

STAY HOME!

**And we mean don't go anywhere!
Stay inside your house! It's cold out there!**

Compiled by Ashley Petry

This winter, there's no reason to face the body scanners and pay the outrageous baggage fees. Instead of schlepping your stuff to Florida or Cancun, you can organize a relaxing (and economical) staycation right here at home, without the bedbugs or noisy hotel neighbors. Here, we offer more than 60 ideas—from book recommendations to party suggestions—to make staying home this winter the best vacation you'll ever (not) take.





15 STAY! HOME! THINGS TO DO

1 DRESS UP

Throw a **themed cocktail party** that celebrates your favorite TV show. At a “Mad Men” party, wear that vintage dress and whip up grandma’s favorite recipes. Or, try on a waitress outfit, a la Sookie Stackhouse from “True Blood,” and create some creepy recipes of your own.

2 WATCH IT

Get the family together for a cozy **movie night**, complete with gourmet popcorn and old-fashioned sodas. Not sure which movie to choose? Check out our list of Hoosier films on page 57.

3 BRUSH UP

So, you’ve been meaning to paint the spare bedroom? For the past six years? If you’re stuck inside, it’s the perfect time to tackle that **home-improvement project**.

4 SAY CHEESE

Stock up on individual-sized pizzas and your family’s favorite toppings and have a **family pizza night**. It’s a great way to bring the family together for dinner—without the arguments about olives.

UNPLUG

Turn off the power for a few hours: no laptops, no cell phones, no iPods, no television. See what happens when your family gathers around a warm fire and—gasp—actually communicates.



6 GO LOCAL

Have a **picnic in your living room** to celebrate the best Indiana foods, such as goat cheese from Capriole and yogurt from Traders Point Creamery. Don't want to venture out to the farmers market? Delivery services like Green B.E.A.N. Delivery will bring local, organic products right to your door (see page 62).



7 PLANT THE SEED

Show winter who's boss by creating an **indoor garden**. A windowsill or sunny corner offers the perfect spot to grow your own herbs, hot peppers or flowers. It's an easy way to brighten up your cooking—and those gloomy winter days.

8 REACH OUT

Still don't have a Facebook account? Now is the perfect time to **get wired** and reconnect with distant family members and long-lost friends. Or, boost your career by signing up on professional networking sites like LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) and Smaller Indiana (www.smallerindiana.com).



LET IT SNOW!

Who cares what the neighbors think? Get the kids (or just your sweetheart) together for an **old-fashioned snow day**: make snow angels, build a snowman and have an epic snowball fight. Afterward, warm up together with hot chocolate and a roaring fire.





10 ROLL THE DICE

Organize a **family game night**, where you can play the latest board games or (with a larger investment) have an air-hockey or billiards tournament. For the best local game suppliers, see our list on page 59.

11 TOSS IT

Do you really need all this stuff? Your staycation is the perfect time to **clean out** and organize your storage areas and donate unwanted items to people who will actually use them. Nonprofit organizations like AMVETS will even pick up your donation (see page 62).

12 TURN THE PAGE

Reconnect with friends and neighbors by forming a **book club**. It's an easy way to transport yourself to a different world (and catch up on the neighborhood gossip). See our book list on page 58 to find a great read with ties to central Indiana.

13 CHAT IT UP

Start a conversation with your family about their best and worst memories, their likes and dislikes, and their hopes and dreams. Question cards, such as Table Topics—Family (www.tabletopics.com/family), will open the door to memorable and meaningful discussions.

14 ADD SPICE

On a chilly night, get the neighbors together for a **chili cook-off** and enjoy the good-natured arguments about noodles and spice levels.



15 GET CRAFTY

Now's the time to **create that scrapbook** or family recipe book, finish the quilt you started 10 years ago, practice your painting skills or learn to crochet.

STAY HOME! A DIRECTOR'S DOZEN: MOVIES WITH INDIANA CONNECTIONS



“The Magnificent Ambersons” (1942), based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Hoosier author Booth Tarkington, is set in a fictionalized Indianapolis and stars several Indiana actors. It was nominated for four Oscars, including best picture and best actress in a supporting role.

“Hoosier Holiday” (1943), about farmers trying to enlist during World War II, stars comedic musicians Ken and Paul Trietsch. The brothers were born near Arcadia and were members of a popular band called Hoosier Hot Shots.

“To Please a Lady” (1950), starring Clark Gable, Barbara Stanwyck and Indiana native Will Geer, was filmed at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

“Rebel Without a Cause” (1955) established the iconic image of a brooding James Dean, a Fairmount native who died in a car accident the year the film was released.

“Breaking Away” (1979) tells the story of the Cutters, a “townie” team in Bloomington hoping to win Indiana University’s historic Little 500 bicycle race.

“A Christmas Story” (1983) is a holiday classic that recounts Jean Shepherd’s wacky memories of growing up in Hammond.

“Hoosiers” (1986), starring Gene Hackman and Dennis Hopper, is about a small-town high school basketball team trying to win the state championship.

“A Girl of the Limberlost” (1990), based on the novel by Hoosier author Gene Stratton-Porter, is about a girl in rural Indiana who struggles to overcome poverty and get an education.

“Rudy” (1993) is the true story of a small-town kid determined to play football for the University of Notre Dame.

“Blue Chips” (1994) features a struggling college basketball team, whose big moment comes in a game against IU. The movie was filmed in Frankfort, and Hoosier legends Bob Knight and Larry Bird make cameo appearances.

“Going All the Way” (1997) is a 1950s coming-of-age story set and filmed in Indianapolis (and definitely not suitable for the kiddos). The screenplay and book of the same name were written by Hoosier author Dan Wakefield.

“Kinsey” (2004) is a biopic of IU researcher Alfred Kinsey, played by Liam Neeson, who founded the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction.

The Hoosier state has many ties to Hollywood—from celebrated local actors to films about storied Indiana traditions. Here are a dozen to try.



READ WHAT *you* KNOW:

10 BOOKS WITH INDIANA CONNECTIONS

This winter, curl up with a good read about the Hoosier state. Our list includes 10 of the best fiction and nonfiction tales of life in Indiana. Looking for more? Visit the Indiana Room at the Hamilton East Public Library, where assistant Nancy Massey collects books with local ties.

*Books courtesy of Mudsock Books & Curiosity Shoppe
Photo by Joel Philippsen*



FOR THE HISTORIAN: Read local anecdotes by Noblesville native Lois Kaiser Costomiris, including “Windmills, Washboards and Whippersnappers,” “Rail Fences, Rolling Pins and Rainbows” and “Cops, Clotheslines and Cookie Snatchers.”

FOR THE AVID READER: Try a novel by Indianapolis native Booth Tarkington, such as “The Magnificent Ambersons” or “Alice Adams” (both winners of the Pulitzer Prize for fiction). Bonus option: Anything by Terre Haute native Theodore Dreiser, such as “Sister Carrie” or “An American Tragedy.”

FOR THE EXPLORER: Learn more about the founder of Fishers’ Conner Prairie in “Sons of the Wilderness: John and William Conner” by Charles N. Thompson.

FOR THE POET: Pick up “The Complete Poetical Works of James Whitcomb Riley,” a Greenfield native who introduced the world to Little Orphant Annie and the “gobbleuns ’at gits you ef you don’t watch out.”

FOR THE DAYDREAMER: Pick up “The Princess Diaries,” by Bloomington native Meg Cabot, who has written more than 50 novels (some set in Indiana).

FOR THE WANNABE SHERLOCK: Read a crime novel by Noblesville native Rex Stout. His series about fictional detective Nero Wolfe, starting with “Fer-de-Lance” in 1934, has been honored as the best mystery series of the 20th century.

FOR THE RELUCTANT HOOSIER: Read “God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater,” by Hoosier Kurt Vonnegut. It’s set in fictional Rosewater County, where the family patriarch is “a humorless, constipated Christian farm boy” who marries “the ugliest woman in Indiana.”

FOR THE THRILL SEEKER: Read “Running Out of Time” by Midwestern author Margaret Haddix. The book is set in 1840, in the frontier village of Clifton. Or is it? (Hint: It’s based on Conner Prairie.)

FOR THE GOURMET: Look for “Home Grown Indiana,” by Christine Barbour and Scott Hutcheson. The guide to local foods mentions Hamilton County favorites like Homestead Growers, Stuckey Farm and Joe’s Butcher Shop.

FOR THE ARMCHAIR TOURIST: Explore the Hoosier state from your living room with “Oddball Indiana: A Guide to Some Really Strange Places” by Jerome Pohlen. Sights mentioned in the book include a giant sneaker in New Castle and the birthplace of cultist Jim Jones.

5 STAY! HOME!

SOURCES *for* ENTERTAINMENT

Whether you need a \$5 board game or a \$15,000 billiards table, the northside offers plenty of options for family fun. Here are five of our favorites.

- 1 For classic coin-operated games, make the drive to **Wagner Gameworks** in Greenfield, where “Doc Pinball” Mark Wagner sells and repairs pinball machines, arcade games and other vintage machines. Your inner child will soon have its heart set on a crane machine. Or maybe an old-fashioned jukebox. Or maybe that Dolly Parton pinball machine. 285 W. 200 N., Greenfield, (317) 326-3533, www.docpinball.com
- 2 For game-room furniture from 10 of the nation’s swankiest manufacturers, head to **John Kirk Furniture**. Top sellers include custom pool tables, ranging in price from \$2,000 to \$15,000, for which everything from inlays to felt quality can be tailored to your whims. (Some even convert to ping-pong tables.) The store also carries air-hockey tables, card tables, arcade games and shuffleboard tables—a nice option for a game room with limited space. 12345 Old Meridian St., Carmel, (317) 846-2535, www.kirkfurniture.com
- 3 In central Indiana, the big name in game-room supplies is **Family Leisure** (formerly Watson’s), where you’ll find a huge selection of pool and game tables starting around \$1,200. You can also choose from arcade games; air hockey, foosball and shuffleboard tables; bars and bar stools; home-theater seating—and just about everything else you need to transform your game room into the most popular hangout in town. 11811 Pendleton Pike, Indianapolis, (317) 823-4448, www.familyleisure.com
- 4 Make movie night magical with a home-theater system from **Digitech Custom Audio and Video**. Start with the latest video technology, such as a 3D-compatible HD projection system, and add surround sound, a Blu-ray player and a user-friendly control system. “We’re always doing some sort of nice control system that automates the experience,” says Mark Vyain, president and lead designer. Entry-level theater systems start at \$7,000, but the average budget is closer to \$15,000—and much more if you splurge on furnishings and acoustical treatments. 612 Station Drive, Carmel, (317) 580-1922, www.digitechcustom.net
- 5 For the area’s best selection of specialty board games, head to the **Game Preserve**, which recently moved from the Fashion Mall to a new location across the street in Fashion Commons. The Indiana chain’s flagship store also stocks jigsaw puzzles, card games and a large collection of chess sets—all the essentials for a memorable family game night. 8487 Union Chapel Road, Indianapolis, (317) 257-9110, www.gamepreserve.com



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STAY HOME!

ROMANTIC MUST-HAVES

Planning a Valentine's Day staycation weekend? Make sleepover plans for the kids, dim the lights and pick up these five romantic essentials.

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A lacy Blush Lingerie camisole or bra and panty set, available at the Pillow Talk boutique in Carmel's Arts and Design District. 23 E. Main St., (317) 574-8990, www.pillowtalkboutique.com.

A luxurious body cream or roll-on essential oil from Indianapolis-based Ambre Essence, in scents like Invoke and Solace. (Check www.ambreblends.com for a list of more than a dozen Hamilton County retailers.)

Soy candles—like Tangerine Spice or Sweet Lavender—from Herbal Art, one of several Hamilton County artisans included in the Indiana Artisan program. 11650 N. Lantern Road, Suite 205, Fishers, (317) 418-8227, www.herbalartonline.com.

A gift certificate to a couples' cooking class at Kiss Z Cook—the perfect way to spice up an evening. 890 E. 116th St., Carmel, (317) 815-0681, www.kisszcook.com.



Decadent chocolate turtle candies from Uncle Henry's Candies (also an Indiana Artisan), made in Cicero and available online at www.unclehenryscandies.com.



Photo courtesy of Herbal Art



What's the best way to keep hands and feet presentable during the winter?

The best thing I hear the pedicurists and manicurists tell their clients is that every night they should rub a cuticle oil around their cuticles and apply some type of heel cream—or wherever the dryness is. Do it right before you get in bed. Wrap your feet in some cellophane and then put socks on.



What scents do you recommend for candles and essential oils?

You need to be careful with florals because they can get very heavy and almost sickening, but you can't go wrong with lavender or citrus, like orange or lemon. It's hard to OD on those.

What's the best time of day for a spa treatment?

Whenever you are not going to be rushed. It's not always nighttime ... it needs to be a time that you know you'll have the fewest interruptions.

Q&A: THE STAY HOME! SPA EXPERIENCE

The best hotels are known for their luxurious spas. Even if you schedule a staycation, however, you can still create a relaxing spa experience at home. We asked David Miller, co-owner of Carmel's David and Mary spa and salon, to share a few spa secrets—including the wonders of plastic wrap.



What's the ideal atmosphere for a home spa?

Try to do it so there aren't any distractions. You need to get as far away from the regular and make the environment look different, feel different, sound different. ... In the bathroom, run the shower and open the door, so there's more moisture in the air.

How can you enhance the experience of a store-bought product like a facial mask?

Wash your face, apply the mask in a fairly thick layer and then get regular cellophane. Apply it from the tip of the nose up to the hairline, and another strip around the jawbone. You just mold that to your face, and you'll immediately feel the entrapment of warmth, because it traps your own body heat.

You can also heat moist towels in the microwave for maybe 30 seconds—as warm as you can handle without burning the face. Just drape that starting at the chin, bring it up over the jawbone and wrap it around your head. Just lie back and leave that on until it cools.



STAY HOME! SERVICES *for* HERMITS

Don't want to leave the house—or lift a finger while you're there? With these local delivery and in-home services, you can have everything from dry cleaning to dried beans delivered straight to your front door, just as you could in a five-star hotel.

Delivery Services: Food and Drink

Can't make it to winter's far-flung farmers markets? **Green B.E.A.N. Delivery** (formerly Farm Fresh Delivery) offers weekly deliveries of local, organic produce and grocery items, including many foods from Hamilton County farmers and producers. We love the pasta sauces from Local Folks Foods and mushrooms from Homestead Growers—both based in Sheridan. You might never visit a grocery store again. To sign up, visit www.greenbeandelivery.com or call (317) 377-0470.

The **Vin Explorer wine club** at Carmel's Vine and Table offers monthly deliveries of wines selected by a personal wine guide—one red wine and one white wine per month. At just \$99 plus shipping, a three-month membership will get you through the winter. To sign up, visit www.vineandtable.com or call (317) 817-9473.

For sweet treats, call **Holy Cow Cupcakes**, which delivers to homes in Hamilton County for a mere \$5 fee (with a minimum order of one dozen

cupcakes). Try the Ryan, a red-velvet cake topped with vanilla cream-cheese frosting, or February's flavor of the month, the Turtle, a vanilla cake filled with caramel sauce and topped with chocolate ganache, caramel and chopped pecans. For more information, visit www.hollycowcupcakes.com or call (317) 571-1500.

Other Delivery Services

Still haven't dropped off your holiday dresses for dry cleaning? Sign up with **Classic Cleaners**, which offers free dry-cleaning pick-up and delivery services twice a week. The company also offers "fluff and fold" laundry service that includes ironing as needed. Just plop the dirty laundry on the front porch in the company's bags, and it shows up clean and fresh a few days later. For more information, visit www.classiccleaners.net or call (317) 577-5752.

Get a head-start on spring cleaning with the **AMVETS Household Discard Program**. The organization will pick up clothing, toys, electronics and household goods—anything one person

can carry without assistance (no large appliances or heavy furniture). Donations, which are sold at Indianapolis-area Value World locations, support a range of programs for veterans and their families. To schedule a pick-up, call (317) 353-8140 or visit <http://indianapolis.donatestuff.com>.

In-Home Services

One downside of a staycation: no hotel maid service. Remedy that problem with **MaidPro Carmel**, which uses a 49-point cleaning checklist and the cleaning supplies of your choice. "If you have a busy lifestyle, this is not how you want to spend your time," says owner Amy Leibovitz. Depending on the size of your home, expect to spend \$129 to \$225 for a one-time deep cleaning or \$65 to \$156 for weekly service. Get a free quote at www.maidprocarmel.com or (317) 614-0630.

Every great hotel has a great concierge, and you can have one at home, too. Lindsay Tallant, owner of Fishers-based **Peace of Mind**, offers personal assistant and concierge services for about \$17 an hour. She'll do your shopping, walk your dog, take your car for an oil change or even drop off that diorama your kid forgot to bring to school. Contact her at www.peaceofmindfishers.com or (765) 639-4147.

Want a gourmet meal without lifting a finger? Try **Brad Gates Catering**, whose focus is "seasonal and regional" cuisine. Gates, who lives in Carmel, has worked with Indianapolis restaurants

such as Euphoria, Ball and Biscuit, and the former Puck's at the Indianapolis Museum of Art—plus big-name restaurants in New York, Atlanta and Martha's Vineyard. Costs range from \$15 per person for a simple cookout to \$70 per person for an elaborate plated meal. Gates can also provide appetizers and cheese platters from Ball and Biscuit's wide selection. For more information, visit www.bradgatescatering.com or call (317) 292-4259.

If you're looking for something more low key, try Carmel-based **Kitchen Express**. Classically trained chef Jennifer Cheezum will prepare two weeks' worth of meals in your kitchen, storing them in the fridge and freezer to heat up later. A standard package—four servings each of five entrees and five dishes—can easily be tailored to meet your nutritional goals and dietary restrictions. Contact Cheezum at (317) 417-4915 or www.kitchenexpresspcs.com.

Can't get to the gym? Work off those catering calories with an in-home personal trainer. Bob Fields, owner of **Precision Health and Wellness**, offers personal training, nutritional counseling and physical fitness assessments, backed by more than 30 years of experience at gyms and hospital weight-loss centers. He'll adapt the routine to the fitness equipment you already own, make you a shopping list or provide his own equipment, as needed. An in-home session costs \$85 to \$100 per hour, depending on your location, but package discounts are available. Contact Fields at www.precisionhealthandwellness.com or (317) 502-7570. ○