

Bookings in the Salon and Restaurant Carriages

This information is intended to provide guidance to customers to ensure that their visits are enjoyable, safe and comfortable for all our guests.

The Restaurant carriage has 11 tables which can be reserved for dining. The duration of normal table bookings is 90 minutes with a 15-minute turnaround between reservations whenever this is feasible. Guests are requested to ensure that they arrive on time and understand that the table should be vacated at the appropriate time to facilitate the next reservation.

We are very fortunate to have a special Salon carriage which we can use for afternoon teas, private bookings and larger groups. The Restaurant carriage is not normally available for private hire. Because we are a daytime facility only, opening the train for private functions in the evenings is not usually feasible. If you wish to request an exception to this there are additional facility hire costs associated with that. Please see guidance below.

Capacity

The Salon carriage can accommodate 32 seated guests on small tables plus additional seating for up to 5 people on two settees. Capacity for meals or buffets is 32. This carriage is usually used for serving Afternoon Teas rather than the main café menu. The Bar can accommodate around 20 additional guests in an informal setting.

The Restaurant carriage, also known as the Buffet Car, has 32 seats arranged on tables of two and four either side of the main train corridor. Because the tables are fixed in both size and location, they cannot accommodate more than the designated numbers so larger parties may need to be accommodated on adjacent tables, when available. The main café menu is served in this carriage.

Wheelchair access is usually possible to all areas of the train though certain seats are more suited to this than others and this should be discussed with us prior to booking. Some larger wheelchairs are too wide to pass through the train doorways however we have a wheelchair which can access all areas that guests are welcome to request.

The largest table seats 6 though additional chairs can be provided to accommodate 2 additional guests on the same table. This is in the Salon and is not available for lunchtime food.

There is a false cocktail bar in the Salon carriage on which welcome drinks can be served. Buffets are also served from a temporary table adjacent to the cocktail bar which can compromise space in that area during service. Guests should be aware of this potential 'bottleneck' caused due to the width of the train.

The main bar for the train is in the middle carriage, known as the Baggage Carriage. This is normally unmanned though it can be staffed at additional cost should customers require it. Buffets can also be laid out in the Bar if guests prefer.

Hire Cost

Daytime hire costs for the Salon are usually dependent on the number of people and type of food and drink that will be purchased. As a rough guide, bookings with fewer than 20 people will not usually secure private use of the whole carriage. A deposit of £10 per person or 50% of the total food cost is taken to finalise larger group reservations. For exclusive-use bookings, the relevant room hire cost will also be taken. Should the numbers drop below the agreed numbers, this will result in the deposit being forfeit and/or potentially, exclusive use being withdrawn.

We do not offer purely a 'Venue for Hire' facility – guests must purchase from one of our agreed menus in order to use the facilities.

The deposit is not refundable if a cancellation is received within 2 weeks of the booking. Reduced guest numbers will also result in their deposit being forfeit.

There is a £300 charge for all Exclusive-hire daytime bookings in the Salon plus an additional £10 for each person fewer than 32. These events must have concluded by 5pm, when we close. If, by prior agreement only, the event is to finish after our normal closing time of 5pm, there is an additional charge of £100 per hour. The duration for standard exclusive-use hire is 3 hours however longer duration can be arranged and will be subject to additional costs as indicated above.

The Restaurant carriage is not available for daytime private hire.

Because we are a café and sell a wide range of cakes and drinks to suit all guests, the consumption of guests own food or drinks is not permitted at any time. If a birthday cake, or similar, is to be provided by the guests, there will be a once-off minimum charge of £25 to facilitate this, depending on the number of people being served. Provision of own cake must be agreed in advance at the time of placing the reservation. We can arrange for a special cake or specific beverages to be available if notified well in advance. If a customer is bringing their own cake, this should not be used as a dessert substitute.

Should an evening or out of hours hire be required, consideration will be given to availability of staff, existing bookings that day and the following morning, the date and our opening times, in addition to the numbers and food required. There is an additional evening hire cost of £100 per hour for the Salon carriage and £200 per hour if the whole train and station facilities are required. Hire costs for events that fall outside our normal opening hours reflect the need to re-open the whole station, staff both kitchen and café, open the bar, additional heating, lighting and cleaning costs. Kitchen capacity will also dictate the feasibility of all private bookings. Each booking request will consider all these factors. Evening bookings can be accommodated from 5pm and must always finish by 9pm.

Additional staff can be provided at a cost of £25 per person, per hour. As a guide, assume a minimum of 2 staff members for the Salon and 4 for whole train bookings.

A 10% service charge is added to the total bill for all exclusive hire bookings.

A few rules ...

1. Please do not allow children to climb on our furniture or remove the cushions. The train is a really exciting playground but it is not as sturdy as it looks.
2. Please do not climb on the train or steps.
3. We welcome dogs and children in all areas of our site including on the train however we request that they are clean, well-behaved, are not allowed to block corridors and must not annoy or disturb other guests. There is a Dog Etiquette which dog owners are required to familiarise themselves with and adhere to.
4. Please accompany children who wish to go onto the footplate of the train as it can be slippery and there are some high steps, railings and fittings which can easily become damaged and must not be climbed on.
5. Dogs should be kept on a lead unless you have exclusive use of the Salon where they may be let off the lead but must remain under close control. Dogs must remain on the floor at all times and not be allowed to sit on knees, furniture or at table height. All dog mess must be picked up and placed in our bins.
6. You are very welcome to decorate the Salon carriage and we can sometimes facilitate this the day before, subject to bookings. Please speak to us to arrange access for this.
7. We request that no small foil 'sprinkles', crackers, party poppers, confetti or balloons filled with bits are used to decorate the train as these get everywhere and cause damage to our vacuum cleaners and are not good for the environment either – thank you for your cooperation with this.
8. The window blinds are very delicate indeed and are mounted on a spring which rolls the blind back behind the wooden panelling if released too quickly. Please do not adjust the blinds or allow your guests to play with them.
9. The heaters are air-conditioning units and set to ensure a constant temperature throughout the carriages. Please avoid adjusting them or switching them on or off. If you are uncomfortable, we have blankets and staff will be happy to adjust the air flow to help you feel more comfortable.
10. We can be exceptionally busy at times and staff are likely to be working at full capacity in both the front of house areas and the kitchen. We try our best so please be patient and kind to us if there are delays, minor errors or concerns. We invite constructive but respectful comments that will help us enhance our customer experience – we really want to learn from our mistakes and let you have the best possible time!