

# **Edinburgh's Christmas begins next month...**

**While it is only the beginning of October, UniqueAssembly who produce Edinburgh's Christmas, already have their plans made to entertain Edinburgh this festive season.**

The old favourites will be back with the Festive Wheel, Santa Stories, the ice rink on George Street, the StarFlyer and the funfair. Christmas markets will be sited in East Princes Street Gardens, and a new Christmas Tree Maze will take over St Andrew Square. The Santa Run will take place for the 20th year and there will be free entertainment for families at the Ross Bandstand in November and December.

Charities will benefit – Social Bite, When You Wish Upon a Star, OneCity Trust and the Simon Community Scotland.

And there are the usual resident discounts for those with an EH postcode.

**The programme runs from 15 November until 4 January.**

- The Christmas Market – East Princes Street Gardens – food and drink stalls and locally made crafts
- Edinburgh's Christmas Big Wheel is an easier option than the thrills of the 80M Around the World Starflyer.
- Festive Family Funfair opens on 16 November
- The Winter Warmer Zone offers food and drink – including

hot chocolate

- Winter Windows Walk will have artwork specially created by schoolchildren

## **At the Ross Bandstand**

- Light Night Concert 17 November
- St Andrew's Day Ceilidh 30 November
- Nativity Carol Concert 1 December
- Santa Run for When You Wish Upon a Star on 8 December

## **On George Street**

- The ice rink will be in the usual place at the west end of George Street with a 120 metre long rink and a viewing gallery.
- Festive Workshops further along George Street where everyone can learn a new skill such as wreath making or ice carving – alongside a new warming area with live entertainment.

## **St Andrew Square**

- The Christmas Tree Maze will be the biggest in Scotland with 450 illuminated Christmas trees and “festive surprises”
- Santa's Stories in the Piccolo Spiegel tent – book a slot to hear the Christmas tales from the man in red
- The Santa Postbox will be in the Square to receive children's letters

Edinburgh's Christmas attractions are open daily except

Christmas Day, with varying opening dates and times available at the official website. For further information and to buy tickets (from noon Friday 4 October), please go to [www.edinburghwinterfestivals.com](http://www.edinburghwinterfestivals.com)

Culture and Communities Convener Cllr Val Walker, said: "Edinburgh at Christmas is a magical experience, and it's exciting to be announcing such a varied programme of events and attractions for 2024. We will see the return of many favourites like the Traditional Christmas Market, Santa Stories and Big Wheel, as well as a brand-new Christmas Tree Maze in St Andrew Square!

"We want Edinburgh's Christmas to be a welcoming and inclusive experience for everyone, and this packed programme has something for families and Christmas enthusiasts of all ages. We are especially proud of the opportunities it affords to raise funds for local charities. The free tickets donated to charities and community groups will help spread Christmas joy across the capital. We're also looking forward to supporting other events in communities across the city"

Roddy Smith, Chief Executive and Director of the city centre Business Improvement District, Essential Edinburgh, said: "Christmas is a special time of year for everyone, it is also a really important trading period for our city centre retailers and hospitality businesses.

"We are delighted to partner with Unique Assembly to support this year's Edinburgh's Christmas activities encouraging our residents and visitors to come into the city centre to enjoy themselves. With the now well-established Ice Rink on the West End of George Street joined by the new Christmas Tree Maze in St Andrew Square Garden, we have festive fun for all ages all the way from the West End to the St James Quarter."

A spokesperson for Unique Assembly, producers of Edinburgh's Christmas, who will run the Christmas festivities for the next

three years, said: "We are thrilled to unwrap the first exciting attractions for this year's Edinburgh's Christmas, with a seven-week programme packed full of family favourites, plus new events and attractions to be announced. This year's event promises to be one of the biggest and best ever, and we look forward to welcoming everyone when we open doors in only six short weeks!"



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Ice Rink © Chris Scott





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