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The Joy of Giving

Have fun and do good at the Journey into Christmas festival

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Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

Moscow's biggest seasonal festival, Journey into Christmas, kicked off in an explosion of twinkling lights and fir trees. But it's not all about buying and being entertained — it's about giving back to the community, too. The Moscow Times is here to give you a rundown of some of the best family-friendly events that will allow you and the kids to get ready for Christmas while helping those in need.

Make toys on Tverskoi Bulvar

On Dec. 27 and Jan. 9, join Russian Birch, a charity that assists large families, single elderly people and people with disabilities. You and your family can take part in a master class on making soft toys and dolls. From 3 to 7 p.m.

Make something for Fido on Tverskoi Bulvar

On Dec. 26, join Paws of Friendship, a charity that cares for homeless animals and raises awareness of their plight. Your kids can learn how to draw dogs -- and put their drawings in a contest -- make collars and tree ornaments, and chat with founders Ekaterina Zubenko and Marina Kashira. From 3 to 7 p.m.

Get glamorous on Ploshchad Revolyutsii

On Dec. 25, join Life, a foundation supporting seriously ill children from disadvantaged families, for a master class with acclaimed Russian designer Marina Getmanenko where you'll learn how to make jewellery and décor items to give to your friends and family this festive season. From 3 to 7 p.m.

Make a candle on Tverskoi Bulvar

On Dec. 28, join children's hospice Lighthouse for a masterclass on candle making and decorating. From 3 to 7 p.m.

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