



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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MEIJER GARDENS CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS WITH 42 INTERNATIONAL TRADITIONS

24th annual 'Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World' exhibition celebrates the season of joy.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – November 5, 2018 – Experience the joy of the holidays at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park with the annual *Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World* exhibition on display from November 20 through January 6, 2019. Guests from all over the world visit Meijer Gardens to experience 42 Christmas and holiday trees and displays representing countries and cultures from across the globe. The always favorite and enchanting Railway Garden and the holiday wonderland that encompasses it will once again wind its way through three lush indoor garden spaces, including the recently renovated Grace Jarecki Seasonal Display Greenhouse.

Guests are invited to ring in the holiday season with our most beloved winter exhibition. It's the season of joy! This year Meijer Gardens celebrates how our community and communities around the world joyfully commemorates the diverse and generations-old traditions that remain vibrant today. Visitors will experience a world of cultural celebrations, represented across 42 different displays that explore folklore and fact, past and present.

In many cultures, the holidays bring people together in distinct and memorable ways that are difficult to capture in a display. New this year, Meijer Gardens is presenting a wonderful original film, *joy*, that explores the diverse festive fabric that is holiday life across our local communities. This film will be shown continuously in the Hoffman Family Auditorium and is available on the [Meijer Gardens YouTube channel](#) as well. "This year we take note of how our community joyfully commemorates the diverse, generations-old traditions that remain vibrant today through *joy*, a new film exploring the festive fabric that is holiday life across our local community." said Maureen Nollette, Annual Exhibitions Assistant Designer.

Each winter, Meijer Gardens transforms into a botanic wonderland with fresh poinsettias, orchids and amaryllis. The smell of evergreens as visitors enter the building and the sounds of carolers make it a place to reflect and enjoy the holiday season. Indoors and out, trees sparkle with 300,000 colorful lights. More than 500 volunteers lovingly decorate the trees and displays.

The unique horticultural artistry of the beloved Railway Garden complements the model trolleys, trains and handcrafted buildings replicating 30 Grand Rapids landmarks. Visitors will find familiarity in the Fifth Third Ballpark replica building with its light posts made of willow, as well as striking hydrangea petals that make up the iconic glass tower of the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. Five landmarks from Grand Rapids sister cities around the world are also represented in the Railway Garden.

"This holiday season, guests have a special opportunity to see how our community joyfully celebrates a variety of traditions from centuries ago that remain vibrant today," said Steve LaWarre, Director of Horticulture. "These traditions are wonderful, celebratory aspects of West Michigan's diversity and community."

Mainstays of the exhibition include the Germany tree, adorned with handmade glass ornaments and homemade springerle cookies, the England tree—with antique Christmas cards and mistletoe—and the beautiful *Eid ul-Fitr* display, which celebrates the end of Ramadan.

A variety of family-friendly activities are offered throughout the exhibition.

Exhibition Activities

- **Extended Holiday Hours:** Open until 9 pm on December 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28 and 29. (PLEASE NOTE: Meijer Gardens is CLOSED on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day).
- **The Original Dickens Carolers:** Tuesdays: November 20 and 27, December 4, 11, 18, 6-8 pm
- **Santa Visits:** Tuesdays: November 20 and 27, December 4, 11, 18, 5-8 pm
- **Rooftop Reindeer:** Saturdays: November 24, December 1, 8, 15, 22, 1-4 pm
- **Christmas Cabaret Gala:** Thursday, December 6, 6 pm ([RSVP required](#))
- **Winter-Time Walks:** (November 20-January 5, 2019)
Tuesdays 10:15 am and 11:15 am, Saturdays 11:15 am
Fee: Included with admission
Winter in the Lena Meijer Children's Garden can be chilly, but fun! Bundle up and join us on an outdoor interactive discovery walk to investigate the Children's Garden in new ways. We'll explore different winter themes and gather in a cozy spot to learn about winter with stories, kid-friendly conversation and other activities.

- **Christmas and Holiday Themed Classes:** Enjoy festive learning opportunities for adults and families. Fees apply. Visit MeijerGardens.org/calendar for more information.

Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World is made possible by Ruffino Wines, Spectrum Health, the Meijer Foundation, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Foundation, the Botanic and Sculpture Societies of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park and the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Railway Garden is sponsored by Warner Norcross + Judd.

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Images available HERE: bit.ly/CHTAW18

About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park served 723,000 visitors in 2017 and was recently listed in the top 30 most visited museum in the United States by *The Art Newspaper*, the leading publication in global art news. The 158-acre main campus features Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest interactive children's gardens in the country; arid and Victorian gardens with bronze sculptures by Degas and Rodin; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens; and a 1900-seat outdoor amphitheater, featuring an eclectic mix of world-renowned musicians every summer. The internationally acclaimed Sculpture Park features a permanent collection including works by Oldenburg, Moore, Hepworth, Serra, Bourgeois, Ai Weiwei and Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with exhibitions by Ai Weiwei, Picasso, Degas, di Suvero, Borofsky, Calder and Dine. In June 2015, the eight-acre Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park opened. Created by renowned designer Hoichi Kurisu, the garden features sculpture by Anish Kapoor, Jenny Holzer and Guiseppe Penone, among others.

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