



# 10 things to do in Harlem for the holidays

By [Derrel Johnson](#) | December 24, 2015 10:09 AM EST

What can I say about Harlem that hasn't already been said? The historic home for Black culture is in the midst of a rebirth with new businesses opening rapidly. Here are 10 things to do in Harlem for the holidays.

1. **The Apollo Theater.** No visit to the most influential black metropolis in the world would be complete without a visit to the world famous Apollo Theater. Opened in 1934, the Apollo recently underwent a spectacular renovation inside and out, and still hosts Amateur Night on Wednesdays. Entering the theater where legendary performers like Michael Jackson and James Brown performed is a must. Also, in this era of Instagram and selfie pics, no visit to Harlem would be complete without taking a picture in front of the Apollo Theater. The Apollo has events every night through the end of the year, including a Kwanzaa celebration and a production of "First Noel."
2. **Red Rooster.** This famous Harlem hot spot has seen President Barack Obama, President Bill Clinton, and too many celebrities to name. Stop by for dinner or have a drink at the bar. Many nights of the week, you can catch a DJ spinning a unique blend of sounds. Red Rooster also has a performance space, Ginny's Supper Club, on the lower level.
3. **Jacob Restaurant.** With two locations in Harlem, Jacob Restaurant is the place I frequent most, and I know many who do the same. Jacob serves soul food staples like fried, baked, barbecue and jerked chicken, collard greens, macaroni and cheese, sweet potatoes, string beans, curried goat, crab cakes, cabbage, baked salmon, beef short or pork ribs, different types of rice, corn, oxtails, assorted fruit, dessert including banana pudding, and much more, It is a pay and weigh, so you can sample as little or as much as you want to dine in or take out.
4. **Angel of Harlem.** A lounge that opened earlier this year, Angel of Harlem is an intimate venue that is a great place to grab a drink and network during the week and listen to music with a good looking crowd on the weekends. With DJs spinning every Friday and Saturday, Angel of Harlem is also hosting a New Year's Eve party with free admission and music by DJ Jon Quick from 107.5 WBLS.
5. **The Harlem School of the Arts** is an institution that enriches the lives of young people through training in and exposure to the four art disciplines (Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts and Music). The school presents the Refracted Light: The Artwork of Mario Moore, HSA 2015-16 Visual Artist-in-Residence through January 11. This exhibit marks the official launch of the newly renovated HSA Gathering Space Art Gallery.
6. **The Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art & Storytelling** is a 17,000 square-foot museum space designed by David Adjaye and created by Broadway Housing Communities. Its goal is to provide "children and families with a space to grow and learn about Sugar Hill and the world at large through interactions with accomplished artists and storytellers, access to well-equipped art-making facilities, and firsthand experiences with historically significant and important contemporary works of art." It is open from December 26-30 during the holiday season, reopening January 2.

7. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The Schomburg is one of the leading institutions in the world that focuses exclusively on African-American, African Diaspora, and African culture. The Schomburg currently has three exhibits: The 75th Anniversary of the American Negro Theatre, Black Suburbia: From Levittown to Ferguson, and Unveiling Visions: The Alchemy of the Black Imagination.
8. National Black Theatre. This theatre was founded in 1968 by the late Dr. Barbara Ann Teer and is now run by her daughter Sade Lythcott after Dr. Teer's untimely death. The National Black Theatre won an Audelco Award and hosts a Monday series called Keep Soul Alive which showcases new talent. A season series for the theatre, priced affordably at \$99 and \$149, makes a great last-minute holiday gift as well.
9. Moca Lounge. Open for over a decade, Moca has been a staple in Harlem entertainment and nightlife. With its Caribbean flair, Moca offers affordable appetizers, drinks, and entrees in a comfortable atmosphere. The bar/lounge has live entertainment many nights of the week, including poetry Tuesday and DJs on the weekends, with special holiday events booked.
10. Solomon & Kuff's Rum Lounge. One of the newest venues in Harlem brought to you by Karl Franz Williams (67 Orange Street), the venue has a unique event this Saturday for Boxing Day with a DJ playing dancehall, '90s and Lovers Rock and a New Year's Eve event sponsored by Bacardi and Peroni.