



MATPRA

MID-ATLANTIC TOURISM PUBLIC RELATIONS ALLIANCE

Special Events Bring the Happiness of the Holidays to the Mid-Atlantic Region

(Mid-Atlantic Region, November 19, 2018)- The holidays are nearing, and locations throughout the Mid-Atlantic region are hosting festivals and special events to celebrate the season. Members of the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance ([MATPRA](#)) invite you to experience all of the celebratory events the region has to offer.

For more information on specific events or attractions, please contact the state tourism office or CVB listed.

DELAWARE

Delaware's Quaint Villages

There's no better place to celebrate holiday spirit than Delaware's Quaint Villages. Head to downtown Dover to find the perfect last-minute gift during the Annual Home for The Holidays Marketplace & Parade on the first Saturday of December. Enjoy shopping and a night-time lighted Christmas parade with over 100 floats! *Delaware's Quaint Villages (Kent County, DE)*, Danielle Jonigan, [VisitDelawareVillages.com](#), djonigan@visitdelawarevillages.com

Greater Wilmington

Celebrate the holidays in historic du Pont style in Greater Wilmington & Brandywine Valley. From November to January, the magnificent du Pont mansions and gardens - Hagley, Winterthur, Nemours and Longwood - are dressed for the season. It's the perfect place to get into the holiday spirit. *Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau*, Lyn Lewis, [VisitWilmingtonDE.com](#), lynlewis@visitwilmingtonde.com

MARYLAND

State of Maryland

Maryland illuminates with light spectacles from the ocean to the mountains during the holiday season, with Christmas on the Potomac featuring ICE! and the Eastport Yacht Club Lights

Parade. Skip staying with family by checking into a hotel as part of Maryland's Home for the Holidays. *Maryland Office of Tourism, Matthew Scales, VisitMaryland.org, mscales@visitmaryland.org*

Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

Bedecked in green garlands, red ribbons, and white lights, Annapolis is magical during the holidays! A Lighted Boats Parade, Chocolate Binge Festival, Midnight Madness Holiday Shopping, drive-through lights display on the Bay, Candlelight Concerts at the Maryland State House, Candlelight Strolls, Military Bowl, and New Year's Eve Celebration welcome all! *Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, Susan Seifried, VisitAnnapolis.org, sseifried@visitannapolis.org*

Baltimore

Baltimore is the perfect place to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year. From ice skating in the Inner Harbor, exploring an authentic German Christmas Village, and seeing Hampden's Miracle on 34th Street, Baltimore helps you and your loved ones find the joyful spirit of the season. *Visit Baltimore, Kelly Nagle, Baltimore.org, knagle@baltimore.org*

Calvert County

Holiday events in Calvert County include the Solomons Christmas Walk, Garden in Lights and lighted boat parade in Solomons and Christmas on the Beach featuring a holiday parade, a boardwalk Christmas market and Santa, followed by a New Year's Day Polar Plunge in the Chesapeake Bay in North Beach. *Calvert County Department of Economic Development, Hilary Dailey, ChooseCalvert.com, hilary.dailey@calvertcountymd.gov*

Cecil County

Visiting Cecil County at Christmas is like going home for the holidays! Kick off the season at the Christmas Parade in the town of North East and catch the magic at the Candlelight House Tour & Winterfest of Lights along the scenic banks of C&D Canal in historic Chesapeake City. *Cecil County Tourism, Sandy Turner, SeeCecil.org, sturner@ccgov.org*

Frederick County

The Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship celebrates Frederick's tradition of religious diversity and local history. As the sun begins to set, visitors tour Frederick's famous clustered spires and other historic houses of worship by candlelight. Guests will be welcomed with special programs, angelic choirs, and nativity scenes. *Visit Frederick, Melissa Joseph Muntz, VisitFrederick.org, mmuntz@fredco-md.net*

Hagerstown - Washington County

Williamsport's Charlie Brown Christmas is a magical display of Christmas trees that began with a council woman's idea to decorate the town's historic barn using donated trees. This event now attracts thousands of people the first two weekends of December to view more than 130 themed

trees. Visit Hagerstown, Betsy DeVore, VisitHagerstown.com, betsy@visithagerstown.com

Harford County

The holiday season is a lively time in Harford County! In December, celebrate with parades and tree lightings in our three municipalities: Bel Air, Aberdeen, and Havre de Grace. Experience a unique New Year's Eve Duck Drop & Fireworks on the waterfront town of Havre de Grace. Visit Harford, Mindy Schneider, VisitHarford.com, mindy@visitharford.com

Howard County

Come play and stay for the holidays in Howard County, Merry-Land! Main Street in Old Ellicott City is open for business, Symphony of Lights is shining bright, and our scenic beauty is breathtaking. Eat, drink and be merry in Howard County! Visit Howard County, Crystal Abrom, VisitHowardCounty.com, crystal@howardcountytourism.com

Queen Anne's County

Celebrate the holidays in Queen Anne's County. Kick off the season at the largest model train show exhibit around - at the Old Outlet Center mall on Kent Island. Then relive Centreville's rich history during the holiday historic house tour. Queen Anne's County Office of Tourism, Ashley Chenault, VisitQueenAnnes.com, achenault@qac.org

Talbot County

Talbot County's holiday celebrations are welcoming and festive - from the annual Christmas in St. Michaels celebration to Christmas on the Creek in Oxford. The Great Tilghman Island Crab Pot Tree is a beacon for seasonal merriment that culminates in the New Year's Eve crab drop at First Night in Easton. Talbot County Office of Tourism, Cassandra M. Vanhooser, TourTalbot.org, cvanhooser@talbgov.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania attractions like Hershey Park, Sesame Place, Phipps Conservatory, and Longwood Gardens transform for the holidays! With events like It's a Wonderful Life Festival in Indiana, A Dickens of a Christmas in Wellsboro, Christkindlmarkt in Bethlehem, and Santa-themed train excursions - the season is merry and bright in PA. Pennsylvania Tourism Office, Natalie Buyny, VisitPA.com, nbuyny@tierneyagency.com

Butler County

The Harmony Museum's annual WeihnachtsMarkt, a traditional German Christmas Market, has become a major regional attraction. The festival has also become the museum's prime fundraiser while presenting gift-shopping in a family-fun atmosphere. The thousands of visitors who attend find handcrafted and German imports as well as traditional food and entertainment. Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau, Tiffany Hernandez, VisitButlerCounty.com, tiffany@visitbutlercounty.com

Central Pennsylvania

Bellefonte Victorian Christmas allows visitors to interact with the Dickens characters, have breakfast with Mr. and Mrs. Claus and take a ride in a horse-drawn carriage. New Year's Eve brings First Night State College, where ice sculptures and music fill the streets of downtown. *Central Pennsylvania Convention & Visitors Bureau, Andy Rupert, VisitPennState.org, andy@visitpennstate.org*

Chester County

The Brandywine Valley is home to Longwood Gardens, the world's premier horticultural display garden. The holidays find the gardens transformed into a dazzling, illuminated wonderland. Magic awaits inside a soaring four-acre conservatory while outdoors a half million lights warmly glow. Longwood is open every day of the year. *Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau, Nina Kelly, BrandywineValley.com, nina@brandywinevalley.com*

Clearfield County

Home for the Holidays in Curwensville will put you and your family in the holiday spirit! Home for the Holidays offers a family movie night, town wide caroling, a Santa parade, a wine tour, horse and carriage rides, and so much more! *Visit Clearfield County, Josiah Jones, VisitClearfieldCounty.org, jjones@visitclearfieldcounty.org*

Endless Mountains

The Festival of Lights at Stone Hedge Golf Course running through New Year's Eve combined with holiday shopping, events like Christmas in Our Hometown or Christmas in Dushore plus a stop at a local tree farm to pick your pine is a visit guaranteed to make memories! *Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, Morgan Christopher, EndlessMountains.org, sales@endlessmountains.org*

Franklin County

Come home for the holidays to Franklin County! Enjoy an 1800's celebration during Christmas at the Farm at Renfrew Museum & Park or bundle up and bring the whole family to the Cocoa Crawl and holiday shopping in downtown Chambersburg. *Franklin County Visitors Bureau, Lauren E. Cappuccio, ExploreFranklinCountyPA.com, lcappuccio@explorefranklincountypa.com*

Gettysburg

Gettysburg is home to many holiday events that spread Christmas cheer. Set on the steps of the Gettysburg Hotel, the annual Tuba Carol Festival brings in tuba players from all over region to lead the crowds in song. The brass sounds warm the soul while hot chocolate warms the rest. *Destination Gettysburg, Rachel Wright, DestinationGettysburg.com, rachel@destinationgettysburg.com*

Hershey Harrisburg

Annual holiday events in Hershey & Harrisburg include Hersheypark Candylane & Sweet Lights, Hershey's Chocolate World Holiday House, live seasonal shows, and Christmas at Fort Hunter Mansion. *Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau, Rick Dunlap, VisitHersheyHarrisburg.org, rick@hersheyharrisburg.org*

Huntingdon County

Families and friends travel to share the holidays together in our luxury vacation homes tucked into the mountains around Raystown Lake. There are beautiful homes here large enough for a holiday meal together (around a table large enough to seat all) and gathering around the fireplace to reminisce. *Huntingdon County Visitors Bureau, Edward Stoddard, Raystown.org, estoddard@raystown.org*

Lancaster County

Revel in the holiday atmosphere on one of the Christmas Trains at Strasburg Rail Road. Choose from distinctive experiences offered by Santa's Paradise Express, the Christmas Tree Train, or The Night Before Christmas Train - plus enjoy a Christmas feast aboard select departure times. Trains available between Thanksgiving and Christmas. *Discover Lancaster, Joel Cliff, DiscoverLancaster.com, jcliff@discoverlancaster.com*

Laurel Highlands

Celebrate the holidays in the Laurel Highlands! Take a ride through the beautiful landscapes of Seven Springs Mountain Resort, adorned with more than one million lights. Stroll through the incredible artisans at the Holiday Village, take a ride on the holiday train, go snow tubing, meet Santa Claus, and more. *Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, Anna Weltz, LaurelHighlands.org, aweltz@laurelhighlands.org*

Lehigh Valley

Make your days merry and bright in Lehigh Valley. Explore Bethlehem, "The Christmas City," on a historical walking tour or take a horse-drawn carriage ride along Main Street. Be sure to make your way to Christkindlmarkt at SteelStacks, recognized as one of the top holiday shopping markets in the world. *Discover Lehigh Valley, Kaitie Burger, DiscoverLehighValley.com, kaitie@discoverlehighvalley.com*

Philadelphia

Every must-do Philadelphia holiday list should include the Philly Holiday Festival presented by One Liberty Observation Deck and a spot on the sidewalk for the Mummers Parade. *Visit Philadelphia, Daniel Davis, VisitPhilly.com, daniel@visitphilly.com*

Pittsburgh

Light Up Night marks the start of the holiday season in Pittsburgh. Numerous holiday displays will come to life and visitors will enjoy ice skating, an outdoor holiday market, horse drawn carriages, and more around Downtown Pittsburgh through the end of the year.

VisitPITTSBURGH, Kristin Wenger,
VisitPittsburgh.com, kristin.wenger@visitpittsburgh.com

Pocono Mountains

The Pocono Mountains region is full of holiday celebrations in December. Visitors will find halls decked for the season, life-sized gingerbread houses, spectacular tree lighting ceremonies with fireworks, visits from Santa Claus, historical Christmas reenactments, and more. It's an extra special time to visit the Poconos. *Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, Kelly Shannon*, PoconoMountains.com, kshannon@poconos.org

Potter County - Tioga County

Christmas on Main Street honors Wellsboro as "the town that saved Christmas" sharing the history of the town's production of Shiny Brite ornaments during World War II for homes across North America. Events, displays, shopping and holiday entertainment await visitors annually the second weekend of December. *Visit Potter-Tioga, Morgan Christopher*, VisitPotterTioga.com, morgan@visittottertioga.com

VIRGINIA

Alexandria

Minutes from D.C., Old Town Alexandria is filled with nostalgic wonder during the holiday season. On the first Saturday in December at 11 a.m., celebrate the city's Scottish heritage during the Annual Campagna Center Scottish Christmas Walk Parade featuring Scottish clans, pipe and drum bands, terriers and hounds, and more. *Visit Alexandria, Leah Spellman*, VisitAlexandriaVA.com, lspellman@visitalexva.com

Fairfax County

In festive Fairfax County, spend the holidays strolling through glittering botanical gardens adorned with 500,000 lights or take a drive through Northern Virginia's largest light show. Greet George Washington's Christmas camel and take candlelit tours at his beloved Mount Vernon. Everyday fun includes ice skating, shopping, and many seasonal events. *Visit Fairfax, Ali Morris*, FXVA.com, amorris@fxva.com

Hampton

Experience the magic of the season at the Downtown Hampton Lighted Boat Parade. This dazzling flotilla of roughly 20 boats sails down the Hampton River, delighting spectators on both banks. Held Friday of the first full week of December, see and hear the parade best at the Hampton Maritime Center. *Hampton Convention and Visitor Bureau, Elizabeth Severs*, VisitHampton.com, elizabeth.severs@hamptoncvb.com

Harrisonburg

Visit Downtown Harrisonburg for Winter Wonderfest in early December! Activities include photos with Santa, a browse of the Art Market, caroling, meeting the Grinch, watching The Polar Express at Court Square Theater, and partaking in the Cookie Tour! *Harrisonburg Tourism &*

Visitor Services, Brenda Black, VisitHarrisonburgVA.com,
brenda.black@harrisonburg.va.gov

Prince William County

One of the best small towns in America to spend this holiday season is Historic Occoquan, located in DC's Countryside. Visitors can grab a hot cocoa and attend a traditional Christmas tree lighting and holiday parade. They also won't want to miss the arrival of Santa Claus by boat! *Prince William County Office of Tourism, Nicole Warner, VisitPWC.com, nwarner@pwcgov.org*

Richmond

The holiday season is a sparkly one in the Richmond region. Dominion Energy GardenFest of Lights features over one million lights and hand-crafted decorations at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Kings Dominion's WinterFest has plenty of hands-on activities like ice skating, cookie-decorating and a 38-animal petting zoo. *Richmond Region Tourism, Meghan Gearino, VisitRichmondVA.com, mgearino@visitrichmondva.com*

Shenandoah County

In Shenandoah County there are six small historic towns strung along Route 11 like pearls on a strand. Each has its own unique way of ringing in the holiday season with parades, tree-lightings, carols, cocoa and good cheer during the first week in December. *Shenandoah County Tourism, Jenna French, VisitShenandoahCounty.com, jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us*

Virginia's Blue Ridge

Choose Virginia's Blue Ridge for the holidays! Discover the charm of a magical mountain destination full of cheer, parades, tree lighting ceremonies, festivals, and holiday performances. From Santa sightings and Christmas carolers to ice skating and historic home tours, it's all part of the holiday spirit in Virginia's Blue Ridge. *Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge, Taylor Spellman, VisitVBR.com, tspellman@visitvbr.com*

WEST VIRGINIA

Hampshire County

In Romney, West Virginia's oldest city, ride the Potomac Eagle Christmas Train and visit with Santa and his Elves. There's seasonal fun on this holiday train ride with crafts, coloring, hot cocoa and cookies, carolers, musicians, elves and other special guests. *Hampshire County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Jonathan Bellingham, CometoHampshire.com, jonathan@caponsprings.net*

About Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance

The Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) is a cohesive unit of regional tourism partners encompassing Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington, D.C. The group serves travel journalists by creating a regional resource that ignores geographical boundaries. The Alliance promotes

common threads and offers saleable stories to journalists about the mid-Atlantic destination as a whole. For more information, visit www.matpra.org.

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Kaitie Burger

MATPRA Chair 2018-2019

midatlantictourism@gmail.com