

Head to Cumbria to See Levens Hall's Festive First

Levens Hall and Gardens, the stunning Elizabethan house close to Kendal in Cumbria, whose gardens include the world's oldest topiary garden, has created a 'first' for those wishing to see both house and garden in a unique and festive way.

Although traditionally closed over winter, Levens Hall and Gardens is this year laying on what promises to be one of the UK's most memorable festive events. Between December 16 and 20 inclusive, visitors can enter the candlelit home in full Christmas splendour and view the topiary garden in a brand-new way.

From 4pm to 8pm each day of this event, visitors can tour the house, revelling in festive decorations designed by the head gardener, Chris Crowder, and Tallulah Rose Flowers. With flickering candles, plus a unique ambience from seasonal scents and sights, the Elizabethan property, renowned for its fine oak panelling and ornate plasterwork, as well as its furniture, clocks, paintings and links to the Stuart Court and the Duke of Wellington, will look stunning and wow visitors with this exceptional fusion of past and present.

Levens Hall and Gardens is also illuminating its topiary garden in a spectacular manner, enabling visitors to view it not only at a time of year at which access is not usually available but also by dark. The famously shaped trees, ranging from the huge Giant Umbrella tree to Queen Elizabeth and her Maids of Honour, with all manner of other forms and geometric shapes in between, will look stunning and highly photogenic in this very different environment.

Hot food, mulled wine and mince pies, and waffles and ice cream will be available from Levens Kitchen café and The Goat Shed, whilst a bar in the Howard Room with its roaring log-burner fire, will help build a warm glow. Meanwhile, the Levens Hall courtyard will host a Christmas market, with a variety of local food and drink and artisan crafts suppliers offering lots of gift inspiration, further enriched by Levens Hall's own Potting Shed Gift Shop. Heading home without a bottle of Levens Hall's famous secret recipe, Morocco Ale, would be a real shame, especially as former residents went to such lengths to hide the recipe from Cromwell's troops during the English Civil War!

Tickets for this festive extravaganza, at one of the UK's most intriguing properties and in the world's most ancient topiary garden, cost £10 for adults, £6 for children aged 5-16 (with under 5s free of charge) and £29 for a family ticket (2 adults + up to 3 children). Head to www.levenshall.co.uk to book, whilst tickets are available.

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Press calls: Jane Hunt, Catapult PR, 01253 446925 – jane@catapultpr.co.uk