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Holiday LIGHTS at Cheekwood Returns November 20 with an Enchanted Noel *New French-Inspired Mansion Décor, Dazzling Light Installations and Holiday Experiences Await*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Nashville’s beloved holiday tradition returns to Cheekwood Estate & Gardens November 20, illuminating the historic estate with more than one million lights and festive experiences. This year’s event features new French-inspired décor inside the Historic Mansion & Museum by former White House Chief Floral Designer Laura Dowling.

For her third year at Cheekwood, Dowling draws inspiration from French history, decorative arts, gardens, fashion and *art de vivre* to create *Un Noël Enchanté*, or **An Enchanted Noel**. Each room of the Historic Mansion offers a distinct interpretation of French beauty and holiday celebrations.

Outside, guests will encounter the twinkling lights that have made Holiday LIGHTS a Nashville favorite for more than a decade. A 28-foot **Pixel Pine** tree, featuring three-dimensional custom light designs, returns to the center of the Bradford Robertson Color Garden to welcome visitors on their journey through the gardens.

A one-mile walking path throughout the gardens features the classic **Peppermint Path** with its candy-cane trees, the **Star Field** and **Enchanted Esplanade**. The **Sparkling Serpentine** will once again dance across the Mansion lawn with 600 linear feet of color. Cheekwood’s **TRAINS!** exhibit also gets a holiday makeover with a new theme, North Pole Butterfly Garden. Guests will discover lights, seasonal scenes and surprises around every bend.

Guests can also warm up with hot cocoa and seasonal libations, roast s’mores around courtyard firepits and shop for holiday gifts at the Holiday Marketplace, Museum Shop and Garden Shop.

“Holiday LIGHTS has become one of Nashville’s most cherished holiday traditions, and each year we look for new ways to create a memorable experience for our guests,” said Jane MacLeod, President and CEO of Cheekwood. “This year, Laura Dowling has created something truly special in the Mansion, bringing the beauty and spirit of French design, craftsmanship and hospitality to Cheekwood. Combined with more than one million

lights throughout the gardens, it makes for a holiday experience that celebrates tradition and artistry.”

Holiday LIGHTS opens to the public November 20 and runs until January 3. A media preview is scheduled for November 19 at 4:30 p.m.

Holiday Décor in the Mansion – An Enchanted Noel

This year, Cheekwood’s Historic Mansion is transformed into *Un Noël Enchanté*, a celebration of French beauty, artistry and imagination. Conceived by Holiday Artistic Director **Laura Dowling** and Paris- and Dubai-based Guest Artistic Advisor **Mauricio Clavero Kozlowski**, the experience draws on centuries of French style to create a holiday setting conceived expressly for Cheekwood’s historic interiors.

Each room presents a distinct French-inspired experience, from the great châteaux of the French countryside to the splendor of Versailles. Highlights include a spectacular vintage-inspired hot air balloon handcrafted by **Studio Cera Marie**, a glittering French holiday banquet, jewel-toned salons and an *orangerie* filled with citrus and winter greenery. Guests will also discover a romantic pastoral *hameau* inspired by Marie Antoinette.

The installation brings together flowers and foliage, ribbon and textiles, French antiques and decorative objects with original commissions and specially fabricated pieces created expressly for *Un Noël Enchanté*, allowing historic references to be reimaged for Cheekwood’s distinctive interiors.

Collaborations with some of France’s most celebrated houses add another dimension to the project, connecting the Mansion’s holiday transformation with living traditions of French craftsmanship, decorative arts, hospitality and *savoir-faire*. **Baccarat** brings the brilliance of French crystal and Arcadia tableware to holiday tables and entertaining scenes throughout the Mansion. **Le Meurice**, the celebrated Paris palace hotel, brings the world of French hospitality into the story of *Un Noël Enchanté*. French antiques and furnishings specially loaned for the exhibition further enrich the Mansion’s interiors.

Guests are welcome to tour the Mansion during the day from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. or in the evening from 4:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. during Holiday LIGHTS.

“With *Un Noël Enchanté*, we set out to create an ambitious celebration of French style, drawing on centuries of decorative arts, gardens and traditions of hospitality,” said Dowling. “I’m especially delighted to be collaborating with my friend, Paris- and Dubai-based designer Mauricio Clavero Kozlowski, along with so many wonderful French partners, artisans and creative collaborators who have brought their own artistry and perspective to the project. My hope is that, as visitors move through the Mansion, the experience unfolds almost like a dream—one beautiful and unexpected world after

another, filled with a sense of wonder, discovery and the enchantment of the holiday season.”

About Laura Dowling

From 2009 to 2015, Laura Dowling served as Chief Floral Designer at the White House, where she oversaw floral design for official and private entertaining, including state dinners, receptions and ceremonies, as well as major seasonal installations including the White House Christmas.

Dowling is known for her contemporary and romantic style of flower arranging rooted in classic French design. She is the author of *Floral Diplomacy at the White House*, *A White House Christmas*, *Wreaths, Bouquets*, and *Laura Dowling Designing Christmas: Practical Tips for Festive Decor*. She currently tours the country sharing her experiences at the White House and is a regular speaker at national, regional and local horticulture associations, garden clubs and museums.

Special Programs

The celebration extends beyond the decorated Mansion through a series of special programs bringing designers, artists and creative partners together around French style, hospitality, craftsmanship and the decorative arts.

Designing Iconic Places for the Holidays - *Les Décors d'Exception* November 19 | 4:30 p.m. | Massey Auditorium

Go behind-the-scenes with Holiday Artistic Director Laura Dowling and Guest Artistic Advisor Mauricio Clavero Kozlowski. Moderated by Flower magazine founder and Editor-in-Chief Margot Shaw, the conversation offers an insider’s look at the inspiration, artistry, and craftsmanship behind large-scale holiday designs.

Guided Tours of *Un Noël Enchanté*

Docent-led tours of the Mansion décor will be offered at 11 a.m. Tuesdays through Sundays from November 24 through January 3. Tours are included with admission.

Holiday Experiences

S'mores Stations and Seasonal Libations

Treat yourself to hot chocolate or festive holiday cocktails, including Candy Cane Cocoa and Red Hot Rudolph. S’mores kits are available for purchase at the Holiday Marketplace and bar kiosks and can be roasted at the Frist Learning Center terrace.

Perenn at Cheekwood will also offer hot chocolate, warm spiced cider, fresh-baked cookies, and a rotating selection of seasonal treats and menu offerings.

Daytime Visits with Santa

December 12-24

Tuesday - Friday | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

This year guests have more opportunities to visit with Santa. Stop by the Historic Stable and Tack Room located in the Frist Learning Center on weekdays and weekends and bring letters to put in Santa's mailbox.

Dog Visits with Santa

December 13 | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

December 22 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Bring your four-legged family member to join the merriment and pose for photos with Santa in the Frist Learning Center courtyard.

Dog Visits with Santa is sponsored by Veterinary Emergency Group.

Holiday Marketplace

The **Holiday Marketplace** returns to the Frist Learning Center with five different décor collections, cozy winterwear, Jellycat plush and an expanded Cheekwood collection featuring snow globes, custom ornaments and more.

Guests can also explore gifts inspired by this year's Mansion décor in the **Museum Shop** and nature-themed treasures in the **Garden Shop**. All three shopping destinations are open during Holiday LIGHTS.

Truist Holiday Gift Drive

During Holiday LIGHTS, Cheekwood is hosting a Holiday Gift Drive for military families in collaboration with Truist Bank. Guests can purchase items from Cheekwood's three shops to donate. At the conclusion of the event, Truist volunteers will wrap the presents and deliver the gifts to local military families.

Seasonal Workshops

Winter-themed hands-on art workshops for adults offer another opportunity to get inspired and learn something new. Designed for beginners, the workshops introduce a variety of art forms and crafting techniques.

Topics include stained glass and live greenery wreaths. Classes and workshops are for participants 18 years and older. Advance reservations are required. For more details visit, <https://cheekwood.org/learn/adult-education-programs/seasonal-workshops/>

Holiday LIGHTS Proposal Package

Holiday LIGHTS also offers a festive setting for couples looking to pop the question. Couples can sneak away down a trail lit by twinkling lights to a private proposal spot available exclusively during the holidays.

To learn more visit, <https://cheekwood.org/weddings-facility-rentals/proposal-packages/>

New Holiday LIGHTS Igloo Experience

Make the evening memorable with a private heated igloo experience at Holiday LIGHTS. Each igloo seats up to eight guests and features cozy seating, blankets and a choice of a charcuterie or dessert board from Perenn at Cheekwood and a bottle of champagne. Igloos can be reserved nightly from 5:30–7 p.m. or 7:30–9 p.m. A reservation costs \$350, or an igloo can be added to a Holiday LIGHTS proposal package for \$250. Reservations can be made by contacting specialevents@cheekwood.org.

Holiday LIGHTS Tickets

The seasonal festival is open from 4:30 to 10 p.m. seven nights a week, except Thanksgiving and Christmas. Timed-entry tickets must be purchased online in advance. A ticket pre-sale for Cheekwood members is already underway. Tickets go on sale to not-yet members on October 13.

Late Night Lights offers a discounted ticket price for those who wish to experience the displays later in the evening. These discounted tickets are available on select Monday – Thursday nights for 8:30 p.m. Gardens Only entry. Price is \$20 for non-members (adult or youth) and \$17 for member adults and \$13 for member youth.

The **Merry & Bright** package returns this year with two adult Gardens and Mansion admission passes valid on any night at any time, parking for one vehicle, two drink vouchers, two s'mores kits and a 10% discount at the Holiday Marketplace. The package costs \$130 for members and \$155 for not-yet members.

Cheekwood is pleased to offer **Military Mondays** on select Monday evenings throughout the festival. Military personnel and their families receive half-price tickets. Advance reservations required.

To learn more about Holiday LIGHTS and to purchase tickets, visit <https://cheekwood.org/calendar-events/holiday-lights/>

Holiday LIGHTS is presented by Truist Bank, sponsored by Amazon and supported by Lipman. The Hospitality Sponsor is Courtyard by Marriott Nashville Green Hills. A special thanks to Outdoor Lighting Perspectives.

About Cheekwood Estate & Gardens

With its intact and picturesque vistas, Cheekwood is distinguished as one of the leading Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the 1930s estate, with its 30,000-square-foot Mansion and 55-acres of gardens, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum, and art museum with furnished period rooms and galleries devoted to American art from the 18th to mid-20th centuries. The property includes 13 distinct gardens including the Blevins Japanese Garden and the Bracken Foundation Children's Garden, as well as a 1.5-mile woodland trail featuring outdoor monumental sculpture. Each year, Cheekwood hosts seasonal festivals including Cheekwood in Bloom, Summertime at Cheekwood, Cheekwood Harvest and Holiday LIGHTS. Cheekwood is a 501c3 nonprofit charitable organization. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and nationally as a Level II Arboretum. It is a four-time voted USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden, named the Most Beautiful Garden in Tennessee in 2025 by HGTV, in 2024 and 2025 received a Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award, and in 2021 was named by Fodors as one of the 12 Most Beautiful Gardens in the American South. Cheekwood is located eight miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. It is open Tuesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., with extended days and hours of operation depending on the season. Visit cheekwood.org for current hours and to purchase advance tickets required for admission.

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Images for Media

<https://show.pics.io/press-images/collection/6078af9635b79d001153e848>

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