

2017



HOLIDAY

EVENTS

Wilmington.C.
River District & Island Beaches

Wilmington *Carolina Beach*
Kure Beach *Wrightsville Beach*

WilmingtonAndBeaches.com
#WilmingtonNC

866-266-9690
#WhenInWilmington



Stray off course and see where the water takes you when you experience the color and pageantry of holiday events that reflect the culture and warmth of Wilmington, North Carolina's river district and island beaches. Visitors can choose from more than 50 holiday events to create a memorable vacation in Wilmington, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, and Wrightsville Beach. For details about seasonal highlights and specials, visit www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/things-to-do/seasonal-highlights. For a free official visitors guide, call us at 1-866-266-9690 or email us at visit@WilmingtonAndBeaches.com. The following is a sampling of Holiday Events from the river to the sea.

November 18-December 24

Santa's Workshop & Photos With Santa at Mayfaire

Mon.-Sat. 11am-7pm (Santa breaks: 3pm-4pm); Sun. 12pm-5pm
Santa arrives on Nov. 18 at 11am. Capture holiday memories at Santa's Village. Professional photos available. Santa welcomes children, adults, and pets. Admission charge. Mayfaire Town Center, 1055 International Dr., Wilmington. (910) 256-5131; mayfaire.com/content/holiday

November 18 & 25

Kure Beach Holiday Market

9am-3pm

A seaside holiday market with 30 talented artists and crafters. Free. Kure Beach Oceanfront Park, 105 Atlantic Ave, Kure Beach. (910) 458-8216; townofkurebeach.org

November 20-December 31

Cape Fear Festival of Trees

9am-5pm

Wander through a winter wonderland featuring decorated holiday trees sponsored by area businesses to benefit Lower Cape Fear Hospice. Admission charged. N.C Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Rd, Kure Beach. (910) 796-8099; capefearfestivaloftrees.org

November 21

Manheim Steamroller in concert

3:30pm & 7:30pm

Experience the magic of the season with the signature sound of *Mannheim Steamroller*, America's favorite holiday tradition for over 30 years. Admission charge; tickets required. Wilson Center, 703 N. 3rd St, Wilmington. (910)362-7999; cfcc.edu/capefearstage/mannheim2017/

November 23

Wrightsville Beach Turkey Trot

7am

This 5K timed run or 1-mile walk around the Wrightsville Beach Loop is a Thanksgiving tradition for all ages. Prizes, food and fun. Admission charged. Wrightsville Beach Park, 1 Bob Sawyer Dr, Wrightsville Beach. wrightsvillebeachturkeytrot.com/event.html

November 24-25

33rd Annual North Carolina Holiday Flotilla & Day in the Park

A Southeast Tourism Society Top 20 Event! Launch party starts Friday at 7pm at the Blockade Runner Beach Resort. (Tickets required for launch party.) The fun begins on Saturday with a Festival in the Park at Wrightsville Beach Park from 10am-4pm, followed by the lighted boat parade at 6pm in Banks Channel with fireworks. Free. Wrightsville Beach. (910)256-2120; ncholidayflotilla.org

November 24

Island of Lights-Light Up The Lake

7pm

Light-up ceremony on Nov. 24th. Tree lighting with local dignitaries; Christmas by the Sea festivities will follow on the Boardwalk. Free. (910)458-8323; Carolina Beach Lake, Hwy 421 & Atlantic Ave, & Boardwalk, Carolina Beach. (910)458-8323; islandoflights.org

November 24

Downtown Holiday Tree Lighting

5:30pm

Tree lighting, music, holiday marketplace & refreshments. Free. Water & Princess Sts, Wilmington. (910)772-4177; wilmingtonnc.gov

November 24

Battleship Ho Ho Ho

10am-12pm & 1pm-3pm

Fly an American flag with Santa, compose a retro e-card, type a Christmas wish list on a vintage typewriter, call the North Pole from the Battleship's radio room, and track Santa's journey in the Combat Information Center. Free with Battleship Admission. Battleship *North Carolina*, 1 Battleship Rd, Wilmington. (910)251-5797; battleshipnc.com/Events/BattleshipHoHoHo

November 24-December 30

Holiday Lights Cruise

Fri. & Sat. 6pm

Cruise of the harbor with Christmas carols, holiday cocktails, and snacks. Admission charged. Wilmington Water Tours, 212 S. Water St, Wilmington. (910)338-3134; wilmingtonwatertours.net

November 24 & 25, 1-2, 8-10, 13-22

Enchanted Airlie

2 sessions each night: 5pm-7pm & 7pm-9pm

More than one million lights create magical evenings of illumination in the gardens, along with entertainment and a meet & greet with Santa. Admission charge. No tickets sold at gate. Advanced tickets required. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Rd, Wilmington. (910)798-7700; airliegardens.org/events-news/enchanted-airlie/

November 25-December 16 (Saturdays)

Christmas by the Sea

Saturdays 6:30pm-8:30pm

Family activities include Santa and hot chocolate, fire pit with storytelling, live nativity scene, caroling, holiday themed movies, puppet shows and arts & crafts. Free. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Carolina Beach Ave S, Carolina Beach. (910)470-8666; pleasureislandnc.org

November 25-December 30

Christmas Train & Light Spectacular

Fri. & Sat. 6:30pm-8pm; Mon, Dec 26

Model trains at night under thousands of holiday lights and a winter wonderland. Admission charged. Wilmington Railroad Museum, 505 Nutt St, Wilmington. (910)763-2634; wrrm.org/

November 25

WRRC Turkey Trot Trail Run

9am

Runners will race on paved road and trails through pine forest and over wooden footbridges. Pre-registration required. Carolina Beach State Park Marina, 1010 State Park Rd, Carolina Beach.

wilmingtonroadrunners.wildapricot.org/Turkey-Trot

November 26

Historic Wilmington Foundation Post-Thanksgiving Tour

2pm-4pm

Join architectural historian Ed Turberg for a lecture/tour with Q&A and refreshments at this year's historic home, located at 314 Colonial Drive, Wilmington. Admission charged. For details and tickets: (910)762-2511; historicwilmington.org

December 1-2, 8-9, 15-16

Merry Little Christmas Festival: Star of Wonder, Star of Night

5pm-9pm

Poplar Grove's grounds will be aglow with lights. Get in the holiday spirit with a camp fire as it blazes for roasting marshmallows, or drop a letter in the mail to Santa. Take a candlelight tour through each of the eight rooms of the Manor House. Admission charged. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Hwy 17 N, Wilmington. (910)686-9518; poplargo.org/festivals/amerrylittlechristmas/

December 1-3, 7-10, 14-17

Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some!): Theatre

Thurs.-Sat. 8pm; Sun. 3pm

Instead of performing a holiday classic for the umpteenth time, three actors decide to perform every Christmas story ever told, plus Christmas traditions from around the world, seasonal icons from ancient times to topical pop-culture, and every carol ever sung. Tickets required. Cape Fear Playhouse, 613 Castle St, Wilmington. (910)367-5237; bigdawgproductions.org/2017-season.html

December 1

Island of Lights Christmas Parade

7:30pm

Extraordinary nighttime lighted parade filled with festive fun and entertainment for the entire family. Free. Lake Park Blvd/Hwy 421 S, Carolina Beach. (910)458-5507; islandoflights.org

December 1-2

The Nutcracker

Fri. 4pm & 7pm; Sat. 10am

This sixty-minute narrated version of the classic Christmas tale tells the story of a young girl where she journeys through the land of sweets, witnesses a daring battle, and meets the Sugar Plum Fairy. Tickets required. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington. (910)632-2285; thalianhall.org/events

December 1-3

The Holiday Flea at BAC

Fri. 4-9pm; Sat. 10am-6pm; Sun. 12-5pm

Shop for original gifts from an array of vintage, retro, and upcycled treasures. Admission charged. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 N 4th St, Wilmington. (910)538-2939; brooklynartsnc.com

December 2

Battleship Alive-Christmas Edition

8am-5pm

A special Battleship Alive program demonstrates a 1940s Christmas aboard the ship. Admission charged. #1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. (910) 251-5797; battleshipnc.com/Events/Battleship101Alive

December 2

Island of Lights Holiday Flotilla

6pm

A spectacular parade of fishing boats and pleasure craft electrically decorated with thousands of lights. Free. Intracoastal Waterway, Snows Cut to Carolina Beach Boat Basin, Carolina Beach. (910)458-8323; islandoflights.org

December 2

Dashing Through the Glow 5K and Holiday Festival

3:30pm

A 5K/holiday festival with food trucks, caroling, vendors, a visit from Santa, and a 5K running race (5:30pm) and a 1-mile fun run (5:35pm). Admission charged. RiverLights, 4410 River Road, Wilmington. its-go-time.com/riverlights-dashing-thru-the-glow/

December 2-3

City Ballet- A Carolina Nutcracker

Sat. 7pm; Sun. 3pm

Set in 1865 at Wilmington's Bellamy Mansion, this production merges local history with classic elements of the original Nutcracker. Tickets required. CFCC Wilson Center, 703 N. 3rd St, Wilmington. (910)362-7999; cfcc.edu/capefearstage/city-ballet-a-carolina-nutcracker/

December 2-3

Old Wilmington by Candlelight Tour

Sat. 4-8pm; Sun. 1pm-5pm

Holiday candlelight tour of elegant historic homes and sites. Purchase tickets at the Latimer House. Admission charged. Latimer House, 126 S. Third St, Wilmington. (910)762-0492; wilmington-bycandlelight.org/

December 2, 9, 16-17, 23

Storytime: Polar Express & Visit with Santa

Two readings each day 4:30pm & 5:30pm

A reading of the Polar Express, along with hot chocolate and a visit from Santa Claus. Admission charged; reservations required. Wilmington Railroad Museum, 505 Nutt St, Wilmington. (910)763-2634; wrrm.org/events

December 2-January 8, 2018

Art of Illumination Exhibit

10am-5pm

This juried art exhibit features original lanterns crafted by artists from coast to coast; Floating Lantern Ceremony on Dec. 10. Admission charged. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 S. 17th St, Wilmington. (910)395-5999; cameronartmuseum.org/index.php?c=lanterns

December 3

Wilmington Holiday Parade

5pm

Wilmington's annual parade as Santa arrives in the Port City. Free. Front and Water Streets, Wilmington. wilmingtonnc.gov

December 3

Santa Cares: Sensory Friendly Santa Event

12pm-5pm

This event offers children with special needs the opportunity to meet and have their photo taken with Santa in a low stress, quiet environment. Free; Registration required. Mayfaire Town Center, 1055 International Dr., Wilmington. (910) 256-5131; mayfaire.com/content/holiday

December 3

Wrightsville Beach Museum Holiday Open House

2pm-4pm

Visit the decorated museum for seasonal refreshments & learn about the Bordeaux Cottage move. Shop for stocking-stuffers and gifts. Free. Wrightsville Beach Museum, 303 W. Salisbury St, Wrightsville Beach. (910)256-2569; wbmuseumofhistory.com/

December 3-4

Jingle Bells Holiday Tea at the Bellamy Mansion

1pm-3pm

A formal holiday tea with food and live entertainment in the festively adorned parlors of the Bellamy Mansion. Admission charged; reservations required. Bellamy Mansion Museum, 503 Market St, Wilmington. (910)251-3700; bellamymansion.org/calendar.html

December 5

Ft. Fisher Holiday Open House

9am-3pm

Seasonal decorations, music, refreshments & gift shop discounts. Free. Ft. Fisher State Historic Site, 1610 Ft. Fisher Blvd, Kure Beach. (910)458-5538; friendsoffortfisher.com/calendar.html

December 8

Greenfield Lake Park Christmas Tree Lighting

5:15pm (entertainment) 6pm (tree lighting) 7pm (movie)

Wilmington's Christmas tree is lit at the World's Largest Rotary Wheel in Greenfield Lake Park. Music, visits with Santa & a holiday movie at the amphitheater. Free. Greenfield Lake Park, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. (910)341-7855; wilmingtonnc.gov

December 8-9

Holly Jolly Holiday Stroll

Fri. 4:30pm-5:30pm; Sat. 10am-8pm

Holiday sights, sounds, flavors and activities as you stroll shops in an 'open house' setting. Merchants provide refreshments and holiday gift ideas. Street musicians and local choral groups will entertain. Activities also take place along the Riverwalk, and Santa makes appearances. Free. Various locations, Downtown Wilmington. (910)763-7349; hollyjollywilmington.com/

December 8-10, 15-17

A Christmas Story: The Musical

Fri. & Sat. 7:30pm; Sun. 3pm

Based on the cult classic movie, this holiday tale follows mischievous young Ralphie in his quest to score a special gift from Santa. Tickets required. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington. (910)632-2285; thalian.org/2017-2018-season/a-christmas-st/

December 9

Island of Lights Tour of Homes

5pm-9pm

Visit homes decorated for the holidays in Carolina Beach & Kure Beach on this self-guided tour. Admission charged; tickets required. (910)458-5006; Various homes. islandoflights.org

December 9

A Christmas Stroll Through the Past

4:30pm-8:30pm

Join the Burgwin-Wright House, Bellamy Mansion Museum, and St. James Episcopal Church for a festive holiday evening filled with music, dancing, costumes, refreshments and more! Admission charged. Bellamy Mansion Museum, 503 Market St, Wilmington. (910)251-3700; bellamymansion.org/calendar.html

December 9

9th Annual 5K Jingle Bell Run

7:30am (registration), 9:00am (race)

Race participants are encouraged to dress in holiday apparel. Entry fee required. Wrightsville Beach Museum, 303 W. Salisbury St, Wrightsville Beach. (910)256-2569; wbmuseumofhistory.com/

December 9

A Charlie Brown Christmas

Doors 2pm; Show 3pm

Enjoy the 1965 Peanuts' cartoon Christmas special with live actors and jazz musicians! Admission charge; tickets required. Wilson Center, 703 N. 3rd St, Wilmington. (910)362-7999; cfcc.edu/capefearstage/charlie-brown-christmas-2017/

December 9-10

Poplar Grove Arts & Crafts Festival

Sat. 10am-5pm; Sun. 11am-4pm

Enjoy a local arts & crafts show, kettle corn, hot cider, wagon rides, inflatables, and an appearance by Santa Claus. Admission charged. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Hwy 17 N, Wilmington. (910)686-9518; poplargo.org/festivals/christmas/

December 9, 16, 21-22

Holiday Elf Camps at the Aquarium

9:30am-3:30pm

Magically find free time & keep the kids happy too. Campers (ages 5-12) make gifts, wrap them, discover natural wonders and create special memories. Camps include a pizza lunch, snacks, crafts, holiday gift-wrap, instruction. Pre-registration required. N.C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Rd, Kure Beach. (910)772-0500; ncaquariums.com/fort-fisher-experiences

December 10

Cameron Art Museum Floating Lantern Ceremony

4pm-7pm

Lantern messaging/decorating begins at 4pm. Write or draw your feelings and wishes on a lantern, then set them afloat on the museum pond. No charge to attend; lanterns available for purchase. CAM Reflecting Pond, Cameron Art Museum, 3201 S. 17th St, Wilmington. (910)395-5999; cameronartmuseum.org/index.php?c=lanterns

December 14

Cherish the Ladies: Celtic Christmas

7:30pm

A blend of virtuosi instrumental talents, beautiful vocals, captivating arrangements, and step dancing. Tickets required. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington. (910)632-2285; thalianhall.org/events

December 14-17

Ebenezer: A Christmas Carol

Thurs. & Fri. 7:30pm; Sat. 2pm, 7:30pm; Sun. 2pm
True to Dickens' tale, Ebenezer: A Christmas Carol features a miserly Scrooge and his uninvited ghostly guests. But this version unfolds in a world of song and dance with twists and turns. Tickets required. Kenan Auditorium, UNCW Campus, 601 S. College Rd, Wilmington. (910)962-3500; uncw.edu/arts/presents/2017-2018/ebenezer.html

December 15-17

Wilmington Ballet Company Presents: Nutcracker

Fri.-Sat. 7pm; Sun 3pm
Wilmington Ballet Company presents a traditional Christmas Classic. Admission charged. CFCC Wilson Center, 703 N. 3rd Street, Wilmington. (910)362-7999; wilmingtonballetcompany.org

December 15-28

Holiday Lights Trolley Tour

Tours depart 6pm & 7:30pm; Please arrive 15 min. early to board this festive 45-minute tour through some of Wilmington's most impressively decorated neighborhoods on an authentically reproduced trolley with music, narration, and a heated cabin. Admission charged. Wilmington Trolley, 101 Water St, Wilmington. (910)763-4483; wilmingtontrolley.com/tours/

December 15-16, 21-24

Christmas Caroling with Santa and his "Reindeer"

6pm-10pm
A very special holiday horse drawn/carriage tour caroling through downtown Wilmington. Admission charged. Departs at foot of Market and Water St, Wilmington. (910)251-8889; horsedrawntours.com

December 16

Holiday Super Saturday Fun Time

3pm-4:30pm
Join the Dock Street Kids for a holiday kid's adventure and variety show. Tickets required. TheatreNow, 19 S. 10th St, Wilmington. (910)399-3669; theatrewilmington.com/dinner-shows--events.html

December 16

Storytime with Santa

8:30am-10:30am
Gather around Santa and hear a classic Christmas tale at Chick-fil-A. Kids will also have crafts and other activities available. Free; seating is limited. Chick-fil-A Mayfaire, 6891 Swan Mill Rd, Wilmington. (910)256-5131; mayfaire.com/content/holiday

December 16

Toys For Tots Concert

7:30pm
L Shaped Lot & Signal Fire will be playing this year's benefit concert for Toys for Tots. Admission charged. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 N 4th St, Wilmington. (910)538-2939; brooklynartsnc.com

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December 16-17

Santa by the Sea

9am-5pm

Experience a magical holiday with Santa and his aquatic friends. Meet a live penguin, pose with Santa, play games & explore the Aquarium's decked halls. Santa will dive alongside sharks, eels and sea turtle friends three times each day. Free with general aquarium admission. N.C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Rd, Kure Beach. (910)772-0500; ncaquariums.com/fort-fisher-experiences

December 16-17

The Christmas Cabaret

Sat. 7pm; Sun. 12:30pm

The Christmas Cabaret at the Blockade Runner Resort is presented by Opera House Theatre Company and directed by Ray Kennedy. Admission charged. Blockade Runner Resort, 275 Waynick Blvs, Wrightsville Beach. (910)256-7105; operahouse.squarespace.com/

December 20

A Classical Holiday Pops

7:30pm

A holiday celebration filled with joyful symphonic arrangements of Christmas classics and holiday melodies. Admission charged; tickets required. CFCC Wilson Center, 703 N. 3rd Street, Wilmington. (910)362-7999; cfcc.edu/capefearstage/a-classical-holiday-pops/

December 21

Holiday Screening of It's A Wonderful Life

7pm

Frank Capra's iconic holiday film is a Wilmington tradition, shown as it was meant to be—on the big screen. Enjoy seasonal treats and Thalian Hall director Tony Rivenbark's famous toy collection. Admission charge; tickets required. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington. (910)632-2285; thalianhall.org/events

December 22

NC Symphony – Holiday Pops Concert

3pm & 7:30pm

Holiday carols and traditional favorites performed by the N.C. Symphony. Tickets required. CFCC Wilson Center, 703 N. 3rd Street, Wilmington. (910)362-7999; ncsymphony.org

December 22

Choral Concert: Christmas at St. Paul's

7:30pm

Carols sung by The Choir of Saint Paul's. Free. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 16 N. 16th St, Wilmington. (910)762-4578; spechurch.com

New events are added during the season. For more events,

[visit wilmingtonandbeaches.com/events](http://wilmingtonandbeaches.com/events)

WilmingtonAndBeaches.com

December 31

Island of Lights New Year's Eve Celebration

9pm

An STS Top 20 Event! Celebrate New Year's Eve at the beach. This family-friendly event will feature a DJ, dancing, refreshments and party favors available for purchase. Don't miss the giant beach ball being dropped at midnight followed by an epic fireworks. Free. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Cape Fear Blvd & Carolina Beach Ave, Carolina Beach. (910)458-5507; pleasureislandoflights.com/the-new-year-celebration.html

December 31

New Year's Eve Gala

7pm

Ring in the new year gala-style with dinner, drinks, dessert, and a sensational performance of the Broadway musical "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert" by Opera House Theatre Co., followed by DJ/dancing and champagne toast. Admission charge; tickets required. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington. (910)632-2285; thalianhall.org/events

December 31

New Year's Noon

9am-12pm

This kid-friendly celebration has crafts, singing, dancing and an epic confetti toss and juice toast at noon in the courtyard. Admission charged. Children's Museum of Wilmington, 116 Orange St, Wilmington. (910)254-3534; playwilmington.org/events

December 31

New Year's Eve Winner Party Boat Cruise

Boarding 10:30pm; Departure 11pm

Ring in New Year's Eve aboard the 120-foot Royal Winner Princess II. Enjoy a champagne toast at midnight, dance party and party favors as you cruise along the Cape Fear River. Admission charged; reservations required. Winner Party Boat, 100 Carl Winner Drive, Carolina Beach. (910)458-5356; winnerboats.com/tours-cruises

December 31

New Year's Eve: Bacchanalia

7pm

Celebrate New Year's Eve with a variety of performances including flame acts, aerial acts, live music, comedy and more, alongside a delicious four-course indulgent meal. Tickets required. TheatreNow, 19 S. 10th St, Wilmington. (910)399-3669; theatrewilmington.com/dinner-shows.html

December 31

Midnight in Paris

5:30pm

Ring in the New Year and enjoy a three-course French menu and a glass of bubbly plus "cotillions" in Downtown Wilmington. Admission charged; please call for reservations. Le Catalan Café, 224 S. Water St, Wilmington. (910)815-0200; lecatalan.com/

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The Wilmington and Beaches CVB will not be held responsible for the information contained herein. Inclusion in this brochure should not be construed as a recommendation but merely as a guide. Before traveling any distance, please contact event organizers to confirm dates and times, etc.