

# WHERE TO SEE SANTA

Get in the Christmas spirit with a visit to Mr and Mrs Claus and their team of elves and reindeers!



They know if you've been naughty or nice!

## FINNISH LAPLAND DAY TRIP

With snow piled high, pine trees, log cabins, and the atmospheric half-light of the short daytime, a trip to this winter wonderland is like stepping into a Christmas card. Day trips mean an early start and late finish, but the memories make that worthwhile. Children can learn elf language, decorate biscuits in Mrs Claus's kitchen, and admire ice sculptures. Santa gives every child a present and poses for photos, before you head outdoors for huskies, sleigh rides, snowmobiles and fireside hot berry juice. Lunch is served in the underground grotto, while elves put on a show.

**THE COST** Thomson's Santa's Secret Grotto day in Rovaniemi costs from £395pp with flights available from six UK airports; [thomson.co.uk](http://thomson.co.uk), 0871 230 2555.



Finnish elves put on a show

## STEAM ALONG WITH SANTA

Steam railways all over the UK add Santa specials to their timetables...

### \* Spa Valley Railway, Tunbridge Wells and Eridge

Expect face painting, a Spot the Snowman competition and time in Santa's sleigh. Tickets: Adults, £14; children, £12; [spavalleyrailway.co.uk/product.php/17/santa-specials](http://spavalleyrailway.co.uk/product.php/17/santa-specials).

### \* Avon Valley Railway, Bitton, South Gloucester

Photos with Santa on the platform, mince pies and festive biscuits for everyone await. Tickets: From £10pp; [avonvalleyrailway.org](http://avonvalleyrailway.org)

### \* Brecon Mountain Railway, Pant, Merthyr Tydfil

There's mulled wine and mince pies for adults and gifts for all. Tickets: Adult, £14.75; child, £12.50; [breconmountainrailway.co.uk/santa-specials](http://breconmountainrailway.co.uk/santa-specials).

### \* Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, West Yorkshire

Beware Mr Scrooge, who tries to throw presents off the train! Tickets: £17pp; [kwvr.co.uk/events-and-experiences/festive-santa-specials](http://kwvr.co.uk/events-and-experiences/festive-santa-specials).



Here comes Santa Claus!





Walking in a winter wonderland

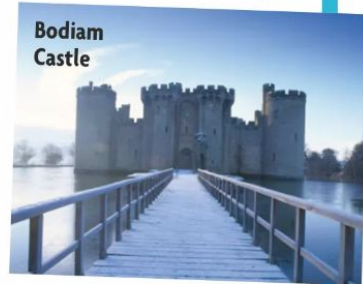
## LAPLAND UK

The excitement extends far beyond your four-hour visit at this Berkshire attraction. Beforehand, Father Christmas sends children a personalised invitation to help with toymaking, then, on Christmas Day, there's a thank-you note. Once you enter the snowy forest through the magical door, activities abound: toymaking with the elves, helping Mother Christmas in the kitchen, ice skating, meeting reindeer and huskies, and filling up on seasonal treats. The highlight is meeting Father Christmas, primed with info about each child. You'll take home a photo and husky toy.

**THE COST** From £65.50pp; [laplanduk.co.uk](http://laplanduk.co.uk).

## SPEND TIME WITH THE TRUST

Help Father Christmas prepare for the season at some of the National Trust's most stunning locations nationwide. See Father Christmas in Tudor costume at Terice in Cornwall or help make decorations in Santa's grotto at Bodiam Castle in East Sussex. There's a Hansel and Gretel theme at Hughenden in Buckinghamshire – and a present from Santa. See Santa's washing drying and a map of his Christmas Eve route



Bodiam Castle

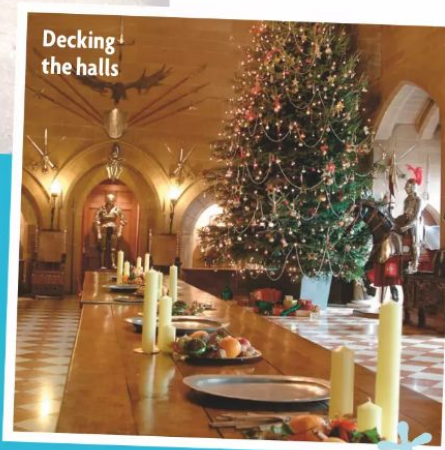
at Acorn Bank in Cumbria and get your Magical Kingdom Passport stamped on arrival at The Argy, Co Armagh.

**THE COST** From £2.50, plus usual admission charges; [nationaltrust.org.uk/features/visit-father-christmas](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/features/visit-father-christmas).

## MEET RUDOLF AND FRIENDS

Little animal lovers will go wild for Santa's 100+ reindeer at Blithbury Reindeer Lodge, near Rugeley in Staffordshire. Get up close to stroke and feed them, take a reindeer-sleigh ride before meeting Santa. Enrol in Elf School to learn about reindeer training, then pick a present, settle down for fireside storytime and make an edible snowman with the elves.

**THE COST** Adults from £9.95; children from £14.95; [blithburyreindeerlodge.co.uk/christmas-at-blithbury](http://blithburyreindeerlodge.co.uk/christmas-at-blithbury).



Decking the halls

## BREAKFAST AT A CASTLE

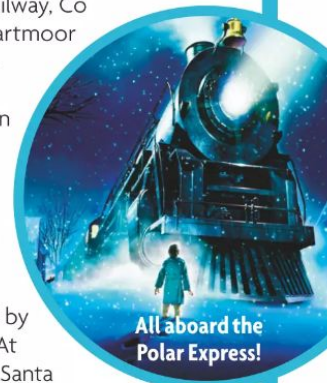
Enjoy early-morning access to this medieval castle, as elves lead the way to the Great Hall. You'll be greeted by Mrs Claus before you sit down in the State Dining Room for a full English breakfast – and Santa's arrival. After breakfast, enjoy games with Mrs Claus and the elves, receive a personalised present from Santa, then listen to Santa's storytelling.

**THE COST** Santa's Stately Breakfast places cost £55pp, including castle attractions, such as the Horrible Histories Maze and the trebuchet, plus turrets, towers and dungeons; [warwick-castle.com](http://warwick-castle.com).

## NEXT STOP... NORTH POLE

For Polar Express fans, two (non-steam) train trips bring the story alive, on Weardale Railway, Co Durham, and Dartmoor Railway, Devon. Travelling in pyjamas, children are served hot chocolate and cookies while listening to the story and have their golden tickets punched by the conductor. At the North Pole, Santa Claus and the elves give each child a silver bell from Santa's sleigh.

**THE COST** Adults from £23; children £18; [weardale-railway.com/polar-landing-page](http://weardale-railway.com/polar-landing-page).



All aboard the Polar Express!



Take a reindeer sleigh ride