



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS IN OLD TOWN ON DEC. 14 AND 15

--Celebrate the Season in 1800s-style with Family-Friendly Events All Weekend --

Bonfires, piñata parties, gingerbread houses, the 63rd-annual Las Posadas procession and other holiday-themed activities will bring a festive air to Old Town San Diego State Historic Park during the second weekend of December.

On Saturday, Dec. 14, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park hosts Holiday in the Park. All of the museums, stores and restaurants in the park will be open and richly decorated. Guests will enjoy special holiday treats, activities and extended shopping hours, along with strolling carolers until 8:30 p.m. Special holiday hay rides will be also offered by horse-drawn carriage around the park until dusk.

Attendees will have the chance to see more than 20 gingerbread houses spread throughout Old Town San Diego State Historic Park shops and museums. The park will be offering tours of the most impressive creations at 1, 3 and 5 p.m. Visitors should meet at the Robinson-Rose Visitor Center 15 minutes before the tour is scheduled. The tour will conclude with a live performance of Hansel and Gretel by state park interpretative staff in the newly restored schoolhouse.

Saturday night will be capped off with a crackling bonfire in the middle of the park with free s'mores and hot chocolate, sponsored by Fiesta de Reyes. Carolers dressed in period attire will lead the crowd in a traditional sing-a-long of holiday songs around the fire until 9 p.m.

The highlight of the event will be the "Winter Workshop," formerly the El Fandango Restaurant, which will feature crafts such as cornucopias, wrapped peanuts, popcorn-cranberry garland making, and dried fruit decorations from noon to 4 p.m. The Wells Fargo Museum will also be hosting a free letter-writing station where people of all ages can send a letter to anyone, including Santa Claus.

Sunday's festivities are kicked off with a visit from a very special guest at Casa de Reyes' Brunch Olé!, a traditional Mexican brunch with live entertainment every Sunday from 9 a.m. to noon in the lush garden plaza. Guests will get to meet with the Big Man

himself, Santa Claus, from 10 a.m. to noon. Entrees for Santa's brunch are priced at \$6.45 to \$9.95 each and kids 12 and under are \$4.95.

The beloved Las Posadas procession is hosted on Sunday, Dec. 15. This centuries-old tradition is being celebrated in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park for the 63rd consecutive year. The Park Merchants Association and Write Out Loud reenact the biblical journey of Mary and Joseph through the town of Bethlehem. The event begins at 2 p.m. with a musical pre-show in the state park, with the live theatrical procession starting promptly at 5 p.m. A piñata party, sponsored by RUST General Store and Wallach and Goldman, and bonfire, sponsored by Fiesta de Reyes, will follow at 6 p.m.

Fiesta de Reyes, Old Town San Diego State Park, Write Out Loud, and the Old Town Historic State Park Merchants Association are sponsoring these events. There is free parking available in the Caltrans parking lot on Taylor Street in Old Town all day on weekends. For more information about any of these events, visit oldtownmexicanfood.com or call 619-297-3100.

###