



Holiday Wonders in Winston-Salem

Looking for something different this holiday season? Check out these one-of-a-kind experiences.

When it comes to the holidays, no town in America shines quite like Winston-Salem. You'll find a mix of traditions, decorations, and flavors unlike anywhere else in America, from the cobblestone streets in Old Salem to the brightly lit displays at Tanglewood. Here are a few things that make the holiday season one-of-a-kind in Winston-Salem.

Moravian Customs (and cookies)

Many of Winston-Salem's unique holiday customs are tied to the Moravians, a group of German-speaking migrants who founded the town of Salem in the 1700s. Today, many of those customs are still alive and well. You can check out our guide to Moravian traditions [here](#) and read about a few highlights below:

- The centerpiece of the Moravian holiday customs is [Old Salem Museum & Gardens](#), one of America's largest and most immersive historic attractions. You can chat with period-dressed interpreters, watch festive trade demonstrations, and get hands-on with many holiday traditions. Be sure to grab a photo on Old Salem's iconic Heritage Bridge, where dozens of Moravian stars create a one-of-a-kind scene. And no visit to Old Salem is complete without a stop by historic Winkler Bakery, where you can pick up fresh-baked treats such as the delightfully delicious Moravian cookies (the official state cookie of North Carolina). See the link above for special holiday events at Old Salem, including evening lantern tours, holiday markets, and more.
- Old Salem is also the home to another beloved holiday tradition, the annual [Candle Tea](#). Set in the Single Brothers House, this 8-day event lets you share in several Moravian holiday traditions, including carol singing, candle-making, enjoying coffee and sugar cake, and seeing an elaborate "putz" display and nativity scene.
- The Moravian festivities culminate on Christmas Eve, when dozens of Moravian churches hold candlelight [Lovefeasts](#). Lasting roughly 90 minutes, the simple services feature Christmas carols, coffee, and Lovefeast buns. The grand finale comes in the form of lighted beeswax candles, passed hand-to-hand through the congregation and raised in unison in a darkened sanctuary, creating a spectacle that's nothing short of magic.

Tanglewood Festival of Lights

For over three decades, the Tanglewood Festival of Lights has brightened the holidays in Winston-Salem. The spectacle is both the largest light display in the Carolinas and the best known, having earned "top light display in North Carolina" from Travel + Leisure for several years running. Open nightly from Nov. 15 to Jan 1, this drive-through display runs directly through Tanglewood Park in Clemmons, a suburb just a few miles west of Winston-Salem. The route is nearly five miles and consists of 80 unique displays and more than a million total lights. Visitors can also enjoy shopping and more at the Tanglewood Barn, located halfway through the festival route, home to Tanglewood's Gift Village and the S'moresville marshmallow roasting station. You can see what's new at the festival and get some insider tips by checking out our [Festival of Lights Guide](#).

Downtown Window Shopping

Downtown Winston-Salem is an attraction in its own right during the holiday season, providing the backdrop for a number of festivals, performances, pop-up markets, and more. Adding to the merriment is the annual [Window Wonderland](#) competition, a window-decorating contest but on by the Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership. Dozens of downtown businesses fill their windows with holiday lights and scenes, from bars to boutiques to art galleries, and winners are determined by public vote. While in downtown, shop for gifts and handmade items at places like Design Archives, Mast General Store, Piedmont Craftsmen, Visual Index, and other business filling the Downtown Arts District area. For a look at all the festivities, check out our shared [events calendar](#).

Historic Homes Dressed in Holiday Style

While Tanglewood and Old Salem are the focal points of Winston-Salem's holiday celebrations, there's plenty more seasonal magic to explore here, especially at several estates. Here are three highlights.

- [Reynolda](#). Steep yourself in holiday cheer at Reynolda, the former estate of R.J. and Katharine Reynolds. Stroll through the boutique shops and eateries at Reynolda Village, adorned with festive decorations, during the annual Holiday Stroll (Nov. 23). Take a wreath decorating class or purchase poinsettias at Reynolda Gardens. And don't miss Reynolda House, dressed in its holiday finest, where special events like Caroling Fridays are sure to delight. Learn more about Reynolda's holiday offerings [here](#).
- [Körner's Folly](#). You can experience "the strangest house in America" in full holiday splendor, as its 22 rooms are decked with Victorian-inspired décor. From Nov. 26 to Jan. 4, visitors can enjoy self-guided holiday tours of the home, which dazzles floor-to-ceiling garland, lights, and Christmas trees in nearly every room. Körner's Folly also holds several special events throughout the season, including Christmas By Candlelight evening tours on Dec. 7. Learn more about the home and its holiday traditions [here](#).
- [Graylyn Estate](#). Recently named one of the Top 5 boutique hotels in America by USA Today, this castle-like estate occupies 55 acres along the picturesque Reynolda Mile, just minutes from downtown. The 85-room estate shines especially bright during the holidays with festive music, events, and signature décor. The decorations are hallmarked by a series of themed Christmas trees scattered throughout the house. There are also nutcracker collections, twinkling lights, and an unforgettable gingerbread house (a mini-scaled model of the Graylyn Manor House). Those planning to stay in the estate can enjoy seasonal perks and specials, including a Holiday Magic getaway package. Go [here](#) for more on Graylyn's holidays.

MEDIA NOTES: We're happy to provide more details, high-res photography, and b-roll footage on the attractions mentioned. We can also discuss other holiday happenings and hotel packages. If you're interested in booking an interview, contact[maria/me] by phone or email. [Contact info is below.]

