



PRESS RELEASE

Delaware Announces Holiday Attractions

Wilmington, Del. (December 4, 2009) – Delaware has no shortage of fun and festivities planned during the holiday season! Highlighted below are some of the wonderful seasonal attractions offered by each of the counties in the First State.

Holiday Magic in Greater Wilmington, Delaware

Experience the magic of the holidays in Greater Wilmington, Delaware and the Brandywine Valley. Discover magnificent mansions decorated for the season, fantastic outdoor lighting displays and glorious indoor gardens. Enjoy fine dining experiences and fabulous performances and don't miss Greater Wilmington's wonderful tax-free shopping opportunities. Be here when Santa Clause arrives in a whirlybird or take a ride with Santa aboard a steam-powered locomotive. Whether you are looking for a romantic weekend getaway or a fun-filled outing with family and friends, Greater Wilmington and the Brandywine Valley is the perfect place to get into the holiday spirit.

Located midway between New York City and Washington, DC and less than thirty minutes from Philadelphia, Wilmington, Delaware is readily accessible by car or train. If you need help planning a visit call (800) 489-6664 or check www.VisitWilmingtonDE.com.

Nemours Mansion & Gardens is dressed for the season and open for guided tours, but reservations are a must. Always spectacular, the mansion built for A.I. du Pont at the turn of the century and modeled after Marie Antoinette's Le Petit Trianon, takes on a special aura during the holidays.

Hagley Museum & Garden is celebrating Christmas. Treat yourself to a delicious Sunday brunch at the Belin House on the grounds of the estate. Then tour Eleutherian Mills, the ancestral home of the du Pont family, which is trimmed for the holidays in a combination of styles from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Winterthur Museum & Country Estate, home of Henry Francis du Pont and his world-known collection of American antiques, features table settings, floral displays, toys and treats set amidst exquisite period furnishings to demonstrate how the du Pont family celebrated the season. Outside on select evenings, Enchanted Woods, a children's garden built by the fairies who once entertained young Henry and his sister, Louise, are aglow with twinkling lights. Be sure to reserve enough time to peruse Winterthur's fabulous gift shop and the changing exhibits in the galleries.

The area is steeped in history as a visit to **Historic New Castle** or the **Historic Homes of Odessa** quickly attests. **Historic New Castle**, located just a few minutes south of the city of Wilmington on the bank of the Delaware River, dates back to the 18th century. On December 12th, the town is decorated for a colonial Christmas complete with music, carolers, carriage rides, private home and museum tours, greens sale, tree lighting and St. Nicholas. A little further south is the small residential community of Odessa. Throughout the year, the Historic Houses of Odessa offer a unique and well-documented picture of 18th- and 19th-century lifestyles, but Saturday, December 5 is exceptional. Experience *Christmas in Odessa*. The five historic properties and many private homes in the town of Odessa are dressed for the season and open for tours. The day's festivities include a Christmas Craft & Antique Show, Tea in Old St. Paul's Church, Clydesdale drawn carriage rides, caroling, bell ringing, an organ recital, a Fife & Drum performance and a fresh greens sale.

Christmas blooms at **Longwood Gardens** through January 10. Thousands of poinsettias, towering Christmas trees and fragrant flowers transform the indoor gardens. Outside, more than 400,000 decorative LED lights glitter in the trees and colorful fountain displays set to music enchant visitors.

One of Greater Wilmington's most unique yuletide traditions is the **Sankta Lucia** celebration on December 13th in Old Swedes Church, the nation's oldest church building dating back to 1638. This moving celebration combines two traditions-- the pagan ritual of worshipping the Sun God at Midwinter and the Christian Christmas. Lucia comes with candlelight in her hair on the darkest morning of the year. Afterwards, guests are invited to tour the Hendrickson House Museum which is decorated for a Swedish Christmas.

On a lighter side, climb aboard **Wilmington Western's** steam powered locomotive and ride through the Red Clay Valley with Santa himself.

Experience the thrill of greeting Santa Claus as he flies into the **American Helicopter Museum** in a whirlybird or drive through the grounds of **Herr's Snack Factory** which are illuminated with 250,000 decorative lights.

Shopping is a real treat—and it's also tax free in Delaware! You can shop in the Christiana Mall with anchor stores like Macy's and J. C. Penney, search for bargains in the outlet centers at Shipyard Shops on the Riverfront or browse through quaint boutiques and galleries in Trolley Square, Centreville or Hockessin. Find great and unusual gifts at Brandywine River Museum's Annual Critter Sale or Holiday Shops, Delaware Art Museum, Hagley Museum and Winterthur.

Wonderful dining experiences await you in the Greater Wilmington Area and there is a restaurant or winery to please every palate. The choice of entertainment is equally broad with Broadway productions, symphonies, concerts, Broadway productions, special Christmas shows at The New Candlelight Dinner Theatre, performances of the ever popular *Nutcracker* and more.

Most area hotels offer special packages, so come for the day and stay for the night. Get into the holiday spirit in Greater Wilmington and the Brandywine Valley.

Central Delaware Region Celebrations: www.visitdover.com 800-233-5368

Opera House Art Show through December 13

The 14th annual Smyrna Opera House Art Show begins with an opening night reception from 6-8 p.m. featuring high-quality, juried artwork by local and regional artists, and the show runs through December 13. For information, call 302-653-4236.

Festival of Lights in Downtown Dover

Through to New Year's -- Explore the City of Dover's annual Festival of Lights, after dusk, free. For information, 302-736-7050 or www.cityofdover.com.

Walking Tour of the Dover Green

For 300 years, The Green has been the center of life in Dover. Guided walks through the historic district reveal the people and events that left their mark on Dover's history. Free, for information, 302-739-9194.

Sounds of the Season at Opera House

December 4 & 5 -- Original Holiday show featuring local singers and musicians at the Smyrna Opera House at 7:30 p.m. fee. For more information call 302-653-4236 or visit www.smyrnaoperahouse.org.

Historical Performances at State House

Saturday, December 5 -- "Fully, Freely and Entirely," live historical theater, will be presented at the Old State House at 6:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., fee, for tickets and info call 302-739-9194.

Colonial Life Book Discussion at Old State House

December 5 -- First in a series book discussion about Colonial Life, James Thomas Flexner, *Washington: The indispensable Man*, sponsored by Delmarva Discussions from 10 a.m. until 12 noon at the Old State House in Dover, free. Read the book in advance through the Dover Public Library (302-736-7032). For info, call 410-996-0091.

Home for the Holidays Downtown Dover

December 5 -- The Downtown Dover Partnership will host its Second Annual Home for the Holidays event featuring live performances, a visit from Santa, parade, scavenger hunt, historical performances and more. For info, 302-678-2940 or www.downtowndoverpartnership.com.

Dover Library Hosts Home for the Holidays Events

December 5 -- Dover Public Library will host a reading of Clement C. Moore's "The Night Before Christmas" and other holiday stories at 10:30 a.m. From 1 to 2:30 p.m., "Tis the Season to Decorate" will be featured. Children may drop in to create a holiday decoration for their home. Both events free of charge, for info, 302-736-7032.

Revenge of the Reindeer at The Schwartz

December 5 -- Chicago City Limits will present the holiday comedy "Revenge of the Reindeer" at 7 p.m. at the Schwartz Center for the Arts, fee, for info, 302-678-5152. or www.schwartzcenter.com.

A Musical Holiday at the Victrola

December 5 - Travel back to the early 1900s and hear musical favorites inspired by winter and the holiday season. [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), 375 S. New St., Dover, DE 19901. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free admission, 302-744-5055.

Ag Museum Hosts 'A Farmer's Christmas'

December 5 -- Holiday crafts, singing, activities, historical craft demonstrations inside and outdoors in the lantern lit Loockerman Landing Village. If you would like to participate, volunteer or have any suggestions please call the Delaware Agriculture Museum, fee. For more information call 734-1618.

Biggs Kids: Snowflakes Program

December 5 -- The forecast calls for a wintry mix! Make your home a winter white landscape by creating snowflakes for your windows for children ages 5-10 from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Biggs Museum, free. For information, [ww.biggsmuseum.org](http://www.biggsmuseum.org) or call 302-674-2111.

Holiday Cookie Decorating Workshop

December 8 -- Not sure how to turn those sugar cookies into festive treats? Let Chef and Pastry Artist Dana Herbert teach you the tricks of the cookie decorating trade. Herbert will provide you with fresh pre-made cookies to decorate for a gift, your holiday party, or perhaps for just yourself from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Biggs Museum. Fee. Visit www.biggsmuseum.org or call 302-674-2111 for program details and reservations.

Cocoa, Cookies and Toy Soldiers Program

December 9 -- Join the Biggs Museum before Caroling on the Green to enjoy some sweets and treats and create a toy soldier ornament to hang on your tree at home from 6 to 7 p.m. All supplies and refreshments will be provided by the museum. One toy soldier per child participant. Free, children ages 5 and up, reservations required. For info, www.biggsmuseum.org or call 302-674-2111

Annual Candlelight Tour of Homes

December 10 -- Get the holiday spirit by touring a number of decorated homes in Dover from 4 to 9:30 p.m., fee. For more information, call 302-653-6975.

Chesapeake Brass Band at Smyrna Opera House

December 12 – Step out for holiday music in style and listen to the 35 piece brass ensemble at 7:30 p.m. fee. For more information call 302-653-4236 or visit www.smyrnaoperahouse.org.

Kids: Visit Santa's Workshop

December 12 – Bring the kiddies out to the Smyrna Opera House have some fun at 10a.m., fee. For more information 302-653-4236 or visit www.smyrnaoperahouse.org.

Breakfast With Santa in Dover

Saturday, December 12 -- 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., children and their parents are invited to have Breakfast with Santa, includes breakfast, face painting, photographer and crafts, fee, Fairview Elementary School in Dover. For info, call 302-672-1951.

Biggs Kids: Snowflakes Program

December 16 -- The forecast calls for a wintry mix! Make your home a winter white landscape by creating snowflakes for your windows for children ages 3-5 from 1-2 p.m. at the Biggs Museum. Free, for info www.biggsmuseum.org or call (302) 674-2111.

'Scrooge' on Stage at The Schwartz

December 17 -- 9 a.m., 12 noon and 7 p.m., and Friday, December 18, 7 p.m. Bring the family out for the classic story of Scrooge, performed by Clear Space Productions at the historic Schwartz Center for the Arts, fee, 7 p.m., for info, 302-678-5152 or www.schwartzcenter.com.

Crown Decorating at First Night

December 31 -- A First Night favorite! Children of all ages are invited to participate in the 8th annual crown decorating activity from 3 to 6:00 p.m. All materials will be supplied and staff and volunteers will be on hand to assist the children. For info, www.biggsmuseum.org or 302-674-2111.

First Night Set For New Years Eve in Dover

Thursday, December 31 -- First Night Dover, an alcohol-free family fun event, will be held throughout the City of Dover from 3 p.m. until 12 midnight when a grand finale fireworks show will decorate the skies over Dover. Fee, for more information, 302-741-8228 or www.firstnightdover.com.

Shipbuilding in the First State -- Through December 31, 2010

["Shipbuilding in the First State."](#) Exhibit chronicling shipbuilding in Delaware from Native American canoes, to World War II vessels, to the tall-ship replicas of today. [Delaware Visitor Center and Galleries](#), 406 Federal St., Dover, DE 19901. Tues.–Sat., 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Sun., 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. Free admission. 302-744-5055.

'Simple Machines' -- Exhibit demonstrating the six "simple machines"—incline ramp, screw, wedge, pulley, lever, and wheel—that constitute the elementary building blocks of which all complicated machines are composed. [John Dickinson Plantation](#), 340 Kitts Hummock Rd., Dover, DE 19901. Wed.–Sat., 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Free admission. 302-739-3277.

Working Artist Forum Art Exhibit -- Through Jan 18, 2010. Come see what all the talk is about. All art work is for sale and part of the proceeds benefit the Delaware Agriculture Museum. Fee. Opening Reception November 21st 1-3 p.m. For more information call 734-1618.

Arts ConnectEd -- Through February 21, 2010

Arts ConnectEd features the young talent of students in Delaware schools. The exhibition consists of four month-long installations, each featuring the artwork of a different school in the state of Delaware. *Arts ConnectEd* reflects the quality and diversity of art education in Delaware schools. The Biggs Museum is dedicated to promoting and supporting the role arts play in youth development. In addition to the four school installations, *Arts ConnectEd* will also feature *Sewell's Studio*, an interactive creativity center, providing young museum visitors the opportunity to create works of art similar to those currently on display. The Biggs Museum is honored to foster this commitment to learning and community. Delaware Schools showcasing

in *Arts ConnectEd* include, Holy Cross Elementary, Campus Community School, William Henry Middle School and Ursuline Academy. For info, www.biggmuseum.org or 302-674-2111.

Holiday-Centered Events in Southern Delaware

Holiday Celebrations

Historic Lewes Christmas Celebration

December 5, 2009, 10am

Location: Downtown Historic Lewes

Old Fashioned Christmas Parade & Lewes Historical Society Christmas House Tour

www.historiclewes.org

Milton Annual Holly Festival and Holiday House Tour

December 12, 2009, 10am – 3pm

Location: Historic & Greater Milton

A holiday shopping event in Milton and a holiday house tour featuring both historic and new Milton homes beautifully decorated for the holiday season.

www.historicmilton.com

Hometown Christmas Parades

Millsboro Christmas Parade & Santa Shop: December 5, www.millsborochamber.com

Seaford Christmas Parade: December 5, www.seafordchamber.com

Rehoboth Beach Hometown Christmas Parade: December 7, www.downtownrehoboth.com

Holiday-Centric Performing Arts

Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra Holiday Concert

December 5, 2009, 7:30pm

Location: Mariner's Bethel Church, Ocean View

Nutcracker Suite and other holiday favorites.

www.midatlanticsymphony.org

The Last Christmas Carol

December 4-6 & 11-13, 2009

Location: Possum Point Players, Georgetown

A non-traditional rendering of Dicken's traditional tale. This witty, musical twist will put you in good spirits for sure!

www.possumpointplayers.org

The Polar Express

December 6, 2009

Location: Milton Theatre, Milton

The Milton Theatre presents the 2004 film, *The Polar Express*, in both a Saturday matinee and Saturday evening showing to help get everyone into the holiday spirit.

www.miltontheatre.com

A Christmas Celebration with the American Boy Choir

December 5-6, 2009

Location: Rehoboth Beach Theatre of the Arts, Rehoboth Beach

For over seventy-three years, The American Boy Choir has been regarded as the United States' premier concert boys' choir and one of the finest boychoirs in the world. Its members - boys from grades 4 through 8, reflecting the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of our nation - come from nine states and four foreign countries.

www.rehobothbeachtheatre.com

First State Ballet Theatre Presents "The Nutcracker"

December 12, 2009, 7:00pm

Location: Delaware Tech Theatre, Georgetown

First State Ballet Theatre presents its sumptuous production of the holiday classic for all ages featuring the company's professional dancers and Tchaikovsky's exquisite music.

302-858-5475

Unique Tax-Free Shopping Opportunities

Second Saturdays Destination Art Walk

December 13, 2009

Location: Downtown Rehoboth Beach

Visit a dozen downtown art galleries as part of the new Second Saturday Art Walks presented by Mosaic - the new gallery collective for downtown Rehoboth. Check out the galleries, the fabulous art, receptions and more.

www.mosaicrehoboth.com

Rehoboth Beach Holiday Farmers Market

December 13, 2009, 1 – 3:30pm

Grove Park, Rehoboth Beach

Fresh wreaths, garlands, cheese and fruit baskets, and more.

www.rbfarmersmarket.com

CONTACT: Tina Madanat (302) 672-6834

For Immediate Release

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