



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Get In the Spirit in Delaware!***

**TAX-FREE SHOPPING, LODGING DEALS & SPECIAL EVENTS PERFECT TIME FOR HOLIDAY GETAWAY**

DOVER, DE – Jumpstart your tax-free holiday shopping, visit a local Christmas tree farm to take home a fresh-cut tree and get your jollies on at festive events in Greater Dover/Kent County this holiday season, starting November 17 with an old-fashioned bayberry candle-making workshop.

“Nothing says ‘holiday’ better than the fragrance of a fresh-cut Christmas tree,” said Cynthia S. Small, Executive Director for Kent County Tourism in Dover, DE. “Kent County is home to 10 Christmas tree farms, where you can hand-pick the perfect type, shape and size, have it cut on the spot and packaged for easy transport.”

Delaware tree growers feature multiple varieties of firs, spruces and pines. Fresh-cut trees, if watered daily, will last much longer than trees that have been cut and shipped to big box stores. Some growers offer “balled” trees, which can be planted after the holiday season.

“Visiting Delaware’s Capital Region can yield not only the fresh-cut tree, but also bargains on gifts purchased tax-free,” Ms. Small said. “From electronics to jewelry and clothing, there are deals to be had. Plus, it’s a pretty novel idea to buy your gifts, and at the same time, the tree to put them under.”

Several holiday-themed events are scheduled starting mid-November. Below is a sampling of events:

- **Bayberry Candle-Making** – Saturday, November 17, at the historic John Dickinson Plantation near Dover from 1-3 p.m. The free workshop will explore candle-dipping techniques and lighting devices that would have been used during the 18<sup>th</sup> century when John Dickinson was in residence at the plantation, which will also be open for free tours from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.
- **Birding and Events at Bombay Hook** – Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge will host several events including a Bird Identification Station on Sunday, November 18 from 1-5:30 p.m.; a Sunset Tour, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 18; and Wonderful Waterfowl Workshop on Saturday, November 24 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The event will include field study on North American waterfowl. Paul J. Baicich, creator of Great Birding Projects and former editor of the American Birding Association’s bird finding guides, will be a featured speaker. To register, call 302-653-6872. The Refuge, located at 2591 Whitehall Neck Road in Smyrna, will host a “Black Friday” sale in the Refuge Store on Friday, November 23 with most items discounted.
- **Festival of Trees** – The annual Hospice Festival of Trees will begin on Tuesday, November 20 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., and continue on Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed Thanksgiving Day); then Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Dover Downs Hotel & Casino. 800-711-5882.
- **Trains and Planes** – The Air Mobility Command Museum will host its holiday exhibit “Trains and Planes” featuring large garden scale trains with four trains operating at one time. Members of the Shoreline Garden Railroad Club will be on hand to describe their hobby. The exhibit will run from November 20 through January 2, and the museum is open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., free admission (302-677-5938).
- **Thanksgiving Buffet** – The Sheraton Dover Hotel will host a Thanksgiving buffet at 2 p.m. with turkey, steamship round of beef, Virginia glazed ham, salmon with crab and lobster and coconut shrimp with all the trimmings. For reservations, call 302-734-0907.

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- **Chocolate Festival** – The annual Chocolate Festival, featuring chocolate, holiday gifts, music and entertainment, will be held at Dover Downs Hotel & Casino from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free for those 18 and younger. For information, call 800-711-5882.
- **Ring in the Holiday Season** – Sunday, November 25, the Dover Symphony Orchestra will perform holiday season music at the Dover Downs Hotel & Casino Rollins Center at 2 p.m. For tickets, call 302-270-1903.
- **The Nutcracker** – Delaware Ballet will perform The Nutcracker at Delaware State University in Dover at 7 p.m. on Friday, November 30 and at 2 and 7 p.m. on Saturday, December 1. For tickets, 302-674-3030.
- **A Farmer’s Christmas** – The Delaware Agricultural Museum & Village in Dover will host its annual “A Farmer’s Christmas” on Saturday, December 1 from 1 to 5 p.m. Holiday crafts, stories, activities, historical craft demonstrations and woodstove cooking, stroll through the lantern-lit 19<sup>th</sup> Century Lookerman Landing Village where you will see live blacksmith and goat treadle (knitting directly from the goat) demonstrations, enjoy warm mulled cider and a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus. For more information, call 302-734-1618.
- **Holiday Stroll** – It’s hard to beat the holidays in a quaint, hometown atmosphere where Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive by horse and carriage. Friday, December 7, 5-8 p.m., join Downtown Milford merchants for live entertainment, festivities and open house at many local merchants. For more information, call 302-839-1180.
- **Handmade for the Holidays** – Saturday, December 8, decorate cards through the art of paper quilling and stenciling, write a personal note with a quill pen and create a sachet with herbs and spices at the John Dickinson Plantation from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Free of charge, and the plantation will be open for tours from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. 302-739-3277.
- **A Frank Sinatra Christmas** – The Schwartz Center for the Arts in Dover will host Rob Zappulla and his jazz band performing Sinatra classics such as White Christmas, Jingle Bells and Let it Snow at 7 p.m. For tickets, call 302-678-5152.

In addition to tax-free shopping, live-cut Christmas trees and a host of special holiday events, several hotels are offering special rates and discounts including the Microtel Inn & Suites, offering a “buy one night, get the second at 50 percent off” through January 31 (302-674-3800); Mainstay Suites is offering buy one night, get the second at half price, or buy two nights and get the third night free (302-678-8383); holiday shopping special from Rodeway Inn, \$49 per night weekdays and \$59 on weekends; and Sheraton Dover Hotel is offering a “Shop ‘Til You Drop” package that includes lodging for two, complimentary breakfast for two and complimentary transportation to and from the local shopping areas at \$99 per night (302-678-8500).

For more information about visiting Delaware’s Capital Region, call 800-233-5368 or on the web at [www.visitdover.com](http://www.visitdover.com).

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**PHOTO CAPTION:** Captured on film during a snowy day, the mansion house at the John Dickinson Plantation, located just south of Dover, DE, was built in 1740 for Samuel Dickinson (father of John Dickinson). John Dickinson spent his boyhood years here. The plantation will host bayberry candle-making on November 17 and paper quill card-making on December 8. [www.visitdover.com](http://www.visitdover.com).