

Photo: TripAdvisor Announces America's Top 10 Quirkiest New Year's Eve Events Dropping Sausages, Pirate Wenches and Gumbo Pots Add Spice to Traditional New Year's Eve Fare

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TripAdvisor(R), the world's largest travel community, today announced the top ten quirkiest New Year's Eve celebrations in America, according to TripAdvisor editors and travelers.

To view the Multimedia News Release, go to: <http://www.prnewswire.com/mnr/tripadvisor/36372/>

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1. Triple Crown: Key West, Florida

Featuring three free countdown celebrations, the toughest decision for New Year's in Key West is whether to watch the conch, drag queen, or pirate wench descend at midnight. The revelrous Duval Street hosts two of the celebrations, including the 16th annual conch shell drop from the roof of Sloppy Joe's Bar and the lowering of a local legend, Drag Queen Sushi, in her glittering six-foot tall red high-heel shoe at the Bourbon Street Pub. Along the harbor, the Schooner Wharf Bar lowers a costumed "pirate wench" from 70 feet atop the schooner "Liberty Clipper."

2. Peep Show: Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Although Bethlehem, Pennsylvania is widely recognized for its Christmas attractions, the city's New Year's Eve Peep drop has been a sweet tradition for three years running. During Bethlehem's First Night celebration, a 25-pound fiberglass illuminated Peep is dropped from a crane at midnight. With as many as 30,000 people expected this year, entertainment starts early in the afternoon with tons of family-friendly entertainment, including a performance from children dressed as "peep-ettes." Tickets to the First Night Celebration are \$15 for adults, \$10 for children.

3. A Fish Story: Port Clinton, Ohio

Each year, thousands of people from across the U.S. descend on the small town of Port Clinton, Ohio for the free "Madness at Midnight Walleye Drop." Now in its 14th year, the self-proclaimed "Walleye Capital of the World" drops a 20-foot, 600-pound fiberglass walleye fish named Wylie from the sky at midnight. In 2007, the event joined forces with the Ohio State Lottery and this year plans to announce four \$1 million prizes on live television from the event.

4. Picklepalooza: Mount Olive, North Carolina

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Mount Olive's pickle drop, where a three-foot tall, glowing pickle makes a 45-foot plunge down the Mount Olive Pickle Company's flagpole into a redwood pickle tank. Up to 2,000 attendees congregate each year to watch the pickle drop spectacle at 7 p.m. (midnight Greenwich Mean Time.) In addition to the main event, this free hour-long pickle party includes plenty of complimentary dills and the popular "Pickle Polka," leading to the famous plunge.

5. Sausage Fest: Elmore, Ohio

Inspired by the town's longest running business, Tank's Meats, Elmore's locals drop a brilliantly lit, 18-foot sausage from the sky to welcome in the New Year. First devised in 2001 to celebrate the town's 150th birthday, the sausage drop returned to the forefront of Elmore lore with the 2006 New Year's Eve celebration, and attracts as many as 1,200 people annually. With zany events like a raw sausage toss, the sausage eating contest and a "dress your dog" contest for children, this free celebration is affectionately regarded as the "wurst" in the area.

6. My Bologna Has a New Year's Celebration: Lebanon, Pennsylvania

Weighing in at 120 pounds, Lebanon's seven-and-a-half-foot edible bologna has been the star of this town's New Year's Eve

celebration for more than seven years. This free annual celebration includes a deejay and enlists the help of a city fire department ladder truck to lower the super-sized bologna at midnight. Following the celebration, the bologna, which is made locally by the Weaver-Kutztown Bologna Company, is donated to area charities.

7. Champagne Wishes and Gumbo Pot Dreams: New Orleans, Louisiana

Following Hurricane Katrina, the city of New Orleans added a new tradition to their annual New Year's Eve celebration by dropping a paper mache gumbo pot at midnight. As part of a free outdoor event in Jackson Square organized by the Crescent City Countdown Club, local musicians play popular music, including the fight songs for both college football teams playing in the city's Sugar Bowl on January 2nd. At midnight, fireworks go off along the Mississippi River, accompanying the majestic gumbo pot drop.

8. Shell of a Party: Easton, Maryland

For the past five years, First Night Talbot in Easton, Maryland has been ringing in the new year with a giant crab drop. Around 1,500 people come out to see the monstrous replica of a steamed red crab, descend at both 9 p.m. for the children and again at midnight for the official New Year's celebration. Easton's First Night also includes seven venues, 125 performers and a mini-train that circles most of the events. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and free admission for children under five.

9. Hunker for a Hunk of Cheese: Plymouth, Wisconsin

In a town known for producing high quality cheese, it's no surprise that Plymouth, Wisconsin rings in the New Year by dropping a big hunk of their beloved dairy product at midnight. Sadly, the cheese is not edible, but it's still an impressive sight. Plymouth's cheese drop takes place in the Plymouth Art Center parking lot and is free to the public. While complimentary refreshments are served, visitors have to bring their own real cheese.

10. Nutty New Year's: Raleigh, North Carolina

During the city's First Night celebration, Raleigh, North Carolina borrows a 1,250 pound copper acorn from the city's Moore Square to star in the New Year's countdown from atop their civic center. Known as the "City of Oaks," Raleigh has been dropping this massive acorn for the past 18 years -- once at 7:30 p.m. and again at midnight. Tickets to First Night Raleigh are \$12 for adults, \$10 for kids and admission is free for children under five.

"While New York City's famous ball drop in Times Square is a spectacular sight, there are other uniquely wonderful ways Americans can ring in the New Year," said Michele Perry, vice president of global communications for TripAdvisor, "While they range from clever to wacky, it's clear that New Year's Eve is about celebrating traditions and enjoying the company of a crowd."

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