

News Release



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CHICAGO AMTRAK TRAINS SUPER-SIZED FOR HOLIDAYS Unique 'Great Dome' car adds seats and scenic views on selected dates

CHICAGO – Amtrak is operating all available railcars and locomotives on trains to and from the Chicago area in advance of the Thanksgiving holiday travel season. Fresh from fall colors trips to and from the East Coast, starting today the historic Amtrak “Great Dome” rail car will provide a unique opportunity to experience city and prairie views to and from Chicago as it adds extra seating capacity to super-size the busy trains.

The dome car features an upper level with windows on all sides – as well as overhead – to provide passengers with panoramic views. The dome section runs the full length of the car, a rare feature even when dome cars were more numerous on the nation’s railroads.

The dome car is scheduled to operate on the following *Lincoln Service*, *Saluki/Illini* and *Wolverine Service* trains to and from St. Louis, Carbondale and Detroit/Pontiac on the following dates: Trains 301 & 304 on Nov. 17, Nov. 19 and Nov. 25, Trains 303 & 306 on Nov. 18 and Nov. 26, Trains 391 & 392 on Nov. 21, Train 305 on Nov. 22, Trains 300 & 352 on Nov. 23, Train 351 on Nov. 24, Train 393 on Nov. 27 and Train 390 on Nov. 28.



Seats in the dome car are not reserved and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The heaviest single travel day of the year for Amtrak is the Wednesday before Thanksgiving which set a record last year of 134,230 passengers for the day. Amtrak also set a record last year by transporting 704,446 passengers for the holiday week. Amtrak anticipates similarly strong ridership for this year’s Thanksgiving travel.

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From Nov. 23 to 25, passengers traveling on Amtrak long-distance trains will be offered a menu item of a traditional Thanksgiving meal featuring a fully-cooked turkey breast with gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce and side accompaniments. Pumpkin pie with whipped cream and maple walnuts will be offered as a dessert option.

Amtrak is working to make the holiday travel experience as pleasant as possible and encourages passengers to consider the holiday travel tips listed to the right to help ensure a smooth trip.

About the “Great Dome” Car

The only remaining dome car in Amtrak service, car number 10031, is a Great Dome car previously used on the Chicago-Seattle *Empire Builder* when the train was operated by the Great Northern Railway and the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad (later the Burlington Northern Railroad). It was built in 1955 by the Budd Company for the Great Northern and carried the name “Ocean View,” car number 1391. It was conveyed to Amtrak in 1971, with this car first being given the number 9361. It was renovated in 1985, renumbered 9300, and used in daily service on the Amtrak *Auto Train* to and from the Washington, D.C., and Orlando, Fla., areas through 1994. It was further refurbished in 1999, renumbered to 10031. This year, the “Ocean View” has been freshly re-painted in honor of Amtrak’s 40th Anniversary in the Amtrak Phase III paint scheme and wears stripes comprised of equal red, white and blue stripes, symbolic of Amtrak being America’s Railroad®.

About Amtrak

Celebrating 40 years of dedicated service as America’s Railroad®, Amtrak is the nation’s intercity passenger rail provider and its only high-speed rail operator. A record 30.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2011 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates trains in partnership with 15 states and four commuter rail agencies. Enjoy the journeysm at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on facebook.com/Amtrak and follow us at twitter.com/Amtrak.

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Holiday Travel Tips

- **Avoid the Rush:** The busiest Amtrak travel days are the Wednesday before and Sunday after Thanksgiving. Purchase tickets early using Amtrak.com, QuikTraksm ticket vending machines or ticket windows at staffed stations, the Amtrak [iPhone app](#) or by calling 800-USA-RAIL.
- **Arrive at the Station Early:** Allow plenty of time at stations prior to departure – at least 45 minutes before if tickets need to be picked up. Arrange for pre-boarding if you need extra time or assistance and use Red Cap agents to help you with your baggage. In addition, suburban Amtrak stops can be less crowded than downtown locations and can enable you to get a jump on your trip if the station is in your direction of travel.
- **Know the Limits:** Note the limit of two carry-on bags per person (excluding laptops, purses, briefcases), and be sure all luggage is tagged with your name and address.
- **Carry photo ID:** Passengers are required to show valid photo identification when purchasing tickets. Make sure to carry valid photo ID at all times, as it may be requested aboard trains.
- **Be Safe:** Be aware of your surroundings, stand back from the edge of the platform, do not leave your bags unattended, and watch your step when boarding and leaving the train or when walking between cars while the train is in motion.
- **Security Matters:** If you see something suspicious or unusual, say something. Call Amtrak Police at 800.331.0008 or 911. Passengers may notice additional police presence at stations and on board our trains as part of our planned increased security efforts which also include random baggage screening at various stations.