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## Save the Tables for New Year's Eve

By Phil Vettel

Tribune critic

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Merry Christmas! Hope you got everything you wanted.

But did you get a reservation for New Year's Eve? Didn't think so.

The last thing you want to do right now is resume shopping, this time for a good restaurant, so in the spirit of giving, I've done most of the work for you.

Once again, I've made New Year's Eve reservations at restaurants around the city and suburbs. Over the years, this list grew to almost comical proportions, so this year I cut way back—while still maintaining a variety of locations and prices.

We've got everything from a \$300-plus black tie extravaganza (Sixteen) to a three-course meal for just \$39 (The Bristol), plus several restaurants that are simply serving their regular menus.

And any one of them can be yours, if you're the first caller to request "the Phil Vettel table."

Keep in mind that this is not a freebie. You still have to pay the full freight, tax and tip. All you get out of this little exercise is a prime-time table that might not have been available otherwise.

Because today is Christmas Day, it's highly unlikely that many (or any) of the following restaurants are staffing the phones. But come tomorrow, start dialing. Don't assume, if you leave a message, that you're the first caller. Each restaurant has absolute discretion to determine which caller is first.

Unless designated otherwise, prices are per person, and do not include tax or tip. Prices and package features are subject to change.

And have a credit card ready when you call. Many restaurants require a credit card deposit, to guard against no-shows.

(Were this not enough of a holiday gift, consider that our annual "Save the Seats" feature is back in On The Town on Dec. 26, with tickets saved for readers at top-flight performances on New Year's Eve.)

**Ajasteak**, Dana Hotel, 660 N. State St.; 312-202-6000, is saving two tables for four at 10:30 p.m. The restaurant will be serving its regular menu, plus specials.

**Avec**, 615 W. Randolph St.; 312-377-2002, is saving a table for four at 9:30 p.m. Featuring a four-course menu, featuring wild boar, for \$50 (wine pairings \$25 additional).

**Blackbird**, 619 W. Randolph St.; 312-715-0708, is saving a table for four at 9:30 p.m. Featuring the regular menu, plus a chef's tasting menu for \$135 (wine pairings \$55 additional).



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**Brasserie Jo**, 59 W. Hubbard St.; 312-595-0800, is saving a table for four at 10 p.m. Featuring a four-course menu, live music by Manuel Arrington Band and champagne toast at midnight, for \$59.

**Bristol**, 2152 N. Damen Ave.; 773-862-5555, is saving a table for four at 9:45 p.m. Featuring a three-course dinner priced at \$39.

**Cafe Lucci**, 609 Milwaukee Ave., Glenview; 847-729-2268, is saving a table for four at 9 p.m. Featuring regular menu, plus specials. Bottles of Taittinger La Francaise brut available for half-price (\$45).

**Carlucci**, 1801 Butterfield Rd., Downers Grove; 630-512-0990, is saving four tickets to its New Year's Eve buffet. Full dinner buffet with dancing and open bar for \$99.

**Carnivale**, 702 W. Fulton Market; 312-850-5005, is saving a table for four at 10 p.m. The "Fiesta de Ano Nuevo" features a stilt walker, magician and more, plus a balloon drop and champagne toast at midnight. Regular menu served.

**Chaise Lounge Restaurant**, 1840 W. North Ave.; 773-342-1840, is saving a table for four at 8 p.m. Featuring a three-course dinner with open bar for \$120. Contact Elizabeth for reservations.

**Chalkboard**, 4343 N. Lincoln Ave.; 773-477-7144, is saving two tables for two and one table for four at 11 p.m. Featuring regular menu, plus a Chef's Whim degustation for \$75 (\$125 with wine).

**Custom House**, 500 S. Dearborn St.; 312-523-0200, is saving two tables for two at 9 p.m. Featuring a four-course menu for \$110. Open seating and a la carte menu also available.

**Galway Tribes**, 9680 Lincolnway Lane, Frankfort; 815-464-9881, is saving tables for two, four and six at 9 p.m. The evening will feature live music, regular menu plus specials, an appetizer buffet at midnight and a \$5 coupon for the next morning's "Pajamas and Sweats" buffet brunch. No cover charge.

**Graham Elliot**, 217 W. Huron St.; 312-624-9975, is saving a table for two and a table for four at 9 p.m. Featuring three-course (\$65) and five-course (\$90) menus.

**Le Titi de Paris**, 1015 W. Dundee Rd., Arlington Heights; 847-506-0222, is saving a table for two and a table for four at 10 p.m. Featuring a seven-course menu for \$95 (\$164 with wine flight).

**Lockwood**, Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe St.; 312-917-3404, is saving a table for four at 10 p.m. for its New Year's Eve Signature Tasting, a \$95 dinner (wine pairings \$55 additional) featuring at least eight courses.

**Michael**, 64 Green Bay Rd., Winnetka; 847-441-3100, is saving a table for four and a table for six at 9 p.m. Featuring a four-course menu with party favors and midnight champagne toast for \$89 (earlier seatings \$69-\$79).

**Mk**, 868 N. Franklin St.; 312-482-9179, is saving a table for two and a table for four for its late seating. Four-course menu, \$90, will be featured; tax and 20 percent tip will be added. Champagne toast at midnight. For mk patrons, Hotel 71 (71 E. Wacker Drive; 312-346-7100) is offering special overnight rates (\$179 deluxe, \$209 premier).

**Moto**, 945 W. Fulton Market; 312-491-0058, is saving small and large tables (from 2 to 10 guests) at 9 p.m. Featuring a 12-course tasting menu for \$150 (wine pairings \$90 additional).

**Nacional 27**, 325 W. Huron St.; 312-664-2727, is saving a table for two and a table for four at its late (9-11 p.m.) seating. Featuring a three-course dinner, including choices of tapas, ceviches, entrees, paellas (for two) and desserts for \$75. Cover charge \$20; cover waived for guests with credit-card-secured reservations.

**Naha**, 500 N. Clark St.; 312-321-6242, is saving a table for four at 9:30 p.m. Featuring a seasonal a la carte menu with some special and luxury options.

**North Pond**, 2610 N. Cannon Drive; 773-477-5845, is saving a table for four at 9 p.m. Featuring a five-course menu for \$110 (wine pairings \$50 additional).

**Otom**, 951 W. Fulton Market; 312-491-5804, is saving small and large tables (for 2 to 10 guests) at 9 p.m. Featuring the regular menu, plus specials.

**Publican**, 837 W. Fulton Market; 312-733-9555, is saving a table for four at 9:30 p.m. Special a la carte menu will be featured.

**Sepia**, 123 N. Jefferson St.; 312-441-1920, is saving a table for two at 9:15 p.m. Featuring a five-course menu for \$80.

**Sixteen**, Trump International Hotel & Tower, 401 N. Wabash Ave.; 312-588-8030, is saving a table for four for the late seating (8:30-9:30 p.m.). Featuring a gala evening with tuxedoed waiters, orchid centerpieces and live jazz music. Choose between a seven-course tasting menu for \$230 (\$310 with wines) or a 10-course "blind" tasting menu for \$330 (\$470 with wines). Complimentary Krug champagne toast, photograph in gemstone-studded keepsake picture frame included.

**Sola**, 3868 N. Lincoln Ave.; 773-327-3868, is saving a table for four at 9 p.m., featuring the regular menu plus specials.

**Sugar Toad** (Hotel Arista, 2139 CityGate Lane, Naperville; 630-778-8623) is saving two tables for two at 8:30 p.m. Held in the Grand Ballroom, the celebration includes music by Saffire—the Uppity Blues Women, open bar and a seven-course dinner by Jimmy Sneed for \$300 per couple. (Sugar Toad restaurant will feature the seven-course dinner for \$95, in addition to the regular menu.) All couples attending the Grand Ballroom celebration will receive a \$100 gift certificate for a future Sugar Toad visit.

**SushiSamba Rio**, 504 N. Wells St.; 312-595-2300, is saving two tables for two at 8 p.m. Featuring a Carnival-style party atmosphere, with a special a la carte menu.

**Tavern at the Park**, 130 E. Randolph St.; 312-552-0070, is saving seven tables for two. Featuring regular menu with specials; champagne toast and party favors at midnight.

**Va Pensiero**, 1566 Oak Ave., Evanston; 847-475-7779, is saving a table for two and a table for four at 9 p.m. Featuring a seven-course dinner, unlimited champagne beginning at 11:30 p.m., music and dancing for \$98.

**Vie**, 4471 Lawn Ave., Western Springs; 708-246-2082, is saving a table for four at 8:30 p.m., featuring a seven-course menu for \$100 (wine pairings \$40 additional). Party favors at midnight.

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