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A warm welcome awaits your clients at Bodysgallen Hall & Spa.

Festive Availability for 2024

Dear Friends,

As the summer winds down and blends into what we hope is a glorious autumn for you and yours, we're sure you have holiday travel on your mind. For your clients who may have gotten swept away by summer sun and neglected to make plans for the festive season, no need to fret - there is some availability left throughout the Rebecca Recommends portfolio, whether they're seeking a traditional Europe holiday or experiencing a new cultural tradition in India or Nepal.

Here's a peek at what holidaying looks like at many of our hotels and DMCs throughout the world:

- In the English Countryside: House parties, fantastic feasts, and Boxing Day walks
- In London: Shopping for the perfect gifts in Chelsea, Kensington, and Knightsbridge
- In Zurich: Fondue, Christmas markets, and endless mulled wine
- In India: Experiencing Independence Day and the birth of Lord Krishna in local style

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- In Ireland: Cozying up with rum hot chocolate and fruity mince pies and gala black-tie events on New Year's Eve in a picturesque castle settings
- In Greece: Experiencing the "Winter Mykonos" at Arachova for a laid-back ski holiday
- In Australia & New Zealand: Dining in view of the famous Sydney fireworks, or escaping with family and friends to a luxurious beach house
- In South Africa: Indulging a foodie's sensibilities in the seasonal bounty of the Cape Winelands
- In Scotland: Attending a renowned Hogmanay celebration for New Year's in historic Edinburgh
- In Nepal: Immersing oneself in the cultural celebrations of Nepal, such an integral part of daily life
- In New York City: Soaking up exclusive views of Rockefeller Center's Christmas Tree Lighting Party while savoring a gourmet dinner
- In Napa Valley: Toasting to loved ones of all ages with artful wine pairings and a special visit from Santa

As always, please reach out with any questions about these festive experiences or for an introduction.

Fondly,

Rebecca

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Rebecca and Basanti are ready for the festive season.

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New Years Eve in Sydney. Photo credit Tourism Australia

[Southern Crossings, Australasia](#) - Act Now for Amazing Down Under Festive Availability

While there are still some pockets of availability across Southern Crossings' destinations, things are booking up fast and the options are becoming increasingly limited by the week (especially at New Zealand's intimate luxury lodges). While some elements of clients' dream itineraries may no longer be possible this year, it's time to encourage travelers to consider Australia and New Zealand for the 2025 festive season to ensure they can include all of the elements that they would like to.

As some of the first places in the world to see in the new year, with world-famous fireworks displays and the enticing allure of Christmas by the beach and in the sun, celebrating the festive season Down Under is always very popular (with locals and visitors alike!). Always book as early as possible to be able to secure preferred arrangements.

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Fireworks in Sydney. Photo credit Tourism Australia

The Sydney New Year's Eve firework celebrations are often high on many traveler's bucket lists. While Sydney hotel rooms with harbor views and private luxury vessels on the harbor are already pretty scarce, Southern Crossings still has access to some very special accommodations and venues, such as the Front Row Table - an exclusive dining experience for up to 12 family or friends at Bennelong Restaurant looking across the harbor to the Harbour Bridge from beneath the sails of the Sydney Opera House, or a private dining room at Quay looking back across Circular Quay to the Opera House.

Many restaurants and venues (including Sydney's spectacular harborside Botanic Gardens and Taronga Zoo with views to the city skyline, which both annually present outdoor, ticketed New Year's Eve events) have yet to release the details and tickets for 2024 celebrations. Most restaurants are also finalizing their plans, usually releasing early September (though many have already started waiting lists).

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Landing Boathouse. Photo credit - The Landing Residences

For those looking to celebrate a little more low-key - perhaps under a canopy of outback stars or surrounded by the vines of the Barossa wine country - Southern Crossings is still able to curate memory-making Australian celebrations.

Similarly, over the Christmas holidays, availability at some of the most popular island-lodges (Lizard Island, Qualia, or Capella Lodge on Lord Howe Island and Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island) is already very limited, but there remain opportunities to secure some spectacular private beach houses in stunning Australian coastal locations. With this a very popular option for locals holidaying too, the advice here is again to be quick!

Across the Tasman in New Zealand, availability at the most exclusive luxury lodges is - by the very nature of these properties - very limited (in fact, you will want to start planning now for the 2025/26 festive season to get ahead of the rest and secure your preferred arrangements).

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Front Row Table at Bennelong Restaurant, Sydney Opera House

Photo credit - Bennelong Restaurant, Sydney Opera House

Many of New Zealand's luxury lodges host special celebratory dinners and itineraries, while those looking to create their own special celebrations can do as the locals do for the summer and book an exclusive-use luxury bach (that's "kiwi" for holiday house) - beachside, lakeshore, or mountaintop.

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[Curated Greece, Greece](#) - Discover Festive Greece, a Unique Holiday Destination

This holiday season, entice your clients with the magic of Greece, an enchanting destination that offers a blend of history, culture, and festive cheer.

Begin in Athens, a city that transforms into a winter wonderland during Christmas. The streets light up with dazzling decorations, and festive markets offer delicious treats and handmade gifts, all of which can be discovered in Curated Greece's special Christmas edition private food tour. Visiting the iconic Acropolis during this season with no crowds and sweet cool temperatures is an invigorating and truly immersive experience. For the ultimate luxury experience, a stay at the historic Hotel Grande Bretagne offers exquisite accommodation and the perfect view of the magnificent Christmas tree at Syntagma Square.

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From Athens, a short, chauffeured drive takes visitors to the picturesque village of Arachova, nestled on the slopes of Mount Parnassos. Known as the “Winter Mykonos,” Arachova is a charming alpine village with cozy tavernas, traditional stone houses, authentic accommodations, and vibrant nightlife. It’s the perfect base for a laid-back ski escape at the nearby quaint Parnassos Ski Resort, offering easy-going slopes for all levels and stunning mountain views.



Just a stone’s throw from Arachova lies the archaeological site of Delphi. Here, your clients can explore the ancient ruins, including the Temple of Apollo and the ancient theater, while soaking in the mystical atmosphere of this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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Cours Mirabeau

[Découvertes, France](#) - Feel the Spell of Provence

December drapes Aix-en-Provence in a magical, festive glow. The Cours Mirabeau transforms into a twinkling wonderland, enticing visitors with the promise of handcrafted treasures and heartwarming treats. Indulge in mulled wine and local delicacies while exploring the Santon fair - a Provençal tradition that will leave guests enchanted.

Craving something more substantial? Les Bacchanales, a Provençal gem, awaits your clients' culinary desires. After a sumptuous lunch, they may embark on a whirlwind tour of Aix's historic heart, from the majestic Hotel de Caumont to the soulful Cézanne's studio.

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Les Baux de Provence

Venture beyond Aix and discover the allure of Provence. Explore the medieval magic of Les Baux de Provence, the charming village of Eygalières, and the vibrant ochre hues of Roussillon. Learn the secrets of Provençal cuisine, from traditional Christmas feasts to the art of crafting the 13 desserts.

Their journey culminates in Avignon, a city steeped in history and festive spirit. Immerse your clients in the grandeur of the Pope's Palace, stroll across the iconic Avignon Bridge, and indulge in the delights of a bustling Christmas market.

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Enjoy the exclusive Thanksgiving Day Parade and party from one of the best vantage points on the route.

[Beyond Time Square, East Coast, United States](#) - A Season of Spectacular in NYC

Get ready to light up your clients' holiday season with BTSQ in New York City, with plenty of festive, fun events that make for unforgettable holidays.

It all starts with the [Exclusive Thanksgiving Day Parade Viewing Party](#) where guests will not only enjoy indoor and outdoor views of the iconic Macy's parade, but be treated to a breakfast and brunch buffet, unlimited mimosas and bloody marys, live entertainment, and more.

Each year on the Wednesday following Thanksgiving, the larger-than-life Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree is illuminated for the first time. Send your clients there in person as they join BTSQ's exclusive [Christmas Tree Lighting Party](#). It's an intimate night of gourmet dining, dancing, and, of course, amazing views of that world-famous tree.

For those seeking a unique holiday celebration, there's the [Holiday Cabaret Brunch at LeRock](#). Happening every weekend in December, it's a delicious brunch during which Broadway stars perform holiday songs amidst the festive backdrop of the Rockefeller Center Tree.

End the year on a high note with the [New Year's Eve Gala at M Social Hotel](#). Picture this: gourmet bites, unlimited champagne, live entertainment, and a view of the Times Square Ball Drop. Families can attend the kid-friendly [New Year's Eve Party at Rockefeller Center](#) with everything to keep both the young and young at heart entertained, including a live DJ, a tasty buffet, and more - all just steps from the stunning Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree.

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[Meadowood Napa Valley, California](#) - Make Merry & Bright Holiday Memories

Meadowood Napa Valley welcomes the holidays with an array of activities for everyone. Enjoy seasonally inspired holiday dining and cocktails at Forum, the property's central restaurant; refine hosting skills at a wreath workshop; and learn the art of wine pairings with experts from The Wine Center. Make memories with the whole family at the annual Holiday Bazaar, on December 6th, including a special visit from Santa, before retreating to a sumptuous guest room to decorate a gingerbread house in front of a crackling fireplace.

As the festive season continues, the Santa's Helpers Camp returns December 22nd and 23rd! Hosted by the little ones' favorite Meadowood instructors and counselors, this afternoon camp combines equal parts holiday cheer and fun. Activities include merry fitness bootcamp and games, scavenger hunts, silent glow disco, hot chocolate, cookies, and crafts.

A special gift for oneself or others, the Best of Meadowood package offers a way to indulge in — and balance — the best of what the valley has to offer. Reserving this package includes access to a one-of-a-kind tasting hosted by the distinguished education team at The Wine Center; a day of pampering at the Meadowood Spa; individualized curation of visits to some of the most celebrated Napa Valley wineries and vineyards; a full menu of daily fitness classes and hikes on the grounds; and reservations with some of the region's most renowned restaurants. Meadowood welcomes guests this winter to revel in the simple yet rewarding pleasures that make for unforgettable holiday memories.

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A festive table enjoyed at Babylonstoren.

[Babylonstoren, Franschhoek Wine Valley, South Africa](#) - Season of Wonder at Babylonstoren

Neither a farm nor a hotel, Babylonstoren is set in the breathtakingly beautiful Cape Winelands, on the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain. It's an experience in multiple dimensions, a paradise of sorts, anchored to the land. Here, each season is celebrated for its qualities and bounty, but no season is as eagerly anticipated and treasured as the festive season. This, like no other time of year, is the season when wonder awaits at every turn in the fertile garden.

December in South Africa is a time of long, sun-drenched days, of large, loose blooms, creamy gelato, ice-cold rosé, plump red tomatoes, and succulent stone fruit on luxurious pillows of water buffalo mozzarella, seasoned with a pinch of sea salt and Babylonstoren's homegrown, peppery olive oil. There is much to taste, smell, see, and do on the farm, with many carefully curated cool corners and serene, natural nooks along the garden paths.

Guests may surrender to the cultivated care of the garden and hot spa treatments, before toasting the day from the slopes of Simonsberg Mountain, taking in the late-afternoon tranquility of the farm. With Babylonstoren's summer harvest in full swing, the festive season is the perfect time of year to sample the fantastic produce in the farm-to-fork restaurants, which have a biome synonymous with the fairest Cape. From their free-roaming, grass-fed cattle, to the elegant wines produced in the cellar, a true taste of the region is offered.

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At Babylonstoren, the bounty of the earth is celebrated, which includes sharing inspiration in the form of walks and tours. Guests are encouraged to join in workshops during their stay. The December schedule includes opportunities to make one's own Christmas decorations, a lavender and essential oils workshop, and two workshops on growing one's own veggies for kids under 12.

Christmas at Babylonstoren is a magical, sun-drenched feast for the senses, filled with flavors, experiences, adorable farm animals, family time, and memories to last a lifetime.

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[The Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa, Cape Town, South Africa](#) - Christmas in the Cape

Escape the winter chill in luxurious comfort at South Africa's iconic Twelve Apostles Hotel, nestled in Cape Town's exclusive Camps Bay neighborhood. Here, warmth, luxury, and a touch of holiday magic await you. Elevate the festive spirit with a magnificent Christmas Eve dinner, offering a delicious start to a season of cherished traditions and family moments. As the clock ushers in the New Year, glasses are raised to a dazzling dinner, a night of style and elegance that promises unforgettable memories. Celebrate the holidays with unmatched allure in Azure restaurant, where sunshine meets sophistication.

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Hadspen House at Christmas time.

[The Newt in Somerset, Somerset, England](#) - A Glorious Time in the English Countryside

Make this Christmas special for your discerning clients, in true Somerset style. The team has lined up a ho-ho-host of treats, experiences, and exclusive dinners made to remember. The Christmas package is over four nights and covers a huge range of festive treats and sumptuous celebrations, from feasts to Christmas tipples with live music.

A seasonal tip from the hotel: Book into The Farmyard where the quiet embrace of the countryside further warms the spirit with rooms having their own fireplaces and the Garner Bar featuring a range of complimentary drinks. A private indoor pool allows guests to soak into the relaxation of being cheek-to-rosy-cheek with winter's embrace.

Your clients can expect festive treats upon arrival, dinner in the Botanical Rooms or the Farmyard Kitchen on December 23rd or 26th, a Christmas Eve gala dinner with wine, a four-course Christmas Day lunch with wine, a Boxing Day brunch with a tipple, full English breakfast each morning, a festive Cream Tea each day, live music, a Christmas Eve Druid Tree Walk with mulled cider and mince pies, a 12-month Newt membership from the date of their stay, and exclusive festive estate experiences.

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[The Milestone Hotel & Residences, London, England](#) - London Lights Up for the Holidays

Enhance your family festivities with a stay at The Milestone's Residences, where the atmosphere of "a private home in the city" meets the joyous celebratory spirit. Each of the two-or three-bedroom Residences boasts its own magnificent Christmas tree, setting the stage for treasured memories and a very special visitor on December 24th. Situated opposite Kensington Palace & Gardens and only moments from the illustrious Royal Albert Hall, the Residences offer direct access through the hotel or via one's own private entrance, ideal for seamless transitions between Christmas shopping and seasonal performances in London's West End.

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[The Living Circle, Zürich](#) - Cinnamon, Candlelight & Christmas Spirit

Experience the enchanting holiday atmosphere of Zürich during the Advent season. The scent of mulled wine and cinnamon wafts through the air, Christmas carols emanate from stores and shopping malls, and children's shining eyes gaze at the festively decorated Märlitram. The narrow, winding streets of the Old Town are bathed in magical light, offering a feast for the senses to Christmas lovers.

During Advent, Zürich becomes a paradise for food enthusiasts. As your clients leisurely stroll through the city center, they'll be tempted by a variety of festive treats. Whether it's the rich, melted cheese of raclette, the cozy corners of timber chalets serving fondue, or the comforting warmth of hot chestnuts from a "Maroni" vendor, Zürich has something to satisfy every craving. And to keep insides warm, there's mulled wine and a range of sweet and spicy punch variations at every turn.

For an unforgettable stay, reserve your clients' stay by the river Limmat at the Storchen Zürich, where Christmas lights twinkle and they can enjoy views of Zürich's famous churches. Alternatively, opt for the Widder Hotel, where design meets history in nine ancient townhouses, creating a beguiling, restful atmosphere brimming with Christmas spirit.

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[100 Princes Street, Edinburgh, Scotland](#) - Luxury Meets Tradition in the Heart of Edinburgh

For an unparalleled festive experience, 100 Princes Street in Edinburgh stands out as the ultimate choice for Christmas and New Year's. Nestled along iconic Princes Street, this luxury hotel offers breathtaking views of Edinburgh Castle and the historic skyline, ensuring a magical backdrop for your clients' celebrations.

During the festive season, the hotel transforms into a winter wonderland, with elegantly decorated interiors that exude warmth and sophistication. The exceptional service, combined with the cozy yet opulent atmosphere, makes it the perfect retreat for discerning travelers seeking both relaxation and festive cheer.

Edinburgh itself is renowned for its Hogmanay celebrations, one of the most spectacular New Year's events globally. Staying at 100 Princes Street places guests at the heart of the festivities, from the enchanting Christmas markets to the torchlight procession and the famous street party. They'll enjoy easy access to these events while savoring the comfort and luxury of their accommodations.

The hotel's commitment to excellence extends to its festive dining experiences, offering exquisite seasonal menus. Whether indulging in a sumptuous Christmas feast or toasting the New Year with a glass of champagne, every moment is designed to delight.

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[Park Hotel Kenmare, County Kerry, Ireland](#) - A Delicious Way to Holiday

Christmas time at Park Hotel Kenmare is incredibly full: with stories, laughter, savory and sweet delights, traditions, and memories. Make the hotel your clients' home this Christmas, a place they can gather by the fire, sing at the piano, experience traditional dishes, and help fill the hotel with warmth and joy for the holidays.

The celebration begins on Christmas Eve with festive coffee, rum hot chocolate, fruity mince pies, and classic Christmas cake. Stroll to Kenmare for last-minute shopping or wander through the gardens to the waterfront with a Christmas cocktail in hand. Little guests enjoy Christmas tea, hang their stockings, and leave special treats for Santa. Relax to the sound of open fires and live choir music in the Garden Rooms, before a candlelight dinner at Landline.

On Christmas Day, guests may sleep in and wander down to the Sean Scully Room for breakfast, where they can start with some bubbles, or an Irish coffee, and unwrap presents. Active folks can join a 5K run around Kenmare, opt for a swim in the pool or, if they're bold, in the Atlantic, followed by a light Christmas lunch. Later, it's time for Christmas games and quizzes or to watch a holiday classic in the cinema before dinner. At 5 pm the bells ring in the arrival of Santa Claus, who welcomes guests to Christmas tea. At 7:30 pm, all can indulge in a festive feast of juicy turkey with all the trimmings, and the hotel's sweet Christmas pudding with brandy butter to finish.

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On Stephen's Day, guests enjoy a late breakfast, take off for a fun day of hiking, or join the local treasure hunt around town. Winners of Christmas day quizzes are announced in the afternoon and the demolition of the gingerbread house is a tasty treat for younger guests after their tea. A final candlelight dinner awaits followed by music, singing, and dancing to Christmas classics.



For those who wish to stay through New Year's, it's cheers to the end of 2024 with champagne and cocktails before an elegant dinner at Landline. Then, the carpets are rolled back and the disco ball comes out for dancing into the New Year with live music and singing as the clock counts down to midnight.

Start New Year's Day off slowly and luxuriously, soaking in 2025 in the heated outdoor vitality pool as one reflects on resolutions for the next 365 days.

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[Lismore Castle, County Waterford, Ireland](#) - An Unforgettable New Year at Lismore Castle

Family and friends will have a truly memorable start to 2025 with exclusive use of Lismore Castle, the Irish home of the Duke of Devonshire and a gorgeous setting of fine interiors, 800 years of history, and a warm Irish welcome.

With 45 years of experience, castle butler Denis Nevis and his team will create a bespoke experience to perfectly suit your client group of up to 27 guests. They'll watch fireworks explode above the towers, dance to traditional Irish music in the spectacular Pugin Hall, or enjoy an intimate dinner around a fireplace.

Accessed via a long, walled drive, Lismore Castle's history is everywhere one looks, from the stained-glass windows and thick stone walls to the centuries-old gardens and the exceptional artworks by Old Masters and leading contemporary artists.

Guests can feel at home with cozy fires throughout, board games, treasure hunts, pool games, and themed dinners. Outside of the castle, they may choose to take in panoramic views on a trek in the Knockmealdown Mountains, explore the wild coastline of Ardmore, or visit the county of Cork, for the famous Jameson Distillery and award-winning restaurants.

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[Ashford Castle, County Mayo, Ireland](#) - Celebrate the Season in Style

The festive season is a truly special time of year, and there's no place quite like Ashford Castle to celebrate it. It's a time to be thankful, reflect, and enjoy the company of loved ones. Whether indulging in a Thanksgiving experience or booking the all-inclusive two-night New Year program, your clients are in for an unforgettable treat.

The Castle's New Year experience offers guests an enchanting blend of tradition and luxury. Over the course of two days, they'll enjoy a lavish Afternoon Tea, a variety of activities, including a captivating history walk with the resident historian, a scenic boat cruise on Lough Corrib, and a Hawk Walk at Ireland's First School of Falconry. Each evening, they'll savor exquisite dinners, culminating in a gala black-tie event on New Year's Eve, followed by midnight celebrations featuring champagne, dancing, and a spectacular fireworks display.

This is truly a memorable time at Ashford Castle. To book, please contact our reservations team at reservations@ashfordcastle.com. The New Year experience is commissionable at 5%, with a cancellation policy of one month prior to arrival. Prepayment is required to secure your reservation. (Subject to availability)

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[The Egerton House Hotel, London, England](#) - A Tale of Festivities in London

Experience the magic of the holiday season at London's Egerton House Hotel with their Egerton Wonderland package. This enchanting offer invites guests to explore iconic Harrods, one of the world's most legendary department stores, located just minutes from the hotel. After a delightful day of Christmas shopping, retreat to the hotel's cozy Drawing Room and indulge in a festive afternoon tea by a warm and inviting fire.

Adding to the festive charm, the hotel features a captivating installation by its partner of 30 years, the talented florist Jane Wadham. Each year, Jane transforms the exterior décor, ensuring a unique and enchanting Christmas surprise that adds a touch of wonder to every stay.

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[Gravetye Manor, Sussex, England](#) - Gravetye Christmas Magic

Christmas at Gravetye Manor promises a magical experience, blending historical charm with festive elegance. Located in Sussex, England, this 16th-century Elizabethan manor house is renowned for its beautiful gardens, luxurious accommodations, and exquisite dining.

Gravetye Manor is transformed with traditional Christmas decorations, featuring twinkling lights, elegant wreaths, and beautiful Christmas trees. Cozy interiors and roaring fireplaces create a warm and inviting atmosphere.

The Manor's Christmas House Party runs for three nights, starting on Christmas Eve with afternoon tea and Christmas carols sung by a local quartet, then a sumptuous five-course Christmas Day lunch in the Michelin-starred dining room, followed by a casino evening on Boxing Day with a magician and roulette tables.

Prices are not yet finalized for the Christmas House Party in 2025, but please do reach out to register your interest.

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A beautiful festive window display at The Hari, Belgravia.

[The Hari, Belgravia, London, England](#) - A Lavish London Holiday

Welcome to Christmas at The Hari. Before we know it, the festive season will be upon us, and the time will come for your clients to celebrate with their nearest and dearest. Whether they are searching for a shopping break, a delicious Christmas lunch, or spiced cocktails under the stars, the hotel invites guests to share in their festivities. Greeted with a dazzling display of traditional decorations and twinkling lights, guests can't help but get in the Christmas spirit from the moment they arrive.

Your clients will feel festive atmosphere and indulge in limited-edition cocktails on the Winter Terrace with heaters and blankets, or seasonal menus carefully curated by Head Chef Angelo Albera in Italian restaurant il Pampero, before heading out to explore the wonders that Christmas in London has to offer.

The Hari borders the areas of Chelsea, Kensington, and Knightsbridge, meaning the hotel is moments away from London's greatest attractions and shopping destinations, including Winter Wonderland, the Royal Albert Hall, and Harrods.

For those looking for a more elaborate affair, The Hari's event spaces are perfect for all types of Christmas celebrations, from private dining with bespoke festive menus and fun-filled crackers, to Christmas soirees brimming with seasonal cocktails and canapés.

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[Great Fosters Estate, Egham Surrey, England](#) - Festive Feasts and Fireside Cheer

The Christmas holidays at Great Fosters, near Windsor, are a celebration steeped in tradition and luxury. Whether staying during the festive run-up to Christmas, Christmas Day itself, or during the Twixmas break, where could be lovelier than this historic Tudor estate. With an enviable location, a short journey from Heathrow and within easy reach of Windsor Castle and Hampton Court, there is plenty to explore.

During December, the festive spirit at Great Fosters is infectious. The Michelin-starred Tudor Pass will be pulling out all of the stops while the Estate Grill offers a more relaxed, but equally delicious approach to the season. Guests won't want to miss festive afternoon tea served in the Anne Boleyn Room.

For escapes during the holiday itself, Great Fosters offers the ultimate festive celebration over one, two, or three nights, during which one can enjoy a host of activities, including carol singing, falconry, and a whisky and chocolate tasting. There are also activities for children such as a treasure hunts and a stocking class. Indulgences start at check-in, with festive menus including Champagne Afternoon Tea, canapé receptions, and a hearty breakfast each morning. For those seeking a Twixmas break after Christmas, walks around the spectacular grounds can be followed by afternoon tea by the open fire or spa treatments for the ultimate holiday relaxation.

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After the quieter relaxation post-Christmas, the celebrations ramp up again for New Year's Eve for the most glamorous occasion of the festive season. One- and two-night stays are available as well as the option to pop by for the evening's celebratory five-course menu and entertainment to ring in 2025!

To find out more and see the full details of Great Foster Estates' Christmas offerings visit their website [here](#).

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[Hartwell House & Spa, Buckinghamshire, England](#) - A Winter Wonderland Welcome

Set in the Vale of Aylesbury, the historic Hartwell House & Spa offers a quintessential, festive country house retreat, with a rich history that dates back to the 17th century, combining timeless elegance with modern comforts.

Christmas is a splendid time to visit Hartwell House and there is still availability to join the three-day house party in this magnificent stately home. From roaring fireplaces to traditionally decorated Christmas trees within magnificent drawing rooms, each moment is designed to kindle the warmth of the season.

Festivities commence on Christmas Eve with a champagne reception in the evening, followed by a three-course dinner. On Christmas Day join the sensational four-course lunch with wine pairings and then sit back and listen to King Charles III's speech in the Library. Boxing Day will begin with Hartwell Brunch and concludes with a black-tie four-course dinner with fun casino action in the evening.

There are also some very exciting events and offerings towards the end of 2024 and into 2025, from Halloween-themed afternoon teas to festive wreathmaking workshops, as well as New Year's celebrations for a special winter break.

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[Bodysgallen Hall & Spa, Llandudno, North Wales](#) - Home for the Holidays at a Historic House Hotel

From the mountains to the sea, North Wales beckons your clients to experience the best of the festive season. Think Christmas markets with local artisan handicrafts and stylish brands that make excellent and unique gifts for family and friends back home, “Santa Trains” on the narrow-gauge Welsh Highland Railway, “Zipmas” for the thrill-seekers at Zip World Snowdonia, and the Christmas Extravaganza in the Victorian seaside resort of Llandudno. For family fun, there is always the traditional pantomime playing at Venue Cymru.

In a more sophisticated style, Bodysgallen Hall & Spa is the perfect place to stay and immerse oneself in quintessential country-house living. Sink into a very warm Welsh welcome and some of the best traditions passed down through generations for the enjoyment of all. The scene is set in this historic house dating back to the 13th century, with oak-paneled walls, magnificent fireplaces, treasured collectibles and paintings, sumptuous food menus, and every comfort offered by an attentive staff during a three-day house party.

Arrange for your guests to arrive on Christmas Eve to decorated halls and twinkling Christmas trees so they may soak up the nostalgia while local choristers arrive early evening to sing carols, followed by a delicious dinner. Christmas Day has all the sparkle with a lavish lunch in true traditional style, after which the televised Christmas greeting from King Charles III can be watched while relaxing with Christmas cake and a cup of tea. The following day, Boxing Day, offers guests time to relax in the spa and enjoy a spot of pampering before a gala dinner in the evening.

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[Middlethorpe Hall & Spa, North Yorkshire, England](#) - A Dickensian Christmas in York

There are few cities more magical during the festive season than York, when the Christmas tree is lit up in St. Helen's Square and the city is transformed into a winter wonderland. Your clients can immerse themselves in the city's medieval charm while staying at Middlethorpe Hall and Spa, just a short distance from the hustle and bustle of the city center. Here they can enjoy the comforts of quintessential English country house living, relaxing on plump sofas at the open fireside, enjoying exquisite dining while surrounded by beautiful antiques and paintings in this historic setting, or treating themselves to some well-deserved spa pampering.

York comes alive with festive illuminations, themed window displays, and special events during the six-week-long York Christmas market. The city center is compact, mostly pedestrianized and easily covered on foot. There are lots of quirky, independent shops and the Christmas markets in their alpine-style wooden chalets for unusual artisan and quality gifts to take home. The historic Shambles is particularly atmospheric at Christmas. The decorated medieval shopfronts and street illuminations make the cobbled street look like it has stepped out of a Dickens novel.

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The Shambles at Christmas

The magnificent York Minster puts on a program of spectacular events, from a Christmas Tree Festival to Carols by Candlelight and festive music performed by the Handbell Ringers of the Chapter House Choir. A Christmas service at York Minster is truly special, the most popular being the Minsters' "Nine Lessons and Carols" service.

Take a day out to visit the magnificent Castle Howard, the film location for "Brideshead Revisited," and join Alice's Christmas Wonderland for an unforgettable experience following the White Rabbit through a psychedelic world ending with a Mad Hatter's Afternoon Tea.

Returning to Middlethorpe Hall after a day capturing the true spirit of Christmas, guests can enjoy a traditional afternoon tea with a festive twist, or a delicious seasonal menu in the beautiful Oak Dining Room. These are magical memories to take home and share with family and friends.

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A celebratory idol of Lord Ganesha in Mumbai during Ganesh Chaturthi. Photo credit - Pexels

[Ventours International, India](#) - Cultural Festivities to Experience in India

Whether it's culture seekers or spiritual pilgrims, a family vacation, or a romantic honeymoon in India, Ventours International reveals the country's captivating contrasts and contradictions. Seamlessly entwining the world of the spirit with culture and everyday life, their expert trip planners can curate ways for your clients to immerse themselves in it all.

India embraces Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and several other faiths. As travelers with Ventours, visitors are immersed in the festivals, rituals, traditions, and practices that contribute to this cultural mosaic. Throughout the year, your clients may experience Ganesh Chaturthi, a 10-day festival dedicated to Lord Ganesha, or Eid, commemorating the end of Ramadan, the sacred month of fasting for Muslims. Diwali, the Festival of Light, is of particular importance in Hinduism, celebrating the victory of light over darkness and good over evil.

Those visiting India during the months of December and January will find Christian churches adorned beautifully for Christmas, as well as a variety of New Year's events that reflect the country's secular and inclusive ethos. Whether festive lights, exchanging gifts, setting goals and aspirations, or traditional music and dance performances, New Year's celebrations bring together people of different backgrounds while encompassing the rich diversity of Indian traditions.

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Kumbhalgarh Fort, Rajasthan, India. Photo credit - Flickr

Consider a stop in Rajasthan for the Winter Festival at Mount Abu, which is the only hill station on the highest peak in the Aravali Mountains. A huge procession of folk dance and music performances headlines the three-day celebration. Also in the winter, Madhya Pradesh celebrates Tansen Sangeet Samaroh music festival. Your clients can enjoy music by artists from all over the country during a celebration that commemorates Tansen, a musician in the court of Akbar, a Mughal emperor. Alternatively, travelers can visit Kerala for the Vaikathashtami Festival, a religious occasion when Lord Shiva is worshipped in the form of Shivlinga. It's a chance to visit the popular Vaikom Mahadeva Temple and learn about several legends of Indian mythology that are associated with the temple and this 12-day festival.

Be in touch with the experts at Ventours for travel inspiration during the festive season, or events throughout the year.

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Maitidevi Temple During Tihar, the festival of lights. Photo credit - Wikimedia Commons

[Dwarika's Hotel and Resort, Nepal](#) - Experience a Tapestry of Color and Culture in Nepal

Nestled in the heart of Nepal, where rich cultural heritage and vibrant traditions flourish, The Dwarika's invites your guests to immerse themselves in a land where festivities are an integral part of everyday life. Each festival pays homage to an array of deities, creating a tapestry of celebrations that are both joyous and deeply spiritual.

In November, your clients may witness the captivating spectacle of Tihar, the festival of lights. The entire nation is draped in enchanting lights and decorations, transforming Nepal into a visual paradise. Tihar is significant to the Nepali people spiritually, for blessings and well-being, for the strengthening of familial bonds, for the chance to express cultural traditions visually and artistically and to perform Laxmi Puja in order to gain prosperity and wealth. The festival attracts visitors from around the world, further contributing to the exchange of cultural ideas and the country's economy.

In December, the Kirats celebrate Udhauli Parva (also known as Sakela by Nepali people) to thank nature for a plentiful harvest. This population, which leads an agrarian lifestyle, makes its way from the hills to the lower regions in order to escape the harsh climate of a Himalayan winter. They'll remain in the lowlands until the arrival of Ubhauli in summer.

From colorful processions to profound religious observances, the Dwarika's offers a beautiful home base from which to explore the festive tapestry of Nepal in unparalleled luxury and style.