



## **WILTSHIRE LIGHTS UP FOR CHRISTMAS**

Wiltshire is playing host to a fun-packed programme of festive fun and entertainment this Christmas, with activities taking place across the county. Here are some of VisitWiltshire's favourite festive highlights.

**Longleat Safari & Adventure Park** is to stage Europe's largest ever display of giant Chinese lanterns in their new 'Festival of Light' event (14 November – 4 January).

Featuring hundreds of enormous illuminated creations, some 18 metres tall, including Chinese dragons and pagodas alongside giant recreations of some of the Safari Park's famous animals.

Visitors will also be able to enjoy the extraordinary experience of traditional Chinese 'face-changing' opera where performers magically transform elaborate masks in an instant, alongside Longleat's traditional Christmas celebrations, including the Santa Train and Ice Skating Rink.

Salisbury will once again be a focal point for the festive season with Christmas carols and Christmas services at **Salisbury Cathedral** together with the popular **Salisbury Christmas Market** opening from 27 November to 20 December.

Visitors can expect to find lots of tasteful, inspiring, high quality gifts and festive goods including arts and crafts with a strong emphasis on British products, amongst local choirs and festive music.

If it's entertainment you're after then Mother Goose is the Christmas production at **Salisbury Playhouse**. Open from 3 December – 10 January this family pantomime is packed full of plenty of laughs and silly yolks, eggcellent music and audience participation - Mother Goose will be eggceptional entertainment for all ages!

The **Cross Keys Shopping Centre** offers an eclectic range of shops, restaurants, events and activities making Salisbury an excellent place to eat, shop and explore and be entertained, during the festive season.

Devizes has some exciting Christmas events including a Santa Cruise on the **Kennet & Avon Canal** 13 - 14 & 20 – 23 December – only £7.50pp. On 28 November the **Devizes Christmas Festival** will be full of festive fun including Christmas markets, live music and street theatre shows leading up to Father Christmas turning on the Christmas Lights and culminating with a fireworks display.

The most eagerly awaited feature is the gigantic parade of lanterns made by children and community groups from Devizes and the surrounding area. The parade consists of around 2,000 people who circle the town before returning to the market place.

**Warminster Town Council** is holding a magical Christmas Market on Saturday 29 November at the Civic Centre, with stallholders providing gift ideas including crafts, jewellery, baby gifts, toys, pottery, woodturning and fresh produce. Festive cheer will be provided by carol singers and Father Christmas will be in his grotto.

Children can also meet Father Christmas at **Stourhead** in his new magical grotto from 6 – 21 December. Families can write their letters to the jolly man in red, and make Christmas cards and festive decorations together. Local choirs will provide entertainment and encourage you to join in with the seasonal songs. Timed tickets for Father Christmas will be subject to availability each day, £5 per child which includes a present.

Why not take a ride on the **Swindon & Cricklade Santa Train Specials** on selected dates between 29 November to 21 December? Or experience a Dickensian Christmas at the **Trowbridge Museum** where Christmas activities and a new exhibition will be open from 29 November.

Lady Lansdowne's festive shopping celebration returns for its third year with the **Bowood House** Christmas Extravaganza set to take place from Wednesday 3 - Friday 5 December.

The three-day event will include a wealth of gift stalls spreading out from the House Restaurant, through to the Sculpture Gallery and into the Orangery. With carols in the Chapel, roaring fires, candles, good food and mulled wine, all combine to make this a stylish pre-Christmas shopping event.

Join Dick Whittington, Alice Fitzwarren and loveable Tommy the Cat on an enchanting pantomime adventure at the **Wyvern Theatre, Swindon**.

Opening from 6 December to 4 January this dazzling production will be spectacularly brought to life with an abundance of comedy, stunning sets and fabulous costumes – plus, as you have come to expect from the Wyvern Theatre's annual pantomime, Dick Whittington promises plenty of audience participation.

### **Christmas Getaways Special Offers**

If you are looking for a large family getaway **Beechfield House** is offering an exclusive use two-night Christmas package arriving Christmas Eve and checking out Boxing day and including all food and accommodation for only £375pp for a min of 40 guests!

Why not escape the stresses of a family Christmas and getaway to the **Old Manor Hotel** for their two night Christmas escape? Christmas Eve to Boxing Day from £225 per person based on two sharing. It includes a three course dinner on Christmas Eve, a Bucks Fizz breakfast and a Christmas stocking to wake up to as well as a five course Christmas dinner.

Alternatively, a relaxing week-long Christmas holiday at **Church Farm Country Cottages** from 22 – 29 December is only £655 in a tastefully converted 4 star single storey cottage which sleeps 2.

**Mayfield House Hotel**, near Malmsbury, is offering coach transport to Bath Christmas Market for only £10pp which include free coffee and croissant prior to departure. Ideal if you don't want to drive/park & pay! Any Sun to Thurs from 27 November – 14 December (w/end +£5 pp); A two-night stay is only £108 pppn or four nights only £200 pp. Free Tickets to Westonbirt's Christmas Illuminated Enchanted Woods event with 2 night weekend stay only £59 pppn.

Let your hair down and party with the **Cathedral Hotel** overnight New Year Party Break from only £149 per double room based on two sharing. Enjoy a three-course New Year's

Eve dinner and then party until late. Wake up to a New Year's Day breakfast and add New Year's Day overnight B&B for an extra £70 per room.

There are many places in Wiltshire to see Christmas Lights being switched on – these range from Bradford on Avon on 21 November – Chippenham on 29 November.

**For further information about what there is to see and do in Wiltshire this Christmas please visit [www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/whats-on/christmas](http://www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/whats-on/christmas) Follow us on Twitter @VisitWiltshire. Please note group rates may apply.**

### **Editors' Notes**

**Issued by VisitWiltshire. For further information, images or to request a familiarisation visit please contact Travel Trade & PR Manager, Florence Wallace on 01722 341309 or 07436 588860 or email [flowallace@visitwiltshire.co.uk](mailto:flowallace@visitwiltshire.co.uk)**

VisitWiltshire was established in August 2011 and is the official Tourist Board for Wiltshire. It is a private sector membership organisation representing over 550 members.

VisitWiltshire's priority is to grow the county's Visitor Economy by raising awareness of the destination and generating additional tourism visits and spend. Wiltshire's Visitor Economy currently generates an estimated £1.4billion and supports over 27,000 jobs.