

July 2008

### **Make a date, to visit Stoke-on-Trent**

The City of Stoke-on-Trent - world-famous as "The Potteries" - is now looking forward to a number of major upcoming events, which will attract visitors from around the globe throughout 2008, and 2009.

At the top of that list is the planned opening – **in October, 2008** – of the new, purpose-built £10-million Wedgwood Museum.

Described by Wedgwood as "a world class museum which is expected to attract more than 100,000 new visitors a year", it will be the first time in history that the entire Wedgwood collection will have been brought together under one roof. The priceless collection at the company's headquarters in Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent, will contain many of the Wedgwood Museum Trust's 8,000 strong historic ceramics collection, more than 75,000 manuscripts and items of correspondence, plus a fine art collection including works by Stubbs and Reynolds.

The previous, much smaller, Wedgwood Museum at Barlaston closed in 1999 to make way for a new Visitor Centre at the factory. And the majority of its collections have remained hidden from public view ever since.

Hard on the heels of the opening of the new Museum, Wedgwood will offer yet another reason for visiting The Potteries **throughout 2009**, as the company celebrates its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A host of special events and exhibitions is planned to mark the year; and full details will be launched soon.

Before then, however, a relative newcomer to the city – Trentham – will be staging its Christmas Events. And at the heart of these will be the Magical Lakeside Ice Rink, which is carefully positioned so as to create the illusion of actually skating on Trentham Lake. The winter beauty of the gardens, and a visit from Father Christmas, will add to the seasonal celebrations throughout **December 2008**. Other Christmas events, in the City Centre, include a Continental Market from **November 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>**; and the Christmas lights switch-on on **November 13<sup>th</sup>**.

The Stoke-on-Trent Ceramics Festival, meanwhile, is to become an *international* event in 2009, and will be called British Ceramics Biennial. Already recognised as a showcase event for contemporary lifestyle ceramics, it will feature designers, cutting-edge studio potters, experts, and celebrities from around the globe, and will also draw large numbers of collectors and members of the general public into "The Potteries" in **October, 2009**.

As well as increasing the profile of Stoke-on-Trent's artistic and cultural heritage, the Stoke-on-Trent International Ceramics Festival ([www.stokeceramicsfestival.co.uk](http://www.stokeceramicsfestival.co.uk)) will also give the public the chance to invest in studio pottery and other famous name brands - ranging in price from a few pounds, through to several thousand pounds.

Last, but by no means least, The Tour of Britain 2008 will reach Stoke-on-Trent on **September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008**.

For more details, visit [www.visitstoke.co.uk](http://www.visitstoke.co.uk).

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