



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

Date: 1st December 2009

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SANTA SPECIALS OFF TO A FLYING START

Extra seats added to first festive trains.

**GCR teams up with local hotel and attractions to promote
Leicestershire - not Lapland for a festive break!**

The Great Central Railway began running its award winning Santa Specials last weekend (28th / 29th of November) with demand for tickets so strong, extra seats had to be made available on trains.

Now the railway has teamed up with a local four star hotel and another top rated family attraction to encourage more people to Leicestershire for a festive break. Masterminded by Leicester Shire Promotions Ltd, the county's destination management agency, Imago at Burleigh Court (a four star hotel) and Twinlakes Winter Wonderland park are part of a package deal to promote festive tourism.

Kate Tilley from the Great Central Railway said, "**We've experienced a very strong start to our Santa Special trains this year. Bookings were coming in at a rapid rate last week so the decision was made to add extra seats to all our trains on Saturday and Sunday November 28th and 29th. Being part of the deal with Twinlakes and Imago at Burleigh Court will hopefully bring more people to the railway and the county this Christmas.**"

For just £122, a family of four can get onboard the Santa Special steam train at Great Central Railway, ice-skate their way through a Winter Wonderland at Twinlakes family theme park and enjoy 4 star accommodation at Burleigh Court in Loughborough. This unique offer represents a saving on standard ticket prices and room rates. For more details visit:

www.goleicestershire.com/shortbreaks/xmas-shortbreak-2009.asp

Martin Peters, Chief Executive of Leicester Shire Promotions commented:

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY
Great Central Railway, Great Central Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 1RW
Tel: (01509) 230726 Fax: (01509) 239791



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"The Festive Family Fun short break is aimed at families with young children who want to experience the magic of Christmas at an affordable price. Instead of trudging around the busy shops, why not treat the family to a well-deserved end of year break and let the kids visit Santa on a traditional steam train, pet a reindeer, or go ice skating and tobogganing?"

Santa Special trains at the Great Central Railway run every weekend through December and daily from the 18th. Some trains close to Christmas are already sold out. Ideal for the young and the young at heart passengers meet Father Christmas close up and receive a present as the train steams its way through the Leicestershire countryside.

ENDS

WORDS 392

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 has been operating for over 36 years, 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 railways 10 year history.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide 4 or 6 course meals, whilst travelling between Loughborough and Leicester or childhood dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including Bonfire Night and 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.

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