

NEW YORK LIFESTYLES

BEST PLACES TO SPEND NEW YEAR'S EVE

BY NORAH BRADFORD

As the clock ticks down to the New Year, crowds gather waiting for a glittering ball to drop. But it's not New York City. Instead, we're in Hong Kong where everyone enjoys ushering in a brand New Year. Fireworks, street parties, dancing, with lots of food and drink make December 31st an especially great time around the world to celebrate. Of course, each destination has its cultural twists and distinctive setting. Here, our picks that will undoubtedly start your year right.

AMMAN, JORDAN

WHAT TO SEE

An ancient city and capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Amman was in earlier times named Philadelphia by Macedonian ruler Ptolemy II. New Year's Eve in Jordan offers visitors the opportunity to see ancient history and the influence of the Roman Empire, Islamic and Turkish-Ottoman Empires on the modern day Jordan.



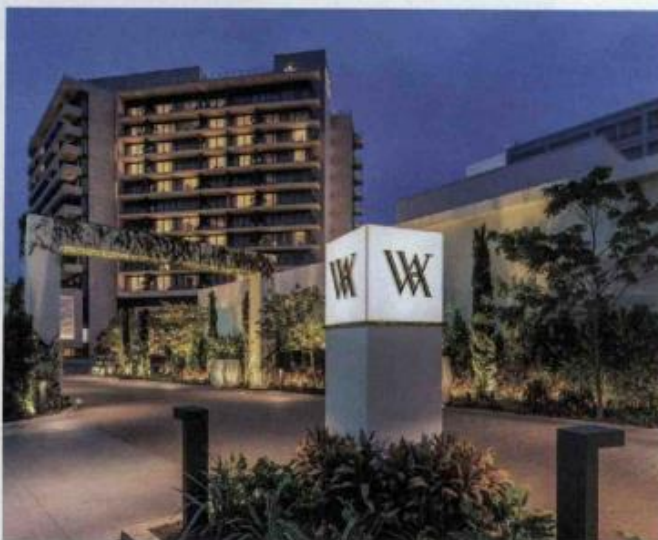
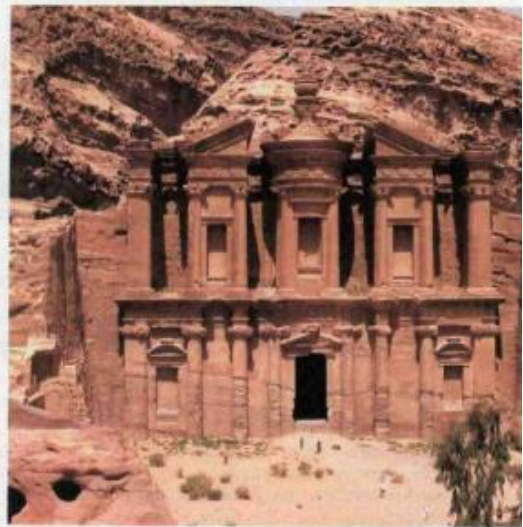
WHERE TO STAY

Atop the highest of the seven hills is the **Four Seasons Hotel Amman** (fourseasons.com). Use this as your palace from which to experience and explore the souks, the museums containing the Dead Sea Scrolls or to travel to the ancient City of Petra. The Spa offers treatments using Dead Sea salts. Dine at *La Capitale* and enjoy a classic French Brasserie experience.



WELCOME 2018 IN STYLE

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

WHAT TO SEE

With LA's round-the-clock party scene, why not indulge in the latest trend for—club crawls? Drop into some of the hot parties such as the 9th Annual Cleopatra Ball at the **Egyptian Theatre Courtyard** or the classic **Hollywood Roosevelt New Year's Eve** celebration. The Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills is an ideal vantage point from which to celebrate New Year's Eve fireworks and perhaps stay longer to see the first of the Hollywood Awards—The 75th Golden Globes on January 7th.

WHERE TO STAY

New Year's Eve in the City of Angels has a new home at the **Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills** (waldorfastoria3.hilton.com). Located at the intersection of Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards the property has been designed by Pierre-Yves-Rochon with the aim of emphasizing the best of California luxury and lifestyle. It boasts no fewer than three distinct cocktail lounges and a restaurant from Chef Jean-Georges.

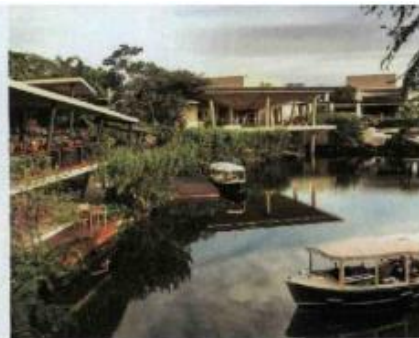
MAYAKOBA, MEXICO

WHAT TO SEE

Before midnight strikes twelve, visit the Aztec ruins of Chichen Itza or the caverns and caves of Rio Secreto. In town visit the art galleries, the 3D museum of wonders or the Playa Aquarium. Alternatively get out on the water either for fishing, yachting or snorkeling.

WHERE TO STAY

Round out your plans for New Year's Eve with a relaxing beach vacation at the **Rosewood Mayakoba** (rosewoodhotels.com). Nestled in a nature reserve, enjoy the fantastic cuisine, party at the *Agave Azul Sushi & Tequila* bar, not to mention the luxurious accommodations. Be sure to experience a treatment (or two) at the spa, *Sense*, where the expert staff will soothe and pamper. There's also the PGA Tour golf course El Camaleon. Alternatively, try the ultimate experience: Purchase one of the five-star residences and confirm your future New Year's Eve plans!



MONTREAL, CANADA

WHAT TO SEE

Celebrating its 375th Anniversary of Foundation this year alongside Canada's 150th celebrations this is the time to enjoy a cosmopolitan, almost Parisian experience of New Year's Eve. On your New York doorstep is Canada's second largest city. Visit the Old Port which has ice-skating and watch the fireworks display or visit one of the nightclubs for dancing such as Mad House or something a little more *classique*, the **Montreal Ball**.

WHERE TO STAY

The **Ritz-Carlton Montreal** (ritzcarlton.com) is over a century old though keeps up with the pace with its iconic position as a contemporary five-star, five-diamond-rated travel destination. The cozy, yet modern accommodations will conspire to keep you in your room though the hotel boasts outstanding spa experiences such as an indoor rooftop saltwater pool as well as a centerpiece *Maison Boulud* restaurant. Not without a sense of humor one of the packages offered by the hotel includes a discount based on how many degrees below zero (Celsius—not Fahrenheit) the temperature is on your day of arrival.

BAHAMAS

WHAT TO SEE

Those relaxing beach days give way to wild nights as the Bahamas prepares to ring in the New Year. Most hotels offer guests in-house celebrations. However, the real fun begins when locals celebrate with **Junkanoo**. It's the Bahamian version of Mardi Gras, complete with music, street performers, and colorful costumes. The fun continues as most of these parades continue into the next day.

WHERE TO STAY

The sight of this pink fantasia known as **Atlantis** (atlantisbahamas.com) comes into view well before you cross one of the Paradise Island bridges. In fact, Atlantis is as much a tourist attraction as it is a resort hotel. At **Dolphin Cay**, interact with dolphins and stingrays. And at **Aquaventure**, a 63-acre waterscape, thrilling waterslides, as well as lazy-river tube rides, traverse the sprawling grounds. To be sure, Atlantis has the entire family covered with special New Year's Eve events for kids, a festive masquerade ball for adults, and prime viewing of the **Marina Village** fireworks.



HONG KONG

WHAT TO SEE

New Year's Eve in Hong Kong features one of the world's best pyrotechnic shows, an extravaganza of light and sound that includes a fireworks show over Victoria Harbour and a "Times Square" countdown, complete with a ball drop at midnight. However, the show begins with the **Light Show** display that illuminates 45 buildings across the Hong Kong skyline at 8 pm (it's presented every night throughout the year). Best views can be seen from any of the tour boats in Victoria Harbour; and on land head to Avenue of the Stars in Kowloon.



WHERE TO STAY

It's no exaggeration to say **The Peninsula Hong Kong** (hongkong.peninsula.com) is legendary. Opened in 1928, it has been providing luxury accommodations with white glove service for nine decades. The Peninsula is home to no fewer than nine restaurants and bars. Begin your New Year's Eve celebration at *Gaddi's* for it classic cuisine, then grab a table on the 28th floor's *Felix*. Not only are there spectacular views of Victoria Harbour, but the hand-crafted cocktails will also delight. •