



A Hallmark Holiday in New Braunfels, TX

Picture a town square wrapped in twinkling lights, carolers on the corner, and hot cocoa or wassail steaming in your hands, that's New Braunfels during the most wonderful time of the year. This is the kind of small-town Christmas that makes you want to leave your phone in your pocket and just soak it in. Grab someone you love and get ready for two days that feel like they were written into a holiday movie.

Day 1: A Downtown Christmas Story

Every good holiday story needs an opening scene, and Downtown New Braunfels delivers one every year at [Downtown Lighting & Santa's Arrival](#). Main Plaza fills with neighbors bundled in scarves or, this being Texas, maybe shorts and flip-flops, since our holiday weather never quite reads the script, as the New Braunfels Community Band plays and the Mayor leads the countdown to flip the switch, lighting up downtown for the season. Santa makes his appearance soon after and is on hand for photos with the kids. It's the kind of moment that makes you believe in the magic of small towns again.

After the tree lighting, follow the crowd over to the [Sophienburg Museum + Archives](#) for Weihnachtsmarkt

Under the Stars, a cozy new addition to the evening with fun for the kids, vendors selling one-of-a-kind gifts, and food to keep you warm while you shop under the night sky.

If you time your visit right, don't miss [Weihnachtsmarkt](#), a

premier German Christmas market, where the scent of mulled wine and the sound of holiday music make it easy to forget you're still in Texas. Then, on the evening of [Wassailfest](#), Downtown transforms again with free wassail tastings, twinkling storefronts, and carols from local school choirs filling the streets. Think of it as New Braunfels' own version of a Hallmark movie's opening credits.



Enjoy German comfort food and a stein at [Krause's Cafe](#), or cozy up at a candlelit table at [Alpine Haus](#).

Right across the street from Krause's, stroll into the newly opened [New Braunfels Visitor Center at the Historic Hinman House](#). Stop in for a snack, mail a

letter to Santa, chat with locals who call New Braunfels home, and get a few tips for making the most of your visit. Then wander the storybook storefronts of downtown, the boutiques along Seguin and San Antonio streets are dressed in their holiday best, perfect for checking a few names off your gift list!

Day 2: Christmas Comes to Gruene

If downtown is the opening scene, Gruene is where the movie hits its heart. The whole district leans into [Holidays in Gruene](#), a season-long celebration built around Gruene's very own



Santa, a cowboy-hatted, boot-wearing legend named Cowboy Kringle. Reserve a photo slot in advance; the line for this one is as much a tradition as the man himself.



Lace up for a spin around the [Gruene Ice Rink](#), an open-air rink strung with lights in the heart of the historic district, about as unexpected (and charming) a sight as you'll find in the Texas Hill Country. Then browse [Gruene Christmas Market Days](#), where nearly 100 artisans set up shop for a weekend of

handmade gifts, Texas foods, and small-town shopping that feels like it was scripted for the season.

Grab lunch with a view of the Guadalupe at [Gristmill River Restaurant & Bar](#), and explore festive Gruene, all decked out for the holidays. Pop into [H.D. Gruene Mercantile](#) and [Gruene Hat Company](#) for a custom-branded cowboy hat, browse [The Pomegranate](#) for find goods and little luxuries. Stop by the [Gruene General Store](#) for fudge and old-fashioned candy or pick up a box of sweet treats from [The Great Texas Pecan Candy Company](#) the kind of goodies that make perfect stocking

stuffers or gifts to take home. Save room for dinner at [The Gruene Door](#) or [Mozie's](#) before the night winds down under the lights.

Holiday Extras Worth the Drive

For an underground Christmas unlike anywhere else, head just up the road to [Christmas at the Caverns](#) at Natural Bridge Caverns, where carolers perform 180 feet below ground. Above ground, a glittering trail of lights, s'mores around the campfire, and a visit with Santa awaits. Back in town, Ballet Texas brings The Nutcracker to the historic [Brauntex Theatre](#) each December offering a timeless and enchanting way to spend an evening dressed in your holiday best.



For something a little more unexpected, the [New Braunfels Renaissance Faire](#) brings knights, fairies, and jousting to Heritage Village each December, with a Christmas twist all its own; think Santa Claus rubbing elbows with knights in shining armor. It's a different kind of holiday outing for anyone looking to trade the usual Christmas activities for something a little more whimsical.



And no New Braunfels Christmas is complete without a slow drive through [Santa's Ranch](#), a mile-long, drive-thru wonderland featuring more than three million lights just off I-35. Roll the windows down, turn up the carols, and let the kids (or the kid in you) count the twinkling scenes all the way to the Town of Bethlehem.

Where to Stay

Make it a whole weekend at [Sophie's Gasthaus](#), recently awarded a Michelin Key, or the [Historic Schmitz Bed & Breakfast](#), the newly renovated [Faust Hotel](#) keeps you right in the middle of the downtown holiday scene. In Gruene, [Gruene Mansion Inn](#), [Gruene River Hotel & Retreat](#), and [Hacienda del Rio](#) put you

steps from Cowboy Kringle and the ice rink, and for a familiar hotel brand, the [Courtyard by Marriott](#) and several other national brands are conveniently located right off I-35, or browse more [places to stay](#) in New Braunfels.



Twinkling lights, small-town charm, and a Christmas that feels like it was written just for you...that's the holidays in New Braunfels. We look forward to welcoming you and yours this season!

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