its tried and true holiday favorites.

For decades The Rocks has offered fragrant farm fresh Christmas trees and beautiful handcrafted wreaths. The Christmas tree farm, owned by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, also strives to keep things fresh by introducing new holiday ideas each season.

"Each year we try to bring something new to Christmas, while holding onto the traditions that people expect when they come to experience the season at the farm," said longtime Rocks Estate manger Nigel Manley. Over the years, Manley and his staff have added new features to create an atmosphere of fun and festivity around choosing a Christmas tree. Visitors to the Christmas tree farm are invited to enjoy a horse-drawn wagon ride through the picturesque estate and visit with The Rocks' own "Green Santa," who presents each child with a fir tree seedling.

The more adventuresome visitors may try a dogsled ride courtesy of the dogs from Muddy Paw Kennel in Jefferson. Those looking for the perfect gift or a one-of-a-kind ornament will find plenty of options at the new Rocks Estate Market Place, introduced last winter and featuring unique offerings from dozens of New Hampshire artisans.

New this year, The Rocks has added Canaan Firs to its traditional Fraser Fir and Balsam Fir Christmas trees. Guests may cut their own tree from the extensive fields around the estate, or choose a fresh-cut tree in the lot. Families visiting The Rocks this holiday season will also find a large birch deer – made of birch logs and nature's other offerings – which makes a perfect perch for children for a family photo.

Among the beautiful holiday wreaths, handcrafted right at The Rocks, are a Chris Moose wreath decorated with cones, canella berries, statice flowers and a whimsical stuffed moose. The Christmas Star wreath is adorned with pepper berries and statice. A limited Trees For Troops wreath features a stuffed bear in military fatigues and dog tags, with proceeds benefitting the Trees For Troops program, which delivers thousands of trees each Christmas to military service members and their families.

The Rocks Estate opens for the Christmas tree season Nov. 17 and will remain open every day from 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. through Christmas Eve. Wagon rides and dog sled tours are offered Nov. 17, 23, 24, 25, Dec. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15. Reservations are recommended for both. The Rocks' Green Santa will be at the farm each Saturday, joined most days by a family of beautiful and friendly Bernese Mountain dogs.

Owned by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the landmark 1,400-acre Rocks Estate includes numerous buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, extensive walking paths, and 45 acres planted with Christmas trees.For more information and a full schedule of events, please visit www.therocks.org.

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Crafts/Shows

New England Holiday Craft Spectacular

12/7/2012 (10:00AM)

A variety of juried Crafts and unique specialty foods enhance this Festival The 13th Annual New England Holiday Craft Spectacular will be held indoor at the Rockingham Park Racetrack in Salem, NH, on Friday December 7, Saturday, December 8 and Sunday, December 9, 2012. Over 200 of the regions finest Craftsmen and women will display and sell their American made crafts including Candles, Angels, Turned Wood, Pottery, Scarves, Tapestry, Fine Jewelry, Quilts, Basketry, Photography, Metal Sculpture, Ceramics, Soap, Wall Hangings, Puppets, Appliqués, Chimes, Hats, Folk Toys, Marble Craft, Carved Birds, Soft Sculpture, Victorian Wreaths, Leather, Slate, Oil Paintings, Blown Glass, Mail Boxes, Pen & Ink Drawings, Calligraphy, Fleece, Knits, Poetry, Topiary, Silk and Dried Floral, Collectable Bears, Stained Glass, Holiday Decor and much more. A "food sampling" extravaganza will be presented with such gourmet delights as Herbal Dips, Sauces, Jams & Jellies, Maple Products, Candies, Dried Fruit & Nut Mixes, Honey Products, Relishes, Pickles, Cinnamon, Bread Mixes, Pumpkin Butter, Fudge, Vinegar's, Pastry, Oil's, Salsa's and Gourmet Coffees. Live holiday music and craft demonstrations complete this picture perfect New England Holiday Event. Directions: From Route 93 take Exit 1, "Rockingham Park" Salem, NH. Hours Friday and Saturday from 10am to 5pm and Sunday from 10am to 4pm Ample free parking. This event is held indoor rain, snow or shine. For more information call (603) 332-2616 or print a discount admission coupon at www.castleberryfairs.com. Event Fee: Admission $7.00 Adult, under 14 free. One admission is good for all 3 days. Rockingham Park, Indoor Grandstand, 79 Rockingham Park Blvd., Salem, NH. Phone: 603-332-2616, Email: terrym@worldpath.net, Website: www.castleberryfairs.com

Events NH intros NH for the Holidays Expo

Manchester, NH- The first ever NH for the Holidays Expo will have businesses from all over New England demonstrating, sampling and selling their products and services at, what will be, NH's premier holiday expo. The Expo will be held December 8 & 9, 2012 at the Radisson Hotel/Center of New Hampshire Expo Center in Manchester, NH. This will be a unique, heavily themed expo, which will include many elaborate decorations including a Victorian village to stroll through, a Festival of Trees, a huge model train display, entertainment on stage, and much more!

This will be no ordinary craft fair or trade show. This seasonally themed expo will do what some think to be impossible, make holiday shopping fun! Attendees will stroll through a winter wonderland (and holiday village) to find the perfectly unique gift that's not available at any shopping mall.

Crafts/Shows

Expo Hours: Saturday, December 8 from 10am to 8pm, Sunday, December 9 from 10am to 4:30pm. Ticket prices are $10 for Adults, $9 for Seniors, $4 for Children ages 3 to 12 and any Child under the age of 3 will be admitted for free. All tickets can be purchased at the door with cash or check. Bring at least one canned food item to donate to the NH Food Bank and receive $1 off of your admission. Limit one per person. The NH for the Holidays Expo is produced by EventsNH, a division of Millyard Communications, which also publishes Business NH Magazine and NH Hospitality News. For more information, please contact Amanda Arseneault at 603.626.6354 ext. 224.

1st Annual juried Christmas Craft Show

We invite you to share in a wonderful, juried Christmas Craft Show to take place on December 1st from 9:00 am- 3:00 pm at the Amos J. Blake House Museum. Travel back in time to discover what was old is new again. Exceptional handmade, one-of-a-kind treasures will be displayed on both floors of the quaint museum. Delight in the ambience of the gift giving season. Find that special gift for the people you care about in an old-fashioned holiday setting. This is a new type of shopping experience sure to delight you. There will be nothing else like it for miles around!

Vendors should contact the organizer, Judith Graves 603-239-8005, as soon as possible for more information. Admission is a non-perishable food item for the local food pantry. The Amos J. Blake House Museum is located on the historic town common, Route 119, Fitzwilliam NH, fhs@myfairpoint.net or call 603-585-7742 for directions. This event can also be found on facebook.

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Holidays Fairs

St. Nicholas Fair at Grace Episcopal Church

12/1/2012 (9:00AM)

Great bargains for all will be found for all at the 2012 St. Nicholas Fair at Grace Episcopal Church in East Concord, Saturday, December 1, 2012 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. The holiday shopper will find one-of-a-kind artists' quality holiday gifts, home-made pies, cakes, sweets, fudge, New England Baked Beans, jewelry, and much more including gifts for your favorite cat and dog. The talented parishioners of Grace Church work year round to fill the parish hall with everything from hand-knit hats and mittens to traditional holiday ornaments and decorations. Additionally, shoppers can explore the "White Christmas Elephant Sale" and "Used Book Sale" offering bargains and treasures for everyone's budget. If you are looking for affordable gifts for family, friends and even teachers, you will find it all here at the 2012 St. Nicholas Fair. Be sure to stay for a meal at The St. Nicholas Café serving breakfast and lunch, featuring home-made soups, breads and of course home-made pie-by-the-slice hot out of the oven. Just like Mom makes! Back by popular demand, fresh holiday evergreen wreaths will be available again this year. For more information about the 2012 St. Nicholas Fair, please call Grace Episcopal Church at 603-224-2252 or visit our website at graceeastconcord.org. Grace Episcopal Church, 30 Eastman Street, Concord, NH. Phone: 603-224-2252, Email: office@graceeastconcord.org, Website: www.graceeastconcord.org

Evergreen Fair 2012

12/1/2012 (10:00AM)

Celebrating 35 years of fine handcraft in 2012, Evergreen Fair features 50 carefully selected artists & craftsmen working in clay, fiber, wood, metals, paper, stone, acrylics, watercolor, pen & ink and mixed media. Demonstrations include letterpress printing & hand engraving using an antique iron hand press, bird carving and silhouette cutting. Live music by R.P. Hale on Thursday-Friday & the New England Irish Harp Orchestra on Saturday. Memorial Union Building, UNH, 83 Main Street, Durham, NH. Phone: 603-934-6248, Email: evergreenfair@hotmail.com, Website: www.facebook.com/evergreenfair

New Castle Village Christmas Fair

12/1/2012 (8:00AM)

Start your morning off right at the New Castle Village Christmas Fair with steaming coffee and delicious homemade baked goods. Get into the holiday spirit as you check out the great selection of wreaths, greens, Boxwood trees, Holly wreaths, Hydrangea wreaths, and centerpieces. Highlights include: Craft Table, Candy Store, the famous New Castle Cookbook, Jewelry and Red Elephants, Gift Baskets, and Silent Auction. Enjoy a lobster roll and fish chowder for lunch, followed by some incredible desserts. The folks in New Castle really know how to cook! Held in the New Castle Recreation Building at the entrance to New Castle common. Saturday, Dec. 1, 2012, 8:00 -2:00. For Information Call: 603-436-1776. New Castle Recreation Bldg, 301 Wentworth, Rt. 1B, New Castle, NH. Phone: 603-436-1776. Email: jethammond@gmail.com