

Harbourfront centre

Harbourfront Centre unveils its winter programming with a tree lighting ceremony and the return of waterfront skating

Harbourfront Centre's 50th anniversary winter programming showcases a festive holiday market, KUUMBA's 30th anniversary, the Ontario Science Centre's KidSpark experience, New Year's Eve fireworks and more

November 21, 2024 (Toronto, ON) – Harbourfront Centre is delighted to kick off the winter season with the inaugural tree lighting ceremony and the highly anticipated return of skating.

The season launches with a tree lighting gathering at the Public Square on Friday, November 29, from 6 p.m. onwards, with the tree lighting at 7 p.m. It will feature an immersive performance by [FreePlay](#) — the musical duo of internationally recognized vocalists, Suba Sankaran and Dylan Bell — who will bring their unique blend of technical brilliance and rich, multicultural storytelling to classic holiday tunes for attendees to enjoy.

The 33-foot tree will be the centrepiece of **Winterfest Toronto**, a holiday market in partnership with [Street Eats](#) running on weekends from **November 29 to January 5**, complete with hot chocolate, gløgg (mulled wine) at the The Uller House, train rides for kids, music, a holiday food market and marketplace and an urban tree lot.

Harbourfront Centre is also pleased to announce the **return of the ice rink and skating** with complimentary skate rentals on Saturdays, thanks to the [Waterfront BIA](#). Opening Saturday, **December 21 and continuing through March**, visitors and neighbours can enjoy picturesque lakefront skating, which also includes fire pits, and **DJ Skate Nights** on Saturdays, making it a perfect backdrop for quality time with loved ones.

“There’s nothing more magical than carving memories into the ice, surrounded by the iconic skyline that makes Torontonians proud to call this city home. We are delighted that ice skating has returned to Harbourfront Centre as it evokes a sense of nostalgia while providing a foundation for fresh festive programming,” said Cathy Loblaw, CEO of Harbourfront Centre. “We are grateful for the support from the City of Toronto and Deputy Mayor, Ausma Malik, and look forward to watching residents and visitors embrace winter at Harbourfront Centre.”

Bringing families together, Harbourfront Centre is excited to welcome the **Ontario Science Centre's** popular **KidSpark**, the dynamic learn-through-play space for kids ages 10 and under. Running **December 4 to May 4**, KidSpark will offer the Centre's science-packed, family-friendly fun filled with hands-on exploration and discovery. Shop in a pretend supermarket, take a simulated fishing trip with Ontario wildlife and get stuffed animals X-rayed in an imaginary office, plus some new surprises.

"We are proud to partner with Toronto's premiere science museum to bring fan favourites to Harbourfront Centre," said Loblaw. "There is real chemistry with this partnership, and our campus is an ideal gathering place for the community to experience the richness of arts, culture and now, science. We couldn't be more excited to welcome them to the heart of the waterfront."

This February also marks the 30th anniversary of Harbourfront Centre's legacy program, **KUUMBA** and **KUUMBA 365**, Toronto's largest and longest-running Black Futures festival. Presented by TD Bank Group through its Corporate Citizenship platform, the TD Ready Commitment, the festival presents a vibrant, multidisciplinary programming lineup of free and ticketed events. From live dance and musical performances to engaging panel discussions and wellness workshops, **KUUMBA30 (February 1-28)** will spark dialogue honouring Black culture's richness and diversity, showcasing the creativity, talent and stories that shape the community.

With support from the Government of Canada and the City of Toronto, Harbourfront Centre continues to honour its landmark 50th anniversary. Its 2024/2025 winter programming aims to extend the celebrations into the holidays, inviting people to come together and revel in the season's magic.

A complete list of winter programming highlights can be found below. To learn more and purchase tickets, please visit [HarbourfrontCentre.com/winter](https://harbourfrontcentre.com/winter).

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Harbourfront Centre winter programming highlights

Winterfest Toronto

November 29 - January 5, West Campus and Public Square

Join us this festive season at Harbourfront Centre's new holiday market, Winterfest Toronto, brought to you by Street Eats Market. Enjoy sparkling lights, tasty food offerings, mulled wine, S'Mores, a 30-foot Christmas tree, hand-crafted one-of-a-kind gifts and more! Winterfest will be open Fridays 6 to 10 p.m.; Saturdays 12 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Sundays 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Tree Lighting

November 29, Public Square

Celebrate the spirit of the season and the lighting of our 33-foot holiday tree: the centerpiece in Public Square! Capture your 'Instagram-able' moments with the Toronto skyline in the background or go inside the tree for an extra-special photo op!

Urban Tree Lot

November 29 – December 22, North Orchard

Our urban tree lot will have a vibrant selection of holiday trees for purchase. Enjoy the aroma of fresh pine and the sweet scents of hot cocoa as you select the perfect tree to adorn your home this holiday season.

Marketplace

November 29 – December 22, Lakeside Terrace

Shop for everyone on your list at the Marketplace. Full of local art and craft items, you will surely find that perfect gift. The market is held every Saturday and Sunday leading up to the holidays.

The Uller House

November 29 – January 5, Food Lab Patio

Celebrate holiday cheer and enjoy a hot cup of gløgg (mulled wine) at our Scandinavian-inspired indoor/outdoor bar. Embrace the crisp winter air, wrap yourself up in a cozy blanket and enjoy good company in this charming winter retreat.

KidSpark at HARBOURFRONT CENTRE

Ontario Science Centre Experiences December 4 – May 4, Harbourfront Centre

Created for children ages 10 and under, this learn-through play experience features fun and interactive exhibits that encourage hands-on exploration and discovery, playful learning and introduces even the youngest visitors to the incredible world of STEM.

Return of the Rink

December 21 – March 16, West Lawn

Skate under the open winter sky on a new and improved layout, plus plenty of free family and friend's events throughout the season, including free skate rentals for children 12 and under. In partnership with the Waterfront Business Improvement Area (BIA).

DJ Skate Nights

December 21 – February 15, Stage in the Park

It's a skating dance party! Head to Harbourfront Centre on Saturday nights until February 15 and enjoy skating along to beats spun by some of Toronto's hottest DJs. Admission is free and is fun for all ages.

New Year's Eve Fireworks

December 31, Public Square

Countdown to 2025 with the City of Toronto's brilliant fireworks display. The 10-minute show will be synchronized to music for a high-altitude light fest all along the waterfront.

KUUMBA30

Feb 1 – 28, various Harbourfront Centre venues

This year, KUUMBA celebrates its 30th anniversary with live music, movement, dance, theatre, a symposium and workshops to celebrate the vitality of Toronto's African and Caribbean communities and the works of emerging and innovative Canadian artists. Presented by TD Bank Group through the Bank's Corporate Citizenship platform, the TD Ready Commitment.

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About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is Canada's community waterfront, home of arts, culture and education, and a registered, charitable not-for-profit cultural organization operating a 10-acre campus on Toronto's central waterfront. Harbourfront Centre provides year-round programming 52 weeks a year, seven days a week, supporting a wide range of artists and communities. We inspire audiences and visitors with a breadth of bold, ambitious and engaging experiences. We champion Canadian artists throughout their careers, presenting them alongside international artists and fostering artistic exchanges between disciplines and cultures.

Harbourfront Centre acknowledges the generous support of: Government of Canada and the City of Toronto; Programming Partners: Government of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Government of Ontario, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund and the City of Toronto and its Corporate Site Partner, Labatt.