

## **Railway To Give Passengers A Taste of Christmas**

Cumbrian visitor attraction, Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, is celebrating Christmas tradition and alluding to the Western Lake District's strong culinary ties to the spice trade, by running 'Mince Pie Trains' on certain dates in December.

All travellers buying a Ride All Day ticket during the brown and blue timetabled services (until Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>) – will be offered a free mince pie in its Turntable Café at Ravenglass.

A token for the mince pie will be given at the Ravenglass ticket desk and passengers can decide when in their day to exchange it for their festive treat at the Turntable Café.

Mince pies have 13<sup>th</sup> century origins, with crusaders bringing recipes back with them from the Middle East. The port of Whitehaven once buzzed with ships engaged in the spice, rum and slave trade and mince pies were packed with spices such as cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg, along with minced meat, suet, dried fruits and sugar.

The pies were once associated with Catholic idolatry and frowned upon by Puritans, but they survived and made their way into the Victorian era, when they became a little daintier, losing their original long oblong shape.

In Cumbria, mince pies were hugely popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and were made with minced lamb, sugar, orange peel and rum. Called stanning pies, because they would be left to stand for a while, they were referenced by Dorothy Wordsworth in a Journal entry of 1801.

Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway's marketing manager, Lisa Braithwaite, says: "We are looking forward to treating our passengers to a little bit of Cumbrian and Christmas tradition, although our mince pies will be meat-free and made to a modern fruit and spice recipe.

"Our December weekends will lead into our Twixmas period, when we shall run trains between December 26 and 31 and then on January 1 and 2. We shall then give our locos a short break, with them then running again from February 10. We hope to see as many local and visiting families as possible, enjoying the stunning winter views from our snug, covered carriages before we put the locos into their blankets."

More information is available at [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk)

ENDS

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