

Holiday Events & Activities in Phoenix

Written by Written by Christine Whitton

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It's official. Christmas is just around the corner. In between rushing to decorate, bake and shop, the little ones are wondering just how Santa fits down the chimney. This year, occupy their minds with some good old-fashioned family fun. Each year, most towns across America gather together for their annual tree lighting and picture ops with Santa. And our Valley is no different. Filled from brim-to-brim with festive holiday fun, we at *Arizona Foothills* have gathered a few events we thought would be jolly ol' time.

Scottsdale Holiday "Snow and Glow"



Scottsdale's annual Holiday Harmony celebration kicks off the Christmas season with the mayor's annual tree lighting ceremony on Dec. 5 at 6:15 p.m. Located at the Scottsdale's Civic Center Mall, the festivities begin at 3:30 p.m. and include live bands, interactive booths, real snow trucked in and an appearance by Santa himself—an event anticipated by many Valley dwellers.

Zoo Lights



Open until Jan. 10, the Phoenix Zoo, in partnership with SRP, has created a magnificent holiday display through a colorful arrangement of lights and music. Families can enjoy this year's newest edition with the Komodo dragons and their new exhibit, Land of the Dragons; music in motion; horse-drawn wagon rides; carousel rides; and camel rides. www.phoenixzoo.org.

The Fiesta of Light, Electric Light Parade



At last, the 23rd annual Fiesta of Light, Electric Light Parade is marching into town on Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. This year's "Going Green for the Holiday's" theme will entertain thousands with floats, bands and performing groups. The parade route will start on Central Avenue and move from Montebello Avenue to Camelback Road, go east on Camelback Road to 7th Street and take 7th Street south to Indian School. Remember curbside seating in on a first come first served basis, so come early.

McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park



All aboard! The Scottsdale-based family-owned rail park has strung thousands of little twinkle lights and holiday displays to create a magical winter wonderland for children to experience by train. This annual event is a hit among many families and their out-of-town guests. In addition the park's main train attraction, kids enjoy rides on the carousel, sweet-tasting drinks like hot cocoa and perusing the shelves for toys at the gift shop. The park is open from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Dec. 11 to Jan. 2, excluding holidays. www.therailroadpark.com.

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Biltmore Fashion Park Showing of Elf



Grab a blanket and a Santa sack full of tummy-filling snacks for this movie night in the park. Biltmore Fashion Park is showing “Elf,” the hilarious Christmas comedy starring Will Ferrell as an oversized elf, on Friday, Dec. 11. Rated PG, this movie is perfect for families getting into the holiday spirit.