



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**STAR-STUDED PERFORMANCES LIGHT UP THE 33RD ANNUAL
WINTRUST MAGNIFICENT MILE LIGHTS FESTIVAL®**
Featuring iconic acts: the Former Ladies of Chic, Cameo and Quad City DJ's

WHAT: The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® features a mile-long parade, celebrity performances, and The Wintrust Fireworks Spectacular, making it one of the most anticipated holiday events in Chicago.

WHERE: Lights Festival Lane: Pioneer Court, 401 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago
Parade Route: South on North Michigan Ave. from Oak St. to Wacker Dr.,
East on Wacker Dr. to Upper Columbus
Fireworks Display: North Michigan Ave. and the Chicago River

WHEN: Saturday, November 23, 2024
11am–4pm CST: Lights Festival Lane
5:30pm–7:30pm CST: Parade and Wintrust Fireworks Spectacular

COST: FREE | Activities are free and open to the public

WEBSITE: TheMagnificentMile.com

CHICAGO, IL – The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® is back for its 33rd annual celebration, bringing new talent, larger-than-ever balloons, and exciting performances to downtown Chicago. The event features the largest evening parade in the U.S. and marks the official start of the holiday season in Chicago.

On Saturday, November 23, 2024, this mile-long celebration will thrill attendees from morning to night with live music, musical celebrity appearances, festive entertainment, and the grand debut of Muppet-themed balloons, including a towering 60-foot Santa Kermit The Frog and his pal Animal.

This year's festival will feature grand marshals Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse from *Walt Disney World*® Resort, alongside a lineup of fresh performances and interactive experiences sure to delight audiences of all ages. With one million lights illuminating over 200 trees along North Michigan Avenue, the parade attracts up to one million spectators each year. The parade will air on ABC7 Chicago on Sunday, November 24th, from 6-7pm, with on-demand access throughout the holidays at abc7chicago.com, and will also be syndicated in over 200 markets across the U.S. and Canada, hosted by Cheryl Burton, Ryan Chiaverini, Judy Hsu, and Hosea Sanders.

MUSICAL TALENT

This year's festival promises to elevate the holiday spirit with star-studded performances along the parade route:

- Iconic disco group and the Former Ladies of **Chic** will perform their hits "Le Freak" and "Good Times"
- American soul-influenced funk band **Cameo** will perform "Word Up!" and "Candy"
- The Wintrust Express will feature 90s Miami bass duo **Quad City DJ's** performing their major hits "C'mon N' Ride It (The Train)" and "Space Jam" along with the **Wintrust Mascot Party**, featuring our favorite mascots from various professional Chicago and Milwaukee sports teams and Illinois' own 2024 Olympic Gold Medalists **Shemier Little** (track and field) and **Alexa Knierim** (figure skating).

- Enjoy Illinois' float will feature Chicago Blackhawks Official Game **DJ Lee Michaels** along with **The Pack Drumline**, from *America's Got Talent*, and the Enjoy Illinois mascot, **Big Lincoln**.
- Choose Chicago will highlight the 40th anniversary of House Music with a performance from **DJ Chip E**.

PARADE HIGHLIGHTS

Along the parade route, guests can look forward to seeing floats from *Walt Disney World*® Resort and Santa Claus including:

- **Mickey Mouse** and **Minnie Mouse** from *Walt Disney World*® Resort will lead the parade, illuminating N. Michigan Ave. from a reimagined holiday float.
- Iconic Disney characters, including **Buzz Lightyear, Woody, Anna, Elsa, Tiana, and Belle**, will make special appearances on themed floats.
- The debut of Muppet balloons, including 60-foot tall **Santa Kermit The Frog** and his pal **Animal**.
- The event will culminate with **Santa Claus** arriving on Wintrust's Grand Finale float, followed by the Wintrust Fireworks Spectacular over the Chicago River. Santa will be escorted by the all new 2025 Kia Carnival HEV and K4 vehicles.

The parade will also feature a host of marching bands and special groups from across the country, including:

- Loveland High School Band (Ohio) – 90 members
- Pearl City High School Band (Hawaii) – 100 members
- Greendale High School Band (Wisconsin) – 200 members
- Smiths Station High School Band (Alabama) – 150 members
- Beaver Creek High School Band (Ohio) – 200 members
- Crystal Lake Strikers Drumline (Crystal Lake, IL) – 25 members
- Petoskey Steel Drum Band (Michigan) – Returning thanks to sponsorship from HDR

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Make The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® a full holiday weekend! Enjoy exclusive hotel packages, festive dining experiences, and holiday shopping all throughout The Magnificent Mile district. Be sure to download The Magnificent Mile Holiday Guide for special offers and holiday experiences. Exceptional hotel packages are available at top properties like The Langham, Chicago, and Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park. Find more details at [TheMagnificentMile.com](https://www.themagnificentmile.com).

PHOTOS + SOCIAL CHANNELS

Photo and B-Roll Link: [here](#).

Official Hashtag: #WintrustLightsFest | Facebook: The Magnificent Mile ([Facebook.com/MagnificentMile](https://www.facebook.com/MagnificentMile))

X: @TheMagMile | Instagram: @TheMagMile | Website: [TheMagnificentMile.com](https://www.themagnificentmile.com)

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ABOUT THE WINTRUST MAGNIFICENT MILE LIGHTS FESTIVAL®

For thirty-three years, The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® has been an exciting and joy-filled holiday celebration. The centerpiece is the largest nighttime parade in the United States. Led by Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse of *Walt Disney World*® Resort, the spectacular 2024 parade down North Michigan Avenue will feature fabulous floats with beloved characters Buzz Lightyear and Woody, Anna and Elsa, Tiana and Belle, marching bands from across the country, musical celebrities, Santa Claus, The Wintrust Fireworks Spectacular, and one million lights illuminating The Magnificent Mile's 200+ trees. Special surprises, including a brilliant new lighting spectacle along the parade route near the Chicago River, are planned for our 2024 event thanks to a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and Enjoy Illinois. Save the date for this year's event on Saturday, November 23, 2024! Come feel the magic of this dazzling holiday parade, brought to you by Wintrust, and presented by Enjoy Illinois, Chicagoland Kia Dealers and Dunkin'. For more information, visit www.themagnificentmile.com.

ABOUT THE MAGNIFICENT MILE ASSOCIATION

Organizer of The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival®, The Magnificent Mile Association is a private, non-profit membership organization with a mission of preserving, promoting, and enhancing one of Chicago's most unique neighborhoods. The organization's members include retailers, hotels, restaurants, popular attractions, and commercial, institutional and residential properties. For more information, visit www.themagnificentmileassociation.com.

ABOUT WALT DISNEY WORLD® RESORT

Walt Disney World® Resort, The Most Magical Place on Earth, is a contiguous, nearly 40-square-mile, world-class entertainment and recreation destination featuring four theme parks (Magic Kingdom Park, EPCOT, Disney's Hollywood Studios and Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park); two water adventure parks (Disney's Blizzard Beach Water Park and Disney's Typhoon Lagoon Water Park); more than 25 resort hotels; 63 holes of golf on four championship courses; two full-service spas; Disney's Wedding Pavilion; ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex; and Disney Springs, a shopping-dining-entertainment complex. Located in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., 20 miles southwest of Orlando, *Walt Disney World*® Resort opened Oct. 1, 1971.

ABOUT WINTRUST

Wintrust is a financial holding company with approximately \$62 billion in assets whose common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market. Guided by its "Different Approach, Better Results" philosophy, Wintrust offers the sophisticated resources of a large bank while providing a community banking experience to each customer. Wintrust operates more than 200 retail banking locations through 16 community bank subsidiaries in the greater Chicago, southern Wisconsin, west Michigan, northwest Indiana, and southwest Florida market areas. In addition, Wintrust operates various non-bank business units, providing residential mortgage origination, wealth management, commercial and life insurance premium financing, short-term accounts receivable financing/outsourced administrative services to the temporary staffing services industry, and qualified intermediary services for tax-deferred exchanges. For more information, please visit www.wintrust.com

ABOUT ENJOY ILLINOIS AND THE ILLINOIS OFFICE OF TOURISM

The Illinois Office of Tourism leads tourism industry efforts to inspire visitation to, and within Illinois, resulting in significant economic impact and quality-of-life benefits for all Illinois residents. We are committed to making Illinois a model of inclusivity and celebration of diversity. Illinois is a state that embodies innovation, craft, surprise and creativity. Whether domestic and international visitors are traveling for business or leisure, the Illinois Office of Tourism is their trusted guide in crafting an unforgettable experience. To learn more, visit EnjoyIllinois.com.

ABOUT DUNKIN'

Dunkin', founded in 1950, is the largest coffee and donuts brand in the United States, with more than 13,700 restaurants in nearly 40 global markets. Dunkin' is part of the Inspire Brands family of restaurants. For more information, visit DunkinDonuts.com and InspireBrands.com.

ABOUT KIA

Visit your Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana Kia dealer for great deals on your next new Kia. Visit Kia.com, Kia, Movement that Inspires.