



Blue Christmas with Royal Copenhagen

A staging of the Christmas Plates at Frederiksborg.

2 November 2025 – 4 January 2026. The Great Hall · Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of Royal Copenhagen, Frederiksborg Castle presents a staging of the world-famous Royal Copenhagen Christmas Plates – treasured collectors' items since 1908. All of the 118 plates are gathered in an installation beneath the ornate ceiling of the castle's Great Hall.



The installation, titled *Blue Christmas with Royal Copenhagen*, is designed by award-winning scenographer Julian Toldam Juhlin, renowned for his grand stage designs at The Royal Danish Theatre, among others. Some of the rarest pieces are displayed in showcases, while most – instantly recognisable from festive tables and walls across the world – form part of a breathtaking table setting. Heritage meets heritage, as the story of Danish design and craftsmanship unfolds within Scandinavia's largest Renaissance castle.

Collectors' Heritage

Since the first plate was launched in 1908, Royal Copenhagen's Christmas Plate has become one of the brand's oldest and most treasured collectors' items, passed down through generations in Denmark and abroad. At 'Blue Christmas with Royal Copenhagen', design heritage meets cultural heritage: the plates are staged in Frederiksborg Castle's majestic Great Hall, with the castle itself standing as a monument to Denmark's national history.

Frederiksborg has been featured on the Christmas Plate three times: in **1953, 2022 and 2025**. This year's anniversary plate marks the factory's 250 years with a motif of Dowager Queen Juliane Marie, one of Royal Copenhagen's founders in 1775. Beside her stands the very first plate from 1908, while outside the window rises the tower of Frederiksborg Castle, where she married King Frederik V in 1752.

The motif is created by artist Allan Therkelsen, who has designed Christmas Plate motifs and figurines for Royal Copenhagen for decades. Visitors to Frederiksborg can even encounter Juliane Marie's bust in the castle itself and look out towards the same tower – as if stepping directly into the plate's imagery.

Both Frederiksborg and the Christmas Plate grew out of a national romantic vision – Frederiksborg as a memorial to Danish history, and the plates with their wealth of national romantic motifs. At A Royal Blue Christmas, this shared heritage is experienced anew, set against one of Denmark's most magnificent historical interiors.

An Enchanting Experience

Alongside the complete plate collection, visitors can explore sketches and preliminary works for this year's design. During the festive season, Frederiksborg glows with the warm light of chandeliers, creating a truly atmospheric setting in the winter darkness. Guests can also enjoy the museum's porcelain audio guide, developed especially for the jubilee year.

Royal Copenhagen on the Collaboration

Royal Copenhagen's Creative Director **Jasper Toron Nielsen** says:

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Frederiksborg and to see the Christmas Plate brought into focus in the year of our 250th anniversary. The plate is a treasured collectors' item and a window into our history – linking Danish design, craftsmanship and proud traditions for more than a century. In the



innovative setting of Frederiksborg's magnificent Great Hall, we can experience this heritage in a new light – where art, cultural history and the unique spirit of Christmas meet.”

Practical Information

The installation opens on **2 November 2025** and runs until **4 January 2026**. Workshops and related events will be announced at dnm.dk.

About Frederiksborg

Frederiksborg is Denmark's National Portrait Gallery and Museum of National History. In Scandinavia's largest Renaissance castle, visitors encounter the people and events that shaped the nation. Portraits, historical paintings, royal interiors, porcelain, design objects and architecture come together to tell the story of Danish identity and cultural heritage.

About Royal Copenhagen

Founded in 1775, Royal Copenhagen is one of the world's oldest porcelain brands. For 250 years, it has been defined by deep respect for tradition and the highest standards of craftsmanship. Today Royal Copenhagen is celebrated worldwide for its hand-painted porcelain and creative reinterpretations of its rich design heritage.

Since 1908, the annual Christmas Plate has been a beloved collectible, with a new motif each year rooted in familiar historic places and symbols. Cherished across generations, the plates remain centrepieces of festive traditions in Denmark and beyond.



Supplementary Material: The Making of Royal Copenhagen's Christmas Plates

Since the very first Royal Copenhagen Christmas Plate was released in 1908, it has been cherished by collectors worldwide. Each plate tells a story of Danish history and culture.

By Steen Nottelmann, Royal Copenhagen historian and Heritage Manager for more than 45 years. Please credit Steen Nottelmann when quoting material on the history of the Christmas Plates.

The Origins

The idea behind the Christmas Plate as we know it today can be traced back to the Nordic Exhibition of Industry, Agriculture and Art in Copenhagen in 1888. This spectacular event, held mainly in and around Tivoli Gardens, attracted 1.3 million visitors – in a country with a population of just 2 million.

As part of its stand, the Royal Porcelain Factory displayed a series of plates decorated in blue with the factory's logo – the crown and the three waves. Among the visitors was Crown Princess Louise, who wished to buy one as a memento of the exhibition. Her choice was marked with a small sign, prompting other visitors to request a plate as well. Demand was so high that the factory had to produce more, thus inadvertently discovering the perfect collectible: an object that could commemorate special occasions. In the following years, the factory created plates to mark milestones in the Danish Royal Family.

Around the same time, artist Frans August Hallin experimented with cutting reliefs into the mould, making it possible to reproduce plates more easily. Spray techniques could then be used to apply colour, with the relief adding depth and contrast. In 1895 Hallin left the Royal Porcelain Factory, taking his idea to rival Bing & Grøndahl. There, owner Harald Bing developed it further into an annual Christmas Plate – exactly as we know the concept today. Thirteen years later, in 1908, Royal Copenhagen followed suit, releasing its own Christmas Plate using Hallin's relief technique. Even after the two companies merged in 1987, both series have continued side by side, to the delight of collectors worldwide.

The Craft

Each plate begins with a drawing by an artist. Since 1908, many different artists have contributed, and for the past decade, Allan Therkelsen's designs have been transformed into the familiar blue-and-white plates by Royal Copenhagen's modelers and painters.

Today, the final drawing is transferred to a CNC milling machine, which engraves the design into a plaster mould. The motif is then refined and hand-carved by Royal Copenhagen's modelers, who carefully translate the drawing into relief. This delicate, time-consuming process has been passed down from generation to generation of craftsmen at the factory.



The plaster moulds are cast and mirrored several times to create alternating areas of light and shadow. Finally, a rubber mould is produced and sent to Royal Copenhagen's factory in Thailand, where the plates are cast and fired for the first time at 900°C. The colour is then applied to the porous surface using an airbrush and soft brush, before glazing and a final firing at around 1400°C.

Unlike Royal Copenhagen's other underglaze decorations – such as the world-famous Blue Fluted pattern or the modern Blue Mega and Blue Elements – the Christmas Plate design is created in relief. A layer of cobalt blue colour is sprayed across the plate, then carefully removed with a brush so that it remains in the recesses while being lifted from the raised surfaces. The process is repeated several times, with additional layers sprayed and partially removed, until the motif emerges in its characteristic variations of light and dark blue.

Each plate is therefore hand-finished and bears the unique imprint of the painter. After glazing and firing, the thickness of the colour layers results in the distinctive tones of Royal Copenhagen's Christmas Plates.

