

# SE CITYLIFE

SOUTH EAST LONDON'S PREMIER GUIDE TO LUXURY LIVING November 2007 • ISSUE 15

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**RETURN OF THE  
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TUTANKHAMUN COMES  
BACK TO LONDON

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# NEW YEAR, NEW EXPERIENCE

**INSTEAD OF COUNTING DOWN THE LAST SECONDS OF 2007 IN TIMES SQUARE, POOJA JAIN DISCOVERS MORE UNUSUAL WAYS TO END THE YEAR**

It is rare for Londoners to celebrate New Year's Eve in a noteworthy manner; attending a party in the capital, on what is usually a rainy night, is a rather uninspiring way to bring in the New Year. However, with a bit of early planning, you can enjoy a memorable start to 2008 in some exotic locations

## COPACABANA PALACE, BRAZIL

Celebrate the end of 2007 at one of the most famous New Year's parties in the world: Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro. Last year, over two million people attended the party, which features live music shows and a stunning fireworks exhibition. Guests of all ages, nationalities and backgrounds share in the festivities, with traditions such as wearing white and throwing flowers in the ocean before midnight.

A stay in the most luxurious hotel in South America, the Copacabana Palace, located on the beach itself, will ensure your time in Rio de Janeiro is perfect in every way. A brand new spa, a semi-Olympic size swimming pool and a tennis court are just a few of the amenities offered. If you are feeling extravagant, stay in a 6<sup>th</sup> floor penthouse suite and surround yourself with oriental carpets and french fabrics, as well as gaining access to the exclusive swimming pool on that storey. Local cuisine and Brazil's diverse selection of fruit can be sampled at nearby eateries, but the hotel features the city's most renowned restaurant, the *Hotel Cipriani* – a favourite with celebrities.

Shopping in the city is plentiful and continues until late; try the Rio Sul Shopping Centre for over 450 shops. Visitors can enjoy one of the world's largest coasts with water sports, including snorkelling at off-shore islands and beach games. This thriving city has pulsating nightlife as well as a cultural history; looking down over golden beaches, colonial buildings and towering Sugarloaf Mountain is the iconic statue of Christ the Redeemer.

Avenida Atlântica 1702, Rio de Janeiro  
Tel: 0845 077 2222  
[www.copacabanapalace.com.br](http://www.copacabanapalace.com.br)

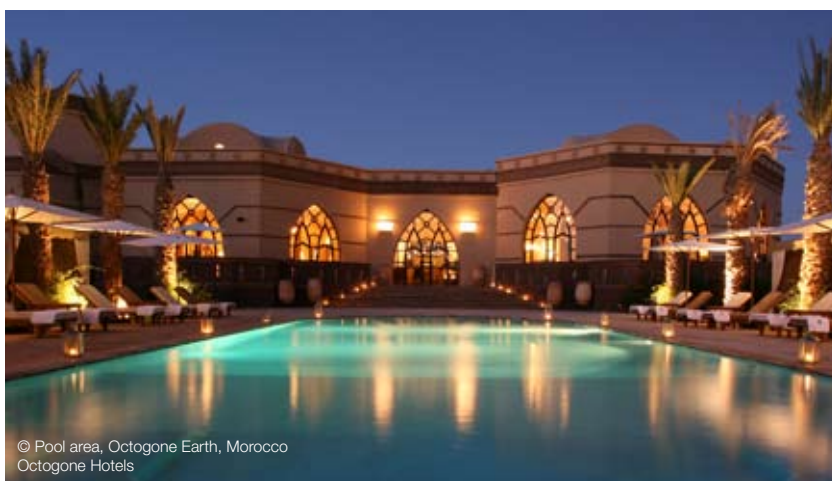
## OCTOGONE EARTH RESORT AND SPAS, MOROCCO

If you want to escape the skyscrapers, pollution and noise, then Octogone Earth is an ideal place to spend New Year. Located in the Palmerai Desert, the name of this hotel, 'Terre' (Earth), reflects the fact that the resort has been innovatively carved from earth. The nearest airport is in Marrakech, Morocco's most exotic city; travelling the fifteen kilometres to the resort, one is immediately struck by the tranquillity of the location, especially when contrasted with the bustling city.

Terre is the perfect place to unwind after a hectic year. It maintains an authentic feel and complements its environment, with its large courtyards, palm-trees and unique Riad-style homes – each created using an eight-sided variation of traditional and modern Moroccan architecture. The emphasis is on privacy, and it is ideal for spending quality time with a partner or close friends, basking in the sun by the poolside. The villas are spread over the resort, so you can have a secluded area for your New Year celebrations. The Royal villas even offer a private chef to create anything you wish, perhaps to take as a picnic on an ascent of the Atlas Mountains for an unforgettable experience. The hotel is renowned for its luxurious amenities with extremely attentive staff and all the facilities of a five-star resort. It is really an opportunity to relax playing familiar sports such as tennis or golf in beautiful surroundings; you can rejuvenate yourself for the year ahead by being pampered with an extensive range of beauty treatments at the renowned, world-class Esprite Nomade Spa. Be sure to



© Copacabana Palace, Brazil  
Orient-Express Hotels



© Pool area, Octogone Earth, Morocco  
Octogone Hotels

try out the unusual eight-hand massage, in keeping with the hotel's octagonal theme. If you feel the urge to venture away from the peace of Terre, the ocean is nearby – an exhilarating location for New Year's Eve celebrations. The vibrant city souks and ancient monuments are also worth a visit. The exclusive resort has been open for just over a year, so be sure to visit it before your friends.

Gueliz Marrakesh, 40000  
Tel: +212 2433 4060  
[www.octogonehotels.com](http://www.octogonehotels.com)

## THE ICE HOTEL, SWEDEN

The *Absolut* Icebar in Mayfair quickly became immensely popular, proving that Londoners do not mind braving the cold for an extraordinary experience. The Ice Hotel in Lapland, home of the original Icebar, is certainly unique – the construction itself reflects this, as it is rebuilt each year by skilled artisans. Creative expression is in evidence in the hotel's ice sculptures, the ice globe theatre shows and the Magnetite Heavy Art exhibition.

There is the rare satisfaction that everything around you has been created

by pure, raw materials derived from local sources – from the spring water to the clear ice. However, one need not worry that the cuisine on offer is sparse; delicacies include local reindeer meat and appetising desserts made from fresh berries.

The hotel is far from uncomfortable and temperatures inside are maintained between -5 °C to -8 °C; warm clothing, cosy sleeping bags and gently cracking buildings create an intimate, if surreal, environment.

The range of activities organised by the hotel are extensive – from a snowmobile trip along the trails of the aboriginal Sami people to a Killer Whale Safari by the steep fjords of Lofoten in Norway. You can even choose to be collected from the airport by dog-sledges. For thrill-seekers, the hotel offers a Saab ice-driving experience where you can test the luxury car to its maximum.

The blue and white brightness of the silent, unspoiled wilderness is striking, especially against the backdrop of the spectacular northern lights. With non-stop flights from Heathrow, this fairy-tale environment is certainly within reach.

Jukkasjärvi, 200 km north of the Arctic Circle  
Tel: +46 (0) 980 66800  
[www.icehotel.com](http://www.icehotel.com)