

# The New York Times: “On Christmas Day, New Yorkers Follow Their Own Traditions” [C2]

La città multiculturale di New York ha sviluppato una serie di usanze natalizie secolari che sono diventate parte della tradizione, come il noto albero del Rockefeller Center e i Babbo Natale dei centri commerciali.



On Christmas Day, a Brooklyn street was bustling. Couples carrying grocery bags ran into friends on street corners, double-parked cars lined the avenue, and one man complained that he'd been circling the block for half an hour, looking for a parking spot. But there were no Christmas carols, no spruce trees lining the sidewalk outside delis and nary a twinkling light in sight. In Borough Park, home to one of the largest communities of Orthodox Jews outside of Israel, it was not Christmas. It was just Tuesday. In most of New York City, tourists and locals did what they usually do to celebrate: They attended Christmas Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral or spent the afternoon in pajamas watching A Christmas Story. (Or Die Hard. Please argue among yourselves.) But there were also other rituals to be followed: Thousands of oft-disappointed but resolute New York Knicks fans steeled themselves for the team's almost-annual Christmas Day game, this year against the Milwaukee Bucks. Some families flocked to homeless shelters and

[soup kitchens](#), including local politicians, who [donned](#) plastic [aprons](#) and [spooned out](#) yellow rice and [collard greens](#) at a must-stop event in Harlem. And of course, Chinese restaurants in every corner of the city were preparing for one of their busiest days of the year, when people [stand in line](#) for hours in the cold for soup dumplings and Peking duck after a trip to the movies. There were no lines at China Glatt, Borough Park's main Chinese restaurant. Around noon, [orders](#) started to [roll in](#) for chicken and broccoli with brown rice. It was a perfectly [unremarkable](#) lunch service. A man came out of the kitchen, [sipping egg drop soup](#). Efraim P., who declined to give his last name because he did not have his boss's permission, is a mashgiach, or an inspector of food in kosher restaurants. He had just finished his morning routine of [picking over](#) the restaurant's new deliveries of potatoes, carrots and frozen french fries. "We appreciate the American holiday, we acknowledge that it's there, but for us life goes on," he said. There is meaning to be found in the mundanity of Christmas in Borough Park, said David Greenfield, a former [city councilman](#) who now runs the Met Council, a Jewish charity. "It's intentionally a regular day so that people don't get the [misimpression](#) that these American Jews are in fact celebrating a Christian holiday," Greenfield said. Depending on when you got your food, Mayor Bill de Blasio might have served you [sweet potatoes](#). If you came a bit later in the afternoon, [Representative](#) Adriano Espaillat probably served you egg salad. Either way, chances were that Councilman Andy King of the Bronx served you [collard greens](#). For hundreds of needy New Yorkers, their Christmas Day meal was served by a rotating cast of a dozen or so politicians. National Action Network, founded by the Reverend Al Sharpton, has hosted a Christmas Day event for twenty-two years, and over time, it has become the [go-to spot](#) for politicians looking to serve the community and get some positive [face time](#) with the media. Other politicians were later introduced before they [donned](#) their [aprons](#) and gloves to serve food. For Sharpton, their presence only reaffirmed the success of the event. "Politicians go where people are," he said. Published in The New York Times on December 25, 2018. Reprinted with permission.

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# Glossary

- **twinkling** = luccicare
- **Mass** = messa
- **soup kitchens** = mense comunitarie
- **donned** = indossare
- **aprons** = grembiuli
- **collard greens** = cavolo riccio
- **Representative** = senatore
- **roll in** = arrivare
- **egg drop soup** = zuppa con le uova
- **misimpression** = impressione sbagliata
- **delis** = gastronomie
- **nary** = nemmeno uno
- **sipping** = sorseggiare
- **city councilman** = consigliere comunale
- **go-to spot** = il posto dove andare
- **was bustling** = essere affollato
- **carols** = canti natalizi
- **spruce trees** = abeti
- **Die Hard** = "Trappola di cristallo"
- **flocked** = affluire in gran numero
- **unremarkable** = ordinario
- **picking over** = selezionare
- **steeled themselves** = farsi forza
- **stand in line** = fare la fila
- **sweet potatoes** = patata dolce
- **argue** = discutere
- **oft** = spesso
- **spooned out** = servire a cucchiariate
- **orders** = ordinazioni
- **face time** = faccia a faccia