

# EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY SANTA SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE

## EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY'S SANTA SPECIALS JUST GOT MORE MAGICAL

- Tickets for Santa Special on sale NOW
- Santa Specials are more magical than ever
  - Tickets are from £18.00 per person
- Around 41,000 Santa Special tickets were sold in Christmas 2018
- Ticket sales are vital for keeping the heritage railway running



It's officially less than 100 days until Christmas, so what better time to embrace your inner Ho Ho Ho (as Santa would say) as tickets for the East Lancashire Railway's famous "Santa Specials" are now on sale and more magical than ever before!

Running for over thirty years, thousands-upon-thousands of people from across the North West and beyond have celebrated the festive season on one of the ELR's "Santa Specials" trips - becoming a family tradition for many.

Last year, ELR saw a record breaking year welcoming over 41,000 people on its "Santa Special" trains - with the event selling out at the start of November and demand so high the heritage railway had to start a waiting list for families keen to join the festive fun. 2019 is set to prove just as popular with new additions to add some extra special touches.

Passengers will be immersed in Christmas magic from the moment they step into the beautifully decorated Bury Bolton Street Station, before boarding a steam train for an hour and a half long ride through Lancashire's very own winter wonderland, the stunning Irwell Valley.

Say hello to costumed characters, listen to a traditional brass band, join in with carol singing and be mesmerised by on-board magicians as Father Christmas himself makes his way through the train, handing presents and goodies to children and adults.

New for 2019, each child will be gifted a chocolate lolly and bespoke activity pack as well as juice and biscuits in a keepsake ELR branded drawstring bag, while grown-ups will be

treated to a mince pie and festive tippie and the opportunity to have a go at the Great Christmas Treasure Hunt in our Bury Transport Museum.

Mike Kelly, Chairman of the East Lancashire Railway, said: "Our Santa Specials have a reputation for being one of the best Christmas experiences in, not only the North West, but the country as a whole. We are delighted that people think so highly of our volunteer run event and pride ourselves on the experience we offer. But not one to rest on our laurels we have added some extra touches this year to make the experience even more memorable, including presenting the gifts in an ELR branded drawstring bag, massively reducing our plastic waste. The new bags are beautifully branded, re-usable and make a special souvenir for our younger visitors.

"While "Santa Specials" is the highlight of our calendar, they are also vital to the preservation of the line. The East Lancashire Railway is a registered charity that is run predominantly by over 800 volunteers - relying on the help of our supporters, public donations and events like this to keep it going. Thanks to the support of our "Santa Specials" visitors, we can protect and preserve the line for the enjoyment of future generations."

Only a 30 minute tram journey from Manchester, the event has become a Christmas tradition for many families in the North West and beyond, providing an alternative to the traditional Santa's grotto.

It's advised that you book your place on the Santa Specials early to avoid disappointment!

The Santa Specials will run this year on 30 November and then in December on the 1st, 7th, 8th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th.

Tickets are from £18.00 per person

For more information see East Lancashire Railway's website [www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk](http://www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk)

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