



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### DISCOVER A WINTRY WONDERLAND IN THE HEART OF CAROLINA

*Holidays to shine and shimmer from Belmont, N.C., to McAdenville's Christmas Town, USA*

**BELMONT, N.C. (11/15/16)** – In the heart of the south, amid a beautifully warm end-of-year climate, discover a twinkling winter wonderland that will inspire joy and holiday spirit in visitors of all ages. The city of Belmont, N.C., dazzles with small-town charm, sparkling lights and family-friendly festivities this season, beckoning guests from nearby Charlotte and around the world to wander streetscapes and glowing gardens alike through the end of the year.

Merry fun begins mid-November across the Belmont area. From a contemporary, natural environment that shines under night skies to a town brimming brightly in tradition, the region offers a little something for everyone.

Said Brandon Keller, chairman of Belmont Tourism Development Authority, “Belmont regularly attracts guests from across the U.S. for its regional sights and exhibits. But Christmastime? The southern hospitality mixed with historic downtowns and gleaming, glowing lights brings in an international audience that radiates with excitement and cheer. It’s a can’t-miss occasion for our community and thousands upon thousands of visitors.”

The season starts on Nov. 17 at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden in Belmont. Twinkling trees and fountains will shimmer at *Holidays at the Garden*, which features a towering tree of orchids, more than 600,000 lights and illuminated displays throughout the nearly 400-acre venue. Gather around the crackling fire after you wander the various pathways and take in the sparkling sights. Bring the entire family, or venture to the Garden as a couple; take a horse-drawn carriage ride or enjoy a visit with Santa and his Mrs. Garden lights flicker on at 5 p.m. through Dec. 31.

Three miles from Belmont’s holiday festivities, discover the glowing tradition of Christmas Town, USA, or McAdenville. Each year since 1956, this quaint community transforms into a vast holiday spectacle worthy of its nickname, welcoming several thousand guests annually from near and far. Homeowners and the city join together to bring Christmas Town, USA to life with street-lined lit homes, more than 375 decorated trees, 200 shining lamppost wreaths, chiming Christmas music, a life-size Nativity scene and a large gleaming lake fountain, reflecting its brilliant colors along the water. McAdenville’s non-commercial, globally recognized display has warmed the hearts of millions for more than six decades. Festivities include its 5th Annual Christmas Town 5K, the Yule Log Ceremony – a town tradition since 1950 – and the Annual Christmas Town Festival. The Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 1 will light up Christmas Town, burning bright through Dec. 26.

Historic downtown Belmont hosts additional activities throughout the holiday season for the entire family to enjoy. Beyond the brick-lined, twinkling sidewalks, come see the Belmont Christmas Tree Lighting on Dec. 4, the Annual Christmas Parade on Dec. 5, and Downtown Christmas Village on Dec. 8. At Belmont Abbey College’s Haid Theatre, performances of “A Christmas Carol” begin in early November with several shows through Nov. 19. Also enjoy the sweet sounds of the college’s annual Arts at the Abbey Holiday Concert on Dec. 9 at 8 p.m. This event is held at the Abbey Basilica, a basilica of pilgrimage listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1973 and an exquisite place of worship during the Christmas season.

“Year-round, the entire Belmont area offers diverse options for shopping, dining and southern charm,” said Ted Hall, president of the Chamber of Commerce. “This magical, celebratory season puts an extra twinkle on the distinct beauty our community proudly displays every day.”

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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 and a variety of special events. For more information, visit us online at [www.visitbelmontnc.org](http://www.visitbelmontnc.org).