

Christmas Market set for Town Square return next Friday

Yonge Street might be the focus of local holiday cheer this Saturday as the annual Santa Under the Stars Parade returns to Aurora, but the good times will continue the following weekend as the Town puts the finishing touches on its annual Christmas Market.

Taking place over two weekends, the Christmas Market kicks off next Friday, November 28, with the official lighting of the Town's Christmas Tree, and will run through November 30, and again from Friday, December 5 through Sunday, December 7.

None of the six total market days will be alike, say organizers, with dozens of artisans, vendors, buskers and more working together to keep the festive feeling fresh.

'We will have 21 unique vendors every single night,' says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. 'Six nights with 21 vendors each night, so we've got a really great balance of products and, of course, we try to get as unique as possible for each of the nights. There's the tried and true of candles, scents and honey, all the way to really customized ornaments, treats, and a nice balance of everything. This isn't the type of Market that you visit once and you're done; there's different activities for each night, different workshops, different vendors, different performances in the Performance Hall - it's six new Christmas Market experiences back-to-back.'

Indeed, it's about much more than shopping - a shift made possible by the relocation of the Aurora Christmas Market from Town Park to Town Square in 2024. The move has allowed not only for a significant growth in performing arts at the Market, but outdoor skating, fire shows, and spaces to hold holiday-themed workshops.

'New this year, on the Saturday of the first and second weekends we're going to be offering a Silent Dance Party, which will be a cool experience for those that have never participated in one before,' says Ware of dances where music is only heard by participants wearing individual headphones. 'We'll also have a variety of experiences within the Performance Hall for those who want to grab a ticket, secure their seat, and enjoy a great show comfortably.'

Organizers plan to transform Program Room A into the North Pole, so don't be surprised if Santa Claus pops by again for another visit.

Some of the offerings in the Performance Hall include A Jazzy Christmas from the Borealis Big Band, and screenings of the holiday favourites 'Elf' on November 28 and 'Home Alone' on November 30.

'I know we've all streamed them in our homes, but I'm personally looking forward to seeing it up on the big screen. I think this really sets you up in the mood of the holidays and it also relaxes you with how busy the season can be, because taking a step out of the chaos and taking in the funny, funny 'Elf' or watching Kevin in 'Home Alone,' it gives us a taste of our past in a familiar, nostalgic kind of way.'

Before you settle in for Elf, however, stay outside on the Friday evening for the official Tree Lighting Ceremony starting at 5.30.

'We're relying on the community for their spirit and their energy throughout the countdown,' says Ware. 'If you don't skate, or you don't need to shop, the Christmas Market is still a fabulous atmosphere to talk through, people-watch, enjoy the festivities and warmth - and regardless of whether you're young or mature, having a photo with the actual Santa Claus never, never gets dull!'

For a full schedule of the Aurora Christmas Market and associated activities, visit aurora.ca/christmasmarket.

DECK THE HALLS TOUR

If you're embracing your inner Griswold and going all out on your Christmas decorations, the Town of Aurora wants to hear from

you!

This Friday, November 21, is the last chance to enter your home in the Town's 2025 Deck the Halls Tour, a self-guided driving tour of some of the community's most vividly-decorated homes, businesses and buildings, which runs from December 9 ? December 23 from 5 ? 9 p.m.

??Tis the season for bright lights and festive joy! Do you like to decorate the outside of your home or business for the holiday season? Then let's light up Aurora with some festive spirit! says the Town. ?If you have a home or business in Aurora, consider participating in Aurora's Deck the Halls Tour. This is a great opportunity to add festive cheer to the community and is a safe way to admire the beauty of the season.

?The first 30 registrations will receive an Aurora Home Hardware gift card for their participation. This gift card will be provided during the first week of the Tour once we have received a photo of your display. There will be cash prizes to be won for 1st Place and Honourable Mentions.?

For more information, call 905-726-4762 or visit aurora.ca/deckthehallstour.

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter