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Florida's Historic Coast's Grand Illumination Celebrates 30 Years

St. Augustine's iconic Nights of Lights begins Saturday, November 18th, and glows through January 31st

St. Augustine, Fla. (September 26, 2023) – For the past thirty years, St. Augustine has marked the Saturday before Thanksgiving with Light Up! Night. During the annual Nights of Lights, millions of

twinkling white lights come to life and illuminate the historic architecture of the nation's oldest city. The festival has roots in the Spanish tradition of placing lit white candles in the windows of homes to mark the Christmas season. Today, Nights of Lights has a global audience, recognized by National Geographic, Conde Nast Travelers, and AAA Auto Club as one of the best cities for holiday lights displays.

Nights of Lights kicks off Saturday, November 18th with Light Up! Night. Downtown St. Augustine will hum with anticipation as an excited crowd waits for the switch to be flipped, and the city to light up from the sidewalk up to the rooftops. Light Up Night! is a free event that begins at 4 p.m. with a spirited holiday l performance by Showtime USA at City Hall. Then at 5:30 p.m., the All-Star Orchestra takes the stage with great swing and big band sounds at the historic Plaza de la Constitución Gazebo. At 6 p.m. the switch is flipped, lighting up the city.

The City of St. Augustine offers a free Park & Ride Shuttle for Light Up! Night, and during peak days throughout the holidays. Multiple pick-up and drop-off locations are available.

With the festival encompassing more than 20 blocks of the historic district, there are many ways to experience the Nights of Lights! Historic buildings, museums, inns, hotels, restaurants, boats, carriages, trees, and more are all lit with soft white lights – there's no bad view in town! Traditionalists may prefer to stroll the streets at their own speed. Be sure to hit two favorite selfie spots! The decorated tree in the middle of the Plaza de la Constitución is a holiday staple, while the scenery from the top of the Bridge of Lions provides an expansive shot of the lights. Or join Ancient City Tours for guided walking tours full of fascinating stories.

St. Augustine has many local businesses that provide a variety of ways to sit back, relax, and enjoy the lights. Two of the most popular rides are Old Town Trolley's Famous Nights of Lights Tour and Ripley's Red Train Nights of Lights Tours. Both tours depart nightly at 6 p.m., the Trolleys from the St. Augustine Visitor's Center and the Trains from Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum. Riding tours are full of the holiday spirit with music, history, and cheer. St. Augustine Land and Sea and Pineapple Ride &Tours offer

luxury golf cart tours of the lights for up to 12 guests. Their tours are a fun and interactive experience – Spanish-speaking guides are available.

For a vintage vibe, climb aboard a horse-drawn carriage and take in the lights leisurely. Rides with The Tasting Tours are offered daily, including boutique wines and VIP boarding. They also provide family-friendly rides with the Grinch or Scrooge.

Take in the entire illuminated landscape from the sea by booking an intimate and highly customizable sailing experience on one of St. Augustine Sailing's luxury sailboats departing from Camachee Cove Marina. For larger groups, the Schooner Freedom brings traditional sailing techniques to life during their Sunset and Nights of Lights sails. For a powered boat journey, hop on board with Florida Water Tours, St. Augustine Scenic Cruise, St. Augustine Boat Tours, St. Augustine Eco Tours, Pia & Me Charters, and Red Boat Tours. For a piratical spin, check out the Black Raven Pirate Ship.

Soar to new heights and see the lights from above with two of the city's most unique perspectives. First City Helicopter offers evening flights over downtown in their famous yellow helicopter. Circle the city and take in the splendor from expansive windows. If flying isn't your speed, it only takes 219 steps to reach one of the most famous views in St. Augustine. Climb the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum and enjoy the sweeping views from the red tower.

Come for the lights and stay for the fun! Florida's Historic Coast has many other events like the Colonial Nightwatch Parade, the Regatta of Lights and the Annual Christmas Parade for visitors to enjoy.   Join St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and the Beaches as we celebrate 30 years of illuminating the nation's oldest city. Plan your stay today – you won't want to miss this!

Located midway between Daytona Beach and Jacksonville, Florida's Historic Coast includes historic St. Augustine, the outstanding golf and seaside elegance of Ponte Vedra Beach, and 42 miles of pristine Atlantic beaches. For more information, call 1.800.653.2489 or go to the Visitors and Convention Bureau website at www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com. Check us out on social media Instagram @FloridasHistoricCoast
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