

believe in the magic
holly jolly ideas for a merry little Christmas

woman's day

season's
eatings

lazy morning
**BREAKFAST
BAKE**

warm-your-belly
**COMFORT
CHILI**

+27

Santa-approved
DESSERTS

**HOLIDAY
MOVIES**
& chill
watch this, eat that!

Jingle
all the
way!

the
**PEACEFUL
SLEEP**
secret

Mr. Claus
pull-apart
cupcakes!
so easy!

kindness matters
the reason for the season p.42



HAPPY PLACE

Holiday TOWNS

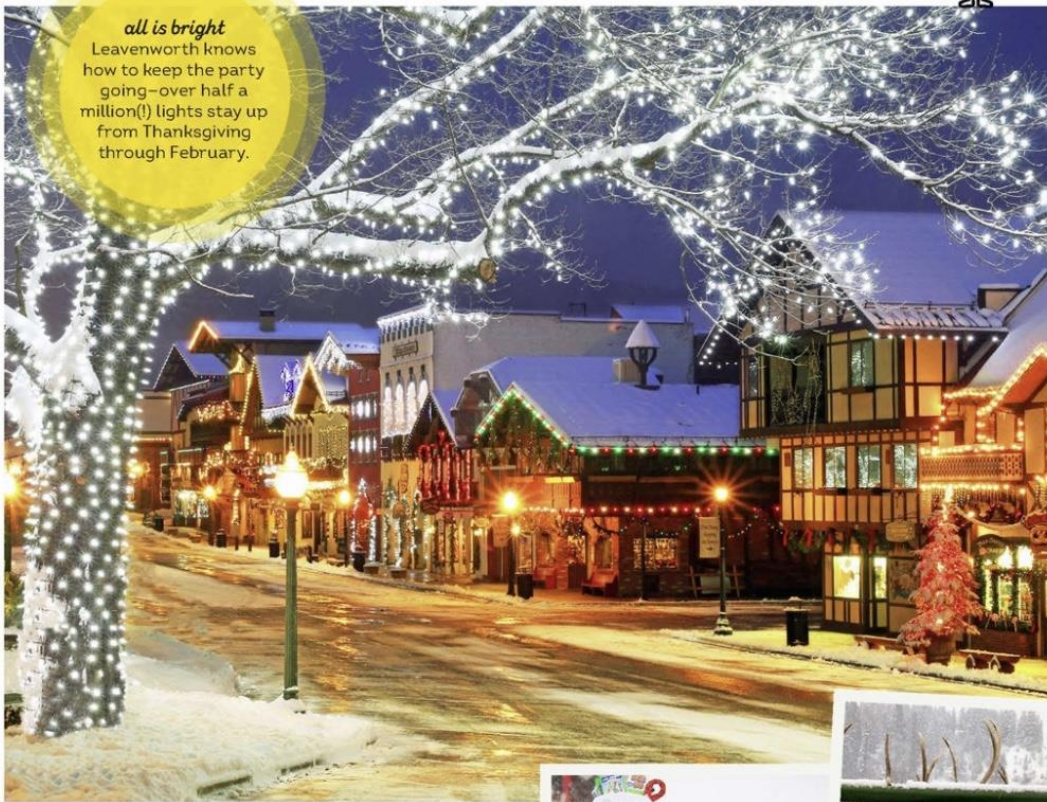
It's the most wonderful time of the year...
to visit these festive spots full of Christmas cheer

by Kristi Valentini

I'm nuts for Christmas!



all is bright
Leavenworth knows how to keep the party going—over half a million(!) lights stay up from Thanksgiving through February.



STEP INTO A STORYBOOK LEAVENWORTH, WA

This Bavarian-style village nestled in the Cascade Mountains feels straight out of a fairy tale, and you can choose your own adventure. Pick from an array of winter fun (snow tubing, sledding, snowshoeing, you name it), ride through the woods in a one-horse open sleigh, or check out one of the world's largest collections of nutcrackers (over 7,000!) at the Leavenworth Nutcracker Museum. Our advice: Do it *all*, and snack on treats from the Gingerbread Factory between stops. leavenworth.org



↑ Meet the friendly herd at Leavenworth Reindeer Farm.

REINDEER: COURTESY OF LEAVENWORTH REINDEER FARM; HATS: COURTESY OF ICICLE TV; TOWN: COURTESY OF BRIAN MUNOZ

HAPPY PLACE
HOLIDAY TOWNS



FEEL LIKE A KID AGAIN THIS CHRISTMAS
GREENVILLE, SC

If you thought seeing Santa at the mall was exciting, imagine the thrill you'll get cruising the streets alongside him in a motorized sleigh. (Three words: *Oh. What. Fun!*) After that joyride, read the dozens of eight-foot-tall greeting cards on Main Street, embrace nostalgia at the "Norman Rockwell's Home for the Holidays" exhibit at the Upcountry History Museum, and take laps around the outdoor skating rink. Hoping for a Rudolph sighting? Nab tickets for the Holiday Lights Safari at Hollywild Animal Preserve. visitgreenville.com



CELEBRATE CHARLES DICKENS
FRANKLIN, TN

Dickens of a Christmas (December 11 and 12) is an annual festival that brings the works of the beloved *A Christmas Carol* author to life in this city's historic downtown. More than 200 actors in 19th-century garb roam the streets (look for Scrooge and Tiny Tim!), interacting with festivalgoers and singing carols. visitfranklin.com

SCORE SANTA'S SPECIAL STAMP
SANTA CLAUS, IN

Legend has it that on a wintry night in the 1800s, village residents gathered to name their town. The kids thought they heard sleigh bells and shouted "Santa Claus!"—and everyone rolled with it. If you visit the town's post office in December, your outgoing mail will get a one-of-a-kind Santa postmark. And hit up Santa's Candy Castle to sample the 35 hot cocoa flavors and roast chestnuts on holiday weekends. santaclausind.org



BE DAZZLED BY LIGHT
NATCHITOCHES, LA

From Thanksgiving to Christmas, there are more than 100 light displays along Cane River Lake, and over-the-water Saturday night fireworks shows are choreographed to Christmas tunes. Thanks to their reflections in the water, expect double the wow factor. natchitoches.com



↑ Don't miss the lighted boat parade on December 11.

GREENVILLE: COURTESY OF VISITGREENVILLE.COM; SANTA CLAUS: COURTESY OF SPENCER COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU; FRANKLIN: COURTESY OF VISIT FRANKLIN; NATCHITOCHES: COURTESY OF BRAD FERGUSON.