



For Immediate Release
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**EXPLORE CHARLESTON AND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF THE LOWCOUNTRY
UNVEIL THE CHARLESTON SANTA**

Santa Experience and Toy Drive to Spread Holiday Cheer

CHARLESTON, SC – In a joyous collaboration that blends the enchantment of the holiday season with a commitment to community, Explore Charleston and the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry invite families to visit The Charleston Santa, the area's newest holiday festivity.

Beginning Friday, November 24, The Best Friend Train Museum, conveniently situated between the downtown visitor center and the Children's Museum, will host The Charleston Santa. Each weekend between Thanksgiving and Christmas, children are invited to visit with the jolly old elf himself. Families will receive a free photo to commemorate the occasion.

There is no charge for the event, though reservations are required since space is limited.

The Charleston Santa not only welcomes families seeking a magical Santa experience, it also creates an educational opportunity for visitors to learn more about the Best Friend of Charleston train and aims to make a meaningful impact by supporting Toys for Tots. Attendees are encouraged to contribute to the joy by helping Explore Charleston and the Children's Museum reach their goal to "fill the train" with new, unwrapped toys.

"In conversations with the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry, we saw an opportunity to bring additional attention to the Best Friend of Charleston while simultaneously creating a quality experience for our community and visitors that adds to the magic of the Charleston area during the holidays. Many people might not realize we're home to America's first passenger steam locomotive. When families visit with Santa they'll not only learn about this part of Charleston's history, they'll also have an opportunity to give back in a way that truly reflects our community's values. The Charleston Santa is set to become a hallmark of holidays in the Lowcountry," said Helen Hill, CEO of Explore Charleston.

Karen Coltrane, President and CEO of the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry, emphasized the importance of encouraging the spirit of giving in young minds.

"It is sometimes challenging for parents during the holidays to find ways to instill in young children the importance of giving to others. So, we were thrilled that Explore Charleston looked to us to bring this element to the partnership," said Coltrane.

The Children's Museum will have a holiday pop-up toy store located in The Best Friend Train Museum. All toy purchases benefit the Children's Museum's programs for families facing financial challenges.

The Children's Museum will also host the Elf Emporium, a shop exclusively for children ages 8 and under, where they can select pre-wrapped gifts for their parents, siblings, grandparents, and even pets.

The Charleston Santa welcomes families Nov. 24 (10:00am-6:00pm); Nov. 25 - 26, Dec. 2 - 3, Dec. 9 - 10, Dec. 16 - 17 (10:00am-4:00pm); Dec. 22 (10:00am-6:00pm) and Dec. 23 (10:00am-4:00pm).

An opportunity is available for those with sensory sensitivities on December 10 (10:00am-12:00pm).

For more details and to make reservations, visit thecharlestonsanta.com. For hi-resolution images visit the [link here](#).

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About Explore Charleston:

As the region's destination marketing and management organization, Explore Charleston represents ten municipalities across three counties. It seeks to unify and lead the local travel industry in marketing the Charleston area, create overnight visitation, and support responsible development through travel and tourism strategies.

About Children's Museum of the Lowcountry:

At the heart of Charleston, the non-profit Children's Museum of the Lowcountry provides its 150,000 annual visitors with innovative learning experiences that equip and inspire children to become creative problem solvers.