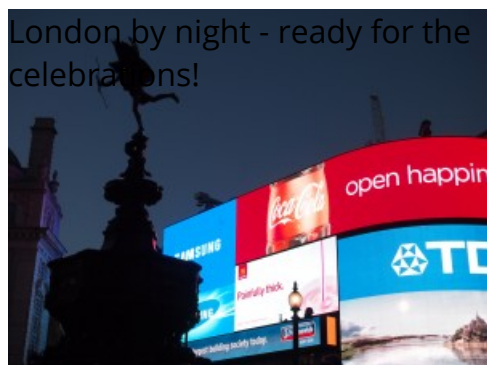


So, Christmas is over, copious amounts of food have been eaten, you've said goodbye to the family and they've stopped showing Elf on television every day. But fear not because yet more excitement is upon us! That's right – it's the New Year!

Like in many parts of the world, in the UK the New Year is a huge cause for celebration. People make New Year's resolutions, promising themselves that they will do more exercise, or take up a new hobby, for example. Tonight we will be looking back fondly at 2012 and all of the amazing times we had at Reach this year, as well as eagerly looking forward to summer 2013! People all over the world have many ways of seeing in the New Year: In Spain, traditionally people eat twelve grapes on the twelve chimes of the clock as it strikes midnight, and in Brazil people at the coast jump seven waves, making a wish with each jump.

In the UK, New Year is often a time that is spent having fun with friends. The two biggest celebrations take place in London and the Scottish capital city, Edinburgh. But in the battle of the New Year's celebrations which city reigns supreme? Let's find out!



1. London

Each year on 31st December the Mayor of London organises an impressive (and, what's more, free!) fireworks display for the residents and visitors of the city. This year will be no different – the Mayor's office promise that 'The night skies will be a blaze of light and colour' around the London Eye on the South Bank, illuminating the River Thames and the famous Houses of Parliament in brilliant colour. A DJ plays party tunes for the dancing crowds, and the fireworks too seem to dance in the night sky. At midnight, the music stops while the crowds join together for a rendition of Auld Land Syne – a poem written by Scottish poet Robert Burns that is traditionally sung to say goodbye to the old year and usher in the new one.

On January 1st, the annual New Year's Parade takes place, attended by up to 500,000 people. The

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spectators will watch around 10,000 performers do their thing as they make their way from Berkeley Street to Parliament Square. That's quite a show, London!

2. Edinburgh

Probably the most famous New Year celebrations (or 'Hogmanay', as it is called by the Scots) in Britain take place in Scotland's capital – Edinburgh. Festivities begin on 30th December with the stunning Torchlight Parade. In this family event, thousands of torch bearers cross the city, accompanied by drummers, until they reach their destination on Calton Hill and the event culminates in a spectacular fireworks display.



Reach Keilidh fun in summer! Just like how they do it at Hogmanay!

The celebrations continue in full force on the 31st. Around 80,000 people come together for a street party against the backdrop of Edinburgh's famous castle, enjoying live music and entertainment as well yet another amazing fireworks display at midnight. Alternatively, revellers could make their way to the world famous annual Keilidh! This is a chance for party goers to really let loose, have a great time dancing with friends, and try out their best moves to traditional Scottish music played by a live Keilidh band. Those of you who tried the Keilidh during Reach summers past may remember how much fun this unique type of dance is!

So, where would we rather be?

That is SUCH a tricky question. However, despite the guaranteed chilly temperatures, Edinburgh's world famous Hogmanay celebrations might just win out over their London equivalents. This time. But both events are guaranteed to be a LOT of fun – after all, the important thing for us at New Year is getting together with friends and family.

However you are celebrating, all of us at Reach wish you a very HAPPY NEW YEAR and all the best for 2013.

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