

# Plants, Trains and Christmas

## Going loco(motive)

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A train is uniquely magical in how it allows passengers to leave urban life behind and enjoy beautiful scenery for the duration of their journey. While rail trains have been largely replaced by cars, planes and modern subways, the romance of a train journey

lives on in pockets across fiction and reality, particularly during Christmas. In the 1985 children's book *The Polar Express*, a young boy finds himself on a magical train en route to the North Pole, where Santa Claus lives. A film adaptation of the book was released in 2004.


The Polar Express is not real, but there is a Santa Train that has been chugging through the Appalachian Mountains of the United States every year for 82 years. It delivers gifts to families along the route. In Singapore, selected MRT trains and buses have been decorated for the 2024

holiday season. And visitors at the Gardens by the Bay Christmas Train Show can also pop into replicas of a vintage Swedish railbus and a modern SMRT cabin, which are decked out with tinsel, Christmas trees, life-size gingerbread men and more.

## CHUGGING ALONG

1

**Electric Swiss locomotive**  
Cogwheeled engine designed for mountains and steep gradients



2

**Swiss steam engine**  
Used on mountainous routes in Switzerland



3

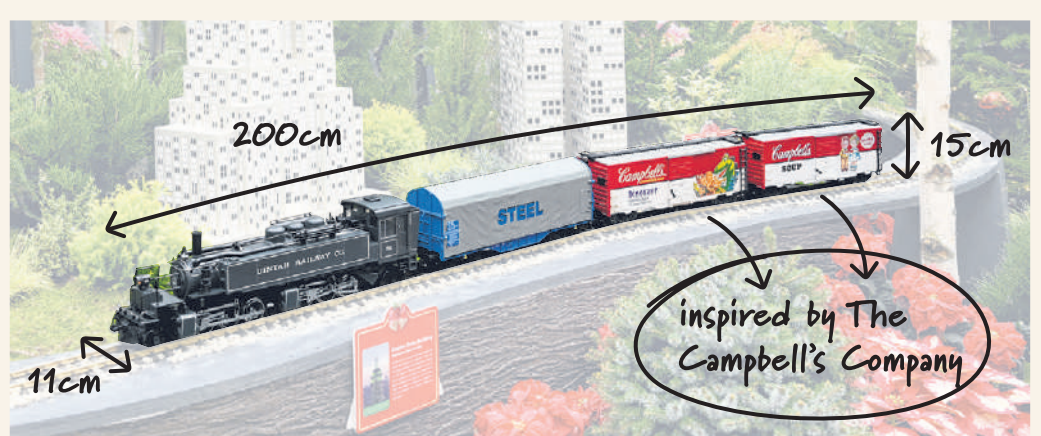
**Mogul steam engine**  
From the late 19th century and inspired by American passenger trains operated by the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad



4

**Stainz steam engine**  
Inspired by trains commissioned for Austria's Styrian State Railway in the late 19th century





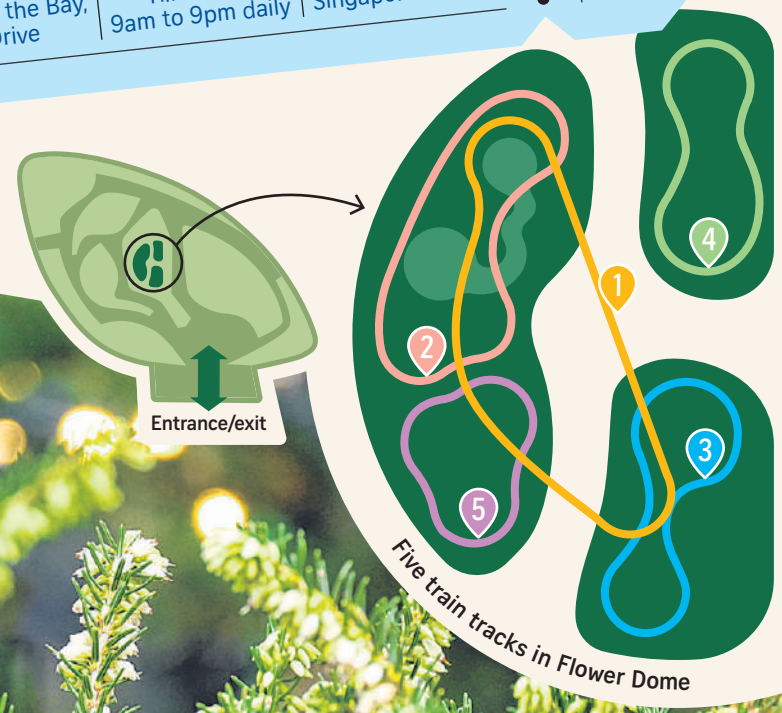
5

**Mallet steam locomotive**  
Inspired by the Uintah Railway train in the 1910s, the sliding tarpaulin freight wagon by Austrian Federal Railways was designed to transport steel coils and other metal products



For more information, go to [str.sg/tPJs](http://str.sg/tPJs)

**CHRISTMAS TRAIN SHOW**  
**BOOK IT**  
WHERE: Flower Dome, Gardens by the Bay, 18 Marina Gardens Drive  
WHEN: Till Jan 5, 9am to 9pm daily  
ADMISSION: From \$8 for Singapore residents  
ADMITTS ONE



## GOING OFF-TRACK



**Grand Central Terminal**

- Made of botanical materials such as cinnamon curls (arches), honeysuckle branches (pillars) and sugar pine cones (awnings)
- Inspired by the iconic commuter rail station in midtown Manhattan, dating back to 1913



**Carson Mansion**

- Made of botanical materials such as eucalyptus leaves (facade), cedar sticks (railings) and oak bark (roof)
- Inspired by a famous Victorian mansion in California, dating back to 1884

**Space Needle**

- Inspired by the futuristic observation tower built in Seattle for the 1962 World's Fair



## CHRISTMAS TRAIN SHOW BY THE NUMBERS

5

Number of model trains chugging around the Flower Dome at any given time. They will be regularly swapped out

>15

Number of model trains brought in

109m

Length of all the railway tracks combined

150 sq m

The space encompassed by the railway tracks

13

Number of major United States landmarks located across the landscape



4cm

Height of model grizzly bear, the smallest landmark



1.8m

Height of model Empire State Building, the tallest landmark

9,845

Number of plants on display

479

Conifer pots

3,050

Poinsettia pots

## PINE-ING FOR CHRISTMAS

What is Christmas without a Christmas tree? Pine, spruce and fir varieties are among the most popular accoutrements of the holiday season

Conifers often pop up in folklore and mythology as plants imbued with protective properties and magic



Poinsettias, native to Mexico, are now so integral to Christmas that they have become the world's most commercially important potted plants