

## Chicago's once-a-year special holiday products

Isa-Lee Wolf, Yahoo Contributor Network

While winter's first appearance in Chicago can prove shocking, the warmth of the city in the holiday season - from the lights to the decorations to the goodies - makes up for cold. Here are some of the special Chicago seasonal offerings that are a high point to the low temps.

Perennial Chicago favorite [Goose Island](#) offers seasonal beverages, including [Mild Winter Ale](#), [Bourbon County Stout](#), and its new [King Henry](#) barleywine, as well as its traditional [Christmas Ale](#), but it's not the only drink in town. [Simon's Tavern](#) annually serves toasty glasses of [glogg](#), a Danish Christmas mulled wine served warm.

Meal-planners can count on local [Slagel Family Farm](#), which has honey-glazed spiral-cut hams for the holiday season in addition to meats like prime rib, pork crown roast, and leg of lamb. The quality-focused farm will arrange a drop-off. For a mix of sweet and savory, Chicagoans can sample relative newcomers [Kim & Scott's Gourmet Pretzels](#) with the [Holiday Twist](#) package, which includes soft-baked pretzels in eight flavors like grilled cheese, chocolate crumb, mozzarella pizza, and apple cinnamon. Pretzels are available frozen or as sandwiches at the local couple's [Cafe Twist](#).

Chicago legend [Garrett Popcorn Shops](#) offers a range of [holiday-themed items](#), including its [gingerbread caramelcrisp](#) flavor. Also available are holiday-colored popcorn balls, gift tins, and wintry skyline mugs.

When it comes to sweet holiday options in Chicago, though, Garrett is just the tip of the Lake Michigan ice floe. Andersonville's [Swedish Bakery](#) has vort limpa (a bread), cookies, and even Christmas tree coffeecake [available for shipping](#). In addition to holiday cookies, cakes, and pies, [Calumet Bakery](#) has Rosca de Reyes, or Three Kings Bread for Three Kings Day, the twelfth day of Christmas. Evanston's [Bennison's Bakery](#) offers gingerbread houses ([watch them](#) being made), colored macarons, and even croquenbouche, a delicate tower of cream puffs, among its [seasonal goods](#). [Rolf's Patisserie](#) has ginger and marzipan cakes, trees of chocolate strawberries, and holiday petit fours. Chicago's hometown cheesecake baker, [Eli's](#), offers its special [Holiday Sampler](#) including pumpkin, white chocolate peppermint and chocolate caramel pecan cheesecakes.

Handcrafted chocolates also abound in Chicagoland during the season. Evanston's [Belgian Chocolatier Piron](#) offers special [holiday-themed boxes](#) for chocolates made of chocolate, including a white-chocolate wooden shoe. Sea + Cane Sweets has a holiday ["meat" and "cheese"](#) gift set, consisting of chocolate truffles resembling salami and a wheel of cheese, along with butter cookie "crackers."

Of course, food and drinks are not the only handmade items available in Chicago. [Christkindlmarket](#), the annual event in Daley Plaza, boasts ornaments, gifts, and, well, yes, food. Shoppers looking for the one-of-a-kind can check out the [Illinois Artisans Chicago Holiday Art Spree](#), the Columbia College [ShopColumbia Holiday Market](#), or get a \$20 portrait painted at the [Project Onward Holiday Sale and Portrait Slam](#).

### Product and location information

Goose Island [Beer Finder](#) and [contact information](#).

Simon's Tavern, 5210 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL. 773-878-0894.

Slagel Family Farm, 23601 E. 600 North Road, Fairbury, IL. 815-848-9385

Kim & Scott's Cafe Twist, 2218 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL. 773-281-3634.

Garret Popcorn Shops [Store Locator](#).

Swedish Bakery, 5348 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL. 773-561-3461.

Calumet Bakery (three locations), 2510 E. 106th St., Chicago, IL. 773-721-3747.

Bennison's Bakery, 1000 Davis St., Evanston, IL. 847-328-9434.

Rolf's Patisserie, 4343 W. Touhy Ave., Lincolnwood, IL. 847-982-9400.

Eli's Cheesecakes, [shop online](#) and [retail outlet locator](#).

Belgian Chocolatier Piron, 509 Main St., #A, Evanston, IL. 847-864-5504

Sea + Cane Sweets [contact form](#).

Chriskindlmarket, 50 W. Washington St., Daley Center, Chicago, IL. 312-494-2175

Illinois Artisans Chicago Holiday Art Spree, Dec. 14-16, 2011, James R. Thompson Center Atrium, 100 W. Randolph St., Chicago, IL.

ShopColumbia Holiday Market, Dec. 9-10, 2011, 623 S. Wabash, Chicago, IL.

Project Onward Holiday Sale and Portrait Slam, December 9-10, 2011, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., Project Onward Gallery, Chicago, IL.

*Isa-Lee Wolf is a Chicagoan with a passion for all the details, moments, and moods of Chicago that give the city its unique spirit.*