

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Philadelphia's Favorite Winter Waterfront Tradition Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest Returns! Plus, Holiday Art Show and Artist Gift Guide at Cherry Street Pier

PHILADELPHIA (November 3, 2025) — The [Delaware River Waterfront Corporation](#) (DRWC) invites all to embrace the magic of the season as the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest returns for its 2025 – 2026 season, opening Friday, November 28, 2025. In addition to the beloved skating tradition, DRWC will spread festive cheer along the Waterfront with holiday offerings at Cherry Street Pier, including a Holiday Art Show, making its debut December 5, 2025, and a Holiday Gift Guide highlighting items from the Pier's Artists in Residence, launching Small Business Saturday on Saturday, November 29, 2025.

“For more than 30 years, the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink has been Philadelphia’s premier destination for skating, memories, and winter fun,” said **Joseph A. Forkin, president & CEO, DRWC**. “This season, our winter tradition expands to Cherry Street Pier with holiday shopping and art installations that invite everyone to make new memories and rekindle family traditions along the Waterfront. Thank you to our long-time partner, Independence Blue Cross, for helping us create a welcoming, accessible place where all can experience the spirit and joy of the season.”

“Winterfest is a beloved Philadelphia tradition where families, friends, and visitors can come together to celebrate the season,” said **Steve Fera, executive vice president of Public Affairs and president of Government Markets at Independence Blue Cross**. “IBX is proud to continue our long-term support of this iconic destination that brings people outdoors, encourages healthy activity, and captures the joy of winter on the Waterfront.”

Winterfest 2025 – 2026 | Friday, November 28, 2025 - March 2026

Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest

101 South Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA



Opening Friday, November 28 and running through March 2026, Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest invites guests to cozy up on the Delaware River Waterfront with amazing views of the Ben Franklin Bridge. The beloved seasonal tradition features an NHL-sized ice rink, outdoor firepits, warming cabins, and festive food and drink for all ages to enjoy.

Open seven days a week, including holidays (unless otherwise noted), admission is free with pay-as-you-go amenities that let visitors create their own winter adventure. Classic amusements like the Ferris wheel, indoor arcade, and the giant holiday tree return in December. For the best experience, guests are encouraged to reserve skating tickets, cabins, firepits, or Rinkside Lounge packages in advance at [RiverRink.com](https://www.riverrink.com).

In addition to booking in advance, visitors are encouraged to plan ahead as they gear up to visit this season. Parking on-site will be limited, however, there are many great ways to access the Waterfront include walking and biking along the Delaware River Trail, rideshare, and public transit.

This season, at The Lodge at Winterfest, guests can warm up with hot chocolate, festive cocktails, and local brews. On-site food and beverage partners include Chickie's & Pete's, Skelly's Amusements, Skelly's Pizza Port, Philly Taco, and—new this year—Philadelphia's historic spirits supplier, Jacquin's, which will take over the outdoor Porch Bar with a lineup of winter-themed cocktails from their brands including Pennsylvania Dutch, The Roaster's Daughter, and Union Forge vodka. Concessions accept cash and credit and remain open during operating hours.

Weekly programming, events, and entertainment will be offered on-site, with major holiday festivities, including:

- **Opening Weekend | Friday, November 28, 2025 – Sunday, November 30, 2025**
- **Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO | Friday, December 5, 2025, 6 pm**
- **New Year's Eve Fireworks | Wednesday, December 31, 2025** **More details to come*

Skate admission is \$5, and skate rental is \$12. Independence Blue Cross members receive free skate admission for themselves and up to three guests by showing their IBX card online or in person (skate rental not included). Military personnel and first responders also receive free skate admission for themselves and up to three guests with valid ID (in person only; skate rental not included).

Visitors can check [RiverRink.com](https://www.riverrink.com) for the latest programming, daily and holiday hours, ticket information, and event listings.

Independence Blue Cross returns as the proud title sponsor, with support from PECO, Visit PA, Maker's Mark, Hornitos, Jacquin's, and Visit Philadelphia. These partnerships help bring Winterfest to life each season, creating a one-of-a-kind experience on Philadelphia's Waterfront.

2025-2026 Seasonal Highlights:

- **Affordable Fun:** Free to enter and open to all. Skate for just \$5; rentals \$12.
- **IBX Member Perk:** IBX cardholders (plus up to three guests) skate free (rentals not included).

- **Hero Discount:** Military and first responders skate free for themselves and three guests with valid ID (rental not included).
- **Classic Amusements:** Spin on the Ferris Wheel, play in the indoor arcade, and make family memories all season long. Plus, get dazzled by the twinkling lights of the giant holiday tree!
- **Cozy Comforts:** Snuggle up in warming cabins with flat-screen TVs or around glowing outdoor firepits for the perfect winter escape.
- **New! Jacquin's Porch Bar:** Sip your way through winter-themed cocktails and soak up the après-skate vibes at the newly branded outdoor bar.
- **Décor Glow-up:** Step into The Lodge, now shining with giant colorful disco balls, holiday trees, and elevated décor that make every visit photo-worthy.
- **Festive Eats:** Feast on Philly favorites including Crabfries, birria tacos, hot pizza, cheesesteaks, pretzels, and more.
- **Dog-Friendly:** Leashed pups welcome in all outdoor areas except The Lodge.
- **Plan Your Visit:** Check RiverRink.com for hours, tickets, and special events.

Cherry Street Pier's Artist Gift Guide & Holiday Art Show

Cherry Street Pier, 121 N. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Artist Holiday Gift Guide & Small Business Saturday | Saturday, November 29, 2025

Holiday Art Show | Friday, December 5 – Sunday, December 21, 2025

****Opening Night: December 5, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

Holiday cheer will extend to Cherry Street Pier along the Delaware River Waterfront with a Holiday Art Show, and curated gift guide from the Artist in Residence at Cherry Street Pier.

Welcoming visitors to shop local beginning Small Business Saturday – Saturday, November 29 – Cherry Street Pier artists will offer handmade gifts from Philadelphia artists who work out of their Cherry Street Pier studios and launch the 2025 Cherry Street Pier Artist Gift Guide. Shoppers and visitors to Cherry Street Pier will be able to purchase art prints and textiles, collages, jewelry, Philadelphia-centric pieces, and one-of-a-kind keepsakes from a variety of price ranges.

In addition to the Cherry Street Pier artist offerings for holiday shopping, Cherry Street Pier will welcome a Holiday Art Show, taking place from Friday, December 5, 2025 through Sunday, December 21, 2025. The Holiday Art Show will feature unique gifts, one-of-a-kind finds, and creative works from the talented Cherry Street Pier resident artists.

Opening Night of the Holiday Art Show will take place on Friday, December 5, 2025, 5 – 7 pm as part of the First Friday Series presented by Fulton Bank. It will kick off just ahead of the Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO at the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest.

HIGH-RES IMAGES:

- For high-resolution images of our parks and events, visit our media gallery: [linked here.](#)
Use password: **aidemdrwc**
- [Gift Guide Images](#)

To stay up to date on DRWC happenings throughout the year, please visit delawareriverwaterfront.com.

ABOUT DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION:

The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) is the nonprofit responsible for planning, developing, and maintaining public spaces along Philadelphia's Central Delaware River Waterfront. With a mission to create a welcoming and connected Waterfront for all, DRWC blends design, culture, and community to transform formerly industrial land into beloved public destinations. DRWC's year-round programming, parks, and trails—including Spruce Street Harbor Park, Cherry Street Pier, Race Street Pier, and the Delaware River Trail—welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Through thoughtful placemaking and strategic investment, DRWC continues to shape a vibrant waterfront that reflects the spirit of Philadelphia and strengthens its future. Learn more at delawareriverwaterfront.com.

ABOUT INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS:

[Independence Blue Cross](http://ibx.com) is the leading health insurance organization in southeastern Pennsylvania. For more than 85 years, we have been enhancing the health and well-being of the people and communities we serve. We deliver innovative and competitively priced health care products and services; pioneer new ways to reward doctors, hospitals, and other health care professionals for coordinated, quality care; and support programs and events that promote wellness. To learn more, visit ibx.com. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#). Independence Blue Cross is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

ABOUT INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK:

Produced by DRWC, the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink is Philadelphia's premier Waterfront destination for skating, tradition, and memories. For over 30 years, it has welcomed families and visitors of all ages to enjoy seasonal traditions set against the scenic backdrop of the Delaware River and the Ben Franklin Bridge. Independence Blue Cross RiverRink is open seasonally, transforming into Winterfest, a cozy, holiday-themed ice-skating retreat in the winter – and Summerfest, a lively boardwalk experience with roller skating in warmer months. As part of a larger effort to create access to the Waterfront, it is a welcoming space for all, with programs to support community access to skating and free admission for Independence Blue Cross members, the region's largest health insurer, to promote greater accessibility.

ABOUT CHERRY STREET PIER:

An incubator for creativity, community, and connection, Cherry Street Pier ("CSP") is a reimagined creative hub on the Delaware River Waterfront. Jointly serving as a year-round venue, working artist studios, and gallery space, Cherry Street Pier brings people together through art, culture, and community. Originally constructed in 1919 as Municipal Pier 9, the reimagined space honors Philadelphia's industrial Waterfront roots while showcasing the city's creative future. Stewarded and managed by DRWC, it plays a vital role in creating access to the Philadelphia urban Delaware River waterfront.

Media contacts:

Tamara Yvette Day, Signature 57
tday@signature57.com

Lauren Schmalz-Rocco, Signature 57
Lschmalz@signature57.com

###