

How to thrive and survive this New Year's Eve



Raj Taneja
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For the holiday season event planner, this time of year can be downright nerve wracking. While everyone else parties on, it's your job to bring it, and in a big way. Fortunate for you, I've got a couple of tips from some of Vancouver's most seasoned celebration planners.

Peter Girges is the managing partner at 100 Days, the deliberately short-lived pop-up restaurant in the OPUS Hotel. This year the restaurant will celebrate its first and last New Year's Eve celebration with help from the hotel that has gained a reputation for putting on the premiere event Vancouver.

In the city with the least amount of cabs per capita

and with strict new drinking and driving regulations, the Hotel invites guests to let the elevator be the designated driver. For a mere \$659, you and a guest can enjoy a guestroom at the luxurious hotel, an open bar up until midnight and a late 2 p.m. checkout the next day. If you live in the area, \$150 per person gets you the high-roller host-bar celebration ticket.

Girges, who's been in the service industry for almost 20 years, says create an environment where all the logistics are thought out. From dinner, drinks, to a good night's rest and beyond, everything's available to guests and nobody has to go elsewhere for the entire evening.

Robert Gagne, the legendary French, is one of the city's best known Maitre D's. He works his magic at Joe

« In the end, the experience is about emotions and how people feel – and people want to feel good about spending their hard earned money with you. »

Fortes Seafood & Chop House. This year, the Restaurant is putting on a celebration that includes dinner, a live band, party favours and champagne at midnight. For his crowd, the event is such a hit, that it's already sold out.

Frenchy says it's important to treat your guests as if you're receiving them in your home. In the end, the experience is about emotions and how people feel – and people want to feel good about spending their hard earned money with you.

Christian Betancor-Leon is a director at Bikram Yoga Commercial Drive. For the eighth year in a row, the Hot Yoga Studio is hosting a 90 minute class that ends right at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Day. Hearing the katzenjammer on the street below after working up a sweat is a great way to energize yourself for the upcoming morning celebration.

Christian says don't be focused on what you're going to get out of hosting an event. Do it because it brings you joy. If you benefit out of the event, that's extra but not your motivation.

Raj Taneja is part technologist, part entrepreneur, part social media thought leader and part foodie. Raj spent years planning events under the Urban Mixer brand name. His twitter username is @inthead.



Peter Girges is the managing partner at 100 Days.
PHOTO RAJ TANEJA

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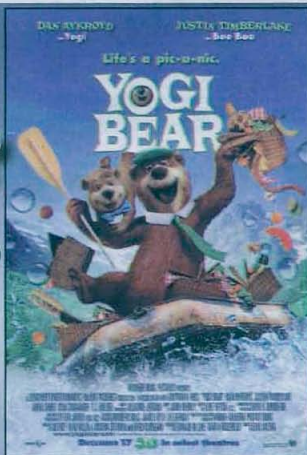
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