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Things To Do in Philadelphia With Kids During The 2023 Holidays

Here's a list of light displays, outdoor fun, festive shows and exciting experiences to make the holidays magical for your little ones

PHILADELPHIA December 7, 2023 – Philadelphia offers tons of family-friendly experiences in the city and throughout the region sure to delight and dazzle. There are holiday light displays from the city to the countryside, memory-making holiday experiences, stunning live performances and lots of outdoor fun.

Ready to explore holiday fun for the kids around Philadelphia for the 2023 holiday season? Read on below for some great ideas on things to do.

Those enjoying all the holiday sights and festivities are encouraged to stay the night with the [Visit Philly Overnight Package](#) and score great perks (like tickets to The Franklin Institute, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and more), free hotel parking (valued up to \$100) and a cozy bed you don't have to make. Want to make a weekend out of it? The [Visit Philly 3-Day Stay](#) package is the gift that keeps on giving: Buy two nights and get your third night for free.

Holiday Experiences

[Santa's North Pole Express Train and Santa's Steam Train Ride on the New Hope & Ivyland Railroad](#)

**Where: New Hope & Ivyland Railroad, 32 W. Bridge Street, New Hope
Through Saturday, December 30, 2023 (select dates)**

Aboard these one-hour seasonal adventures, guests ride the 150-year-old New Hope Railroad's line all the way to the North Pole (well, New Hope to Lahaska and back). Travel holiday-themed railway cars with Santa and Mrs. Claus through the Bucks County landscape while enjoying hot chocolate and fresh-baked cookies as wandering musicians play carols. Whether you choose the vintage diesel locomotive on Santa's North Pole Express Train or the Santa's Steam Train Ride

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behind the antique #40 engine, kids (and adults) are encouraged to don comfy pajamas, and each child receives a sleigh bell from Santa. Advanced tickets required.

[Comcast Holiday Spectacular at the Comcast Center](#)

Where: Comcast Center, 1701 John F. Kennedy Boulevard

November 23, 2023 - January 1, 2024

Any list of Philly holiday traditions would include the annual Comcast Holiday Spectacular, a free 15-minute video show presented on a 25-foot-high and 85-foot-wide, over-8K HD LED wall depicting a magical photo-realistic sleigh ride over the city and a performance of the Philadelphia Ballet's The Nutcracker with a holiday sing-along. The 28 million 2.6-mm pixel presentation is open to the public inside the Comcast Center's seven-story lobby every hour on the hour daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (including sensory-friendly shows at 2:30 p.m.).

[Teddy Bear Tea at the Mary Cassatt Tea Room at The Rittenhouse Hotel](#)

Where: The Rittenhouse Hotel, 210 W. Rittenhouse Square

December 21-31, 2023 (select dates)

Throughout the year, the acclaimed Mary Cassatt Tea Room inside the gorgeous Rittenhouse Hotel hosts elegant afternoon tea service with all the accouterments. But each holiday season, the tea room offers the special Teddy Bear Tea experience for the whole family. The service features a special menu with hot chocolate, mini-cupcakes and classic sandwiches for kids (and their stuffies). Grownups can enjoy the traditional offerings of beautifully prepared leaf teas, scones, savory sandwiches, petit desserts and complimentary sparkling wine. Reservations required.

Holiday Light Shows

[Wild Lights at Elmwood Park Zoo](#)

Where: Elmwood Park Zoo, 1661 Harding Boulevard, Norristown

Through Saturday, December 30, 2023 (select dates)

Norristown's Elmwood Park Zoo shines — quite literally — during the holiday season, with millions of LED lights illuminating the Montco attraction's 16 acres during the annual Wild Lights holiday display. The walk-through experience at Elmwood (which celebrates its centennial in 2024) features brilliant light and tree displays, live holiday music, animal meet-and-greets, costumed characters, carousel rides and photo ops with Santa. The fun begins after regular zoo hours (on select nights) with separate tickets required.

[Macy's Christmas Light Show and Dickens Village](#)

November 24 - December 31, 2023

Where: Macy's, 1300 Market Street

The Grand Court in the National Historic Landmark Wanamaker Building has hosted the iconic Christmas Light Show for eight decades. The quintessential Philadelphia holiday tradition (as

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Macy's since 2006) features thousands of twinkling lights shaped as snowflakes, candy canes and dancing snowmen. Free shows run daily at designated times:

- Mondays through Saturdays: 10:30 a.m., noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m. & 6 p.m.
- Sundays: noon, 2 p.m. & 4 p.m.

Finish the day with an animatronic retelling of A Christmas Carol and pics with Santa in the Dickens Village (reservations required), then explore the department store's famous animated holiday windows.

[Tinseltown Holiday Spectacular at FDR Park](#)

Where: FDR Park, Pattison Avenue & South Broad Street

Through Monday, January 1, 2024

The twinkling lights and icy fun of the Tinseltown Holiday Spectacular head to South Philly's FDR Park for the first time ever. Take in the sights and sounds while skating along a winding ice trail or gliding down a 160-foot-long ice slide. Pop into Mistletoe Marketplace to find that perfect gift, grab a bite and a cocoa inside Union Forge Lodge, visit Mrs. Claus' Reading Room or take a family photo with Santa. Timed tickets required, with optional add-ons for the Ice Trail, Ice Slide and those snaps with Santa.

[LumiNature at the Philadelphia Zoo](#)

Where: Philadelphia Zoo, 3400 W. Girard Avenue

Through Sunday, December 31, 2023 (select dates)

The immersive LumiNature display transforms the Philadelphia Zoo into a multimedia spectacular with 16 zones illuminated with 1 million twinkling lights, including the new Shimmer River and LumiNature Lane. While the animals sleep, kids and their grownups can hop the SEPTA PZ Express train for a ride under the lights, go on a scavenger hunt or walk the 100-foot lighted jungle tunnel. Snap pix of the fam in front of a 22-foot butterfly tree, 40-foot glowing penguin or the new sparkling waterfall of lights. Grab seasonal snacks and a hot chocolate while you roam. Timed tickets required.

[LuminoCity Holiday Lights Festival at The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center](#)

Where: The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Avenue, Oaks

Through Monday, January 15, 2024 (select dates)

The LuminoCity Holiday Lights Festival — one of the nation's top traveling holiday spectacles — has arrived at The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks. Celebrating a new "Golden Holiday" theme for 2023, the sprawling wonderland of immersive illuminated installations features over 20 individual displays and rides from the Candy Cane Gates to the Mammoth Parade, plus a full holiday market. The state-of-the-art production features bright,

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colorful, large-scale lightscapes with a 50-foot-tall, fully decorated tree as its magical centerpiece.

[Holiday Light Show at Shady Brook Farm](#)

Where: Shady Brook Farm, 931 Stony Hill Road, Yardley

Through Saturday, January 27, 2024 (select dates)

Bucks County's sprawling Shady Brook Farm warms up for the holiday season with its after-dark Holiday Light Show, a whimsical ride through giant animated winter scenes, character displays and illuminated tunnels rendered with 3 million tiny bulbs across acres of farmland. Enjoy the two-mile farm trail from the comfort of your own vehicle or in an open-air tractor-pulled wagon. Revelers can also visit Santa's village for pictures with the Big Guy, shop the holiday farm market, have a bite at Stone's Throw Pub or warm up around the firepit with cocoa and s'mores. Tickets required.

Holiday Markets and Outdoor Fun

[Holiday Garden Railway and Nighttime Express at Morris Arboretum](#)

Where: Morris Arboretum, 100 E. Northwestern Avenue

Through Saturday, December 30, 2023 (select dates)

One of the country's largest outdoor model train displays gets its annual winter wonderland makeover, becoming the Holiday Garden Railway. Located inside the 100-acre Morris Arboretum & Gardens, Pennsylvania's official state arboretum, the display features G-scale mini-locomotives winding their way through a quarter-mile of loops, tunnels, bridges and replicas of beloved Philadelphia landmarks beneath a canopy of thousands of twinkling lights. The daytime experience is free with general admission, but come sunset, the display transforms into The Nighttime Express with sparkling lights along the railway and laser lights in the trees. (Separate advanced tickets required.)

[Seasonal Celebrations at Sesame Place Philadelphia](#)

Where: Sesame Place Philadelphia, 100 Sesame Road, Langhorne

Through Sunday, January 7, 2024 (select dates)

Join Big Bird, Elmo and the gang at the only Sesame Street theme park on the East Coast as Sesame Place transforms into a winter wonderland for slew of seasonal celebrations. A Very Furry Christmas programming transforms the park with glittering lights, daily parades, festive floats, sing-alongs and light shows around a 30-foot-tall Christmas tree. During the Hanukkah Celebration (December 8 to 10, 2023), guests can play dreidel games and join in on the spectacular menorah-lighting ceremony. And visitors can end the season with a colorful Kwanzaa Celebration featuring storytime, a Kinara-lighting ceremony and programs around the holiday's seven principles (December 26, 2023 to January 1, 2024).

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[Holiday Events at Peddler's Village](#)

Where: Peddler's Village, 100 Peddlers Village, Lahaska

Through Sunday, January 14, 2024

Bucks County's charming Peddler's Village is festively decorated for the season with 1 million twinkling lights covering nearly every building, path and tree. The village offers a season full of festive decorations and family-friendly holiday events, including the Gingerbread Competition & Display — featuring over 100 handcrafted gingerbread creations on display for free — and Holly Jolly Weekend, two days of free Santa-themed festivities and parades (December 2-3, 2023). Check out the site's event calendar for plenty more holiday activities and displays.

[Winter in Franklin Square](#)

Where: Franklin Square, 200 N. 6th Street

Through Sunday, February 25, 2024 (dates vary by attraction)

Festive Franklin Square celebrates the holidays with a slew of seasonal attractions and exciting outdoor fun. Highlights include the free nightly Electrical Spectacle Light Show, which illuminates the square every half-hour with seasonal songs and choreographed light displays. Chilly Philly Mini Golf, Center City's only outdoor mini-golf course, decks its halls with 18 holes of merry lights, holiday music and iconic winter characters. And returning for a second season is street curling – a combination of curling and tabletop shuffleboard. Tickets required for mini-golf and street curling.

[Winter at Dilworth Park](#)

Where: Dilworth Park, 1 S. 15th Street

Through Sunday, March 17, 2024 (dates vary by attraction)

In the shadow of City Hall, Winter at Dilworth Park brings holiday fun to Center City with plenty of free events and cool attractions. Strap on the skates at the Rothman Orthopaedics Ice Rink (tickets required) or hang out, grab a bite and relax inside the Rothman Orthopaedics Cabin or out at the cozy firepits. Then explore The Wintergarden, a botanic wonderland with festive greenery, topiaries and holiday lights.

[Christmas Village in Philadelphia at LOVE Park and City Hall](#)

Where: LOVE Park, North 15th Street & Arch Street

November 23 - December 24, 2023

Gorgeous LOVE Park transforms into an open-air European marketplace during the annual free-to-explore, pay-as-you-go Christmas Village in Philadelphia. More than 100 vendors set up shop in wooden stalls offering local and international gifts, ornaments and wintry apparel. After shopping up an appetite, indulge in tasty treats like raclette sandwiches, spiced wine, apple cider strudels and more. Across the street at City Hall, a double-decker carousel, Ferris wheel and kids train await. New for 2023: later operating hours, more lights and Vegan Wurst Wednesdays.

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[Yuletide at Devon](#)

**Where: Devon Horse Show & Country Fair and Devon Fall Classic, 23 Dorset Road, Devon
November 24 - December 31, 2023**

A Bavarian Christmas market, a live music festival, a community carnival or a gourmet farm-to-table dining experience ... which do you choose? You don't have to pick just one thanks to the gorgeous (and new-for-2023) Yuletide at Devon celebration at the famous Devon Horse Show grounds. Experience fair rides (including a 65-foot Ferris wheel), lots of live music, craft soft drinks and hot chocolate, locally sourced eats, and over 35 high-end holiday fair vendors. Tickets are required.

[Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest](#)

Where: Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, 101 S. Christopher Columbus Boulevard

November 24, 2023 - February 19, 2024

Experience a Penn's Landing waterfront winter wonderland at the 30th annual Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest. Glide around the enormous ice skating rink, snap a photo by the festive holiday tree, play games on the boardwalk and warm up with pay-as-you-go seasonal treats next to a toasty fire pit (or inside a cozy cabin). And don't miss the star-studded tree lighting ceremony set for Friday, December 1. Tickets required to ice skate, cabins and fire pits must be reserved in advance.

[Christmas Around the Farm at Linvilla Orchards](#)

Where: Linvilla Orchards, 137 W. Knowlton Road, Media

December 1-23, 2023

A year-round spot for harvest fun, the 300-acre Linvilla Orchards family farm puts on its holiday best come December for Christmas Around the Farm. The Delco attraction's Garden Center is transformed into a North Pole farm with cut-your-own Douglas or Canaan fir trees, an ice sculptor, live music, a holiday market featuring handmade wreaths, poinsettias, decorations, toys and more, and, of course, visits with Santa Claus (Fridays through Sundays). Keep warm and fed with winter treats like wood-fired pizza and Holly Jolly donuts (available in apple pie, maple bacon and cookie jar flavors).

Holiday Events at Attractions

[Christmas Underwater at Adventure Aquarium](#)

Where: Adventure Aquarium, 1 Riverside Drive, Camden, NJ

November 24 – December 24, 2023 (select dates)

Make it a holly jolly fishmas with Christmas Underwater across the Delaware River at Adventure Aquarium on the Camden waterfront. Gaze in wonder as Scuba Santa and his "el-fish" helpers dive live with sharks, sea turtles, rays and more; marvel at the world's tallest

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and smallest underwater Christmas trees (in the aquarium's Shark Realm); and experience thousands of twinkling lights and colorful shells and coral in display.

[LEGOLAND Holiday Bricktacular](#)

Where: LEGOLAND Discovery Center Philadelphia, 1055 500 W. Germantown Pike, Plymouth Meeting

November 24, 2023 – January 1, 2024 (select dates)

The 33,000-square-foot LEGOLAND Discovery Center brings joy to wintertime LEGOmaniacs during LEGOLAND Holiday Bricktacular. Experience giant holiday-themed LEGO builds including a LEGO sleigh, reindeer and snowman. Visit a Miniland wonderland with wintry city streets featuring iconic LEGO Philadelphia holiday scenes (and find the gingerbread minifigs hidden in the display as part of the holiday scavenger hunt). Join a special holiday build with the Master Model Builder in the Creative Workshop. And don't forget to drop your holiday wishlist in the LEGO mailbox — or tell LEGO Santa in person at weekend meet-and-greets. Included with paid museum admission.

[Holidays at the Please Touch Museum](#)

Where: Please Touch Museum, 4231 Avenue of the Republic

December 10, 16 & 29, 2023

Located inside Fairmount Park's Memorial Hall (built for the 1876 Centennial), the beloved Please Touch Museum (opened for the 1976 Bicentennial) offers a trio of holiday events. Start the season off with the Hanukkah Celebration (December 10, 2023) featuring a performance of Herschel and the Hanukkah Goblins and a Hanukkah sing-a-long. A performance from The Nutcracker Dipped in Chocolate ballet highlights a jolly Christmas Celebration (December 16, 2023) plus storytime with Santa, cookie decoration and a dance workshop. And the Kwanzaa Celebration (Friday, December 29, 2023) features an interactive performance with songs, stories, drumming and dancing with storyteller Queen Nur.

Holiday Live Performances

[The No Name Pops Presents: A Very Philly Christmas at the Kimmel Center](#)

Where: Kimmel Center, 300 S. Broad Street

December 1-23, 2023 (select dates)

Join a new orchestra featuring some of Philly's best classical musicians, choirs from around the city and a cast of Broadway singers and dancers for The No Name Pops' festive A Very Philly Christmas program at the Kimmel Center. The upbeat performance of holiday classics and pop favorites in sparkling new arrangements is led by guest conductor Enrico Lopez-Yañez, Principal Pops Conductor of the Nashville Symphony and Pacific Symphony.

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[The Philadelphia Ballet Presents: George Balanchine's The Nutcracker at the Academy of Music](#)

Where: Academy of Music, 240 S. Broad Street

December 9-30, 2023 (select dates)

It's just not the holidays in Philadelphia without the Sugar Plum Fairy, the Mouse King and the other magical inhabitants of The Land of Sweets as the world-class ballet dancers of The Philadelphia Ballet twirl across the stage at the Academy of Music performing choreographer George Balanchine's The Nutcracker.

[The Philadelphia Orchestra's Children's Holiday Spectacular at the Kimmel Center](#)

Where: Kimmel Center, 300 S. Broad Street

Saturday, December 16, 2023 | 11:30 a.m.

That sound of sleigh bells jingling and ring-ting-tingling you hear is conductor Austin Chanu and vocalist Desi Oakley leading The Philadelphia Orchestra — and some very special guests — in a Saturday sing-along at the annual Children's Holiday Spectacular at the Kimmel Center, featuring classics like Joy To The World, The Night Before Christmas, Sleigh Ride and selections from Disney's Frozen. Recommended for ages 5 to 12.

[The Philadelphia Orchestra Presents: Elf in Concert at the Kimmel Center](#)

Where: Kimmel Center, 300 S. Broad Street

December 22-23, 2023

"The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear." You won't stop smiling (it's the best!) as the talented musicians from The Philadelphia Orchestra present Elf in Concert, performing composer John Debney's whimsical score live during two screenings of the Will Ferrell, Zoey Deschanel and James Caan holiday classic film, which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2023.

[Disney on Ice Presents: Magic in the Stars at the Wells Fargo Center](#)

Where: Wells Fargo Center, 3601 S. Broad Street

December 24, 2023 – January 1, 2024 (select dates)

Beloved Disney and Pixar characters from Mickey and Minnie to Tiana and Rapunzel glide, spin and dance across the ice during Disney on Ice Presents: Magic in the Stars, a fun-filled, family-friendly skating production live at Wells Fargo Center. Featuring the on-ice debut of Raya from Raya and the Last Dragon, this year's brand new show journeys through the classic worlds of Cinderella, Aladdin and Toy Story and revisits newer fan favorites like Encanto, Moana and, of course, Frozen.