



ROAD TRIP

OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS

Deck the halls and jingle the bells. Sing your favorite carols and roast chestnuts. These six towns are brimming with old-time Christmas spirit. Friends and visitors come together for a celebration with plenty of good tidings.

LORI VANOVER SENIOR EDITOR

1 MANISTEE, MICHIGAN

Travel back in time during the 30th annual Old Christmas Weekend on Dec. 6–9 in the festively decorated downtown. The highlight is the Victorian Sleighbell Parade, in which a team of draft horses pulls a 30-foot Christmas tree down River Street. After the parade, gather for caroling and the lighting of the tree. Other can't-miss spectacles include a display of Victorian-era holiday items, a meet-and-greet with Dr. Seuss character the Grinch, and a Festival of Trees. manisteesleighbellparade.com

2 FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS

A monthlong holiday celebration blends Old World German Christmas traditions and Texas hospitality. Shop along the glowing Main Street *Marktplatz*, which features a handcarved 26-foot Christmas pyramid and an outdoor ice-skating rink. On Dec. 7 watch the Light the Night Christmas Parade, and on Dec. 8 bring the little ones to Kinderfest, a children's festival, at the Pioneer Museum. Or visit the drive-through Nativity at Bethany Lutheran Church on Dec. 14 and 15. visitfredericksburgtx.com



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3 BEDFORD, OHIO

This holiday season, visit a place in touch with Christmas in the 1940s. On the afternoon of Dec. 8, the city transforms into the iconic small town of Bedford Falls, depicted in the classic film *It's a Wonderful Life*. Shopkeepers greet customers with a bevy of delightful sweets and treats. Santa and Mrs. Claus welcome young children and listen to their hopes and dreams for gifts they will find under the tree. The free event includes crafts, hot cocoa, live music, Lolly the Trolley tours, Polar Express Story Time, letter-writing to veterans, and more.

christmasinbedfordfalls.com

4 NEVADA CITY, CALIFORNIA

Visit this small gold rush town in the Sierra Nevada foothills in December, and you might think you've stepped into a scene from a Currier & Ives print. Twinkling white lights and gas lamps illuminate the winding streets, and wandering minstrels, bagpipers and carolers in Victorian garb mingle with the crowds. (Visitors are welcome to dress in period attire, too.) Tantalizing aromas of roasted chestnuts and other holiday foods fill the air. Make sure to look for the Walking Christmas Tree and Father Christmas.

nevadacitychamber.com

5 NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE

Tour decorated homes and churches and enjoy live music during the Spirit of Christmas on Dec. 8, a townwide event sponsored by the New Castle Presbyterian Church. Admission is free on that date at the Amstel House, which is adorned for a traditional 18th-century Colonial holiday, and the Dutch House, hosting a celebration of St. Nicholas' Eve. Also check out A Dickens Experience, complete with a Victorian ball, on Dec. 7—when the New Castle Visitor Center at The Arsenal becomes the Fezziwig house from *A Christmas Carol*—and a Victorian tea on Dec. 8.

newcastlehistory.org

6 RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

Main Street Square is a place of community and mirth as it gets dressed up for Christmas, says Field Editor and Rapid City resident Kathleen Ungerer. On Nov. 24, visit the winter market and watch as the Festival of Lights Parade marches along with over 75 floats. All season, the square transforms into a skating rink. Gather over a fire pit to warm your hands while children glide across the ice. Statues of presidents downtown wear hats and scarves, donated so the less fortunate can help themselves to what they need.

downtownrapidcity.com. ⚙