

Carlinville Christmas Market Foundation

The Christmas Market Foundation (CMF) was established in 2006 with this vision in mind:

"The Carlinville Christmas Market Foundation is a non-profit corporation that will produce the annual Christmas Market in Carlinville as the premier holiday event in Central Illinois. It will further support the economic development endeavors of Central Illinois, as well as its charitable activities."

Christmas Market will become more than a festival; it will be a program that supports and promotes what is exciting, enticing, and unique in Central Illinois. Attracting Midwestern guests to Carlinville and the surrounding area will help support the efforts of neighboring towns and organizations that want to showcase their special attractions.

In that same spirit of development, a percentage of the Christmas Market proceeds will be directed to deserving local charities. The community has given us its time, talent, and contributions, and now we want to give back.

Non-Profit Status

As stated in its by-laws, "The Carlinville Christmas Market Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit corporation organized to stimulate economic development and provide charitable benefit for Carlinville and the surrounding area. The Foundation's purpose will include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

- Produce the annual Carlinville Christmas Market.
- Solicit donations and bequests of money.
- Provide economic development for Macoupin County communities.
- Provide a portion of the proceeds of the Carlinville Christmas Market to various charitable organizations throughout Carlinville and Macoupin County."

The Foundation is registered with the Illinois Secretary of State's Office and the Illinois Attorney General's Office and has applied to the federal Internal Revenue Service for 501(c) (3) status.

What You Can Expect:

- Arts and crafts booths featuring the wares of talented artisans
- Food booths serving holiday favorites & hearty fare
- Street entertainers, strolling carolers, and carriage rides
- Special entertainment for children—Santa, pony rides, crafts, games
- Narrated trolley tours of historic sites
- Delightful variety of unique restaurants and gift shops
- Drama, music, and dance presentations
- Guided tours of majestic Macoupin County Courthouse and "cannonball" jail, house walk, historical museum

And a red-carpet welcome by the town that loves Christmas!



Carlinville is located midway between Springfield, IL, and St. Louis, MO. From I-55, take Exit #60 and drive approximately 12 miles west on IL Route 108 to the town square.

Photos provided courtesy of Ken Meade Photography

Visit the Annual



and experience

Small Town Holiday Magic!

Friday, Saturday, Sunday

Always the first full weekend in December in downtown

Carlinville, Illinois

The History of the Carlinville Christmas Market

Carlinville hosted its first Christmas Market on the town square in December 1990 to attract families from throughout Macoupin County with a memorable holiday festival they could afford, thoroughly enjoy, and return to each year.

At that time, there were three goals:

- To provide entertainment that embodied both the religious and the secular spirit of the Christmas season—i.e., a variety of sights, sounds, scents, and activities that made people happy they came;
- To attract talented artisans whose arts and crafts would offer shoppers variety and value;
- To extend the Market well beyond its town-square setting to include our town's businesses, churches, fraternal organizations, and residents who would not only benefit from but also plan and organize the weekend holiday festival.

From the onset, the festival's reputation spread quickly by word-of-mouth, attracting visitors and exhibitors in an ever-widening circle that today brings new and repeat visitors from throughout Illinois and neighboring states, such as Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and Wisconsin.

Christmas Market in Carlinville's historic downtown district has grown not only bigger but, most important, better. It has established itself as a celebration worth returning to year after year. Now guided by the Christmas Market Foundation, Carlinville works all year long to keep this event a can't-miss holiday tradition.

A Stroll Through the Christmas Market...

The Famous Tents

Centered in Carlinville's picturesque town square, the Market features large, heated tents that enclose arts and crafts booths with everything from handcrafted wood works to sweatshirts, from stained glass to candles, and from Christmas decorations to kitchen-fresh cookies, cakes, and candies "like grandma used to make." In the food court, there is variety fit for a full meal to dine in or take out, as well as snacks, soft drinks, coffee, soothing hot chocolate, and tangy spiced cider. It's a bustling, friendly atmosphere where you're likely to find old acquaintances and meet new friends.

The Sights, Sounds, and Activities

Emerging from the tents is like entering Brigadoon. The array of Christmas lights and decorations on the square is dazzling. The gazebo in the center of the square (on the same site as the old courthouse where Abraham Lincoln practiced law!), the surrounding trees, and the

cozy shops that line the square from corner to corner are alive with the shimmering colors of Christmas.

The bright red trolley stops for a few minutes to pick up new passengers for another narrated



Exhibitors display their merchandise in the large, heated tents.

tour of the town's historic sites. A horse-drawn carriage ambles by as its passengers exchange waves with shoppers. Across the way, strolling musicians play and carolers sing the songs of the holidays. The younger children are eager to get to the pony rides or to Santa's little red house for a visit with the jolly old list-maker.

On the Square

As you stroll the lively square, you understand why Christmas Market is so much more than its tents. It is all of downtown Carlinville. The quaint gift shops offer arts and crafts, clothing, jewelry, furniture, flowers, and accessories. Restaurants and coffee shops provide more dining choices. And nearby churches host holiday presentations and serve their own special treats.



Special exhibits take place in the magnificent "million-dollar" courthouse.



A vintage trolley transports visitors around town to other local attractions.

Off the Square

Just off the square, the majestic Macoupin County Courthouse, with its colorful past and festively decorated dome, invites visitors to take another step back in time. Enjoy a fascinating tour and special Christmas Market historical and entertainment events here. Walk across the street and tour the old "cannonball" jail, with its boast that no one ever escaped.

Less than a mile away, visitors can drive through the historic Sears Homes district, the tightest concentration of Sears Roebuck mail-order homes in the U.S. Across the way and well worth a visit, you'll find Blackburn College nestled among the trees on its beautiful campus.

You'll also want to stop by the Macoupin County Historical Society Museum (formerly known as the "haunted" Anderson Mansion) for an historic and colorful glimpse into Christmas past.

Come visit and experience the magic for yourself!

There is so much more. But don't just take our word for it. Visit our website at www.carlinvillechristmasmarket.com. Ask the people who have been here before. Talk to the exhibitors. Better yet, come see for yourself. Bring your family and friends. You're a part of our holiday tradition, and we'd love to be a part of yours!



Visitor Information

Tourism

Information on area motels and restaurants is available on the Carlinville Community Chamber of Commerce website at www.carlinvillechamber.com, via e-mail at info@carlinvillechamber.com, or by phone at 217.854.2141. The office is open Monday-Friday, from 9 am to 4 pm. A packet of literature will be mailed upon request or by visiting the Chamber office at 112 North Side Square, Carlinville IL 62626.

Christmas Market

The Market magic takes place the first full weekend in December.

Friday (3 pm - 9 pm)
Saturday (9 am - 6 pm)
Sunday (11 am - 3 pm)

For additional information, contact:

Carlinville Christmas Market
505 North Broad
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Carlinville IL 62626
Phone (answering machine): 217-854-3552
E-mail info@carlinvillechristmasmarket.com
Web site www.carlinvillechristmasmarket.com