



For Immediate Release
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Make the Holidays Shine with an Island Escape

Tree lightings, artisan fairs, and an Island Nutcracker bring good cheer to the San Juan Holiday Season

San Juan Islands, WA ... "What's this? There's color everywhere. What's this? There's white things in the air. What's this? Good feelings everywhere?"* Although it rarely snows, island holidays are as magical here as in Tim Burton's mythical Christmas Town. It's a perfect time to get away from nightmare parking lots and cookie-cutter chain stores. This season, celebrate with a winter forest hike or walk on a stormy beach, a great meal by the fire, and holiday spirit with friends old and new.

In the Islands, Santa arrives by ship instead of sleigh, and shoppers can shop small instead of mall. Holiday [gifts](#) mean so much more when they are made by someone you know. And in the San Juan Islands, it's easy to meet the artisans who create the art, crafts, foods and more. Discover their work at old-fashioned holiday artisan fairs that harken back to Europe, farmers' markets, and in local shops.

For something festive and refreshingly non-commercial: The **Dance of the Elders** on December 11th in Friday Harbor is an annual evening celebration by our local Hispanic community. Starting at 5:00 p.m., a statue of the Virgin of Guadalupe is carried up Spring Street accompanied by the Hispanic dancing group Ballet Folklorica. The women dress up in ribbon-strewn folk costumes, the men hunch over, wear old man masks and sport canes, but their feet do lively tap dancing just the same. On the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the next evening, a 5 pm mass is held in Spanish, accompanied by a mariachi band. It's followed by a small Fiesta at 6:30 p.m. with food, music, and dancing. All are welcome.

From Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, a festive lineup of [Holiday Events and Specials](#) offer plenty of ways to keep friends and families busy, from holiday plays and concerts to wine tastings and dinners, special restaurant and lodging packages, and more. Three tree lighting ceremonies in Eastsound Village Green, Lopez Village, and Friday Harbor will brighten up the chilly nights, with carolers, cookies, hot cider, and good cheer. Escape the mainland's rush and discover island time.

Friday Harbor/San Juan Island Events:

November 30, [Island Lights Festival](#)
December 7-8 [Salish Sea Nutcracker Ballet](#)
December 11-12 Dance of the Elders/Feast of Guadalupe
December 14, [Brickworks Old-Fashioned Christmas Market](#)

Lopez Island Events:

November 29, [Lopez Village Holiday Lighting & Gathering](#)
November 30, [Lopez Preschool Annual Holiday Bazaar](#)

Orcas Island Events:

November 29-30, [Eastsound Art Walk](#)
December 6, [Eastsound Holiday Celebration & Tree Lighting](#)

December 7-8, [Eastsound Artisan's Faire](#)

*lyrics from "What's This?" in Tim Burton's film "Nightmare Before Christmas."

Additional holiday events and specials, as they are added, may be found at <http://www.visitsanjuans.com/holiday>. Find more suggestions for a [Cozy Island Holiday](#) on our [San Juan Islands Experiences](#) section at www.visitsanjuans.com.

Holiday photos may be found in Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fjqg44t9efw6hb8/AAAYTN2xs56DhlxASf-VixHQa?dl=0>

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