

Enjoy a wintry day out

Whether you fancy exploring a Christmas market, walking in woodlands or dogsledding in the fresh snow, there are plenty of inspirational trips you can take around the UK this festive season



C. LATHAM SHARP

Clockwise from above: Bristol's German Christmas market; a snowy scene at Stonehenge; sled dogs in the Cairngorms

The days may be short and the weather nippy but that's no reason to spend this winter curled up on the sofa. Many places across the UK come into their own at this time of year, with landscapes treated to a sprinkling of the white stuff and seasonal events adding a sparkle to the streets. So why not hit the road and enjoy a wintry day out? Follow our guide to festive happenings and use a TomTom GO LIVE with HD Traffic to ensure a fun-filled day for all without getting snarled up in traffic.

TomTom HD Traffic monitors all roads in real time so you know exactly what's going on around you before you leave home and during your journey. Armed with this up-to-the-minute information, you can be confident that you're taking the quickest route to your destination, leaving you to enjoy a stress-free drive.

Christmas markets

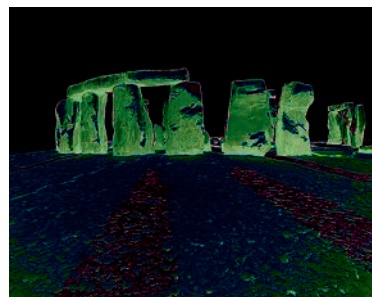
Want to get into the festive spirit? A surefire way is to visit one of the UK's numerous Christmas markets.

Bristol is hosting a brand-new market this year (until 19 December) which celebrates the best in local produce, from mulled Somerset cider and Bristol cheese to handmade jewellery and local photographs. Alongside this, the German market (until 22 December) will be selling traditional foods, wooden toys and crafts.

In Leeds' Millennium Square you'll find Christkindelmarkt (until 19 December), where genuine German traders will be selling handcrafted toys and Christmas decorations, as well as dishing up delicacies such as glühwein, gingerbread and bratwurst.

Seasonal food and drink is also a cornerstone of the Cardiff Christmas

Didn't think you could go dogsledding in the UK? Think again



market (until 23 December), now in its 17th year and bigger than ever. Taking place in the Castle Quarter and the pedestrianised St John's Street, the market sells an ever changing selection of handcrafted Christmas gifts. The castle provides a suitably picturesque backdrop to the festive scene.

Winter walks

There's nothing like a brisk walk in the fresh, winter air to get the blood pumping. Get in your car and drive somewhere new for a walk with invigorating views.

With fewer visitors in winter, now is the perfect time for a stroll at prehistoric marvel Stonehenge. Time your visit for the winter solstice (22 December) and you'll enjoy a rare opportunity to get close to the stones.

For something slightly more energetic, take a hike on the Durham Discovery Trail, a two- to three-hour walk which starts in the city's cobbled streets before heading out along the river Wear. The route returns to the city through woodland where you may spot wildlife such as the rare red squirrel.

Really blow the cobwebs away by hiking a stretch of the dramatic Causeway



Coast in County Antrim. You'll pass windswept sandy beaches, rocky cliffs and the famous Giant's Causeway. If you're feeling brave and the weather allows, you can cross the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, suspended across an 25-metre-deep chasm. You'll be rewarded with incredible views.

Winter sports

Didn't think you could go dogsledding in the UK? Think again. The Cairngorm Sleddog Centre in the Cairngorm mountains offers safaris into the national park on a two-seater sledcart plus the chance to help prepare the 12-dog team.

If that's too wild for you, get your skates on at one of the UK's outdoor ice skating rinks. There are lots of choose from, but one of the best can be found at Newcastle's Life Science Centre. After a spin around the large open-air rink there are delicious mince pies and mulled wine to warm you up.

If the weather isn't quite wintry enough for you, head to a place where it snows every day. The Sno!zone in Milton Keynes offers indoor skiing and snowboarding, plus lessons for all abilities and a freestyle playground for creative high jinks.

PLANNING YOUR JOURNEY

If you're heading out on the road this winter you won't want to spend any more time in the car than you need to. Make the most of your day out with TomTom GO LIVE with HD Traffic – the only traffic system that monitors all the UK's roads, from motorways to country lanes, in real time. The GO LIVE 1000 range comes with free HD Traffic for a year, giving you access to the most accurate and up-to-date traffic information available.

The GO LIVE also features mobile and fixed speed camera alerts, local search with Google to help you pinpoint shops and businesses, and forecasts from TomTom Weather. TomTom is so committed to reducing traffic on the roads that it recently launched a manifesto to reduce congestion for all. Visit tomtom.com/manifesto The TomTom GO LIVE 1000 is available from £249.99.



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