



# *Merry Ho,*

As I sit here, naked, I'm reminded of the wonders of Santacon - the great length of the tradition, the wide girth of joy we deliver to the city and the yeasty promise that December 12th brings. How often does one get to don such a majestic uniform and wonder the streets of fair London, spreading joy and cheer, for no reason other than to share the Christmas spirit?!?

We really do have something special here.

OK, enough of the sentimentality, let's talk Santacon. This year's the same as any other - dress in full Santa attire, meet at the designated start point (published the night before) and wonder through London imparting goodwill.

I can't tell you how excited everyone at Santa HQ is. OK, I can - it's like being 8 years old and waking up and finding that school's been closed. No, it's better than that. It's like waking up to find you didn't drink that much last night, you didn't spend all that money, you resisted the kebab (and resulting toilet pleasantries this morning) and you didn't sleep with 'that' person....oh, and you won the lottery, invented the cure to baldness, saved the lives of 14 drowning kittens and have been asked to front your own sitcom called 'Santas' (6 crazy Santas living above a coffee shop - hilarity ensues!)

OK, maybe that's just me. Regardless, below is everything you need to know about Santacon and it's updated from previous years so please read it!! Other than that, we'll see you on 12th December!

Drink and be Merry!

# *Santa*





## Santa Afterparty

Each year we try and ensure that Santa gets to carry on the party until the early hours of the morning. In years gone by we would just turn up to a late bar/club and crash whatever party was there. Unfortunately, as the number of Santas grows each year, we have to try and find a venue that can fit as many of us in as possible. This year we have the services of the Waterfront Bar at Kings College London Student Union Bar as our main after party. Capacity is slightly smaller than last year! All details will be on the Santacon website and tickets will be going on sale shortly - we'll mail the Yahoo and Facebook groups when they do. We are also trying to find alternate venues that are Santa friendly, for those who don't get into the main party, and will send out the details of these nearer the time.

## Santanav

As always, Santa likes to stay in touch with those Santas who couldn't quite keep up. We will be leaving bread crumbs of information on twitter to let you know where we are in case you get lost. You can follow this on Twitter using the hashtag **#londonsantanav**.

Additionally, we will be providing updates of our progress on the Santacon website by clicking here - [www.santacon.co.uk/santanav](http://www.santacon.co.uk/santanav)

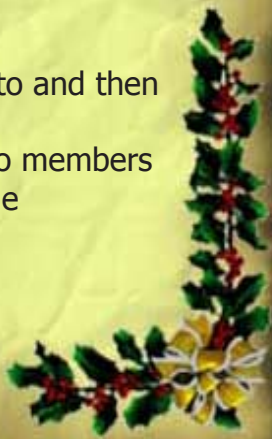
## Santa's Grottos

This is a relatively new idea to Santacon but it's one we like. A Grotto is a collection of Santas. Call it a Clan, a Cell or a Tribe. Any Santa can create a Grotto, and they can be any size. The only requirement for a Grotto is that it has a name and a standard (a flag with a symbol) . Beyond these basics, Grotto's can organise in any way they wish. Grottos can define their philosophy, set up Facebook groups, pub meets, start their own mailing lists, evolve their own style of Santa dress or even write their own songs. The main Santacon website will list any public grottos so that Santas can find a family that suit's them.

### Grotto Basics...

- A Grotto needs a name, and a standard or symbol to use as a logo
- Make a flag and put it on a flag pole of some kind so you're visible to your members
- If anyone can join, post a message to the Santacon list or Facebook page with information.

### Some extra things you could do...

- Create a facebook group or set up some form of communication
  - Encourage your members to customise their outfits to a basic Grotto theme
  - Maybe choose your own earlier starting point so that you can gather your grotto and then arrive together at the main starting point
  - Set up a twitter hashtag or some kind of way to communicate with other grotto members
  - Organise a pub meet up for your members before the day to welcome everyone
  - Bring musical instruments or drums and make some noise.
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## Santa Stewards

Santa needs to keep Santa out of trouble. The Convention is a jolly event and responsible Santa's are requested to offer their services to steward the crowd of fellow convention attendees.

### HOW TO VOLUNTEER YOURSELF AS A STEWARD

#### 1. MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT

Make your self appointment known on the Santa mailing list or on Facebook. Write an email with a subject stating something like "I HEREBY APPOINT MYSELF A STEWARD". All email addresses of self appointed stewards will be collected and added to a new list. This list will be used to discuss policy and share contact information.

#### 2. ADD AN ELEMENT OF HI-VIS TO YOUR COSTUME

All Steward Santas need to be wearing some element of hi-viz clothing on the day of the convention. This will allow fellow Santas to identify you.

#### 3. (OPTIONALLY) CARRY SOME SMALL FIRST AID KIT

Stewards are not expected to know about first aid, but having some kind of equipment that could be used if needed shows that you have thought about potential hazards. Any kit is fine, something cheap from the pound shop would work. We're not talking medical training - we just mean common sense bits and bobs (plasters etc)

#### 4. DON'T GET UTTERLY SHITFACED AT THE CONVENTION

Drink and be jolly, but keep some element of consciousness. This requirement may rule out many jolly Santas, but there should be enough left to matter.

### WHAT DOES A STEWARD DO ?

Stewards are not out to stop Santa from being stupid. Santa has a right to be seriously idiotic. However, should situations arise where violence is possible, Santa is being seriously inappropriate or a non-Santa is getting nasty, Steward Santas are requested to act with some level of sobriety to deal with the situation. Steward Santas are not a police force and do not take responsibility for the actions of any individual Santa, they are only there to look after the well-being of The Convention as a whole.

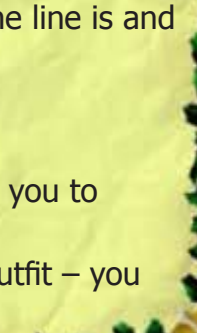
Any Santa who is uncertain of the responsibility is welcome to announce their intention to be Steward and choose to withdraw the offer at a later date.

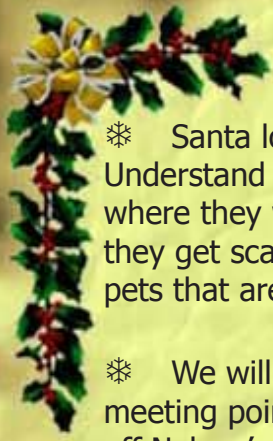
If you're interested then email [criminalsanta@gmail.com](mailto:criminalsanta@gmail.com)




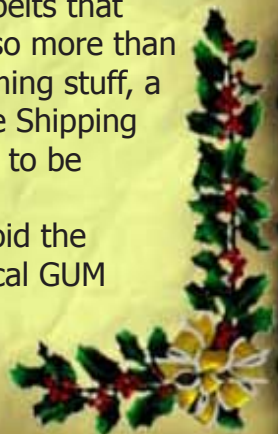


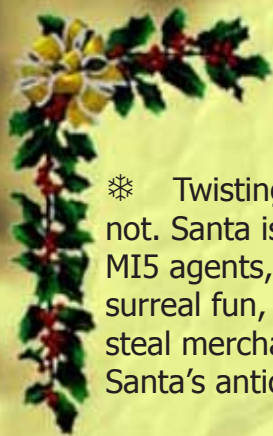
## Santa Guidelines

- ✧ Santacon is the meeting of likeminded Santas from the four corners of the earth. Anyone is welcome. The only prerequisites are that you **wear a complete Santa outfit** (though occasionally we have a few reindeer turn up) and possess the Santa cheer. A Santa hat alone will not make you eligible for the Santacon! Your Santacon outfit is however absolutely essential - customise it in any way you see fit. Seriously, go all out! The wackier the better and we guarantee you won't feel over dressed!! There is only one Santa but he has many forms. We have had Pimp Santas, Robot Santas, Punk Santas, Cricket Santas, Sexy Santas, Superhero Santas...and an assortment of magical beards. Dazzle Japanese tourists with your flair and panache.
  - ✧ Santacon is a mysterious little beast and, in keeping with tradition, the start time and location will not be revealed until the day before. The details of where Santa is to convene will be made public via the Santacon Yahoo mailing list and Facebook group only.
  - ✧ From here Santa will begin his epic journey through the streets of London, spreading cheer and frequenting a few bars along the way.
  - ✧ Warning: Some people think it's all big and clever to bring their own alcohol along with them so they don't have to queue at bars! We agree – it's a bloody great idea. Some Santas have been known to carry rucksacks containing a noxious alcoholic elixir that would remove the pants of a sexy Elf from up to 20ft away (or, as we're in Europe, 6.096 metres). Be aware that this might mean you're not able to enter the occasional public house that we visit so will have to stand outside with the other 450 Santa who can't get in...or be really sneaky beaky by hiding it in the front of your suit as your 'belly'. Of course if you're a bit of a porker then this space is already taken. Improvise Santa! – Spare space down the front of your boxers? According to Mrs Claus, the answer's an unsatisfying yes...
  - ✧ We know it is somehow, astonishingly, difficult to know who to follow given that there are hundreds of Santas. Obviously the megaphone gives one idea but this year we will hopefully also have some stewards (maybe with flags) to provide a reference point. If 'SANTA' comes into a bar with a megaphone and says we're off then drink up Santa...we're moving out.
  - ✧ We are Santa and, as such, we have no agenda. We are here to spread cheer and enjoy ourselves. If you've been on Santacon before, you'll know it is worth doing just to walk the streets and see the bemused look on the faces of the shoppers, shop keepers, tourists, security guards, police, children and pets that we encounter. Just know where the line is and obey the Four D's:
    - ✧ Don't mess with kids (they'll stab you)
    - ✧ Don't mess with security (they'll cry)
    - ✧ Don't mess with the police (they'll shoot you several times and link you to terrorism, particularly because you have a beard)
    - ✧ Don't mess with Santa (Chuck Norris will be attending in a Santa outfit – you really want to take that chance?)
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- ✧ Santa loves to include not exclude and therefore we say that anyone can come. Understand however, that this is not a child 'friendly' event in that we enter several pubs where they will not be allowed. Similarly we've had pets come along and while they're cute, they get scared and have no idea which of the hundreds of Santas they belong to. The only pets that are welcome are gimp Santas and only if they are kept on a leash at all times.
- ✧ We will hit Trafalgar Square this year as normal. Don't rock up here instead of the meeting point as only we know when we will arrive there. Oh, and considering someone fell off Nelson's column last year (specifically a slippery lion) and injured themselves pretty badly, we'd suggest you don't do it. Seriously, you attend Santacon at your own risk.
- ✧ Load yourself up a good belly-lining breakfast and bring snacks and water for the day too. You may be prepared to run into shops and buy some on the day, but many santas get left behind this way. Santa T pities the fool who thinks Santacon stops at a restaurant for food. You've been warned Sucka! 
- ✧ Look after your feet – Slack Reindeer and a nationwide Elf strike means Santa walks quite a lot on the day. Wear comfortable/sensible shoes or boots.
- ✧ Likewise, you'll be spending a fair amount of time outside in between bars so wear something a warm under your Santa outfit!
- ✧ Occasionally you'll find a lot of Santas in the bars we visit. Use your Santa sense and find other bars next door to make sure you get served and spread the cheer. Stay with the massive though – it's strangely easy to lose nearly a thousand Santas and we won't come looking for you. Alternately, bring your own booze!
- ✧ If you see an off license then use it Santa. We can't sit around in pubs all day so buy some ale to drink along the way.
- ✧ Go to the toilet when you can – there's not always one around
- ✧ Be patient in the pubs at the bar. Santa was there before you.
- ✧ Share the love! Make/Bring badges to stick on passers by, wrap brussel sprouts and coal for those who have been good/bad. Full blown signs and banners will make you a hit for the tourist photos. Maybe make some hug vouchers - people luuurve to hug Santa. Hug vouchers encourage people to molest your fellow Santas!
- ✧ Seasoned veterans of Santacon know all too well the folly of trusting in the belts that come with Santa outfits. Sort yourself out with a proper belt or black tape. It also more than a little useful to carry safety pins, a needle and thread, some wonder web hemming stuff, a bicycle pump, a snake bite kit, an assortment of aromatic oils and a guide to the Shipping Lanes and Tidal movements of the South East Coast. We're not saying it's going to be exactly like last year but it pays to be prepared. Kendal Mint cake is optional. Some Santas have been known to attach a cotton backing to their beards to avoid the itching sensation. This will not work with genital conditions – go and see you local GUM clinic!





❄ Twisting the Christmas paradigm until it screams for mercy is fun! Getting arrested is not. Santa is friendly, respectful, and cooperative with police, security guards, horse guards, MI5 agents, and shop and bar staff, and does NOT break any laws!!! Have your own special surreal fun, but DON'T MESS IT UP FOR THE REST OF US. Santas do not destroy property, steal merchandise or do harm to others. The authorities and local businesses usually take Santa's antics in the loving, festive spirit that Santa intends, if we are nice to them.

❄ The "route and schedule" is open to liberal interpretation by Santa at all times. There is no head Santa in charge to call. If you can't show up for the start or get lost, get the mobile number of someone who can help you catch up later. Depending on the year there may be guiding Santas, flags to follow or some technological Santanav system.

❄ Bring small gifts naughty gifts to give grown ups; nice stuff to give kids. Visit a pound shop, wrap up coal, sweets and brussels sprouts; Santa loves stickers, hug vouchers and mistletoe.

❄ Watching Santa get drunk can be fun. Babysitting Santa while they vomit in an alley or breaking up fights is not. Don't be that Santa. You are responsible for yourself! Pace your drinking and be nice to your fellow Santa.

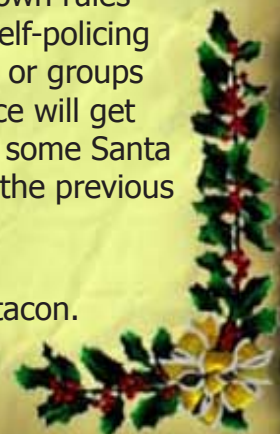
❄ Memorise these answers to important questions that may arise:

- Who's in charge/ What organization are you with? - "Santa."
- What are you protesting? Why? - "We're not protesting; we're celebrating Christmas"
- Where are you going next? - "I'm only allowed to tell you if you wear this hat and buy me a beer."

❄ Don't forget to print out a copy of the carols that we'll be singing. The 2009 version is up on the [main site](#) and posted on Facebook.

❄ Lastly, and we hate to say this but previous years have occasionally seen an unwanted element turn up to Santacon. Common sense please. Santacon is a surprisingly delicate operation and can only take place because of the goodwill, generosity and seasonal spirit of the partaking Santas. Some, however, have seen it as an occasion to use the anonymity of hundreds of Santa to steal, cause trouble or become aggressive. We tread a veeeeery fine line between being just a fun walk about and being a scary mass of people that the police will want to disperse immediately. We're out for a fun day so no stupidity that'll spoil it for everyone else. We do not want trouble and believe us, it WILL NOT be tolerated. We need all of the Santas to keep an eye out for any behaviour unbecoming of a Santa and alert other Santa immediately - if necessary, alert the police. We're not laying down rules but all reasonable Santas know where the line is. We would like to rely on the self-policing of Santas but we will involve the law as we have done before should individuals or groups behave in the manner outlined above. If you start causing trouble then the police will get you (with our full support) and if they don't then Drag Santa will and he'll bring some Santa mates. For those of you turning up to have a jolly lovely day out, please ignore the previous paragraph. Lecture over!

❄ So there you have it. All you could possibly never need to know about Santacon.





## DISCLAIMER

- \* SantaCon does NOT endorse drinking irresponsibly – it’s bad for your elf.
  - \* SantaCon does NOT endorse the wearing of red suits with white fur trim or any other Christmas regalia.
  - \* SantaCon does NOT endorse the manipulation of traditional festive songs to satisfy Santa’s comedic requirements.
  - \* SantaCon features stunts performed by professionals. Do not attempt to recreate these unless surrounded by a suitably large audience armed with cameras.
  - \* No animals were harmed in the making of SantaCon.
  - \* Refrigerate SantaCon after opening, and consume within 3 days.
  - \* SantaCon expects all participants to fully conform to the law at all times.
  - \* SantaCon is for educational purposes only.
  - \* SantaCon is a novelty toy and should not be used internally.
  - \* SantaCon is not designed or intended for use in on-line control of aircraft, air traffic, aircraft navigation or aircraft communications; or in the design, construction, operation or maintenance of any nuclear facility.
  - \* The views and opinions expressed on SantaCon are purely those of Santa and are not paid for by special interests.
  - \* SantaCon may not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes
  - \* All SantaCon models over 18 years of age.
  - \* Any similarity to persons living, dead or fictional is completely coincidental.
  - \* Do not attempt to operate motor vehicles while under the influence of SantaCon.
  - \* SantaCon may cause severe cramps, nausea, nose bleeds, dizziness, munchies, redundancy, headaches, embarrassment, loss of voice, loss of clothes and loss of dignity. Use at own risk!
  - \* References in SantaCon to any specific commercial products, processes, or services by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring, unless otherwise specified. This includes, but is not limited to, alcoholic beverages, brussel sprouts, white beards, red outfits or coal.
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