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CELEBRATE THE SEASON SAFELY IN BELMONT, N.C.
Tweaked traditions carry pandemic precautions from Belmont to Christmas Town USA

BELMONT, N.C. **(11/23/20)** – In 2020, everyone needs a little cheer. Everyone also needs to be safe. This holiday season, the quaint and charming city of Belmont, N.C., combines its traditions of glow and glee with pandemic precautions to ensure visitors arrive healthy into the new year.

From its Christmas Tree Lighting to the rolling acres of a twinkling Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, Belmont beckons guests from near and far to its southern streets just west of Charlotte, N.C. The festivities of years past unfold once again with safety and social distancing becoming paramount. Said Jim Hoffman, chairman of Belmont Tourism Development Authority, "The holiday season annually welcomes families to our city, known for its southern hospitality and small-town charm. We want to welcome people again this year, but also keep them as safe as possible as they celebrate in Belmont."

At Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, the seasonal sparkle returns among blossoming cherry trees, the Piedmont Prairie and popular topiary displays at *Holidays at the Garden*. From Nov. 27 to Jan. 3, experience a smaller yet still shimmering show that also includes the annual towering Orchid Tree, roaring fires for roasting marshmallows and food truck features. Advance tickets are required this year to allow for staggered and social distanced entry. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, there will be no live entertainment; however, the Garden will still delight guests of all ages with its shining spectacle.

The season continues to shine brightly in *Christmas Town USA* as well. In its 65th year of bringing nostalgia to the holidays, Christmas Town USA comes to life in McAdenville, N.C., on Dec. 1. Its lights twinkle nightly through Dec. 26 with a variety of safety measures included this year, such as a shortened designated route and removing lit areas where visitors often congregate. Traditions may be trimmed in 2020, but Christmas Town's street will dance in merriment with thousands of illuminated red, green and white lights.

In downtown Belmont, the holidays officially begin with the *Christmas Tree Lighting* on Nov. 30 at 6:30 p.m. This town tradition takes place in front of Belmont City Hall in historic downtown, inviting guests to peruse the Festival of Trees once the city is aglow. The third annual *Festival of Trees* returns in 2020 to Stowe Park. It features dozens of twinkling trees decorated by the local community. Guests at both events are asked to social distance and wear masks to keep themselves and others safe.

On Dec. 1, the parade tradition in Belmont gets a tiny twist to support a safe holiday season. *Cruise Thru Christmas – Belmont Style* will bring the best of the annual downtown parade to a health-minded pandemic environment. This year's parade is a drive-thru event, encouraging families to decorate their cars and drive along the parade route to view spectacular yet stationary floats and other entries. Attendees are asked to remain within their vehicles during this nontraditional parade. Cruise Thru

Christmas creatively brings abundant holiday cheer to Belmont while preventing heavy crowds and gatherings normally seen during the annual occasion.

"Christmastime is nothing short of magical in Belmont – a place where memory making and nostalgia are easily discovered by families every holiday season," added Hoffman. "We're decking the halls and we're more than ready to welcome bright and smiling faces back to our streets, our Garden pathways, our restaurants and our shops this year. Now, more than ever before, is a time to spread cheer, and we have plenty of festive cheer here in Belmont."

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About Belmont, N.C.
Belmont, N.C., is located in Gaston County, 15 minutes west of Uptown Charlotte. Whether you're visiting us for the first time for a vacation getaway or returning for a daytime adventure, you're sure to enjoy a truly unique experience in Belmont. Once a place where textile industries served as the lifeblood of the community, the city now stands as a successful example of commerce and redevelopment, while maintaining charm and hospitality. With picturesque nuances brushed throughout the town, Belmont offers a scenic view of historical homes, vintage streetlamps, red brick sidewalks and memories of a simpler time. It's a community that embraces entertainment, the arts, unique local retail, destination restaurants and a variety of special events. For more information, visit us online at www.visitbelmontnc.org.