Love Where You Live, San Antonio

THE CHRISTMAS EDITION

DECEMBER 2026 · SAN ANTONIO · HELOTES · BOERNE · NEW BRAUNFELS · HILL COUNTRY

THE DECEMBER ISSUE

Every parade, light show and market day from the River Walk to the Hill Country

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

More than 90 holiday events, with 2026 dates checked

Parades, tree lightings and drive-through lights

Navidad: tamales, pan dulce, champurrado, posadas and luminarias



BETSY



ROY

PRESENTED BY

Harvest Real Estate Group

210-889-7495 · HOMESBYHARVEST.COM

PHOTO BY JHOVANI MORALES ON PEXELS

FROM BETSY & ROY

San Antonio does Christmas like nowhere else. Here is all of it in one place.

Every year someone asks me the same question in November: when is the River Parade, and what else is going on? So this year Roy and I put the answer in one place. Every parade, tree lighting, light show and market day we could find, from downtown to Boerne, New Braunfels, Seguin, Castroville and Fredericksburg.

Here's how it works. The pages run by kind of event, and every listing has the date, the place, the cost and the link. We checked each date against the event's own page on November 16. A few favorites had not posted 2026 dates yet, so we marked those "Check date" instead of guessing.

Print it, stick it on the fridge, and pass it to a neighbor. That is what it is for.

Some of our favorite memories in this city happened on the River Walk on parade night, and half the fun is who you go with. If you are new to San Antonio, start with page 4. If you have lived here forever, I bet there is a town square on page 13 you have not seen yet. And turn to page 16 for Navidad: tamales, pan dulce, champurrado, posadas and luminarias.

Merry Christmas from our family to yours.

Betsy



BETSY NAVA-FLORES



ROY FLORES

Betsy Nava-Flores & Roy Flores

HARVEST REAL ESTATE GROUP · BETSY NAVA-FLORES, BROKER ASSOCIATE, TX LIC. #480380 · ROY FLORES, REALTOR®, TX LIC. #482480 · BROKERED BY EXP REALTY, LLC

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READ IT ONLINE

Every listing names its official website, so you can check the latest details before you go. In the PDF edition, tap any web address to open it. Questions about anything here go straight to Betsy at 210-889-7495.



PHOTO BY STEPHEN CRANE ON UNSPLASH

THE BIG NIGHT · FRIDAY, NOV 27

Parade Night Starts the Season

The day after Thanksgiving, the River Walk lights switch on and the season starts.

NOV 27 FRI

Ford Holiday River Parade & Lighting Ceremony FREE

RIVER WALK · STEPS OFF AT THE TOBIN CENTER

The 45th parade of lighted floats on the river, and the moment the River Walk lights switch on for the season. Theme: Holiday Wishes Come True.

6 PM · free on the east bank, Pecan St to Richmond Ave · reserved seats ticketed · thesanantonioriverwalk.com

NOV 27 FRI

Tobin Center Parade Viewing Party FREE

TOBIN CENTER PLAZA, 100 AUDITORIUM CIR

Watch the floats push off from the plaza where the parade begins.

Plaza opens 5 PM, ends 8 PM · tobincenter.org

NOV 27 FRI

H-E-B Christmas Tree Lighting FREE

TRAVIS PARK, 301 E TRAVIS ST

The city's official tree lighting, a short walk from the parade route.

4 to 7 PM · tree lights at 6 PM · sa.gov

NOV 27 FRI

Pearl Holiday Tree Lighting FREE

PEARL PARK, 303 PEARL PKWY

Carolers, cocoa and the lighting of Pearl's tree.

Time not posted yet (late afternoon last year) · atpearl.com

NOV 27 TO JAN

River Walk Holiday Lights FREE

DOWNTOWN RIVER WALK

More than 100,000 lights over the water, every night from parade night into early January.

Nightly · free · thesanantonioriverwalk.com

NOV 27 FRI

Boerne City Tree Lighting FREE

GAZEBO AT NORTH POLE VILLAGE, MAIN PLAZA, BOERNE

Boerne lights its tree on the first night of Dickens on Main.

6 to 6:30 PM · holidaysinboerne.com

NOV 27 FRI-SAT

Dickens on Main FREE

HILL COUNTRY MILE, BOERNE

A vintage holiday festival up and down Main Street: markets, snow and ice slides, Santa and a trackless train.

Nov 27-28 · noon to 9 PM · some rides extra · holidaysinboerne.com

NOV 27 TO JAN 2

Northern Lights Christmas Light Park

3171 CHURCH RD, SEGUIN

A drive-through park with more than 1.5 million lights. Opens the same night as the parade.

6 to 10 PM nightly · $28.96 per car online · northernlightstx.com

Dates, times and prices checked Nov 16, 2026 against each event's own page or city calendar. Plans change, so check the link before you go.



PHOTO BY CHRISTY ASH ON UNSPLASH

How San Antonio Does Christmas

Most cities light a tree. We light a river, make tamales by the dozen and walk Las Posadas by candlelight.

Christmas here is half Texas, half Mexico, a little bit German, and all of it outdoors.

BETSY NAVA-FLORES

If you grew up here, you know. Christmas in San Antonio does not stay inside the house. It happens on the river, on the plazas, and in kitchens where three generations roll tamales at one table.

It starts the night after Thanksgiving, when the Ford Holiday River Parade floats down the River Walk and more than 100,000 lights come on over the water. Those lights stay on into January, so you have weeks to stroll them, and they are free.

From there, the season borrows from every culture that built this city. Las Posadas retells Mary and Joseph's search for shelter with a candlelit procession and songs sung door to door. Los Pastores, the shepherds' play, has been performed here for generations. Market Square fills with music and food on the weekends, and La Gran Tamalada turns tamale-making into a festival.

Drive a half hour in any direction and the accent changes. New Braunfels and Fredericksburg hold German Christmas markets with a pyramid and wassail. Boerne puts on Dickens on Main. Gruene sends Cowboy Kringle in on horseback.

Here's the move: pick one downtown night, one Hill Country town and one tradition you have never tried. Everything you need to plan all three is on the next pages.

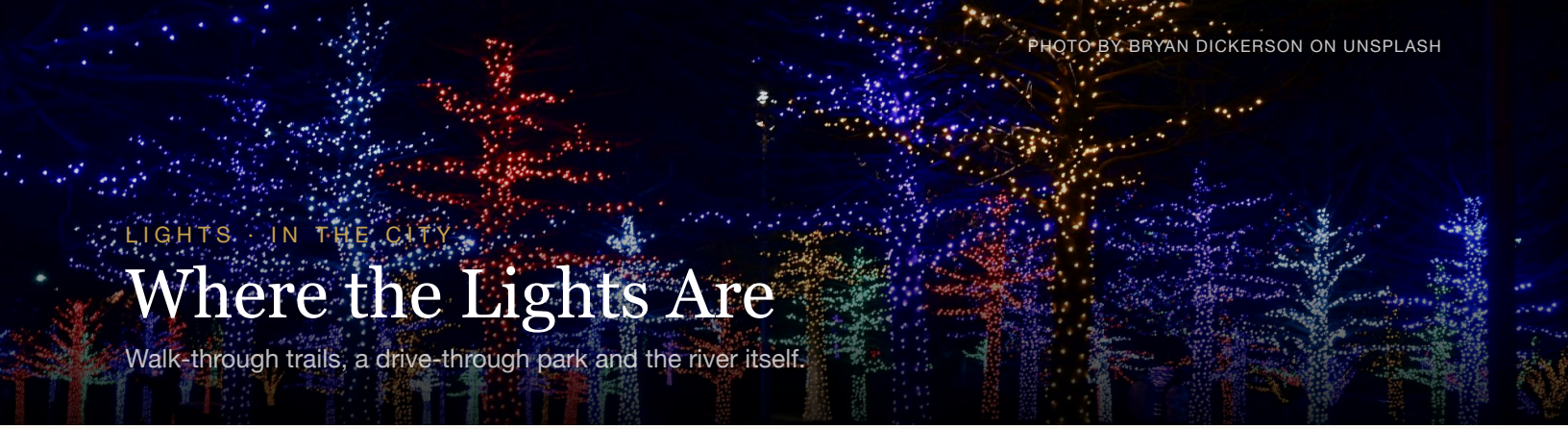


PHOTO BY BRYAN DICKERSON ON UNSPLASH

LIGHTS · IN THE CITY

Where the Lights Are

Walk-through trails, a drive-through park and the river itself.

NOV 14 TO JAN 3

Zoo Lights

SAN ANTONIO ZOO, 3903 N ST MARY'S ST

Miles of lights through the zoo and a new 129-foot tree at Congo Falls.

Daily · included with zoo admission · free for members · sazoo.org

NOV 20 TO JAN 10

Illuminate

SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL GARDEN, 555 FUNSTON PL

A timed-entry walk through the garden in light. Sensory-friendly night Dec 1, Family Night Dec 11.

5:30 to 9:30 PM · adults from $29.99 · parking $20 · sabgtx.org

NOV 6 TO JAN 3

The Light Park

NELSON W. WOLFF STADIUM, 5757 US-90 W

A mile-long drive-through LED show you can enjoy without leaving the car.

Nightly · gates 5:30 PM · priced per car · thelightpark.com

NOV 23 TO JAN 3

ice! featuring Rudolph

JW MARRIOTT HILL COUNTRY RESORT, 23808 RESORT PKWY

Two million pounds of hand-carved ice, kept at 9 degrees. Bring a jacket.

Daily · ticketed · jwhillcountrychristmas.com

DEC Sel. DATES

Ford Holiday Boat Caroling

RIVER WALK BARGES

Carolers sing from lighted barges. Free to hear from the banks; barge seats are ticketed.

Select December evenings, about 5 to 10 PM · thesanantonioriverwalk.com

NOV 27 TO JAN

Museum Reach Lights FREE

MUSEUM REACH, RIVER WALK

The quieter northern stretch of the river, lit for the season, with a light show at the lock and dam.

Nightly with the River Walk lights · sariverauthority.org

TUE - SUN

San Antonio | The Saga FREE

SAN FERNANDO CATHEDRAL, MAIN PLAZA

A 24-minute story of the city projected on the cathedral front. Pair it with a River Walk stroll.

Tuesday to Sunday at 9 PM · mainplaza.org

NOV 21 TO JAN 3

Holidays at The Rock

THE ROCK AT LA CANTERA, FROST PLAZA

More than 40,000 lights, an outdoor skating rink and free holiday movies on select nights.

Opening tree lighting Nov 21, 7 to 10 PM (free ticket required) · therockatlacantera.com

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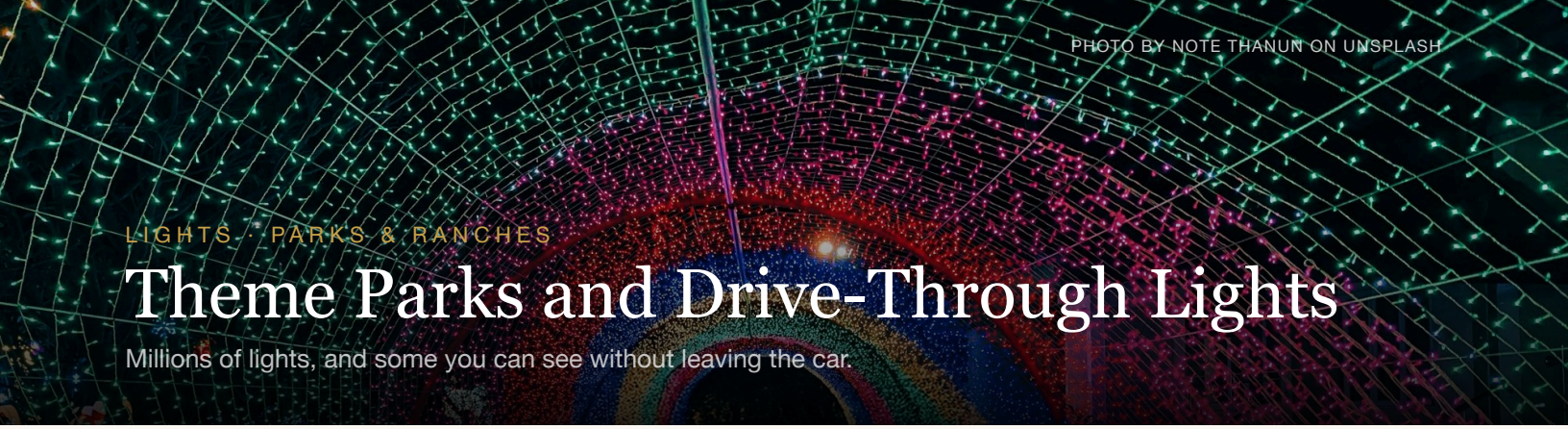


PHOTO BY NOTE THANUN ON UNSPLASH

LIGHTS · PARKS & RANCHES

Theme Parks and Drive-Through Lights

Millions of lights, and some you can see without leaving the car.

NOV 12 TO JAN 4

SeaWorld Christmas Celebration

10500 SEAWORLD DR

Millions of lights, the O Wondrous Night show and a cowboy Santa. Fireworks on New Year's Eve.

Select dates from 1 PM · included with park admission · seaworld.com

NOV 21 TO JAN 4

Holiday in the Park, 30th Anniversary

SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS, 17000 IH-10 W

A 70-foot tree, holiday shows and Santa's Cottage. Nightly fireworks Dec 26 to 30.

Select dates · included with admission · sixflags.com/fiestatexas

NOV 6 TO JAN 3

Santa's Ranch

9561 I-35 N, NEW BRAUNFELS

About 3 million lights along a mile of road.

6 to 10 PM (11 PM Fri-Sat) · $37 per car · santasranch.com

NOV 7 TO DEC 31

Jones Christmas Ranch

43360 I-10 W FRONTAGE RD, BOERNE

More than 4 million lights synced to 94.5 FM, plus an indoor market.

6 to 10 PM (11 PM Fri-Sat) · $40 per car · thejoneschristmasranch.com

NOV 27 TO DEC 23

Old West Christmas Light Fest

ENCHANTED SPRINGS RANCH, 242 SH 46 W, BOERNE

Walk through an Old West town wrapped in more than 2 million lights.

15 select nights, 5 to 10 PM · ticketed, ages 6 and up · christmaslightfest.com

DEC 5 TO DEC 23

Christmas at the Caverns CHECK DATE

NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS, 26495 NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS RD

A trail of lights, Santa and caroling underground. Supports the food bank.

Select nights · from $22.99 · confirm dates before you go · naturalbridgecaverns.com

DEC 11 FRI-SAT

Christmas in the Park

GUADALUPE RIVER STATE PARK, SPRING BRANCH

Two evenings with the park dressed as a winter scene.

Dec 11-12 · park entry · tpwd.texas.gov

NOV 24 TO JAN 5

Christmas Nights of Lights FREE

MARKTPLATZ, FREDERICKSBURG

A 30-foot tree and a 26-foot German Christmas pyramid light up every night. Dark Dec 4 and Dec 31.

Music 5 PM · lights 6 PM · visitfredericksburgtx.com

Dates, times and prices checked Nov 16, 2026 against each event's own page or city calendar. Plans change, so check the link before you go.



PHOTO BY CHRISTY ASH ON UNSPLASH

MARKET DAYS

Christmas Markets and Market Days

Shop local makers, from La Villita to Gruene.

NOV 20 TO NOV 22

Weihnachtsmarkt

NB CIVIC CENTER, 375 S CASTELL AVE, NEW BRAUNFELS

A German-style Christmas market with more than 60 vendors. Benefits the Sophienburg Museum.

10 AM to 5 PM · ticketed · sophienburg.com

NOV 27 TO NOV 29

Wrap & Rock Holiday Market FREE

THE ROCK AT LA CANTERA

More than 75 local makers in one place for holiday shopping.

Fri-Sat 6 to 10 PM · Sun 1 to 5 PM · free reservation · therockatlacantera.com

NOV 28 SAT

Tobin Holiday Art Market

TOBIN CENTER, 100 AUDITORIUM CIR

More than 80 local artists, the day after the parade.

10 AM to 4 PM · tobincenter.org

NOV 28 SAT

Celebración Musical FREE

HISTORIC MARKET SQUARE, 514 W COMMERCE

A day of music with the Musician's Blessing at noon.

10 AM to 6 PM · marketsquaresa.com

DEC 2 · 9 · 16

Pearl Holiday Night Market FREE

PEARL

An evening makers market on three Wednesdays in December.

5 to 9 PM · atpearl.com

DEC 4 TO DEC 20

Holidays on Houston Street FREE

LA VILLITA, 418 VILLITA ST

Downtown's holiday market, two weekends: Dec 4-6 and Dec 18-20.

Fri noon-10 PM · Sat 10 AM-10 PM · Sun 10 AM-6 PM · onhoustonstreet.com

DEC 4 FRI-SAT

Old Fashion Christmas FREE

HOUSTON SQUARE, CASTROVILLE

Medina County's largest arts and crafts show, with Santa and hayrides.

Fri 6 to 10 PM · Sat 9 AM to 4 PM · castroville.com

DEC 5 SAT

Kwanzaa Market Festival FREE

SBC COMMUNITY CENTER, 3310 E COMMERCE ST

The 17th year of vendors, drumming and food from the Pan African Cultural Community.

Noon to 5 PM · facebook.com/PanAfricanCommunity

DEC 5 SAT-SUN

Gruene Christmas Market Days FREE

GRUENE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Nearly 100 artisan vendors under the trees in Gruene.

Dec 5-6 · 10 AM to 5 PM · gruenetexas.com

DEC 6 SUN

Yulefest FREE

SEGUIN COLISEUM, 950 S AUSTIN ST

A holiday market to close out Seguin's Holiday Stroll weekend.

10 AM to 4 PM · visitseguin.com

NOV Sat & SUN

Market Square Weekends FREE

HISTORIC MARKET SQUARE, 514 W COMMERCE

Music, artists and food booths every weekend in November. December weekends usually follow.

10 AM to 6 PM · marketsquaresa.com

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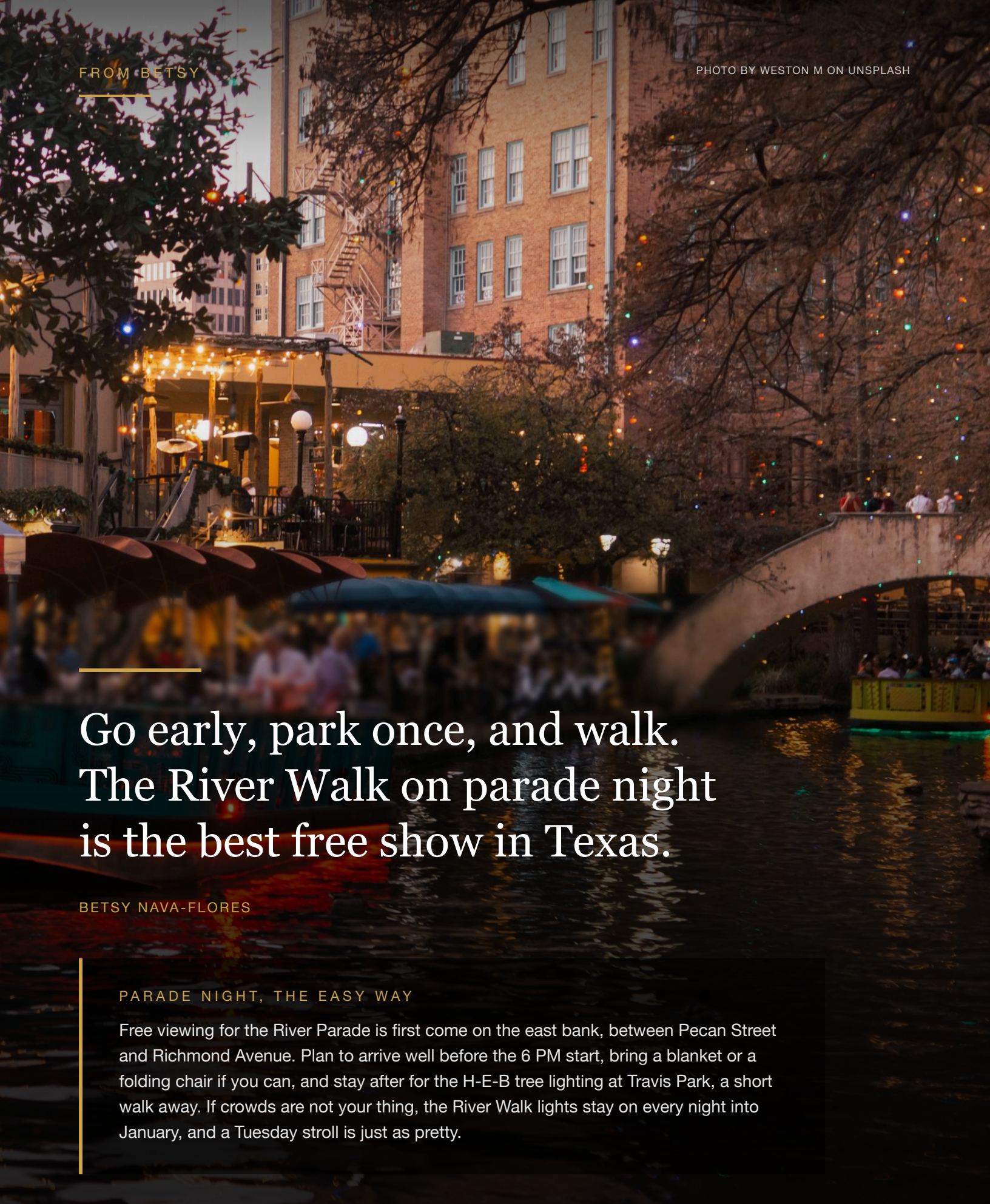


PHOTO BY WESTON M ON UNSPLASH

Go early, park once, and walk. The River Walk on parade night is the best free show in Texas.

BETSY NAVA-FLORES

PARADE NIGHT, THE EASY WAY

Free viewing for the River Parade is first come on the east bank, between Pecan Street and Richmond Avenue. Plan to arrive well before the 6 PM start, bring a blanket or a folding chair if you can, and stay after for the H-E-B tree lighting at Travis Park, a short walk away. If crowds are not your thing, the River Walk lights stay on every night into January, and a Tuesday stroll is just as pretty.



PHOTO BY MARIO PRECIADO ON UNSPLASH

ON STAGE

Holiday Shows on Stage

The Nutcracker, the Grinch and a tamale comedy that is pure San Antonio.

NOV 21 TO DEC 24

How the Grinch Stole Christmas

MAGIK THEATRE, 420 S ALAMO ST

The family stage show. Pay-what-you-wish Nov 27 at 2 PM; sensory-friendly and ASL shows Dec 5.

Ticketed · magiktheatre.org

DEC 4 TO DEC 13

The Nutcracker

TOBIN CENTER, H-E-B PERFORMANCE HALL

Ballet San Antonio's annual Nutcracker. Two weekends: Dec 4-6 and Dec 11-13.

Evening and matinee shows · ticketed · balletsanantonio.org

DEC 4 TO DEC 20

The Polar Express: The Musical

CHARLINE MCCOMBS EMPIRE THEATRE

The Children's Ballet of San Antonio's holiday show. Opens Dec 4 at 7 PM.

Matinees through about Dec 20 · ticketed · majesticempire.com

DEC 11 TO DEC 13

A Christmas Story, The Musical

MAJESTIC THEATRE

The touring musical about one kid's wish for a very specific gift.

Ticketed · majesticempire.com

DEC 19 SAT

A Holiday Spectacular

TOBIN CENTER, H-E-B PERFORMANCE HALL

The Youth Orchestras and the Children's Chorus of San Antonio share one stage.

7 PM · from $23 · tobincenter.org

DEC 26 TO DEC 27

Nutcracker! Magical Christmas Ballet

MAJESTIC THEATRE

A touring Nutcracker for the days after Christmas.

Ticketed · check times when you buy · majesticempire.com

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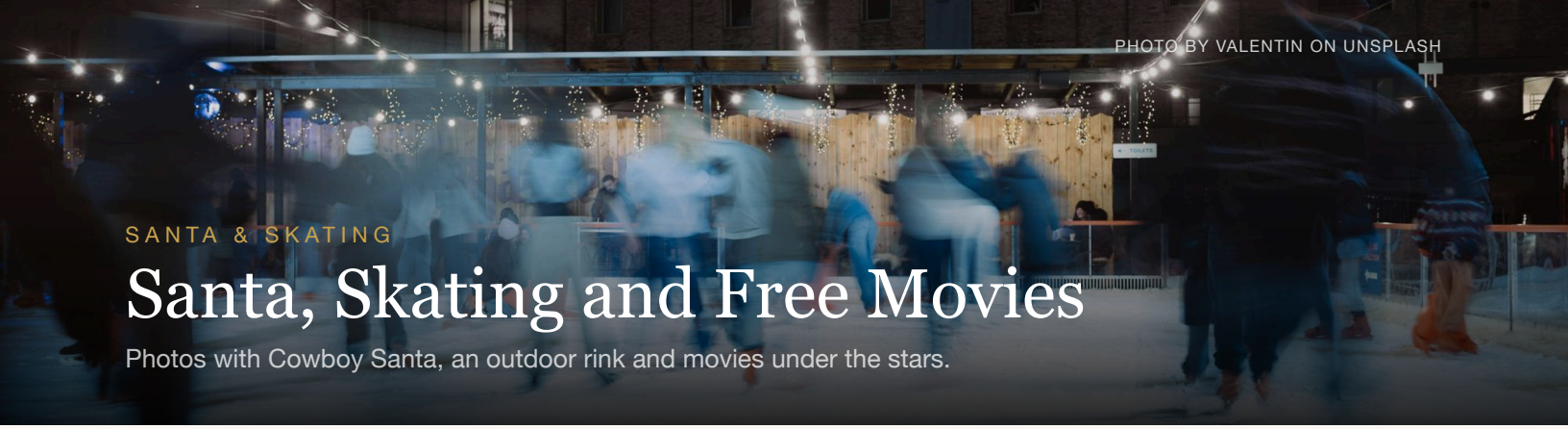


PHOTO BY VALENTIN ON UNSPLASH

SANTA & SKATING

Santa, Skating and Free Movies

Photos with Cowboy Santa, an outdoor rink and movies under the stars.

NOV 21 TO JAN 3

Skating at The Rock

THE ROCK AT LA CANTERA

An outdoor rink. Daily from Dec 19; Thursday to Sunday evenings before that.

Paid · closed Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve · therockatlacantera.com

DEC 4 FRI

Nighthawk Winterfest FREE

NORTHEAST LAKEVIEW COLLEGE, 1201 KITTY HAWK RD, UNIVERSAL CITY

Santa photos, alpacas, food trucks and a Toys for Tots drive, ending in fireworks.

5:30 to 8 PM · alamo.edu/nlc

DEC 5 SAT

Christmas at the Alamo FREE

PLAZA DE VALERO, 300 ALAMO PLAZA

A living-history camp, musket firing and a live band.

10 AM to 2 PM · thealamo.org

DEC 11 FRI

Down Home Christmas

LIVE OAK MUNICIPAL COMPLEX

Santa photos, hot cocoa and marshmallow roasting.

6 to 8 PM · liveoaktx.net

DEC 12 SAT

Cowboy Santa at the Alamo FREE

ALAMO PLAZA

Free photos with Cowboy Santa and Mrs. Claus.

10 AM to 2 PM · thealamo.org

DEC 18 TO JAN 2

Holiday Flix at The Rock FREE

THE ROCK AT LA CANTERA

Free holiday movies outdoors, nightly Dec 18-24 plus Dec 26 and Jan 2.

Evenings · therockatlacantera.com

DEC 19 SAT

Holiday Movie Night at the Alamo FREE

PLAZA DE VALERO

The Muppet Christmas Carol on an outdoor screen.

6 to 8 PM · thealamo.org

DEC 20 SUN

Breakfast with Santa CHECK DATE

SAN ANTONIO ZOO, FIESTA ROOFTOP TERRACE

Breakfast and photos with Santa. Check the zoo calendar for added dates.

Ticketed · sazoo.org

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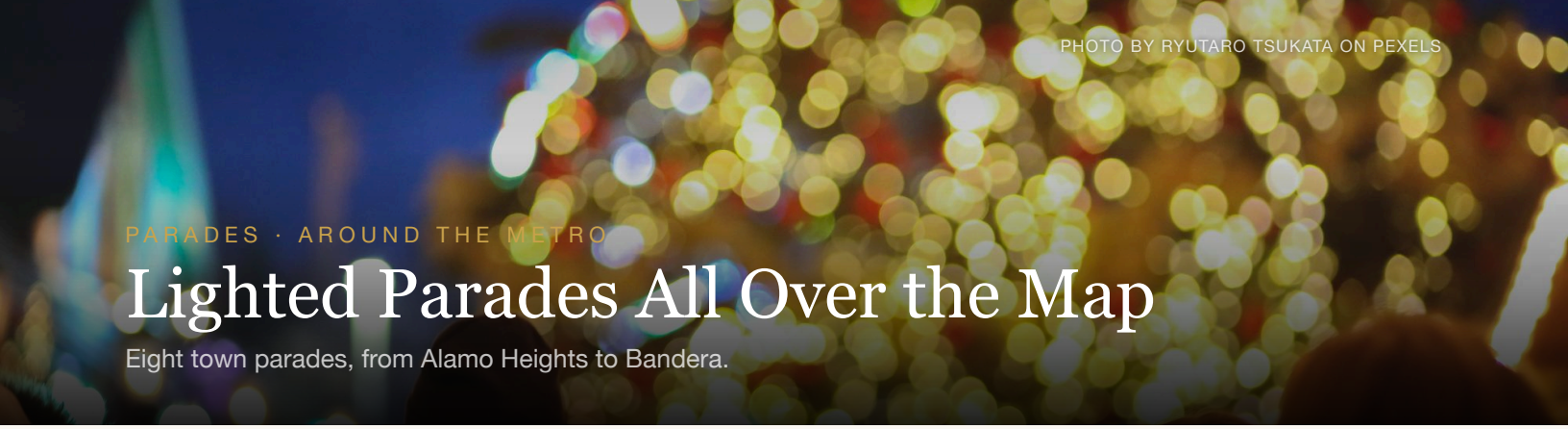


PHOTO BY RYUTARO TSUKATA ON PEXELS

PARADES · AROUND THE METRO

Lighted Parades All Over the Map

Eight town parades, from Alamo Heights to Bandera.

NOV 21 SAT

Alamo Heights Holiday Parade

TUXEDO AVE & ALAMO HEIGHTS BLVD

A neighborhood night parade, kicked off by the Midtown Mile Holiday Run on the route.

Run starts 5:30 PM · parade free · runsignup.com

NOV 21 SAT

Kerrville Holiday Lighted Parade FREE

DOWNTOWN KERRVILLE

Up to 96 lighted entries, then Merry on the Square and the courthouse lighting.

6 PM · market from 4 PM · kerrvilletx.gov

NOV 28 SAT

Floresville Tree Lighting & Parade

FREE

DOWNTOWN FLORESVILLE

Vendor market, cocoa and kids' activities around the lighting and parade.

Tree 7 PM · parade 7:30 PM · floresvilletx.gov

DEC 3 THU

Seguin Holiday Stroll Lighted Parade

FREE

AUSTIN & COLLEGE ST TO CENTRAL PARK, SEGUIN

More than 100 entries, and the mayor switches on the downtown lights.

6:30 PM · visitseguin.com

DEC 4 FRI

Light the Night Christmas Parade

FREE

MAIN ST, WASHINGTON TO BOWIE, FREDERICKSBURG

More than 150 lighted floats down Main Street. Reserved bleachers sell online.

6:30 PM · fbgtxchamber.org

DEC 5 SAT

Boerne Weihnachts Parade FREE

MAIN STREET, BOERNE

The 39th year, with nearly 100 lighted floats and shops open late.

6 PM · holidaysinboerne.com

DEC 12 SAT

Cibolo Holidays on Main FREE

PFEIL RD & MAIN ST, CIBOLO

Parade, tree lighting and an evening market, all in one day.

Times not posted yet (11 AM parade last year) · cibolotx.gov

DEC 12 SAT

Bandera Night Christmas Parade FREE

DOWNTOWN BANDERA

The Cowboy Capital's lighted parade caps the Christmas Shoppers Jubilee (Dec 11-12).

6 PM · banderacowboycapital.com

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PHOTO BY ARKADIUSZ RADEK ON UNSPLASH

TREE LIGHTINGS & TOWN SQUARES

Tree Lightings and Town Squares

Small-town lightings, wassail and Cowboy Kringle.

NOV 20 FRI

New Braunfels Downtown Lighting FREE

MAIN PLAZA, NEW BRAUNFELS

Downtown lights on, Santa's arrival and the Holiday Haus market. Free shuttle.

6 to 9 PM · newbraunfels.gov

NOV 21 SAT

Opening Night Tree Lighting at The Rock FREE

THE ROCK AT LA CANTERA, FROST PLAZA

Opens Holidays at The Rock. Free, but grab a ticket ahead of time.

7 to 10 PM · therockatlacantera.com

NOV 30 MON

Christmas on the Circle FREE

ATASCOSA COUNTY COURTHOUSE, JOURDANTON

The courthouse light displays switch on for the season.

6 PM · atascosacounty.texas.gov

DEC 4 FRI

Helotes Lighting of the Lights FREE

HELOTES CITY HALL AREA, 12951 BANDERA RD

Our own hometown lighting, just down the road from the Harvest office.

6 to 7:30 PM · helotes-tx.gov

DEC 4 FRI

Garden Ridge Tree Lighting

COMMUNITY & EVENT CENTER, 9500 MUNICIPAL PKWY

A small-town lighting on the center's grounds.

5:30 to 7 PM · ci.garden-ridge.tx.us

DEC 5 SAT

Gruene Town Lighting FREE

GRUENE HISTORIC DISTRICT

A brass band, then Cowboy Kringle rides in on horseback.

Band 5 PM · lighting 6 PM · gruenetexas.com

DEC 7 MON

Leon Valley Tree Lighting

IRENE BALDRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTER, 6427 EVERS RD

Music, Santa and the city tree.

5:30 to 8 PM · leonvalleytexas.gov

DEC 3 THU

Wassailfest FREE

DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS

Wassail tastings from the shops, lights, choirs and late shopping.

6 to 9 PM · visitnbtx.com

DEC 4 FRI

Boerne Wassail Walk FREE

HILL COUNTRY MILE, BOERNE

Each shop pours its own wassail, and carolers compete along the way.

4 to 8 PM · holidaysinboerne.com

Dates, times and prices checked Nov 16, 2026 against each event's own page or city calendar. Plans change, so check the link before you go.



PHOTO BY SCOTT GREER ON UNSPLASH

Christmas in the Hill Country

Four towns within an hour of downtown, each with its own way of celebrating.

Pick one Saturday, one small town and a cup of wassail. That is a holiday tradition.

BETSY NAVA-FLORES

Boerne goes all in. Dickens on Main opens the season the weekend after Thanksgiving, the Wassail Walk and Stocking Stroll fill the shops on Dec 4 and 5, and the Weihnachts Parade sends nearly 100 lighted floats down Main Street on Dec 5.

New Braunfels and Gruene carry their German roots proudly. The Weihnachtsmarkt runs Nov 20 to 22, Wassailfest fills downtown on Dec 3, and on Dec 5 Gruene lights its town while Cowboy Kringle rides in on horseback. Christmas Market Days run that same weekend.

Fredericksburg lights its 26-foot Christmas pyramid on the Marktplatz every night from Nov 24 into January. The Light the Night Parade brings more than 150 floats down Main Street on Dec 4, and the Eisbahn rink is right there on the square.

Seguin and Castroville keep it close to home. Seguin's Holiday Stroll runs Dec 3 to 6 with a lighted parade, hot chocolate and Yulefest. Castroville's Old Fashion Christmas on Houston Square, Dec 4 and 5, is Medina County's biggest arts and crafts show.

Make a day of it: lunch on the square, shopping before dark, then the lights.



PHOTO BY NILES GIBBS ON PEXELS

DAY TRIPS · MORE TO SEE

More Hill Country Weekends

Strolls, a carnival and an ice rink by the Christmas pyramid.

NOV 28 SAT

Wimberley Hometown Holidays FREE

DOWNTOWN WIMBERLEY

The kickoff for Wimberley's holiday calendar.

Season opener · hometownholidays.com

DEC 3 TO DEC 12

Sights & Sounds of Christmas

SAN MARCOS PLAZA PARK

Carnival rides, live music, Santa and lights. Dec 3-5 and 10-12.

5:30 to 11 PM · $10 a night · 12 and under free · visitsanmarcos.com

DEC 4 FRI

Seguin Sip n' Stroll

DOWNTOWN SEGUIN

Homemade hot chocolates, Santa and live music.

6 to 9 PM · visitseguin.com

DEC 4 FRI-SAT

Boerne Stocking Stroll

HILL COUNTRY MILE · TICKETS AT 282 N MAIN

A small gift at each of about 19 shops. Proceeds support Dickens on Main.

10 AM to 5 PM · ticketed · holidaysinboerne.com

DEC 5 SAT

North Pole Stroll & Jingle Bell Run

CENTRAL PARK, SEGUIN

A morning 5K, then kids' activities in the park.

Run 8:30 AM · activities 10 AM to 2 PM · visitseguin.com

DEC 11 FRI-SAT

Bandera Christmas Shoppers Jubilee FREE

DOWNTOWN BANDERA

A shop-local scavenger hunt that ends with the night parade.

Dec 11-12 · banderacowboycapital.com

NOV Fall SEASON

Eisbahn Outdoor Ice Rink CHECK DATE

MARKTPLATZ, 122 W MAIN, FREDERICKSBURG

A charity-run rink beside the Christmas pyramid. Check hours before the drive.

$20 day pass · heritageschool.org/eisbahn

Dates, times and prices checked Nov 16, 2026 against each event's own page or city calendar. Plans change, so check the link before you go.



PHOTO BY BHUWAN BANSAL ON UNSPLASH

Navidad en San Antonio

Tamales by the dozen, candles in paper bags and a Tejano Santa. This is how San Antonio keeps Christmas.

A San Antonio Christmas smells like masa, cinnamon and candle wax.

BETSY NAVA-FLORES

The tamalada. In a lot of San Antonio homes, Christmas starts at the kitchen table, with an assembly line spreading masa on corn husks. It is the busiest season of the year for local tamale makers. Benny Lopez of Delicious Tamales has estimated the city buys about 50,000 dozen over the holidays, and he calls San Antonio the tamale capital of the United States.

Las Posadas. For nine nights before Christmas, processions retell Mary and Joseph's search for shelter. Pilgrims sing at each door asking for posada, are turned away, and finally welcomed in. The big one walks by candlelight from Milam Park to San Fernando Cathedral.

Luminarias. A luminaria is a candle set in sand inside a small paper bag, a Mexican Christmas lantern. San Antonio lines the River Walk with them on December weekends, and you will see them on porches and church steps all month.

Los Pastores. The shepherds' play descends from Spanish nativity plays brought by missionaries. Parishioners of Our Lady of Guadalupe still perform it at Mission San José from a script that dates to the 1930s.

Pancho Claus. The Tejano Santa grew out of the Chicano movement of the 1970s, with versions in San Antonio, Seguin and Lubbock. Look for him at Market Square and the West Side toy giveaways.

And to finish: pan dulce with champurrado on Nochebuena, and rosca de reyes on January 6.



PHOTO BY MAHONEY FOTOS ON PEXELS

NAVIDAD · POSADAS & LUMINARIAS

Posadas, Luminarias and Misa de Gallo

Candlelit processions, the shepherds' play and Midnight Mass.

DEC 2 WED

A Pearl Holiday Tradition Returns

CHECK DATE

PEARL PARK

Pearl's 2026 calendar marks Dec 2 for a returning tradition. Past years, Pearl hosted a candlelit posada procession on a December Wednesday.

Details to come · atpearl.com

DEC 6 SUN

Advent Las Posadas at St. Mark's

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 315 E PECAN ST

A parish posada procession downtown, retelling Mary and Joseph's search for shelter.

Posada starts 9:15 AM · stmarks-sa.org

DEC Mid DEC

La Gran Posada

CHECK DATE

MILAM PARK TO SAN FERNANDO CATHEDRAL

The city's big candlelit procession, with songs sung at each stop on the way to the cathedral.

A Sunday evening in mid-December last year · free · sfcathedral.org

DEC 16 TO DEC 24

Las Posadas in the Parishes

CHECK DATE

CHURCHES AND NEIGHBORHOODS CITYWIDE

Nine nights of posadas, one for each night before Christmas. Ask your parish for its schedule.

Nightly Dec 16 to 24 · visitsanantonio.com

DEC Sel. DATE

Posadas at the Missions

CHECK DATE

MISSIONS SAN JOSÉ AND SAN JUAN

Las Posadas at the Spanish colonial missions, part of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.

Watch the park calendar · nps.gov/saan

DEC Sel. WKNDS

Fiesta de las Luminarias

CHECK DATE

RIVER WALK, AROUND CROCKETT & PRESA

Thousands of luminarias, candles set in sand in paper bags, line the river on December weekends.

2024 ran Dec 6 to 22 · free · thesanantonioriverwalk.com

DEC Mid DEC

La Pastorela Folklórica

CHECK DATE

GUADALUPE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

The shepherds' Christmas play with music and dance. Last year: Sunday, Dec 14.

Call 210-271-3151 · guadalupeculturalarts.org

DEC Late DEC

Los Pastores

CHECK DATE

MISSION SAN JOSÉ

The traditional shepherds' play, performed by Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioners from a script dating to the 1930s.

Free in past years · nps.gov/saan

DEC 24 THU

Christmas Eve at San Fernando Cathedral

CHECK DATE

MAIN PLAZA, DOWNTOWN

Evening Masses, the Service of the Carols, then Midnight Mass, the Misa de Gallo.

2024: Carols 11 PM, then Midnight Mass · free · sfcathedral.org

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PHOTO BY OSCAR DAMIÁN JIMÉNEZ ON PEXELS

NAVIDAD · MARIACHI & TAMALADAS

Mariachi, Tamaladas and Pancho Claus

Mariachi Vargas, Las Mañanitas for La Virgen, and two tamale festivals.

DEC 5 SAT

32nd Mariachi Extravaganza

LILA COCKRELL THEATRE, 200 E MARKET ST

Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán headlines the closing concert of the national student mariachi competition.

7:30 PM · ticketed · mariachimusic.com

DEC 12 SAT

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

CHECK DATE

LITTLE FLOWER BASILICA, 1715 N ZARZAMORA ST, AND PARISHES CITYWIDE

Las Mañanitas at dawn: mariachis serenade La Virgen before the morning Mass.

Last year: 6 AM Mañanitas y Misa con Mariachi · littleflowerbasilica.org

DEC 13 SUN

La Gran Tamalada CHECK DATE

HISTORIC MARKET SQUARE

Masa-spreading and husk-folding demonstrations, music and vendors. Visit San Antonio lists Dec 13.

Free in past years · marketsquaresa.com

DEC 13 SUN

Pullman Market Tamale Festival

CHECK DATE

PULLMAN MARKET AT PEARL

Pearl's own tamale day. Programming pending confirmation.

Details to come · pullmanmarket.com

DEC 3 TO DEC 6

Las Nuevas Tamaleras

JO LONG THEATRE, CARVER COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER

The holiday comedy about making tamales, a San Antonio favorite.

Thursday to Sunday · ticketed · lastamaleras.com

DEC 23 WED

José Hernández' Merry-Achi Christmas

TOBIN CENTER, H-E-B PERFORMANCE HALL

Mariachi Sol de México plays Christmas favorites, mariachi style.

7:30 PM · from $42 · tobincenter.org

DEC Wknds DEC

Fiesta Navideña with Pancho Claus

CHECK DATE

HISTORIC MARKET SQUARE

Children's choirs, folklórico, mariachi and Pancho Claus, the Tejano Santa, usually on December weekends.

Free in past years · marketsquaresa.com

DEC TBA 2026

Pancho Claus Toy Giveaway CHECK DATE

SAN ANTO CULTURAL ARTS, 2120 EL PASO ST

Toys, hot chocolate, pan dulce and photos with Pancho Claus. Last year: Dec 19.

Free · sananto.org

DEC 4 SUNDOWN

Hanukkah Begins CHECK DATE

CHANUKAH ON THE RIVER, ARNESON RIVER THEATRE

Also this season: Hanukkah starts at sundown Friday, Dec 4, and Chabad's river menorah lighting is a downtown tradition.

2026 date to be announced · chabadsa.com

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PHOTO BY MARISELA LEON ON UNSPLASH

NAVIDAD · TAMALES

Where San Antonio Gets Its Tamales

Order early. By Christmas week, the lines start before sunrise.

Tellez Tamales & Barbacoa

1737 S GENERAL MCMULLEN DR · WEST SIDE

Open since 1975. In December it is pork only, first come, first served, and lines formed before dawn on Dec 23 last year.

Go early · tellez-tamales-barbacoa-factory.business.site

Adelita Tamales & Tortilla Factory

1130 FRESNO DR · NEAR WEST SIDE

A family business since 1938, with masa made in house.

Tue to Sun, 7 AM to 2 PM · 210-733-5352 · adelitatamales.com

Delicious Tamales

SIX LOCATIONS · MAIN KITCHEN 1330 CULEBRA RD

Pork, chicken, jalapeño bean and sweet pumpkin, and they ship.

210-735-0275 · delicioustamales.com

Delia's Specializing in Tamales

13527 HAUSMAN PASS · NORTHWEST SIDE

The Rio Grande Valley favorite. Near Christmas last year, it was pre-order pickup only.

Order ahead · 210-864-1111 · deliastamales.com

Ruben's Homemade Tamales

1807 RIGSBY AVE · EAST SIDE

Pork, chicken, and bean with jalapeño. Last year it opened at 7 AM Christmas Eve for orders.

Call ahead · facebook.com

Tamale Boy

5300 S FLORES ST · SOUTH SIDE

More than 15 kinds of tamales.

Thursday to Sunday · satamaleboy.com

Del Rio Tortilla

1402 GILLETTE BLVD · SOUTH SIDE

Pork, chicken and bean, cooked or raw for steaming at home.

Call ahead · delriotortillas.com

Alfonso's Tamales

2000 SE LOOP 410, STE 103 · EAST SIDE

Machine-rolled frozen or hand-rolled hot.

Call ahead · alfonsostamales.com

Tamahli

814 W RHAPSODY DR · NORTH CENTRAL

Tamales wrapped in corn husk or banana leaf. No walk-ins.

Order ahead · tamahli.com

Not paid listings, just local favorites. Holiday hours and order deadlines change every year, so call before you go.



PHOTO BY BLUE ARAUZ ON PEXELS

NAVIDAD · PAN DULCE & CHAMPURRADO

Pan Dulce, Champurrado & Rosca

Conchas for Nochebuena, champurrado for dunking, rosca for January 6.

Mi Tierra Café y Panadería

218 PRODUCE ROW · MARKET SQUARE

Pan dulce baked daily: conchas, cinnamon marranitos, empanadas and campechanas.

210-225-1262 · lafamiliacortez.com

La Panadería

SEVERAL LOCATIONS · 8305 BROADWAY AND MORE

Mexico City-style conchas. Rosca de reyes pre-orders opened right after Christmas in past years.

Watch for rosca pre-orders · lapanaderia.com

Panifico Bake Shop

602 NW 24TH ST · WEST SIDE

On the West Side since 2005. Marranitos, piedras, the volcán concha and rosca de reyes.

210-434-9290 · panifico.com

Bedoy's Bakery

803 W HILDEBRAND AVE · ALSO 2714 HILLCREST DR

Family-run since about 1961. Deeply scored conchas, and rosca in January.

210-736-2253 · bedoysbakery.com

Panadería Jiménez

1846 FREDERICKSBURG RD

Rosca de reyes with cinnamon, anise and citrus, and champurrado to go with it.

Call to confirm hours

Alebrije Bakery

1931 N NEW BRAUNFELS AVE

Bright, bold conchas that are as pretty as they are good.

CHAMPURRADO & ROSCA

Champurrado is the chocolate cousin of atole: Mexican chocolate, cinnamon and piloncillo, thickened with masa. It is thicker than hot chocolate, and it is made for dunking a concha.

La Calavera Garbancera · 1701 Guadalupe St
Champurrado on the menu

Panadería Jiménez · 1846 Fredericksburg Rd
Champurrado with your pan dulce; call ahead

Your neighborhood panadería
Many make it only in winter, so ask at the counter

Rosca de reyes, Jan 6
Whoever finds the baby in their slice hosts the tamales on Feb 2, Día de la Candelaria

Not paid listings, just local favorites. Holiday hours and order deadlines change every year, so call before you go.

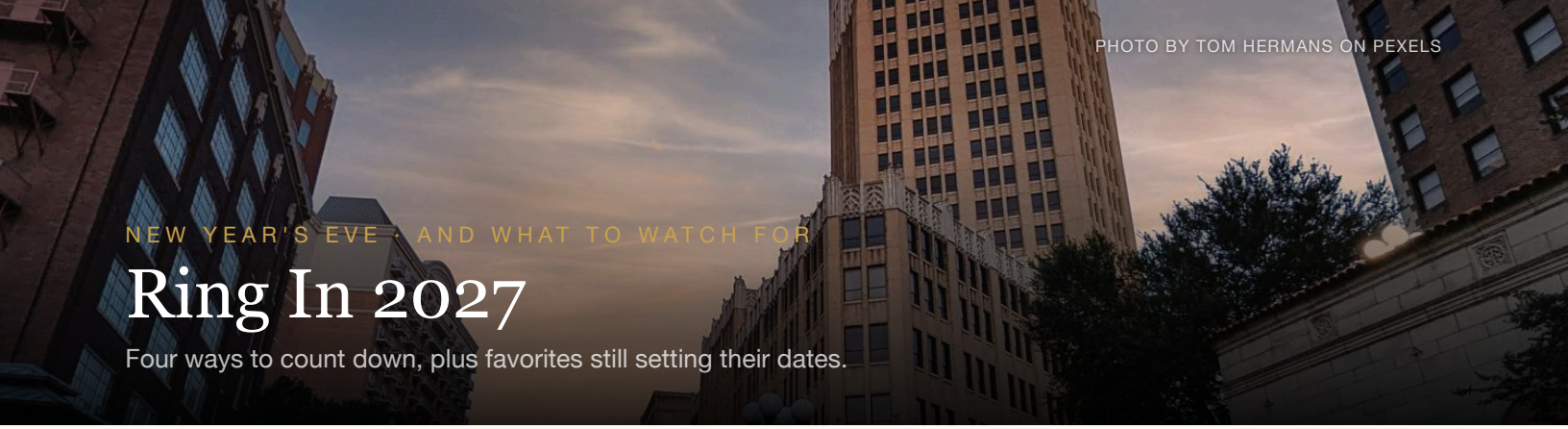


PHOTO BY TOM HERMANS ON PEXELS

NEW YEAR'S EVE · AND WHAT TO WATCH FOR

Ring In 2027

Four ways to count down, plus favorites still setting their dates.

DEC 31 THU

Celebrate SA NYE Party & Countdown

FREE

HEMISFAIR, 434 S ALAMO ST

The city's own New Year's Eve party, counting down downtown.

6 PM to midnight · free · saparks.org

DEC 31 THU

Rock the Clock

THE ROCK AT LA CANTERA

Live music and a countdown, all ages.

8 PM to 1 AM · ticketed · therockatlacantera.com

DEC 31 THU

New Year's 360 Fireworks

SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS

Fireworks to ring in 2027.

Included with admission · sixflags.com/fiestatexas

DEC 31 THU

SeaWorld New Year's Eve Fireworks

SEAWORLD SAN ANTONIO

The Christmas Celebration ends the year with fireworks.

Included with admission · seaworld.com

WATCH FOR THESE

Annual favorites that had not posted 2026 dates when we went to press. Check before you go.

Pearl Ice Rink · Pearl
Usually late Nov to early Jan

Skate the City · Civic Park at Hemisfair
Usually late Nov to early Jan

Holidays at Hemisfair Markets · Hemisfair
Mid-December weekends last year

Helotes Christmas Parade · Old Town Helotes
A December Saturday night last year

Schertz Holidazzle · Hal Baldwin Municipal Complex
First Saturday of December

Windcrest Light-Up · Windcrest
Mid-November through Dec 31

Bulverde Christmas Lighting · Old Village of Bulverde
Friday after Thanksgiving

Christmas in Comfort · Downtown Comfort
Saturday after Thanksgiving

Cowboy Christmas at the Briscoe · Briscoe Western Art Museum
Early December

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Five Things to Do Before Company Arrives

A little prep now saves you a scramble when the house is full.

01 Have a plan for a hard freeze

Know where your water shutoff is, and keep pipe covers and faucet wraps handy. San Antonio does not freeze often, which is exactly why it catches people off guard.

02 Check your lights before they go on the roof

Toss frayed strands, use outdoor-rated cords outside, and do not chain more strands together than the box allows. A timer saves you a trip outside every night.

03 Test the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

More cooking, more candles and a heater running in the guest room all add up. Fresh batteries take five minutes.

04 Protect your packages

Ship to a locker or pickup point, ask a neighbor to grab deliveries, or set delivery for a day someone is home.

05 Write down what the house needs this year

Guests notice the sticky door and the dripping faucet. Make a list while they are fresh in your mind. If you are thinking about a move in 2027, that list is a head start.

Questions about your home's value or a move next year? Call or text Betsy, 210-889-7495. **homesbyharvest.com**

ABOUT US

Your Neighbors in Real Estate

26 years of helping San Antonio families buy, sell and settle in.

We are Betsy and Roy Flores, and we run Harvest Real Estate Group out of our office on Old Bandera Road in Helotes. Betsy has worked in San Antonio real estate for 26 years. Together we help people buy and sell homes all over the metro and the Hill Country towns in this guide, including military families on a PCS move and homeowners facing a hard situation.

Our tagline is simple: where other agents say no, we find the solution. Most of what we do starts with a question, not a contract. What is my house worth right now? Should we wait until spring? What would a move cost us?

We make guides like this one because we love this city, and because being useful all year is how we would rather be known. If a real estate question comes up over the holidays, ask us. There is no pressure attached.

IN THEIR WORDS

> I recommend Harvest Real Estate Group to anyone seeking an honest and friendly realtor.
>
> FERNANDO CANTILLO

> Even AFTER closing, she still helps us with any questions we have.
>
> GINA HALACY

> Through it all, Betsy stayed communicative, kept the process moving, and remained committed to getting us to the finish line.
>
> ANGUS RANSON

Client words quoted from public reviews. Betsy Nava-Flores, Broker Associate, TX Lic. #480380 · Roy Flores, REALTOR®, TX Lic. #482480 · Brokered by eXp Realty, LLC. TREC notices at homesbyharvest.com. Equal Housing Opportunity. Not affiliated with the events listed.

Call or text Betsy · 210-889-7495 **homesbyharvest.com**

Love Where You Live, San Antonio

DECEMBER 2026

Merry Christmas, San Antonio. Pass this one along to a neighbor.

Betsy Nava-Flores & Roy Flores

HARVEST REAL ESTATE GROUP

210-889-7495

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homesbyharvest.com

SAN ANTONIO · HELOTES · BOERNE · NEW BRAUNFELS · HILL COUNTRY

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