

City Of Hermann, Division of Tourism

For Immediate Release

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CELEBRATE A HERMANN CHRISTMAS

Experience an Old World Christmas in Historic Missouri Town

When the Holiday season draws near, there is no better place to observe a traditional German-style Christmas than Hermann, MO. This 19th century village, on the banks of the Missouri River, provides a unique setting where visitors can step back in time and experience the feeling of a true old time Christmas.

Holiday events are nothing new to Hermann, but the number and quality of events have increased in recent years. Now there are an abundance of opportunities to enjoy traditional German culture and celebrations as part of the Christmas season. A complete schedule is available at www.VisitHermann.com, or by calling 1-800-932-8687.

Downtown Hermann also features many unique shops and galleries, offering a variety of options for special, one of a kind, Christmas gifts.

Most of the activities will be the first two weekends of December, focused around the Kristkindl Markts, which are reminiscent of traditional Christmas markets in Germany.

On December 5-6 the 17th annual Kristkindl Markt at the Stone Hill Winery Pavilion will feature a variety of crafts and Holiday items, including several "Missouri Hands" artisans, as well as food and local entertainment. The Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce is sponsor of this event.

On December 12-13 the market moves to the Hermannhof Festhalle and Hofgarten, at 1st and Gutenberg, and is sponsored by the Dierberg Educational Foundation. This event will feature food and craft demonstrations, story telling, a visit from Father Christmas, a select group of local artists and craftermen, and a variety of food and entertainment.

Both markets will be brightly decorated and offer a number of local entertainers scheduled to display their talents and highlight the spirit of the season. The markets are open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Weihnachtfest will be celebrated both weekends at the Deutschheim State Historic Site, which is the German heritage site of the Missouri State Park System. Deutschheim is open from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. daily with special Christmas displays depicting German customs dating back to the 19th century.

The German School Museum, built in 1871, will also be open both weekends to observe the Holiday season with tours, special decorations and refreshments. One new feature this year is a German Bakery, offering many choices of traditional Holiday baked goods. The museum is open on Saturday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sunday from noon-4 p.m.

On December 5 the Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual Holiday House Tours from 2-7 p.m., offering an opportunity to visit several unique homes in the Historic District specially decorated for the season. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the Hermann Welcome Center.

Also on December 5, visitor can celebrate Christmas 1800s style as the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles holds its annual Lewis & Clark Christmas Party at the Hermannhof Festhalle. The group, re-enactors and educators of the Lewis & Clark Corps of Discovery, will have special events open to the public from noon-4 p.m. at the Hermannhof Hofgarten, including a twilight Downtown lantern parade at 5:00.

A Christmas dinner, starting at 6:30 p.m., followed by a military ball at 8, is open to the public. Tickets are \$28 and can be purchased at the Hermann Welcome Center or by calling 800-932-8687. Period dress is encouraged but not required; seating is limited.

On December 12-13, from noon to 8 p.m., the annual St. George Rectory tour is scheduled. This is one of Hermann's very special Holiday activities. Father William Debo and parishioners from St. George Catholic Church have worked countless hours to create a spectacular old world Christmas display that sparkles with candles, music, traditional art and décor, and dozens of Christmas trees. A good will offering at the door will help fund the Hermann Ministerial Alliance's efforts to assist needy residents.

On November 28, at 6:30 p.m., the Christmas season officially begins with a traditional Lantern Parade through the Downtown. In Germany, the traditional festival of lanterns celebrates the generosity and compassion of Martin of Tours, a German knight who gave half his coat to a beggar. The parade starts and ends at the Clara Eitmann Messmer Amphitheatre at 5th and Gutenberg. After the parade, participants may join in singing Christmas carols and enjoy refreshments. All ages are welcome to participate.

On November 28, holiday organ concert will be held at 2 and 7 p.m. at St. Martin's Museum Church in Starkenburg, located two miles north of Highway 94 near Rhineland. Barry Bierwirth, a talented musician who is a Hermann native now living in St. Louis, will play the church's historic Pfeffer Pipe Organ. He will be joined by the 14 member hand bell choir from St. Paul United Church of Christ in Hermann. Another Hermann native, Carrie Kirchhofer Tilly, will perform several solos during the concert.

For more details about events that are part of "A Hermann Christmas", go to www.VisitHermann.com or call 1-800-932-8687. Additional information about lodging and other activities are also available.

Hermann is an hour west of St. Louis. It can be reached from Highway 19 at both Interstates 44 and 70 and from Highway 100 off I-44.

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