

SILK PEARCE STAMPS CELEBRATE 'LICK OF THE IRISH'

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Branding and design consultancy, Silk Pearce has designed a miniature sheet for Royal Mail featuring four stamps that will go on sale from Tuesday 11 March to highlight St Patrick and some of Northern Ireland's top tourist attractions. The stamps - which were originally targeted for issue on Saturday 15 March, St Patrick's Day - are being launched a few days earlier to enable cards to be posted to overseas destinations in time for the big day!

"St Patrick's Day is not an event that the design team at Silk Pearce would normally celebrate but clearly this year we will be raising a glass or two of Guinnessafter hours, of course! We are always flattered when Royal Mail invites us to design commemorative stamps and it is a great feeling knowing that our work will be seen, admired and treasured across the world as people get ready to celebrate all things Irish," said Peter Silk, joint creative director at Silk Pearce.

Silk Pearce's design for the Celebrating Northern Ireland minisheet features landmarks and historic sites from the country's rich cultural history, as well as its patron saint. The two first-class stamps show photographs of Carrickfergus Castle, on the banks of Belfast Lough and the Giant's Causeway,



Four stamp designs for the Celebrating Northern Ireland minisheet





one of the UK's greatest natural wonders. The two long-format 78 pence stamps (each 24 x 78 mm) feature: a photograph of Belfast's Queen's Bridge linking the old town of Belfast and its quays with its former industrial heartland; and a newly-commissioned illustration of St Patrick by Claire Melinsky.

The background to the sheet is the Cushendun Hills: an almost uninterrupted succession of hills and uplands where on a clear day it is possible to see Scotland's Mull of Kintyre, about 20 miles away.

St Patrick's Day is normally held on 17 March but is occasionally moved by church authorities to prevent a clash with other significant events. The annual feast day is being shifted this year to Saturday 15 March – it was last moved in 1940 - to avoid it falling in Holy Week, the week before Easter.

Celebrating Northern Ireland is the third set in 'The Four Countries of United Kingdom' series of minisheets being designed by Silk Pearce. The first two sets marking the national identities of Scotland and England were issued in 2006 and 2007; the final set for Wales is due out on St David's Day on 1 March 2009.

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Peter Silk raising a glass for St. Patrick's Day

