

GOOD AS

NEW



Splash steps in to help you choose your own New Year's Eve adventure

BY AMBER GIBSON

New Year's Eve can be decadent and delightful, sure, but also overpriced and predictable. Let's face it: You're paying for real estate. This year, why not veer away from the norm for something a little more adventurous? Follow our handy guide below to figure out how you should ring in 2015:

START HERE

Do you desperately wish to be somewhere warm?

YES

NO

What's more important?

FOOD

ATMOSPHERE

Your ideal party vibe is...

FRENETIC ENERGY

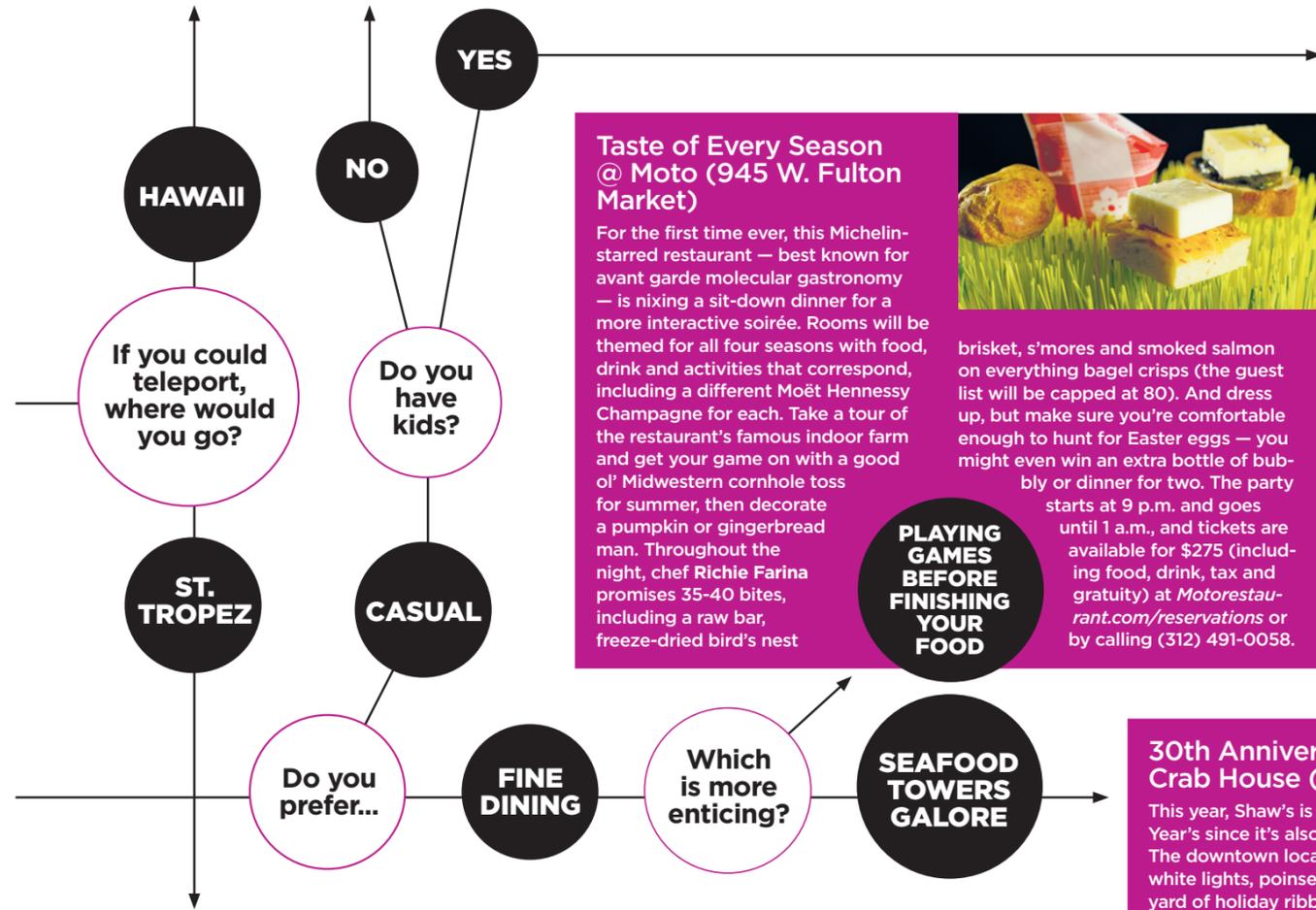
REFINED AND ELEGANT

Hawaiian Lu'au @ Mott Street (1401 N. Ashland)

Hawaii may be a little far to travel for just one night, but Mott Street recreates the warm island vibes in frigid Chicago with a lu'au-themed party. Tiki torches, tropical plants, carved fruit, pineapple lanterns, orchids, banana leaves and calypso tunes will transform the dining room. This lively lu'au pays homage to beverage director **Nate Chung's** Hawaiian heritage, and the family-style 10-course feast includes roasted braised pork



shoulder and pineapple boat fried rice. "The aim is to be decadent without being fussy," Chung says. "We want to throw a New Year's party that's jovial, cheeky and wholeheartedly sincere." Exclusive tropical cocktails include a Mott Street Mai Tai made with chestnut orgeat and a Monserrat with rum, black tea, lemongrass and pineapple. Attire is casual — you'll be lei'd — and guests are encouraged to dress in tropical, bright tones. There will be two seatings, one at 5:30 p.m. (\$115, \$175 with beverage pairing) and another at 8:30 p.m. with an open tiki bar (\$235). Prices include tax and tip. Make your reservations at Mottstreetchicago.com/nye-luau-feast.



Taste of Every Season @ Moto (945 W. Fulton Market)

For the first time ever, this Michelin-starred restaurant — best known for avant garde molecular gastronomy — is nixing a sit-down dinner for a more interactive soirée. Rooms will be themed for all four seasons with food, drink and activities that correspond, including a different Moët Hennessy Champagne for each. Take a tour of the restaurant's famous indoor farm and get your game on with a good ol' Midwestern cornhole toss for summer, then decorate a pumpkin or gingerbread man. Throughout the night, chef **Richie Farina** promises 35-40 bites, including a raw bar, freeze-dried bird's nest



brisket, s'mores and smoked salmon on everything bagel crisps (the guest list will be capped at 80). And dress up, but make sure you're comfortable enough to hunt for Easter eggs — you might even win an extra bottle of bubbly or dinner for two. The party starts at 9 p.m. and goes until 1 a.m., and tickets are available for \$275 (including food, drink, tax and gratuity) at Motorestaurant.com/reservations or by calling (312) 491-0058.

PLAYING GAMES BEFORE FINISHING YOUR FOOD

30th Anniversary & NYE @ Shaw's Crab House (21 E. Hubbard)

This year, Shaw's is going above and beyond for New Year's since it's also the restaurant's 30th anniversary. The downtown location will be bedazzled with twinkling white lights, poinsettias, wreaths, balloons and yard upon yard of holiday ribbon. For one night only, you can order a \$100 chilled ode-to-crab tower with empress and stone crab claws, king crab bites, peeky toe crab, golden king crab and mini bottles of Moët & Chandon. In the main dining room, an a la carte menu will be served throughout the evening with specials including Nantucket Cape scallops, dover sole and Alaskan red king crab. The oyster bar is first come, first served with reservations accepted after 9 p.m. and live music by local blues and rock band **Big Dog Mercer**. Expect smartly dressed regulars celebrating great memories over the years — although newcomers are always welcome, too. At midnight, usher in 2015 with a complimentary oyster and Champagne toast. Make reservations by calling (312) 527-2722.



White & Gold Celebration @ Fig & Olive (104 E. Oak)

One of Chicago's hottest new restaurants, Fig & Olive is bringing us a taste of St. Tropez to break up the winter blues. Similar to the venue's LA and NYC bashes, this party has a white-and-gold theme — think red-carpet refined glamour with tiaras, gold hats and other party favors. Fashionable guests can celebrate with a four-course menu, including foie gras with fig chutney, roasted lamb rack or Chilean sea bass with charroula and cumin. Save room for dessert — Valrhona chocolate brownies — then dance the night away to sexy house music by Paris-born **DJ Edward Netter**. The 9 p.m. seating, including all food and a glass of Champagne, is \$150. Revelers may also opt for Champagne and grazing on passed bites in the lounge from 9 p.m.-midnight for \$100. Reserve your spot by calling (212) 924-1200 ext. 1 or emailing Nye-chi@figandolive.com.



Party Like a Rockstar @ ROOF on the Wit (201 N. State)

This trendy rooftop club on the hotel's 27th floor classes it up with a black-and-white themed celebration. Dress glamorously in those hues for the high-energy party, where you'll ring in 2015 while sipping on Dom Perignon's P2 Champagne, a re-released vintage exclusive to the ROOF with only 33 bottles available in the Midwest. A Veuve Clicquot chandelier is the grand centerpiece, surrounded by an iced sushi bar, go-go dancers, explosive confetti

cannons and music by **DJ Joe Maz**. Fountains will be overflowing with the festive "Midnight Kiss" cocktail — just the liquid courage you need to approach the cutie you've been eyeing across the room. Private table reservations and packages are available starting at \$1,200 for four and include a premium open bar from 9:30 p.m.-1 a.m., extravagant food displays, a dessert bar and a premium Champagne toast at midnight. Table reservations also include 4 State and Lake Chicago Tavern vouchers for a New Year's Day Bloody Mary and mimosa bar. Table packages are available at Roofonthewit.com/nye.

Kiddie Dinner @ Gemini Bistro (2075 N. Lincoln)



Ring in 2015 early — at 6:30 p.m., to be precise — with your little ones at this Lincoln Park bistro. You'll be seated at 5:30, and the "midnight Champagne toast" will be made with sparkling juice and early enough so parents can tuck their kids into bed before anyone falls asleep at the table. "Our kid celebration helps bring families in early, and also gives parents who don't want to stay up till midnight a 'way out' and still feel like they took part in the celebration," says owner **Ryan O'Donnell**. Kids have a choice of grilled chicken, baked macaroni and cheese or a petite filet along with an assortment of gelato and sorbet for dessert. Kiddie cocktails (\$3), including a Shirley Temple or Roy Rogers and lemonade, are available, too. The kids' menu is \$20, while adults enjoy an \$80 three-course meal, including escargot ravioli, duck cassoulet and a glass of Champagne — the real stuff. Reserve your spot by calling (773) 525-2522.