

Travel + Leisure Names Cullman Christkindlmarkt One of America's Top Christmas Markets

Travel + Leisure named Cullman Christkindlmarkt one of the top 10 Christmas markets in the U.S. for 2026, the only Southern market to earn a spot on the list.

CULLMAN, AL, UNITED STATES, September 15, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The only Southern market on the list, [Cullman Christkindlmarkt](#) drew more than 415,000 visitors last year to a city of 20,000.

[Travel + Leisure](#) has named Cullman Christkindlmarkt to its list of the "10 Coolest Christmas Markets in the U.S."

for the 2026 holiday season, placing Cullman alongside New York City, Chicago, Bethlehem, Pa., Carmel, Ind., and Leavenworth, Wash. Cullman is the only market in the South to make the list.

“

Cullman Christkindlmarkt is a remarkable Alabama tourism success story... while celebrating Cullman's German heritage and the Southern hospitality that makes Alabama special.”

Alabama Governor Kay Ivey



The magic of the Cullman Christkindlmarkt begins at the 20205 Parade and Tree Lighting.

The national travel publication described the selected markets as holiday destinations "worth planning a trip around." Its feature highlighted Cullman Christkindlmarkt's rapid growth, authentic German elements and signature attractions, including the world's largest Schwibbogen, an illuminated hand-crafted wooden arch, and the tallest Christmas pyramid in North America.

Cullman Christkindlmarkt has become the fastest-growing Christmas market in the United States, expanding from eight wooden market huts and about 5,000 visitors in 2019

to a downtown holiday village that welcomed more than 415,000 visitors in 2025. That is roughly

20 times the city's population of about 20,000.

"Cullman Christkindlmarkt is a remarkable Alabama tourism success story," Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said. "In only a few years, it has grown into a nationally recognized destination that welcomes visitors from all 50 states while celebrating Cullman's German heritage and the Southern hospitality that makes Alabama special. I congratulate the City of Cullman and everyone whose hard work has made this event a source of pride for our entire state."

"This means a great deal to our community," Cullman Mayor Woody Jacobs said. "Cullman Christkindlmarkt showcases our heritage, draws visitors from across the country and delivers real economic impact for our local businesses. My hope is that everyone who reads about us in Travel + Leisure comes to see it for themselves in November."

The 2025 market ran 24 days and grew to 75 vendors across more than a quarter-mile of vending space offering handcrafted goods, holiday merchandise and authentic German cuisine, including a flagship structure housing German retailer Käthe Wohlfahrt. About 80 percent of visitors traveled from outside Cullman County, generating an estimated \$28 million in local economic impact. The market is produced by Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism with support from City departments, local businesses and volunteers.

"We are honored by this recognition," said Nathan Anderson, executive director of Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism. "We set out to build a Christmas market that reflects Cullman's German heritage and delivers an experience that stands among the best in the country. It takes hundreds of people to build and operate this market every year, and the credit belongs to every one of them."

The recognition follows other recent honors. The Alabama Tourism Department selected the



Christkindlmarkt Visitors shop and talk with vendors down a cozy market alley.



The largest Schwibbogen on Earth welcomes guests to the Cullman Christkindlmarkt.

market as the 2026 Alabama Event of the Year, and the Southeast Tourism Society named it a 2025 Signature Event of the Southeast.

The 2026 Cullman Christkindlmarkt will be held Nov. 19 through Dec. 23. Admission is free.

To read the complete Travel + Leisure feature, visit:

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/best-christmas-markets-us-for-2026-12110656>

For high-resolution photos, video and media assets, visit:

<https://www.cullmanchristkindlmarkt.com/media>

For more information about Cullman Christkindlmarkt, visit:

<https://www.cullmanchristkindlmarkt.com>

About Cullman Christkindlmarkt

Cullman Christkindlmarkt is a free German-inspired Christmas market held each November and December in downtown Cullman, Alabama. The city was founded by German immigrants in 1873. Established in 2019 with eight wooden market huts and about 5,000 visitors, the market welcomed more than 415,000 visitors in 2025. It is produced by Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism and celebrates Cullman's German heritage through traditional food, artisan vendors, entertainment and family experiences.

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