

4 Unexpected Places to Celebrate the Holidays in Style

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© (Getty Images). Winter day in old Quebec

If you want to steer away from cookie-cutter holiday festivities and family customs this year, take the kids on a nontraditional holiday vacation. Whether you stay close to home or venture to a far-off locale, prefer an active vacation or want to relax, these four understated getaways will make the season merry and bright. So, consider skipping typical traditions and heading to these untapped holiday spots.

Quebec City

For a holiday with a European feel – without a flight across the pond – celebrate Christmas in Quebec City. Draped in a blanket of snow and decorated with sparkling lights and greenery, Old Quebec is one of the most picturesque and festive places to be in winter. Bundle up and visit the European-style Christmas markets, with their inviting aromas of gingerbread, mulled wine and bratwurst. Shop for handcrafted items made in Quebec and explore the cuisines of Germany and the Alsatian region in France with traditional foods such as Nuremberg gingerbread and German Christmas cake and dessert beverages like Café Liégeois (sweetened coffee with ice cream and Chantilly cream).

Wander the winter wonderland of Place-Royale to the end of Rue du Petit-Champlain and stroll through Place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville to see the stunning light display with historic Notre-Dame-de-Québec Basilica on one side and City Hall at the opposite end. Take a walking tour to learn about Quebec's Christmas traditions with a guide in period costume. Zip down (at 70 mph) the Toboggan Slide Au 1884 on Dufferin Terrace, which is more than a century old and is situated next to the iconic Château Frontenac. Meet Santa Claus at the Quartier Petit-Champlain and ice skate outdoors at Place D'Youville.

Retire in the evening to one of the most photographed buildings in the world, [Fairmont Le Château Frontenac](#). Views from high atop the hotel are stunning. If you prefer an intimate luxury property, reserve accommodations at [Auberge Saint-Antoine](#) in the Old Port district.