

## Southeast Getaway Travel Newsletter

Christmas Destinations

November 22, 2005

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Dear Harry,

One word most associated with the Holiday Season is MAGIC. Wherever you spend the holidays you bring your traditions and memories with you. This season let the holiday destination provide the MAGIC. The destinations we chose are very special year-round but during the holiday season they sparkle with magnificent splendor providing the MAGIC needed to push your holiday right over the top.

### Disneyworld Orlando, FL



**Magic! Magic! Magic!** From November 14, 2005 - January 8, 2006 Discover the spirit of the season as the four Theme Parks of Walt Disney World® Resort celebrate magical holiday celebrations for the entire family. Join the festivities and ring in the holiday season with millions of lights on a studio backlot, stunning Candlelight Processionals, an all-new fireworks spectacular at Magic Kingdom® Park and, of course, a special holiday parade. Attend Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party (on select nights) at the Magic Kingdom® Park from November 27, 2005 to December 20, 2005. Watch as the joys of Christmas meet the fantasy of Magic Kingdom® Park in this spectacular celebration complete with stage shows, new fireworks, a special parade and more.

The Osborne Family Spectacle of Lights is held at the Disney-MGM Studios from November 14, 2005 to January 8, 2006 where millions of lights add their brilliance to the backlot cityscape. The Festival of the Seasons held in Downtown Disney® from November 19, 2005 - December 24, 2005 allows you to stroll through this holiday haven of shops, entertainment and good cheer. Enjoy the festive atmosphere as Downtown Disney® celebrates the season.

In Mickey's Jingle Jungle Parade at Disney's Animal Kingdom® Theme Park you can jump and jive to the beat of this jammin' jungle parade that blends the spirit of the season with all the adventure of Disney's Animal Kingdom®.

From November 25 - December 30, 2005 at Epcot, you can enjoy Holidays around the World. Bedecked with all the holiday trimmings, this theme park is filled with enchantment. The center walkway that links Future World and the World Showcase is spanned by the "Lights of Winter." As evening descends, these lights transform into a dazzling musical display that twinkle and "dance" to inspirational holiday music. For an added treat, watch as the fountain performs in step with this glistening interlude. The Lights of Winter will be operating thru January 8, 2006.

Each country has it's own special theme that highlights it's culture. Storytellers will delight you with tales of their heritage and how the holidays are celebrated in their homeland. It's a unique opportunity to learn more about the world in which we live. There's a spectacular Christmas tree with decorations that pay homage to all of the countries that comprise the World Showcase. Every evening, you can join Mickey and friends for the nightly tree-lighting ceremony at 6:00 PM. The approximate length of this ceremony is 10 minutes.

Held every year at Epcot, the Candlelight Processional is not to be missed. A mass choir, joined by a 50-piece live orchestra and a celebrity narrator, tell the story of Christmas in words and music, in a very moving performance. Performances are held at the America Gardens Theatre and take place each evening at 5:00 PM, 6:45 PM and 8:15 PM

**ILLUMINATIONS** is enhanced for the Holidays. "Let There Be Peace On Earth" with narration by Walter Cronkite will be the finale of this amazing nightly show.

[For more Disneyworld Information](#)

[For Disneyworld Accommodations](#)

:: [harry@segetaway.com](mailto:harry@segetaway.com)  
:: <http://www.segetaway.com>

:: 888-302-6635

### Asheville, NC

A visit to the Grove Park Inn during the holiday season is MAGIC. From November 25, 2005 - December 30, 2005 enjoy the holidays in the mountains of Western North



Carolina. Experience the Magic of the incredible decorations throughout the resort. This month long event includes over 25 uniquely decorated trees and an extensive display of gingerbread houses from the National Gingerbread House Contest. Also enjoy innovative theme areas, garlands, poinsettias, mechanical displays and wreaths all created by the hotel Floral and Visual Design Department. Now in its eleventh year, the nationally recognized Gingerbread competition is open to amateurs and professionals. In 2005, there were over two hundred houses on display. The event has attracted national attention including prestigious awards, television coverage and appearances on "Good Morning America" and "The Food Network". The houses can be viewed from November 9, 2005 - January 8, 2006. Not to be outdone the New Year's Eve Celebration glitters and sparkles as everyone rings in the New Year in style with the New Year's Eve Dinner and Gala. Two Live bands play into the new year as you dance the night away.

Adding to all the holiday magic the city of Asheville itself offers magic this holiday season with a Victorian Christmas Celebration. Have a Holly Jolly Christmas [Friday, Dec. 2, 2005] in downtown Asheville. This celebration is held each year on the first Friday in December. On this special night music will fill the air as carolers sing, luminaries light up the streets, shops will be opened late to find that special gift, refreshments will be served, and Santa will come for a visit. The Black Mountain Christmas Parade Saturday, Dec. 3, 2005 is the annual Christmas parade. Celebrate Christmas the old-fashioned way. The Smith-McDowell House Museum's time-line of authentically decorated period rooms showcase the evolution of Christmas celebrations and decorations. Just about everyone has holiday traditions-whether it's opening that one present on Christmas Eve; having a huge family brunch on Christmas morning; or hanging a stocking no matter how old you are. But what if your tradition were to raise a 40-foot live Christmas tree and decorate it with brightly wrapped packages? In the evenings, Biltmore House is lit much as it would have been at the turn of the 19th century—by fire and candlelight. Even though Biltmore House was fully electrified, candles were used to provide additional light and fireplaces were used both for decoration and supplemental heat. During Candlelight Christmas Evenings, offered by reservation, luminaries lead the way to the Front Door where guests enter a softly lit wonderland. Flickering light accents the house's extravagant holiday décor and plays off delicate ornaments adorning dozens of Christmas trees. Live music from choirs and musicians fills the halls with holiday spirit.

Of course, there's more to Christmas at Biltmore Estate than just America's largest private home. Across the estate guests will find a variety of activities including holiday events at the Historic Horse Barn. The 1900 barn, original to the estate, interprets the agricultural side of the property. In November and December guests can enjoy old-time and bluegrass music and crafters at work Saturday-Sunday. On Saturdays and Sundays, farm life demonstrations and crafts are offered along with a visit from St. Nick. Next door, Biltmore Estate Winery offers self-guided tours, seminars, cooking demonstrations and complimentary wine tastings throughout the season. Visitors can even pick up a bottle of Christmas wine—a special blend created just for the holidays by Biltmore's winemaker—perfect for gift giving.

That was the practice George W. Vanderbilt started in 1895 during his first Christmas in Biltmore House and it's still carried out to this day during Christmas at Biltmore Estate, held November 4, 2005 through January 1, 2006. It's just one of the Vanderbilt family traditions estate staff will be focusing on during this year's lavish celebration in Asheville, NC. "George Vanderbilt probably didn't realize he was starting a tradition that would go on for more than a century on that first Christmas in his new home," said Director of Museum Services Ellen Rickman. "But here we are in 2005 taking inspiration from Christmas past to decorate the house and entertain visitors with this year's theme of family traditions. When visitors enter the Banquet Hall, it looks as though Mr. Vanderbilt might walk in any minute to hand out gifts from the tree and fresh fruit from the baskets just as he did on Christmas Day 1895."

[For more information on Asheville](#)

[For Grove Park Inn Accommodations](#)

[For Asheville Accommodations](#)

### December's Little Gem of the South--Augusta, GA

While Augusta is known worldwide for the Masters® and the coveted green jacket, you'll find that Georgia's second-oldest and second-largest city - also known as the "Garden City" of the South - is



full of history - atmosphere, Southern charm, and activities to engage everyone's interest. Discover the historic charm of the classic South with Augusta's tree-lined streets and majestic antebellum mansions. Enjoy dozens of shops and restaurants, cultural attractions and entertainment. Meander along the banks of the Savannah River as you stroll Riverwalk Augusta.

[For Augusta Accommodations](#)

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