



# RICHMOND HOLIDAY GUIDE

CINDY BENNETT  
REAL ESTATE



## Happy Holidays!

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*It's the holiday season! The wine is mulling, the mistletoe is hung, and Mariah Carey has taken over the airways! While the elves have been working in Santa's workshop, I've been putting together this guide so you can turn RVA into your own winter wonderland.*

*Inside you'll find a holiday gift guide, the best spots and events in the Richmond Area, a winter "must do" list, and much more!  
Take the (polar) plunge...let's dive in!*

*Cindy*

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# Gift GUIDE



*All I want for Christmas is... clarity. There are so many wishlists; so many people to shop for. Luckily, I've curated the ultimate RVA gift guide so you know exactly what to get everyone.*

*I am focusing all of my lists on local shops and local makers. No supply chain issues is great, but supporting those local businesses? Priceless. (Oh, and it's VERY unlikely your gift will be duplicated.)*

# Gift GUIDE for the...

## FASHION LOVER

Silver and Gold  
Barcelona Hoops  
from ObscurO  
Jewelry



Artemis Tote  
from  
Awl Snap



Great Shoes  
and  
Clothes from  
Scout and Molly's

## BEAUTY OBSESSED

Nontoxic  
(and fantastic)  
Hair and Skin  
Products  
from  
Bright Body



Shampoo Bars  
from  
Bon Air Soap Company  
This one? "Hippie Girl"



Obsidian Gua Sha Tool  
and  
Facial Oil from  
Apothec

Locally made,  
USA sourced  
denim from  
Shockoe Atelier



Embossed  
bifold  
wallet from  
Blackbyrd Goods



Gift card  
for a custom  
shirt from  
Ledbury

## MAN WHO HAS IT ALL

Macaron Club  
Membership  
from  
Whisk RVA



Gift Box  
from  
Gearhart's Chocolates



Put together a  
gift basket from  
Bombolini Pasta

## FOODIE

# Gift GUIDE for the...

## HOST OR HOSTESS



Put together a little cocktail kit with some Virago Spirits micro batch Gin or Rum



Every party loves a cheese and charcuterie board! Order one from Truckle Cheesemongers and be the party hero.

You can't go wrong with some Gingerbread Stout or Christmas Morning beer from Hardywood.

## FURRY FRIENDS

Check out Dog Krazy for toys, treats, and goodies!



If your pet loves luxury,,, Fido Park Avenue has something to fit their taste! Maxwell approves!



Pop in to For the Love of Pete for some treats or toys



Bubble Rompers from Wren's Closet (in so many patterns!)



It's not Christmas until I go to World of Mirth. Unique, interesting toys for kids of all ages.



Paint By Numbers Kits from Wehgo

## KIDDOS



One of the gift sets (or design your own!) from Lewis Cattle Co. Sustainable, quality, and local beef



Stunning fine jewelry (Like this rose gold leafy diamond ring) from Cransfield Jewelers

Bourbon Barrel Oyster Knife from Join or Die Knives (Add some Rappahannock Oysters for a perfect gift.)



## LUXURY LOVER

# RICHMOND *Spots*

## Woods Tree Farm

There are lots of places to get a tree around town at the holidays, but few more charming than Woods Tree Farm. You can't cut your own (yet!) but you can gather around the fire, have some cocoa, and get a gorgeous tree.

***Tips for your real tree:*** Make a fresh cut, and get it right in water. Check and water frequently throughout the season.



## Wreath Making

One way to really get into the spirit of the holidays and personalize your holiday decor is to spend the afternoon making wreaths (maybe with a few friends, and some adult beverages) Click [HERE](#) for a list of these events with RSVP/ticket info and locations.

## GIVING BACK

There are so many ways to give back during the holidays (and all year long) but at the holidays, kids are always top of mind. This year, I'll be adopting angels from the Salvation Army Angel Tree, as I always do, as well as donating to RVA Community Fridges. Food insecurity is year round, but this year maybe a bit more than normal.



# HOLIDAY *Highlights*

*Looking for some fun this holiday season? Me too! Here are some events happening in the Richmond Area that are on my radar.*

**Nov. 25th & 26th**

## Over the River Makers Mart

One of my favorite markets for unique, artisan shopping, OTR Makers Mart is held the two days after Thanksgiving in the parking lot of Perk! Bon Air, at Buford Rd and Forest Hill Avenue. Click [HERE](#) for a preview of all the fantastic vendors!

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**Nov. 21 - Jan. 8th**

## GardenFest of Lights At Lewis Ginter

[The GardenFest of Lights](#) returns with the theme of Seeds and Light. This theme represents how a twinkle of light can transform the darkness and seeds do the same, providing the spark of life to the natural world. Check out this beautiful display for a wonderful experience.

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**December 2nd**

## RVA Illuminates

I can't think of a better way to kick start the holiday season than to see the grand illumination of downtown Richmond. Can you? Head down to Kanawha Plaza for the annual [RVA Illuminates](#). Food trucks, music, and lots of sparkle are in store! (Get there by 5:59!)

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**December 1st - 4th**

## The Bizarre Bazaar

The Bizarre Bazaar is back for its 47th annual Christmas Collection. Stop by to find amazing and unique gifts for everyone in your life! There is something for everyone from gourmet food to handmade jewelry, clothing, toys, books, and so much more. You are sure to find something you love. Get tickets [HERE](#).





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				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# Holiday "MUST DO" LIST

Get a live Christmas tree from [Woods Tree Farm](#) in Amelia Courthouse

☐

Bundle up and go on a winter walk around [Maymont](#)

☐

Build a gingerbread house

☐

Drink a Gingersnap Cookie Milk Latte from [Ironclad Coffee](#)

☐

Go ice skating at [Stony Point Fashion Park](#)

☐

Read your favorite book by the fire

☐

Host a family game night

☐

Make mulled wine using Family Red from [Jolene Family Winery](#)

☐

Buy gifts for a child through [Salvation Army Angel Tree](#)

☐

Look at Christmas lights via my [Holiday Lights Map](#)

☐

Scent your home by simmering oranges, cranberries, and cinnamon sticks

☐

Head to Doswell to drive through the [Illuminate Light Show](#) (rain or shine)

☐

Write down your 2023 New Years resolutions

☐

*Print off this checklist to keep up with all the holiday activities!*

# HOLIDAY TIPS

01

## DECOR

I'll confess, I have an artificial tree. But for wreaths, garlands etc, I love the "real deal." A few of the places I love for these are:

[Tom Leonard's in Short Pump](#)

[The Greenhouse on Patterson](#)

[The Great Big Greenhouse](#)

02

## CHEERS

If you just can't get in the spirit (or if you just can't get enough of it!) get yourself to Miracle on Cary. The holiday season transforms [The Jasper](#) to the most over the top celebration of Christmas you've ever seen. Make a reservation with friends for eggnog or another festive cocktail, and soak up the cheer!

03

## HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

My biggest entertaining trick is to always have something on hand to take to a friend's, or to have an impromptu gathering. You'll always find a couple of jars of olives, cheese, and the ingredients for an easy artichoke dip. (1 can of artichokes, drained and chopped, 1 scant cup mayo, and 1 cup good parmesan. Mix, bake at 350 until bubbly and browned, and serve with pita chips, bread, or crackers.)

04

## HAPPINESS IS BAKERY-MADE

There are so many fantastic bakeries in Richmond and the surrounding area, it's really hard to pick a favorite. So, I won't. It wouldn't be the holidays without sweet treats, and some of the best come from [Shyndigz](#) on Cary, [Lark](#) in Mechanicsville, [Blue Egg Bake Shop](#) in Bon Air, and [Whisk](#) on Staples Mill Road. Whew. [Follow me on social](#) for more!

05

## HOST AND HOSTESS

My hands down favorite gift to have "on hand" is a cheeseboard crafted from reclaimed slate and wood (from Richmond area homes) handmade at and sold by [Governor's Architectural Antiques](#) in Mechanicsville.

# Holiday Events

01

## CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

If you've lived here through Christmas, you know we love our lights! From Kings Dominion, Busch Gardens, and Illuminate, to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden (and more), you can choose a pay-for-entry lights extravaganza, or load the kids in the car and go old school with snacks, cocoa, and a tour of the free lights around town. My faves are [HERE](#)!

02

## TACKY LIGHT TOURS

Take some time out to go see all the amazing and wonderful tacky-light houses around Richmond. Be prepared to be wowed by all the incredibly intricate and creative designs! Some have even been featured on tv! Check out my favorite stops [HERE](#).

03

## DOMINION ENERGY CHRISTMAS PARADE

Join us downtown for the 39th annual Dominion Energy Christmas Parade, Saturday, December 3rd. Get a spot at the Science Museum to see the start of the parade, or find a spot along Broad Street up until the Richmond Coliseum. For more information visit their website [HERE](#).

04

## RICHMOND BOAT PARADE OF LIGHTS

Take in the ultimate Richmond winter experience on the water by coming down to the river on December 10th for the Richmond Boat Parade of Lights. There are plenty of public and private spots to watch from between Rockett's Landing and Osborne Landing. Want to join the parade? Decorate your boat and join the lineup. Go [HERE](#) for more info.

05

## CHRISTMAS MOVIES AT THE BYRD

The Byrd Theater is the perfect place to watch your favorite, classic holiday movies, like A Christmas Story, Home Alone, Elf, and more. Check out their holiday lineup [HERE](#).

# Holiday Events

06

## **LIGHT UP THE TRACKS IN DOWNTOWN ASHLAND**

Lights, lights, and more lights! The Historic District in downtown Ashland will be transformed into a spectacular lights display starting November 19th (don't worry though, you have until January 1st to go see it). Enjoy a night out and celebrate the season. For more information click [HERE](#).

07

## **SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY ARTISAN MARKET**

Join Hardywood Park Craft Brewery for their 2nd annual "Small Business Saturday" artisan market. Check out some amazing local artisans and makers selling their handmade items. Not to mention great food provided by local food trucks! Click [HERE](#) for more info.

08

## **HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR - RVA FAN DISTRICT**

If you are an HGTV devotee, a historic home aficionado, or just love holiday decor, join the Fan District Association for their 60th Annual Holiday House Tour this year on December 10th and 11th from 12-5 pm. To learn more about this event and purchase tickets, click [HERE](#).

09

## **RICHMOND BALLET'S THE NUTCRACKER**

Enjoy a night out in downtown Richmond and support the Richmond Ballet by going to see The Nutcracker at the Dominion Energy Center. This year's performance will feature brand-new scenery, costumes, and choreography for you to enjoy. Click [HERE](#) for tickets and more information.

10

## **ILLUMINATE LIGHT SHOW AND SANTA'S VILLAGE**

Go see Virginia's largest drive-thru synchronized Christmas Light and Music Show at Meadow Event Park. After enjoying the show, head on over to Santa's Village (and even take a picture with Santa until Dec. 23rd). Click [HERE](#) for tickets and more information.

# Holiday Events

11

## **RICHMOND MAKERS MARKET**

Looking for local, handmade gifts? Check out the Holiday Makers Market at Basic City Beer Co. on December 10th. Click [HERE](#) for more info.

12

## **MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS - LIVE AT THE ZOO**

This year is the 20th anniversary of the Miracle of Christmas, a live nativity pageant, at the Metro Richmond Zoo. There will also be live musical performances from local Richmond churches and performing arts groups before and after each performance. For performance dates and more information, click [HERE](#).

13

## **RICHMOND SYMPHONY: *LET IT SNOW***

Celebrate the holiday season this upcoming Thanksgiving weekend by joining the Richmond Symphony at the Dominion Energy Center for a night filled with carols, classics, and other holiday favorites. Get your tickets [HERE](#).

14

## **RVA'S ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING**

Join the Cultural Arts Center for its 24th annual tree lighting. Head on down for a fun-filled, family night out. There will be live music performances, great food, and a bonfire to keep you warm. Santa will also be making a special appearance for the tree lighting! For more information check [HERE](#).

15

## **SANTA PAWS**

For all the dog lovers out there, this one is for you. Take your doggo over to Short Pump Park, on December 10th, to get their pooch portrait taken with Santa (*for free!*). There will also be a vendor fair, family activities, and a food truck for you to enjoy. Click [HERE](#) for more information.





I hope this guide helps you enjoy this holiday season a bit more! The Richmond area is a great place to live all year long, which is why as your local real estate agent, I love helping people get more plugged in to the community.

Some of my favorite RVA holiday pleasures are the simplest. Riding around and looking at lights at night, sharing food with friends and family, and exploring markets for new makers and goodies to discover. I am definitely more than "just" a real estate agent. I'm a big fan of all things holiday and RVA, and I hope this guide makes you love them a little more, too.

*Cindy*

# Holiday RECIPE

*Dinner parties, family gatherings, and extra time at home. All great reasons for you to try my favorite Christmas recipe.*

## What You Need:

- 6 cups water
- 1 cups uncooked quick cooking grits (not instant)
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (divided)
- 1/4 cup butter, cut into pieces (divided)
- 1 pound ground pork or turkey breakfast sausage
- 6 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- salt and pepper to taste



## Sausage Grits Souffle

## How To Make:

01. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a large baking dish.
02. Cook sausage in a skillet over medium-high heat until browned and crumbly, 5 to 7 minutes. Drain.
03. Cook grits according to package directions. Mix in 1 1/2 cup cheddar cheese and butter. Stir until melted. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
04. Beat eggs and stir together with milk. Slowly stir in the egg mixture, then add the sausage.
05. Transfer to lightly greased 9"x13" pan. (Can be refrigerated up to 2 days at this point.) Bake preheated oven for 1 hour until puffed/set/golden. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and bake 2 min. more.