

Sandy Springs Lantern Parade – Light the “Hooch”

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Celebrating the festivals and events of another culture is a great way to learn more about the people, places, and events around the world. I enjoy getting to know more about annual events and why they are important to people. When you can do this right at home – it’s perfect. And, who doesn’t like a staycation – a vacation at home with fun activities for the whole family without traveling long distances.

I’ve found a perfect event to have fun, learn a new craft, participate in an age-old Asian tradition and celebrate a special “place” right down the street from home. It’s the first annual Sandy Springs Lantern Parade.

The Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism Board invites you to join them for an “enlightened” celebration of the Chattahoochee as part of the inaugural Sandy Springs Lantern Parade, June 18, 2016, at Morgan Falls Overlook Park with parking at 8:30pm and the parade at 9pm. It’s fun for the whole family!

Everyone can join in the fun and festive activities – starting with workshops and all coming together for a grand parade.

Participants will “Take It To the River” as they parade downhill on Morgan Falls Road to the park with colorful lanterns lighting the way. And, if the fun couldn’t get any better, at approximately 9:30 p.m., High Country Outfitter paddlers will escort Alice, the 25-foot albino alligator lantern, and the illuminated turtles and lilies to the river for a floating parade. Everyone will watch the light display and enjoy performers and live music.

And, jump right in and let the fun begin before the parade takes place. There are workshops for you to make your special lantern. And, you have the chance to choose the workshop with your favorite type lantern.

The workshop choices and costs are:

Tuesday, June 7 – Floating Turtle Lanterns – 6:30 p.m. (\$35)

Wednesday, June 8 – Bamboo Fish Lanterns – 6:30 p.m. (\$30)

Thursday, June 9 – Lantern Hats – 6:30 p.m. (\$30)

Saturday, June 11 – Globe Lanterns – 10 a.m. (\$25)

Saturday, June 11 – Illuminated Parasols – 2:30 p.m. (\$30)

To purchase tickets and for more information check out this link.



Following each step carefully at the Lantern Hat workshop.



Creative hats ready to “take it to the river!”

But you may ask why a lantern parade. The tradition of making and lighting lanterns has been a part of the Chinese and other Asian cultures for generations. To celebrate winter, love, and community, to name a few reasons, the beautiful lanterns streaming through the community streets has been a way to celebrate life’s significant events.

I asked the tourism board and producer of the Sandy Springs Lantern Parade to share how they decided to start this annual tradition in our community.

Jennifer Cruce, Executive Director, Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism said, “We’ve all been fascinated with the lantern parade concept and thought it was a great way to pay tribute to a “place.” Gathering around water, whether it’s along our 22 miles of river shoreline or at the site of the original springs, is part of our history and is what has made a sense of community part of our city’s DNA. We contacted Chantelle with that in mind and were delighted when she recognized the beauty of Morgan Falls Overlook Park. It’s the perfect place to honor where we live and work and the green, peaceful places the city has preserved.”

Chantelle Rytter, Lantern Parade Producer, added: "When Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism contacted me about taking a lantern parade to the river in Sandy Springs I was delighted. I am always interested in floating lanterns on water. Lantern parades are a community love light, and the Atlanta region needs to hold up a light for the Chattahoochee River. It's a beautiful river, it's our water source, and we forget about it. I am fond of saying that you can't fall in love with a place if you don't get out of your car. I've been going to the dentist in Sandy Springs for 15 years and never got out of my car until Patti and Jennifer showed me this beautiful river park. Right down the road from my dentist. We need to park our cars and go for a happy walk together down to the river. When we lay down joyfully shared memories together in a place, it is a blessing on that place. Lantern parades connect people to people and people to place."

I asked how does Sandy Springs Lantern Parade tie into the Asian tradition

Chantelle Rytter said, "I follow lantern parades around the world. The Asian lantern parades are the oldest. I have gleaned what I can from all of them, picked out things that I like, tossed out things I don't, borrow from puppetry, collaborated inventing lanterns with friends, and scrambled it all up with the spontaneity of a New Orleans second line parade on Mardi Gras Day. Just show up with your fabulous lantern and your fabulous self. Seven years in, we have an Atlanta style lantern parade culture. Jennifer Cruce added,

And, Jennifer Cruce added, "We so appreciate Chantelle's artistry and her vision. We wanted to be part of the lantern parade culture, with our own particular twist – taking it to the river!"

Here are the details:

Sandy Springs Lantern Parade

When: Saturday, June 18, 2016

Where:

Begin – North Springs United Methodist Church at 7770 Roswell Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30350

End – Morgan Falls Overlook Park at 200 Morgan Falls Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30350

Event Hours:

9:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. (park at church by 8:30 p.m. due to rolling road closure)

Check out their Facebook page.

Parade sponsors:

City of Sandy Springs Recreation and Parks

Atlanta Movie Tours

North Springs United Methodist Church

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