



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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MEIJER GARDENS CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS WITH 46 INTERNATIONAL TRADITIONS

25th annual 'Metro Health Christmas & Holiday Traditions' exhibition welcomes a new title sponsor and explores iconic symbols from around the globe.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – November 4, 2019 – Experience the wonder of the holidays at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park with the annual *Metro Health Christmas & Holiday Traditions* exhibition, on display from November 26 through January 5, 2020. Guests from all over the world visit Meijer Gardens to experience 46 trees and displays representing countries and cultures from across the globe. The adored and enchanting Railway Garden, and the holiday wonderland that encompasses it, will once again loop through three lush indoor garden spaces, including the Grace Jarecki Seasonal Display Greenhouse.

Guests are invited to ring in the holiday season with our most beloved winter exhibition. This year, Meijer Gardens celebrates the signs of the season and highlights iconic symbols that are used in holiday festivities. Winter is a season rich with symbolism. On display are icons that evoke a deeper meaning and represent holiday cheer. Guests will celebrate both fact and folklore, past and present.

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, our grounds sparkle with 300,000 lights. 500 volunteers lovingly decorate the trees and displays.

The unique horticultural artistry of the Railway Garden complements the trolleys, trains and handcrafted buildings replicating 37 Grand Rapids landmarks. Visitors will find familiarity in the Fifth Third Ballpark replica building, with its light posts made of willow, as well as Royal Poinciana pods, Pomegranate, Japanese Fantail Willow and Bamboo that make up the iconic architecture of the Van Andel Institute replica building. Five landmarks from Grand Rapids sister cities around the world are also represented in the Railway Garden.

“This winter, Meijer Gardens is highlighting iconic symbols from around the world,” said Steve LaWarre, Director of Horticulture at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. “Guests will have the opportunity to explore the signs of the season with deeper meaning and find the commonalities shared within diverse cultures.”

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.

In many cultures, the holidays bring people together in distinct and memorable ways that are difficult to capture in a display. Meijer Gardens is once again presenting the 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 also available on the [Meijer Gardens YouTube channel](#).

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

Exhibition Activities:

- **Extended Holiday Hours:** Open until 9 pm on December 17 - 21, 23, 26 - 28 and 30. (PLEASE NOTE: Meijer Gardens is CLOSED on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day).
- **The Original Dickens Carolers:** Tuesdays: November 26, December 3, 10, 17. 6-8 pm
- **Santa Visits:** Tuesdays: November 26, December 3, 10, 17. 5-8 pm
- **Rooftop Reindeer:** Saturdays: November 30, December 7, 14, 21. 1-4 pm
- **Christmas Cabaret Gala:** Wednesday, December 4, 6 pm ([RSVP required](#))
- **Winter-Time Walks:** (December 3-January 4, 2020)
Preschoolers: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 11:15 am
Family and Friends: 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.

Metro Health Christmas & Holiday Traditions is made possible by Metro Health - University of Michigan 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, and Star 105.7. The Railway Garden is sponsored by Warner Norcross + Judd, Inc.

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Images available HERE: bit.ly/MHCHT19

About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park served 696,000 visitors in 2018 and was recently listed in the top 30 most visited museums 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 Edgar Degas and Auguste 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 Claes Oldenburg & Coosje van Bruggen, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Richard Serra, Louise Bourgeois, Ai Weiwei and Jaume Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with exhibitions by Ai Weiwei, Pablo Picasso, Edgar Degas, Mark di Suvero, Jonathan Borofsky, Alexander Calder, Jim Dine and others. 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, David Nash, George Rickey, Masayuki Koorida, Zhang Huan and Guiseppe Penone.

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