



November 22, 2011

## 8 Extreme Santa Sightings for Kids

Don't worry about missing Santa if you're traveling over the holidays. St. Nick is making extra efforts this year to reach his pint-sized admirers by showing up on skis, trains, boats, and more. These unique Santa meet-and-greet experiences offer more than just the chance to report good behavior and make special gift requests!

### 1. Santa's Workshop, Colorado

This North Pole is actually at the foot of Pikes Peak in Cascade, Colo., and it's where you'll find [Santa's Workshop](#), a Christmas-themed family amusement park with more than two dozen rides, games, shows, shops, eateries, a petting zoo and an arcade. At the village center you can touch the ice-covered North Pole. You might catch Santa riding the miniature train, antique carousel, or aerial tram, but a visit is guaranteed in Santa's House. A fire pit for roasting marshmallows was recently installed, and Santa has been known to stop by there as well.

### 2. North Pole Experience, Arizona

In the White Mountains of eastern Ariz., you can help elves build toys in Santa's workshop. During the [North Pole Experience](#) in Greer, Ariz., visitors begin with dinner at Molly Butlers Ski Lodge, then travel through a magic portal aboard the Candy Cane Express trolley to reach the workshop. After attending Elf University and seeing Santa's Toy Invention Hall of Fame, kids sit in on story time with Mrs. Claus and then meet her hubby. Lodge packages are available to make it an overnight stay.

### 3. Santa Claus, Indiana

You can find Santa's spirit throughout the town named for him: [Santa Claus, Ind.](#) You'll find Claus at his usual haunts, including the Santa Claus Christmas Store and Santa's Candy Castle. You can also have dinner with him and the missus at Santa's Lodge. After dark, families enjoy driving through the 1.2-mile Land of Lights "Family Christmas Light Adventure" to learn the story of Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer. At the top of every hour, "Santa's Great Big LED Tree of Lights" illuminates Kringle Place Shopping Center. While you're there, send your mail from the local post office for the official Santa Claus postmark.

### 4. The Polar Express

You can ride The Polar Express on several railways this season. The evening excursion typically includes storytelling, carols and refreshments before stopping to meet Santa at the North Pole.

[The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad](#) departs from Bryson City, N.C.; [Grand Canyon Railway](#) runs from the Williams Depot in Ariz.; the [Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad](#) rolls out from Durango, Colo.; and the [Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad](#) offers departures from both Akron and Independence, Ohio. Santa and Mrs. Claus leave the North Pole and travel to [Baltimore](#) on November 25, arriving by locomotive into the Roundhouse of the [Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum](#).

## 5. California Surf, California



Trading his sleigh for a surfboard, Santa returns to [Capitola, Calif.](#) on November 26 to hang ten in the surf capital of the Golden State. He rides the waves to Main Beach followed by his reindeer in canoes, and meets children at his beach chair while Donner, Blitzen and the others pass out candy. Further south in [San Diego](#), Santa sails into downtown's [Seaport Village](#) on watercraft, wearing board shorts and flip-flops and taking photos with visitors on his giant surfboard.

The same day, kids will line the docks of the [Petaluma River Turning Basin](#) in historic Petaluma, Calif., awaiting the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Kringle, who float into the downtown harbor aboard a festive tugboat. After disembarking, the couple distributes candy canes from two antique thrones.

## 6. Skiing the Slopes

No stranger to snow, Santa can be found skiing the slopes at several resorts this season. On "Santa Sunday," December 4, at Sunday River in Newry, Maine, some 250 skiers in red suits can be seen from the South Ridge base area. A Claus crowd cuts up [Canyon Resort](#) in [Park City](#), Utah on December 17, when it's "Santa Skis Free Day" and the first 50 guests in costume get a free lift ticket. At the [Crystal Mountain Resort](#) in Washington, Santa shows up on the beginner and intermediate runs on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, passing out candy and taking runs with families. On Christmas Day, he'll also ski with guests at the [Moonlight Basin](#) resort in Big Sky, Mont., and at [Shanty Creek Resorts](#) in Bellaire, Mich.

## 7. In and Around Atlanta

"SCUBA Claus" gets suited up at the [Georgia Aquarium](#) in [Atlanta](#), then plunges into the world's

largest aquatic habitat, Ocean Voyager, to swim with whale sharks and manta rays. Following these daily shows, Santa meets kids in [Holiday Bay](#). At [Stone Mountain Park](#), the annual Christmas celebration includes a nightly parade with Santa as well as the Snow Angel, who flies over the crowd before the fireworks finale. Visitors to historic [Callaway Gardens](#) in Pine Mountain, Ga., can meet Santa in the Christmas Village every day through December 24; then enjoy the "Fantasy In Lights" show with eight million lights.

## **8. Stylish Arrivals**

Accompanied by Chuck Berry's "Run Run Rudolph," Santa zooms into the [National Corvette Museum](#) in Bowling Green, Ky. for breakfast on November 26, driving a bright red Corvette. In Asheville, N.C. Santa will rappel down the 315-ft Chimney Rock at [Chimney Rock State Park](#) on December 3 and 10. Families are invited to watch Santa's daring climb and go to the top themselves to check out the 75-mile panoramic views. In the [Florida Keys](#), Santa floats by in the lighted boat parades in Largo's Blackwater Sound and Key West Harbor on December 10 and in Key Colony Beach in Marathon on December 11. Santa sails into [Waikiki, Hawaii](#) in an outrigger canoe on December 10, greeted by children performing hula. Afterward, he'll take pictures with his fans in the lobby of the [Outrigger Waikiki on the Beach](#) hotel.

*For more holiday family fun, see [5 Festive Holiday Light Shows](#) and [10 Magical Hotels for the Holiday Season](#).*

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