



## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is *Winter Lights*?**

*Winter Lights* is an annual holiday light show and celebration of winter in the gardens at The North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville. Guests **walk** through displays created from thousands of lights that transform the Arboretum's grounds and gardens into a nighttime winter wonderland and festival full of family-friendly activities. *Winter Lights* offers a unique outdoor, evening experience for Arboretum guests and provides a new tradition for both local residents and visitors. **Event proceeds support Arboretum programs, exhibits and facilities year-round.**

2. **What are the dates** for the fourth annual *Winter Lights* event?

November 17 through December 31, 2017 (**every night**)

3. **What are the hours?**

Ticket holders may **enter the Arboretum property between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.** (incoming gates close promptly at 9 p.m.). The exhibit will close at 10 p.m. each evening. All guests must be off the property by 10:30 p.m.

4. **What should I wear?**

Since this is an outdoor walking experience, you should dress to stay comfortable in the cold mountain evening. A winter coat, hat, gloves and boots are recommended.

5. **How do I purchase tickets?**

All tickets must be **purchased in advance** online at [www.ncwinterlights.com](http://www.ncwinterlights.com). Standard taxes and fees apply. If you have issues with purchasing your ticket(s) online, please call the Arboretum at 828-665-2492, Monday – Sunday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

6. Will tickets be **sold on-site** at The North Carolina Arboretum?

No, all tickets are must be purchased in advance online at [www.ncwinterlights.com](http://www.ncwinterlights.com).

7. **What are service/ticket fees?**

Service fees are often included in ticketed public events and concerts like *Winter Lights* to cover costs for ticketing software and processing operations. A processing fee of \$1.50 per ticket is charged along with a 3.2% credit card fee and 7% state sales tax. ***Winter Lights* is The North Carolina Arboretum Society's largest annual event fundraiser. Proceeds generated from the event will help support the Arboretum's educational programs, exhibits and facilities year-round.**



8. **Can tickets be exchanged for another evening or refunded?**

All sales are final unless the Arboretum is closed for a weather-related emergency.  
(See Question 15 for details.)

In the event of a weather-related emergency, tickets may be exchanged for any other available night by calling the Arboretum at 828-665-2492 before 5:00 p.m. on the date of your ticket. If you are exchanging discounted Tuesday night tickets for any other night of the week, you will be charged for the difference in pricing in order to exchange your tickets. Used or expired tickets are not eligible for exchanges.

9. I have an **e-ticket** on my smart phone. Can you accept that as a printed ticket?

Yes, electronic tickets on your smart phone or your ticket printed from your home computer will be scanned by our ticketing agents.

10. Do **members** get in free?

No, this event is not included in the Arboretum's membership benefits. However, members receive a \$2 discount on every ticket purchased.

a. How do I **apply my membership discount** when purchasing my tickets?

Members must create an account or sign-in by clicking the links on the blue bar in the upper right-hand corner of the purchasing page to receive their discount. All member discounts will be applied on the next page – the cart/ticket order page.

b. Can I purchase a **membership** when I buy my *Winter Lights* tickets?

Yes, you may purchase or renew your membership online when purchasing tickets, and you will receive the discounted ticket price available to current members (see Question 10a to learn about applying membership discounts).

11. Will there be a discounted **group** ticket rate?

Yes. Discounted group rates of \$15 per ticket are available for parties of 20 or more. Members purchasing group tickets receive a \$2 discount on every ticket purchased. Anyone over age four entering the event must have a ticket. All tickets must be purchased in advance online at [www.ncwinterlights.com](http://www.ncwinterlights.com).

12. I haven't purchased my tickets yet. How do I know if the event is **sold out**?

The number of tickets for each night is limited. We strongly encourage you to buy your tickets early, especially if you are interested in attending on a Tuesday, Friday or Saturday evening, or during the week of Christmas, as these evenings are likely to sell out. If an evening is sold out, there will be a notification on the ticket page. Please visit [www.ncwinterlights.com](http://www.ncwinterlights.com) for updates on ticket availability or check the Arboretum's Twitter and Facebook pages for important event announcements.

13. How long does it take to **walk** through the exhibit?

You may stay for the entire evening if you like, but typically, most guests will take **1.5 to 2 hours** to see everything.

14. What if I have a **stroller or wheelchair**? Is it **handicapped accessible**?

Yes, but some limitations may apply. In the event of snow, paths will be shoveled and salted to increase accessibility.

15. Do you have **trams** or other public transportation?

No. The exhibit is designed for pedestrian traffic only.



16. What do you do in the event of **inclement weather**?

The Arboretum's practice is to remain open in the event of rain or snow. During such weather, some *Winter Lights* exhibit features may not be operating, such as Rocky Cove Railroad and the s'mores fire pits. Ticketholders are still welcome to use their tickets and enter *Winter Lights*, but there will be no refund or ticket exchange after the ticket has been scanned. You also have the option of exchanging your ticket for any other available night by calling the Arboretum at 828-665-2492 before 5:00 p.m. on the date of your ticket. (Please see Question 8 for additional details on ticket exchanges.) Used or expired tickets are not eligible for exchanges.

The Arboretum's Executive Director may elect to close the Arboretum in event of a weather emergency that would prohibit the exhibit from being held. Any closures will be announced by 3:00 p.m. on the Arboretum's website and Facebook/Twitter pages, unless circumstances develop later on that warrant a closing after the exhibit opens. Should the Arboretum close, ticket holders may choose to receive a refund of the ticket price or exchange the ticket for a different night by calling 828-665-2492, Monday – Sunday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., or e-mailing [winterlights@ncarboretum.org](mailto:winterlights@ncarboretum.org).

17. Do you have **food or beverages** available?

Yes, the Savory Thyme Café will be offering snacks and dinner options. The Arboretum will also have warm beverages and s'mores kits for sale, and supervised fire pits will be available.

18. Will **alcoholic beverages** be available?

Yes, the Savory Thyme Café will have beer, wine and cider available for purchase in certain designated areas. Guests that attempt to bring alcohol outside designated areas will be immediately asked to dispose of their beverage. If a guest does not comply with these rules, the Arboretum has the right to ask the guest to leave and their ticket will not be refunded.

**Please note: No outside food, beverages or alcohol are allowed on property** (see Question 19).

19. **Can I bring my own food, beverages or alcohol?**

No. Guests may not bring their own food, beverages or alcohol to the exhibit.

20. **Can I carry my backpack with me through *Winter Lights*?**

No. Backpacks or oversized carrying bags are not allowed in the venue. Large bags may be subject to search or required to be left in vehicles at the discretion of the Arboretum's Campus Police.

21. **I have a concealed weapons permit. Can I bring my weapon to the exhibit?**

No. The use or possession of any weapons is prohibited on The North Carolina Arboretum Campus. It is a violation of state law (N.C.G.S. 14.269.2).

22. **Are pets welcome?**

No. Due to the number of visitors expected each evening, we cannot accommodate pets. Service animals, as permitted by law, are welcome.

23. **Will there be a photo opportunity with Santa?**

No, but there will be several seasonal photo opportunities in the garden.



24. **How do I get to the Arboretum? (Directions)**

*Most GPS units do not correctly identify the Arboretum's location within the Bent Creek Experimental Forest, therefore we do not recommend the use of a GPS device for navigation to the Arboretum. The best address to use for a GPS device is: 20 Frederick Law Olmsted Way, Asheville, N.C. 28806*

- a. **The Blue Ridge Parkway** Exit at mile marker 393 there are signs on the Parkway for NC Arboretum, Hwy. 191 and Interstate 26. On the exit ramp, the entrance to the Arboretum is immediately on the left (before Hwy. 191 and traffic light).
- b. **Hendersonville** (traveling Brevard Road / Hwy. 191) Take Hwy. 191 North to Blue Ridge Parkway. After passing under Blue Ridge Parkway bridge, turn left at traffic light. The Blue Ridge Parkway ramp continues to the left and the Arboretum entrance is immediately on the right.
- c. **Asheville Regional Airport** Interstate 26 West (travel North toward Asheville), approximately seven miles. Take Exit 33 (old Exit #2) - marked Blue Ridge Parkway-Brevard Road-Hwy. 191). Turn right at the top of the ramp (South) onto Hwy. 191. Travel South on Hwy. 191 for approximately 2.1 miles (pass Asheville Outlets). Look for brown signs for Blue Ridge Parkway and NC Arboretum. Turn right at light and entrance to The North Carolina Arboretum, main entrance is ahead on right.
- d. **Downtown Asheville** Interstate 240 West (soon to be I-26 East, both signs may be present), which merges into Interstate 26 East. Take Exit 33 (marked Blue Ridge Parkway-Brevard Road-Hwy. 191). Turn left (South) onto Hwy. 191. Travel South on Hwy. 191 for approximately 2.1 miles (pass Asheville Outlets). Look for brown signs for Blue Ridge Parkway and NC Arboretum. Turn right at light and entrance to The North Carolina Arboretum, main entrance is ahead on right.
- e. **Eastbound I-40** Merge right into Interstate 26 East. Take Exit 33 (marked Blue Ridge Parkway-Brevard Road-Hwy 191). Turn left (south) onto Hwy. 191. Travel South on Hwy. 191 for approximately 2.1 miles (pass Asheville Outlets). Look for brown signs for Blue Ridge Parkway and NC Arboretum. Turn right at light and entrance to The North Carolina Arboretum, main entrance is ahead on right.
- f. **Westbound I-40** Merge left onto Interstate 26 East. Take Exit 33 (marked Blue Ridge Parkway-Brevard Road-Hwy 191). Turn left (south) onto Hwy. 191. Travel South on Hwy. 191 for approximately 2.1 miles (pass Asheville Outlets). Look for brown signs for Blue Ridge Parkway and NC Arboretum. Turn right at light and entrance to The North Carolina Arboretum, main entrance is ahead on right.

25. **Where do I park?**

As you enter the Arboretum property, a gate attendant will direct you to the parking area at the top of the hill. Parking attendants will direct you to available parking spaces.

26. **Can I drop off / pick up a ticketed guest?**

The North Carolina Arboretum does not allow anyone under age 16 on property without an accompanying adult. You may drop off or pick up guests 16 and over—who already have a ticket for the night's event—by obtaining a pass at the gatehouse. Please note, if you are using a transportation service, such as a taxi, Uber or Lyft, your ride must pick you up no later than 9 p.m. before the entrance gates close.

27. **What happens in the event of a power outage?**

In the event of a power outage, staff and volunteers will have flashlights and will help direct you out of the garden. Campus police will have lights to help guide you in the parking areas. Arboretum buildings also have emergency generators and basic emergency lighting. In the



event that the power outage lasts longer than 60 minutes, the event will close for the evening (see Question 16 regarding event refunds).

**28. Are there other exhibits at the Arboretum during *Winter Lights*?**

Yes. The Arboretum is hosting *Wicked Plants: The Exhibit*, **on display through January 7, 2018, inside the Baker Exhibit Center**. Inspired by author Amy Stewart's best-selling book, "Wicked Plants: The Weed that Killed Lincoln's Mother & Other Botanical Atrocities," this fun-filled, family-friendly exhibit gives visitors a safe, hands-on experience with some of the world's most harmful plants and diabolical botanicals. Set inside a Victorian-era ramshackle home, visitors roam from room to room and learn about various poisonous plants that may be lurking in one's own home or backyard.

**29. Are there **volunteer opportunities** available at *Winter Lights*?**

YES! The Arboretum is looking for volunteers to help with a variety of indoor and outdoor jobs, including greeting and directing visitors, assisting with family crafts, operating the G-scale model train and more. *Must be 18 or older to volunteer*. Orientations will be offered in early November. Volunteer applications are available at [www.ncarboretum.volunteerhub.com](http://www.ncarboretum.volunteerhub.com). For more information about volunteering, please contact [volunteering@ncarboretum.org](mailto:volunteering@ncarboretum.org) or 828-665-2492 x219.

