INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST OPENS NOVEMBER 27, KICKING OFF A WEEKEND OF HOLIDAY FUN WITH FREE ZINADELPHIA CONCERT AND TREE LIGHTING ON NOVEMBER 29

MEDIA ASSETS: Download images here [Credit: Delaware River Waterfront Corporation]

PHILADELPHIA, PA (November 2, 2026) – The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation announced that tickets and reservations are now available for the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, opening for the 2026-2027 season on November 27. The announcement comes as the popular waterfront winter destination has been nominated for USA TODAY's 10BEST Readers' Choice Awards for "Best Ice Skating Rink."

Free to enter and open to the public, Winterfest invites locals and Philadelphia holiday visitors alike to enjoy outdoor ice skating, festive food and drinks, games, rides and seasonal activities beneath the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. **Guests can now reserve ice skating sessions, the Rinkside Lounge and holiday cabin rentals in advance at RiverRink.com**.

The holiday season officially kicks off with the annual **Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO on Sunday, November 29 at 6:00 p.m. headlined by Philadelphia's own Zinadelphia,** returning to Philadelphia on the Waterfront Tree Lighting stage following a European tour of her latest EP, *The Boutique*. Doors to the free celebration will open at 5:00 p.m., with Jay the Gentleman as emcee and an opening performance by the Emerald Blue a capella group from Girard Academic Music Program at 5:30 p.m., followed by Philadelphia Ska band Catbite at 6:00 p.m. **The tree will be lit at 6:55 p.m., followed by Zinadelphia's performance.**

"Our Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO is a uniquely Philadelphia tradition," said **Erika Joy Erb, Vice President of Marketing & Communications at the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation**. "From our staff selecting the tree each year to the work of our in-house team to unload, mount, light and maintain the tree throughout the season, we're proud to host a homegrown holiday experience, and look forward to welcoming the city back for another memorable season at the RiverRink."

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

Winterfest will remain open through Sunday, February 28, giving visitors the entire winter season including New Year's Eve and Valentine's Day to skate, gather and delight against the backdrop of the Ben Franklin Bridge.

WINTERFEST 2026–27 HIGHLIGHTS
Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest

Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO: The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation holiday tree is hand-picked by DRWC staff from L.R. Stutzman & Sons, LLC, Division of Yule Tree Farms in Hornell, NY. The 2026 tree is a concolor fir and is approximately 40 years old at over 45 feet tall with a circumference of 88 inches. The tree will be lit on Sunday, November 29 at 6:55 p.m.

Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest: For more than three decades, Independence Blue Cross RiverRink has been a seasonal destination on the Delaware River Waterfront. Winterfest transforms the riverfront into a winter gathering place centered around an NHL-sized outdoor ice rink with views of the Delaware River and Ben Franklin Bridge.

The beloved annual Waterfront winter tradition will open Friday, November 27 at 11:00 a.m. at 101 S. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA. Admission is free, and ice skating admission is $5 with $12 for skate rentals.

Winterfest food and beverage favorites will return for 2027 including Chickie's & Pete's, Philly Tacos, and Skelly's Amusements. New for 2027, guests can enjoy Brazilian BBQ and a dedicated s'mores station along with the expanded free fire pit area. Winterfest's festive seasonal bar will also expand to inside the skate house and arcade, so guests can enjoy the iconic retro arcade games with a refreshing drink in hand.

Independence Blue Cross members receive free skate admission for themselves and up to three guests by showing their IBX member ID card online or in person; skate rental is not included. Military personnel and first responders also receive free skate admission for themselves and up to three guests with valid ID when purchasing in person; skate rental is not included.

With limited on-site parking, visitors are encouraged to arrive via public transit, rideshare, bicycle or on foot using the Delaware River Trail.

Opening Weekend Hours

- **Friday (11/27):** 11:00 a.m.–1:00 a.m.
- **Saturday (11/28):** 11:00 a.m.–1:00 a.m.*
- **Sunday (11/29) (Holiday Tree Lighting powered by PECO):** 11:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m.

Regular Hours (November 30, 2026–February 28, 2027)

- **Monday–Thursday:** 1:00 p.m.–11:00 p.m.
- **Friday:** 1:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.*
- **Saturday:** 11:00 a.m.–1:00 a.m.*
- **Sunday:** 11:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m.

After MLK Weekend, Friday and Saturday closing time changes to **12:00 a.m. (midnight).*

Holiday Hours (December 19, 2026–January 2, 2027)

During this period, open 11:00 a.m.–1:00 a.m. daily, with the following exceptions:

- **Christmas Eve (12/24):** 1:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.
- **Christmas Day (12/25):** 1:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

- **New Year's Eve (12/31):** Special hours apply

Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest is available for **private event rentals of all sizes.** Celebrate in cozy cabins, around an outdoor fire pit or on the ice in the heated Rinkside Lounge, complete with plush seating, a private fire pit and waterfront views. For larger parties, **reserve part or all of the Lodge for groups of 15 to 360,** or host a **weekday full-site event** with everything Winterfest has to offer. Food and beverage packages, bar options, group skating rates and other enhancements make Winterfest a festive waterfront setting for celebrations of nearly any size.

Information: RiverRink.com

USA TODAY 10BEST Readers' Choice Awards Nomination for "Best Ice Skating Rink": The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation is honored for Winterfest's beloved RiverRink to be nominated as one of the nation's favorite ice-skating traditions. V**oting begins on Monday, November 2 at 12:00 p.m. EST and ends on Monday, November 30 at 11:59 a.m. EST.** The top 10 winners, as ranked by USA TODAY 10BEST readers, will be **announced on Thursday, December 3 at 12:00 p.m. EST.**

SAVE THE DATES:

Visit PA New Year's Eve Fireworks
Thursday, December 31, 2026
Celebrate New Year's Eve on the Waterfront with fireworks over the Delaware River. Additional details will be announced.

Fire & Ice Valentine's Day Party
Saturday, February 13, 2027
Winterfest's annual Valentine's weekend celebration returns in February. Additional details will be announced.

For more information about these events and additional Waterfront programming, visit DelawareRiverWaterfront.com or follow the Delaware River Waterfront on Instagram and Facebook.

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 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.

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