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Postcards

FALL 2012

ISTANBUL RISING

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where east meets west

Ireland,
Scotland
& Wales

NEW YEAR'S
EVE FROM LOS
ANGELES TO
NEW YORK CITY



AMERICA'S BI

There's a New Year's vacation for every traveler, from far

Revelers at Soho Grand's annual Masquerade
Black & White Ball in New York City.

5 Postcards

LARGGEST PARTY

Family-friendly fun to a romantic night out on the town.

BY KATE THORMAN

NEW YEAR'S EVE is the one night a year that the whole country celebrates. Of course, the celebration lends itself to some friendly competition amongst cities vying for guests who want to make their night the most memorable possible. Cities across the country, including New York, Orlando, Las Vegas and Los Angeles, offer over-the-top firework displays, concerts, elegant soirées and champagne toasts. From ball drops to ball gowns, America's party capitals will be welcoming 2013 in full style. For the best New Year's vacation, make sure you contact your Travel Leaders agent to book a package through its trusted partners such as Funjet Vacations, GOGO Vacations and Delta Vacations. Here's how to make sure you're at the right event this winter, wherever you go.

NEW YORK CITY

No place does New Year's Eve quite like the City That Never Sleeps, with its bright lights, society parties and iconic ball drop. The Times Square experience is enhanced even more if you have access to the VIP section and exclusive parties at the many bars and clubs surrounding the square.

The best fireworks view, though, can be found on the river. Family-friendly water taxi cruises offer prime viewing opportunities, along with an evening of Wii games, hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar for adults. A more elegant affair on a 1920s-style yacht, hosted by Yacht Manhattan, mandates a black-tie dress code and 40-person limit; Frank Sinatra himself would be jealous of the champagne tasting, hors d'oeuvres and live jazz. Numerous other companies, including Circle Line and World Yacht, offer a similar—if less exclusive—evening, with a midnight champagne toast.

Highest society can be found hiding from the cold at the Soho Grand Hotel's annual Black & White Masquerade Ball, always one of the hottest tickets in town.

No celebratory New Year's Eve in the Big Apple would be complete without a similarly indulgent hotel. The gentlemen's club-style The Blakely New York caters to families and couples alike, while The Charwal and Hôtel Plaza Athénée offer tastes of Old-World glamour and five-star service.



Fireworks over the Ritz-Carlton and JW Marriott in Orlando; below, Jay-Z performing at The Cosmopolitan, Las Vegas.

ORLANDO

When it comes to good, old-fashioned family fun, there's no place like Orlando, where the theme parks open for extended hours and special entertainment on New Year's Eve. Check into one of the city's swankier properties, such as the expansive Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress near the Walt Disney World complex, or The Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes, which is just a stone's throw from many iconic theme-park destinations.

With its Main Street parade and multiple fireworks displays throughout the evening, Disney World offers the ultimate kids' New Year's Eve, and Disney Travel packages can guarantee all your tickets, reservations and extra perks for the kids well in advance of the holiday rush. Nearby, Epcot and SeaWorld Orlando attract a wider range of ages, with DJ-hosted dance parties, live music, and lights and fireworks displays. At Universal Studios Orlando and Islands of Adventure, regular admission gives access to dance parties, fireworks and character appearances. Over on the Universal CityWalk, the party caters to adults as much as kids, with an all-you-can-eat buffet, champagne toast, dance club and live concerts from acts such as Smash Mouth and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy.

Orlando isn't just theme parks and family fun, though. Take advantage of Florida's warm winter weather and join the locals at the Church Street party. Tour the bars, but be sure to come out at midnight for the fireworks show and to watch their answer to New York's famed descending ball: the Orange Drop.



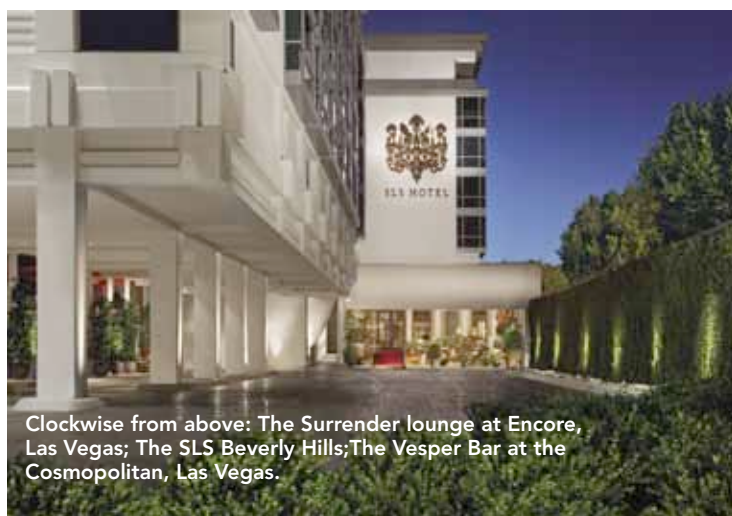
LAS VEGAS

New York may have Times Square, but Vegas redefines partying. In addition to the Fremont Street Experience street party and its cover bands, every casino and club has a hot event with a celebrity host, so it's all about knowing where to go.

Stay at the iconic (and recently renovated) Caesars Palace for a guaranteed ball, or opt for Encore at Wynn Las Vegas for pure luxury. It's The Cosmopolitan, though, since it opened on New Year's Eve two years ago, that has held the bash to remember; Stevie Wonder headlined last year, with Jay-Z and Coldplay the year before. Packages include dinner before and brunch on New Year's Day.

Wherever you go, don't miss the fireworks, best seen from the rooftops of the MGM Grand, Caesars Palace, Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino, The Venetian, and Aria Resort & Casino.

Sin City isn't only parties, though. Cirque du Soleil has a permanent residence there; this year's shows are The Beatles LOVE, Zarkana and the highly acclaimed Mystère. Celebrity magician David Copperfield performs on New Year's Eve, and, for families with a penchant for musical theater, the Tony Award-winning "The Lion King" offers hours of entertainment. Even kids who just can't sit still can enjoy the Coney Island Emporium and Circus Circus' Adventure-dome, with their amusement parks, games and family-friendly fun.



Clockwise from above: The Surrender lounge at Encore, Las Vegas; The SLS Beverly Hills; The Vesper Bar at the Cosmopolitan, Las Vegas.

LOS ANGELES

In Tinseltown, it's all about partying like the stars. Start with booking into one of the city's ritziest addresses, such as the W Los Angeles or the red-carpeted SLS Hotel in Beverly Hills. The centrally located InterContinental Los Angeles Century City places you perfectly for easy access to all your events.

The hottest ticket has long been the Big Bang New Year's Eve, held annually at the iconic Hollywood & Highland Center. The celebrity hosts, DJs and musical acts change, but Cobra Starship and Mario Lopez were just two of last year's big names. An included dinner buffet comes straight from the kitchen of L.A. favorite Wolfgang Puck. Ticket packages are often available to see a performance beforehand at the Kodak Theatre next door.

An evening on Long Beach Harbor's historic Queen Mary ocean liner harkens back to classic Hollywood, boasting fireworks over the water and parties featuring everything from jazz to '80s rock. You can go even more low-key with Tony Award-winner Idina Menzel as she performs her brand new show at downtown's Walt Disney Concert Hall.

If the kids can't sit through the concert, Walt Disney Travel Company offers packages for Disneyland and Disney California Adventure Park excitement, as both stay open late for parades, fireworks displays and live music. Or keep the whole family happy at Universal CityWalk's all-ages party, complete with live music, DJs and fireworks at midnight.

No matter what kind of New Year's Eve you crave, contact your trusted Travel Leaders agent to help you create the perfect vacation. **TL**

Contact your Travel Leaders agent to schedule a New Year's Eve to remember.



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