James Lesch
(314) 616-9310
james@pattan.co

For Immediate Release

Gateway Arch Park Foundation's Winterfest, presented by Bank of America and World Wide Technology, Expands 2026 Holiday Programming With More Ways to Celebrate

The 2026–27 Winterfest schedule, features expanded dates, new experiences, a larger footprint, holiday favorites and special events in view of the Gateway Arch

ST. LOUIS (Oct. 01, 2026) — For more than a decade, thousands of people have gathered in the heart of downtown St. Louis to celebrate the holidays in the shadow of the iconic Gateway Arch at Gateway Arch Park Foundation's Winterfest, presented by Bank of America and World Wide Technology.

This year, St. Louis' beloved holiday tradition returns November 21, 2026 through January 3, 2027, with seven weeks of holiday programming, seasonal experiences, and opportunities to make the memories that have made Winterfest a must-do part of the city's winter calendar.

From holiday card photos and family gatherings to first dates, marriage proposals and ringing in the new year, Winterfest has become part of the way St. Louis celebrates the season. Now, with a new layout encompassing all of Kiener Plaza, new interactive light displays, four new igloo themes and the addition of a curling cafe, the tradition is expanding while keeping the experiences that bring guests back year after year.

"Winterfest has become part of the fabric of the holiday season in St. Louis," said Ryan McClure, executive director of Gateway Arch Park Foundation. "Every year, people return with their families, introduce someone new to Winterfest, or create a milestone memory of their own. This year's programming gives guests even more reasons to make Winterfest part of their holiday traditions, whether they're visiting for an afternoon skate, a special event, or simply to spend time together with the iconic backdrop of the Gateway Arch and Old Courthouse."

Winterfest will be open Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 8 p.m. The festival will be closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day and will be open daily during an extended week from noon–8 p.m. from December 26–January 3.

Opening Weekend Sets the Holiday Season in Motion

GATEWAY ARCH PARK
FOUNDATION

Winterfest kicks off Saturday, November 21 with a full day of festivities in the shadow of the Gateway Arch. The opening-day celebration begins with the Winterfest 5K, presented by Edward Jones, followed by free skating for everyone, courtesy of Ameren, and the Ameren Festival of Lights. Throughout the day, guests can enjoy photos with Santa and Coco Santa, the Winterfest Holiday Expo, live performances, reindeer, jugglers and stilt walkers. The Foundation has also partnered with the Thanks For Giving Parade, which travels through downtown before ending at Winterfest. As the sun sets, the celebration builds toward the Salvation Army Tree Lighting Ceremony, followed by the official tree lighting, a holiday drone show and fireworks. The festivities continue Sunday with more family-friendly entertainment, officially kicking off seven weeks of holiday experiences at Winterfest.

Make Winterfest Part of the Tradition

For many St. Louisans, Winterfest is the place to lace up skates, gather with friends around an igloo, take a holiday photo beneath the lights, or spend time together in the heart of downtown. With new experiences and an expanded footprint throughout Kiener Plaza, guests will find even more ways to make Winterfest part of their holiday traditions.

More Reasons to Come Back for the Holidays

Winterfest's calendar is filled with special programming designed to give guests a reason to return throughout the season, from holiday markets and fashion to music, trivia, art and seasonal celebrations.

- **Nov. 27 | 5–7 p.m. — "Not So Ordinary Ornaments" Book Reading with Paige Hulsey**: Join KMOV Great Day host Paige Hulsey for a reading of her new holiday book. Paige will sign copies of her book after the reading.

- **Nov. 28 | Noon–6 p.m. — Frizz Fest Winter Market**: A seasonal shopping experience featuring local creativity and holiday finds.

- **Dec. 4 | 5:30–8 p.m. — Fashion Mixer & Fashion Insiders Educational Panel**: An evening bringing fashion, conversation, and industry insight to Winterfest.

- **Dec. 5 | 2 p.m. — Winter Fashion Show**: A seasonal showcase bringing style to the heart of downtown.

- **Dec. 6 | 3–5 p.m. — STL Journal Collective**: A free gathering for all ages, focused on community and connection through journaling.

- **Dec. 10 | 4–8 p.m. — Chanukah @ The Arch**: A special seasonal celebration in Kiener Plaza.

- **Dec. 12 | 3–5 p.m. — Ice Carvings**: Watch ice become art in a distinctly wintertime experience.

GATEWAY ARCH PARK
FOUNDATION

- **Dec. 19 | 2–7 p.m. — Art Gallery**: Explore an artistic showcase while taking in the Winterfest atmosphere.

- **Dec. 26 | 2–7 p.m. — Holiday Spirits Tasting**: A seasonal tasting experience as the holiday season winds down.

New this year, Winterfest Trivia takes place Thursdays, December 3, 10 and 17, from 6 to 8 p.m. inside The Greater St. Louis, Inc., Lodge @ Winterfest. Guests can gather a team, enjoy festive drinks and compete for prizes and holiday bragging rights with questions covering holiday traditions, music, movies, pop culture and St. Louis favorites.

Character appearances take place every Sunday at 2:30 p.m**.,** featuring a rotating lineup of beloved characters and giving families a new opportunity each week to add a little extra holiday magic to their visit.

Fan-favorite Carol-oke returns Fridays, December 11 and 18 and January 1, from 4–8 p.m., inviting guests to sing along to holiday favorites and share their seasonal spirit.

Kids skate free every Friday, courtesy of the St. Louis Blues.

A New Year's Eve Celebration in the Shadow of the Arch

Winterfest will once again provide a festive setting for New Year's Eve with NYE Neon Lights on Thursday, December 31. The celebration will include appearances by Elsa and Olaf, fire dancers and jugglers, a live concert by Dirty Muggs, and an 8 p.m. fireworks finale, made possible with support from Greater St. Louis, Inc.

New Ways to Experience Winterfest

The 2026-27 season introduces four new igloo themes: Gingerbread House, Blues at the Arch Igloo, Frosted Snowglobe and Welcome to St. Louis. The festival also debuts a new curling cafe, along with multiple bold new interactive light displays and holiday photo opportunities throughout the expanded Kiener Plaza footprint.

Returning to Winterfest are favorites like Ed's Food Truck, Pour Decisions, Ray's Kettle Corn and Crumbl offering guests food, drinks and festive treats while guests take in the sights, sounds and holiday spirit.

Admission to Winterfest remains free and accessible to the community thanks to sponsors, including Bank of America, World Wide Technology, Greater St. Louis, Inc., and Ameren, along with the supporters and members of Gateway Arch Park Foundation.

The winter festival offers guests an opportunity to experience the holiday season in the heart of downtown St. Louis while supporting the local businesses, attractions and activity that make the area a destination during the winter months. Winterfest has helped turn downtown St. Louis into a place where holiday traditions take shape. As another season begins, Gateway Arch Park Foundation and its partners invite longtime visitors and first-time guests alike to come make memories, continue traditions and experience the season together.

For more information, to view the complete Winterfest schedule or to reserve an igloo, visit archpark.org/winterfest.

###

About Gateway Arch Park Foundation

Gateway Arch Park Foundation is the official philanthropic partner and nonprofit conservancy for Gateway Arch National Park. Its mission is to ensure the Gateway Arch, its grounds, neighboring public spaces, and attractions are a vital, welcoming, well-supported resource to the community and nation for generations to come. It seeks to fulfill its mission by providing for ongoing conservation, preservation and education at the park, in addition to hosting, facilitating and promoting community programs that bring the park and its surrounding areas in downtown St. Louis to life. The Foundation is part of an alliance that helps meet this mission, which includes the National Park Service, Bi-State Development, Great Rivers Greenway, Jefferson National Parks Association, and the City of St. Louis. For more information, visit http://archpark.org.

Media Kit:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1l59lThPTJ2PCzqqnuvH3mFdPVpGxO88Y?usp=drive_link