

A Glittering Holiday Destination



CAROLINA CHRISTMAS

at Charlotte Motor Speedway

For more information about Carolina Christmas, visit www.VisitCarolinaChristmas.com, or to purchase tickets by phone, call 800.455.FANS.

Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway, the region's largest LED Christmas light show, has become a new holiday vacation destination for many. Visitors can fulfill their dream of driving on a racetrack, complete holiday shopping for loved ones, and children of all ages can visit Santa and tell him their hearts' desire for holiday gifts. Drink hot chocolate and wander through a glimmering Festival of Trees and a life-sized Bethlehem-themed village, then snuggle around the fire to make s'mores. Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway is more than just a light show: It's a holiday experience not to be missed.

Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway is now in its second year, and the attractions are sure to bring joy to all. Visitors can drive the 4.7-mile expanded route on the racetrack and experience whimsical holiday displays made with over 3 million energy-efficient LED lights. The event is open from Nov. 23 through Dec. 31 (closed Christmas Day).

"We have expanded the drive-through light park by 30 percent, adding even more lights to enhance the experience this year," says Marcus Smith, president and general manager of Charlotte Motor Speedway. "Our mission is to create cherished memories for each and every visitor."

The adventure begins even before visitors enter the gates of Carolina Christmas. The Cabarrus County Convention and Visitors Bureau is teaming with local hotels and businesses to transform Bruton Smith Boulevard into a festive "Boulevard of Lights" with displays and decorations, heightening the excitement of the holiday season for all.

The entrance to Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway begins upon entering the zMAX Dragway, continues through The Dirt Track at Charlotte, onto Charlotte Motor Speedway's track and into the infield. A beautiful 300-foot tunnel illuminates the end of the course.

Entering at the backstretch, families will get the unique opportunity to drive their vehicles on the track, through Turns 3 and 4 and down pit road before entering the infield at Turn 1. This gives drivers the chance to experience the same banking as the NASCAR greats who have raced at the legendary superspeedway.

"Of course, we want families to experience the thrill of driving on the track," says Smith. "Last year we saw a lot of happy mothers and fathers after the drive."

Children, and the young at heart, will be awed by the vast drive-through light displays. Rudolph's Flight School is sure to delight as reindeer leap and bound for the skies. Snowflake Alley is truly a winter wonderland, capturing the enchantment and joys of the season's first snowfall. Patriotic Alley pays tribute to those serving our country and reminds us to keep them in our hearts this holiday season and year-round.

The fun continues outside of the car as well. The NASCAR infield garages are converted into a walk-through Christmas Village open Thursday through Sunday evening. Of course, Santa and Mrs. Claus are in at-

tendance and are ready to take pictures and listen to the Christmas lists of all.

Visitors can take a magical stroll through the Festival of Trees, each one full of decorations created by local organizations. And for an evening snack, vendors carry many best-loved holiday treats.

"We enjoyed the light show tremendously," says Mary Bargett of Concord, N.C., who visited Carolina Christmas with family and friends last year. "I loved it! We loved roasting marshmallows. I drank a peppermint latte, and we stayed warm by the fire pit."

A holiday emporium is filled with unique gifts to purchase for loved ones as well. "There's a nice variety of things to do," says Elizabeth Nickles of Charlotte, N.C. "Everything is reasonably priced and well laid out. It is just beautifully decorated with Christmas trees, and everything is a lot of fun. The shops were just awesome. I have not been to another light display that had so many different things to do."

Her husband, William Nickles, agrees. "I truly loved it," he says. "I'm a Christmas light fan, and when I [heard about the] lights at the track, I had to go. For me, it's the racetrack!"

Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway also includes Bethlehem Village, with one of the largest live Nativity scenes in the region.

"In the midst of all that Carolina Christmas has to offer, Bethlehem Village is a larger-than-life visual reminder of what this holiday is all about," says Mike Miller, president of 3Dudes Productions, which designed and built the village and is partnering with Charlotte Motor Speedway for the second year of Carolina Christmas.

Some 50,000 cars are expected to drive through during the season, bringing in about 200,000 visitors. Many drive in from out of state to experience Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway. It is indeed a premier holiday destination.

The park will be open to visitors every night from Nov. 23 through Dec. 31 (closed Christmas day) from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The cost is \$20 per vehicle, and special rates are available for vans, buses, and large groups.

With so many activities to participate in, Jennifer Nelson and her mother, Marsha Nelson, from Advance, N.C., said it was the best \$20 they had ever spent.

Mark Hensley of Asheboro, N.C., brought his entire family and says all were impressed. "Everyone liked getting to go down pit road. Our group had a really good time."

3Dudes Productions and Charlotte Motor Speedway have joined together to create an extraordinary light display and family-fun event. Carolina Christmas at Charlotte Motor Speedway has become a Christmas tradition and a leading holiday destination for many to celebrate the spirit of the holiday season.

