

Colonial Williamsburg

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Grand Illumination returns to Historic Area for three evenings this December



Image courtesy of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
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WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Oct. 27, 2022) – [Grand Illumination](#) returns to Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area for three consecutive Saturdays this December as part of a series of holiday programming that is free and open to the public. This expanded schedule, which debuted last year, replaces the one-night event that had been the tradition for decades prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Grand Illumination has been a Colonial Williamsburg institution for more than 85 years, and we are grateful to our community and to our guests for the privilege of playing a significant role in their holiday celebrations for generations,” said Cliff Fleet, president and CEO of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. “Last year’s expansion of Grand Illumination to three nights was

incredibly well received by our community, and Colonial Williamsburg, in partnership with the City of Williamsburg, is delighted to reprise the expanded schedule this year.”

[Grand Illumination](#) will take place Dec. 3, 10 and 17 from 5-7:30 p.m. Each evening includes seasonal music, the lighting of the cressets, storytelling on Palace Green, a special appearance by Father Christmas, and a procession led by the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes & Drums culminating in fireworks demonstrations in the Historic Area over the Governor’s Palace and the Capitol. For a complete list of Grand Illumination FAQs visit colonialwilliamsburg.org/gifaq.

“There’s really no better way to top off a day spent celebrating the holiday season than with the Grand Illumination fireworks,” Williamsburg Mayor Douglas Pons said. “Year after year, we are thrilled to welcome people from near and far to Williamsburg for this spectacular event.”

Additional Colonial Williamsburg holiday programming that is free and open to the public includes:

- [Lighting of the Cressets](#), Nov. 25-26, Dec. 23-24 – Lit cressets (metal baskets of wood mounted from poles and used as an early form of street lighting) will illuminate historic Duke of Gloucester Street as musicians stroll the city. 6-9 p.m.
- [Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony](#), Dec. 1 – Located in the heart of the Historic Area across from the Courthouse, the 40-foot community Christmas tree will be illuminated with over 7,500 lights. This annual event, co-sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg, includes Christmas caroling, a reading of *The Night Before Christmas*, and an appearance by Father Christmas. 5-5:30 p.m.
- [Intersections](#), Dec. 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-24, and 29-31 – Costumed historic interpreters will bring the streets of the Historic Area to life with this free street theater program in front of the Raleigh Tavern in which residents of Williamsburg prepare for an 18th-century holiday ball. 10-10:25 a.m.
- [Celebration of the Yule Log](#), Dec. 2, 9 and 16 – The Yule log will be hauled by a wagon from Capitol Circle to Market Square where it will be added to a bonfire accompanied by holiday music, festivities, and the lighting of the cressets. 6-8 p.m.

Holiday festivities continue daily throughout the season in Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area, Merchants Square and at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg. Colonial Williamsburg historic sites are open daily to ticketed guests from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg are open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. with [extended hours](#) and special programming from 6-9 p.m. every Wednesday of the holiday season beginning Nov. 30. For more information on ticketed holiday programming and dining experiences, explore the Colonial Williamsburg [Holiday Planner](#). To purchase tickets and find up-to-date event information, visit colonialwilliamsburg.org. Follow Colonial Williamsburg on [Facebook](#) and @colonialwmsburg on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia’s 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences highlight the relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 600 restored or reconstructed original buildings, renowned museums of decorative arts and

folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers, lodging, culinary options from historic taverns to casual or elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 45 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones and his son Rees Jones, a full-service spa and fitness center, pools, retail stores and gardens. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.

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