

# Sinterklaas!

## Send off Celebration in Kingston



It's the most wonderful time of the year! Get into the spirit at one of these winter holiday events - Santa may even make a guest appearance!

On Saturday, November 24 the **Sinterklass! Send-off Celebration** will begin in Kingston, NY. The festivities will continue the next Saturday, December 1 in Rhinebeck, NY at the **Sinterklaas Festival Day**.



The Sinterklaas Festivities draw on the Hudson Valley's Dutch heritage, but with some modern day twists. Children are the focus - becoming kings and queens for the day, turning the switches of the original story into royal scepters. Children make scepters and crowns for themselves at the Crowns and Branches workshops.

"But it can't be about the wanting and having, either," says creator Jeanne Flemming, "They each have to tie wishes into their branch - one for the community, one for the family, one for the world. They understand their responsibility to be a good king or queen."

Kingston's Sinterklaas is an interfaith and intercultural holiday tradition that unifies the neighborhoods of the city through creativity - mixing history, fable and fantasy to inspire imaginations and participation of all ages. They will be showcasing a variety of artists and makers from the community to celebrate the wonderfully rich maritime and immigrant history of the Rondout.

Sinterklaas departs from the historic Kingston Waterfront (aka "Spain") after a full day of open houses, musical performances, workshops creating beautiful crowns and branches, and a Children's Maritime Parade down Broadway, with stars and puppets galore. Kingston sends off Sinterklaas and his white horse on a tugboat across the river to his destination there. The send off will culminate with a shadow puppet show celebrating Kingston's folklore maritime history and plenty of specials at all of the local restaurants.

Free activities for the whole family will begin at noon and the parade will take place at dusk along Broadway in the Rondout.

Stay tuned and in the know for all things Sinterklaas. Follow us on Instagram and Facebook for more!

**Arm of the Sea at The Maritime Museum Boat Barn** 12pm, 1pm, & 2pm - Don't Miss! Incredible handmade puppet shows throughout the day.

**Crowns & Branches Workshop at The Maritime Museum Barn** Noon-3:00pm - Children are the heart of Sinterklaas: they are Kings and Queens for the day. Make sure they get a chance to make their crown and adorn their branches for the parade.  
**Sinterklaas Welcome Center and Silent Auction**, 37 Broadway Noon- 4:00pm - Information. Buy your stars. Shop the silent auction benefiting Kingston Sinterklaas.

**Trolley Rides at the T.R. Gallo Park** Noon, 1:00pm, 2:00pm - Enjoy a scenic trolley ride out to Kingston Point Park, leaves on the hour, 45 minute trip. 1pm & 2pm Rides will feature a public reading of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*

**Hudson River Maritime Museum**, 50 Rondout Landing Noon-3:00pm - Exhibits and gift shop open to the public

**Trolley Museum of New York**, 89 E Strand Noon-3:00pm - Exhibits and gift shop open to the public

**Storytime at the Reher Center**, 99 Broadway 3pm- 4:00pm - Karen Pillsworth shares Hanukkah and Reher Bakery stories, cider & cookies

**Kingston Waterfront Businesses** Noon -5:00pm - Enjoy discounts, open houses and free refreshments in businesses up and down Broadway - and get a good start on your holiday shopping!

**Storefront Gallery Show** Noon-5:00pm - View work celebrating this year's honored animal, The Butterfly

**Fruition Hot Chocolate Bar in the Hops Petunia Courtyard** Noon - 4:00pm - Tastings and hot chocolate for sale!

**Belgium Waffle Cart** at Kingston Wine Co Noon -5:00pm - Step on up and enjoy a delicious hot Belgium waffle and wine tasting with Kingston Wine Co.

**Facets of Earth, Whole Clarity and Local Artisan Bakery Pop-Up**, 22 Broadway Noon - 4:00pm - Enjoy fresh baked goods!

**Enchanted Cakes**, 23 W Strand Noon - 4:00pm - Cookie Decorating!

**Hetta Glogg & Eggnog**, 85 Broadway Noon-5:00pm - Enjoy warm glogg, spiked eggnog and Dala Horse Ornaments.

**Milne Antiques**, 81 Broadway Noon-5:00pm - Open house and free refreshments.

**Zephyr Open House**, 35 Broadway Noon-5:00pm - Open house and free refreshments.

**Children's Maritime Parade** - Beginning at Broadway & Garraghan Dr 4:00pm - Accompany Sinterklaas amid fluttering butterflies, a flotilla of boats, star lanterns, outrageous otters and more. Follow along with your Crowns & Branches to water's edge.

**Sinterklaas Send-Off & Shadow Puppet Spectacle** - at T.R. Gallo Park 4:45pm - NEW this year - Don't Miss! Stick around for the spectacle immediately following the end of the parade featuring Liz Howlz famous shadow puppets. A show that will depict various stages of Kingston's development.

When the early Dutch settlers came to America, they brought with them their venerated old bishop, St. Nicholas and their favorite holiday, Sinterklaas. Indeed, the Dutch explorers dedicated their first church on the island of Manhattan, in 1642, to Sinterklaas. When the British took control of New Amsterdam in 1664, they merged Sinterklaas with their Father Christmas - the merry, roly-poly, Falstaffian figure in high boots.

Over the next few generations, Sinterklaas found his way into American literature. In 1809, writer Washington Irving (a man who lived not far from Rhinebeck) created a jolly Sinterklaas for his popular *Knickerbocker Tales*. Then in 1822, an Episcopal priest named Clement Moore (who also lived near to Rhinebeck) wrote "A Visit from St. Nicholas" which featured a jolly old elf, his descent down a chimney on Christmas Eve, and a sleigh drawn by eight tiny reindeer. The Father Christmas image stuck, but he acquired a new name-Santa Claus - a direct derivation from Sinterklaas.

Today, in the Hudson Valley, we celebrate Sinterklaas in both traditional and new ways. We move away from the commercial Santa and back to the wonders that began the legend - The Good King, the Noble Soul, the one who brings light out of darkness, befriends children and animals, and inspires our souls.

What is the meaning of the Crowns and Branches that are made by and carried by the Children in the Parade? Since St. Nicholas loved children so much, it makes sense on his name day, that children - who at all other times of the year are the least powerful people in the society - are turned into the most powerful for just one day. Children are crowned kings and queens!

The birch rod - the threatening instrument of the Grampus - in our Sinterklaas story is transformed by the power imagination and art into a symbol of empowerment and love to become the Branch - the Royal Scepter - a symbol of creative power in the hands of today's children.

The rods are turned to Royal Scepters and the Children are crowned royalty for the day!

There will be workshops in both Kingston and Rhinebeck for children to create their Crowns and Branches at the Crowns & Branches Workshop at The Maritime Museum Barn Noon-3:00pm.

Hundreds of beautiful branches will be laid out alongside lots of beautiful, glittery, and fanciful materials-jewels, ribbons, glitter, lace, streamers-with which the children can create their royal garb! At the end of the day each child has a scepter to carry in the Parades and to take home. Each child will be asked to tie 3 WISHES onto their branch - one for family, for community and for the World.

And in the same location, is the Wish Ladies, who help children make their wishes.

The STARS are a unique addition we've made to the Sinterklaas celebrations. These STARS make families, friends, and relations the active myth makers of our community and its future!

From the moment you take possession of your star, you assume a key role in a community ritual. On the last Saturday in November, carry your stars in the Maritime Children's Parade in Kingston as you see Sinterklaas off for his trip to Holland.

On the first Saturday of December, carry your stars in the Children's Starlight Parade in Rhinebeck. Hundreds of your neighbors, friends, and family join in an illuminated pageant through the heart of town.

A gathering constellation lights the path for the many children who, bedecked with their crowns and branches, are the honored Kings and Queens of the Day. At the end of the procession, everyone gathers for the final ritual of the pageant. The Master of Ceremonies calls upon all those present to honor our children, our hope for the future, our joy of today.

He asks you to bow down on one knee to the children and hold your STAR at the children's waist level, elevating the children on a sea of stars above everyone in the community. Then you are asked to stand again and raise your star above your heads - thus placing you, the children and the entire community in its proper place in the firmament - all of us as one and at peace under the stars. And you can bring your star back next year, adding to an ever-expanding universe of stars, helping to nurture a Rhinebeck tradition.

This year the STARS are available online and at select stores in Rhinebeck and Kingston, including on the festival days.

### THE HAVDALAH

Just before the Children's Starlight Parade begins in Rhinebeck, a special ceremony, havdalah, takes place at the foot of the hill on West Market Street. Led by the children and folks from the Rhinebeck Hebrew School and Temple Emmanuel, this beautiful Jewish Ceremony marks the end of the Jewish Sabbath and opens up the secular time of The Sinterklaas Parade. The Havdalah Ceremony weaves together all of our community in a web of interdependence, symbolized by intertwined candles.

After the Parade the beginning of the Christian Sabbath starts with the Living Nativity at the Reformed Church.