

# Riga prepares for the Third Advent

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On Thursday, 8 December, the festive programme for families with children will continue in Vērmanes Fairy Tale Garden. During the weekend, events and concerts dedicated to the Third Advent will take place in the neighbourhoods and centre of the city.

## Christmas miracles await in Vērmanes Fairy Tale Garden

On Thursday evenings in December, families with children are invited to a special programme near the fountain in Vērmanes Garden: fairy tale readings, games, songs and a chance to meet Santa Claus. The Christmas Gate of Honour will also highlight the special festive programme in the park.

This Thursday at the Vērmanes Fairy Tale Garden from 6.00 p.m., everyone will be delighted by songs, games and fairy tale readings by the dwarfs and Riga choirs. The event will feature performances by the youth choirs "Balsis" and "Mūza", the mixed choir "Sonore", the male chamber choir "Frachori", the children's and youth vocal ensemble "Kolibri", the female choir "Ausma", and the folklore group "Vilcenes", and also the youth theatre studio "Vinnijs".

## Third Advent events in the city neighbourhoods

A musical production for children "In the Footsteps of the Reindeer" will take place on Saturday, 10 December. At 11.00 a.m. it will be performed in Nordeķi Park (near the children's playground), whereas at 2.00 p.m. – in the Youth Garden (24 Lapu Street). Everyone is welcome to play, dance to the music and experience the fascinating story of how the Reindeer travels around the world with two bears.

At 3.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. well-known Latvian performers will join in a musical performance "Christmas Tea with Sunny Groove Dixie" in Pļavnieki Birch Grove.

Several Third Advent events will take place on Sunday, 11 December. From 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. everyone will have the chance to participate in Christmas gift and ornament making workshops that will take place in the branch office of the Culture and Folk Art Centre "Ritums" (43A Ieriķu Street).

At 12.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m., during the Fairy Tale Sunday event, families with children will not only have the chance to meet Santa Claus, but also play games at the shopping area of the Grand Stage at Mežaparks.

At 3.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m., Christmas melodies will delight audience near Riga Culture Centre "Ilģuciems", whereas at 5.00 p.m. the Chamber Hall of VEF Culture Palace will host a festive concert "In Winter as in a Fairy Tale" featuring opera soloist Ilona Bagele, accordionist Inita Āboliņa and accompanying musicians who will be performing Christmas songs from around the world.

Also, at 5.00 p.m., the Advent Concert "Christmas in the New World" featuring the chamber choir "Muklājs" will be hosted at the Riga Culture Centre "Ilģuciems".

Christmas markets will also continue to welcome visitors. Gifts and festive treats can be purchased in Āgenskalns, Kalnciema Quarter, Doma Square, Esplanāde Park and elsewhere.

### Third Advent events in the city centre

On Sunday, 11 December, at 11.00 a.m., 12.30 p.m., 2.00 p.m., and 3.30 p.m., the Riga Art Nouveau Centre will host an Art Nouveau Christmas-themed music salon, featuring students from the Jāzeps Mediņš Riga Music High School and their teacher Ilona Meija.

At 12.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m., the bell ensemble "Campanella", the ensemble of students of the Andžejs Grauds drum school, and the wind instrument quintet "Christmas Joy" will perform in Vērmanes Garden, and at 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m., the traditional Advent Concerts will be performed from the balcony of the Town Hall.

At 3.00 p.m. families with children are welcome to attend the concert "Once upon on a winter night..." at the Small Guild. The children's and youth vocal ensemble "Kolibri" and an instrumental group will perform at the concert. The concert will also be available online [on the website](#) of the Small Guild and on [Facebook page](#).

At the end of the Third Advent, from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m., a heart-warming festive concert "In a Sleigh of Songs" will be performed in the concert hall "Ave Sol" by the women's choir "Sapnis", women's chamber choir "Cantus" and the male vocal ensemble of VEF Culture Palace.

### Festive decorations in the urban setting

This year, the visual image of Christmas and holiday greetings have been created by Latvian artist and illustrator Anna Vaivare and the theme is to enjoy Christmas just like in childhood. 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.

The capital's brightest trees shine in Doma Square and Town Hall Square. Additional 18 Christmas trees are placed at cultural centres, parks, and squares, whereas trees donated by the municipality are displayed in the neighbourhoods of the city and decorated by neighbourhood associations.

As the Third Advent approaches and continuing the tradition started last year, 20 city parks, squares, and playgrounds are decorated with festive lights. 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 7 December, the Christmas Light Trail will gradually be installed along the city's canal promenade. The shining wonders of Christmas lights will be on display for city residents and guests from 17 December until mid-January.

Further information:

You can read more on special Christmas advent events organised by Riga municipality by visiting [svetki.riga.lv](http://svetki.riga.lv) and follow the news on the Facebook page "[Rīgā notiek](#)".

Printed booklets with the programme of the celebrations are available in Riga municipal libraries, culture centres, customer service stations in Neighbourhood Centres, and also the Riga Tourist Information Centre.

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