



NEWS

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Solvang Visitor Center, 1639 Copenhagen Drive, Solvang, CA 93463 (Open Daily 9am-5pm)

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www.SolvangUSA.com and www.SolvangUSA.com/julefest

2018 Solvang Julefest Parade Award Winners Announced

~ More Julefest Events Now thru 1/6/19 Including Free Santa Visits in Park, Nisse Adventure & Candlelight Tours



Solvang, California, USA –Starting at 11:00 a.m. today (Saturday, December 8, 2018), Solvang’s annual Julefest Parade rolled, strolled, trotted and cruised through the Danish-inspired village streets. Thousands of spectators from nearby and far away enjoyed sunny skies and temperatures in the 60+degree range while watching **49 parade entrants and 400+ participants** featuring local organizations and businesses. This year’s theme was “A Danish Tradition.” Concluding the 65-minute parade were **Santa & Mrs. Claus** (pictured above), who landed their sleigh in Solvang Park for free visits and photos with an adoring crowd throughout the afternoon. Word from the North Pole is that they will return on December 15 & 22, 2018 from Noon-4:00 p.m. as well for more free visits for kids of all ages.

The 2018 Julefest Grand Marshal honored Solvang City Manager Brad Vidro, retiring on December 28, 2018, capping more than 35 years of public service throughout California. Vidro began working for the City of Solvang as Public Works Director in June 2005 and was named City Manager in October 2006. According to Julefest organizers, Vidro has worked tirelessly to guide Solvang to a stable, financial footing, provide important leadership on major public works projects and supported Solvang’s hospitality industry throughout his 13-year tenure.

The 2018 Solvang Julefest **Parade Announcer** was **Laura Kath** for the 12th year; and serving as **volunteer judges** were **non-partisan, non-Solvang residents Bob Freed, William Morton and Bill Peden**. **Parade winners are invited to pick up their trophy at the Solvang Visitor Center, 1639 Copenhagen Drive between 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily.**

Here are the 2018 Solvang Julefest Parade Award Winners:

(Hi-res JPG photos are below and available from laura@mariahmarketing.com)

1. **Best Theme Oriented (“A Danish Tradition”):** Atterdag Village of Solvang “Rolling Gingerbread House”
2. **Best Float:** Capuchin-Franciscan Friars of San Lorenzo Seminary
3. **Best Equestrian Entry:** Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort
4. **Best Vehicle Entry:** St. Francis Ranch Restored 1928 Fire Truck
5. **Best Musical Entry:** Santa Ynez Valley Jazz Band
6. **Best Performance Group:** Cruz Dance & Entertainment
7. **Best Overall Entry:** Santa Ynez Valley Union High School Pirate Garage Auto Club

Earlier this week, Solvang was named by *Reader's Digest* as **"The Best Christmas Town in California"** and by *New York Post* as one of **"The 10 Best Christmas Towns in America"**. 2018 Solvang Julefest (pronounced Yule-Fest and meaning Christmas Festival in Danish) happens from December 1, 2018 through January 6, 2019. This year features the return of the popular **Free Candlelight Tours** and the addition of new **VIP Candlelight Tours** (12/8, 12/15, 12/22). More highlights include the **Free Visits with Santa "Julemanden"** in Solvang Park (12/8, 12/15, 12/22); free **Nisse Adventure treasure hunt** (12/1/18-1/6/19); **Shop, Mingle & Jingle Weekends**; **Wine & Beer Walk "Skål Stroll!"** (12/15-16); and free **Live Nativity Pageant** (12/15); and concluding with the **Christmas Tree Burn Safety Demo** (1/4/19). Activities are continually updated at www.SolvangUSA.com/julefest

Solvang Julefest events are presented by the [Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau](http://www.SolvangUSA.com) (SCVB) on behalf of the City of Solvang with sponsorship support from [Visit Santa Ynez Valley](http://www.SolvangUSA.com), [Chumash Casino Resort](http://www.SolvangUSA.com) and other area businesses. All Solvang Julefest events are open to the public with free admission (excluding Julefest Holiday Wine & Beer Walk and VIP Candlelight Tour). For more detailed information about all events, please visit www.SolvangUSA.com or call the Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau at 1-800-468-6765 or 805-688-6144.

2018 SOLVANG JULEFEST PARADE PHOTOS BELOW COURTESY of BILL PEDEN (Credit SolvangUSA.com)
(Hi-res JPG versions available from laura@mariahmarketing.com)



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Best Overall Entry: Santa Ynez Valley Union High School Pirate Garage Auto Club

The Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau is a not-for-profit organization formed in 1986 to promote the City of Solvang, its Northern European culture, cuisine, arts and attractions of the village known as "California's Denmark."

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