



Celebrate an Ozark Mountain Christmas in Branson, Missouri

Branson, Missouri (July 27, 2023) – With less than five months to go until December 25, it might be hard for some of us to get into the Christmas spirit. (Sometimes it's hard to think as far ahead as dinner, so we get it.) However, there are some unique places where it's never too soon to get the (snow)ball rolling. One such place is [Branson, Missouri](#), where visions (of sugarplums), plans and schedules for the destination's annual transformation into one of America's most Christmassy towns are already well under way.

The spectacular two-month Ozark Mountain Christmas celebration kicks off in early November and is filled with lights, music and merriment for the young and the young-at-heart. Branson has officially been celebrating Ozark Mountain Christmas since 1988, making this year its 35th anniversary ... though the celebration has become bigger and brighter each year. If you're in need of some convincing about why a trip to Branson should make it onto your Christmas list, here are just a few reasons:

1. Silver Dollar City's *An Old Time Christmas*

This 1880s-style theme park's "[An Old Time Christmas](#)" event features the largest concentration of lights in Branson ... more than 6.5 million, to be exact (equating to more than 680 miles of lights)! Between November 4 and December 30, visitors can stroll among the massive displays of twinkling lights, including the concentrated 1.5-million-light "Christmas In Midtown" walkthrough and [Joy On Town Square](#) light-to-music synchronized display, featuring an eight-story Christmas tree with larger-than-life LED projections. Many of the park's award-winning rides are open during the festival, along with Broadway-style live holiday productions, festive home-style meals and seasonal treats. Plus, Rudolph's Holly Jolly™ Christmas Light Parade, winds its way through The City's streets.



1.5 million lights are located in the “Christmas in Midtown” section of Silver Dollar City’s “An Old Time Christmas.” This concentration of lights is more than 20% of the 680 miles of lights dazzling guests at the park during this time of year.

Photo Credit: Silver Dollar City

2. Christmas Trees ... and Treasure Hunts!

With more than 1,500 Christmas trees throughout the destination – including those at Silver Dollar City – Branson’s Christmas Tree Trail is truly spectacular. Each year, the [Branson Christmas Coalition](#) – yes, it’s a real organization – unveils a themed community Christmas tree in November. This year’s theme has been announced as “Evergreen and Ever Glowing,” and will celebrate the destination’s balance of nature and neon. A colorful spectacle from top to bottom, all 39 feet of the 2023 tree will be adorned with nearly 6,000 lights and a neon sign wishing the world a “Merry Ozark Mountain Christmas.” Located in the heart of Branson’s Entertainment District, the “Evergreen and Ever Glowing” tree will be centrally positioned in front of the [Branson Ferris Wheel](#). Consider this detail your one and only location-based clue, because visitors are invited to participate in a brand-new Christmas tree treasure hunt to find the remaining biggest and best trees in Branson. Starting on November 1, the most unique landmark Christmas tree displays in Branson will include GPS identifiers. Visitors who want to explore America’s Christmas Tree Trail can take fun holiday quizzes, snap photos and enjoy a hide-and-seek challenge along the way.



Located in heart of Branson's Entertainment District, this year's brand-new community Christmas tree, "Evergreen and Ever Glowing" will be located in the same complex as the Branson Ferris Wheel.

3. Brilliant Lights

Multiple [Christmas displays](#) can be found shining brightly throughout this Ozark Mountain destination, too. Here's a sampling of annual events (though some websites aren't quite ready for 2023 yet):

- With two miles of LED displays, [Let There Be Lights](#) at Promised Land Zoo earns the title of "longest Christmas display in the Ozarks."
- [Lights of Joy](#) is a 1.25-mile drive-thru experience featuring both traditional and whimsical displays, including the nativity scene as well as a Christmas safari.
- [North Pole Adventure](#) at Shepherd of the Hills features a walk-through experience of thousands of twinkling lights, in addition to a visit with Santa, Christmas activities for the family and more.

4. Fruitcake

Earning its title "Hard Work U," College of the Ozarks allows full-time college students to work in exchange for the cost of their tuition. And you might mistake some of them for Santa's elves, since they bake about 25,000 world-famous fruitcakes in the [Fruitcake & Jelly Kitchen](#) each year. Mail-order offerings include such items as the traditional "World-Famous College of the Ozarks Fruitcake" in addition to fruitcake bites, lemon pound cake, a gluten-

free fruitcake and a four-pack cake sampler gift box. (Note: visitors can shop for handcrafted items – including fruitcake – at the [Keeter Center Gift Shop](#) and [online here](#).)



Here's a look at a handful of the world-famous fruitcakes that are baked in the Fruitcake & Jelly Kitchen each year at College of the Ozarks.

5. Festive Accommodations

Throughout December, [Chateau on the Lake](#), Branson's modern-day "Castle in the Ozarks," gets its guests into the holiday spirit with activities like caroling by the fire, story time, holiday movies and more. It's also home to an amazing candy village made by the Chateau's culinary team and displayed in the hotel's lobby. From November 6 through December 31, [Big Cedar Lodge](#) hosts "Home for the Holidays," during which overnight guests can take in 2 million holiday lights on display across the property, in addition to such seasonal festivities as a tree-lighting ceremony, family campfires, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and a Christmas Chapel Service.

6. It's Within a Day's Drive for Half of the U.S.

Nestled in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri, Branson sits right in the middle of the U.S.A. – making it within a day's drive for about half of the American population. And if you don't fall into that radius, a longer road trip or flight to experience an Ozark Mountain Christmas is sure to be worth the memories you'll make.

While it may feel too early to jingle all the way into your inbox with such messages, we hope we've taken the guesswork out of where you can get into the Christmas spirit this year. Please feel free to file this for when you're ready to sip cocoa and jump into all things Christmas. Explore Branson will continue adding Christmas events and experiences as they're confirmed. For the most up-to-date lineup of Christmas events this year, visit www.ExploreBranson.com/Christmas.

About Branson, Missouri

Branson is a one-of-a-kind family vacation destination nestled in the lakeside beauty of the Ozark Mountains with dozens of live performance theaters; three pristine lakes; championship golf courses; an international award-winning theme park; family attractions and museums; a Historic Downtown district; shopping galore; a full range of dining options; and a host of hotels, motels, resorts, RV parks, campgrounds, and meeting and convention facilities. Branson is located less than one day's drive for a third of the United States' population. It's also accessible via flights to the Branson Airport (BKG) and nearby Springfield-Branson National Airport (SGF). Call 1-877-BRANSON for help planning your next vacation, convention or reunion. See more at <http://www.explorebranson.com>

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