

EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY PRESS RELEASE

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East Lancashire Railway's Dining with Distinction Experiences To Return From May 21

The **East Lancashire Railway (ELR)** is delighted to announce the return of its much-loved Dining with Distinction trains this week.

From Friday, May 21, visitors will once again be able to step on board the traditional Pullman-style carriages to be transported back in time and enjoy a range of luxury dining experiences.

The nostalgic voyage will be hauled by a steam train through the beautiful Irwell Valley, where food-lovers, train enthusiasts and new experience-seekers can treat themselves and their loved ones to Lancastrian Lunches, Red Rose Diners and Murder Mystery nights.

Gift vouchers will be accepted on Dining with Distinction trains, with a range of vouchers now available to purchase for selected experiences, which are valid for 12 to 24 months.

Ahead of its return, the heritage railway has worked closely with the local authority to ensure customers are welcomed back safely and in compliance with the current guidelines.

ELR Chairman Mike Kelly commented: "We are delighted to be resuming our Dining with Distinction experiences, which are really popular with our customers.

"The experiences offer a way of escapism for visitors, who can enjoy a first-class service while journeying through the picturesque Lancashire countryside behind one of our historic steam engines.

"Dining with Distinction is perfect for families, couples and individuals looking for unique experiences that are a little bit different, as the country opens up after a long period of lockdown.

"Delivering a first-class service is at the heart of what we do, so we have ensured that safety measures are firmly in place so visitors can enjoy a grand day out with peace of mind."

ELR has been busy preparing for the next stage of its phased reopening after lockdown restrictions lifted to allow indoor dining and entertainment on Monday, May 17.

The railway's two pubs - The Trackside at Bury Bolton Street Station and Buffer Stops at Rawtenstall Station - welcomed back indoor visitors from Monday, May 17.

The heritage railway has been awarded a We're Good to Go industry standard and consumer mark by VisitBritain. Qualifying businesses must demonstrate that they are adhering to the respective Government and public health guidance, have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and have all required processes in place.

For more information and to book, please visit: www.diningwithdistinction.co.uk and www.eastlancsrailway.org.uk.

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Notes to editors:

ELR opened as a heritage railway in 1987, and hosts around 200,000 visitors annually, as one of the leading visitor attractions in the North West. Operating steam trains from Bolton Street Station in Bury, along a 12.5-mile line between Heywood, in Greater Manchester, and Rawtenstall in Lancashire, the railway was recently recognised with a TripAdvisor Travellers Choice Award for 2020.