

## NEW RITUALS FOR THE BRITISH SUMMER

Forget the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and Cowes Week; the Great British Duck Race at Molesey Locks in London and the Wicker Man Festival in Scotland are the events to attend this summer.

In fact almost half of Britons (46%) are considering attending – or even taking part in – something more unusual this summer from a wacky championship to a bizarre festival, according to new data released today from leading ticket retailer, thetrainline.com\*.

Whilst more traditional events like the big music festivals and sporting events will always be a staple of the British summer, it seems alternative events are growing in popularity as people holiday at home and want to explore the more eccentric days out on offer around the country.

The top 10 alternative summer events, according to thetrainline.com customers are:

- 1 Great British Duck Race, London
- 2 Wicker Man Festival, Scotland
- 5 Football in the River, Gloucestershire
- 3 Oyster Festival and Blessing of the Waters, Whitstable
- 4 Scarecrow Festival, Kettlewell
- 6 Swan Upping, River Thames
- 7 Man vs. Horse Marathon, Llanwrtyd Wells
- 8 World Snail Racing Championships, Norfolk
- 9 Gurning Egremont, Cumbria
- 10 World Onion Eating Contest, Newent

The opportunity to try something new is the biggest reason for choosing to attend an alternative event (27%); however it's clear the economic climate is having an impact on the popularity of larger, more traditional events. A third of people (31%) feel that an alternative event offers them a fun day out, and the chance to experience the quirkier side of our British culture, without having to splash the cash.

For some, simply attending an alternative event this summer isn't enough. More than one in ten Brits (13%) has taken part in a wacky championship and is planning to go the whole hog again this year. The World Onion Eating Contest, which takes place each year in Newent is an interesting choice, with a brave few (2%) admitting that eating as many onions as possible in one go would be good fun.

Iain Hildreth at thetrainline.com said “From onion eating to snail racing, there are some fantastic events taking place up and down the country for people to get involved in. With Britons preparing to spend more time on home turf, finding something innovative and different to do with friends and family is essential for making the most of the British summer.

“What’s more, with thetrainline.com travellers can make an average saving of 43% on advance tickets if booked up to 6pm on the day before departure, compared to ‘turn up and go’ tickets bought at the station on the day of travel – so you won’t lose out financially, even if you don’t win the contest!”

It’s not too late to take advantage of the savings. If booked now a return journey from Newcastle to London for the Great British Duck Race (16<sup>th</sup> September) would cost just £16.85 each way\*.

**ENDS**

**For further information, please contact:**

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**Notes to the editor**

\* thetrainline.com polled visitors to its website in July 2009; 2,400 responses were gathered

\*\*All fares correct at time of issue. Tickets and availability cannot be guaranteed.

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