

# Christmas waiting time begins in Riga with festive lights and childhood-themed decorations

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As the first snow covers the ground, Riga is getting ready for Christmas and decorates the city. This year, the capital's decorations and lighting design will make a new appearance, whereas a variety of heart-warming cultural events will be held not only in culture centres, but also in the city centre and its neighbourhoods.

## Older and younger city residents portrayed in the drawings of a children's book illustrator

“This year, during the Christmas season in Riga, we invite both older and younger city residents and guests to enjoy Christmas just like in childhood. You will be given the opportunity to experience the festive feeling and joy of childhood by taking part in games and fairy-tale readings at Vērmanes Garden, enjoying musical shows for children in the city parks, taking a stroll along the Christmas light fairy-tale trail on the canal-side, and also enjoying concerts and shows within the city environment,” Riga Mayor Mārtiņš Staķis reveals.

This year, the visual image of Christmas and holiday greetings have been created by Latvian artist, illustrator, and architect Anna Vaivare. She is known for her illustrations and comics for children's books, and is the winner of the Jānis Baltvilks Award for Children's Book Art.

“The illustrations depict the joyful buzz that one may observe in the midst of preparations for holiday festivities. There are both older and younger city residents getting ready for Christmas, there are festive lights, snowflakes and all sorts of bits and pieces that I associate with the joy of the festivities and that create a warm ambience. I hope that among all these elements, everyone will find something close to their heart. Reading Christmas poems is also a very important part of this celebration

for me. This was also my inspiration when creating the festive illustrations,” says Anna Vaivare, the author of the illustrations.

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The artist's festive motifs and images adorn the city's outdoor billboards and posters which invite visitors to experience the wonders of Christmas in Riga. In early December, some advertising pillars will be decorated with Christmas hats inspired by the artist's illustrations.

### Illuminated city keys in the lighting poles and Riga Town Hall Square Christmas tree

Previous city decorations in shades of blue this year are supplemented with new decorations, i.e. warmly illuminated keys of Riga, rooted in the city's historic coat of arms and renewed graphic identity. They are already placed on the lighting poles of Vanšu Bridge and Kalnciema Street overpass.

The motifs of the city keys will also be found in the Christmas tree in Riga Town Hall Square which will be installed there on the First Advent. In total, 18 trees will be decorated at culture centres, parks, and squares in the city, while city neighbourhood residents will decorate trees donated by the municipality in 21 locations throughout the city.

### Light parks, Christmas light trail and Vērmanes fairy-tale garden

Continuing the previous year's tradition, the city's parks, squares, and playgrounds will be decorated with strings of electric lights, in total in 20 locations this year. From 10 December, the festive atmosphere will be brought to these parks not only with LED strings of energy-efficient light bulbs, but also with illuminated 3D stars, snowmen and other light design objects.

From 17 December, everyone in the city will be able to experience the glittering wonders of Christmas lights in the Christmas light trail along the city's canal promenade. Light installations will be accompanied by popular melodies.

Vērmanes Garden, which this summer hosted well-attended concerts on Thursday evenings, will invite visitors to fairy-tale readings, games, and carols on the same evenings in December. The Christmas Gate of Honour will also highlight the special festive programme in the park.

### Further information

You will soon be able to find out more about the events organised by the Riga City Council to celebrate the Christmas season on the website [svetki.riga.lv](http://svetki.riga.lv) and also to follow the news on the Facebook page [Rīgā notiek](#)”.

Next week, printed booklets with the programme of the celebrations will be available in Riga municipal libraries, culture centres, customer service stations in Neighbourhood Centres, and also the Riga Tourist Information Centre.

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