There's a palpable elation throughout the City-by-the Sea during Christmas in Newport, a month-long celebration toasting simple traditions of the holiday season. For nearly 50 years, this event has made for an extraordinary holiday respite in a quaint New England coastal town. White lights illuminate homes, shops, restaurants and the bustling wharves in a ritual meant to represent candlelight from days gone by, when families would wait for their loved ones to return home from their seafaring adventures. Holiday events are tailored to entertain every age, including tree lightings, Polar Express train rides, historical tours, shopping strolls, concerts and dances, Victorian-era Christmas festivities, culinary fêtes, arts and cultural celebrations and more. (Where else but Newport can you gaze at a 16-foot working gingerbread lighthouse?)

The spirit of a true Gilded Age Christmas comes to life at the legendary Newport Mansions. Thousands of poinsettias, evergreens, wreaths and fresh flowers disguise the remarkable properties as winter wonderlands, and special events like the lauded Newport Nutcracker, Island Moving Company's rendition of the classic holiday ballet, will leave visitors with visions of sugar-plums dancing in their heads. Christmas in Newport proves it is indeed, the most wonderful time of the year!