

# HOLIDAY TRAIL *of* LIGHTS

ALEXANDRIA-PINEVILLE • MINDEN • MONROE-WEST MONROE  
NATCHITOCHEs • SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER CITY



## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact

Sarah McKinney, Communication Coordinator  
Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau  
Office: 318-429-0645  
[smckinney@sbctb.org](mailto:smckinney@sbctb.org)



## 2011 Holiday Trail of Lights reinvents itself and holiday experience

The Holiday Trail of Lights and its partners are gearing up for a whimsical holiday season that is sure to enchant all who come to experience dazzling lights, splendid events and warm Christmas cheer.

This year the Holiday Trail of Lights, eight cities in five regions, is a completely new holiday experience with added and all Louisiana cities, a fresh look, revised logo, new creative and progressive marketing and social media efforts. One of the major differences is a new website set to launch September 1. The new site, [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com) will include event calendars for each city, details about accommodations and attractions, and a new interactive itinerary builder. Website visitors will be able to scope out major events in each city, plan their tour to the regions, and even book a room.

Advertising for the Holiday Trail of Lights will also begin on September 1, with ads in publications such as *Texas Monthly*, *AAA Southern Traveler*, and *Louisiana Cooking*. The Holiday Trail of Lights also hosts a media tour every year attracting journalists from drive markets in Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi and south Louisiana to generate print, broadcast and web publicity. Each year, these journalists tour the cities and regions to get a taste of what each has to offer.

This trail has reinvented itself spanning across I-20 and down I-49 incorporating the cities of Shreveport-Bossier, Minden, Monroe-West Monroe, Natchitoches and Alexandria-Pineville. The Holiday Trail of Lights has been delivering incredible holiday experiences for more than two decades, and it draws tourists during the otherwise slow months of November and December. As

a result it brings positive economic impact to the regions. The cities along the trail are all within driving distance of one another, making the tour a convenient hour-long trip from any one city to its neighboring city. Here are the major events each city brings to the Holiday Trail of Lights tour:

**Shreveport-Bossier**, at the intersection of I-20 and I-49 connects the five regions. Excitement is stirring as plans are being finalized for a new extravagant fireworks show on the riverfront. The December on the Red Fireworks Festival will take place December 31 on the banks of the Red River. Visitors will have the option of enjoying the show from both sides of the river at RiverView Park and the Louisiana Boardwalk. The official start of the holiday season will begin before Thanksgiving marked by the lighting of a 40-foot Christmas tree at the Louisiana Boardwalk, one of the area's top tourist attractions. Holiday-seekers will be dazzled by Christmas in Roseland Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, November 25-December 19. They will be wowed by the Barnwell Garden and Art Center's Holiday Laser Light Show every Friday and Sunday evening, December 2-23 and enchanted by the Christmas on Caddo Fireworks Festival, December 3. And as it gets colder outside, guests will feel warmed and welcomed at the Highland Restoration Association's Christmas Tour of Homes, December 10 and 11.

**Minden**, with its proud German heritage, is starting the holiday season even earlier than most on November 11 and 12 with the "Fasching, Fifth Season Festival." This German equivalent of Mardi Gras marks the beginning of the holiday season, where thousands of holiday lights will be illuminated. Parades, music and historic tours await visitors in the "Friendliest City in the South."

**Monroe-West Monroe** is planning an exhilarating Christmas on the River Festival for 2011. This year, visitors can kick off the holiday season at the lighting ceremony on Antique Alley and enjoy ice skating at the Northeast Louisiana Children's Museum beginning November 26. From art crawls and 5K runs to a redneck parade and a fireworks extravaganza, December 1-3, Monroe-West Monroe is a great place to experience the trail in northeast Louisiana.

**Natchitoches** is celebrating 85 years of lights this Christmas season. This is the nation's second oldest festival. "The City of Lights" is kicking off the season with "Turn on the Holidays," November 19. The entire family can enjoy free entertainment and an awe-inspiring light display and fireworks show. This year, visitors can experience Frosty's Avalanche Slide, the famous snow hill featuring 110 feet of chilly winter fun. Get there early on December 3 to participate in the festival along Front Street and soak up the famous shops, eateries and fascinating history on the Cane River.

**Alexandria-Pineville** claims itself as the heart of Louisiana, and this holiday season these sister cities are bringing music and arts for the soul. Events include a holiday concert by the Rapides Symphony Orchestra, December 4, and visitors can enjoy a performance of "The Nutcracker" by the Red River Dance Company, November 26-27. A favorite in the area is an Old-Fashioned Christmas at the Kent Plantation House, December 3. Guests take a journey back in time and enjoy Christmas with Papa Noel at this free public event.

To learn more about the Holiday Trail of Lights and to stay up-to-date on festivals, events and holiday attractions visit [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com). You can also sign up for the official newsletter on the website. Follow HTOL on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights](https://www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights).

## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact

Sarah McKinney, Communication Coordinator  
Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau  
Office: 318-429-0645  
[smckinney@sbctb.org](mailto:smckinney@sbctb.org)



### **Shreveport-Bossier to add new holiday attractions for 2011, bring back popular favorites**

**Shreveport-Bossier--**The holiday season in Shreveport-Bossier is getting a facelift, and while twinkling lights, holiday cheer and incredible shopping are all staples of the area's Christmas season, this year the sister cities have so much more to offer.

The official kickoff is marked by the lighting of a 40-foot Christmas tree the week before Thanksgiving at the Louisiana Boardwalk. With more than 60 shops and eateries, a movie theater with a new IMAX screen, a Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, and two full-service spas, the Boardwalk is a one-stop-shop for the entire family.

New this year is the December on the Red Fireworks Festival, December 3 on the banks of the Red River. Visitors will have the option of enjoying the show from both sides of the river at RiverView Park or the Louisiana Boardwalk. Expanded and back by popular demand this year, the Barnwell Garden and Art Center's Holiday Laser Light Show, December 2-23, is bigger, better and brighter than ever. The 15-minute choreographed light display will take place in the domed conservatory where guests can listen to holiday music while enjoying snowflakes, stars and candy canes projected on the inside of the dome. Shows are repeated from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. each Friday and Sunday evening. Visit [www.BarnwellCenter.com](http://www.BarnwellCenter.com) for more details.

Visitors and residents can enjoy Christmas in Roseland at the Gardens of the American Rose Center, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, November 25-December 19. This signature event is marked by more than one million lights and Christmas community cards made by area students.

They can see performances of “The Nutcracker” presented by the Shreveport Metropolitan Ballet, December 3 and 4, and the Country Christmas Festival in Vivian, December 3. Shop for a cause at Les Boutique de Noël, November 17-19, make a toy or an ornament and take it home at Sci-Port: Louisiana’s Science Center’s Make-and-Take Toy Workshops, December 18-30. For an off-the-beaten-path holiday experience, make plans to attend Christmas on Caddo Fireworks Festival, December 3. Take a short drive to Benton to enjoy a whimsical Christmas parade at Christmas on the Square, December 10. And as it gets colder outside, guests will feel warmed and welcomed at the Highland Restoration Association’s Christmas Tour of Homes, December 10 and 11.

The holiday season is already in sight, and Shreveport-Bossier is gearing up for a fantastic celebration. Stay up-to-date by visiting [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com) or [www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights](https://www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights) for holiday events. Also visit [www.ShreveportBossierFunGuide.org](http://www.ShreveportBossierFunGuide.org) for all event happenings in Shreveport-Bossier.

## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Pattie Odom  
Economic/Downtown Development Director  
City of Minden  
318-377-2144



## Minden celebrates German Heritage at Christmas

**Minden** -- Celebrate Christmas with the folks from the “Friendliest City in the South,” Minden. Festivities begin on November 11 and 12 when Minden celebrates all things German at the Fasching Fifth Season Festival. Thousands of Christmas lights will be turned on, with hundreds of nutcrackers featured in this year’s Christmas displays. Downtown will be all things German that weekend, featuring German food, entertainment, a beer exhibition and more. Stick around for fireworks at dusk.

Remember how much fun Christmas shopping used to be? Catch the spirit and shop all afternoon at locally owned Minden specialty shops during Holiday Open House on Sunday, November 20. Step back in time as you tour historic downtown, still boasting its 1917 brick streets. “Wrap It Up Downtown” on Tuesday, December 6. Visit Santa, shop, and tour local museums, art galleries, antique shops, and specialty shops. Stick around downtown for the annual Minden Evening Lion’s Club Christmas Parade at 6 p.m. and for the annual Christmas concert of the Minden Community Chorus at 7:30 p.m. at the Saint Rest Baptist Church.

Minden’s Historic Residential District has “decked the halls,” too. Drive through on any evening or make plans to visit Minden on December 10 for the Historic Residential District Candlelight Tour of Homes. Minden invites you to celebrate the season.

Minden is located just 28 miles east of Shreveport on I-20, exit 47. For more information, go to [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com), [www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights](https://www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights), [www.MindenUSA.com](http://www.MindenUSA.com), [www.MindenFasching.com](http://www.MindenFasching.com) or call 318-371-4258.

## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Courtney Hornsby

City of Natchitoches

Office: 318 357-3822

[chornsby@NatchitochesLa.gov](mailto:chornsby@NatchitochesLa.gov)



## Natchitoches Celebrates 85 Years of Christmas Lights

The 85th annual Christmas Festival will be held in conjunction with the annual Festival of Lights celebration

**Natchitoches**--Celebrate the joy of the Christmas season with a visit to historic Natchitoches.

The holiday season officially kicks off on November 19 with "Turn on the Holidays," an entire day of free family entertainment on the downtown riverbank. Events will include numerous children's activities, entertainment and food vendors. The highlight of the day will be the official turning on of thousands of Christmas lights followed by a grand fireworks display. Live entertainment will be provided by River Road.

The entire Festival of Lights season runs from November 19 through January 6, 2012. Thousands of Christmas lights are on daily at dusk, illuminating the downtown district and the Cane River Lake.

Be sure to look for the carolers (and snow!) on Front Street, Friday and Saturday evenings through December 18.

On November 25 and 26 bring the entire family out to enjoy "Snow Fest" in Natchitoches. Experience Frosty's Avalanche Slide featuring tubing down 110 feet of totally awesome winter fun. If your child doesn't meet the height requirement for the slide, there will be numerous other children's activities available for them to enjoy.

Don't forget about other holiday attractions and events. Carriage tours will be available for evening tours through the National Landmark Historic District. The shops in the Historic District will be open and selling their festive decorations, unique gifts and clothing, including the Christmas Festival T-shirt. There will be live entertainment every Saturday night in December followed by a grand fireworks show.

The 85th annual Christmas Festival will take place Saturday, December 3 in downtown Natchitoches. Food and craft vendors will be in place and the shops will stay open late. There will be a daylong celebration filled with live entertainment, arts, crafts and food vendors, two parades, fireworks extravaganza, and a spectacular laser show.

The Christmas by Candlelight Holiday Tour of Homes will take place during the second and third weeks in December. The tour will feature several historic homes decorated for the holidays. The tour is presented annually by the Natchitoches Historic Foundation. Visit [www.HistoricFoundation.com](http://www.HistoricFoundation.com) for more details.

For more information, visit [www.ChristmasFestival.com](http://www.ChristmasFestival.com) or call the Christmas Festival Office at (318) 352-6894 or the Natchitoches Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 259-1714. Stay up-to-date by visiting [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com) or [www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights](https://www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights) for holiday events.

## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact

Alana Cooper, Executive Director  
Monroe-West Monroe Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Office: 318.387.5691

[acooper@monroe-westmonroe.org](mailto:acooper@monroe-westmonroe.org)



## Merry Christmas on the River in Monroe-West Monroe

**Monroe-West Monroe--**The Christmas season is upon the sister cities. That means it's time for the 2011 Christmas on the River Festival in Monroe-West Monroe. The dancing lights on Antique Alley and the ice skating rink at the Northeast Louisiana Children's Museum will return with some exciting new additions.

Below is a sample of weekend activities:

### November 26

Lighting Ceremony on Antique Alley and the "Little Miss Christmas on the River" Pageant.

### December 1-3

Downtown Art Crawl, Bah Humbug 5K Run, Bawcomville Redneck Parade, Christmas Parade presented by the Kiwanis Club, Jaycees Fireworks Extravaganza, PawRade, Journey to Bethlehem, ballet performances, and more.

### December 10

Downtown Christmas Tour, Christmas in the Park, special sales in Antique Alley and more.

### December 17

Old-fashioned Christmas, Antique Car Cruise & Show, hayrides, ballet performances, and more.

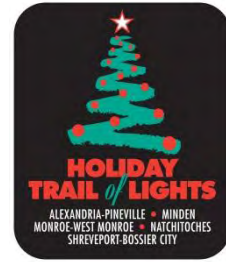
Month-long activities include great shopping, Tree Art Contest viewing, Santa's Village at the Northeast Louisiana Children's Museum, Christmas at the Biedenharn, and more.

For more information and a complete list of events, please visit [www.ChristmasOnTheRiver.org](http://www.ChristmasOnTheRiver.org) or call 318-387-5691. Stay up-to-date by visiting [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com) or [www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights](http://www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights) for holiday events.

## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact

Kelli West, Marketing Manager  
Alexandria-Pineville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Office: 318 442-9546  
[kelli@apacvb.org](mailto:kelli@apacvb.org)



## The Heart of Louisiana Brings Good Tidings and Great Joy

**Alexandria** -- The Alexandria/Pineville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau announces the 2011 holiday season and new partnership with the Holiday Trail of Lights organization.

The 2011 holiday season will be complete with lights, parades, Santa Claus, and performing arts.

Events will include a holiday concert by the Rapides Symphony Orchestra, a performance of “A Christmas Story” by Family Playhouse, a performance of “The Nutcracker” by the Red River Dance Company, “The Pilgrimage to Bethlehem” presented by Emmanuel Baptist Church, community parades, choreographed light displays, and more.

One of the favorite events of the year is “An Old Fashioned Christmas” at Kent Plantation House. This free event is family-friendly, where ornaments are decorated like the ornaments from the early 1800s. Family members can participate in the bell-ringing entertainment and pictures can be taken with Papa Noel.

The local shops in Alexandria will host a Holiday Open House to preview their holiday décor and specialty items. This is a shopping experience you will not want to miss.

The City of Alexandria will also present its 12 Days of Christmas, encompassing holiday activities throughout the area.

For a complete list of holiday events, visit [www.theHeartofLouisiana.com](http://www.theHeartofLouisiana.com) or call (800) 551-9546.

The convention and visitors bureau is a proud partner in the new Holiday Trail of Lights coalition with Shreveport-Bossier City, Natchitoches, Minden and Monroe-West Monroe. The new trail with new cities was formed this year and consists of northwest, northeast and central Louisiana cities. For more information about the Holiday Trail of Lights, visit online at [www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com](http://www.HolidayTrailOfLights.com) or [www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights](https://www.facebook.com/HolidayTrailOfLights).