

Aurora's Christmas Market could be finale in Town Park

Artisans and craftspeople are putting the finishing touches on products that will fit just about every holiday wish list as the Town of Aurora prepares for the annual Christmas Market

Presented by Healthy Planet, the Christmas Market will take over Town Park on two weekends - December 1 to 3, and again from December 8 to 10 - from 5 - 9 p.m.

The free event has been named one of the Top 100 Festivals and Events in Ontario and has become known within and beyond the community as a place of good cheer, hands-on workshops and activities, fantastic seasonal vendors, food vendors, and more.

We will have a minimum of 115 different vendors spread out over the six nights of the Market, so there is truly a variety of high-quality vendors, says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. They will be lined up along the walkway in Town Park and we will be fortunate to use the Armoury's patio this year. We're turning the patio into an inflatable winter playground which will have a minimum of 15 inflatables for children to run around, run through and have photos taken.

Truly, I think it will be inflatable heaven for little kids who love to see the characters we'll have and we're really excited to bring that to fruition.

Among the vendors set to take part this year are those who offer tried and true products like jewellery and bath products, but also woodworking, hot sauces, specialty teas, Christmas ornaments, and charcuterie boards.

You name it, it's a full spectrum, she says. I bet there could be a different gift representing each letter of the alphabet and the list still wouldn't be exhausted.

The Market, as noted above, will begin December 1 with the lighting of the Town's Christmas Tree around 5.45 p.m. by Mayor Tom Mrakas, members of Council, Town Crier John Webster, and perhaps even a visit from the Claus couple.

It really makes the Market ignite with light, says Ware.

Throughout the weekend, in addition to the vendors, there will be a variety of dynamic buskers making their way throughout the Market, including the North Fire Circus, Dr. Draw and his electric violin, and more.

Each night there is a different performance experience, says Ware. We're also over the stars with excitement this year as we're bringing in a 20-foot geodome which will be installed at Town Park. We're really hoping it is going to be a huge magnet of curiosity.

It could also be a fitting finale for the Market at Town Park.

Since its inception, the Aurora Christmas Market has taken place in a number of locations including the Town Hall parking lot and the adjacent Seniors' Centre. For the past four years, Town Park has been its base, but that could change in 2024 as the Town prepares to open the Aurora Town Square redevelopment at Yonge and Church.

Potentially it will be moving to Town Square where there will be greater amenities, greater opportunities for more enhanced programming, a whole cascade of different experiences we can bring to the forefront, which we are limited in doing so at Town Park, says Ware. But we're committed to making it the best year yet. Come one, come all. It is open to all people, all backgrounds, all faith backgrounds. It is really residents coming together with the commonality of light and creating this sense of community, with a little sprinkle of magic.

For more on this year's Christmas Market, including vendors, workshops, volunteer opportunities and more, visit www.aurora.ca/en/recreation-arts-and-culture/christmas-market.aspx.

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