C | M CAMPBELL · MARIC
REAL ESTATE GROUP



LOCAL GUIDE / HOLIDAYS 2026

Ottawa's holidays, sorted.

Where to eat at every budget, plus light shows, Santa parades, markets and skating, from downtown to Orléans, Kanata and Barrhaven. Dates and prices were checked in November 2026. Plans change, so confirm with each venue before you go.

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The Campbell-Maric Group · Updated November 2026

01 · $$$ SPLURGE

$$$ Worth the splurge.

Price tiers are based on each restaurant's own menu, checked in November 2026: $$$ means most mains over $30, $$ means about $18 to $30, and $ means under $18 or counter service. Prices change, and December weekends fill up fast, so book early.

Date night: Beckta, Centretown	150 Elgin St, in a heritage house. Classic Ottawa fine dining, with a tasting menu if you want to go all in. It also sells Christmas and New Year's Eve meal kits for a night in.
Date night: Arlo, Centretown	340 Somerset St W. A small, cozy room with seasonal plates and natural wine.
The work party: Fauna, Centretown	425 Bank St. A private room for 20 to 25, or the main floor for up to 60. Farm-to-table plates made for sharing.
The west-end work party: Brookstreet Hotel, Kanata North	525 Legget Dr. Holiday party packages and a private dining room for up to 14. Ask the events team for this year's menus.
Christmas Day brunch: Fairmont Château Laurier, downtown	A Christmas Day brunch buffet on December 25, 10:30 am to 1 pm. Reserve ahead.

02 · $$ MID-RANGE

$$ A night out, without the big bill.

The work party: The Barley Mow, Nepean	1541 Merivale Rd. A private room that seats up to 45 and is free to book (a minimum spend may apply).
The work party: Fratelli, Westboro	275 Richmond Rd. Family-style Italian with a private room for holiday parties.
Date night: Johnny Farina, Elgin St	216 Elgin St. Wood-fired pizza in a former movie theatre with very high ceilings.
Date night: Chez Lionel, Kanata	101 Kanata Ave. A French brasserie in the west end, with weeknight specials. At the top of this tier.
Out with friends: El Camino, Elgin St and ByWard Market	380 Elgin St and 81A Clarence St. A lively taco bar where you order by the piece. Elgin is open late on Fridays and Saturdays.
Out with friends: Lowertown Brewery, ByWard Market	73 York St. House-brewed beer, food from its own smoker and live-band karaoke.
Out with friends: The Barley Mow, Orléans	2034 Tenth Line Rd. An east-end pub that books parties of 10 or more.
Brunch: Hintonburg Public House	1020 Wellington St W. A neighbourhood pub brunch on weekends and holidays, and it takes large groups.
Brunch: Zak's Diner	ByWard Market, Elgin St and Kanata. Breakfast all day, easy with kids and groups. At the low end of this tier.

03 · $ EASY ON THE WALLET

$ Cheap and cheerful.

The office lunch: Shawarma Palace	Across the city, including Alta Vista (2440 Bank St), Barrhaven (2910 Woodroffe Ave) and Orléans (4230 Innes Rd). Big portions and catering platters for an office party.
Groups: Gongfu Bao, Centretown	365 Bank St. Fun bao and shared plates, and it takes group reservations. Open Wednesday to Saturday.
A casual date: Stella Luna Gelato Café, Old Ottawa South	1103 Bank St. Gelato and waffles after a walk along the canal.
Before a night out: Holly's Hot Chicken, Hintonburg	45 Armstrong St. Hot-chicken sandwiches for an early meetup. It closes early, and it's closed Sunday to Tuesday.
After a night out: Kettlemans Bagel, the Glebe	912 Bank St, open 24 hours. Also in Kanata (710 Eagleson Rd) for a cheap breakfast out west.
Brunch: Sharpfle Waffle, ByWard Market	111 York St. Korean croissant-waffles, sweet or savoury. Open from 10 am on weekends.

04 · LIGHTS

Light shows and Christmas villages.

Winter Lights Across Canada, downtown	Parliament Hill and Confederation Boulevard lit up every evening, December 7, 2026 to January 7, 2027. Free. (Formerly Christmas Lights Across Canada.)
Magic of Lights, Wesley Clover Parks	411 Corkstown Rd. A drive-through light show you watch from the car, November 20, 2026 to January 2, 2027. Check nightly hours and tickets.
Vintage Village of Lights, Cumberland	Cumberland Heritage Village Museum, 2940 Old Montreal Rd, east of Orléans. A heritage village dressed for an old-fashioned Christmas, with Santa and gingerbread decorating. November 27 to December 20, 2026, select evenings. Registration recommended.
A Country Christmas, Saunders Farm, Munster	7893 Bleeks Rd. Santa, a stage show, snowy hedge mazes and light walks after dark. Select days, December 6 to 30, 2026.

05 · SANTA PARADES

Three parades, three ends of the city.

Help Santa Toy Parade, downtown to Lansdowne	Free. Saturday, November 21, 2026, 11 am, along Queen Elizabeth Drive. Bring a new, unwrapped toy for Toy Mountain.
Santa's Parade of Lights, Orléans	Free. Saturday, November 28, 2026, 6 pm, along St-Joseph Boulevard. Lit floats after dark.
Barrhaven Santa Claus Parade	Free. The organiser lists Sunday, November 29 at 5:30 pm. Check santaclausbarrhaven.com for the route before you go.

06 · MARKETS

Shop local, sip something warm.

Ottawa Christmas Market, Lansdowne	Aberdeen Plaza. Wooden cabins, warm drinks and live music. Free. Listed dates: November 20 to 22 and 27 to 29, December 11 to 13 and 18 to 20, and December 31. More dates may be added.
The Museum's Christmas Market, Gatineau	Canadian Museum of History, 100 Laurier St. A big indoor artisan market, November 26 to 29, 2026. Free entry.
Ottawa Farmers' Market Christmas Market, south end	Cohere Centre (formerly the EY Centre), 4899 Uplands Dr. Local growers and makers indoors with easy parking. Saturdays November 28 and December 5, 12 and 19, 10 am to 4 pm.

Get outside, or get loud.

Lansdowne skating court, the Glebe	Free outdoor skating next to the Christmas Market, 6 am to 11 pm daily once it opens. Bring your own skates. Opening date not announced yet; last season it opened in late November.
Rideau Hall rink, New Edinburgh	Free skating on a historic rink at the Governor General's residence. 2026 to 2027 season dates to be confirmed at gg.ca.
Senators at Canadian Tire Centre, Kanata	Home games on December 3 and 5, 2026. The Ottawa Charge play their home opener there on December 6.

Thinking about a move in the new year? Winter is a quieter market, with less competition for buyers and more serious buyers for sellers. Ask us what's selling near you.

PLANNING AHEAD

Moving in the new year?

Buying, selling or just curious what your home is worth? Tell us what you're thinking and we'll give you a straight answer, no pressure.

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