



MATPRA

MID-ATLANTIC TOURISM PUBLIC RELATIONS ALLIANCE

Holiday Happenings

(Mid-Atlantic Region, December 13, 2019) — Destinations across the Mid-Atlantic are busy decking the halls and putting regional touches on small town business districts and suburban shopping areas to welcome visitors for the annual celebration of this special season! Annual and special events across Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia highlight each region's traditional celebrations with modern and unique takes on classic yuletide greetings.

Whether celebrating the splendorous tidings of Christmas, the soulfully illuminating lights of Chanukah or the thoughtful reflections of Kwanzaa, destinations across the region offer a wide variety of events and attractions for visitors, as well as their families, friends and loved ones to consider when planning travel this December!

For more information on any of the following, contact the destination marketing organization listed below. For general information on the Mid-Atlantic, visit MATPRA.org.

DELAWARE

Delaware's Quaint Villages

Spend the Holidays in Delaware's Quaint Villages for a getaway filled with tax-free shopping, homemade baked goodies, caroling, tree lightings, festivals, night-time festive parades and more! From Cider Fest at Fifer Orchards & Country Store to a night-time parade in Downtown Historic Dover, there is something for everyone to enjoy this Holiday season! *Delaware's Quaint Villages (Kent County, DE)*, *Danielle Jonigan*, VisitDelawareVillages.com, , djonigan@visitdelawarevillages.com

Greater Wilmington

The holidays are all about making memories. So why not take a road trip through Wilmington and the Brandywine Valley. From Christmastime exhibits at du Pont family estates to lush garden tours that evoke the spirit of the season, you can fill your days and nights with festive activities. *Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau*, *Sarah Willoughby*, VisitWilmingtonDE.com , swilloughby@visitwilmingtonde.com

MARYLAND

Maryland (State of)

'Tis the season for lights, holiday train experiences, candlelight tours, holiday festivals and performances. Celebrate the season in Maryland by visiting one of the many "Merry-land Holiday Festivities," take the Polar Express Train Ride or see the many light displays throughout the state that light up the Maryland skies. *Maryland Office of Tourism*, *Matthew Scales*, VisitMaryland.org , mscales@visitmaryland.org

Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

A Chocolate Binge Festival, Midnight Madness Holiday Shopping, a Winterfest and European Christmas Market, Lighted Boats Parade, Holiday Candlelight Strolls, Jolly Express Cruises, a Miracle on Annapolis Street meet and greet with the famous Budweiser Clydesdale horses and the Military Bowl at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium await you in Annapolis! *Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, Susan Seifried, VisitAnnapolis.org, sseifried@visitannapolis.org*

Calvert County

It's the most magical time of year! Annmarie Sculpture Garden is transformed into a twinkling wonderland of enchanted woods with glowing light sculptures and installations. Head to the towns of Chesapeake Beach and North Beach to the decorated boardwalk, play I-Spy with the lighted crab who hides around town! *Calvert County Department of Economic Development, Hilary Dailey, ChooseCalvert.com, hilary.dailey@calvertcountymd.gov*

Frederick County

If you've ever wanted to step into a Hallmark Christmas movie, you will love Downtown Frederick during the holidays. Lights twinkle in shop windows, horse-drawn carriages travel through the streets, and the smell of hot cocoa is always close by. *Visit Frederick, Melissa Muntz, VisitFrederick.org, mmuntz@fredco-md.net*

Hagerstown - Washington County

Small town tradition is at the heart of the holidays in Washington County. Enjoy town tree lightings, holiday shows and concerts, outdoor light displays, carriage and wagon rides, festive tree displays, decorated historic homes, visits with Santa and multi-level model train displays that bring out the child in everyone. *Visit Hagerstown, Betsy DeVore, VisitHagerstown.com, betsy@visithagerstown.com*

Harford County

In the beginning of December, each of our three municipalities celebrate the holidays true to their own unique character. Experience it yourself at Bel Air's Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting, Havre de Grace's Holly Jolly First Friday, Parade & Light-Up Night or Aberdeen's Christmas Street Celebration. *Visit Harford, Mindy Schneider, VisitHarford.com, mindy@visitharford.com*

Howard County

Come play and then stay this holiday season in Howard County, Merry-Land! Main Street in Old Ellicott City is open for business, Symphony of Lights will be shining bright and our scenic beauty is breathtaking. Eat, drink and be merry with us this holiday season! *Visit Howard County, Crystal Abrom, visithowardcountytourism.com, crystal@howardcountytourism.com*

Wicomico County

Enjoy the holidays in Wicomico County. Visit the Christmas tree in Downtown Salisbury, see the light display and tree at Salisbury's Winter Wonderland at the City Park, enjoy Cookies With Santa at the Salisbury Zoo and head to the Ward Museum for its Winter Wonderland event. *Wicomico County, Vanessa Junkin, WicomicoTourism.org, vjunkin@wicomicocounty.org*

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania (Commonwealth of)

From holiday light shows to train rides with Santa, and even a town known as the Christmas City, Pennsylvania is ready for the season. Relax fireside at a cozy bed and breakfast, cut down that perfect Christmas tree, and sip cider at one of our craft cideries. *Pennsylvania Tourism Office, Sarah Lunny, VisitPA.com, slunny@tierneyagency.com*

Altoona

Enjoy a drive through a park featuring 51 acres of holiday lights & animations and see the indoor model train display featuring the park! A historic showcases a variety of holiday themed shows. Plus experience indoor recreation for the entire family! *Explore Altoona, Jennifer Fleck, explorealtoona.com, jfleck@explorealtoona.com*

Bradford County

More than 8,000 spectators line the streets of Sayre Borough each year for the region's biggest holiday event - the annual Christmas Parade! This year celebrates the theme "Light Up the Night." Stay the weekend, do some holiday shopping at the region's eclectic shops and enjoy the spirit of the season. *Bradford County Tourism Promotion Agency, Morgan Christopher, VisitBradfordCounty.com, bctourism@bradfordcounty.org*

Butler County

Thousands will gather in the town square of Historic Harmony to welcome the New Year on German time at 6 PM EST (midnight in Germany) in recognition of the community's heritage. The afternoon will be filled with fun and family activities all capped-off by a ball drop and fireworks! *Butler County Tourism and Convention Bureau, Tiffany Hernandez, VisitButlerCounty.com, tiffany@visitbutlercounty.com*

Endless Mountains

Late comedienne Joan Rivers had her holiday tree delivered to her residence from a tree farm in the Endless Mountains. Why? Northeastern Pennsylvania is known as THE place to pick your perfect tree. Add on the Festival of Lights and small town holiday celebrations to create a memorable holiday getaway. *Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, Morgan Christopher, EndlessMountains.org, sales@endlessmountains.org*

Lancaster County

Tis the season for Discovering Christmas in Lancaster County, home to several American yuletide traditions – like the mischievous Belsnickle – and brimming with festive history events, fantastic holiday shows, great shopping deals, seasonal family activities, and cut-your-own Christmas tree farms. *Discover Lancaster, Joel Cliff, DiscoverLancaster.com, jcliff@discoverlancaster.com*

Lehigh Valley

Experience the magic of the Christmas City. Bethlehem, PA offers charming Main Street shopping, horse-drawn carriage rides, historic walking tours and more. Be sure to visit Christkindlmarkt at SteelStacks - ranked one of the top holiday markets in the world by outlets including Travel + Leisure, Forbes, USA Today and more. *Discover Lehigh Valley, Kaitie Burger, DiscoverLehighValley.com, kaitie@discoverlehighvalley.com*

Montgomery County

Whatever your faith, or background, there's something at the heart of the World Nativities exhibit at Glencairn Museum in Bryn Athyn that most people can probably relate to – family. The religious art and history museum displays dozens of three-dimensional nativity scenes collected from around the world every holiday season. *Visit Montgomery, Emily Keel, valleyforge.org, keel@valleyforge.org*

Potter County - Tioga County

Did you know Wellsboro is "the town that saved Christmas"? The second weekend of December event "Christmas on Main Street" honors the creation of "Shiny Brite" ornaments, created here to fill the gap when World War II naval blockades prevented traditionally produced German ornaments from reaching the US. *Visit Potter-Tioga, Morgan Christopher, VisitPotterTioga.com, morgan@visitpottertioga.com*

VIRGINIA

Alexandria

Experience holiday magic on historic streets in Old Town Alexandria. Recognized by Oprah Magazine as one of the Most Charming Christmas Towns Across the World and by Southern Living as the Perfect Southern Town for a Hallmark Christmas Movie, visitors feel transported by an old fashioned sense of holiday wonder. *Visit Alexandria, Leah Spellman, www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com, HolidaysSpellman@visitalexva.com*

Giles County

Experience the season in Giles. Families can enjoy water-side cabins or historic luxury lodges. Adventure seeking visitors will still find hiking and cross-country skiing through the mountains of the Giles. And one cannot let the season go by without visiting Narrows and the Duck Pond to see the Christmas Lights twinkling throughout downtown. *Giles County, VA Tourism, Cora GnegyGilesCounty.org, cgnegy@gilescounty.org*

Harrisonburg

Join us for the sweetest tour of Downtown in December at the Cookie Tour. Browse downtown shops, enjoy festivities and make plans to stop at every location to build your own plate of locally-made holiday cookies. This is sure to get everyone into the spirit of the holidays! *Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services, Jessica Williams, VisitHarrisonburgVA.com, jessica.williams@harrisonburgva.gov*

Lexington & Rockbridge

One of Virginia's beautiful holiday main streets, merry downtown Lexington glows a little brighter with cheerful window displays and wreathed lampposts during the Christmas season. Festivities officially begin with the annual candlelight processional and tree lighting as the calendar grows to include favorite holiday concerts and family-friendly performances. *Lexington & Rockbridge Area Tourism, Patty Williams, LexingtonVirginia.com, marketing@lexingtonvirginia.com*

Norfolk

Wreaths decorate Granby Street, oversize Menorah towers over Town Point Park and carolers can be heard spreading cheer through the downtown streets. Christmas trees and holiday lights of all shapes, sizes and colors illuminate the city, while holiday flavored brews and coffees are steps away to warm up your soul. *VisitNorfolk, Sarah Hughes, visitnorfolk.com, shughes@visitnorfolktoday.com*

Orange County

When winter arrives, it's time to indulge in local, seasonal wines, and holiday feasts. Towns of Orange and Gordonsville transform into old-fashioned holiday villages, James Madison's Montpelier is adorned with vintage 19th century holiday customs and the Market at Grelen's Enchanted Extravaganza features artisans in a beautiful Farm Market setting. *Orange County, Virginia Tourism, Lori Landes-Carter, www.VisitOrangeVirginia.com, Lcarter@orangecountyva.gov*

Richmond

The Richmond region is a flurry of activity during the holiday season! Head to the Science Museum of Virginia for Fruitcake Science to learn about America's least favorite holiday treat. Take a Holiday House Tour in Richmond's historic Fan neighborhood. And don't miss the holiday display at the famous Jefferson Hotel! *Richmond Region Tourism, Meghan Gearino, VisitRichmondVa.com, mgearino@visitrichmondva.com*

Shenandoah County

Don't clean the house in preparation for holiday family guests, come to Shenandoah County and rent a cabin or home where the whole family can gather! Shrine Mont Retreat in Orkney Springs has winter

homes for rent to meet the needs of families and extended families of all sizes. *Shenandoah County Tourism, Jenna French, VisitShenandoahCounty.com, jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us*

WEST VIRGINIA

Hampshire County

Experience a Country Classic Christmas on board the Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad's first ever North Pole Express! You'll ride the rails with Santa, while enjoying caroling, milk and cookies, and a wonderful story of how the train saves Christmas. Runs weekends Nov. 22-Dec. 22 with 3 trips most days. *Hampshire County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Jonathan Bellingham, cometohampshire.com, Jonathan@caponsprings.net*

Pocahontas County

Find yourself lost in Pocahontas County, West Virginia's winter wonderland! From Christmas at Cass, where you can explore the state park as it's transformed into a scene from the North Pole, to a sleigh-drawn horse ride through the snow covered pines at Snowshoe Mountain Resort. Magical holiday experiences and memories await, here Nature's Mountain Playground. *Pocahontas County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chelsea Walker, NaturesMtnPlayground.com, cwalker@pocahontascountywv.com*

About the 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 while promoting common threads, offering story ideas about the Mid-Atlantic region as a whole. For more information, visit MATPRA.org.