

**Charlotte.com**

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TRAVEL

## 9 ways to celebrate holidays Texas-style

**Culture comes out in San Antonio during these seasonal events****PAULA CROUCH THRASHER**  
Cox News Service

You can park yourself in San Antonio from the day after Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve and sample just about every holiday event the Texas city has to offer. But if you've only got a weekend to spare, plan your visit around these events:

**Nov. 24:** Holiday River Parade and Lighting Ceremony. The Paseo del Rio Holiday Festival begins with the flip of a switch to turn on 122,000 lights that will illuminate the River Walk until New Year's Day. A one-hour lighted boat parade's theme is "A Traditional Christmas." Free viewing along the River Walk. Reserved seating \$10-\$20. 7 p.m. Details: [www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com](http://www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com).

**Nov. 24-26:** Feria de Santa Cecilia. Festivities at historic Market Square, including lively mariachi music and the lighting of the square, start the market's holiday celebrations. Free. Details: [www.marketsquaresa.com](http://www.marketsquaresa.com).

**Nov. 25-Dec. 17:** Holiday Boat Caroling. More than 185 school, church, company and civic choral groups sing traditional carols on cruising boats. Diners at River Walk restaurant patios and passers-by often join in with impromptu singalongs. The eclectic mix also includes bell choirs, folk groups and Latino ensembles. 6:30-9:45 p.m. Details: [www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com](http://www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com).

**Dec. 1-17:** Fiesta de las Luminarias. More than 2,500 candles in paper bags glow along the River Walk. Fridays-Sundays.

**Dec. 2:** 12th Annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza. The concert featuring Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan caps an eight-day music fest that includes group and vocal competitions and workshops. 7:30 p.m. Municipal Auditorium. Tickets, \$20-\$100 via [www.ticketmaster.com/artist/755066](http://www.ticketmaster.com/artist/755066). Details: [www.mariachimusic.com](http://www.mariachimusic.com).

**Dec. 2:** Kristkindlmarkt. Beethoven Halle and Garten in the King William District is home to the 15th annual traditional German Christmas market featuring handcrafted gifts, clothing, decorations, gingerbread houses, pottery and more. Free admission. Details: [www.beethovenmaennerchor.com/kristkindlmarkt.htm](http://www.beethovenmaennerchor.com/kristkindlmarkt.htm).

**Dec. 8-10:** Holiday Arts & Crafts Show. Local and regional artists, craftspeople and jewelers sell from booths that line both sides of the River Walk Expansion near the Chamber of Commerce. 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Details: [www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com](http://www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com).

**Dec. 17:** La Gran Posada. San Fernando Cathedral, founded in 1731 by 15 families from the Canary Islands at the invitation of King Philip V of Spain, is host of the re-enactment of the biblical account of Mary and Joseph's search for lodging in Bethlehem on the eve of Jesus's birth. The procession begins at Milam Park and ends at the cathedral on the city's Main Plaza. Details: [www.sfcathedral.org](http://www.sfcathedral.org).

**Dec. 31:** Celebrate San Antonio. Welcome 2007 with fireworks, live music on multiple stages, food booths and family activities on South Alamo Street and in La Villita. Free. Details: [www.sanantonio.gov/sapar](http://www.sanantonio.gov/sapar).