

**CONTACT:** Allie Seifert  
(610) 662-6172, [allie@cashmanandassociates.com](mailto:allie@cashmanandassociates.com)  
Eric Cortes  
(908) 883-1042, [eric@visitphilly.com](mailto:eric@visitphilly.com)

**BELOVED TRADITIONS & FESTIVE NEW EXPERIENCES  
ANCHOR THE 2021 HOLIDAY SEASON IN GREATER PHILADELPHIA**  
*New This Year: A Holiday Parade, A New Year's Day Fireworks Show &  
A Major Suburban Light Display*

**PHILADELPHIA, November 15, 2021** – During the holidays, Greater Philadelphia lights up and a festive spirit spills from shops, restaurants, theaters and parks, where halls are decked, trees are trimmed and tables are set to celebrate the season — with time-honored traditions and brand-new festive offerings. New this year: the [Visit Philadelphia Holiday Parade](#), celebrating all of winter's holidays; the [Visit Philadelphia New Year's Day Fireworks Spectacular](#), adding first-ever booms to the New Year; and the walk-through [Tinseltown Holiday Spectacular](#) at The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center.

2021 promises heaps of traditional holiday offerings as well. Every must-do holiday list includes a visit to Macy's for the iconic [Christmas Light Show](#), a seat at the Pennsylvania Ballet's [The Nutcracker](#), the perfect gift purchase from [Christmas Village in Philadelphia](#); a walk through the splendid horticultural display that is [A Longwood Christmas](#); and a prime view of the **Rivers Casino New Year's Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront**.

Here are some highlights of the 2021 winter holidays in the Philadelphia region:

**Parade Fun:**

- [6abc/Dunkin' Thanksgiving Day Celebration](#) – Back on the Parkway after a virtual 2020 celebration, the oldest parade of its kind in the country marks the official start to the holiday season. Parade-goers marvel at floats, bands, dancers, balloons, and, of course, a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. **November 25, 2021.**
- [Visit Philadelphia Holiday Parade](#) – This all-new parade is the city's first to celebrate all of winter's holidays, including Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and the Chinese New Year. The hour-long event features cold-air balloons, marching bands, floats, dancers and more. The parade kicks off at 5 p.m. and runs along Market Street from 2nd Street to City Hall. Prime viewing locations include Primark and Terrace on Tap at the Independence Visitor Center. Plus, reps from Wawa will be handing out free hot chocolate and coffee between 2nd and 3rd Streets. **December 4, 2021.**
- [Mummers Parade](#) – This only-in-Philadelphia New Year's Day tradition dates back to 1901 and includes 10,000 adults and children wearing feathers and sequins while dancing to music and parading along Broad Street from Philadelphia City Hall, site of a judged competition among the Comic, Comic Wench and String Band divisions, to Washington Avenue. The indoor Fancy Brigade Finale at the Pennsylvania Convention Center focuses on Broadway-inspired music-and-dance routines. Tickets for bleacher seating at City Hall and for the Fancy Brigades are available at the Independence Visitor Center. **January 1, 2022.**

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**Light Displays:**

- **LumiNature, Philadelphia Zoo** – After last year’s hiatus, LumiNature returns to transform the zoo into a nighttime winter wonderland for a second year. Occupying the zoo’s entire footprint, the display features over a dozen illuminating and interactive experiences, including a menagerie of 500 colorful flamingos, a 25-foot-tall flamingo holiday tree, over 200 glowing penguins and a 21-foot-tall colored snake. Timed tickets required. **November 18, 2021-January 9, 2022.**
- **Winter in Franklin Square Presented by Citizens** – The Electrical Spectacle Light Show presented by PECO makes this historic square twinkle, with free shows featuring more than 100,000 lights (more than ever!) that dazzle viewers through most of winter. No holiday show would be complete without comfort food, local beers and hot beverages, all available in the Franklin’s Winter View (plus, outdoor fire pits and an indoor heated tent). During the day, visitors can play mini-golf on the Chilly Philly Mini Golf course and take a spin on the Parx Liberty Carousel, featuring a holiday soundtrack. **November 18, 2021-February 27, 2022.**
- **Wild Lights, Elmwood Park Zoo** – Norristown’s zoo adds even more to the millions of LED lights that illuminate its 16 acres over the holidays during Wild Lights. Each night of the festival features live entertainment, animal encounters, holiday music and Santa appearances. **November 19-December 30, 2021.**
- **A Longwood Gardens Christmas, Longwood Gardens** – This year’s display highlights the contrast between fire and ice with a clear blue alpine stream with flocked trees, a waterfall and suspended icicles in the Exhibition Hall, as well as a 22-foot-tall Fraser fir outfitted with flame lanterns and red, gold and amber ornaments in the East Conservatory. Outdoors, expect 500,000 lights glittering in trees, a 200-foot tunnel of light and spectacular fountains and fire pit flames dancing to seasonal music. Timed tickets required. **November 19, 2021-January 9, 2022.**
- **Holiday Light Show, Shady Brook Farm** – This Bucks County farm kicks off its three-million-light **Holiday Light Show** with **Dashin’ Through the ... Lights**, a family-friendly two-miler through the attraction. **November 19, 2021.** The main display opens to the public on **November 20, 2021**, when visitors drive or, if weather permits, ride in wagons past after-dark displays: illuminated tunnels and just about every imaginable Christmas icon rendered in tiny bulbs. Timed tickets required. Guests can also visit with Santa and cozy up around a campfire. **November 19, 2021-January 30, 2022.**
- **Holiday Lights Display, Herr’s Snack Factory** – Responsible for some of the region’s most celebrated snack foods, Herr’s lights up its factory exterior in Nottingham during its annual (and free) light display. Guests drive through the grounds to see the impressive arrangement, which features more than 600,000 lights (90% of which are LED lights). **November 24, 2021-January 2, 2022.**
- **West Chester Griswolds** – The Plummer family of West Chester takes cues from the hilarious Griswold family of the popular National Lampoon movies with this massive annual holiday light display at their home. It features more than 100,000 lights controlled via computer. Bonus: Kids can drop off their letters to Santa here. **November 25, 2021-January 2, 2022.**
- **NEW: Tinseltown Holiday Spectacular Presented by Dietz & Watson, Greater Philadelphia Expo Center** – This brand-new event in Oaks invites guests to walk through a winter wonderland of light sculptures and displays, including illuminated recreations of local landmarks like the Liberty Bell, boasting over a million bulbs. Also on the docket: ice skating on a synthetic rink, photos with Santa, shopping, and seasonal treats and drinks. **November 26, 2021-January 2, 2022.**

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- **American Heritage Credit Union Drive Through Grand Illumination** – During the holiday season, this Bustleton credit union serves as way more than a place to do banking, doubling as a must-see holiday attraction featuring two 40-foot-tall trees and over 400,000 lights. The festivities begin with a kickoff event on November 27, 2021, complete with a fireworks show and a holiday concert featuring the Philadelphia Boys Choir and the Fifes and Drums of the Old Barracks. **November 27, 2021-January 1, 2022.**
- **Miracle on South 13th Street** – A homegrown South Philly tradition with national traction, this festive light display brings neighbors along the 1600 block of South 13th Street together to decorate their homes with holiday lights and over-the-top decorations, which turn on each evening, beginning the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Drivers should know to expect traffic, especially on weekend nights. **November 27, 2021-January 1, 2022.**
- **Smedley Street Christmas Light Spectacular** – The Smedley Street Christmas Light Spectacular has illuminated the 2700 block of Smedley Street for over half a century. From blow-up decorations to trees covered in string lights, this South Philadelphia street does festive right. **November 27, 2021-January 10, 2022**
- **Boathouse Row Lights** – In honor of multicultural holiday celebrations, Philadelphia lights up Boathouse Row with festive colors for Hanukkah, **November 28-December 6, 2021**; Christmas, **December 20-25, 2021**; and Kwanza, **December 26, 2021-January 1, 2022.**
- **A Very Furry Christmas, Sesame Place** – At the Bucks County-based theme park of Sesame Street, kids get to enjoy a park transformed with millions of twinkling lights. Guests can hop aboard the Sesame Place Furry Express for a train ride and tour of The Twiddlebugs' Gingerbread Factory or reserve a time slot for a pic with Santa or Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Sesame Place also celebrates Hanukkah, **November 28 and December 3-5, 2021**, with a Menorah-lighting ceremony, and Kwanzaa, **December 26, 2021-January 1, 2022**, with a Kinara-lighting ceremony. Plus, the Furry & Bright Christmas Drive-Thru enables guests to experience the best of Sesame Place from their cars. **November 20, 2021-January 2, 2022.**
- **Christmas Light Show and Dickens' Village, Macy's** – The Grand Court in the National Historic Landmark Wanamaker Building has hosted its Christmas Light Show since 1956. The department store continues the tradition of twinkling snowflakes, dancing snowmen and more with a 100,000-light show narrated by Julie Andrews and accompanied by the famed Wanamaker Organ. Free performances of the light show take place once daily at 10:30 a.m. from **December 1-24, 2021** and 11:30 a.m. from **December 26-31, 2021**. Before or after the show, visitors can tour the third floor's vintage Dickens' Village, where intricate animated dolls and sets retell *A Christmas Carol*. Visits to Dickens' Village are by advance reservation only. **November 26-December 31, 2021**
- **Parade of Lights, Independence Seaport Museum** – A fleet of local working boats, covered in holiday lights and decorations, parade down the Delaware River for eager spectators. The museum's fourth-floor terrace provides ideal viewing conditions, as well as warm seasonal beverages and snacks. Activities and crafts precede the parade. **December 4, 2021.**

#### **Parks, Gardens & Other Outdoor Celebrations:**

- **Winter at Dilworth Park** – There are lots of ways to enjoy the winter holidays at Dilworth Park, situated on City Hall's west side, and it all begins with the Wintergarden on the Greenfield Lawn, an open-air wonderland of lights, topiaries and rustic décor perfect for photo-ops, **through April 3, 2022**. The Rothman Orthopaedics Ice Rink offers timed, 90-minute skating sessions, **through February 27, 2022**, and the Rothman Orthopedics Cabin, serves up seasonal cocktails and food in a ski chalet-inspired setup, through **February 27, 2022**. And back again will be the Made in

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Philadelphia Holiday Market, selling handmade trinkets, treats and crafts galore created by local makers, **November 20, 2021-January 1, 2022**, as well as **the Deck the Hall Holiday Lights**, where stunning technicolor projections — synchronized to sound effects and played continuously on a nonstop loop — animate the western façade of City Hall, **November 22, 2021-January 1, 2022**. Rounding out the offerings is the **Visit Philadelphia Holiday Tree**, a magnificent 45-foot-tall tree adorning the north side of City Hall. Revelers can see the tree sparkle for the first time this season during a lighting celebration on Thursday, **December 2, 2021**. Of special note: the tree's custom-made steel base, with designs representing signature Philadelphia landmarks, portions of the city's skyline and diverse neighborhoods. **December 2, 2021-January 1, 2022**.

- **Holiday Garden Railway, Morris Arboretum** – The annual holiday railway brings a mini-winter wonderland to the historic Morris Arboretum, with a quarter-mile track where model trains chug along loops, through tunnels and over bridges, past perfect little replicas of beloved Philadelphia landmarks. On select weekend evenings throughout the display's run, guests enjoy the railway amid thousands of twinkling lights during Holiday Garden Railway Nights. Lighted trees and other colored lights make the garden even more magical. Advanced tickets required. **November 26, 2021-January 2, 2022**.
- **Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest** – One of Philly's favorite winter traditions brings the holiday spirit back to the Delaware River waterfront. This winter wonderland offers guests a chance to go skating at the city's largest outdoor rink, take a ride on the Ferris wheel, cozy up at one of the warming cabins and fire-pit stations, and gaze at the twinkling lights and holiday tree — all while overlooking the Delaware River. Plus, there are carnival games and holiday markets on select dates. **November 26, 2021-March 6, 2022**.
- **Christmas Around the Farm, Linvilla Orchards** – At this popular Delaware County attraction, visitors can take wagon rides to cut their own Douglas or Canaan fir and visit with Santa every December weekend, when kids can speak to the Big Man over the socially distanced (and adorably named) Noelziphone. Linvilla's market offers holiday shoppers pies and other baked goods; the Garden Center has pre-cut Christmas trees, poinsettias, mistletoe, Christmas roses and more; and the gift shop sells oodles of festive decorations. In the Barnyard, guests can visit white-tailed deer, calves, goats, horses, ducks, birds and peacocks. **December 1-31, 2021**.

#### Festive Performances:

- **Holiday Performances, Kimmel Cultural Campus** – The venues that comprise the Kimmel Cultural Campus host a slew of holiday performances. A Magical Cirque Christmas features Cirque moves and holiday tunes, **November 20, 2021**. Peanuts characters come to life onstage when Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy and Linus learn the true meaning of Christmas during A Charlie Brown Christmas, **December 4, 2021**. West End and Broadway star Scarlett Strallen and Philadelphia native and Broadway legend Hugh Panaro join the Philly POPS for an all-new Philly POPS Christmas performance, **December 4-18, 2021**. The Philadelphia Orchestra continues its 60-year tradition, playing magnificent renditions of Christmas classics during The Glorious Sound of Christmas, **December 16-21, 2021**. Leslie Odom, Jr. The Christmas Tour, features the Grammy and Tony Award winner — and Philly-bred performer, **December 18, 2021**. Messiah, George Frideric Handel's oratorio, is a holiday staple, performed over two days by The Philadelphia Orchestra, **December 22-23, 2021**.
- **George Balanchine's The Nutcracker, Academy of Music** – The Sugar Plum Fairy, the King of Mice and others leap and twirl across the stage during the Philadelphia Ballet's annual holiday production of George Balanchine's classic holiday story. Audiences of all ages will recognize whimsical melodies in Tchaikovsky's score. **December 10-31, 2021**.

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**Shopping & Then Some:**

- **Deck the District** – At the Fashion District Philadelphia, shoppers can check out designer Matthew Schwam’s magical, 45-foot-tall floating tree featuring 600 mirrored, stainless steel orbs in the center of the complex. Every half hour from 4 p.m. until closing, the tree is the center of a light show featuring the festive sounds of the Philadelphia POPS. **Through January 1, 2022.**
- **Holidays in the Village** – With more than 60 specialty shops perfect for holiday shopping, Peddler’s Village’s charm and festive decorations help ring in the season — as do the attraction’s million twinkling lights, set to cover its buildings and trees beginning on November 19, 2021. The Gingerbread Competition & Display returns with more than 70 creative entries. **November 19, 2021-January 8, 2022.** And families watch Santa parade through the Village during Holly Jolly Weekend. **December 4-5, 2021.**
- **Christmas Village in Philadelphia** – The European wonderland that is Christmas Village in LOVE Park returns for 2021 with glowing Herrnhut stars decorating the tops of the wooden booths of 110 different vendors. On this year’s docket: the return of the Ferris Wheel, along with local and international gifts such as Käthe Wohlfahrt ornaments, accessories, wintry apparel, raclette sandwiches, spiced wine and more seasonal treats. Additional vendors also set up on the north apron of City Hall and in the City Hall courtyard, where a new double-decker Christmas Village Carousel sits. Also new this year: spirit tastings (that’s in addition to wine tastings) and a revamped German food court. **November 25-December 24, 2021.**
- **Holidays on the Hill** – There are lots of ways to enjoy the holidays in Chestnut Hill, and it all starts with Circle of Trees, taking place this year in a new COVID-friendly format, with Santa’s firetruck making stops at several neighborhood locations, the first being Woodmere Art Museum. **November 20, 2021.** Stag and Doe Nights, each Wednesday in December, feature special entertainment, extended store hours, holiday specials and complimentary refreshments at many stores. What’s more, shoppers can catch a glimpse of Santa greeting families along the street and listen to the sounds of a brass quartet. On December 8 and 22, visitors can also enjoy horse-drawn carriage rides. **December 1-22, 2021.**

**Fireworks Fun:**

- **Rivers Casino New Year’s Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront** – Presented by VISIT PHILADELPHIA, the Rivers Casino New Year’s Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront features two major pyrotechnics displays over the Delaware River — one at 6 p.m. and another at midnight. The stunning show is visible from several attractions and waterfront spots, including Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, which offers programming throughout the night. **December 31, 2021.**
- **Mummers Parade** – See Parade Fun section above. **January 1, 2022.**
- **NEW: Visit Philadelphia New Year’s Day Fireworks Spectacular** – A brand-new event this year, the New Year’s Day Fireworks Spectacular adds yet another fireworks display, this time on New Year’s Day. Stay tuned for more details on this brilliant way to cap off another holiday season in Greater Philadelphia. **January 1, 2022.**

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On Greater Philadelphia’s official visitor website and blog, [visitphilly.com](http://visitphilly.com) and [uwishunu.com](http://uwishunu.com), visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the sites effective trip-planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets. 6<sup>th</sup> & Market Streets, (800) 537-7676

*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](http://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).*