

PRESS RELEASE

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Round up: Christmas around the South East 2019



Blenheim Palace Christmas Market

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Venues and attractions across the South East will be putting on a show for the festive season. There will be the popular Christmas Markets and Ice Rinks, as well as family events and light shows.

A NEW Christmas evening event, **POLAR**, at Robin Hill on the Isle of Wight will run over four weekends in December. A new Amphitheatre production will follow the magical tale of one boy's Christmas dream come true, in a sensational dance and acrobatic theatre style production. Visitors will be able to take the Winter Woodland Walk through sparkling ancient forests, enjoy the festive atmosphere of the POLAR Village and enjoy traditional hot food and drinks. Father Christmas himself will take the wheel of the Big Red Express. (Selected dates from 29 November to 21 December, 5pm-9pm, pre-booking essential). Standard tickets from £19.00, children aged 0 to 2 free of charge if seated on laps.

<https://robin-hill.com/polar>

Magical Kingdom of Birds and Festive Feathers at Leeds Castle where the magnificent state rooms will be transformed. Experience a lavishly dressed banqueting table, laid for a Christmas feast and continue to the glitz and glamour of Lady Baillie's Bedroom, where there is a variety of treasures to spot amongst Christmas garlands. Write your Christmas dream on a feather in a room of winged wishes and experience shimmering duckling eggs ready to hatch under the tree, with the signature Leeds Castle black swan among decorations of silver and gold. (23 November to 1 January). There will also be a Christmas Market with seasonal gifts and decorations and a vintage fun fair. (23 November to 15 December). Standard admission price adults £26, child £17.50) concessions available. Leeds Castle also offers a range of stunning B&B accommodation. www.leeds-castle.com

Bournemouth's Christmas Tree Wonderland will feature a trail of more than 100 LED trees and illuminations. The centrepiece will be a 60ft walk-through animated tree featuring more than 30,000 lights and with regular light and audio shows. There will be a series of illuminations for children, including giant teddy bears, gingerbread people and a walk-through giant bauble. FREE. There will also be an Alpine Market in the town centre and an ice rink in the resort's Grade II listed Victorian gardens. (15 November to 2 January). <https://christmastreewonderland.co.uk>

Winchester Cathedral Christmas Market and Ice Rink is recognised as one of the best Christmas Markets in Europe because of its unique location, high quality exhibitors and bustling atmosphere. In 2018 the Market was voted 2nd best in the UK by Booking.com and one of the top eight Christmas Markets in Europe by the New York Post. Inspired by traditional German Christmas markets the pretty wooden chalets are situated in the Cathedral's historic Close surrounding an open-air real ice rink. (21 November to 22 December). www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk

The **20th Festival of Christmas** at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Travel back to a bygone era, where classic characters welcome visitors at one of the UK's finest Christmas festivals. Featuring Victorian street performers and a traditional Father Christmas in his

green costume, and more. (29 November to 1 December, from 10am - 6pm).

www.historicdockyard.co.uk

Southampton Christmas Festival and Christmas Market features a traditional German market featuring alpine chalets with German fayre from bratwurst and waffles to gingerbread hearts and candied fruit. (14 November 23 December). www.visit-hampshire.co.uk

Christmas at Marwell will be marketing its 10th Anniversary and offering visitors a taste of Alice in Wonderland with illuminated wonderland train rides, garden games, a Cheshire Cat trail and festive treats in the zoo's cafés. Father Christmas and his Elves

Santa Specials at Watercress Line steam railway, Alresford in Hampshire (various dates 30 November to 24 December) Travel in a festive train carriage for a magical trip where Santa and his jolly helpers visit you in your seat with a gift. Grown-ups get treated to white wine and mince pies, whilst children enjoy a soft drink and a gingerbread man. Each child will also receive an activity pack to keep them entertained on this enchanting one hour journey. Prices from adult £18, child (1 - 16 years) £18, under 1 year £10. Christmas Eve slightly different. Advanced booking is essential. www.watercressline.co.uk

Christmas Leave at Watercress Line steam railway. Visitors will be able to join civilian and military re-enactors and experience the atmosphere of a WWII Christmas on the railway. The period stations will host re-enactors and the general public to enjoy song, dance, steam and seasonal merriment. Dress up in period costume or just come along to soak up the atmosphere. (26 and 27 December). Prices adult £19, child (5-16 years) £10, family (2+2) £48. www.watercressline.co.uk

Experience the sparkling splendour of **Royal Tunbridge Wells at Christmas** this year with a visit to the outdoor ice rink. Set in the idyllic Calverley Grounds with live music and festive food and drink, it's the perfect Christmassy activity to enjoy with friends and loved ones! Make it a weekend of festive fun with a stay at the beautiful One Warwick Park hotel,

(rooms from £105 per night) situated just five minutes' walk from the ice rink with independent shopping on the historic Pantiles, Chapel Place and the High Street nearby. Ice rink open from 15 November – 5 January – exact times/prices TBC.

www.visittunbridgewells.com/whats-on/tunbridge-wells-is-christmas

Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Concerts at Eastbourne Grandstand, Grand Parade. A popular and long-standing tradition, the concerts by the Eastbourne Silver Band began when the Bandstand was first built in 1935 and have been a regular Christmas attraction ever since. The concerts are organised by Eastbourne Bandstand and always attract large crowds over the three days. FREE.

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Notes to Editors

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Contact For further information, and to learn more about opportunities for press trips, Irene Caswell, Destination PR Manager, 02380 625475 icaswell@tourismse.com