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All Aboard! 3 Festive Trains to Catch This Holiday Season

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Frisco Sing-Along Steam Train at Silver Dollar City. (Source:Photo provided by MBPR)

Trains are one of the hallmark symbols of the holiday season: they're featured in movies, model versions of locomotives chug around the base of Christmas trees, and their likeness can be found hanging from trees or fastened to wreaths.

The first-ever passenger steam locomotive in the United States ran on Christmas Day in 1830. Here are three experiences for family-friendly fun to celebrate this holiday season.

The Polar Express Train Ride on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad Cumberland, Maryland

This holiday season the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad invites families to wear their favorite pajamas

and take a trip to the "North Pole" on a magical journey inspired by "The Polar Express."

During the 65-minute journey, which originates in downtown Cumberland and climbs high into the Allegheny Mountains to the magical North Pole, passengers will enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, singing, dancing and a reading of the famous book.

Upon arrival in the "North Pole," Santa will greet guests and present the first gift of Christmas. On the return trip, everyone is gifted with a silver sleigh bell (which — as you might remember if you've read the book — can be heard by all those who truly believe).

Frisco Sing-Along Steam Train at Silver Dollar City Branson, Missouri

With top-of-the-line entertainment, nearly seven million bright and brilliant lights, and award-winning food, the legendary 1880s-style theme park Silver Dollar City is undeniably one of the nation's most magical holiday destinations.

Located in the beautiful Ozark Mountains of Missouri, Silver Dollar City's An Old Time Christmas has been named "Best Theme Park Holiday Event" four times by USA Today 10 Best. A family favorite among the 40 seasonal rides and attractions is the park's Sing-Along Steam Train.

This 20-minute musical ride takes passengers on a trip through the Ozark Mountain countryside. In addition to the incredible light displays that guests see on the steam train and elsewhere throughout the park, Silver Dollar City has added even more sparkle to An Old Time Christmas with the debut of a first-of-its-kind 80-foot-tall Christmas tree that features hundreds of thousands of dancing lights.

Holiday Lights Express & Santa Claus Express on Wilmington & Western Railroad Wilmington, Delaware

This season, Wilmington & Western Railroad features two holiday train ride themes. On the Santa Claus Express, families are encouraged to bring their cameras to capture a visit with the Jolly Old Elf himself, who greets everyone on the historic first-generation diesel locomotive during a 90-minute round-trip to Ashland.

If you've already visited with Santa this season and are looking for a relaxing evening excursion instead, experience the 45-minute Holiday Lights Express aboard the Railroad's heated 100-year-old coaches. The trains are decked out with thousands of holiday lights and passengers are sure to enjoy the many decorated homes along the train's route.



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