

EDINBURGH'S CHRISTMAS 2017

Edinburgh's Christmas celebrates biggest ever season with 13% increase in ticket sales

EDINBURGH'S CHRISTMAS IMAGES HERE:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/i5ck67blvmwdodo/AAAIkSHLN3oJNoCNwB5QDYToa?dl=0>



2017 marked the fifth year of Underbelly producing Edinburgh's Christmas for the City of Edinburgh Council and the biggest ever year for the city's six weeks long festive celebrations!

A record-breaking 781,520 tickets were snapped up to Edinburgh's Christmas rides, attractions and shows, a 13% increase on last year's 690,878 tickets with people from 47 countries enjoying all that Edinburgh's Christmas has to offer.

Locals got in on the action too and took advantage of their 20% discount with 142,333 tickets booked by Edinburgh residents, up 9% on 2016's number.

Edinburgh's Christmas's East Princes Street Gardens Christmas Market was also named as the best in UK (in a survey conducted by McCarthy & Stone).

1290 children from Edinburgh schools submitted their stained-glass artworks with the theme of 2050 Edinburgh City Vision to the **Winter Windows** competition with the 44 winners from 33 schools displayed in 5 different locations around Edinburgh: West Parliament Square, outside St Giles just off the Royal Mile, in Leith's Kirkgate Plaza, Craigmillar Library, Drumbrae Library and Westside Plaza, Westerhailes.

Brand new this year, **Edinburgh's Giant Advent Calendar**, a free outdoor attraction created by Underbelly and Double Take Projections, was projected onto General Register House each evening from 1 December until 24 December, revealing one exciting glimpse into Edinburgh's winter history every day for the enjoyment of the passers-by.

The Ice Adventure: A Journey Through Frozen Scotland attracted crowds to the west end of George Street, admiring over 200 ice sculptures charting Scottish history and mythology, including Robert The Bruce, Mary Queen of Scots, Kelpies, Loch Ness monster and fairies.

Festival Square Spiegeltent hosted the one and only **La Clique Noël**, an outrageous and unforgettable night of cabaret and burlesque, featuring the sword-swallowing, fire-breathing Heather Holliday, Craig the Incredible Hula Boy and spandex-wrapped Scotty the Blue Bunny, among others.

In a partnership with Edinburgh Trams, Edinburgh's Christmas invited schoolchildren from across the city to design a special **Christmas and Hogmanay tram** to brighten up the city's streets this winter.

Almost 1.8M people watched Edinburgh's Christmas [vlog entry](#) from a popular vlogger Zoella!

Charlie Wood and Ed Bartlam, Directors, Edinburgh's Christmas said: "What another bumper year with record tickets sales and more locals than ever engaging in Edinburgh's Christmas. In our fifth year of producing the event, we were delighted to introduce some great new attractions, most especially the Ice Adventure which transported visitors into an historical and mythical Scottish winter wonderland.

"We are especially proud of the extension of Winter Windows out of the city centre and into local communities and of the introduction of Edinburgh's Giant Advent Calendar – both entirely free attractions that help spread Christmas joy across the city."

Edinburgh's Lord Provost, Frank Ross said: "Edinburgh's Christmas was a real show-stopper, with more tickets sold than ever before, a welcome rise in the number of Edinburgh

residents enjoying their local discount, and people from 47 countries flying in to experience the city's rides, attractions and everything the city has to offer.

“In its fifth year, Edinburgh's Christmas certainly remains one of the UK's favourite winter destinations. Today's figures prove the Festival continues to attract record numbers of visitors and supports footfall to the city centre - providing a welcome boost to our local economy while bringing everyone together to enjoy Edinburgh in winter. A huge well done to everyone involved.”

John Donnelly, Chief Executive, Marketing Edinburgh said: “Edinburgh's Christmas 2017 offering exceeded expectations and has proven incredibly popular with visitors and residents alike. To have the city recognised as hosting the UK's best Christmas Market was a huge highlight. The expansion of the event's footprint, stretching it from General Register House at the East End of Princes Street to Festival Square, was particularly successful in encouraging people to further explore the city centre's shops, bars and restaurants.”

Roddy Smith, Chief Executive of Essential Edinburgh said: “We are delighted that Edinburgh's Christmas continues to go from strength to strength, with the numbers of both visitors and locals enjoying all that the festive season in the city can offer up again this year.

“The Edinburgh's Christmas celebration, which is supported by Essential Edinburgh, is recognised throughout the world as making Scotland's Capital the place to be at this time of year, driving footfall, trade and opportunities for our retail and hospitality sectors in particular at this vital trading time.”

/ENDS

Notes to editors:

This year's Edinburgh's Christmas celebrations take place between 18 November 2018 and 5 January 2019.

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Edinburgh's Christmas

Edinburgh's Christmas is one of the most popular Christmas celebrations in the UK. 2017 saw the biggest, brightest and best programme of events and entertainment to date. This year the refreshed celebration expanded across the city from East to West, North to South and into community hubs outside the city centre. A new feature, ***the Ice Adventure*** – a Journey Through Frozen Scotland came to the west end of George Street offering residents and visitors a stunning new attraction made of snow and ice. Another new offering this year was ***Edinburgh's Giant Advent Calendar***, this free attraction, created by Double Take Projections, was projected nightly onto General Register House, with 24 glimpses of Edinburgh winters from years gone-by, one revealed each day. In a partnership with Edinburgh Trams, Edinburgh's Christmas has invited schoolchildren from across the city to design a special **Christmas and Hogmanay tram** to brighten up the city's streets this winter.

Underbelly

Underbelly is a UK based live entertainment company whose beginnings were rooted in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2000, where its events and festivals division now operates one of the largest operations.

2017 marks their fifth year producing Edinburgh's Christmas for the City of Edinburgh Council, and their first year producing Edinburgh's Hogmanay (also for the City of Edinburgh Council), one of the leading New Year festivals lasting 3 days in Scotland's stunning capital city drawing an estimated 150,000 people from Scotland and around the world.

Elsewhere, Underbelly also produces Underbelly Festival on the Southbank in London one of the biggest multi-arts offerings in London - 2018 will be its 10th year, Christmas in Leicester Square, Underbelly Festival in Hong Kong, West End Live in Trafalgar Square for Westminster City Council and the Society of London Theatre and Pride in London, the second largest annual event in London after the Marathon. Through its Underbelly Productions arm it produces and promotes live shows in London's West End, throughout the UK and on tour internationally and recently opened its revival of Clarke Peters' Five Guys Named Moe in a specially constructed temporary theatre in Marble Arch, London.

In 2016, Underbelly sold over 1.3 million tickets to its various events. www.underbelly.co.uk