

# Edinburgh's Christmas will be icy!

Underbelly who have the contract with The City of Edinburgh Council to provide all the entertainment for Edinburgh's Christmas 2017 have announced today that the programme is refreshed for this year – and will be very icy!

The Famous Spiegeltent will return to Edinburgh after missing out on her summer visit as St Andrew Square was closed to most of the shows previously put on there. David Bates, owner and producer of The Famous Spiegeltent, said: "We're coming home for Christmas! We've got some spicy seasonal treats in store for Scotland this winter with some new international acts that will bend your minds and bring the fishnets to your Christmas stocking!"

There will be a new feature – The Ice Adventure – which will be staged at the west end of George Street. This will take visitors on a journey through frozen Scotland with the newest attraction made of snow and ice.

The other new feature Edinburgh's Giant Advent Calendar will be free and will feature nightly projections onto General Register House. One glimpse of Edinburgh in years past will be produced each night until Christmas.

 Edinburgh Trams will team up with Edinburgh's Christmas to ask schoolchildren to design a special Christmas and Hogmanay tram which will brighten up the city streets.

Underbelly are now in charge of the programme of events at both Christmas and New Year in the capital and the city's festive entertainment attracts many visitors to the city. While the events company have been in charge of Christmas over the last five years the number of tickets sold and people who visited increased year on year. Between 2013 and 2016 there

was a 46% increase in the number of tickets for Christmas events, and almost a million visitors to the city last year. In addition footfall in the city centre during December has risen by almost a quarter since 2012.

As usual [those living in an EH postcode](#) will enjoy a 20% discount on tickets bought, which applied to 130,680 tickets purchased last year. [CLICK HERE](#)

Everything Christmassy will begin on 17 November 2017 and will go on until 6 January 2018.

Charlie Wood and Ed Bartlam, Edinburgh's Christmas, said: "This is the fifth year Underbelly has produced Edinburgh's Christmas on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council and we are extremely excited to be presenting such an ambitious and refreshed programme spreading farther and wider across the city, reaching more communities than ever before.

"There is the free to access giant Advent Calendar on General Register House to the brand new icy Scottish journey of The Ice Adventure on George Street, to the breath-taking La Clique Noel taking residence in our Festival Square Spiegel tent on Lothian Road and Winter Windows on display in Craigmillar and Wester Hailes.

"The economic impact of Edinburgh's Christmas on the city is growing every year and with the positive effect it has socially on the residents of Edinburgh, we are proud to be able to bring world class winter entertainment to the Scottish capital yet again."

Edinburgh's Lord Provost, Frank Ross, said: "Produced on behalf of the Council for the enjoyment of everyone, Edinburgh's Christmas has become one of the top winter festivals in the UK.

"This year's programme celebrates the past, present and future of our city, with a combination of new attractions, popular

events and old favourites.

“I’m looking forward to seeing the festive cheer spread beyond the city centre this winter with decorative displays in many of our local communities. From Westerhailes to Leith, 50 artworks by local schoolchildren will provide a window into the Edinburgh of the future. It will spread awareness of the 2050 City Vision initiative and brighten all corners of Edinburgh.”

Jamie Hamilton, of Hamilton Ice said: “We couldn’t be happier to be part of Edinburgh’s Christmas for the first time. We’re having great fun imagining and creating in snow and ice many aspects of Scotland from Robert the Bruce to Dolly the Sheep for The Ice Adventure, which we hope visitors will enjoy exploring and discovering.”

Steven McConnachie, Director of Double Take Projections, said: “We’re delighted to be working with Underbelly on both Edinburgh’s Christmas and Edinburgh’s Hogmanay. Edinburgh’s Giant Advent Calendar will be a stunning new feature for this year and we are enjoying working with partners to uncover some old Edinburgh gems which will be revealed in December.”

Matthew Brown, Musical Director at the Nonsense Room Productions said: “Is that a shark in the spiegeltent?! Following a UK and international tour in 2017, Nonsense Room Productions are delighted to be bringing Shark in the Park back to Edinburgh this Christmas. See all three of Nick Sharratt’s Shark in the Park brought to life in this fun family musical!”



Christopher Bell Chorus Master of the Festival  
Chorus at 2016 Light Night

Roddy Smith, Chief Executive of Essential Edinburgh, said: “Christmas is a vital time of year for our retailers and our hospitality businesses, as well as a time of year that

everyone who enjoys our city centre – residents and visitors alike – looks forward to. Edinburgh’s Christmas is now a big part of that, and we are looking forward to another fantastic Christmas.

“Essential Edinburgh is delighted to be partnering with Underbelly to animate the west end of George Street, to create a brilliant Light Night, and to create the famous and hugely popular ice rink in St Andrew Square. “

John Donnelly, Chief Executive of Marketing Edinburgh said: “The new attractions and planned expansion of Edinburgh’s Christmas offering this year is terrific news for the city.

By enlarging the geographical footprint of the festive celebrations across the city centre, we are creating a refreshed destination experience that will crucially encourage residents and visitors to explore further afield, helping them to discover new shops, restaurants and bars.”



Edinburgh’s Christmas 2016

Neil Gregory, Deputy Head of Engagement at Historic Environment Scotland said: “We’re delighted to be a lead partner working with Underbelly on this year’s festive celebrations in the capital. We’ve been working with them and Double Take Projections to provide a huge gift box of images from our holdings in the National Record for the Historic Environment and Scran. Using our archives to create a digital advent calendar to showcase the winters of years gone by is a perfect finale to a fantastic Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology and a great way for us to wish visitors to Edinburgh city centre a very happy Christmas”.



Here is the 2017 programme :

AROUND THE CITY

- Edinburgh's very own, free to access giant Advent Calendar will be projected onto General Register House with 25 glimpses of Edinburgh Winters from years gone-by one revealed each day, created by Double Take Projections, recent projection partners for the opening of the Queensferry Crossing.

In Edinburgh's **Giant Advent Calendar** archive of the city dating back to the 1700s supplied by partners including Historic Environment Scotland, National Library of Scotland, and National Records of Scotland will be animated and set to a soundscape reflective of that year, supporting the end of 2017 as the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. Edinburgh's Giant Advent Calendar will be visible on General Register House at varying times from 5pm to 10pm every day.

General Register House. Free to access.

Friday 1 – Monday 25 December.

- In a partnership with Edinburgh Trams, Edinburgh's Christmas has invited Edinburgh school children to design a special Christmas and Hogmanay Tram, which will brighten up the city's streets this winter.
- Winter Windows, in partnership with the National Galleries of Scotland, involves schools in Edinburgh. The schools take part in the creative project conceived by Underbelly in 2014 to embrace the talents of the city's young people and showcase them to residents and visitors out of the classroom and onto the street. During the autumn term, each school will work with pupils to design stained glass windows with the theme of

2050 Edinburgh City Vision, highlighting the City of Edinburgh Council's campaign to engage everyone in imagining the the City's future.



The children from Edinburgh schools who won in various categories of Winter Windows in 2016

This year up to 50 windows will be displayed across the city. In West Parliament Square the Winter Windows designs from each school will be displayed outside St Giles just off the Royal Mile to be seen by the thousands of visitors to Edinburgh's Christmas, giving local schoolchildren a great way to get involved in the festivities and show off their artistic talents.

In 2017, this will expand into communities outside the city centre with windows popping up in Leith's Kirkgate Plaza, Craigmillar Library Plaza, Drumbrae Plaza and Westerhailes Plaza.

Various locations. Free to access.

Friday 17 November to Monday 25 December

- 24 Doors of Advent returns allowing residents and visitors to peep behind usually closed doors across the city throughout advent. In 2017, working with Historic Environment Scotland, 24 Doors of Advent opens many new doors for you to explore including Trinity House, Lauriston Castle and Mansfield Traquair.

Various locations. Free to access.

Friday 1 – Sunday 24 December

## **GEORGE STREET**

- **The Ice Adventure** – a journey through frozen Scotland

Brand new for 2017, this arctic installation at the west end

of George Street is an immersive walk-through experience filled with spectacular ice and snow sculptures to take your breath away. The event is produced by Underbelly and Hamilton Ice, producers of the Ice Kingdom at London's Winter Wonderland – that event's most popular and pre-booked attraction. Supported by Shackleton Whisky, this attraction will also feature an ice bar.

**George Street 17 November to 24 December Tickets are for timed slots – more info online at [www.edinburghchristmas.com](http://www.edinburghchristmas.com)**

Take a tour of Scotland with life-like ice sculptures of Vikings, fairies and Kelpies, Highland cows, eagles and Dolly the Sheep, Robert the Bruce, Mary Queen of Scots and Greyfriars Bobby, and of course the Loch Ness Monster!

George Street. Tickets £10 (£7)

Friday 17 November to Sunday 24 December 2017

- The ever-popular **Santa's Grotto** is moving to join The Ice Adventure on George Street.

Christmas just wouldn't be Christmas without a visit to Santa... A chance for children to meet Father Christmas, hear a festive fairy-tale, and receive a wee gift.

George Street. Tickets £8

Saturday 18 November to Sunday 24 December 2017

- Sunday 19 November is **Light Night** in Scotland's capital city when the Christmas lights are switched on across the city. This year Light Night will again be hosted by Forth One DJ Arlene Stuart and will showcase the Edinburgh's best amateur choirs and dance groups, including Little Voices Big Stars, Edinburgh Rock Choir and Edinburgh Ballet.

George Street. Free to access

Sunday 19 November, 3-5pm

Visitors to attractions on George Street can also enjoy rides, market stalls and a beautiful light dome at the junction of George Street and Castle Street in the style of the popular Street of Light that was on George Street in December 2016.

## **FESTIVAL SQUARE SPIEGELTENT**

- The Festival Square Spiegeltent pops up on 17 November outside the Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa on Lothian Road, with a dazzling new show from the internationally famous La Clique ... La Clique Noël proudly presented by Edinburgh's Christmas, David Bates and Spiegeltent International.

This very special seasonal treat sees the outrageous and unforgettable theatrical phenomenon La Clique coming home for Christmas with their trademark inspirational mix of cabaret, new burlesque, circus and contemporary vaudeville in a new, sexy, dangerous show! Presenting Scotty The Blue Bunny, Heather Holliday and Vicky Butterfly, among others, this special night will also showcase the talents of Dannie Bourne and The La Clique Palace Orchestra featuring... Kelly Wolfgram!

## **LA CLIQUE NOËL**

**17 November 2017 to 6 January 2018 at 8.00pm Monday to Friday, 6.00pm and 9.00pm Fridays, 5.00pm and 8.00pm Saturdays.**

**Tickets starting from £19.50 weekdays, from £24.50 weekends (from £14.50 previews) are available to book now at**

[www.edinburghschristmas.com](http://www.edinburghschristmas.com) and 0131 510 0395

Friday 17 November – Saturday 6 January

SHARK IN THE PARK

**Nonsense Room Productions**

**Based on the books by Nick Sharratt**

**1 December to 6 January 2018. Tickets are available to book at [edinburghschristmas.com](http://edinburghschristmas.com)**

- When Timothy Pope receives a brand new telescope for his birthday, boy is he excited to test it out at the park! But wait... is that really a shark he can see? Families can enjoy Nick Sharratt's Shark in the Park in which Nonsense Room Productions (Hairy Maclary and Friends Show) bring Sharratt's three shark books together for the stage with a fantastic cast and fun songs to entertain the kids this Christmas.

Festival Square Spiegel tent. Tickets from £10

Friday 17 November – Saturday 6 January

- For those looking to get their dancing shoes on, family favourite **Baby Loves Disco** offers little groovers who might not even have found their feet yet a chance to dance the day away.

Festival Square Spiegel tent. Tickets £9

Friday 17 November – Saturday 6 January

- Spreading the Christmas effect across the city, and working in partnership once again with fellow theatres and the Usher Hall in Edinburgh's West End, Christmas on Stage sets out to draw audiences to some of the best Christmas entertainment around town! The Traverse Theatre brings classic fairy tale Cinderella and pitch-black comedy How to Disappear, while The Lyceum Theatre premieres The Arabian Nights.
- The popular Edinburgh resident's 20% discount across all shows, rides and events returns in 2017. In 2016 130,663 tickets were sold to Edinburgh residents accessing their 20% off tickets, providing a total saving of over £199,000 to residents across the city.

## **EAST PRINCES STREET GARDENS**

- East Princes Street Gardens remains a centre point for families with Santa Land's Christmas Tree Maze providing lots of Christmas magic to kids aged 1 to 100+. Favourite rides including the Star flyer, traditional double Carousel and the Forth One Big Wheel return. The Gardens throw open their gates on Saturday 18 November.

East Princes Street Gardens. Free to access.

Saturday 18 November – Saturday 6 January

- The Scottish Market will join together with the European market, seeing over 130 craft, food and drink stalls pop up across the Gardens. Free to access.



St Andrew Square ice rink © Eoin Carey

## **ST ANDREW SQUARE**

### ▪ St Andrew Square Ice Rink

The elliptical ice rink in St Andrew Square is always a popular draw and a much loved part of Edinburgh's Christmas, set next to the Christmas Nativity scene in the gardens.

17 November 2017 until 6 January 2018

10am – 9.30pm, slots 45 minutes

### ▪ **Nativity Carol Concert**

In conjunction with St Andrews and St Georges West and Edinburgh Churches Together, at the start of Advent, a carol concert will take place around the Nativity Scene in St Andrew Square, generously donated to Edinburgh by Sir Tom Farmer.

St Andrew Square. Free to access.

Sunday 3 December, 3pm, St Andrew Square

**Christmas on Stage** sets out to draw audiences to some of the best Christmas entertainment around. The Christmas on Stage partnership between the Lyceum, Traverse, Usher Hall and Edinburgh's Christmas will celebrate live theatre and music in Edinburgh's West End.

As part of the **Christmas on Stage** partnership, tickets via [edinburghschristmas.com](http://edinburghschristmas.com) will be available for the Traverse Theatre and Royal Lyceum Theatre. The Traverse Theatre brings classic fairy tale Cinderella and pitch-black comedy How to Disappear, while The Lyceum Theatre premieres The Arabian Nights.

## **LIGHT NIGHT**

**George Street. Free to access.**

**Sunday 19 November, 3pm – 5pm**



Light Night is an event free for all to enjoy, which encapsulates the true spirit of the festive season: family and the community.

Choirs and dance groups from across Edinburgh including Little Voices Big Stars, Edinburgh Ballet and Edinburgh Rock Choir will perform across two stages on George Street in front of an expected audience of around 20,000 people. The event will be once again hosted by the formidable Forth One DJ Arlene Stuart.

The Christmas Tree on the Mound, a gift to the City of Edinburgh Council from Hordaland County Council in Norway, will be lit as part of the Light Night switch-on.

## **THE MOUND PRECINCT AND EAST PRINCES STREET GARDENS**

**18 November 2017 to 6 January 2018. Free to access.**

**The Star Flyer:** See Edinburgh as you have never seen it before, and this year you might just open your eyes! Located next to the Scott Monument in East Princes Street Gardens.

**The Forth One Big Wheel:** The arrival of the Big Wheel in East Princes Street Gardens signals the festive season has arrived! Take a ride in this Dutch made Ferris wheel's cosy, covered pods to enjoy spectacular views across the city. Bejewelled with 20,000 lights it makes a joyful addition to Edinburgh's famous festive skyline. A new partnership with Forth One brings a special soundtrack to this festive experience.

**Santa Land:** In the heart of East Princes Street Gardens Santa Land is a place of Christmas sparkle and magic with the Elves workshop hidden inside the Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train and other affordable kids rides. Note that Santa's Grotto can be found on George Street this year.

**The European Christmas Market:** Over 100 stalls return to East Princes Street Gardens and the Mound Precinct from across northern Europe with a selection of tasty food, warming drinks and beautiful handmade gifts for sale.