

## HOW TO SPEND CHRISTMAS DAY ALONE

So you're doing Xmas stag this year? Nothing to be ashamed of. Your girlfriend's working a double, your boyfriend flew back to his parent's in Ann Arbor, the couple next door appears to be on some kind of safari, and you wouldn't have gone to your boss' house for potluck even if he'd invited. But fear not. Although almost everything is closed, there's no reason to hunker down with your Chet Baker records and a *Celebrity Rehab* marathon, because the AV Club has planned a day for you. Just for you.

**5:20am**-walk to **The Mix** (4086 18<sup>th</sup> St@Castro, 431-8616) and be the first in line when it opens at six sharp. The Mix has free pool and usually shirtless (male) bartenders. Order a mimosa and tip recklessly until they agree to turn to the Yule log channel.

**7am**-Hop on the 37-Corbett (Castro@Market) and head up to **Twin Peaks**, where you can see the entire city, row after row of cozy Victorians filled with people already enjoying themselves. Children sing, chimneys puff celebratory smoke, and satellite dishes gear toward the pre-game show. You can almost taste the yams and gingerbread, the air is so perfect and clear.

**10am**-The **Walgreens** on Mission (2690 Mission@23rd, 285-9100) just opened. Clerks hover in blue smocks, while Kenny G smoothes his way through another pitch-challenged version of *O Tannenbaum*. Load up on sinus medicine and gum.

**Noon**-Grab the 14-Van Ness and head to **Tommy's Joynt** (1105 Geary@Van Ness, 775-4216.) They've been open since 1947. Order an Irish Coffee and marvel at the vast selection of rotisserie options. Tommy's makes sandwiches like nativity Jesus decreed they're supposed to be, which is strictly old-school: two slices bread, towering pile of meat, slather of mustard. Done. We recommend against casually wondering if you can get olive tapanade on that. Order a side of the bison stew instead.

**1:30pm**-Free hard candy isn't the only reason to visit the Tenderloin's nicest **Hertz** (325 Mason Street@O'Farrell, 771-2200.) It's also tiny, windowless, and open. Pretend to consider the Mustang convertible. Casually mention you plan on taking a roadie to Tijuana. Ask again about the cubic footage of The Stang's trunk space then say you have to meet a dude, but you'll be right back.

**2:00pm**-In a squat Stalin-era shopping center that will put you in mind of holiday-hating Bolshevik masses, resides **Hollywood Video** (3150 California@Presidio, 922-3761.) Load up on lonely-centric films like Eric Robert's *Lonely Hearts*, Pia Zadora's *The Lonely Lady*, and the definitive Stacy Keach version of *The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter*. Slip the clerk a five to let you repeatedly watch scene from *Trading Places* where Dan Akroyd eats salmon out of his rayon beard. Before leaving, pause briefly by the cover of *Silent Night, Deadly Night*, which features a plump, red-suited psychotic heading down the chimney with an ax.

**6:00pm**-Finish off your rentals, because **Divas** (1081 Post@Larkin, 474-3482) is finally, mercifully, open. With three floors of transgender dancers, there's plenty of room to get merry. Rumor has it that "Diva's Darlings" may put on a special show. Either way, everyone could use a surrogate father (or mother) figure on Christmas. Choose wisely, and you may find both in the same person.

**7:00pm**-There's nothing like the bizarre holiday camaraderie that comes with watching stand-up in an Asian restaurant, which is why you're jogging over to **Kung Pao Kosher Comedy** (New Asia Restaurant, 772 Pacific@Grant, 925 275-9005) to make your dinner reservation. Each ticket (\$62) includes a 7-course meal. Egg roll spit-takes almost never lose their charm, and neither does your headliner, David Brenner.

**8pm**-Work off some carbs during the annual Christmas dance at **Allegro Ballroom** (5855 Christie Avenue, Emeryville, 510 655-2888.) Samba the night away, or just stand against the far wall alone, the perfect spot to turn down nog-sodden suitors while your neck rests against the cool red tile.

**10:30 pm**-Close out the best Christmas you've ever had at the **500 Club** (500 Guerrero St@17th, 861-2500.) Somewhere in the early nineties the 500 made the transition from old man windbreaker-bar to hipster tattoo joint, which means it's the perfect place not to reminisce about sitting on grandpa's lap, tearing open a deluxe-edition Hungry Hungry Hippos. Plus, the back room has vintage arcade games like Dig Dug and Galaga. With a pocketful of change, you're good for hours of bleeping distraction from the stares of bike messengers arrayed along the far wall.

**12:01am**- Bust through the saloon doors and immediately head home, 'cause it's officially become just another day. Splurge on a cab and settle into the back seat with a sense of pride and accomplishment. It looks like we made it. Together.