

BY KAREN HENDRICKS

FESTIVE

Don't be chilly; Here's how to create warm holiday memories with your family throughout Philly and beyond.

CENTER CITY SPIRIT

Dilworth Park, 1 S. 15th St. (west side of City Hall), Philadelphia

Dilworth Park, in the shadow of Philadelphia's City Hall, features a wonderland of family-friendly winter activities. Lots of lights set the scene: First, explore Wintergarden and its playfully-sculpted reindeer topiaries with twinkling lights through March 26. Nightly, kids of all ages will love seeing Philadelphia's iconic City Hall—in a new light—via the colorful Deck the Hall Light Show. The show begins at the top of each hour, between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m., from Nov. 21 through Jan. 1, on the west façade of City Hall.

And there's more! Make family memories by securing pre-purchased skating sessions on the city's ice rink. Or browse the Made in Philadelphia Holiday Market, November 19 through Jan. 1, featuring more than 40 Philly artisans and small business owners. centercityphila.org/parks/dilworth-park

MERRY MARKET

LOVE Park and City Hall, 1500 Arch St., Philadelphia
Philly's LOVE statue sets the tone for Christmas Village in Philadelphia, an outdoor holiday market modeled after Germany's traditional Christmas markets. Festive sights, sounds and scents await visitors. Dozens of vendors offer festive holiday ornaments and gifts, plus traditional European foods such as gingerbread, waffles, bratwurst and mulled wine.

The Christmas Village is open daily, Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays, and until 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Admission is free; rides on the carousel, ferris wheel and train require tickets. philachristmas.com

LIGHT BULB MOMENTS

Franklin Square, 200 N. 6th St., Philadelphia

What better place to enjoy a holiday light show than historic Franklin Square, which pays tribute to colonial-era inventor Benjamin Franklin. It was his discovery of electricity, with a giant kite and key, that gave birth to today's modern electricity-filled conveniences and lifestyle.

Franklin Square's Electrical Spectacle Light Show radiates from the historic fountain every 30 minutes, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., daily. The show is entirely free, and families can enjoy snuggling at nearby outdoor firepits. Hot chocolate is available for purchase—and mom and dad can even say "cheers" with a spiked version. historicphiladelphia.org

WHIMSICAL WONDERLAND

Longwood Gardens, 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square

Longwood Gardens is gorgeous any time of year—but it's especially dazzling during the holiday season. Imagine pathways winding among towering trees, a landscape glimmering with half a million shimmering lights and cozy, crackling firepits. Whimsical, all-natural décor is designed to evoke a sense of wonder in visitors of all ages. Plus, keep your eyes open for the miniature trains chugging along a 500-foot-long track!

"A Longwood Christmas: Botanical Splendor" runs November 18 through Jan. 8, and pre-purchased tickets are required. Too busy during the holiday season? Catch Longwood Gardens' "Winter Wonder," featuring 400 acres of winter's beauty, Jan. 21 through March 26. longwoodgardens.org

SOUTH JERSEY SHIMMER

Historic Smithville, 615 E. Moss Mill Rd., Galloway, N.J.
Take a drive or a mini staycation to historic Smithville, where more than 100 Christmas trees magically float atop Lake Meone. The trees, adorned with more than 50,000 lights, come to life through an orchestrated musical show, sending shimmering, sparkling reflections across the lake.

The show happens every week, Thursdays through Sundays, between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., November 25 through Jan. 6—and it's completely free and open to the public. The surrounding quaint and historic town offers shops, restaurants and on-site lodging—connected by cobblestone walkways—and even a carousel. historicsmithville.com ■



Christmas Village



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Smithville

