



The 2023 Top 25 Historic Hotels Worldwide® Holiday Traditions and Spectacular Displays List Is Announced

December 18, 2023, Washington DC ----- Historic Hotels Worldwide® represents over 300 of the finest, most authentic historic hotels in over 40 countries. In December and January, these historic hotels, inns, chateaus, castles, and haciendas are illuminated in the local fashion for the season, creating beautiful spaces for guests to celebrate one or more of the festive holidays and observances that fall in this time of the year. The historic hotels featured in the 2023 Top 25 Historic Hotels Worldwide Holiday Traditions and Spectacular Displays host extraordinary parties, family art activities, one-of-a-kind cultural performances, religious services, charitable campaigns, and festive afternoon teas for the Winter Solstice, Hannukah, Christmas season, and/or New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Many put up spectacular displays of Christmas or holiday trees, light exhibitions, magnificent gingerbread houses and hotel replicas, and greenery. Many historic hotels featured on the 2023 list incorporate charitable giving into their holiday programming: organizing food drives, collecting monetary donations, and gifts for less fortunate children and families. The cultural diversity found around the world means booking a stay or visit at a Historic Hotels Worldwide hotel guarantees a diversity of opportunities to carry on personal traditions or to discover new ones. As 2023 comes to a close, Historic Hotels Worldwide wishes travelers and explorers *Bonne Année! Frohes neues Jahr! Veselý Silvestr! Bliadhna Mhath Ùr! Srečna Nova godina!* Happy New Year!

Dromoland Castle Hotel (1014) Newmarket-on-Fergus, County Clare, Ireland

“Nollaig Shona Duit” means “Happy Christmas” in Irish Gaelic, and guests of Dromoland Castle Hotel in County Clare, Ireland, do hear it often between December 12 and January 6. The hotel embraces a traditional Irish Christmas every year to share ancient customs and new traditions with guests. The halls are decked with deep green holly laden with crimson berries, traditionally hung to represent a wish for better luck for the coming year. Christmas trees are a relatively new custom in Ireland. Mistletoe is another ancient tradition that can be spotted at Dromoland Castle Hotel. Ancient Celts believed mistletoe possessed magnificent healing powers. It was banned for centuries by Christians, as it was seen as a symbol of Paganism. Now incorporated into the Christian holiday, it symbolizes peace and goodwill—or somewhere to steal a kiss! One of Dromoland Castle Hotel’s newer traditions is also a spectacular display: the gingerbread house. Every year, on December 12, the hotel erects its gingerbread display, a beloved tradition executed this year by Head Pastry Chef Chandima Gamage. On St. Stephen’s Day (December 26, also called Boxing Day), the Wren Boys visit the castle to perform traditional dancing and

singing, dressed up in straw suits and motley garb to raise money for charity. The tradition of the Wren Boys is centuries, if not over a thousand years in age, and can be traced to both Pagan and Christian traditions. Dromoland Castle Hotel, a member of Historic Hotels Worldwide since 2011, enhances sustainability around the holidays by incorporating greenery from its own 500-acre estate and was awarded the Historic Hotels Awards of Excellence Historic Hotels Worldwide Sustainability Champion in 2022.

Sofitel Legend The Grand Amsterdam (1578) Amsterdam, Netherlands

Sofitel Legend The Grand Amsterdam is located between two historic canals in the heart of Amsterdam, and offers five-star luxury furnished with French elegance and grandeur. The Festive Season at The Grand comes with timeless grandeur, including special dining opportunities and extravagant holiday trees. In December, guests can indulge in the hotel's Festive Brunch, while delighting in scenes of glistening decorations, live music, and colorful desserts. Enjoy holiday meals at restaurant Bridges, discovering the rich scents and flavors of the dishes and wines that remind you of the holiday spirit. Or come celebrate the holidays in Mediterranean style with a lunch or dinner at Oriole Garden Bistro. When the hustle and bustle become too much, guests can relax at the Sofitel SPA and wind-down in a truly tranquil atmosphere. To close out the old and ring in the new, the most spectacular New Year's Eve event of Amsterdam, The Grand Ball, has returned. For one dazzling night on December 31, the historic hotel's beautiful Council Chamber will be transformed into an extravagant The Grand Circus for a spectacle like no other and promises to be a night of elegance and entertainment. Sofitel Legend The Grand Amsterdam possesses a rich history that dates back to the 1500s and was inducted into Historic Hotels Worldwide in 2018.

Quinta Real Puebla (1593) Puebla de Zaragoza, Puebla, Mexico

Originally constructed as the Convent of the Immaculate Conception, Quinta Real Puebla is a magnificent historic hotel today that sits in the heart of Puebla, Mexico, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built in Spanish Colonial style, Quinta Real Puebla features vibrant courtyards, original religious architectural details from its past, and a staff who are passionate about celebrating the hotel's heritage to this day. During December, Quinta Real Puebla hangs strings of lights and decks the halls to create a magical holiday environment for its guests. In addition to a magnificent Christmas tree in the main courtyard, the hotel also decorates with a spectacular display of a Christmas star-shaped, seven-point piñata, which was made in the town of Chignahuapan, Puebla. Popular around the world today and appearing in many forms, the piñata is an indigenous Mesoamerican tradition that merged with European Christianity after the Spanish conquest. The spectacular red and cream-colored piñata at Quinta Real Puebla is for decoration, but they are an important part of Christian Las Posadas celebrations, a Mexican tradition commemorating the story of Mary and Joseph's journey as they searched for lodging before Jesus' birth. At a Posada celebration, children will gather in a circle and take turns to try to hit it. When it breaks, candy falls. A traditional piñata shape, like the one at the historic hotel,

has seven peaks. This shape represents the “seven deadly sins,” which celebrants seek to destroy by whacking it with sticks. The candies represent the gifts of overcoming evil.

Hacienda de Los Santos (1600s) Alamos, Sonora, Mexico

Hotels are perhaps one of the most appropriate places to celebrate the Mexican tradition of Las Posadas (“the inns,” in Spanish) and the historic Hacienda de Los Santos in Alamos, Mexico, hosts one every Christmas Eve. An important part of Las Posadas celebration is a dramatization of the Christian story of Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem, looking for lodging. At Hacienda de Los Santos, the Posada features three guitarists who lead a long procession from the hotel through a nearby neighborhood. The procession is Joseph leading the burro (donkey) carrying Mary, followed by Three Wise Men, and then around 75 hotel guests. The guests follow the Posada actors through Mary and Joseph’s journey until they arrive back at the hotel, where baby Jesus arrives. Hacienda de Los Santos’ spectacular holiday display is a nativity scene. Each year, the hotel builds a manger with palm sides and a roof, large enough for Joseph, Mary, and a baby to fit inside. The tradition can be traced back to the holiday planning of early Catholic friars near Mexico City and today it is a custom in Mexico, with variations of the tradition in among Catholics in the Philippines, the United States, and some other Latin American countries. The hotel embraced this tradition 20 years ago. After Posada, visitors have a toast and enjoy a four-course meal.

Pulitzer Amsterdam (17th Century) Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The Dutch capital is beautiful year-round, but winter is one of the most magical times to visit, as the city glistens with lights and is often covered in snow. It is the perfect place for a winter escape. The Pulitzer Amsterdam (1600s) hotel is set within a row of 17th and 18th-century canal houses in one of Amsterdam’s finest neighborhoods, making an ideal base for exploring the city’s Christmas markets or spending an afternoon ice-skating on Museum Square with views of Rijksmuseum. Each year, Pulitzer’s impressive courtyard garden at the center of the hotel is transformed into a winter wonderland. Known as Pulitzer’s Winter Garden, it is decorated with twinkly fairy lights and a spectacular Christmas tree, and it is best enjoyed under warm cozy blankets on the heated terrace. Pulitzer’s Winter Garden is a tradition dating to the time when the hotel reopened in 2016 with new inner gardens and glass corridors, inspired by Amsterdam’s hidden inner gardens tucked away behind the famous canal houses. This winter, the historic hotel collaborated with the esteemed fashion designer ROKSANDA to decorate the tree. Inspired by the vibrant spirit of Amsterdam and its modern artistic community, alongside the hotel’s iconic interiors, this year’s tree is a symphony of bold colors and carefully considered textures. Guests are invited to step into the enchanting Pulitzer Garden and experience the sophisticated charm of the 2023 ROKSANDA x Pulitzer Amsterdam Christmas Tree.

The Great House Antigua (1670) Saint Peter, Antigua and Barbuda

The historic hotel at The Great House Antigua is located on the island of Antigua, which is part of the independent nation of two islands: Antigua and Barbuda, one of the most culturally diverse places to visit in the Caribbean. The island's indigenous Amerindians, believed to be primarily Caribs, resisted colonization by the French and Spanish for over a century before the English settled the islands in 1632, bringing British traditions and religion with them. The Great House Antigua was built in 1670 to be the manor of a sugarcane plantation. Enslaved Africans became the main source of forced agricultural labor in the next century, but some of the earliest 17th century settlers and agricultural workers were Irish emigres shipped over from St. Kitt's. It is believed to be from this early group that the traditional hotel's Old Years Night was introduced to the island and the hotel. Old Years Night—December 31—is a major celebration of the year past across Antigua. At The Great House Antigua, guests are welcome to join the staff as they walk through the estate on Old Year's Night and hit bread on the doors around the hotel estate. According to Irish tradition and superstition, striking at or throwing cake or bread on a door keeps away bad luck and hunger in the new year. The tradition at The Great House can be traced back to the 1960s, when it was a private manor. Guests staying at the estate for Old Years Night are also given a pamphlet in their suite that encourages them to reflect on the past year, and may take the opportunities of the festive socializing to reflect together on 2023 while sharing their joys, hopes, and dreams for the coming years. The Old Years Night celebration ends with fireworks and live music.

Hotel Claude Marbella (1650) Marbella, Spain

Located in the luxurious resort city of Marbella, Hotel Claude Marbella occupies the former summer residence of Eugénie de Montijo, Empress of France and wife of Napoleon III. The 17th-century manor house, built in 1650, has been fully converted to provide all the comforts contemporary guests require. Guests that stay at Hotel Claude Marbella on January 5 are perfectly situated to observe the Los Reyes (“The Three Kings”) holiday celebrations that afternoon and evening. Observed and celebrated across Spain, the holiday honors the day when the “Three Kings” arrived in Bethlehem to honor young Jesus. Celebrants observe the day through gift-giving, parades, and sweets for children. The modern celebrations of an ancient observance can be traced back to the town of Alicante in 1876. In 21st-century Marbella, the festivities begin around midday, when the city's mayor welcomes the Three Kings as they step off a boat at the Puerto Deportivo. In the evening, there is a carnival-like processional in the Old Town along Avenida Ricardo Soriano. Roads are closed on January 5 in Marbella, so plan accordingly. The hotel is about a 20-minute walk from Puerto Deportivo, where guests can wait for the Three Kings to arrive. Avenida Ricardo Soriano is half the distance, only a 10-minute walk between the hotel and the parade route. Hotel Claude Marbella puts on a display for its guests, too: inside, the historic hotel is adorned with beautiful fairy lights and a Christmas tree, with holiday music playing throughout the holiday season.

Hotel Maximilian's (1722) Augsburg, Germany

According to oral tradition, the first iteration of the Hotel Maximilian's in Augsburg, Germany, appeared in the 1490s, when an inn of that neighborhood offered accommodation to overnight travelers from across Europe. When asked about its time-honored holiday traditions, the staff are quick to tell a story that dates to its earliest recorded existence: the story of the Four Abyssinian (Ethiopian) Monks. In the winter of 1495, when the historic inn was diagonally opposite to where its current building stands today, four holy men of the Abyssinian Church were traveling through Germany during a harsh winter. According to legend, they sought shelter but were turned away at every door. On the outskirts of Augsburg, one of the men lost his life to the merciless conditions, but the other three continued to search for help. The historic hotel's innkeeper Konrad Minner brought the three survivors back to his inn and aided in their recovery through the remainder of winter. Before their departure the following spring, the three were immortalized in a blackboard sketch that then became the inn's sign. Three terracotta busts depicting the monks, original creations by sculptor Ehrgott Bernhard, hang in the lobby today. Carrying on this spirit of charity over the centuries, one contemporary tradition at the hotel is its Christmas wishing tree. Children from the Frère-Roger Augsburg Children's Centre are invited to write a wish for a certain gift on a letter and place the letter on the tree. Staff and guests of the hotel are encouraged to take one of these letters and fulfill the wish of a child. On Christmas Eve, every child receives their Christmas present. The tradition began in 2016, and the hotel considers it part of its investment in the happiness and future of the city. Hotel Maximilian's was inducted into Historic Hotels Worldwide in 2019.

Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar (1780) Bagac, Philippines

Set on the sandy banks of Bagac Bay, Philippines, Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar is a prestige collection of historic Spanish-Filipino Colonial structures. Founded with the mission to celebrate and preserve cultural Filipino heritage, the resort at Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar sponsors a variety of magnificent displays and traditions during the Christmas season. The lead up to Filipino Christmas lasts for nine days, the Roman Catholic novena that starts on December 16 and ends on December 24. The church within the resort, the Santuario de San Jose, also conducts an evening mass, Simbang Gabi (Filipino for "night mass"), every evening at 6 p.m. Guests can attend the mass while at the resort and partake on the Filipino traditional food at the food kiosks stationed near the church. Bibingka (a rice cake made with sugar and coconut milk, baked in an oven) and Puto Bumbong (purple rice steamed in bamboo shoots, served with toppings like butter, sugar, and coconut shavings) will also be available all day at the La Parilla for the guests to try signature Christmas snacks.

Gamlebyen Hotell Fredrikstad (1835) Fredrikstad, Norway

Ideally situated along the captivating cobblestone streets of historic Old Fredrikstad, just an hour south of Oslo, Gamlebyen Hotell Fredrikstad is a small gem of a hotel in one of Scandinavia's most historic and best-preserved fortified towns. Fredrikstad takes pride in preserving the authentic Scandinavian character of the town and its holiday celebrations reflect that ambition. Established in 1835, Gamlebyen Hotell Fredrikstad decorates for the season in a traditional

Norwegian style, using candles, pine trees, hay balls, and red bows. During the last weekend of November, the community gathers to decorate a tree on the town square, illuminates the village streets with fairy lights, and opens its charming Christmas market. The hotel also kicks off an annual Gingerbread house competition, which is open to the public. Guests of the Gamlebyen Hotell Fredrikstad can participate by entering their creations or simply come to admire the amazing displays. Additionally, guests of the historic hotel can enjoy Christmas shows, indulge in a romantic dinner featuring both local and national holiday cuisine, and cozy up with a cup of mulled wine in front of the fireplace in the town's historic debtors' prison. The fortified town has a strong military background. It was built during times of war, and for many years, it served as a training ground for mandatory army recruits. Fifteen years ago, the army moved out, but the town still retains a tiny nod to its military past. The local Santa Claus now drives around in his Christmas-themed army jeep!

Engø Gård (1845) Tjøme, Norway

Originally built in 1845 as a country inn for summertime holiday goers, Engø Gård Hotel and Restaurant is among Norway's most historic destinations and now provides the same warm hospitality throughout the year. Starting the first week of November, Engø Gård's gardens and guest buildings are decorated with lights and Christmas trees. The bonfire on the patio is lit every evening for the guests to enjoy the sight and a cozy aperitif outside. The holiday spirit is everywhere, especially in the kitchen. Each year, the head chef and pastry chef build a magnificent gingerbread display, as well as smaller versions that guests can purchase at the hotel's Christmas shop as kits to build themselves. Every day during the holiday season, Engø Gård serves warm Norwegian gløgg to guests at reception. This is a classic Scandinavian Holiday tradition, similar to mulled wine, and guests can enjoy it by the fireplace in the Library. The hotel also takes great pride in its Afternoon Tea with a Christmas twist, and arranges for holiday parties and live music events. On Christmas Day, the hotel hosts a special Christmas Afternoon Tea and a big band concert performed by Tjøme Storband. For a heartier experience, guests are also invited to partake in sauna and ice baths, a holiday tradition at the hotel that dates to the 1920s.

Great Southern Killarney (1854) Killarney, County Kerry, Ireland

The Great Southern Killarney has been a focal point of the historic town of Killarney, Ireland, in County Kerry since it opened in 1854 to serve passengers of the new railway lines that passed through the town. One tradition that has carried through the centuries throughout the year is Afternoon Tea, which has been served in Great Southern Killarney since Victorian times and always receives a holly-jolly twist during the Christmas season. In December, the Festive Afternoon Tea is served beneath the gold-gilded ceiling of the hotel's elegant Garden Room restaurant. Festive Afternoon Tea includes a complimentary glass of warming mulled wine along with festive treats including cranberry scones, gingerbread, and mince pies. On Christmas Eve, guests are invited to a traditional concert of Christmas carols in the historic Grand Foyer. The evening culminates with treats of warm mulled wine and mince pies, a traditional British Christmas dessert pastry containing a mixture of dried fruits, nuts, spices, and (sometimes)

animal fat. On Christmas Day, the Great Southern Killarney provides more musical entertainment for grownups and hosts Father Christmas (Santa Claus), who arrives in costume with gifts for younger guests.

Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin (1885) Noordwijk aan Zee, Netherlands

Just a short distance between Amsterdam and The Hague, the Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin (1885) in Noordwijk aan Zee, Netherlands, is a historic seaside retreat that has been offering fantastic views of the North Sea for more than a century. Since 2009, the hotel has celebrated the December holidays with a massive Christmas tree in the hotel garden. At the beginning of the month, the hotel hosts a spectacular tree-lighting ceremony with a different ambassador visiting each year to illuminate the tree. According to tradition, the Christmas Tree Lighting Ambassador is kept secret until the last moment, and, during the ceremony, the anonymous ambassador is called forward to be revealed by the director of Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin. The ambassador takes center stage, pronounces their wishes for the Christmas season, and then presses a big, red button. Brilliance erupts! After a music and light show, the Christmas tree is officially lit, and the Christmas season starts in Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin. Ambassadors are chosen for different reasons at different years, but most of them have a background in sports, politics, cultural influence, or entrepreneurial success. Regular guests and staff families are invited to the ceremony. The tree, which stays up through the first week of January, is a popular place for holiday portraits and family photos throughout the holidays.

Hamilton Princess & Beach Club, A Fairmont Managed Hotel (1885) Hamilton, Bermuda

The Hamilton Princess & Beach Club opened in 1885 as an urban oasis in the Bermuda capital city of Hamilton. Built in honor of the British Empire's Princess Louise after her 1883 visit to Bermuda, the hotel is still known as a getaway that promises to delight guests any time of the year. During December, the delights get kicked up a notch at "The Pink Palace," and there is no shortage of holiday season traditions and spectacular displays for guests and visitors to enjoy. The annual Christmas Tree and gingerbread display can be found in the hotel lobby, as well as holiday decorations spread across the destination, including the popular and *Instagram*-worthy 'Tunnel of Lights' in the hotel courtyard. New to the hotel this year, the annual gingerbread display has been upgraded to an edible pop-up shop where guests can buy treats and souvenirs, and even make holiday dining reservations. The Gingerbread Shop was a collaboration between the hotel's team of chefs, carpenters, and culinary retail. The wooden frame was built in three weeks, and two weeks were spent whipping up the gingerbread mixture using 533 eggs and 160 pounds of icing sugar. In the final two days of the installation, 900 pounds of gingerbread were affixed to the 20-foot house. One Hamilton Princess tradition that is unique to the island hotel among Historic Hotels Worldwide members is the Boxing Day dance performed by a troupe of masked Bermuda Gombey. Though other islands share a similar tradition, Gombey dancing was recognized as a uniquely Bermudian art form at a UNESCO Cultural and Conservation Conference. During the holidays season, the Gombey dance on Boxing Day and New Year's

Day, as well as other important events and festivals on the island. From records, the hotel knows its Boxing Day Gombey's performance dates at least to the 1970s.

The Savoy London (1889) London, United Kingdom

In the early 1880s, impressed by the grand American hotels he visited on his trip to the United States, entrepreneur and theatrical impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte decided to build his own magnificent hotel in the heart of London. The Savoy London, a member of Historic Hotels Worldwide since 2011, was completed in 1889 and Carte financed the entire project through the profits generated by the shows at the Savoy Theatre. This festive season, The Savoy celebrates all that is magical about a traditional London Christmas. Its Front Hall is transformed into a Victorian train station complete with The Savoy's ornate and luxurious antique steam train, where guests can step inside one of the intricately designed carriages and enjoy a glass of Laurent-Perrier Cuvée Rosé. Beautifully decorated trees and twinkling lights adorn the historic hotel's famous forecourt and interiors. Throughout The Savoy's restaurants and bars, guests can enjoy curated menus featuring nostalgic flavors of the season and innovative cocktails perfectly fitting for this joyous time of year.

Mystery Hotel Budapest (1896) Budapest, Hungary

Step into the wonderful world of the Mystery Hotel Budapest, an eclectic palace filled with hidden delights located in Budapest's Terézváros district. Constructed in 1896 by the Hungarian Freemasons, the palace originally functioned as the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary. Today, it provides an unforgettable experience for travelers and guests—especially during the winter holiday season. The hotel focuses on international Advent and Christmas traditions, and provides an international Holiday Menu with themed cocktails at its Great Hall Restaurant. The holiday season receives special attention each year at our hotel, creating a fairy-tale atmosphere for our guests. The festive traditions and historical customs are embraced by the hotel, which adorns its magnificent interior spaces with beautiful lights, greenery, and Christmas trees from November through early January. Guests can enjoy mulled wine and treats, as well as fantastic holiday dishes with Hungarian wine pairings throughout the holiday season. During Advent, the hotel serves biscuits and tea in the lobby area free for our guests between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Every night between December 20 and 31, guests can book a package that includes a traditional 3-course dinner for nights they stay at the hotel. Visiting this holiday? Keep an eye out for the life-sized nutcracker statue—a guest and staff favorite each year.

Hotel Moskva (1908) Belgrade, Serbia

A celebrated landmark in downtown Belgrade, the Hotel Moskva is one of the most important historical gems in Serbia's capital city. An architectural masterpiece built in 1908 and designed in the Russian secession style—with its façade of decorative taupe and emerald ceramic tiles—the hotel has stood proudly as a cultural monument in Belgrade since 1968. In December, the hotel is decked out for the holidays, and travelers might be curious to note that in Serbia the

iconic evergreen holiday tree is associated with the modern New Years celebration while traditional Christmas is marked by a branch from an oak tree. New Years Eve is *the* event at Hotel Moskva, which hosts a glitzy Gala Dinner celebration that annually cements the hotel's legacy as a haven of tradition, culture, and sophistication. Additionally, the traditional New Year's brunch, accompanied by enchanting violin melodies, adds an extra layer of charm to the festivities. The famous Café Moskva, housed within the hotel, has been a focal point for lively gatherings for over a century—as well as the source of the famous [Moskva Schnitt](#) cake.

[Villa Copenhagen](#) (1912) Copenhagen, Denmark

Located in what once was the Central Post & Telegraph Head Office in Copenhagen, Denmark, the Villa Copenhagen (1912) today offers luxurious and unique accommodations in the heart of the ancient Nordic city. The hotel is decorated for the season—in particular, there are stunning decorations in the courtyard, where homemade Glögg (spiced or mulled wine or spirits) is served every day in December. Guests can also enjoy live music Tuesday-Saturday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., perhaps while nibbling on *kransekage* (“wreath cake), a traditional Danish confection of marzipan, sugar, and egg whites. As the festivities commence, the staff are eager to share news about a charitable tradition and purposefully not spectacular display: The Lonely Christmas Tree. Every year since 2012, Nordic Choice Hotels has collected Christmas presents for children and adults who find themselves in a difficult life situation. They do this through the initiative “Lonely Christmas Tree Seeking Presents.” Neighbors, guests, and employees can put gifts under the Christmas tree at Villa Copenhagen, which will then pass the gifts on to a local organization or association. This year, the Villa Copenhagen carries out this initiative in collaboration with Danish Red Cross. Starting on November 22, 2023, gifts left at the historic hotel go to children at Danish asylum centers.

[Sofitel Legend Casco Viejo – Panama City](#) (1917) Panama City, Panama

Formerly the site of the Union Club of Panama and located in the middle of a UNESCO World Heritage Site (the Casco Viejo district), Sofitel Legend Casco Viejo stands apart as a celebration of Panamanian culture, heritage, and history infused with French tradition. Part of the Sofitel hotel group, defined by its attention to French style and luxury, this historic waterfront hotel celebrates Panamanian heritage with its own art de vivre spirit. Inspired by the illumination of the streets of Paris during the reign of Louis XIV and the Parisian gaslight revolution of the 1860s—both of which made the city streets safer for walking after dark— Sofitel Legend Casco Viejo guests are invited to immerse themselves in comforting illumination as the sun dips into the horizon with a candle-lighting ceremony. Beginning December 1, this candle ritual is paired with the hotel’s grand golden sculptures made by local Panamanian artists and magnificent Christmas tree to create a magical, warm, and welcoming environment. Baked goods at the Vera Café are meticulously adorned with golden accents. During the Christmas tree lighting ceremony this year, carolers and jazz musicians gave a beautiful candle-lit performance. The hotel, which opened in early 2023, is excited to welcome guests to its first holiday season with this legendary celebration of light, hope, and spirit.

Beijing Hotel NUO (1917) Beijing, China

Commanding a prestigious address on Chang'an Avenue, Beijing Hotel NUO is one of China's most historic luxury accommodations, standing proud in the heart of Beijing through a century of boundless change. From the grand French facade to its broad marble staircase, polished 1920s dance floor and rooms and suites of various styles, Beijing Hotel NUO is a unique treat for guests with a passion for classic beauty. Established in 1917, the hotel was once known as "The Most Luxurious Hotel in the Orient" and the social hub for high society. Beijing Hotel NUO has been among China's most prestigious hotels for more than a century and has attracted a multi-cultural following. Many international luminaries have stayed at the hotel including revolutionary Sun Yat-sen, former USSR First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, and former U.S. President Richard Nixon. For this special season, the hotel's lobby and Writers Bar are decorated for Christmas. There is a magnificent gingerbread replica of the hotel's iconic heritage building displayed in the lobby, with the historic, signature staircase behind it and dreamy star lights and crystal chandelier hung above. On Christmas Day, the hotel hosts a spectacular Christmas Afternoon Tea in the Writers Bar for families.

Hotel New Grand (1927) Yokohama, Japan

A designated historic monument and considered one of the most historic Western-style hotels in Japan, Hotel New Grand is the epitome of Yokohama history. Established in 1927, Hotel New Grand serves a very warm welcome during the holiday season with special amenities and decorations. A special illumination event titled "The Garden of Lights" has been held since 2021 in the courtyard of the hotel's historic main building and is in partnership with the annual winter event in Yokohama called "Yorunoyo." The "Garden of Light" display is installed in the courtyard for the holidays, as well as magical illuminations of the "Arch of Light" and "Wreath of Light" located by the central fountain. As part of the annual "Yorunoyo" lights event, the "Illumine Yokohama 2023: Yokohama's Future Shines" holiday program will be held in the park in front of the hotel. This event is curated by the internationally acclaimed lighting designers, the mother-daughter duo: Motoko Ishii and Akari-Lisa Ishii. Guests staying in the hotel's Bayfront guestrooms can enjoy this dynamic and fantastical light and sound art piece from the comfort of their rooms, and all are welcome to view it from the street-level. Other holiday decor traditions at Hotel New Grand include *Kadomatsu*, traditional bamboo or pine wood displays intended to welcome the ancestors and are popular between December 24 and January 7. The hotel installs these displays in front of the Tower Hall to celebrate the New Year. There are two holiday trees on display as well: A real fir tree in the lobby of the Tower Hall, and another in the second-floor lobby of the main building along with a Santa Claus display. For private enjoyment, Hotel New Grand offers a Christmas-exclusive accommodation package with a guestroom adorned with a Christmas tree and festive decor, as well as a Christmas cake crafted by the on-site pastry chef, carefully selected champagne by a skilled sommelier, and a gift from Santa Claus.

Fairmont Le Château Montebello (1930) Montebello, Quebec, Canada

In Quebec, Canada, directly on the Ottawa River, sits the grand cedar lodge and resort of the Fairmont Le Château Montebello. With over 10,000 red cedar logs used in the 1930 construction of the three main buildings, this elegant, rustic resort contains the largest log cabin in the world. In December, the lobby of the world's largest log cabin transforms into a holiday spectacle, decked with greenery and fairy lights, and featuring a 12 ft. tall Christmas tree. On the mezzanine level of the lobby, it is also traditional to have many smaller Christmas trees decorated by local businesses through the Trees of Hope program. This is a charitable initiative to raise money for the local food bank and 2023 marks the tenth year the resort has hosted it. Outdoors, the tradition of winter sports at the chateau transforms its grounds into a winter wonderland, inviting guests of all ages to glide across the ice with the grace of a curling stone, partake in the rhythmic dance of snowshoeing through snow-covered trails, embark on an exhilarating cross-country ski adventure through the scenic woods, and experience the joy of outdoor skating on a picturesque rink. In a celebration of winter sports, Fairmont Le Château Montebello proudly hosts the 89th Annual Bonspiel in 2023. This year's event is particularly special, with over 50 participants gathering to showcase their skill and passion for the sport. The curling competition unfolds with grace and competitive spirit, fostering a sense of community among the athletes. As the bonspiel marks nearly nine decades of tradition, Fairmont Le Château Montebello echoes with the cheers and laughter of athletes who come together to share in the joy of this beloved winter tradition.

Casa das Lérias (1930s) Amarante, Portugal

A historic boutique hotel with a sweet past, Casa das Lérias was founded in the 1930s as a bakery famous for rediscovering the lost recipe for Amarante's famous pastry, the Lérias. Possessing such a history, the hotel focuses its holiday celebration on sweets. People from all over Portugal and around the world visit Casa das Lérias to buy the regional confections that are so iconic and loved. During holidays throughout the year, the hotel offers its guests homemade cookies. As is the custom in Portugal, the Christmas holiday season lasts from December 24 (Christmas Eve) through January 6 (Three King's Day). In December and January, the hotel serves a beautiful and delicious "Tronco de Natal" (Christmas log) cake. Another Portuguese tradition guests will experience while staying at Casa das Lérias on Three Kings' Day is groups of people singing "As Janeiras," announcing the birth of the new year, January, and the arrival of the new god. Like "caroling" in other Christian cultures, this ancient tradition is defined by groups of people walking through the villages singing to celebrate the new year and to announce the birth of Jesus Christ. A key part of this tradition is for the homes they visit to give the singers small tokens of thanks, from nuts and candy to cash. Christmas in Amarante is cozy and intimate, with the scent of woodfire wafting through the streets and colorful lights illuminating the town's monuments. Next door to the hotel, a magnificent Christmas tree goes up and is a favorite attraction for visitors.

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver (1939) Vancouver, British Columbia

Known as the 'Castle in the City', the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver has graced the skyline of Vancouver, Canada, since 1939, when it was the tallest building in the city. Notably, its construction was expedited in the spring of that year in order to accommodate King George VI of the United Kingdom and Elizabeth Queen Consort of the United Kingdom during their Royal Tour in the Dominion. Ever since the royals stayed over 90 years ago, the hotel has offered visitors and guests fun, festive, and meaningful ways to celebrate holiday seasons with friends and family. For example, a festive-themed Afternoon Tea is a longstanding December tradition at Hotel Vancouver. The private dining room at Notch8 is transformed into a winter wonderland, creating a fully immersive holiday experience for all ages. Another tradition is the hotel's famous dinner of prime rib and Yorkshire pudding, a British recipe, served as a side dish, of savory pastry often baked in muffin tins. This dinner has been featured on holiday menus since the hotel's opening in May 1939. Just as was common in the early years of the hotel, the décor, festive buffets, and afternoon tea services continue to draw people in from the surrounding areas of Vancouver and beyond to experience a piece of history and embrace the holiday spirit. For the third year running, Fairmont Hotel Vancouver is a host to the British Columbia Children's Hospital Festival of Trees. A cherished community tradition, the hotel lobby transforms into a holiday wonderland to raise funds for the children's hospital. Between November 23, 2023, and January 1, 2023, guests can take in the interactive spectacle throughout the hotel lobby and join the festive fun by donating to the hospital and voting for their favorite tree. Many guests who frequent the hotel during the holiday season are dazzled by the grandeur and timeless luxury that lives within its walls.

The Murray Hong Kong (1969) Hong Kong, China

An iconic luxury landmark hotel located along Hong Kong's legendary Cotton Tree Drive, The Murray Hong Kong presents the joy and delights of a "Merry Murray Christmas" to travelers and guests of all ages who visit this December. The Murray Hong Kong was inducted into Historic Hotels Worldwide in 2019 and was awarded the Historic Hotels Awards of Excellence Best Historic Hotels Worldwide Hotel in Asia/Pacific in 2022. Keeping with tradition, the hotel offers an extensive range of Solstice, Christmas, and New Year's dining offerings, as well as holiday accommodation packages, a Christmas market, and family activities. Between December 1 and January 8, the hotel's traditional Afternoon Tea transforms into the traditional Christmas Afternoon Tea at the Garden Lounge, presenting an elegant afternoon tea beset with a tempting selection of holiday treats. For children especially, The Murray Hong Kong installed Santa's Grotto, where guests are invited to visit from December 1 through 26 with the legendary Santa Claus. "Elves" are nearby to take photos of guests posing with the holiday celebrity of Western culture and mulled wine is available for of-age-but young-at-heart visitors. On December 22, the Winter Solstice, The Murray Hong Kong invites guests to enjoy a Dim Sum Lunch or Dinner. The Winter Solstice Festival is an important holiday in Hong Kong and throughout China, and it is often celebrated by sharing a warm, hearty meal with family.

"Hospitality shines brighter around seasons of light, life, and hope. Historic hotels carry on time-honored, beloved traditions that offer authentic experiences for families and friends," said

Lawrence Horwitz, Executive Vice President, Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide. “Historic Hotels Worldwide represents over 300 hotels in more than 47 countries, with as many ways to celebrate the annual holidays that their guests and staff treasure. Cultural travelers seeking new experiences and wanting to discover new ways to celebrate shared beliefs can do no better than to book their next adventure through Historic Hotels Worldwide.”

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Historic Hotels Worldwide® is a prestigious collection of historic treasures, including more than 350 legendary historic hotels including many former castles, chateaus, palaces, academies, haciendas, villas, monasteries, and other historic lodging spanning ten centuries. Historic Hotels Worldwide recognizes authentic cultural treasures that demonstrate exemplary historic preservation and their inspired architecture, cultural traditions, and authentic cuisine. To be nominated and selected for induction into Historic Hotels Worldwide, historical lodging properties must be at least 75 years old; utilize historic accommodations; serve as the former home, or be located on the grounds of the former home of famous persons, or a significant location for an event in history; be located in or within walking distance to a historic district, historically significant landmark, place of a historic event, or a historic city center; be recognized by a local preservation organization or national trust; and display historic memorabilia, artwork, photography, and other examples of its historic significance. For more information, please visit HistoricHotelsWorldwide.com.

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