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**Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park**

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**Santa on the Chimney**

**Chimney Rock hosts family-friendly Christmas events**

Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park will get families in the Christmas spirit early on Saturday, Dec. 2, and Saturday, Dec. 9, when they can visit with Santa while he’s in the Park practicing for his big night.

At 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. on both days, Old St. Nick will practice for his Christmas Eve deliveries by rappelling down the Park’s 315-foot Chimney.

“Santa could practice on any Chimney in the world, so we’re honored that he keeps coming back to Chimney Rock year after year to prep for the holidays,” said PR and Promotions Manager Landdis Hollifield. “We look forward to his visit and know that folks will enjoy this year’s event and all it offers.”

Since climbing down the Chimney is no easy feat, Santa will take breaks at the top of every hour starting at 11 a.m., so that he and Mrs. Claus can visit with children in front of Cliff Dwellers Gifts. Children can get their photo taken with Santa during his break.

Free digital copies of Santa photos will be available for download after the event on the Park’s Facebook page.

Boys and girls who haven’t had a chance to make their wish lists can stop by poet Eddie Cabbage’s table, where Cabbage will help kids put their wishes on paper using his old-fashioned typewriter.

A variety of animal education programs by a Park naturalist and a make- a-holiday craft table will also be offered. Chase High School Jazz Band will play a selection of holiday tunes on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Following the band’s performance, Lake Lure Classical Academy’s children’s choir and acoustic ensemble will perform until 1:30 p.m.

On Saturday, Dec. 9, visitors can enjoy Christmas music in front of Cliff Dwellers Gifts.

Complimentary cookies, hot chocolate and coffee will also be available for visitors. Each day there will be a special drawing for a two-hour climbing lessons for two from Fox Mountain Guides, Santa’s special climbing friends. The winner of the drawing will be announced at the end of each Santa on the Chimney event at 2 p.m.

All events during the Santa on the Chimney event are included with the cost of Park admission.

Individuals interested in upgrading their Park admission to an annual pass can do so for $13 per adult and $5 per child. Those that want to purchase an Annual Pass or Rockin’ Discovery Pass for their loved ones can do so at a reduced rate of $25 per Annual Pass or $10 per Rockin’ Discovery Pass.

Adult and children’s annual passes give passholders unlimited access to the Park during regular hours, discounts to area attractions, exclusive invitations to passholder-only events throughout the year and more.

For additional information about Santa on the Chimney or the Park’s annual pass program, visit chimneyrockpark.com or facebook.com/chimneyrockparknc.

**About Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park**

[Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park](http://chimneyrockpark.com/index.php) is a still-developing international outdoor destination located 25 miles southeast of Asheville on Highway 64/74A in Chimney Rock, N.C. It is recognized as one of the Southeast’s most iconic sites and popular travel destinations. The Park’s 535-million-year-old monolith called Chimney Rock can be accessed via the 500-step Outcroppings Trail and offers guests 75-mile panoramic views of Hickory Nut Gorge and Lake Lure. The Park features one of the highest waterfalls of its kind east of the Mississippi River, Hickory Nut Falls, at 404 feet. Hickory Nut Gorge, one of the state’s most significant centers of biodiversity, is home to 36 rare plant species and 14 rare animal species. The Rumbling Bald section of the greater State Park off of Boys Camp Road in Chimney Rock is the only other area of the Park that is currently open to the public. A destination for travel groups, weddings and special events, the Chimney Rock section of the Park also hosts innovative educational programs for schools, homeschoolers, scouts and summer camps. Visit Chimney Rock’s website at [chimneyrockpark.com](http://www.chimneyrockpark.com).

**Sidebar 1: An interview with Santa**

Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park recently sat down with Jolly Old St. Nick to find out how he’s preparing for his upcoming visits to the Park on Saturday, Dec. 2 and Saturday, Dec. 9.

**Question:** What have you been up to since last Christmas? Hopefully, you had some downtime.

**Answer:** I always try to spend some quality time with Mrs. Claus after the holiday rush. Of course, I’m always watching the naughty or nice list, but I do take some time off to bake cookies, brush the reindeer and make snowmen with the elves. In July, I started gearing up for my visit to Chimney Rock.

**Question:** Why do you climb the Park’s Chimney every year and how do you prepare for the descent?

**Answer:** There’s no better way to prepare to deliver toys to children around the world than with a climb down the Park’s 315-foot Chimney. A lot of people think I use my magic to make my way down Chimney Rock, but I save that for Christmas eve. A few months before December, I start training for my climb by walking the Outcroppings steps at the Park in disguise. After a few weeks of walking, I’m more than ready for the climb.

**Question:** What’s your favorite part of visiting the Park?

**Answer:** I love seeing all the boys and girls and hearing what they want for Christmas. One of my favorite parts of climbing the Chimney is looking down from the top of Chimney Rock and seeing all the shops and houses in the Gorge. The view is beautiful and seeing the houses below helps me plan stops on Christmas Eve.

**Sidebar 2: Enjoy Christmas activities in Chimney Rock and Lake Lure**

Before or after Santa on the Chimney, visitors can take part in local Christmas fun in Chimney Rock Village and the Town of Lake Lure, both located within a mile of the Park.

On Friday, Dec. 1, visitors can enjoy the sight of twinkling lights on Main Street before the Village’s all-you-can-eat chili and cornbread dinner at the Chimney Rock Volunteer Fire Department.

Bingo, a cakewalk at the Firehouse and a traditional tree lighting at the Gathering Place fill this event that starts at 5 p.m. Admission to the chili and cornbread dinner is $8 for adults and $5 for kids 10 and under.

When Santa finishes rappelling down the Chimney on Saturday, Dec. 2, he’ll make his way to Chimney Rock Village. Kids who visit him in downtown Chimney Rock will receive a special stocking that local merchants will fill with treats when kid’s visit their shop.

After enjoying holiday specials, carolers and a bake sale in the village, guests can end the day at Lake Lure’s Flowering Bridge. A variety of holiday décor, sparkling lights and festive plants make the flowering bridge the perfect place for an evening stroll as the sun sets.

To learn more about Christmas events in Chimney Rock Village and the Town of Lake Lure, explore visitncsmalltowns.com.

#1(COURTESY CHIMNEY ROCK AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK)

Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit with children between rappelling sessions.

#2(COURTESY CHIMNEY ROCK AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK)

Throughout the day on Dec. 2 and Dec. 9, Santa will climb down the Park’s Chimney.

#3 (COURTESY ANGELA STOCKDALE)

Santa gives a wave to the camera while wearing gear to scale down the Chimney.

#4 (COURTESY CHIMNEY ROCK AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK)

Poet Eddie Cabbage will be on site to type up children’s wish lists.

#5 (COURTESY CHIMNEY ROCK AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK)

Lake Lure Classical Academy’s children’s choir and acoustic ensemble will perform on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.