

## Christmas Market returns to Town Park in December

After planting its roots at Town Hall, Aurora's Christmas Market made the move to Town Park last year, bringing with it the Town's traditional Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony and other activities for the whole family.

The only damper on the festivities last year were capacity limits put in place while the global pandemic raged. But now that outdoor restrictions have lifted, residents are once again set to flock to Town Park in the month ahead for two weekends of holiday fun.

Aurora's Christmas Market will run at Town Park between December 3 & 5, and again from December 10 & 12, running each day from 5 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

With COVID-19 screening in place, including contact tracing, the event promises dozens of unique vendors, live entertainment, and even a visit from Santa Claus himself.

"We're very excited for this to come back," says Shelley Ware, Special Event Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. "Last year was our first time in the park and it was so beautiful, but the true ambiance and atmosphere was restricted due to the COVID-19 protocols that were in place last year. I am doubly-excited to see how that transforms this year."

While there is no capacity limit applicable to an event like this, the Town will be closely monitoring crowds and will impose restrictions at any time based on "comfort levels."

"We want those that attend to feel safe and comfortable," says Ms. Ware.

As last year's Christmas Market was a unique one as far as attendance was concerned, Ms. Ware says this will be an opportunity for residents to re-connect with each other "and there will be no shortage of activities to keep revellers occupied."

In addition to the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 3, there will be 70 vendor spaces over the course of the six evenings. Festive huts will document the landscape, each of which will house a vendor, while other tables will offer goodies to satisfy just about everyone.

"We have worked extensively to make each night different so that if you come to the market on Friday, you haven't seen it all," says Ms. Ware. "You have to come back on Saturday to see different vendors, different entertainment, and different features. As well, we will have little offerings each night, which will change. For instance, anyone who wears festive clothing, we have a limited-edition reusable Market bag we will be giving out " little perks like that throughout the six nights so that each night is a different experience."

"The first night is going to be really unique in that we're hosting the Tree Lighting. The event will start off a little dim until we light the full tree, then the hours of Santa change that evening. The fire juggling show that evening is slightly different. As we go into the Saturday, we're able to spread out the entertainment a bit more, get into some carolling groups in the community and we have lots of busker shows planned " again, striving for uniqueness."

"This year we're excited to reveal a new artist called Dr. Draw. It is a treat we're able to get him to York Region and Aurora. Last year we weren't able to focus on entertainment because it was one of the restrictions. This year, I hope we have doubled down on the efforts and really come up with a formula that will really silence you in awe. As of right now, Santa has included in his agenda coming back to Aurora specifically for Aurora's Christmas Market (after this Saturday's Santa Under the Stars parade) and we will have Santa for certain periods of time on each of the evenings for children to come up and be able to say hello and to be able to have a socially distant photo with him."

For more information on each evening's offerings, including up-to-date information on any changes due to the pandemic, visit

[aurora.ca/christmasmarket](#).

**By Brock Weir** Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter