CYPRESS & NORTHWEST HOUSTON

The Ultimate *Holiday Guide* 2026

Light shows, parades, free Santa visits, markets, tree farms and ways to give back, all within an easy drive of Cypress.



Fay Brink

Your Cypress & Northwest Houston REALTOR®

40	14	6	6	5
HOLIDAY PICKS	FREE EVENTS	SANTA STOPS	POP-UP BARS	TREE FARMS & LOTS

BLAIR Realty Group

Scan for the online guide with every event link

A NOTE FROM FAY

Welcome



Hi neighbor,

Every year I promise myself I'll plan the holidays early, and every year it's suddenly Thanksgiving week and I'm scrolling for parade times in a parking lot. So this year I did the digging for both of us.

Inside you'll find the big nights out, free Santa visits close to home, markets worth a Saturday, where to cut a tree, and a few ways to give back right here in Cy-Fair. I checked every date against what organizers have posted for 2026. Anything that isn't announced yet is marked TBA, so nobody drives to an empty lot.

I also tucked in my gumbo, my mom's cornbread dressing, and a page of house tips I learned the hard way during the 2021 freeze.

Keep it on the fridge, send it to a friend, and if real estate comes up over dessert, you know where to find me.

Merry everything,

Fay

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

FREE No ticket needed.

TICKETED Buy ahead; prices vary.

TBA 2026 details aren't posted yet. Last year's dates are shown only for reference.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go.

EVERY DATED EVENT, WEEK BY WEEK

Holiday Calendar at a Glance

RUNNING ALL SEASON

The Light Park, Katy: nightly Nov. 6 – Jan. 3 Santa's Wonderland, Bass Pro Katy: daily Nov. 8 – Dec. 24

WEEK OF NOV. 15 – NOV. 21

- **Thu. Nov. 19** Zoo Lights opens (through Jan. 3) TICKETED
- **Thu. Nov. 19** Frosty's Christmas Bar reopens TICKETED
- **Thu. Nov. 19** Mariah Carey Holiday Bar opens at Spindletop
- **Fri. Nov. 20** Miracle at Johnny's Gold Brick opens
- **Sat. Nov. 21** Cy-Fair Nutcracker Market, Berry Center, 9 a.m. TICKETED
- **Sat. Nov. 21** Tomball Holiday Parade, 10 a.m. FREE
- **Sat. Nov. 21** Lighting of the Doves, The Woodlands, 3–8 p.m. FREE
- **Sat. Nov. 21** Free Santa Pics, Arc Electric + Lighting, 4 p.m. FREE

WEEK OF NOV. 22 – NOV. 28

- **Sun. Nov. 22** Stageworks Holiday Market, 1–5 p.m. FREE
- **Tue. Nov. 24** CAM Photos with Santa, 4:30–6:30 p.m. FREE
- **Thu. Nov. 26** H-E-B Thanksgiving Day Parade, 9 a.m. FREE
- **Fri. Nov. 27** The Nutcracker opens (through Dec. 28) TICKETED
- **Fri. Nov. 27** Tinsel Town opens (through Dec. 27)

WEEK OF NOV. 29 – DEC. 5

- **Fri. Dec. 4** Chanukah begins at sundown
- **Fri. Dec. 4** Houston Repertoire Ballet's Nutcracker (Dec. 4–6) TICKETED
- **Sat. Dec. 5** LifeBridge Holiday Market, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. FREE
- **Sat. Dec. 5** Wunderlich Farm Old-Fashioned Christmas, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
- **Sat. Dec. 5** Cy-Fair FFA Christmas Craft Show (Dec. 5–6)
- **Sat. Dec. 5** Holiday in the Village, Jersey Village, 4–7 p.m. FREE
- **Sat. Dec. 5** Deck the Depot, Tomball, 4–8 p.m. FREE
- **Sat. Dec. 5** Deck the Hall at City Hall, 4–9 p.m. FREE

WEEK OF DEC. 6 – DEC. 12

- **Sun. Dec. 6** Grand Menorah Lighting, City Hall (time TBA) FREE
- **Sun. Dec. 6** Cy-Fair Parade of Lights, Hwy 6, 6 p.m. FREE
- **Tue. Dec. 8** Cy-Fair Helping Hands toy drive deadline
- **Thu. Dec. 10** Last day for HFD Operation Stocking Stuffer
- **Fri. Dec. 11** Tomball German Christmas Market (Dec. 11–13) FREE

WEEK OF DEC. 13 – DEC. 19

- **Fri. Dec. 18** Nutcracker sensory-friendly show, 1 p.m. TICKETED

WEEK OF DEC. 20 – DEC. 26

- **Sat. Dec. 26** Kwanzaa begins (2026 events TBA)

WEEK OF DEC. 27 – JAN. 2

- **Sun. Dec. 27** Tinsel Town's last night
- **Mon. Dec. 28** The Nutcracker's final performances TICKETED
- **Wed. Dec. 30** Miracle at Johnny's last night
- **Thu. Dec. 31** New Year's Eve (Redemption Square details TBA)

WEEK OF JAN. 3 – JAN. 9

- **Sun. Jan. 3** Final night: Zoo Lights & The Light Park

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

THE BIG EIGHT

Must-Do Holiday Events

DOWNTOWN HOUSTON — TICKETED

Houston Ballet's The Nutcracker

Nov. 27 – Dec. 28 · Matinee & evening shows; sensory-friendly show Dec. 18, 1 p.m.

Brown Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Ave., Houston

Houston Ballet marks ten years of Stanton Welch's production, with Tchaikovsky's score in the Wortham's Brown Theater. Box office: 713-227-2787.

PRO TIP Buy from houstonballet.org or the box office to skip resale markups. Want a calmer house? The sensory-friendly performance is Dec. 18 at 1 p.m.

MUSEUM DISTRICT — TICKETED

TXU Energy presents Zoo Lights

Nov. 19, 2026 – Jan. 3, 2027 · Nightly 5:30–10:30 p.m. (last entry 9:30)

Houston Zoo, 6200 Hermann Park Dr., Houston

The Houston Zoo turns into an after-dark trail of light displays for the season. Dates are posted on Visit Houston; the zoo's own event page updates closer to opening.

PRO TIP Tickets are sold online only, never at the gate. The zoo has no lot of its own and the free Hermann Park lots fill fast, so get there early.

DOWNTOWN HOUSTON — FREE

77th H-E-B Thanksgiving Day Parade

Thu., Nov. 26 · 9 a.m.

Downtown Houston parade route

One of the oldest Thanksgiving parades in the country rolls through downtown with Houston's own Lizzo as grand marshal, 15 floats and 10 giant balloons.

PRO TIP Pull up the route map and road-closure list on the city's parade page before you head downtown, then park outside the route and walk in.

DOWNTOWN HOUSTON — FREE

Deck the Hall: The Mayor's Tree Lighting & Concert

Sat., Dec. 5 · 4–9 p.m.

Hermann Square at City Hall, 901 Bagby St., Houston

A 52-foot tree with 4,000 ornaments and nearly 100,000 LED lights goes up in front of City Hall. En Vogue headlines with Jessica Sanchez and MAJOR, and fireworks launch from the City Hall roof to close the night.

PRO TIP Dec. 5 is the busiest night of the season. Tomball's Deck the Depot and Jersey Village's Holiday in the Village are the same evening, so pick your plan before you leave home.

KATY — TICKETED

The Light Park (Drive-Thru)

Nov. 6, 2026 – Jan. 3, 2027 · Nightly; gates open 5:30 p.m.

Typhoon Texas Waterpark parking lot, 555 Katy Fort Bend Rd., Katy

A drive-through show of synchronized LED displays and light tunnels set to holiday music. One price per car, open nightly rain or shine.

PRO TIP Go on a Tuesday through Dec. 15. Those are Share the Aura nights: every ticket sends a Big Brothers Big Sisters of Houston child and mentor through the park.

TOMBALL — FREE

61st Tomball Holiday Parade

Sat., Nov. 21 · 10 a.m. – noon

Main St., from Elm St. west to Buvinghausen, Tomball

Hosted by the Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce, this year's parade rolls down Main Street under the theme "250 Years – Main Street Americana."

PRO TIP Make it a double: parade in the morning, then Lighting of the Doves in The Woodlands from 3 to 8 p.m.

THE WOODLANDS — FREE

Lighting of the Doves Festival

Sat., Nov. 21 · 3–8 p.m.

Town Green Park, 2099 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands

The Woodlands Township's annual kickoff at Town Green Park, built around the ceremonial lighting of the community's doves, a tradition dating to 1982.

PRO TIP Admission and designated Town Center parking are free, but give yourself extra time to park and walk to Town Green Park before the evening ceremony.

CY-FAIR — FREE

30th Cy-Fair Parade of Lights

Sun., Dec. 6 · 6 p.m.

Highway 6, between Keith Harrow and Huffmeister

Decorated fire trucks, lighted floats and Santa roll down Highway 6 with an America 250 theme. The parade supports Texas volunteer firefighters.

PRO TIP Bring folding chairs and claim your spot along Hwy 6, between Keith Harrow and Huffmeister, well before the 6 p.m. start.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

BRING YOUR CAMERA

Santa Sightings *(for free!)*

CYPRESS — FREE

Photos with Santa Charlie & Mrs. Claus

Tue., Nov. 24 · 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Cypress Assistance Ministries, 12930 Cypress N. Houston Rd., Cypress

Free professional photos taken by Sunburst Photography. Grab the registration flyer on CAM's event page.

KATY — FREE

Santa's Wonderland at Bass Pro Shops

Nov. 8 – Dec. 24 · Daily; times vary

Bass Pro Shops, 5000 Katy Mills Circle, Katy

A free 4x6 studio photo with Santa plus a shareable video. Reserve a time online; slots go quickly on weekends.

CYPRESS — FREE

Free Santa Pics: A Litty Little Christmas

Sat., Nov. 21 · 4 p.m.

Arc Electric + Lighting, 16129 Cypress Rosehill Rd., Cypress

This local lighting shop's annual community event includes a free professional Santa photo. In past years, photos required advance registration.

TOMBALL — FREE

Deck the Depot Tree Lighting Festival

Sat., Dec. 5 · 4–8 p.m.

Tomball Depot Plaza, 201 S. Elm St., Tomball

Tomball's tree lighting with real snow, Santa and the city's first holiday drone show. Free admission and parking.

JERSEY VILLAGE — FREE

Holiday in the Village & Parade of Lights

Sat., Dec. 5 · 4–7 p.m.; parade 7:15 p.m.

Jersey Village Civic Center, 16327 Lakeview Dr.

Ten thousand pounds of snow, food trucks, face painting and photos with Santa, followed by a lighted parade.

CYPRESS — TBA

Light the Towne

2026 dates TBA · Last year: Nov. 20, 6–8 p.m.

The Boardwalk at Towne Lake, 9955 Barker Cypress Rd., Cypress

The Boardwalk's tree lighting, with Santa's arrival, carolers and hot chocolate. Watch the Boardwalk's page for this year's date.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

GROWN-UP CHEER

Holiday Pop-Up Bars

All six are inside Houston, about a 30- to 45-minute drive from Cypress. Plan a ride home.

UPTOWN — NO COVER LISTED

Tinsel Town

Nov. 27 – Dec. 27 · Sun.–Thu. 5 p.m.–midnight; Fri.–Sat. 5 p.m.–1 a.m.

The Chifley Hotel, 2400 West Loop S., Houston

An Uptown hotel bar dressed head to toe for Christmas. Free self-parking. Tables fill fast, and Breakfast with Santa (Dec. 5 & 12) is by reservation.

DOWNTOWN — CHECK SITE

Mariah Carey Holiday Bar at Spindletop

Opens Nov. 19; closing date TBA

Spindletop, atop the Hyatt Regency, downtown Houston

The touring pop-up makes its first Houston stop in the revolving Spindletop restaurant, with cocktails made with Carey's Black Irish cream liqueur and plenty of photo ops.

EADO — TICKETED

Frosty's Christmas Bar

Reopens Nov. 19; closing date TBA

2106 Dallas St., Ste. 100, Houston

Two floors of over-the-top Christmas decor, a dance floor and seasonal cocktails like the Very Merry Punch. Buy tickets ahead.

THE HEIGHTS — NO COVER LISTED

Miracle at Johnny's Gold Brick

Nov. 20 – Dec. 30

Johnny's Gold Brick, 2518 Yale St., Houston

The Heights bar turns into the Miracle Christmas pop-up, with drinks like the Snowball Old Fashioned and the Christmapolitan served in holiday glassware.

RIVER OAKS — TBA

Jingle Bell Bar at Botonica

2026 dates TBA · Last year: Nov. 26 – Dec. 28

Botonica, 2031 Westcreek Ln., Houston

Three themed rooms, Classic Christmas, Candy Cane Lane and a Ski Lodge, plus live music and craft nights.

MIDTOWN — TBA

Miracle at Winnie's

2026 dates TBA · Last year: through Dec. 31

Winnie's, 3622 Main St., Ste. A, Houston

Midtown's sandwich-and-cocktail spot hosts its own Miracle takeover with holiday lights, wreaths and themed drinks.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

SHOP SMALL, SIP COCOA

Holiday Markets

CYPRESS — TICKETED

Cy-Fair Nutcracker Market

Sat., Nov. 21 · 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (no strollers until 2 p.m.)

Berry Center, 8877 Barker Cypress Rd., Cypress

Hundreds of booths under one roof. Admission is listed at $6 cash (one listing says $7), free for ages 16 and under, with free parking. Bring cash.

NW HOUSTON — FREE

Stageworks Acting Academy Holiday Market

Sun., Nov. 22 · 1–5 p.m.

Stageworks Theater, 10760 Grant Rd., Houston

Vendor and food booths plus pictures with Santa, raising money for the academy's Junior Theater Festival trip.

CYPRESS — FREE

LifeBridge Church Holiday Market

Sat., Dec. 5 · 9 a.m.–2 p.m.

LifeBridge Church, 16614 Mueschke Rd., Cypress

Free admission, local vendors and a raffle ($5 for one ticket or $20 for five).

KLEIN — COST TBA

Old-Fashioned Christmas Market & Festival

Sat., Dec. 5 · 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Wunderlich Farm, 18218 Theiss Mail Route Rd., Klein

A turn-of-the-century German Christmas market at a historic farm, with Santa carriage visits, holiday crafts, the schoolhouse, farm animals and music.

CYPRESS — COST TBA

Cy-Fair FFA Country Christmas Craft Show

Sat.–Sun., Dec. 5–6 · Hours TBA

Cy-Fair Exhibit Center, 11206 Telge Rd., Cypress

A two-day craft show hosted by the Cy-Fair FFA, with handmade gifts and holiday decor.

TOMBALL — FREE

18th Tomball German Christmas Market

Fri.–Sun., Dec. 11–13 · Fri. 6–10 p.m.; check site for Sat. & Sun. hours

Old Town Tomball, near Depot Plaza, 201 S. Elm St.

More than 150 street vendors, 30-plus entertainers and four live music stages fill Old Town Tomball. Free admission.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

CHOOSE, CUT, HAUL

Where to Get Your Tree

SPRING — TBA

Old Time Christmas Tree Farm

2026 opening TBA · Listed hours: daily 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m. in season

7632 Spring Cypress Rd., Spring · 281-370-9141

Forty acres of choose-and-cut pine and cypress, with saws and measuring sticks on hand, plus precut firs and spruce.

MAGNOLIA — TBA

Spring Creek Growers

2026 opening TBA · Last season: Tue.–Fri. 2–5:30, Sat. 9–5:30, Sun. 10–5:30

23803 Decker Prairie-Rosehill Rd., Magnolia

A family farm since 1921 growing Virginia pine and Leyland cypress. Hayride out to the field; only trees 6 feet and taller are cut. Precut firs available.

BROOKSHIRE — TBA

Dewberry Farm Christmas Tree Forest

2026 dates TBA · Last year: select dates Nov. 28 – Dec. 14, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

7705 FM 362, Brookshire

Wagon ride to a 40-acre forest of Leyland and Murray cypress. No ticket needed to cut a tree; A Berry Merry Christmas is ticketed separately.

HOCKLEY — TBA

Family Roots TX (formerly High Star)

2026 dates TBA · Call before you go: listings conflict

19020 Becker Rd., Hockley

A longtime choose-and-cut farm in Hockley. Some listings show the old High Star name as closed, so confirm it's open this season before you drive out.

HOUSTON — TBA

Trinity Pope Tree Lot

2026 opening TBA · Opens the Friday after Thanksgiving

4813 Larkin St., Houston

Selling North Carolina Fraser firs since 1982, from 5 to 14 feet tall.

3 quick tree-care tips

Fresh cut first

Ask the farm or lot to take a thin slice off the trunk right before you leave, and get it in water within a few hours.

Water every day

A fresh tree drinks a lot the first week. Keep the water line above the base of the trunk; if it dries out, the cut seals over.

Mind the heat

Keep the tree at least 3 feet from fireplaces, space heaters, candles and heat vents, and turn the lights off when you leave or go to bed.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

OPEN TO EVERYONE

Community Celebrations & Give Back

DOWNTOWN HOUSTON — FREE

31st Annual Grand Menorah Lighting

Sun., Dec. 6 · Time TBA

Houston City Hall, 901 Bagby St.

Chabad Outreach of Houston's city-wide Festival of Lights for Chanukah, held at City Hall for more than three decades.

CYPRESS — TICKETED

Houston Repertoire Ballet: The Nutcracker

Fri.–Sun., Dec. 4–6 · Dec. 4, 7 p.m.; Dec. 5, 2 & 7 p.m.; Dec. 6, 1 & 6 p.m.

CFISD Visual & Performing Arts Center, 11420 Matzke Rd., Cypress

A hometown Nutcracker in Cypress. Tickets start at $30 before fees.

CYPRESS — TBA

Chabad of Cypress Chanukah Celebration

2026 date TBA · Chanukah: sundown Dec. 4 – Dec. 12

Location TBA

Chabad of Cypress has hosted a free public menorah lighting in past years. Check its calendar for 2026.

THIRD WARD — TBA

Greater Houston Kwanzaa Celebrations

Dec. 26 – Jan. 1; 2026 schedule TBA · Last year: first night at Third Ward Multi-Service Center, 3611 Ennis St.

Locations across Houston

Seven nights of public celebrations, one for each principle, with markets, drumming and ceremonies. Last year's events were free.

DOWNTOWN HOUSTON — TBA

New Year's Eve at Redemption Square

Dec. 31; 2026 details TBA · Last year: 7 p.m. start, fireworks at midnight

Redemption Square, downtown Houston

Last year's free celebration had live music, an art market and a midnight fireworks show.

Give back

CYPRESS — GIVE

Cy-Fair Helping Hands Christmas Toy Drive

Donations due Tue., Dec. 8

12923 Enchanted Dr., Cypress (anytime) or 9204 Emmott Rd., Houston (Mon.–Thu. & 1st/3rd Sat., 10 a.m.–1 p.m.)

New, unwrapped toys for ages 0–12 and gift cards for teens, for the group's Dec. 12 client Christmas party.

HOUSTON — GIVE

HFD Operation Stocking Stuffer

Through Thu., Dec. 10

Any Houston Fire Department station

Drop new, unwrapped toys at any HFD fire station, or give online through the program's website.

CYPRESS — GIVE

Cypress Assistance Ministries: Merriment at the Ministry

Running now; 2026 donation deadline TBA

12930 Cypress N. Houston Rd., Cypress · 281-955-7684

CAM's Christmas toy and gift distribution for Cy-Fair neighbors. Call or stop by to donate toys, teen gifts or gift cards, or to volunteer.

CYPRESS — GIVE

Cy-Hope Christmas Adopt to Shop

Sign-ups open now

Cy-Hope, 12715 Telge Rd., Cypress

Adopt a child from Cy-Hope's list and shop their wish list. Volunteer and business partnerships are welcome too.

Event details change. Please confirm dates and times with the organizer before you go. Every event link lives in the online guide.

SMALL BUSINESSES, BIG IMPACT

Shop Local Gift Guide

Something to make

A custom candle blended from a wall of 150+ scents
Foxfire Candle Works
Vintage Park, 126 Vintage Park Blvd., Houston

A private knitting lesson and a skein of Nordic wool
Kani Kettu
10211 Cypresswood Dr., Ste. 600, Houston

A crochet or macrame class for a friend (or the two of you)
Craftique Studio
16726 Huffmeister Rd., Ste. C200, Cypress

A soap- or candle-making workshop date
Love & Make
2516 Times Blvd., Houston

Something to keep

Artisan glass made by Reach Unlimited clients
Reach Unlimited Gift Shop
11832 Mueller Cemetery Rd., Cypress

An air plant or a mini terrarium for the desk
Terrarium
311 W. Main St., Tomball

A one-of-a-kind vintage find from nine dealers
Antique Boutique
11438 Cypress N. Houston Rd., Cypress

A jar of honey from the farm's own bees
Harvest Season Farm
21110 Bauer Hockley Rd., Tomball

Something to do

Two tickets to a singer-songwriter show
Main Street Crossing
Old Town Tomball

A gift card and a glass of wine in the lounge
X&O Books
25712 Hwy. 290, Ste. I, Cypress

A hands-on barbecue class from a Texas Monthly top-50 joint
Feges BBQ Spring Branch
Spring Branch, Houston

A family membership for a year of zoo or museum days
Houston Zoo, HMNS or Children's Museum Houston
Hermann Park & Museum District

Gift ideas, not quoted prices. Class schedules and holiday hours change, so call ahead.

WRAP IT LOCAL

Pair any gift with a card from one of the bookshops on page 12. Every dollar spent here keeps Cy-Fair interesting.

SKIP THE BIG-BOX AISLES

Real Toy Stores for the Kids

Toys “R” Us is gone, but real toy stores aren't. These are mostly independent shops with staff who will help you find the right thing and, often, wrap it.

Close to home

CYPRESS

Learning Express Toys & Gifts

25704 Northwest Fwy.

Locally owned, with free gift wrapping, free personalization and a Birthday Box gift registry.

THE WOODLANDS MALL

The LEGO Store

1201 Lake Woodlands Dr., #01182, The Woodlands

Brick Specialists help you pick the right set, plus a Pick & Build wall and a build-a-minifigure station.

OLD TOWN SPRING

Why Not Toys

319 Gentry St., Spring

Room after room sorted by age and interest: puppets, puzzles, art, music and a book nook.

Worth the drive

GALLERIA

Toys to Love

1715 Post Oak Blvd., Houston

A locally owned shop for learning-through-play toys and books. They gift wrap, and you can order online.

HEIGHTS

Big Blue Whale

237 W. 19th St., Houston

Skips violent and gender-stereotyped toys, and the online shop is sorted by age.

MEYERLAND & BRAES HEIGHTS

Tomfoolery Toys & Books

4854 Beechnut St. and 3835A Bellaire Blvd., Houston

No “do not touch” rule, so kids can try before you buy, plus story times and game days.

SHOPPING ONLINE ANYWAY?

Toys to Love and Big Blue Whale both sell online, so you can still shop local from the couch.

BOOKS AND SO MUCH MORE

Bookshops That Double as Gift Shops

The best bookstores are secretly gift shops: cards, puzzles, mugs, candles and the one book you didn't know they needed. Ask the staff for a pick; that's what they're there for.

Close to home

SPRING / KLEIN

Copperfield's Books

8220 Louetta Rd., Ste. 106, Spring

Neurodivergent- and woman-owned. New and pre-read books plus gifts, cards, puzzles and curiosities, and trade credit for your old books.

OLD TOWN TOMBALL

The Peddler's Pack Book Co.

408 W. Main St., Tomball

Family-owned and new this year: new and used books, mugs, totes, stationery and vinyl.

TOMBALL

The Book Attic

15222 FM 2920, Ste. L, Tomball

Mostly used with some new, plus games, puzzles and paper goods. Trade credit makes a stack of paperbacks cheap.

CYPRESS / WILLOWBROOK

Books Abound

11650 Jones Rd., Houston

A cozy used bookstore with books at half the cover price. Cash or check only.

FAIRFIELD TOWN CENTER

Books-A-Million

28640 Hwy. 290, Cypress

A national chain, but the biggest gift selection nearby: manga, BookTok picks and trending gifts like PopMart.

Worth the drive

MEMORIAL

Blue Willow Bookshop

14532 Memorial Dr., Houston

Celebrating 30 years, with a strong kids' section and staff picks on books, games and gifts.

RICE VILLAGE AREA

Murder by the Book

2342 Bissonnet St., Houston

Mystery and thriller specialists with signed books and bookish gifts, including candles. Brazos Bookstore is across the street.

THE WOODLANDS

Buy the Book

25162 Grogans Park Dr.

Its Blind Date with a Book packages come with pens and goodies around a mystery pick. Good for cards and notepads, too.

FOR THE GAMER AND THE TINKERER

Games & Gadgets

Many of these shops host free game nights, so a gift card plus an invite to play makes a great present.

Board, card & tabletop

HWY. 249 / LAKEWOOD FOREST

Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy

21155A Hwy. 249, Houston

1,000 to 1,500 board games at a time, plus comics and collectibles, and a Tabletop Tavern serving food and drinks.

CYPRESS

Atomic Hobby Shop

13529 Skinner Rd., Ste. E, Cypress

Board games, Warhammer, Magic: The Gathering, miniatures, paints and even disc golf, run by gamers for gamers.

CYPRESS

Cy-Tex Gaming

12736 Grant Rd., Cypress

A trading-card and tabletop shop with 48 table seats and regular tournaments. A good stop for the Pokémon or Magic fan.

Video games & gadgets

TOMBALL

Quicksave Games & Collectibles

25435 FM 2978, Ste. 108, Tomball

Retro consoles back to the original Nintendo, plus PlayStation, Xbox and trading cards. Moved to a bigger space this year.

COPPERWOOD VILLAGE

PayMore Copperfield

8538 Hwy. 6 N., Houston

Tested, pre-owned phones, laptops and game systems with a 30-day warranty, and a bargain bin of retro games.

WORTH THE DRIVE: WESTPARK

Micro Center

5305 S. Rice Ave., Houston

A chain, but the tech lover's dream store: PC parts, gaming gear and gadgets, with staff who know their stuff.

GET 'EM BEFORE THEY'RE GONE

Last Call, Last Chance

These stores are closing or in bankruptcy, with markdowns underway. Status as of mid-November 2026; sales are final, and stock and hours change fast, so call before you go.

The Children's Place & Gymboree

Houston-area stores; check the store locator

Kids' pajamas, holiday outfits and stocking stuffers at deep discounts. The chain filed for Chapter 11 on Nov. 8; stores are open for now, some will close, and everything bought after Nov. 6 is final sale.

The Dump Luxe Furniture Outlet

10251 North Fwy., Houston

The going-out-of-business sale started Oct. 8 on furniture, mattresses and rugs, with more markdowns as it goes. A splurge gift, or the guest-room refresh before family arrives.

Equal Housing Opportunity

FOR EVERY KIND OF MIND

Sensory-Friendly & Neurodivergent-Affirming Gifts

Shops that get sensory needs, for kids and grown-ups alike, plus a few neurodivergent-owned and neurodivergent-made picks.

Shop in person

OLD TOWN TOMBALL

Peace Love Autism

502 Mason St., Tomball

Started by a Tomball mom after her son's autism diagnosis: apparel with a vintage-band-tee feel, plus a community space for events.

MEYERLAND & BRAES HEIGHTS

Tomfoolery Toys & Books

4854 Beechnut St. and 3835A Bellaire Blvd., Houston

A hands-on store with no "do not touch" rule and a big sensory aisle of squishies, stress balls and fidgets.

RICE VILLAGE & MEMORIAL

Learning Express Toys

2401 Rice Blvd. and 12850 Memorial Dr., Ste. 1160, Houston

A sensory-toy section with Thinking Putty, Shashibo fidget boxes and more. Ask the Cypress store what it stocks, too.

SPRING / KLEIN

Copperfield's Books

8220 Louetta Rd., Ste. 106, Spring

A neurodivergent- and woman-owned bookshop with gifts, puzzles and curiosities for readers of every age.

CYPRESS

Reach Unlimited Gift Shop

11832 Mueller Cemetery Rd., Cypress

Artisan glass made by the nonprofit's clients, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Order online

CYPRESS-BASED, SHIPS NATIONWIDE

Mama of Joy Sensory Play

mamaofjoy.com

Themed sensory bins and kits for little hands, with a monthly subscription option.

ONLINE MAKER

All Things Sensory Shop

allthingssensoryshop.com

Fidgets and "chewelry" made by a neurodivergent maker, including subtle designs adults can wear anywhere.

GIFT IDEAS THAT TEND TO LAND

Soft, tagless clothing; noise-reducing earplugs or headphones; weighted lap pads; fidget jewelry; and outings at quieter times. When in doubt, ask what they'd like.

YOUR HOUSE, YOUR PARTY

Holiday Hosting Ideas

12 party themes

1. **Gumbo & Games Night** One big pot, a stack of bowls, board games on every table.
2. **Cookie Swap** Everyone bakes a dozen of one kind and leaves with a dozen mixed.
3. **Tamale Night** Order from your favorite spot or roll them together assembly-line style.
4. **Ugly Sweater Social** Prizes for tackiest, most homemade and most lights.
5. **Hot Cocoa Bar** Three cocoas, a dozen toppings, and spiked or not by the mug.
6. **Ornament Exchange** Each guest brings a wrapped ornament; steal rules apply.
7. **Light-Tour Progressive Dinner** Appetizers at one house, dinner at the next, dessert after a drive past the lights.
8. **Holiday Brunch** Breakfast casseroles, a mimosa bar and coffee for the designated drivers.
9. **Gingerbread Build-Off** Teams, a 45-minute timer and a judge who can be bribed with candy.
10. **Movie Marathon** Pick three holiday classics, set out popcorn three ways, and vote between films.
11. **Candlelight Dessert Night** Pies, coffee and carols on the patio once the sun goes down.
12. **New Year's Eve Countdown** Small bites, sparkling everything, and a midnight toast.

4 easy games

White Elephant

Set a price cap. Players draw numbers, then open a gift or steal one already opened. A gift can only be stolen twice.

Name That Holiday Tune

Play the first five seconds of a song. First person to name it scores a point; ten points wins.

Two Truths and a Tinsel

Each guest shares two true holiday memories and one made-up one. Everyone else guesses the fake.

Pass the Present

Wrap one small gift in many layers. Pass it while music plays, and whoever holds it when the music stops tears off a layer.

FROM MY KITCHEN

My Favorite Recipes & Traditions

Chicken & Andouille Gumbo

Serves 8

I use Savoie's jarred roux and I'm not one bit sorry. It saves me an hour at the stove. A deboned rotisserie chicken is my other shortcut. Okra goes in, Tony Chachere's goes on just about everything, and nobody's ever complained.

- 1 lb andouille sausage, sliced into coins
- 1 onion, 1 green bell pepper and 3 celery ribs, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- About 3/4 cup Savoie's jarred roux (add more for a thicker, darker pot)
- 8–10 cups chicken stock
- 1 rotisserie chicken, skin off, deboned and shredded
- 2 cups sliced okra
- 2 bay leaves
- Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning, to taste
- Sliced green onions and cooked white rice, for serving

1. Brown the andouille in a heavy pot. Lift it out and leave the drippings.
2. Cook the onion, bell pepper and celery in the drippings until soft, about 8 minutes. Add the garlic for 1 minute.
3. In a separate pot, bring the stock to a simmer and whisk in the roux until it dissolves completely.
4. Pour the stock into the vegetables, add the sausage and bay leaves, and simmer uncovered 45 minutes.
5. Stir in the chicken and okra and simmer 30 minutes more. Season with Tony's, pull the bay leaves, and serve over rice with green onions.

My Mom's Cornbread Dressing

Serves 10–12

This is my mom's recipe, and it's on my table every Thanksgiving. Yes, it has chicken gizzards. They make it. Bake the cornbread the day before so it has time to dry out.

- 1 lb chicken gizzards
- 1 pan of day-old cornbread (9x13), crumbled
- 4 tbsp butter
- 1 onion, 1 green bell pepper and 3 celery ribs, chopped
- 3–4 cups broth (use the gizzard cooking liquid)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning and black pepper, to taste

1. Simmer the gizzards in salted water about 1 hour, until tender. Save the liquid, then chop the gizzards fine.
2. Melt the butter and cook the onion, bell pepper and celery until soft.
3. In a big bowl, combine the cornbread, vegetables and gizzards. Add broth until it's moist but not soupy, then stir in the eggs and season.
4. Spread in a greased 9x13 dish and bake at 350°F for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until set and golden on top.

Also on my holiday table: Julia Child's mashed potatoes (a hit last year), A from-scratch green bean casserole, Street corn (elote) casserole, Red beans & rice on the cold nights in between.

Equal Housing Opportunity

PROTECT THE HOUSE WHILE YOU ENJOY IT

Holiday Home Tips

Hang lights safely

Use lights rated for outdoor use, plug them into GFCI outlets, and have someone hold the ladder. Toss strands with cracked sockets or frayed wire.

Tree & candle safety

Water the tree daily and keep it 3 feet from heat. Never leave a candle burning in an empty room; battery candles look just as good in a window.

Protect your pipes

When a hard freeze is forecast, drip faucets on outside walls, open sink cabinets, cover outdoor spigots, and know where your main water shutoff is before you need it.

HVAC check

Swap the air filter and test the heat before the first cold front, not during it. A tune-up costs far less than an emergency call on a holiday weekend.

Smoke & CO detectors

Test every alarm, replace batteries, and make sure there's a carbon monoxide detector near the bedrooms if you have gas appliances or an attached garage.

Clean the gutters

Clear leaves before winter rains so water drains away from the foundation instead of over the edge.

Stop porch pirates

Ship to a store or parcel locker, require a signature on pricey items, or ask a neighbor to grab boxes while you're away.

Travel prep

Put a few lamps on timers, hold your mail with USPS, set the thermostat to a safe temperature, and give a trusted neighbor your number.

NO PRESSURE, EVER

Let's Connect



BROKERED BY BLAIR REALTY GROUP



Fay Brink

Your Cypress & Northwest Houston REALTOR®
Blair Realty Group

No pressure, no pitch. If you're curious what your home would sell for, weighing a move in 2027, or just want next year's guide in your inbox, I'd love to hear from you.

And if something in this guide changes or I missed your favorite tradition, tell me. I'll add it next year.

CALL OR TEXT	(832) 723-3025
EMAIL	faybrink.realtor@gmail.com
WEBSITE	faybrink.github.io

Scan for next year's guide or a home value

Scan to read client reviews

Scan to visit my website

BLAIR Realty Group

Fay Brink is a licensed Texas REALTOR® with Blair Realty Group. TREC Information About Brokerage Services and Consumer Protection Notice are linked at faybrink.github.io. This guide is for information only and isn't sponsored by any event or business listed.