

Blue Cross RiverRink
Winterfest
Founding Sponsor
Independence



**PHILADELPHIA'S FAVORITE HOLIDAY TRADITIONS
RETURN AS BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST OPENS
FOR THE SEASON ON NOVEMBER 29, 2019**

Outdoor Ice Skating by the Ben Franklin Bridge, Newly Decorated Cabins, S'mores on the Fire Pits, Warming Food and Drink Specials in The Lodge, All Set in a Sparkling Winter Wonderland

PHILADELPHIA, PA (November 19, 2019) -- The holiday season is all about cozying up with friends and family to share in favorite winter traditions, and the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) is excited to announce that on Black Friday, November 29, 2019, Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest will kick off the holiday season for the 26th year with the re-opening of an iconic Philadelphia winter experience.

Opening weekend promises a kickoff to the season for the books and will include an Ice Skating Princesses Performance, Storytime in the Lodge with free cookies and hot chocolate, and Lego building.

Filled with all of Philadelphia's favorite winter traditions, including skating under the stars amidst the majestic Ben Franklin Bridge on a regulation-sized Olympic outdoor ice skating rink, sipping hot chocolate and eating comfort foods in the chalet-inspired Lodge with food and beverages from Garces Group, Chickie's and Pete's, and Franklin Fountain, the fun lasts all season long with arcade games, storytelling adventures, late night dancing, character skating, and more at this picture-perfect winter wonderland.

Now celebrating its 26th year, Blue Cross RiverRink sparkles at night from thousands of lights strung across the site, lighting that washes vibrant colors over the rink, and a majestic holiday tree dressed in tens of thousands of twinkling LEDs (over 100,000 lumens!).

"Winterfest is one of the most festive seasonal experiences for Philadelphia residents and visitors," said Joe Forkin, president of DRWC. "Thousands of people have been coming to the Waterfront for more than 25 years to ice skate with their families, eat great food, enjoy hot drinks in The Lodge, and just have a wonderful time. It's a favorite winter tradition in Philadelphia."

New this year is the design of the cabins and main Lodge. Designer Todd Marcocci of West Chester's Under The Sun Productions was tasked with reimagining each of the cabins as well as the main Lodge. Marcocci drew his inspiration from his upbringing in Western Pennsylvania and his experiences in the mountain region.

Each of the cabins has two, brand-new, hand-sewn and custom printed Independence Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest logo pillows trimmed in various winter colors. While the design aesthetic will feel new, the warmth and tradition of Winterfest remains.

The new lodge and cabin themes include:

MAIN LODGE

In the main lodge, visitors are embraced by all new soft goods that pull together familiar design elements that create the perfect winter cabin feel. The enhanced decorations are carefully contoured with trees featuring new, hand-made burlap rosettes. Countless cardinals have been incorporated into the décor to add color and texture along with pillows and plush accessories that match the cabins.

CARDINAL CABIN

The theme of this cabin was inspired by the excitement the designer experienced when his aunt would spot a cardinal in her yard during the winter season. The lush colors of red fill the cabin along with themed soft goods.

NATURE CABIN

The nature cabin was inspired by a treasured print of a farm, wagon and pine tree. The space is filled with various representations of the natural environment, along with the inspirational print.

SKI CABIN

This cabin theme was inspired by the designer's father who was an avid skier and started his son in the sport at the age of two years old. Various skis -- including a vintage set -- are positioned to compliment the theme.

SKATE CABIN

The skating themed cabin was inspired by the Independence Blue Cross RiverRink, where

thousands come each year to enjoy skating along the Delaware River. Vintage and modern skates, along with soft goods and pops of vibrant color, make this cabin an ideal place to hang out.

SNOWMAN CABIN presented by Philadelphia Magazine

Everyone loves a snowman and this cabin features different snowman-themed props along with a snowman and snow-themed soft goods.

In addition to traditional favorites, tasty treats include Village Whiskey burgers, Chickie's and Pete's famous Crab Fries, fried Oreos, S'MORES, "drinking chocolate" and more! Visitors can also enjoy drinks seasonal hot chocolate, spiked apple cider, and other warmed wintery libations while enjoying the cozy confines of the newly-decorate Lodge and cabins.

"The Blue Cross RiverRink brings people together and helps create memories that last a lifetime," said Daniel J. Hilferty, Independence Blue Cross CEO. "Independence Blue Cross is so pleased to help make this great Philadelphia tradition possible, as part of our commitment to promoting a fun and active lifestyle in the region."

And, of course, everyone's favorite traditions include all of the incredible and largely free events offered at Winterfest.

This year's annual **Holiday Tree Lighting Powered by PECO** will take place on Friday, December 6th and includes 10 acts and 28 performances that include gospel choirs, Latin ensembles, dancers, synchronized skaters, and more. Returning this year as a headlining performer to sing *O Holy Night* is The Voice, Season 14's Jackie Verna. New this year as the second headliner is America's Got Talent semi-finalist, Christina Wells, singing *I Know Where I've Been*.

"PECO is honored to share in the tradition of the Holiday Tree Lighting for the 4th year. For 25 years PECO has proudly supported DRWC's events and programs, including the PECO Multicultural Series," said PECO President and CEO Mike Innocenzo, "DRWC does an incredible job of kicking off the holiday season with a night of remarkable performances, capped off, of course, with the moment the tree lights turn on. This magical night, and lighting up the holiday season along the waterfront has become a favorite tradition of ours."

Another favorite holiday tradition for kids of every age is *Skate with Santa* which will take place every Sunday from December 21st through 22nd.

Perhaps the brightest and most festive traditions is the one that brings everyone together to say goodbye to 2019 and welcome in an exciting New Year. The **Rivers Casino New Years Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront** will light up the evening sky with two shows at 6:00 pm and Midnight. Visitors can get the best seat in the house at Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest at one (or both!) of the New Year's Eve Parties on Ice.

"Rivers Casino Philadelphia is proud to support the New Year's Eve fireworks shows along the Delaware River waterfront," said Emily Doñes, community relations manager of Rivers Casino Philadelphia. "This will be the 10th consecutive year the casino is hosting the city's traditional celebration and is the perfect way to ring in 2020."

In addition, the rink, Lodge, and cabins can be rented for holiday parties, winter get-togethers and birthday celebrations. Especially with their new designs, the warming cabins are the perfect

place to hold your next gathering. Single Cabins rent for \$75 per 90 minutes and fit 8-10 people, and Double Cottages rent for \$125 per 90 minutes and can fit up to 18 people. Parents can also be heroes when they host the ultimate ice skating birthday bash for the youngster in their lives in the Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest Kid's Lodge. Just a few feet away from the rink, this heated space features arcade games, small rides, and classics like pinball and air hockey, and is the home of the positively perfect Portside Pizza! Interested parties can email riverrink@drwc.org for more information.

MORE HAPPENINGS ON THE WATERFRONT

DRWC continues every year in its mission to program and develop the Central Delaware River Waterfront for all of Philadelphia and its visitors. By consistently producing innovative programming and design, the nonprofit provides new, authentically-Philadelphia traditions and public spaces that create a new era on the Waterfront.

To that end, the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation is thrilled to report progress and exciting new developments. Studio Zewde (Harlem, New York) is working on public engagement, site assessment, and design for the **Port Richmond Waterfront & Graffiti Pier** Planning Study project while OLIN (Philadelphia and Los Angeles, California) is tasked with the same duties for the **South Philadelphia Wetlands Park** project.

The kickoff to DRWC's new **Waterfront Arts Program** saw the docking of a 90 foot holographic, site-specific 18th-century "ghost ship" adjacent to Race Street Pier. The three dimensional light and water installation, by Romanian-based Biangle Studio enjoyed a month-long run and saw over 40,000 visitors.

Looking ahead, DRWC has announced exciting developments for its most ambitious undertaking and a keystone of the organization's Master Plan, the **Park at Penn's Landing**. This project includes the reconstruction and expansion of a new bridge over I-95 that will support a new 12-acre riverfront civic space, the extension of South Street Pedestrian Bridge, and the construction of a portion of the Delaware River Trail. Furthermore, DRWC announced a nationwide call for developers for these eleven acres of prime waterfront land.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information about programming, food and beverage options, and season details can be found in our press room. Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest high resolution photos can be downloaded via our website (password is [aidemdrwc](http://aidemdrwc.com)).

BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST SPONSORS

Winter Programming is made possible by [Independence Blue Cross](#), [Rivers Casino Philadelphia](#), [Dunkin'](#), [Visit Philadelphia](#), [NBC10](#) and [Telemundo62](#), [Liberty Coca-Cola Beverages LLC](#), and [Philadelphia Magazine](#)

ABOUT INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS

Independence Blue Cross is the leading health insurance organization in southeastern Pennsylvania. With our affiliates, we serve nearly 8 million people nationwide, including 2.5 million in the region. For 80 years, we have been enhancing the health and well-being of the people and communities we serve by delivering innovative and competitively priced health care products and services; pioneering new ways to reward doctors, hospitals, and other health care professionals for coordinated, quality care; and supporting programs and events that promote

wellness. To learn more, visit www.ibx.com. Connect with us on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#). Independence Blue Cross is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

ABOUT DRWC

DRWC is a 501(c)(3) created in January 2009, exclusively for the benefit of the City of Philadelphia and its citizens. The fundamental purpose of DRWC is to design, develop, program and maintain public amenities such as permanent and seasonal parks, trails, and streetscape improvements to transform the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia as is consistent with the goals of the Master Plan for the Central Delaware. Daily programming throughout the entire year is changing the way Philadelphians see and converse about the waterfront, and is helping to create spaces and communities that connect residents and visitors to the waterfront.

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