**A Holiday *Escape* Route via Verde Canyon Railroad**

 **Clarkdale, AZ, Sedona, AZ, Jerome, AZ** - There’s no need to have your blood percolating while waiting in long lines at the mall or having to sit on some jolly guy’s lap in order to reap treats this December. Escape the stress of the holiday season with *jingle-bell relief-time* aboard Verde Canyon Railroad. Timeworn reindeer pulling a creaky old sleigh are no match for the Railroad’s powerful vintage locomotives and the train’s deluxe accommodations. Verde Canyon Railroad’s *rail hospitality* during December is a refreshing respite … no cell service, no billboards, no Internet invasion … just four hours of relaxation and fun at a leisurely 12 miles per hour.

 There are no strings of colored lights that tangle, no over-embellished holiday décor and no tacky seasonal sweaters just out of moth balls that take your breath away. As the train passes through the Verde Canyon, the brisk canyon air, the muted pastel light, the high desert sounds and scents and the chasm’s brilliant bone structure revealed are what take your breath away. The echoes of holiday elevator music evaporate as classic railroad tunes played onboard the train bring passengers together to sing along with Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings or Aretha Franklin. Perish the thought of downing a warm glass of milk “reserved” for St. Nick when you can sip on prickly pear margaritas and other signature cocktails after cheering as the train passes through a 680-foot manmade tunnel. Daylight diminishes, awakens the soul and lifts the spirit as visions of crowds and shopping mayhem fades.

 The snaking curves of the Verde River meandering through the bold beauty of glorious crimson rock formations created by thousands of years of geologic transformation is enhanced by the train’s first-class accommodations that lavish passengers with comfortable seating, abundant appetizers and attentive beverage service right at one’ seat. The Canyon comes alive through panoramic windows or from an adjacent open-air viewing car, a favorite aspect of this popular rail journey. Fresh air, fresh food and fresh scenery are a refreshing reprieve from the 12 endless days of Christmas.

 Don’t suffer from the holiday blues when you can take advantage of red rock relaxation as the train takes passengers *through* a grand canyon rather than *to* a grand canyon. At Verde Canyon Railroad it is always about the journey, not the destination. Gather together grandma and grandpa, Aunt Mae and Uncle Fred, your best friend Mary and coworker Sam for an adventure through this wild and scenic back country near Sedona. Verde Canyon Railroad is the ideal place to escape holiday pandemonium with family, friends and colleagues. Come Christmas Eve, your jolly good time on the rails just may entice you to leave an extra cookie out for the man in the big red suit.

 Only two hours from Phoenix and 25 minutes from Sedona, Verde Canyon is a rare opportunity to actually enjoy the holidays. Trains depart Wednesdays and Saturdays in December at 1 p.m. Remember, if the escape plan can’t be executed in December, put a real train under someone special’s tree with a gift card from Verde Canyon Railroad. Gift card purchases and reservations are accepted at 800-293-7245 or online at verdecanyonrr.com.

*Verde Canyon Railroad – great service and a great time, every time!*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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