

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION

# Town & Country

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THE  
PARTY  
ISSUE

160 Years  
of Dazzling  
Events!



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## ON THE TOWN *Party Venues*



### NEW YORK

Sometimes the best-kept secrets hide in plain sight. Exhibit No. 1: the year-old private-event venue discreetly housed on the 67th floor of 30 Rockefeller Center, within the building's crowning observation deck, Top of the Rock. Called the **WEATHER ROOM** in a nod to the up close and personal experience visitors have with the elements outside, this lofty vertical space (shown

at left) has soaring floor-to-ceiling windows and two open-air terraces offering spectacular perspectives. Guests can gaze as far north as Yankee Stadium and south to Lady Liberty. Another eye-catching detail, a geode wall, slyly showcases 150 embedded miniature Swarovski-crystal figurines. Hospitality group Cipriani, with an outpost in the legendary Rainbow Room two floors below, handles food and drink requirements—whether for cocktail receptions (up to 300 people) or seated dinners (100 maximum).

Already, this elegant locale has played host to memorable fêtes, from a gala for Nelson Mandela to a Tuscan-style dinner for forty given by Dallas Cowboys quarterback turned real-estate mogul Roger Staubach. When old New York glamour meets modern design in a space with such unforgettable views, it's a Manhattan high that few partyers can resist. *Room rental from \$20,000 to \$25,000. 30 Rockefeller Center, 67th Floor; 212-698-2000; topoftherocknyc.com.*

KATHRYN MATTHEWS



### SAN FRANCISCO

"The perfect event space combines something you've created and a geographically stimulating natural environment," says Stanlee Gatti, San Francisco's premier party designer. **TREASURE ISLAND** exemplifies that combination, putting it at the top of Gatti's list of places for impressive soirées. Created to host the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939 and 1940 (and later converted to a naval base), this man-made island commands dazzling views of San Francisco's bay, skyline and bridges.

Gatti has used all the island's available venues, including Casa de la Vista, a former officers' club. His favorite, however, is the Great Lawn, about 126,500 square feet of grass extending along the western shore of the island, the site of many Gatti events, including the 1960s-themed party pictured above, complete with Andy Warhol waiters.

"You can create any environment you want on the Great Lawn," Gatti says exultantly. *Facilities rental from \$2,000 for the Great Lawn to \$10,000 for Building 180, a massive hangar with standing room for 5,000. sfgov.org/treasureisland.*

MANDY BEHBEHANI

### CHARLESTON

Located in Charleston, South Carolina, a city where the art of entertaining is passed down from generation to generation, the **WILLIAM AIKEN HOUSE** has become a favorite site for parties. Hollywood and political personalities have held special events here, and for one fiftieth birthday, the guest of honor (who shall remain nameless) was paraded, à la Cleopatra, on a palanquin carried by muscular guests dressed as ancient Egyptians.

Patrick Properties made the three-story house into a party space in 2000, restoring it to its original 1810 condition, complete with period furniture and appointments. The beauty, romance and elegance of the historic building create an aura that can be found only in the Low Country.

The appeal of having a party at the William Aiken House is that whether the occasion is an intimate dinner (like the one shown below) or a grand reception for 600, it feels as though you were entertaining at home. "Celebrating Charleston-style is celebrating with friends and neighbors," says event planner Mitchell Crosby, of JMC Charleston. "That's why it's such a spectacular location." *Facilities rental from \$3,400 to \$5,600. 456 King Street; 843-853-1810; williamaikenhouse.com.*

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