



Colonie Christmas Market

Thanksgiving Weekend · The Crossings at Colonie · Albany County, New York

A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY & THE LIVING WINTER TRADITION

CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE OF THE CAPITAL DISTRICT

Welcome to the Colonie Christmas Market

The Colonie Christmas Market brings the centuries-old tradition of the European Weihnachtsmarkt to the heart of Albany County. Set against the sweeping grounds of The Crossings at Colonie, the Market draws its spirit from this land's layered past — Dutch patroons, Mohawk trade routes, Revolutionary cannon roads, Shaker ingenuity, and the immigrant families who built a capital district out of river clay and Erie Canal stone.

This gathering is more than commerce. It is a seasonal rite — an honoring of the deep European roots of this landscape and the cultures that have shaped it. The Market is organized and produced by the Church of Sovereign Ontological Studies (COSOS), a nonprofit religious organization based in Albany County, committed to experiential formation, cultural stewardship, and the living tradition of the sovereign self.

The rich past of Colonie continues to shape the cultural identity of New York's Capital District — from the first Dutch farmsteads of 1630 to the immigrant communities who arrived by canal, rail, and steamboat. The Colonie Christmas Market holds this inheritance in the open air.

A Settlement of Remarkable Depth

Colonie was first settled in 1630 when the Dutch West India Company's patroon, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, established Rensselaerswyck across land purchased from the Mohawk. The earliest European settlers moved north from Fort Orange in search of farmland, leaving a material record that

archaeological digs have continued to uncover — Indian artifacts alongside Dutch ceramic shards and ironwork.

The English took the colony in 1664. By the 1750s, British General John Campbell, 4th Earl of Loudon, was commanding forces through this corridor in the French and Indian Wars, and the plank road he cut through the forest — Loudon's Ferry Road — later carried General Henry Knox's cannon train from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston, delivering the first decisive American victory of the Revolution.

After the Revolutionary War, New England traders and craftsmen arrived alongside the remaining Dutch families. The Erie Canal opened in 1825, pulling Irish and Italian workers into the region. German, French, Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish families followed in the decades thereafter — a living immigration record embedded in the soil, the steeples, and the surnames of this valley.

Places That Shaped This Land

Historical sites within the Town of Colonie that form the living backdrop of the Market's tradition

Site 1

Schuyler Flatts — National Historic Landmark

The most historically significant parcel in Colonie, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1994 and listed on both state and national registers since 1974. A Dutch farmhouse stood here as early as 1642, built by Arent van Curler for the Van Rensselaer patroonship. Father Isaac Jogues escaped Mohawk captivity from this site in 1643. Pieter Schuyler — Albany's first mayor — rebuilt the house around 1672, and the Flatts served as a military staging ground for thousands of soldiers headed to Saratoga in 1777. Knox's cannon train from Fort Ticonderoga passed through these grounds in 1775. The park today holds 35 acres, replica Dutch barn, Erie Canal remnants, and the outlines of three centuries of occupation.

Site 2

Pruyn House Cultural Site

One of the oldest private residences in Colonie, built between 1825 and 1830 on land leased from Stephen Van Rensselaer III — the last Patroon. A Federal-Greek Revival blend, it served as the summer home of Casparus Pruyn and his family, descendants of Frans Jansen Pruyn who arrived in America in the 1660s. The Town acquired the house in 1983 for preservation. Ten historic structures now comprise the complex, including the Buhrmaster Barn and the Verdoy Schoolhouse.

Site 3

Watervliet Shaker Historic District

The first permanent Shaker settlement in America, founded in 1776 by Mother Ann Lee and seven disciples from England. At peak the community held 300 members, divided across four "families" centered on a Meeting House. The Shakers invented the flat broom and were the first to package garden seeds commercially. They were pacifists and early advocates of gender and racial equality. The last Shakers departed in 1938. The 1848 Meeting House and surrounding structures are preserved by the Shaker Heritage Society.

Site 4

Loudon Cottage

Built between 1800 and 1830 near the original encampment of Lord Loudon during the French and Indian War, the cottage carries a remarkable Civil War footnote: in 1852 it was owned by Senator Ira Harris, whose daughter Clara and her fiancé Major Henry Reed Rathbone sat beside President Lincoln at Ford's Theatre on the night of his assassination. Clara's bloodstained dress was kept in a closet at the cottage for years afterward.

Site 5

Albany Rural Cemetery

Established in 1841, Albany Rural was among the earliest "rural" cemeteries in the United States — modeled on Mount Auburn in Cambridge and part of the Victorian movement to return the dead to designed natural landscapes. Today it spans 467 acres with over 110,000 burials, including President Chester A. Arthur. Six Civil War Medal of Honor recipients rest here, along with five Cabinet Officers, seven Governors, and a survivor of the Titanic's first lifeboat.

Site 6

The Erie Canal & Crescent Aqueduct

Much of the eastern terminus of the Erie Canal ran through Colonie, entering at Menands and tracing west through Watervliet and along the Mohawk. The Crescent Aqueduct carried the canal over the river near present-day Route 9, an engineering marvel removed in 1919 with construction of the new Barge Canal. The canal's opening in 1825 transformed Colonie from frontier territory into a commercial artery connecting the American East with the Western frontier.

Site 7

West Albany Railroad Yards

Constructed in 1853 by the New York Central Railroad across 350 acres along Patroon Creek, the West Albany yards were a manufacturing and service hub for one of the continent's most important rail lines. Engine 999 — the world's fastest locomotive at the time — was built here in 1893, reaching speeds that stunned the industrial world. The yards anchored the regional economy through the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Site 8

Mulberry Hill

A farmhouse built by Stephen Van Rensselaer in 1783 became the refuge for Madame de la Tour du Pin and her family during the French Revolution, from 1794 to 1796. A close attendant of Marie Antoinette, she left a detailed memoir of managing this Capital District farm — one of the most intimate accounts of early Colonie life in existence. The house was rebuilt after a fire in 1812. Delatour Road carries her name to this day.



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