

GETAWAY



The Caffery family meet Peppa Pig and George



Cerys Caffery with Rudolph



Santa's grotto

Everywhere an oink oink

PEPPA PIG IS GETTING INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AT PAULTONS PARK, REPORTS ADRIAN CAFFERY

PIGS in blankets are an essential part of Christmas for many.

But how about trying pigs in scarves, hats and winter coats for a change this year?

Not on the dinner table, of course, but at Peppa Pig World, the family attraction near Southampton, in Ham-pshire.

Porkers Peppa and her brother George are welcoming pre-schoolers and those a little older this festive season.

My children, aged two and six, were lucky enough to give the popular pair a cuddle and a high-five during our visit.

In truth, however, our shy youngest, Owen, needed to be press-ganged into joining the family photo on this page. That's despite the fact he's always happy enough to spend hours sat six inches from the TV screen when they're on.

The meet-and-greet was one of many highlights at Peppa Pig World, part of the much larger Paultons Park attraction.

We also encountered Rudolph the Reindeer and a cheeky elf whose impertinent behaviour reminded me very much of my son!

Then there was Frosty the Snowman, who danced with my daughter, Cerys, as a giant animated teddy bear sang popular carols.

Cerys also sat at Frosty's feet for a festive story-time and was covered in snow at the climax of a super song and dance show.

Together, we watched a film in the 4D Cinema where we felt Blitzen's breath on our faces, an elf's tears on our heads and the blistering acceleration of Santa's sleigh.

Then the whole family entered Santa's grotto which – in mum and dad's experience – had never looked so snowy and utterly magical.

Rudolph had got his antlers tangled up in tree lights and we joined him in a race against time to catch up with his gang on Christmas Eve.

Along the way we saw woodland animals, polar bears, a singing tree and some sort of snow beast, who looked friendly enough.

Santa was in jovial mood and told Owen and Cerys they could collect a well earned (so he says!) present from the elves' workshop.

The big man had obviously done his homework because the cute soft toy (for her) and the wooden dinosaur puzzle (for him) generated wide smiles.

Their gifts were top quality. And, not to be left out, my wife and I were offered a free mince pie and little cup of hot fruit punch.

The theme park was strewn with garlands and Christmas trees, including a giant one that illumi-

nated in time to festive music.

Our children travelled around Peppa's colourful land by car, train, boat, helicopter, hot air balloon, in a cloud and on the back of a dinosaur.

As well as these seven rides, they also enjoyed the indoor and outdoor play areas.

A dozen of the theme park's other rides were also open, with Cerys particularly liking the beautiful, double-decker Victorian carousel.

We were able to cram so much in to our visit because we only spent about 10 minutes in total in queues all day.

And we were able to stay until closing time, even on a school night, because Paultons is so handily placed for the motorway network.

For a fantastic festive treat, there really is snout better than Peppa Pig World.



Story with Frosty The Snowman

NEED TO KNOW

■ Adrian Caffery and family were guests at the opening weekend of Christmas at Paultons. It is open November 26 and 27, December 2-5, 9-12 and 16-23. Christmas tickets to meet Santa with a gift for children cost from £24.50 for adults and children over three years, £19.25 for children aged 12 months to 35 months, and £5.50 for those under 12 months. Tickets must be pre-booked at www.paultonspark.co.uk. Park-only tickets cost £15 per person over 1m in height. The Lost Kingdom and all of Paultons rides aimed at bigger thrill seekers are closed for Christmas.

■ Paultons is located on the edge of the New Forest. To explore its many delights visitors can book an overnight hotel stay through Paultons from £73 per family, on a bed and breakfast basis. Call 0871 360 2034 for more details.