



Celebrate the holidays with the beloved Radio City Rockettes and witness the iconic kickline.



Kids take in the view at Brooklyn Boulders.



A Grumman F-11A Tiger, one of the 75 aircraft at Cradle of Aviation Museum



Billy Beez's play space will keep the kids busy for hours.

A Staycation a Day »

Ideas for seven fun-filled family days around our region. **By Bethany Braun-Silva**

There's no better way to create lasting memories as a family than taking a trip together, especially around the holidays. As a mom of two young boys, however, I know how hard—and expensive—it can be to take a trip. The good news is you don't need to get on an airplane or even stay at a hotel to have a memorable and exciting winter break. The New York metro area offers such a wealth of things to do with kids that there are virtually endless possibilities for a "vacation" right here at home. To help, we've created a list of seven great local "staycation" itineraries—a week's worth of kid-focused fun for you and your family to enjoy this holiday season.

Brooklyn

Check out Brooklyn Boulders, at which adults and kids can scale mountain-like fixtures in Boerum Hill. You can also experience a bit of history at the New York Transit Museum in Downtown Brooklyn. Got an animal-lover on your hands? Head to Coney Island and visit the New York Aquarium to marvel at the sea turtles, sharks, seals, and more.

Fairfield County, CT

Check out the Maritime Aquarium in Norwalk, which is home to a special "Animals Without Passports" exhibit through Jan. 2, 2017. The Stepping Stones Museum for Children, also in Norwalk, offers a great variety of activities, including Zumba® classes for kids and an Elf Workshop in which children can create their own Christmas tree ornament. Top off the day by catching a performance of *The Nutcracker* at The Palace in Stamford.

Long Island

Garden City's Cradle of Aviation Museum features more than 75 aircraft and spacecraft, a dozen cockpits, and 30 hands-on exhibits. You can keep the learning going with a trip to Sagamore Hill in Oyster Bay, Theodore Roosevelt's home, which offers tours and ranger activities for kids. Kids can also enjoy trout-feeding demonstrations and tours at the Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery & Aquarium in Cold Spring Harbor and take a trip back in time at Old Bethpage Village Restoration in Old Bethpage, at which they can take part in the junior apprenticeship program, dress in authentic period clothing, and learn historic crafts.

Manhattan

Start at everyone's favorite, the American Museum of Natural History on the Upper West Side. You can then take a short trip downtown—walk through Central Park if it's not too cold—to experience the holiday fun

at Rockefeller Center or take in the Rockettes' Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall. Finish up with some grub at Ellen's Stardust Diner in Midtown, since you're sure to be hungry.

Queens

Head to Corona to experience GingerBread Lane at the New York Hall of Science. It won the Guinness World Record—in 2013, 2014, and 2015—for the largest gingerbread village. You can also see a family-friendly show at Flushing Town Hall or check out the annual Holiday Market there. Next, head over to Funtopia USA for some arcade fun in Middle Village.



Kids take in the amazing feat that is GingerBread Lane at the New York Hall of Science.

Rockland County

Head to the Palisades Center in West Nyack for some serious family fun all in one place. Kids and adults can take on the ropes course at Palisades Climb Adventure. Afterward, parents can sit back while their kids jump and play at Billy Beez, an indoor play space. Younger kids will enjoy the Ferris wheel and carousel just off the food court, while older ones can catch a movie or IMAX and go ice-skating.

Westchester

Have a museum-filled day at the Katonah Museum of Art in Katonah or the Westchester Children's Museum in Rye (or both!). Afterward, head over to Ridge Hill in Yonkers for an afternoon at Legoland Discovery Center, to experience the festive creations at Bricktacular. Walk just a block or two within Ridge Hill to find a bite to eat or be truly adventurous and try indoor skydiving at iFly.



Kids can build and learn with Legos at Legoland Discovery Center.



The Stepping Stones Museum for Children offers kids educational fun.