



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 2, 2023



**Celebrate the Holiday Season at Cheekwood  
Holiday LIGHTS Opens November 18**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Joyful. Jubilant. Jolly. Holiday LIGHTS, Nashville’s classic holiday tradition returns Saturday, November 18, 2023, and runs through January 7, 2024, featuring elegant and creative displays of lights that set Cheekwood Estate & Gardens aglow. With over one million lights on a one-mile walk shining throughout the gardens, Holiday LIGHTS is a memory-making experience not to be missed.

“This year’s Holiday LIGHTS is brighter than ever,” says Cheekwood President and CEO Jane MacLeod, “Each year we add a little something new, while still offering the traditional displays our guests have come to know and love. An equally festive experience awaits guests inside the historic Mansion where this year’s theme of candy canes and gingerbread will bring cheer to visitors of all ages.”

Displays of twinkling lights and dazzling delights bring a spectacular sight amongst the beauty of Cheekwood’s botanical gardens. The newest feature, the Enchanted Esplanade, on the Carell Dogwood Trail is comprised of nine trees wrapped with programmed RGB string lights, and ground effects along the path. The trees will show distinct colorful patterns in motion, while the ground effects will envelope the walk with shimmering waves of rainbow colors. Enchanted Esplanade joins other whimsical installations including Peppermint Path, Tunnel of Light, Star Field, Bejeweled Bridge, Luminary Lanterns and the always popular Dancing Lights of TRAINS!

### **Holiday Décor in the Mansion**

With themes of candy canes and gingerbread, the bedecked Cheekwood Mansion is sure to bring joy to the young and young at heart. A 14-foot candy cane tree will greet visitors in the foyer. The red-and-white striped theme continues up the grand staircase and into the Drawing Room. The iconic 20-foot-tall live poinsettia tree on display in the Loggia will also feature a candy cane inspired motif, created by Cheekwood's garden team. In the Library, a nutcracker tree will complement Cheekwood's impressive nutcracker collection, with the wooden figurines nestled throughout the period rooms. Gingerbread takes over the Morning Room with gingerbread men and houses, and a 10-foot gingerbread themed tree.

### **2023 Martin Shallenberger Artist-in-Residence Sarah Nguyen Exhibition**

On view in the special exhibition galleries are intricate artworks by Artist-in-Residence, Sarah Nguyen. Working primarily with paper, Nguyen carves both recognizable and abstract forms out of paper fiber panels. Her technique is reminiscent of Jewish paper cutting, with intricate designs incorporating flora and fauna, bringing together new stories as well as those reminiscent of the past.

### **Holiday Marketplace**

Open day and night, the Holiday Marketplace returns to the Frist Learning Center Great Hall with a nine-foot garden-themed ornament wall and a wide range of gifts and decor. This year, the Marketplace features an amazing selection of nutcrackers, reindeer, and cardinals. Other highlights include new Cheekwood ornaments and an expanded selection of Jellycat holiday soft toys. Shop for gifts for loved ones or a memento of the holiday experience at Cheekwood.

### **S'mores Stations and Seasonal Libations**

While out exploring the luminous landscape, guests can stop by one of the many kiosks throughout the grounds for hot cocoa or festive holiday spirits, including spiked cocoa and apple cider. S'mores kits will be available for purchase to roast at the stations behind the Holiday Marketplace in the Frist Learning Center.

### **Daytime Visits with Santa for Families and Dogs**

Families can come visit with St. Nicholas every Saturday and Sunday, beginning December 2 through Saturday, December 23 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The visits on December 2, 3, 9, 16 and 23 will be held in the Frist Learning Center. While there, children can bring their letters to put in Santa's mailbox. On December 10 & 17, special dog visits take place in the Frist Learning Center courtyard, where four-legged family members can join in on the merriment.

### **Thanks to our Sponsors**

Holiday LIGHTS is presented by Truist Bank and sponsored by Amazon. Proceeds benefit Cheekwood's programs and preservation. With special thanks to Outdoor Lighting Perspectives.

## **Holiday LIGHTS Tickets**

The seasonal festival is open from 5 – 10 p.m., seven nights a week, except for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Timed-entry tickets must be purchased online in advance. A ticket pre-sale for Cheekwood members begins October 2. Tickets will go on sale to the public on Monday, October 16. Members receive discounted tickets throughout the festival and are also invited to view Holiday LIGHTS before it officially opens to the public, at a special preview on Friday, November 17.

**Late Night Lights** will offer a discounted ticket price for those who wish to experience the displays later in the evening. The \$20 per person Gardens Only passes allow entry at 8:30 p.m. or later Monday through Thursday.

The **‘Merry & Bright’ package** returns this year with two adult garden and mansion admission passes, two drink vouchers, two s’mores kits and 10% off at the Holiday Marketplace, all in one convenient purchase. The package costs \$100 for members and \$125 for not-yet members. Admission for the package can be used any evening of Holiday LIGHTS without advance reservations.

Cheekwood is pleased to offer **Military Mondays** throughout the festival. Military members (active or retired/veterans) along with up to five immediate family members, receive a 50% discount on Gardens Only admission Monday evenings. In partnership with Truist Bank, guests may purchase from a list of gifts in the Cheekwood shops to donate to a military family.

Advance reservations required at [cheekwood.org](https://cheekwood.org). To learn more about Holiday LIGHTS and to purchase tickets, visit <https://cheekwood.org/calendar-events/holiday-lights/>.

## **About Cheekwood**

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 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 three-time voted USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden and in 2021 was recognized 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. Check [cheekwood.org](https://cheekwood.org) for current hours and to purchase advance tickets required for admission.

**Featured Images:**

Left to right. Candy Cane Lane, Holiday Lights 2022, photo by Nathan Zucker. Courtesy of Cheekwood Estate & Gardens. Bejeweled Bridge, Holiday Lights 2022, photo by Nathan Zucker. Courtesy of Cheekwood Estate & Gardens. Holiday Lights 2022, photo by Nathan Zucker. Courtesy of Cheekwood Estate & Gardens.

**Images for Media**

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

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