



European Christmas Markets

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The holiday season in Europe is a true winter wonderland. Christmas lights illuminate the long nights, and the smell of gingerbread and spiced wine waft through the air. Christmas Markets are an integral part of the holiday experience, being held every winter for centuries. Locals sell their hand-made crafts and treats in wooden Christmas stalls set up in large open squares and along narrow winding alleys, converting the heart of ancient cities into holiday carnivals filled with warm drinks and smiling faces.

QUIZ

*What Type of Traveller
Are You Based on
Your Travel IQ?*

TAKE THE QUIZ

Top 5



Prague, Czech Republic

If you want to experience some Christmas Magic, spend your winter days wand...



Antwerp, Belgium

The Belgian city of Antwerp will transform into a full-blown winter playgrou...



Berlin, Germany

As the capital of Germany, Berlin has much to offer its visitors - not only ...



Budapest, Hungary

Vörösmarty Square is the place to go if you are visiting the Hungarian capit...



Paris, France

Festive lights, Christmas decorations and gingerbread men everywhere - these...



SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN!



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But when...?

Christmas Countdown



The most wonderful time of the year is getting closer every day! It doesn't matter how old you are, everyone should know how many days are

left till the most special day of the year. Don't hesitate to check out the Xmas Countdown Clock to see how much time you have left to get into the Christmas spirit!

Photo: Evgeny Karandaev / Shutterstock.com

Internet: www.xmasclock.com

CHRISTMAS MARKETS



Ekaterina Pokrovsky / Shutterstock.com

There are many ways to catch the infectious and magical spirit of Christmas, but visiting a Christmas market is definitely one of the best. For hundreds of years, Europeans have been celebrating the holiday season by filling the main squares of cities and villages to wander among snow-covered, masterfully decorated Christmas stalls. The magical and romantic markets help people get into holiday mode, and a chance to meet Santa Claus himself certainly helps!

Prague, Czech Republic



If you want to experience some Christmas Magic, spend your winter days wandering around all of Prague's festive markets. The well-known Old Town

Square and Wenceslas Square never fail to impress with their selection of Christmas wares and gingerbread men, the beautifully-decorated Christmas tree and the petting zoo, a favourite for the whole family.

Photo: Jiri Foltyn / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 30 November 2019 - 6 January 2020

Internet: www.prague-info.cz

Antwerp, Belgium



The Belgian city of Antwerp will transform into a full-blown winter playground this Christmas season, which will run from December 7th until January 5th. Anyone visiting during this period can take advantage of the 1000-square-metre ice skating rink smack in the heart of Groenplaats, and enjoy smooth gliding under a roof designed to emulate a starry sky. Grote Markt will be another happening hot spot, with its giant Christmas trees and hanging winter garden sparkling with magical lights, plus a scattering of inviting Christmas Market stands, which, in addition to the classic 'spekpatatjes' (fried potatoes with bacon), will this year be taking you on a culinary journey across the world, with delightful treats like fish & chips and steamy Vietnamese 'pho' soup.

Antwerp's city center is compact enough to easily get around on foot. While you do so, remember to wander through the entrancing winter forest of tree sculptures and natural moss in Handschoenmarkt, and pay a visit to the irresistibly cosy Steenplein with its inviting, family-friendly Bar Den and multiple tiny heaters to warm up at.

Photo: Henryk Sadura/Shutterstock.com

Address: Groenplaats, Grote Markt, Handschoenmarkt, Steenplein and further locations throughout Antwerp

Opening hours: 7 December 2019 - 5 January 2020

Internet: www.visitantwerpen.be/en/events-exhibitions/winter-in-antwerp-en

More Info: Use the hashtag #winterinantwerp to share your magical winter wonderland experiences in Antwerp

Berlin, Germany



As the capital of Germany, Berlin has much to offer its visitors - not only when it comes to sightseeing but also around Christmas time.

Walking around the city's more than 60 different Christmas markets will give you the right giggles and jiggles the season requires. All of them are unique and charming in their own way and have their own bit of Christmas magic. Charlottenburg Castle and Gendarmenmarkt are two favourites in Berlin that will give you a taste of the classic winter wonderland.

Photo: LianeM / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 25 November 2019 - 31 December 2019

Budapest, Hungary



Vörösmarty Square is the place to go if you are visiting the Hungarian capital between November 9th and the 1st of January. Stop by and

experience why this one is one of the most popular Christmas Markets in Europe. Be sure to walk among the stall shutters, but don't stop there - take a look at the huge advent calendar on the Gerbeaud building and look for live entertainment along the way.

Photo: dsajo / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 8 November 2019 - 1 January 2020

Paris, France



Festive lights, Christmas decorations and gingerbread men everywhere - these are just a few ways the city of romance gets you in the right mood around Christmas. There are several places to visit throughout the city if you are looking for some Christmas fun. Stop by Champs-Élysées to spend time in the Christmas Village or in the Latin Quarter to see Santa's Village. For a real winter wonderland don't miss out Trocadero Gardens.

Photo: russavia / Wikimedia Commons (image cropped)

Opening hours: Late November 2019 - Early January 2020

Vienna, Austria



With more than 150 stalls just in the heart of the city, in Rathausplatz, Vienna's Christmas Market is a huge one, decorated with amazing Christmas lights. When you are visiting the market of the Austrian capital, don't forget to look for gingerbread hearts with sweet messages, and of course, beewax candles should be on every shopping list. If you get thirsty - or just want to warm up while walking around in the snow - give Weihnachtspunsch a try!

Photo: S.Borisov / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 15 November - 26 December 2019

Bologna, Italy



Christmas markets are not exclusive to northern Europe, as some of the most festive can be found in the Mediterranean region. Bologna's two Christmas Markets are the oldest in the whole country. Walk among the stalls either at the Fiera di Natale or the Antica Fiera di Santa Lucia, and you will surely find some Christmas decorations to treasure. Stuff your tummy with tasty Christmas delights, such as specially shaped marzipan and nuts.

Photo: gab90 / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 21 November 2019 - 6 January 2020

Stockholm, Sweden



When Christmas time comes around, Sweden gets its locals ready with some glögg and pepparkakor. Sipping mulled wine while chewing on thin ginger biscuits is a typical Swedish way of celebrating the most wonderful time of the year. Don't miss out on the amazing Christmas Market in the capital - step into the winter wonderland that is Stockholm. Visit the beautifully-decorated stalls right in front of the Nobel Museum, where your children can happily play on the tombola for just a few cents.

Photo: Oleksiy Mark / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 23 November - 23 December 2019

Trondheim, Norway



At the heart of Trondheim you will not only find stalls but also traditional tepee-style tents where you have the chance to buy your very own woollen jumper - a great way to experience the real Christmas-feeling that spreads around Norway. While munching on some berry-flavoured cheese, hop on a sleigh and let the horses take you for an amazing ride in the beautiful snowy surroundings.

Photo: Liveshot / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 6 - 21 December 2019

St Gallen, Switzerland



Just a short drive away from the Swiss capital, you will find a Christmas market that will set your heart abuzz. St Gallen has the tallest Christmas tree in the country, which is decorated with countless lights. To top off the experience, you can hear the songs of carollers around the clock. During your stay in St Gallen, try out the local specialities, such as biberli and feuerzangenbowle, just the treats to get you in the right mood.

Photo: Fedor Selivanov / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 29 November - 24 December 2019

Brussels, Belgium



Visiting Brussels between the end of November and January 6th, you will not only find yourself in the middle of a shiny Christmas market along

the Place Sainte Catherine but you will also have the chance to experience an elegant sound-and-light show on the Grand Place. Christmas wares and beautiful handmade souvenirs can be found all over the market's 240 wooden chalets - but be sure not miss out on the traditional Belgian waffle, as well.

Photo: Palis Michalis / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 29 November 2019 - 5 January 2020

Internet: www.plaisirsdhiver.be

Vilnius, Lithuania



Vilnius has a different take on Christmas trees - they decorate the 550-ft high Vilnius Television tower for the holiday season and hang a bunch of Christmas lights all around it. While strolling among the beautiful sites of Vilnius, sip some karstas vynas (mulled wine) and buy a pair of woollen gloves to keep warm. Find the perfect handmade gift from among the many Christmas decorations and candle holders. And be sure to do all this while munching on some raguolis (a traditional Lithuanian pastry)!

Photo: R.Babakin / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 30 November 2019 - 7 January 2020

London, England



Spending a winter break in London is an excellent choice. The Christmas lights in the city light up ceremoniously already in November, so if you are around, don't miss out on the parade either. For the holiday season, Hyde Park turns into a real winter wonderland, offering not only the traditional stalls but also the largest outdoor

skating rink of the city. Strap on your skates and head out onto the ice. Wander around the different Christmas markets of London, stop by a Christmas concert or experience the carol sing-along at the Royal Albert Hall.

Photo: mariakraynova / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 21 November 2019 - 5 January 2020

Helsinki, Finland



Senate Square is the place where you have to go if you are looking for a huge Christmas Market in Finland. The capital of the country will not leave you hanging - visit the market's more than 100 beautifully decorated Christmas stalls for real Finnish crafts, hand-made Christmas decorations and much more. If you feel like it is getting chilly, buy a pair of woollen gloves or warm up with some glögi (traditional Finnish spicy mulled wine) at the Food Yard.

Photo: Oleksiy Mark / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 1 - 22 December 2019

Riga, Latvia



During the holiday season, Riga is a magical place to visit if you are seeking to spark the festive spirit within you. Latvia's capital and largest city celebrates Christmas in the Old Town with a huge Christmas Fair offering not only the creative Latvian handcrafted decorations but also several concerts and different workshops to please visitors, both the old and young. And if you haven't met him yet, you will now have the chance to see the one and only Santa Claus!

Photo: Lisa A / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 1 December 2019 - 6 January 2020

Gdansk, Poland



The Christmas Market in Gdansk is not only a traditional market but an attraction as well. Besides meeting Santa Claus, riding a carousel horse and skating around the ice rink, visitors can explore the traditionally decorated Christmas trees from all over Europe that are exhibited at the fair. Don't worry about your tummy either - cakes, chocolate covered fruit and different roasted nuts are just a few of all the culinary delights waiting for you in Gdansk.

Photo: Curioso / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 3 - 23 December 2019

Bucharest, Romania



In the middle of the city, right on University Square, you will find around 65 wooden Christmas stalls gathered from the end of November till the end of December. While you are strolling around looking for a bit of Christmas treasure - such as beautiful handicrafts, ceramics, Christmas decorations - make sure to stop by Santa Clause's house. The festive season wouldn't be real if you couldn't go on a Christmas carousel ride - so visit Bucharest and have a blast!

Photo: NatashaPhoto / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 28 November - 26 December 2019

Tallinn, Estonia



What could be better than celebrating the holiday season with Santa and his reindeer? When visiting Tallinn at Christmas time, you will have the chance to put a huge smile on your and your children's face while wandering around the Christmas Market in the Town Hall Square. Meeting Santa, shopping in the little huts, and petting animals in the tiny zoo are just a few of the activities to choose from. Get warm by sipping a cup of hot chocolate and listening to some Christmas music.

Photo: Aleksei Verhovski / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 15 November 2019 - 7 January 2020

Internet: www.christmasmarket.ee

Zagreb, Croatia



During the weeks of Advent, Zagreb celebrates the holiday season with a huge Christmas market that takes place in different streets around the Jelacic Square. Look around and find yourself among hundreds of gingerbread hearts with the sweetest figures and pick a beautifully-decorated and locally-produced seasonal souvenir. You will not only be shopping around but also entertained by local choirs, dancers and live music.

Photo: Randi Sokoloff / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: 30 November 2019 - 6 January 2020

Internet: www.adventzagreb.com

UNIQUE CHRISTMAS MARKETS



View Apart / Shutterstock.com

Although all the traditional Christmas Markets are unique in their own way, the location or style of some makes them really stand out. Have you thought of visiting a floating Christmas market, or maybe one in a cave? Read on to see some of the most exciting and unusual ones of all.

Ravenna Gorge Christmas Market - Under a Viaduct



Deep in the Black Forest, but just a few minutes from Freiburg, you will find an extremely romantic Christmas Market that is located right under a viaduct. Just beneath the Ravenna Gorge viaduct there are more than 40 stalls offering local, handmade Christmas crafts and some fun programmes for children and adults. Visit this market to experience a real romantic and rustic vibe while getting in the perfect holiday mood.

Photo: R.Babakin / Shutterstock.com

Opening hours: Weekends; 1st December - 23rd December 2019

Velvet Cave Christmas Market



Velvet Cave Christmas Market, or as some call it, Santa's Cave, is an excellent choice if you are looking for an extremely unique Christmas Market

this year. Just under the castle of Valkenburg you will find a beautifully decorated Christmas Market that will definitely give you the Christmas chills with its unique festive atmosphere - in a cosy cave!

Photo: Wolfgang Zwanzger / Shutterstock.com

Address: Velvet Cave, Valkenburg aan de Geul

Opening hours: 15th November - 29th December 2019

Liseberg Amusement Park Christmas Market



If you are looking for the largest Christmas Market in Sweden, don't try to find it on a street or a square - it is in an amusement park! The

second largest city of the country, Gothenburg awaits its visitors with a real adventure and experience when it comes to the holiday season. After you have wandered around the more than 80 stalls located right in the middle of Liseberg, go ahead and jump on a ride to enjoy the real atmosphere of a Christmas Market in an amusement park.

Photo: lkoimages / Shutterstock.com

Address: Liseberg, Gothenburg, Sweden

Opening hours: November 15-17, 22-24 and 28-30 and December 1, 4-8, 10-23 and 26-30

Internet: www.liseberg.se

Floating Christmas Market



If you are a lover of rivers and boats, visiting the floating Christmas Market in Vilshofen is the way for you to make the most of this upcoming

holiday season. Not only the boat but also the Danube promenade is transformed into a festive Christmas market offering handcrafted decorations and Christmas delights. If you decide to spend your holiday break in Vilshofen, don't miss the largest wooden manger scene in the world!

Photo: Halina Arapova / Shutterstock.com

Address: Vilshofen, Germany

Opening hours: 29.11-1.12. | 6.-8.12. / 13.-15.12 2019 Friday: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday: 1 p.m. - 8 p.m

Santa Claus Village



Are you looking for the real winter wonderland? You have just found it. The capital of Lapland, the official hometown of Santa Claus is open

year-round offering you and your family an unforgettable way to celebrate the holidays. The elves' toy factory and the Santa Claus photography service are among the most beloved attractions for children. Don't forget to also look around the shelves - as a souvenir, buy some real Finnish-designed products or send a postcard from the Santa Claus Main Post Office.

Photo: Guschenkova / Shutterstock.com

Address: Rovaniemi (Lapland), Finland

Opening hours: Opening November 11, 2019

Internet: www.santaclausvillage.info