



Christmas markets, advent concerts, and Christmas shows: Zurich is simply magical at Christmas time. The whole city is bathed in a warm light, the fragrant aromas of cinnamon and mulled wine hang in the air, and the sounds of Christmas can be heard everywhere you go. Sunday and late-night shopping offer plenty of opportunity to find the perfect Christmas gift, and on New Year's Eve, Zurich's hoteliers greet the new year with a bang.

→ zuerich.com/christmas

Christmas Magic and Spectacular Lights

The Advent Period in Zurich Opens with “Lucy”

At the end of November, all the city’s Christmas illuminations are switched on simultaneously. Among them is “Lucy”, which bathes Zurich’s famous shopping street, Bahnhofstrasse, in a warm and colorful light. This spectacular light installation comprises almost 12,000 crystals with white, blue, and red LEDs that can vary in intensity. That same evening, many of Zurich’s stores remain open until 10pm, marking the beginning of the Christmas shopping season. What’s more, several shopping Sundays and numerous Christmas markets throughout the city and region provide even more opportunities to make your Christmas purchases.

“Illuminarium”

In the courtyard of the National Museum, too, visitors can immerse themselves in a winter wonderland of light: an interactive light show featuring the mythical creature, Yuki, and her orchestra brings the museum façade to life in a spectacular way. Besides this animated show, for which admission is charged, there is a freely accessible area, where members of the public are also treated to illumination and illusion, as well as music and cuisine – accompanied by a glass of mulled wine or punch.

Christmas Markets and Singing Trees

Festive decorations and the scent of cinnamon herald the arrival of the traditional Zurich Christmas markets. Whether at Zurich’s oldest Christmas market in the Niederdorf or the popular “Christkindlimarkt” at Zurich Main Station, locals and tourists mingle as they browse through the stalls in search of treasures. The showpiece of the “Christkindlimarkt” in the station concourse is the 16-meter (52 ft) high Christmas tree decorated with around 7,000 Swarovski crystals. If you stroll along the Bahnhofstrasse, sooner or later you will come across the unique “Singing Christmas Tree”. Each evening, choirs from the Zurich region perform the highlights from their Christmas repertoire rowed up on a house-high, pyramid-shaped stage decorated to look like a Christmas tree. Set against the spectacular backdrop of the Opera House, the “Wienachtsdorf” on Sechseläutenplatz is the perfect place to get into the Christmas spirit: countless enchanting market stalls, an ice rink, and many other attractions provide hours of magical entertainment for young and old alike. All of these Christmas markets take place from the end of November to the end of December (for the exact dates, see below).

Christmas Beyond the City

A train or boat trip to Rapperswil is particularly worthwhile during the Christmas period. Its annual “Christkindlimärt” is one of the largest in Switzerland, and is renowned for both its elaborate decorations and its diverse program of events. Anyone wishing to explore the northern part of the canton can get into a contemplative mood at the “Wiehnachts Märt” in Winterthur. The market in the Old Town is considered to be one of the most beautiful and atmospheric markets in Switzerland.

Candle Dipping

Candle dipping – where visitors can create their own candles in a relaxed and unhurried way – is a favorite Christmas activity in Switzerland. The most popular candle-dipping event in Zurich is held in the pavilion on Bürkliplatz. As soon as you set foot in the temporary tent, you are enveloped in the scent of beeswax and the warm glow of candlelight.

Jelmoli “Märlitram”

The “Märlitram” (fairy tale tram) has been a popular attraction since 1958 – so for 60 years now. The festively decorated streetcar trundles through the center of Zurich, rings its bell merrily, and makes people’s eyes shine, no matter what their age. This special tram is driven by Santa Claus, while two angels read Christmas stories to the up to 25 young passengers on board. The children are aged between 4 and 10 years; adults are not admitted. The tram follows a route from Bellevue, across Limmatquai to Central, and from there along Bahnhofstrasse and back to Bellevue.

Magical and Breathtaking

Year after year, various circuses come to Zurich and surrounding region to show off their skills in spectacular Christmas shows. On the Bauschänzli on the Limmat, the tradition-steeped Circus Conelli enralls audiences with its latest program, while the Knie family’s circus, Salto Natale, in the airport municipality of Kloten offers up a mystical world of breathtaking acrobatics.

Seeing in the New Year With a Bang

Zurich’s hoteliers bring the contemplative season to an end with a bang. As the year draws to a close, visitors from both home and abroad gather in the area around the lake basin to join in the largest New Year’s Eve party in the country. The impressive fireworks display over Lake Zurich, which is accompanied by music, is organized by Zurich’s hoteliers, with fireworks being launched into the air from boats on the lake.

Christmas Markets

Traditional: “Dörfli” Christmas Market

Zurich, Niederdorf // November 22 – December 23, 2018

→ weihnachtsmarkt-doeerfli.ch

Urban: “Wienachtsdorf”

Zurich, Sechseläutenplatz // November 22 – December 23, 2018

→ wienachtsdorf.ch

Indoor: “Christkindlimarkt”

Zurich Main Station // November 22 – December 24, 2018

→ christkindlimarkt.ch/en

Musical: Christmas Market with the “Singing Christmas Tree”

Zurich, Werdmühleplatz // November 22 – December 23, 2018

→ singingchristmastree.ch

Central: City Christmas Market

Zurich, Lintheschergasse // November 22 – December 24, 2018

→ weihnachten-zuerich.ch

Trendy: “Heiliger Bimbam!”

Halle 622, Oerlikon // December 20 – 23, 2018

→ montagsmarkt.ch

Extensive: Rapperswil “Christchindlimärt”

Rapperswil-Jona // December 14 – 23, 2018

→ christkindlimaert.ch

Atmospheric: Winterthur “Wiehnachts Märt”

Winterthur Old Town // November 30 – December 23, 2018

→ weihnachtinwinterthur.ch

Bijou: Baden Christmas Market

Baden, Kirchplatz and Weite Gasse // December 12, 2018

→ badener-adventsmarkt.ch

Events Calendar 2018

Zurich Candle Dipping at Bürkliplatz

Bürkliplatz, near Bellevue // November 9 – December 23, 2018, daily, 10am – 8pm

“Illuminarium” – Christmas Illuminations at the National Museum

Inner courtyard of the National Museum // November 15 – December 31, 2018, 5 – 11pm

Conelli Christmas Circus

Bauschänzli, near Bellevue // November 22 – December 31, 2018

→ circus-conelli.ch

Salto Natale

Holberg car park, Zurich Kloten // November 15, 2018 – December 31, 2018

→ saltonatale.ch

“Singing Christmas Tree” performances

Zurich, Werdmühleplatz // November 22 – December 23, 2018

→ singingchristmastree.ch

Switching on of the “Lucy” Christmas lights

Bahnhofstrasse // November 22, 2018 at 6pm. Christmas lights in operation until 6 January, 2019

→ zuerich.com

Late-Night Shopping

Zurich city center // November 22, 2018, open until 10pm

Sunday Shopping in Zurich City

December 2, 9 & 23, 2018, 11am – 6pm

Santa Swimming Event

Zurich, River Limmat // December 9, 2018

→ samichlausschwimmen.ch

“Lichterschwimmen” (floating candles on the River Limmat)

Zurich, River Limmat // December 20, 2018

→ zuerich.com

“Silvesterzauber” (New Year’s Eve Magic) hosted by Zurich’s hoteliers

Lake basin, Lake Zurich // December 31, 2018

→ silvesterzauber.ch

Zürich Tourism

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New Year Shopping

Zurich city center // January 2, 2019, 9am – 8pm

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