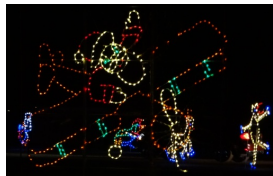


Favorite Holiday Lights: West and East Valley

Written by Rachel Roland

Friday, 23 December 2011 09:26 - Last Updated Tuesday, 03 January 2012 11:51

Rachel Roland is a mom on a mission - exploring the Valley with her two little companions in search of the best restaurants, attractions, and products for you and your children. See what she has in store for your family today!



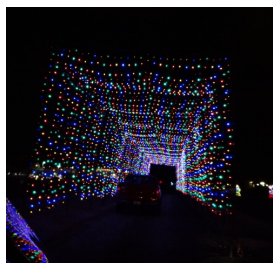
There's nothing quite like the millions of lights that adorn homes, businesses, and other places this holiday season. Our family loves visiting many places throughout the Valley to check out the lights, from driving down decorated streets to checking out the lights you can walk or drive through, we love them all!

I wanted to share two of our favorite places to visit for holiday lights this Friday before Christmas with you, in case you're looking for something fun to do with the family.



[Arizona Celebration of Lights](#)

Located just off 99th Avenue and McDowell, (right near the 101 and I-10 intersection in Avondale), the Arizona Celebration of Lights boasts 7 million lights over a 1 mile stretch. You drive through the lights, which is nice when it's chilly outside, and you can take your time – you're only limited by the cars in front of you and how fast they're going. It took us about 20 minutes to drive through, and we went slowly. (My fantastic mother in law drove so I could take photos, isn't that great?)



We loved it – listening to holiday music in the car, and driving through the hundreds of displays, was a sweet, magical experience. There's no fighting crowds of people, although we did joke that it was kind of like being stuck in traffic as you slowly weave your way through the lights. Admission is \$15 per car Monday – Thursday and \$20 per car Friday – Sunday. You can [buy tickets online](#) or you can pay with **cash only** at the entrance. They also sell treats – hot chocolate, cotton candy, etc – for your drive. It can be a little bumpy, so handle hot drinks with caution!

The [Arizona Celebration of Lights](#) is still open through January 1st, and will be open Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Their hours are Sunday-Thursday 6pm-9pm and Friday and Saturday, 6pm-10pm.



[McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park](#)

Clear on the other side of town, on Scottsdale and Indian Bend Road, the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park puts on a light display like no other! Naturally, this is a popular event and there are a lot of families. We arrived around 530pm (the trains don't start til 630pm), and thankfully, my husband waited in line while the kids played. They have a lot going on to entertain while you're waiting in line – there's the playground....

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The kids loved meeting all the 'celebrities' – there was also Elmo, Tigger, Scooby Doo, and more. Jeremiah and Sarah were thrilled with our little souvenirs - and these were surprisingly inexpensive, too. (\$5! Anywhere else, you'd end up paying at least double that.) They also have Santa, who you can meet in a train, as well as the mini train museum, which Jeremiah and Sarah enjoyed. You can also ride the mini-train for a donation, and the line for that was much shorter than the big train.



Overall, the wait in line was just over an hour – my husband got in line about 610pm, and we boarded our train about 720pm. The train ride was really fun, and the lights were amazing! The first ride is through the tunnel, and when you exit, it's 'snowing' on you! How fun.

The Holiday Lights are closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Don't fret, though! You can still go tonight or December 26th-December 30th. They run from 630pm-9pm, and I'd recommend getting there early with an assigned 'line waiter' so the kids can run around and play. Train rides are \$2 per person over 3, and kids 3 and under ride free with a paying adult. The line for tickets can also be long, so be ready to wait!

Do you have any favorite holiday lights around the Valley? I'd love to hear your suggestions – tweet me at @rachelroland or you can email me at rachel@smallstepsonourjourney.com.

I hope you and your family have a wonderful holiday season!



I'm Rachel - a mom, wife, and 'green' blogger at [Small Steps On Our Journey](http://SmallStepsOnOurJourney.com). If you have any suggestions for future articles or any questions on this one, please contact me at rachel@smallstepsonourjourney.com or tweet me @rachelroland!