

# Just one more day until Edinburgh's Christmas

Everyone only has to be in the city centre for a short while to know that Christmas is on its way. One more sleep and then it will be time to go ice skating or shopping at the markets.

The festivities will last for seven weeks and open on Friday with the traditional Christmas markets, funfair rides, ice skating, mulled wine and Santa reading stories in St Andrew Square.

Edinburgh's Christmas opens early evening on Friday 17 November with the Big Wheel and Christmas Market at East Princes Street Gardens. The Festive Family Funfair, Ice Rink with Jet2holidays, and Santa's Stories begin on Saturday 18 November and run till Saturday 6 January 2024. Tickets and further information on Edinburgh's Christmas full programme of events and attractions is available at [www.edinburgh-christmas.com](http://www.edinburgh-christmas.com).



Christmas Wheel Princes Street Gardens. © 2023 Martin McAdam  
**HERE COMES SANTA CLAUS...**

There's something for everyone at Edinburgh's Christmas in 2023 – whether taking in views of the city skyline from the Forth1 Big Wheel, skating your way into the festive season at the Ice Rink or settling in for a Santa Story...it's the most wonderful time of the year.

Landing in St Andrew Square straight from the North Pole itself, Santa and some very helpful elves will welcome families to **Santa's Stories** – a magical storytelling experience where every child will meet Santa and receive their own gift, as well as learn the importance of giving this Christmas season. Create new Christmas traditions at St Andrew Square's special **Post-Box and Letter Writing Station** where Santa's elves will help kids post their requests off to the North Pole.

Get your skates on and take a trip around the ice at Edinburgh's Christmas **Ice Rink with Jet2holidays** – back bigger

and better than ever before on George Street. The clear undercover rink is the ideal way to take in the majestic Georgian skyline of Edinburgh's New Town whilst embracing the festive spirit and showing off your best moves before warming up with a hot mulled cider at George Street's cosy warming zones.

Take a ride on the **Forth1 Big Wheel**, Scotland's largest festive ferris-wheel standing at 46m tall and providing stunning views of the city's skyline. Or take a ride on the TechnoPower, reach new heights on the Starflyer or take the long way down on the Helter Skelter, all located in East Princes Street Gardens.

## **FAMILY-FRIENDLY LIVE EVENTS**

The iconic **Ross Bandstand** will play host to a programme of free family-friendly events each weekend in the build up to Christmas. The programme features four key themes of LIGHT, MUSIC, DANCE & SANTA and will include live concerts, Diwali Celebrations, ceilidhs, silent discos, carol concerts and even a pup-tastic Santa Paws event.

**Edinburgh's Christmas Opening Concert** will officially launch festivities on Saturday 18 November with a welcome speech from the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, with performances from the Little Stars Big Voices Choir, Dance@Studio21, Siamsoir Irish Dance Performance Troupe, and Sprog Rock.

Other events include the culmination of **Edinburgh Diwali** (19 November) with performances and a dazzling fireworks display; **Sing-a-long Saturday** (2 December) and a **Nativity Carol Concert** (3 December) where you can join the chorus for your favourite Christmas songs; and a **St Andrew's Outdoor Ceilidh** (26 November) in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle. Rounding things off at the Ross Bandstand events is **Santa Paws** (9 December) and the **When You Wish Upon A Star's Santa Fun Run** (10 December). Dress up as Santa and fundraise for a

good cause at the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Edinburgh Santa Fun Run & Walk.

*Events at the Ross Bandstand run Saturdays and Sundays, 18 November – 10 December. Tickets are free or from £4 for the Silent Disco with £1 of every ticket being donated to One City Trust.*

## **FIND THE PERFECT GIFT**

Edinburgh's traditional Christmas Markets are world renowned and this year, over 80 stalls will be located across the city from East Princes Street Gardens to George Street. The local and international stalls will sell everything from handmade gifts and bespoke products to tasty treats and delicious drinks.

The perfect place to pick up gifts for under the tree this year, the Christmas Market in East Princes Street Gardens will welcome independent traders including; **The Edinburgh Natural Skincare Company, LoudElephant, From the Olive Tree, Hairy Fairy Gifts** and returning favourites **The Christmas Nutcracker Shop** and many more.

Shoppers can take a trip down one of the city's most famous streets for shopping as George Street becomes home to a stunning selection of Christmas markets and boutique traders including family-run **Soctopus**, locals **Brownhill Whisky and Native Handicraft**.

Foodies looking for tasty festive treats in East Princes Street Gardens can try out everything from **Ting Thai's** award-winning Pad Thai to hot pies from **Jarvis Pickle Kitchen** and finish off with sweet churros, crepes and waffles, or luxury hot chocolate from **Hector and Harriet**.

For more gift ideas, head to **Local Motive's Christmas Market** on Castle Street from 25 November to 22 December, featuring 22 stalls selling quality made local, fair trade and ethical gift including arts and crafts, food and drinks.



Pic Greg Macvean 13/11/2023

Capital Theatres – Press launch of Peter Pan Panto at Festival Theatre

## **SPREADING CHRISTMAS CHEER**

It's not just the city centre that gets into the Christmas Spirit, with festive exhibitions and events taking place across Edinburgh.

Pantomime favourites Allan Stewart, Grant Stott and Jordan Young join **The Pantomime Adventures of Peter Pan** (25 Nov – 31 Dec) at the Festival Theatre; The Snow Queen (23 Nov – 31 December) makes her way to The Lyceum, the Balkan bad boys of puppetry bring **Boris & Sergey's A Christmas Carol (A Cabaret)** (12 – 21 December) to Assembly Roxy and the 14<sup>th</sup> annual **Edinburgh International Magic Festival** (20 – 31 December) comes to Edinburgh with performances from Elliot Bibby, Cameron Gibson, Kevin Quantum, and more.

**Christmas at the Botanic** (16 Nov – 30 December) returns with a magical, botanical illuminated trail for all ages; **The Polar**

**Express Edinburgh** steams its way into Waverley Station for a thrilling theatrical experience; and Christmas at the Palace takes place at the Palace of Holyroodhouse with Exclusive Evening Tours and a Carol Concert in the State Apartments.

Summerhall hosts its **Big Christmas Weekend** (1 – 3 Dec) with arts, Christmas creativity, and wreath making workshop; the **Christmas Arts Market** (2 – 10 Dec) returns to Out of the Blue Drill Hall; **Edinburgh's Zoo Winter Village** (1 Dec – 7 Jan) comes to Corstorphine; and the **Tron Kirk Market** (1 Nov – 1 Jan) boasts over 20 Scottish artists and designers all affiliated with the Scottish Design Exchange.

*Details of Christmas events across Edinburgh can be found at [www.edwinterfest.com](http://www.edwinterfest.com)*

**Culture and Communities Convener, Councillor Val Walker said:** “It’s fantastic that Edinburgh’s Christmas is opening to the public this week, and I can’t wait to experience the magic alongside our residents and visitors. For six weeks our city is transformed into a true winter wonderland with a wide range of activities for people of all ages. From the Ice Rink on George Street, to the Botanical Gardens being lit up, the amazing Christmas market in Princes Street Gardens and so much more we’re truly spoilt for choice.

“We’re exceptionally proud of the internationally stellar reputation that our Winter Festivals command and I’m sure this year will be every bit as special.”

Edinburgh’s Christmas, produced by UniqueAssembly on behalf of City of Edinburgh Council, will take place across four locations throughout the capital this year with events in East Princes Street Gardens, West Princes Street Gardens, St Andrew Square and George Street. Full programme information and tickets to attractions and events are available now via [www.edinburgh-christmas.com](http://www.edinburgh-christmas.com).



Sammy Bishop of Paraffle and Luna Xue of Westmount Art are both local traders and this year will be their first time at the Edinburgh Christmas market. Santa will be in St Andrew Square telling stories PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter