

Celebration in the Oaks: A sparkling holiday tradition

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The Celebration in the Oaks light show includes breathtaking light displays and a train ride under moss-draped trees. (Photos by Ryan Rivet)

During the holiday season, New Orleans City Park transforms from a place of meandering paths and thick looming trees to a wonderland of oaks dripping with icicles and colorful figures twinkling through the night.

These icicles and figures are composed of thousands of coils of lights arranged artistically for the annual [Celebration in the Oaks](#) at City Park, on display through Jan. 2.

City Park is a perfect staging arena for the show. The park is filled with the world's

largest stand of mature live oaks that gives the celebration its name. The towering trees and the fairy-like hanging Spanish moss serve as a perfect backdrop for the abundance of lights dangling off every available piece of greenery.

“I love going to off-campus events to experience all that New Orleans has to offer and fully immerse myself in the culture,” said Tulane University sophomore Pam Segal, who used the event as a fun opportunity to see the city with some friends. For many other Tulane students, the park display offered a chance to unwind with friends and take a break from the stress of finals.

More than 165,000 visitors pour in every year to see the spectacle of lights. There is a wide range of attractions and activities, from rows of Christmas trees decorated by local schools, to the large snowman [Mr. Bingle](#) (a traditional figure once displayed outside a Canal Street department store), the setting for plenty of photos and selfies.

The event is very family-friendly, and inside you will find children running along the paths and giggling inside lit-up igloos.

“I loved seeing all the families with cute babies all bundled up!” said Brae Hunter, a sophomore at Tulane.

The light show attracts many university students, tourists and residents who come to see the beautiful displays the city has to offer.

Claire Davenport is a sophomore at Tulane University, majoring in English and political science.

The displays made it feel so beautiful and wintry, despite it being 70 degrees.
Pam Segal, sophomore



City Park's Peristyle, built in 1907, gets contemporary decorations during the Celebration in the Oaks light display.