



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

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CELEBRATIONS AS GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY SCOOPS TWO PRESTIGIOUS TOURISM AWARDS.

Volunteers and staff at the Great Central Railway were celebrating this morning as the railway picked up two tourism awards, including a GOLD for the best tourism experience in the East Midlands.

The award is perfectly timed - kick starting a weekend long steam gala (8th to the 10th of October) which should bring thousands of visitors to the East Midlands.

The awards are run by East Midlands Tourism which is responsible for improving the skills, quality standards and the value and competitiveness of the tourism industry.

The best tourism experience award comes after the railway invested heavily in upgrading passenger facilities at Loughborough station including a new lift to help people who use wheelchairs reach the platform and extra toilet facilities. At Leicester a new canopy roof was built.

Meanwhile, the railway's famous on train catering team picked up a silver gong for outstanding customer service. Headed by Chef James McIntosh, the team often have to prepare 84 multi course meals from a small galley kitchen.

The GCR's president Bill Ford said, "**We are honoured to have picked up two awards which really reflect the hard work put in by everyone at the railway in the last year. Our staff and customer service were highlighted by the mystery visitors who judged the two categories, which makes me very proud of the whole team.**"

It's the second time the railway has won the best tourism experience category in recent years.



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PRESS INFORMATION

ENDS

WORDS 250

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Details on the above and all forthcoming events can be found on the Great Central Railway's extensive website: www.gcrailway.co.uk

Additional information can also be obtained from the Booking Office, Loughborough Central Station, (Daily 9.00 - 5.30) on 01509 230726

NOTES

Voted number 12 on the list of the 50 greatest railway journeys in the world the Great Central Railway is the UK's only double track, main line heritage railway. It's the only place in the world where full size steam engines can be seen passing each other – just as it was when steam ruled the rails. The preserved railway celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2009, and is manned by around 700 volunteers and a small team of permanent staff. Preservation of this section of the Great Central Railway began in 1969. The route was originally part of a main line from Sheffield to London. The 8 mile preserved section between Loughborough and Leicester is fully operational and the 4 stations reflect a different period of the railway's 111 year history. Around 100,000 visitors a year come to the railway from all over the world.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide famous dining experiences, whilst passengers travel between Loughborough and Leicester. Childhood engine driver dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including Santa Specials.

The railway has won a number of awards including "independent railway of the year", and a gold award for the East Midlands best visitor experience and is a quality assured visitor attraction as designated by Enjoy England.

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY

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