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# The First Night Experience

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The first night of the new year is a cause for celebration in any town of any country, charged with hope and optimism, waiting for the fresh start that only a new year can bring. Washington, DC is one of the best cities in the world to celebrate! On land or on river, by neighborhoods or decadent hotels and resorts, Washington, DC pulls all the stops to ensure everyone in and around the nation's capital enjoys this remarkable day.

## An All-Inclusive Affair

A popular option in celebrating the New Year is to attend parties hosted in area hotels, nightclubs, and restaurants. Celebrate with the security in knowing that food, drinks, and a variety of music come with the admission fee. The largest event in the area is Big Night D.C. at the Gaylord National Resort and Conference Center. Other venues that offer this entertainment option are the Night at the Newseum, Gatsby Trilogy at the Sequoia restaurant, the Cirquedu International 2017 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, the [International Spy Gala](#) at the Washington Plaza Hotel, the Passport to the World Gala at the Capital Hilton, the Black Tie Gala at the Marriott Marquis Hotel, among many others.

## For a Family Fete

Washington is filled with communities of young families, which can become both a challenge and an opportunity. Neighboring cities offer [First Night](#) to those families that wish to celebrate the New Year with little ones. Closest to Washington, D.C. is [Old Town Alexandria](#). Always a popular gathering, First Night in Alexandria begins their celebration with an Annual Fun Hunt and other activities starting 2 p.m. Later in the evening, live entertainment, all fitting for all ages, will begin starting at 7 p.m. Ending the night for families is a spectacular fireworks show over the Potomac river, which is scheduled at 10 p.m. First Night events are also offered in Annapolis, Fall Church, Vienna, and Winchester.

## Cruising in Celebration

The Odyssey and the Spirit of Washington are two river cruises that regularly travel the Potomac River, offering breathtaking views of the Washington skyline and its neighboring cities of Arlington and Old Town Alexandria. The best part about cruising for the night is the comfort in knowing that drinking and dancing on the first night of the year is safely contained on the vessel.

# A Casino Celebration

In prior years, the Maryland Live Casino was the nearest casino destination in the DC area. And it's still a great venue to celebrate the New Year for those who wish to have a more casual weekend. Opened in June 2012, this gambling facility contains more than 4300 Las Vegas style slot machines, electronic and live action table games, and a 52-table Poker Room. Conveniently located halfway between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore., Maryland Live Casino also houses several big name restaurants and the Rams Head Center Stage--a 500-seat venue with state-of-the-art light and sound features a full slate of live entertainment.