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October 2015

Globility Global Traveler



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Snow Business

It's only October and already those of us who live in the Northeastern United States are sharing the latest winter forecast from the *Old Farmer's Almanac* and making offerings to the weather gods, beseeching them to spare us another record-breaking snowfall.

Like many of my fellow winter of 2014–2015 survivors, I tried to get out. During the height of the frozen deluge, I wanted to go anywhere warm, anywhere. But I was too late. Flights to warm-weather destinations were either full or priced way beyond my quick-getaway budget. Resigned to tough-

ing it out, I set my sights on next year and booked a 2016 winter vacation. So when the snow flies this season, I'll be winging my way to the U.S. Virgin Islands, coincidentally this month's featured Kicking Back destination.

It's not too late for you to do the same, and this issue provides plenty of inspiration for booking a warm-weather getaway — for business or leisure — with articles about safaris in South Africa, business in Abu Dhabi, meetings in São Paulo and golf in South Carolina.

Flip-flops, piña coladas and sunglasses beat snow boots, hot toddies and mittens any day of the year!

Lisa Matte, Editor in Chief

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Inside Access

This issue's Add-On article reminds me that South Africa offers terrific travel value. With the currency exchange rate at about 13 South African rands to the dollar, on-the-ground costs are lower than ever. And South African Airways, winner of many awards from *GT* and our sister publication *trazee travel.com*, flies you there in comfort and style. I have to plan a trip!

If you're thinking of booking a holiday trip for more than two people, it's probably too late, unless you're willing to compromise your plans and

style. Cruises are filling up, with suites and upper-level accommodations like Norwegian's The Haven suites all but gone. You need to book now for 2016, though some resorts are already filled, particularly the best accommodations. I discovered Casa Tortuga in Belize is even sold out for Christmas 2017. Perhaps those properties with availability will reach out with what they have to offer.

We plan way ahead at *Global Traveler*. The task of planning a year of issues takes time and consideration, and our 2016 editorial calendar has been set for more than three months. The upcoming calendar features a wonderful mixture of old-time favorites and up-and-coming destinations as well as travel trends and surveys of the world's airlines, hotels and travel-related companies. In our effort to remain top of mind, we've added new articles with updated approaches.

Lastly, as a frequent traveler like you, I would like to fully endorse the United MileagePlus Club Card from Chase for your use when traveling. It has a host of benefits including:

- Full use of United lounges when traveling
- Two free checked bags for cardholder and a companion
- Premier Access offering dedicated airport check-in lines, exclusive security lanes and priority boarding
- 1.5 miles per every dollar purchased using the card
- No foreign transaction fees (an issue with some American Express cards)
- Chase Inside Access events

I've recounted my experiences with Chase Inside Access a few times. It is a real boost and an added advantage. In fact, I replaced my usual picture with me teeing off at Pebble Beach's 18th hole during a recent Chase Inside Access event (see *Golf* in the June 2015 issue).

Enjoy my birthday month, pick a destination and stay connected!

Francis X. Gallagher, Publisher/CEO

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What's happening on *GT* blogs?

Have you checked out our *Global Traveler* blogs recently? Last month we featured blogs about everything from trends in multigenerational travel to devastating wildfires in the Pacific Northwest.

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COVER PHOTO: A LEOPARD PROVIDES A PHOTO OP TO A GROUP OF TOURISTS IN SOUTH AFRICA. PHOTO: © PHOTOGRAPHERLONDON | DREAMSTIME.COM



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August Cover Battle

Our August issue highlighted the winner of our second annual photo contest with Tamron. We featured the winning image on the cover, and also ran a photo of the runner-up on our Mail Call page in August. Which did you prefer?

Selecting “Sunrise Over Port Royal” for your August cover was undoubtedly the right choice. The composition is outstanding and the colors so vibrant. It makes me wish I was there right now. And let’s face it, isn’t that what a great travel magazine like yours should inspire us toward? Congrats!

George Rhodes, Raleigh, N.C.

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Art History

Irina Lew got it right when she covered Madrid’s Paseo del Arte as a must-visit neighborhood in the Spanish city. That’s my favorite section of the city, and the museums are second to none. Travelers would be remiss to skip this area and the abundance of exceptional and accessible art on display. Visit this area — or better yet, book one of the recommended hotels and really enjoy!

Gail Hogan, Chicago, Ill.

Hot-Button Issue

In the July 8 issue of eFlyer USA, we reported the Justice Department is investigating whether some of the biggest airlines in the United States colluded to keep airfares high. Readers continue to feel strongly about this topic.

I do believe we are being unfairly and unduly charged by airlines that I believe are all collaborating on charges to receive even more money



Which Would You Pick?

This is a photo of our alternate cover choice for the October 2015 issue. South Africa or São Paulo? The South Africa cover was not only beautiful but timely and, ultimately, the winner. Do you like the cover we chose? Or do you prefer São Paulo? Share your thoughts; did we make the right choice?

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mail call

from consumers who can do little about it! I want to thank Congress for bringing this to our attention and hopefully doing something about it on behalf of all consumers; we are at the mercy of airlines that do not seem to give a rip about us.

Martha Coffman-Collins, Huntsville, Ala.

The fee that still really gets to me is the one on top of cashing in miles. In 2013, I decided to invite my sister on a trip to London, and I would pay for her airfare using my frequent-flyer miles. I was pleased to find seats were available using American Airlines and British Airways for a direct flight from Boston to Heathrow, but with a \$680 fee on top of cashing in the miles.

I understand charges outside of the airlines' control (taxes, airport fees, etc.), and I have no problem getting charged for those. But after much obfuscating, I learned that about \$450 was fuel surcharges. Fuel costs were passed along to passengers, including those who were supposed to get a "free" flight.

I initially thought there was some mistake when I tried to book this online. When I contacted AA, they said it was a BA issue. When I contacted BA, they said it was an AA issue. I was told it was "a London and Paris thing," implying there was some issue flying to those airports. I was told it was related to taxes. After some Internet searching, I found this was related to fuel.

Since airfares by that time were \$1,200 at the cheapest and I wanted a direct flight for my sister, who has knee trouble, I bought the ticket using the miles and the surcharge. But I still think this is one for the Consumer Protection organization, as well as the FAA.

Jan Owens, Mt. Pleasant, Wis.

Plans Announced for \$4 Billion LaGuardia Renovation

In the Aug. 5 issue of eFlyer USA, we reported Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced plans to rebuild and redevelop LaGuardia Airport. The project will create a single new building designed to dramatically reduce flight delays and turn the airport into a state-of-the-art facility. We asked: Have you visited LaGuardia recently? How was your experience?

My recent experience at LGA was abysmal. Getting off the plane, the gate was overcrowded with people from two gates waiting for the next flight out. They spilled down the walkway into a narrow area of seats.

My husband needed a seat to catch his breath and none were seen nearby. The restroom didn't have nearly enough stalls or hand-washing facilities, nor did it have standard water-saving plumbing fixtures.

Signage to exit to ground transportation or baggage pickup was confusing, as it was two signs pointing together but separated enough you might not notice the other, and what they were pointing at was an opening in a wall that was rather narrow for the number of people expected to transit through. The place is tired and worn out. Sounds like they are on the right track now.

Terry Erickson, Round Rock, Texas

Airlines Restrict Lounge Access to Prevent Overcrowding

In the Aug. 26 issue of eFlyer USA, we reported on U.S. carriers restricting lounge access and raising membership prices to reduce overcrowding. We asked: Have you recently noticed crowded lounges?

Based on my visit last month to a lounge in LAX, I would say it was populated but not overcrowded. There were plenty of available seats. It did disappoint me that I had to shell out more money for my family members.

David Goldstein, via email

At the start of a recent trip, my husband and I were denied access into a lounge at LAX because it was "full." The two ladies at the desk were a bit grumpy and wouldn't budge and turned us away.

On our return trip, we were able to use the lounge. The place was worn out with stained carpet, not enough seating and really was a mess!

Joyce M. McPherson, Minneapolis, Minn.

There is always plenty of room in Delta Sky Club Lounges. There are times when we accessed the lounges awaiting an early-morning flight with maybe only one or two other members there! Yes, there are times when there are quite a few customers, but never to the extent of not finding available seating. It seems this is just a further attempt by the airlines to squeeze more money out of travelers' wallets.

Carriers are continuing to manipulate their frequent-flyer programs as well, making it more difficult to take advantage of elite membership benefits.

Michael McMillan, via email

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Access Denied: Airlines Restricting Lounge Access

In an effort to reduce crowding in airport lounges, select U.S. carriers are altering their lounge policies by upping membership prices and restricting access. Delta Air Lines tightened lounge access last year by increasing the cost of access by up to 54 percent and excluding complimentary guest access as a benefit of the American Express Platinum and American Express Delta Reserve cards. The policy changes were introduced “to maintain the Club’s exclusive atmosphere,” according to an email Delta sent to members of its SkyMiles frequent-flyer loyalty program.

Next year, United Airlines will follow suit in a similar strategic move. Passengers may have noticed signs throughout the carrier’s network announcing changes to its current lounge policy. From Aug. 18, 2016, “all United Club customers, including members, will only be eligible to access United Club locations if they have a same-day boarding pass,” according to the signs. With this change, only passengers

flying with a same-day boarding pass will have access to United Club lounges, while those connecting overnight or on a red-eye will be turned away.

Global Traveler reached out to United for clarification on the terms of this new policy and the impetus for the change. According to Jennifer Dohm, media relations manager, United Airlines, the airline is implementing the policy alteration in order “to reduce crowding and make the overall club experience more relaxing for passengers traveling through the airport.” Passengers with same-day boarding passes from any airline will still be accepted.

Have these new policies influenced your lounge membership decisions? Have you noticed overcrowding in lounges recently?

delta.com
united.com

Final Flight

US Airways celebrates 76 years of history with its final flight under that carrier’s name this month. With Flight 1939 to commemorate the year the airline was founded as All American Aviation, the designated Airbus A321 aircraft makes a final tour on Oct. 16, departing Philadelphia (PHL) and touching down at hub airports including Charlotte (CLT), Phoenix (PHX) and San Francisco (SFO). Over the course of its long history, All American Aviation endured a series of name changes, transitioning first to Allegheny, then USAir and finally US Airways. In 2013 the carrier merged with American Airlines, combining both loyalty programs into one and fusing travelers’ online accounts into a single identity.

aa.com

Got Seoul

Following the openings of a new luxury property on the north-eastern waterfront of Manama, the capital city of Bahrain, and a 5-star hotel on the French Riviera, Four Seasons continues its active expansion plans in 2015 with the debut of a new hotel in Seoul this month. Set in Gwanghwamun, the heart of Seoul, the first Four Seasons property in Korea offers 317 guestrooms and suites with décor combining form and function with modernized Korean motifs. In addition to seven exciting restaurants and bars, facilities include an extensive fitness center, an intimate spa and a wide choice of meeting and event spaces. The company’s ambitious plans for the rest of the year include two new openings in Bogotá and a new hotel in Casablanca.

fourseasons.com

Caribbean Connections

The Caribbean destination of Bonaire, an island located in the Leeward Antilles known for its diving and snorkeling opportunities, is set to receive additional flights from United Airlines and Delta Air Lines this winter. To offer more choice and convenience to customers looking for an escape from the cold, non-stop Delta flights from Atlanta (ATL) to Bonaire (BON) expand from one to three weekly, while United adds additional flights from Newark (EWR) and Houston (IAH). United's Newark non-stop flight returned last month, while its Houston route launches next month. Delta will add two more direct flights beginning Dec. 19.

tourismbonaire.com

united.com

delta.com

Sophisticated Suite Sailings

Royal Caribbean and Seabourn are both introducing new onboard suite accommodations for sailings next year. Available for voyages beginning May 2016 aboard the cruise line's Oasis- and Quantum-class ships, including *Anthem of the Seas*, *Quantum of the Seas*, *Allure of the Seas* and *Oasis of the Seas* as well as *Harmony of the Seas* and *Ovation of the Seas*, Royal Caribbean's new Royal Suite Class will offer a variety of exclusive amenities based on three tiered service levels. Premium features include a Royal Genie, certified by the British Butler Institute to meet guests' every need; free VROOM, the fastest Internet at sea; complimentary special dining and the ultimate beverage deal; upgraded room amenities; and preferred seating at select onboard venues.

Set to debut in late 2016 is Seabourn's new all-suite, all-veranda accommodations on *Seabourn Encore*, the cruise line's newest ultra-luxury ship. Ranging from nearly 300 square feet to upwards of 1,300 square feet, the ship's 300 elegant suites offer a residential feel with high-quality finishes and furniture and rich mahogany wood. Premium amenities include welcome Champagne and canapés; a selection of designer soaps; personalized nightly turn-down service; luxurious bathrooms; and an interactive flat-screen TV system in each suite featuring an extensive selection of entertainment options, including lectures and live views from the bridge.

royalcaribbean.com

seabourn.com



PHOTO: © SHANGRI-LA'S LE TOUESSROK RESORT & SPA

Personal Paradise

Shangri-La's first foray in Mauritius debuts next month following an extensive six-month renovation of the legendary Le Touessrok on the east coast of the island in the stunning Trou d'Eau Douce Bay. Shangri-La's Le Touessrok Resort provides guests with their own personal paradise, featuring 200 guestrooms, suites and villas boasting views of the Indian Ocean as well as a secluded private island reserved exclusively for guests with its own stylish beach club and on-island butlers. As part of the major renovation, the resort mixes elements reflecting Shangri-La's Asian sophistication and heritage with Mauritius's diverse landscape of volcanic mountains, lush rainforests and blue lagoons. Future Shangri-La properties in the luxury hotel group's pipeline include locations in mainland China, Cambodia, India, Myanmar, the Philippines, Qatar and Sri Lanka.

shangri-la.com

The Birth of One Brand

After merging in 2012, LAN Airlines and TAM Airlines are consolidating all of their combined operations under a single LATAM Airlines logo and identity. The new brand will extend to all of the carriers' affiliates, including LAN's subsidiaries operating in Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru as well as affiliated cargo carriers. LATAM plans to gradually implement the rebranding across airports, aircraft, commercial offices, Web pages and uniforms, starting in the first half of 2016 with a new logo inspired by the identity and heritage of the region. Under the new brand, the carrier will offer an improved travel experience with access to a single product and service within one network. It plans to boost passenger convenience and comfort with increased optimization of its fleet, providing easier access to the best network of destinations in the region.

latam.com

Scandinavian Service

Los Angeles and Miami will become the newest destinations in the United States for Scandinavian Airlines. The national carrier recently announced plans to grow its route network in the country with new direct routes to Los Angeles (LAX) from Stockholm (ARN) and to Miami (MIA) from Oslo (OSL) and from Copenhagen (CPH). The first flight to Southern California takes off March 14, 2016, with daily service planned throughout the summer season, while first flights to Miami are expected to lift off in fall 2016. The carrier's current presence in the United States includes long-haul flights from Scandinavia to New York (JFK), Chicago (ORD), San Francisco (SFO), Houston (IAH) and Washington, D.C. (IAD).

flysas.com

deals



PHOTO: © UNITED

Saver Award Sale

Save on flights to South America with United Airlines this fall. Members of the MileagePlus frequent-flyer loyalty program can take advantage of a Saver Award sale on flights to Brazil and Chile. Book and travel by Nov. 30 to enjoy 25 percent off round-trip MileagePlus Saver Awards in United economy. The reduced rates are valid for travel between the United States or Canada (excluding Hawai'i) and Brazil and Chile. Participating award airports include Rio de Janeiro (GIG) and São Paulo (GRU) in Brazil and Santiago (SCL), Chile. Members must register for the promotion online in order to receive the discount.

united.com

One, Two, Free

National Car Rental launched its popular ONE TWO FREE promotion, offering members of the Emerald Club the chance to earn Free Rental Days with every two qualifying rentals or 600 points through Jan. 31, 2016. The deal provides enrolled members of the promotion a number of opportunities to earn bonus points, including the chance to earn 300 bonus points for referring friends, 75 bonus points for mobile app rentals, 300 bonus points for rentals in Latin America or the Caribbean, and many more. A qualifying rental is the paid rental, via the Emerald Club, of a midsize or larger vehicle at participating National Car Rental locations in the 50 United States and the District of Columbia for a period of two or more consecutive days during the promotion.

emeraldclubpromos.com/12free/2015

City Savings

Hyatt Gold Passport members can enjoy up to 15 percent off overnight accommodations during their next trip to Hawai'i, Phoenix, San Diego or Washington, D.C. Through March 31, 2016, the loyalty program offers savings on all standard and premium rooms with an exclusive My Hyatt member rate. Participating hotels include select Andaz, Grand Hyatt, Hyatt Regency, Hyatt Place, Hyatt House and Park Hyatt locations in Hawai'i, Phoenix, San Diego and downtown Washington, D.C. To qualify for the My Hyatt rate, guests must make their reservation via Hyatt.com or contact their nearest worldwide reservation center and provide their Hyatt Gold Passport membership number at time of booking.

goldpassport.com

rewards

Triple Your Trip

Members of the Hilton HHonors loyalty program can earn up to triple points on stays with its Triple Your Trip event. Through Dec. 31, sign up and stay at any Hilton hotel to earn double points on stays Monday through Thursday nights and triple points on travel Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The promotion is valid for all Hilton-affiliated hotels and resorts booked directly, with no excluded properties. In addition, some members are eligible to receive 2,000 additional bonus points on their first stay during the Triple Your Trip promotion. Hilton HHonors members must first register online prior to check-out to receive the bonus points.

hiltonhhonors.com/triple

Marriott MegaBonus

Marriott Rewards members can earn up to 20,000 bonus points on stays this fall and winter with Marriott's 2015 MegaBonus. The promotion offers double points on every paid stay, starting with your second stay, at participating properties booked by Nov. 15 and completed by Jan. 15, 2016. Members can earn up to 20,000 bonus points. Participating brands include EDITION, JW Marriott, Autograph Collection Hotels, Renaissance Hotels, Marriott Hotels, Marriott Vacation Club, Gaylord Hotels, AC Hotels by Marriott, Moxy Hotels, Protea Hotels, Courtyard, Residence Inn, SpringHill Suites, Fairfield Inn & Suites and TownePlace suites. Stays at Marriott's exclusive luxury hotel partner, The Ritz-Carlton, count toward achievement.

marriottrewards.com/megabonus2015

Triple Avios

Members of the British Airways Executive Club frequent-flyer loyalty program can earn triple Avios on Rocketmiles hotel bookings for the rest of the year. Members who have not previously made a booking via Rocketmiles will be eligible for a 3,000 Avios bonus, in addition to the standard award rate of between 1,000 and 5,000 Avios, if they register with Rocketmiles and choose British Airways Executive Club as their loyalty program before Dec. 31. Reservations must be made with promotional code BAEC3000 on the Rocketmiles iOS app or using the promotional link.

rocketmiles.com/ba-avios-3k-bonus



Jumeirah Carlton Tower

Reviewed by Francis X. Gallagher

Arrival/Check-In: After a long journey from Heathrow Airport, we were greeted by the fine staff at the Jumeirah Carlton Tower. We were thrilled to be in the heart of London, accessible to everything. My daughter was particularly excited to be near some of the greatest shopping in London's Knightsbridge.

Guest Quarters: We occupied an adjoining suite and single room for our visit. The entry hallway of the suite led to a large room which included a king-sized bed on the far wall flanked with nightstands. Two large windows overlooked Sloane Street; we could see the fashionable shops and hear the roar of a revved-up Maserati. Between the two windows sat a large, multipurpose vanity/credenza which held the coffeemaker, bottled water and drawers for clothing. Above this piece was a large, flat-screen TV. On the opposite wall, a comfy sofa and a large coffee table provided an area to relax with morning coffee or an evening glass of Champagne. On the fourth wall near the hallway and the door to the adjoining room sat a desk and workstation which became my command central in between touring the city and the outskirts. A little table under the left window offered a space for dining.

The bath was tucked away and included a sizable closet with a safe just outside the bathroom door. The bathroom was efficient and lacked a separate shower stall, but based on the age of the property, I found it understandable. Bath products were REN — and we were pleased by the frequent refreshing by the maid service.

The adjoining guestroom was obviously comfortable, as my daughter had a hard time waking up for our morning departures!

Services/Amenities: The team at the Carlton Tower could not have been more gracious or accommodating. We enjoyed the world-famous Rib Room and were treated to dinner by our dear friends, Pauline and Dennis Banks, whom we met on our *Queen Mary 2* crossing a couple of years ago. It was a real treat, and Pauline could not believe I ordered fish at the best steak and meat restaurant in London. We enjoyed the Rib Room frequently during our trip for a cocktail in the bar and breakfast in the morning. The staff makes the Rib Room the most welcoming place to be — particularly the team in the morning, who nicknamed me “Prince Andrew.” My wife enjoyed her breakfast in-room or an easy continental breakfast in the Chinoiserie right off the main lobby.

The conveniently located Peak Health Club & Spa are well-regarded in London. However, London afforded us little time to visit them, with our touring itinerary packed to the brim. Every morning I took a three-mile walk, and every morning I went in a different direction. There is so much to see here, and I enjoyed a little “memory lane” as I walked past two of my prior offices in London.

The Experience: You can have the most beautiful hotel in the world; but if you don't have people who enjoy their work and treat guests as if they value their stay, you have nothing. The team at the Carlton Tower makes it one of the best places to stay in London. You cannot beat the location; everything is within walking distance or a quick cab or Tube ride away. Restaurants are nearby, and the concierge stands ready to make you a reservation anywhere in town.

GT CHECKLIST

- ☑ Doorman/valet
- ☑ Less than 10 minutes for check-in
- ☐ Separate tub and shower
- ☑ Large vanity
- ☑ High-quality towels
- ☑ Powerful, unattached hair dryer
- ☑ High-quality bed linens
- ☑ Large, flat-screen television
- ☑ Large desk with convenient outlets
- ☑ Large, complimentary laptop safe
- ☑ Complimentary in-room WiFi
- ☑ Complimentary bottled water
- ☑ Stocked minibar
- ☑ Ample lighting
- ☑ In-room coffeemaker
- ☑ Iron and ironing board
- ☑ On-site restaurant and bar
- ☑ 24-hour room service
- ☑ 24-hour state-of-the-art fitness center
- ☑ Turn-down service

Jumeirah Carlton Tower

Cadogan Place
London SW1X 9PY
United Kingdom
tel 44 20 7235 1234
jumeirah.com

GT tested

Villa Aquamare

Reviewed by Lisa Matte

Arrival/Check-In: Arriving at Villa Aquamare is more like coming home to your own private Caribbean estate than any check-in I've ever experienced. My husband and I arrived on Virgin Gorda via Air Sunshine from San Juan, taxiing along a sandy runway — ocean on one side and dunes on the other — and deplaned at a modest, one-story wooden building that serves as the lone gate as well as Customs and Immigration for entry into the British Virgin Islands. After a pleasant encounter with a friendly immigration officer, we pushed through the door to find our host, William Matthews, waiting for us. Again, it was like old home week; William's relaxed manner eased our transition to island time, and he happily stopped at a local grocery market so we could pick up provisions for our four-night stay. Upon arrival at the villa, William helped us carry our bags and groceries inside and proceeded to help us stock the refrigerator and cabinets.

Guest Quarters: Spectacular doesn't even begin to describe the accommodations at Villa Aquamare. Comprising three 8,000-square-foot, five-bedroom villas connected by winding walkways but separated by verdant landscaping, the accommodations are ideal for family reunions, travel with friends and even corporate getaways. Each 1,000-square-foot bedroom includes its own sitting area, an outdoor balcony (three of five showcase expansive ocean views) and generous baths designed for relaxation and indulgence, each with a separate, ultra-private outdoor shower. Frette linens, towels and robes add to the allure. Throughout the villa, local stonework and rich hardwoods enhance the sense of place, while luxury touches like travertine marble and Hermès bath products create an atmosphere of elegance.

Guests can relax in the privacy of their own secluded retreat or converge in the massive first-floor living area consisting of a fully equipped gourmet kitchen, dining room seating for up to 12 guests and a comfortable living room with floor-to-ceiling doors that can be opened to create a truly alfresco experience. A private plunge pool and multiple groupings of tables and chaise longues create a comfortable setting for relaxation or conversation.

Services/Amenities: As resident host, William serves both as friendly neighbor and manager intent on ensuring his guests enjoy the ultimate experience, whether the focus is business or



leisure. A slightly frayed dishtowel that may have gone unnoticed by someone else does not escape his eagle-eye oversight.

While there's no restaurant on the property, it's easy to pick up groceries and cook on your own. Another option: Hire a private chef, which is what we did for two of four nights. He may not be known on the world culinary stage yet, but Chef Tridick Chet Peters is a star on the rise. Not only did he arrive prepared to cook a delectable three-course menu, he also set a romantic candlelit table on our patio, coddled us during service and left behind an immaculate kitchen — all for a more-than-reasonable \$75 per person, excluding wine. (Daily breakfast, lunch and dinner is on offer for \$130 per person.)

The Experience: A stay at Villa Aquamare offers a gateway to paradise, but it's pricey, averaging \$25,000 per week during high season. On the other hand, all that indulgence is yours for as little as \$5,000 a week if you choose to fill up all five bedrooms and book a group stay, business or leisure.

GT CHECKLIST

- Doorman/valet
- Less than 10 minutes for check-in
- Separate tub and shower
- Large vanity
- High-quality towels
- Powerful, unattached hair dryer
- High-quality bed linens
- Large, flat-screen television
- Large desk with convenient outlets
- Large, complimentary laptop safe
- Complimentary in-room WiFi
- Complimentary bottled water
- Stocked minibar
- Ample lighting
- In-room coffeemaker
- Iron and ironing board
- On-site restaurant and bar
- 24-hour room service
- 24-hour state-of-the-art fitness center
- Turn-down service

Villa Aquamare

Mahoe Bay
Virgin Gorda
British Virgin Islands VG1150
tel 787 461 2638
villaaquamare.com



EgyptAir | Business Class

New York (JFK) to Cairo (CAI)

Reviewed by Monique Barrett

On the Ground: Weeks of careful deliberation went into deciding whether I should travel to Egypt following a recent botched terrorist attack on a popular tourist site in Luxor. I chose to go after discussing the pros and cons with colleagues, family and friends. I headed to JFK with a mix of excitement and anxiety, but my eagerness to explore the country and see the only remaining member of the Seven Wonders of the World outweighed my apprehension. Following an uneventful commute from Pennsylvania, I arrived for my evening flight in the early afternoon; any lingering unease was allayed by EgyptAir's simple and quick check-in process for premium passengers and my relaxing experience in the SWISS Business Class Lounge, shared by Star Alliance members.

Pre-Flight: After a roughly five-minute wait in the security line for premium passengers, I took a short walk to the SWISS Lounge, conveniently located in Terminal 4 on the second floor near a TravelEx post that quickly exchanged my U.S. dollars for Egyptian pounds. Though nearly empty when I first arrived about two hours before my flight, the relatively small space quickly filled up in the evening, with several premium passengers flying Star Alliance carriers filling the remaining comfortable seating, leaving others to sit in the less comfortable high-top seats. From my seat overlooking the runway, I enjoyed bites from the fresh food choices, including a cold appetizer of mushroom salad, a hot entrée of pepper steak with jasmine rice, a vegetable side of roasted bok choy with pearl onions and confit tomatoes and cream of broccoli soup, and selected a Brooklyn Lager from the extensive beverage selection.

I made the most of my waiting time by working on my laptop with free WiFi and was interrupted a bit later with a boarding notice. I found the priority line empty at my gate and boarded

the Boeing 777-300 without delay. A flight attendant immediately guided me to my aisle-access seat in the middle section of the 2-3-2 configuration and offered a pre-flight beverage of fresh mango juice (EgyptAir is a dry airline), as well as magazines, newspapers, amenity kits and menus.

In-Flight: After an on-time take-off, food service started with an ample appetizer of tasty smoked salmon and marinated prawns served with avocado, tomato and cream cheese as well as a fresh salad, bread and a small plate of cheese and grapes. From the three entrée offers of beef, sea bass filet and chicken breast, I chose the filet of beef. While the meat was a bit too salty for my taste, I enjoyed the sides of grilled vegetables and mushroom risotto.

Too full, I skipped dessert and sipped on a soda before settling into *A Most Violent Year* and dozing off. The airline offers a number of new movies and popular TV shows in a variety of languages. I slept on and off for about five hours of the 10-hour flight, roused about 90 minutes before landing for breakfast. The flight attendants, who all spoke English well, offered rather heavy breakfast options, including my choice of omelet with cottage cheese accompanied with chicken sausage, potatoes, sautéed mushrooms and a tomato stuffed with baked beans that left me feeling sluggish when we landed in Cairo a short while later. Disembarkation was quick, as was clearing Immigration and picking up my priority tagged luggage, one of the first on the conveyor belt.

The Experience: Overall, my flight with EgyptAir was pleasant, setting me up for an incredibly memorable trip to a country attempting to boost tourism after years of unrest. Following the January 2011 uprising that toppled former President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's tourism sector is only starting to rebound. The only issue I ran into involved acquiring a visa. I had to search for a different service in the airport to buy an Egyptian visa after the first told me it only accepted U.S. dollars; I eventually found a location nearby willing to accept Egyptian pounds.

GT CHECKLIST

- Less than 10 minutes for check-in
- Friendly and helpful agents
- Priority tagged bags
- Airport lounge
- Complimentary in-lounge food
- Priority boarding
- Helpful and courteous flight attendants
- Pre-flight beverage service
- Pre-flight newspapers and magazines
- Extensive on-demand entertainment
- Amenity kits
- Slippers
- Lie-flat seat/bed
- Turn-down service
- In-flight menu with three entrée choices
- Top-shelf wines and liquors

EgyptAir
egyptair.com

Thomas M. Fischer | General Manager, Corinthia Hotel London



Name: Thomas M. Fischer
Title: General manager
Company, city: Corinthia Hotel London, London
Number of employees: 450-plus
Recent project: General manager, Corinthia Hotel Budapest
First job: It all started with an apprenticeship at the Hilton in Munich.
Little-known fact about you: If I told, it wouldn't be little-known anymore...

YOUR BUSINESS

Essential business philosophy: I could summarize it in the four words that encompass The Spirit of Corinthia, which holds together everything we do: understanding, precision, authenticity and passion.
Best way to keep a competitive edge: Discretion is key to maintaining a competitive edge.
Yardstick of success: Success can be measured in a variety of ways, but the satisfaction of our guests is paramount, as is the cohesion of our team.

AS A TRAVELER

What is the most important item you take when traveling? It depends on the destination, but in general I'd say my phone.
How do you spend your time on board? My time on board a flight is usually spent reading a gripping book or magazine and of course watching a good movie.
What is your favorite restaurant in the world? I really couldn't pick one, but a meal at a good, authentic Italian restaurant is guaran-

teed to leave me feeling satisfied at the end of a long day.

What is your favorite destination? Munich, my hometown

ABOUT YOUR BRAND

Corinthia Hotel London is housed within a Victorian building; how do you incorporate the building's history into the hotel?

Corinthia Hotel London features 294 guestrooms, including 40 suites and seven penthouses, offering sweeping views across London's most popular landmarks, just footsteps from Trafalgar Square, The Embankment, Westminster and Covent Garden and a few minutes from Mayfair and The City. Originally opened in 1885 as the Hotel Metropole, Corinthia London offers glimpses of a bygone age through its architecture and interior design, ensuring the building's rich history seamlessly blends with state-of-the-art facilities and modern technology.

Tell our readers about the property's well-known spa and other on-site amenities.

Corinthia London is home to the flagship ESPA Life at Corinthia, a next-generation spa housed across four floors together with a hair salon by Daniel Galvin. The spa offers revolutionary lifestyle programs incorporating complementary and alternative medicine and targeted fitness and rehabilitation services that focus on sports training, detox, sleep, weight loss and general vitality.

Corinthia London provides unrivaled world-class luxury with superb ground-floor offerings, including The Northall restaurant, serving the best in British produce throughout the day; modern Italian cuisine at Massimo Restaurant & Bar; and the musically inspired Bassoon Bar. The new Garden Lounge offers all-day dining options in an alfresco David Collins Studio-designed garden landscape and a comprehensive cigar humidor and spirits menu for late-night entertaining.

What distinguishes Corinthia London from other premium hotels in the city?

The hotel boasts the largest room sizes in London, original restored Victorian columns and tall windows that let in swathes of natural light. Cutting-edge technology in guestrooms and meeting rooms allows for recording, mixing and broadcasting from dedicated media rooms.

Corinthia London is a 21st-century grand hotel located in the heart of London, created by experts with a passion for craftsmanship and an understanding of world-class service. It is the ninth of Corinthia Hotels' collection of 5-star hotels founded by the Pisani family of Malta.

Tech to Fall For

Gear up for travel with these take-along tools.

BY ALEXANDRA KIRKMAN

HP Pavilion X2

Equipped with a USB Type-C power connector, a quad-core CPU, 64GB of storage and nearly 11 hours of battery life, HP's newest Pavilion is making a splash. The 10-inch tablet-PC hybrid (Windows tablet with detachable keyboard) weighs just under 2.5 pounds, or 1.29 pounds for the tablet alone. The nearly full-sized keyboard features 1.5 mm of keyboard travel for easy and accurate typing plus a large touchpad. Dual front-facing Bang & Olufsen speakers deliver high-quality sound, while the HP TrueVision HD Webcam provides clear video for online chatting.

Comes with one year of Microsoft's Office 365 Personal including 60 Skype premium minutes per month and 1 TB Microsoft OneDrive storage. In Blizzard White, Sunset Red and Turbo Silver. Starts at \$299.99.

hp.com



SkylinkNet Alarm System

Easily manage your home from anywhere with your smartphone, with no monthly fees or contract. Just set up the customizable system's Internet Hub through a wireless Internet router to coordinate the activities of all receivers and sensors. Up to six users can monitor a location at the same time; the accompanying iOS and Android smartphone app sends push notifications if sensors are triggered or the alarm is armed or disarmed. SkylinkNet works with up to 100 wireless sensors and controllers and 10 wireless cameras. Price includes Internet Hub, two door/window sensors and keychain remote; purchase additional sensors and cameras separately. Other packages available. \$169.

skylinkstore.com

Denon AH-GC20 Noise Canceling Headphones

Developed with Denon's decades of headphone development know-how, these sleek wireless headphones, equipped with professionally tuned 40mm drivers, deliver a natural tonal balance and crystal-clear voice quality even in the noisiest surroundings. The dual microphone/noise-canceling system provides the near elimination of outside sound, and the Bluetooth 4.0 Dual Mode technology enables connection to two devices simultaneously. The sophisticated cVc (Clear Voice Capture) noise reduction system enhances received audio quality and includes noise suppression, adaptive equalization, echo cancelation, wind-noise reduction and noise-dependent volume control. Count on a comfy fit: Denon measured more than 4,000 people's ears and facial structures to develop a universal design. \$399.

usa.denon.com



Dacuda PocketScan

This wireless scanner — the world's smallest at 3.75 by 2 by 1 inches — will dazzle you with its functionality. Thanks to its photo-stitching technology, anything you scan instantly appears on your screen, as if you're painting. It's brainy, too, recognizing scanned text or tables in virtually any language and transforming the paper versions into content you can edit on screen instantly. A built-in light source means your scans are always bright, crisp and clear. PocketScan effortlessly scans large formats (like artwork) that would never fit in a standard scanner. Compatible with Windows, Mac, iOS and Android. \$149.

dacuda.com



Take Two

Enjoy the same select wines on LAN and TAM airlines. BY EUNICE FRIED



Beers served on board LATAM hail from many of the airlines' destinations.

Separately, they did just fine. Together, they are doing even better. In 2012 LAN Airlines, based in Chile, and TAM Airlines, based in Brazil, became LATAM Airlines Group, the largest airline association in South America. In August of this year, the brand announced a new brand identity as LATAM. LATAM's new brand roll-out begins in 2016 and will continue for three years.

Until then each airline retains its own name and brand identity and flies its own routes, but passengers will find one thing identical: Both LAN and TAM offer the same wines, chosen once a year by Hector Vergara, the only Master Sommelier in Latin America. Vergara and a panel of wine experts begin with a pre-selection to narrow their choices to about 300 wines. They then spend three days judging the remaining wines, considering how each tastes, how it will pair with LATAM cuisine and how high-altitude pressure will affect the perception of that wine. They consider and eliminate until they whittle down the 300 wines to 30 for premium business. These are the wines offered on board, with the choice updated each month.

To give passengers a true South American experience, Vergara offers many of the continent's wines since, he says, "South America's varied terrains and temperatures are ideal for producing a diverse selection of varietals. Chile is the 10th-biggest

wine producer in the world. Argentina is the fifth-largest wine producer and makes more than 70 percent of the world's Malbec." Vergara is considered a major authority on Chilean wine, which explains why usually 60 percent of his choices come from Chile. But he does not limit wines to South America. His sparkling wine is Champagne, and his table wine offerings include those from Spain, Australia and France.

When it comes to cuisine, LATAM Executive Chef Hugo Pantano searches for regional South American recipes and preparations. "We are proud of the South American seal of our onboard gastronomy," he says. "It is deeply rooted to our culinary culture."

Passengers flying LATAM currently can expect to find Bodega Dominio del Plata Blend 2011 and Bodega Salentein Pinot Grigio 2014 from Argentina, Viña Santa Rita Petite Sirah 2010 and Viña Errazuriz Sauvignon Blanc 2014 from Chile, and the French Château Poujeaux Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/Petit Verdot 2010.

In total, LATAM opens 365,000 bottles of wine on board each year in its Premium Business class; 222,000 are red and 143,000 are white.

All of which means whether you fly LAN or TAM, the pourings promise to fascinate.

TAIWAN

Taipei

Taiwan's capital and home to more than 2.7 million, Taipei prospered as a hub for business and trade throughout its history. The city now thrives as a center for electronics manufacturing and a popular destination for both Asian and Western tourists. From the sparkling Taipei 101 skyscraper to the ancient temples and traditional markets below, you'll find an invigorating mix of old-meets-new as you explore the streets of Taipei.

GETTING THERE

Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport is 30 miles from the city center and about a one-hour drive. A number of international airlines serve the airport, including China Airlines and EVA Air. China Airlines, established in 1959, serves 115 destinations in 29 countries and 14.1 million passengers annually. EVA Air, started in 1989, serves 60 cities and 8.9 million passengers annually. From the airport, it's easy to hail a cab; you can find them on the west side of the arrivals lobby in Terminals 1 and 2. A one-way trip from the airport to Taipei costs about \$35. Kuo-Kuang Motor Transport operates a bus route 24/7. The 60-minute ride is about \$4.

GETTING AROUND

A traveler's best options for navigating Taipei are the MRT metro system and the bus. The MRT offers day passes which can be purchased for travel from 6 a.m. until midnight. A one-day pass is about \$5. The Taiwan Tourist Shuttle buses make stops at the most frequented attractions in the city; a one-way ticket costs 50 cents to \$10, depending on the destination.

9-5

Ya Ge

For a sophisticated and traditional Cantonese dining experience, Ya Ge, located inside the Mandarin Oriental, Taipei features a main dining room, multiple bars and private meeting spaces for up to 20 guests. The upscale menu includes items such as Australian Wagyu beef with foie gras and rice noodles with Kavalan black pork and black truffle. The dress code, smart casual, includes an extra requirement of long sleeves, full-length pants and closed shoes for men.

Marco Polo Lounge

Afternoon tea is a historic custom in Taiwan. For your afternoon tea experience and a gorgeous view, visit Marco Polo Lounge on the 38th floor of Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel. You'll have a remarkable panorama of the Taipei 101 building as well as the rest of the city and the surrounding mountains. Tea is served 2:30-5 p.m. every day.

W Taipei

If you're looking for meeting space in Taiwan, W Taipei offers a Go Green Sustainable Meeting Package for stylish events with small carbon footprints. The package employs energy-



SHILIN NIGHT MARKET

PHOTO: © RONNIECHUA | DREAMSTIME.COM

efficient signage, sustainable menus using locally sourced ingredients, reusable utensils and green printing services. A great option for organizations dealing with environmental initiatives firsthand or those looking to put their best foot forward with environmentally conscious clients, W Hotels makes your event a success.

AFTER 5

The National Palace Museum

The National Palace Museum, open until 6:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and until 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, leaves you ample time to visit during evening hours. Housing a huge collection of Chinese artwork and antiquities, the museum features everything from rare books and calligraphy to weaponry and the famous jade cabbage. A small fee provides rental of an English audio guide.

Shilin Night Market

One of the most popular attractions in Taipei is the Shilin Night Market, a large grouping of popular shops and stalls that have sold a variety of traditional foods and other wares to locals and tourists since the beginning of the 20th century. The shops stay open past midnight, feeding the crowds who begin to arrive around dusk. The wide variety of street foods makes the market a great attraction, so be sure to get your fill.

Soho X Marquee

Soho X Marquee, located in the fashionable Xinyi District, celebrates its fifth birthday this year, but age has not made this popular spot any less desirable to the rich and famous. Opening at 8 p.m., Soho X Marquee serves Western-style cuisine and a fun array of cocktails. The venue is also ideal for business events, private parties and product launches.

RESOURCES

For more information, visit taipeitravel.net

Grand Hyatt Taipei
grand.hyatt.com

Marco Polo Lounge
shangri-la.com

The National Palace Museum
www.npm.gov.tw

Shilin Night Market
shilin-night-market.com

Soho X Marquee
marquee-taipei.com

Taipei Rapid Transit
metro.taipei

Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport
taoyuan-airport.com

W Taipei
wtaipei.com

Ya Ge
mandarinoriental.com

GLOBILITY BOARD RECOMMENDS ...

Jim Elliott and Dorothy Wood both give two thumbs up to a stay at Grand Hyatt Taipei.

CHINA AIRLINES' NEXT GENERATION

The leading airline debuts a refined experience onboard its Boeing 777-300ER

In late 2014, China Airlines unveiled its Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, featuring an updated business class, a new premium economy class, the family couch, an advanced in-flight entertainment system and an award-winning design.

PREMIUM BUSINESS CLASS

China Airlines passengers enjoy a private and comfortable space, with 78-inch, full flat-bed business class seats. The industry-leading cabin also features a user-friendly control panel, 18-inch personal screens with more than 100 selected shows, a cabinet for personal belongings, premium in-flight amenities and an accessible herringbone arrangement.

The highlight of Premium Business Class is Sky Lounge, a space in the middle of the cabin for passengers to relax. The Eastern Literary Tea-tasting Area offers tea from Taiwan and complementary snacks, while the Western Fashionable Coffee Area provides coffee and pastries. Selected Chinese and English books of the month are also available.

PREMIUM ECONOMY

Introducing a new cabin on the 777-300ER allows China Airlines to offer passengers a seat pitch of 39 inches at a reasonable fare. The seat's fixed backshell and front-sliding design, combined with adjustable leg rests, optimizes passenger comfort, support and privacy.

Premium-economy passengers enjoy a number of added amenities, including an amenity kit, special meals and a larger baggage allowance, at fares only slightly higher than economy class. Added storage includes a compartment for tablets and large tray tables. The cabin also boasts 12-inch personal entertainment systems.

FAMILY COUCH

China Airlines' enhanced economy-class cabin feature the innovative Family Couch seats. A specially designed footrest raised 90 degrees converts three seats into a single sofa bed, allowing families and couples the comfort of lying on their backs on long-haul flights. The Family Couch comes with a mattress, pillows, blankets and specially designed seatbelts.

ENHANCED IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

China Airlines' industry-leading Panasonic eX3 in-flight entertainment system features multi-touch technology, an 18-inch screen, movies, music, games and much more. The My Favorite function allows passengers to save their favorite programs for continuous viewing after a rest or meal.



The most unique feature is the social networking Seat Chat function, which allows passengers to message each other, share their favorites and make new friends in flight. The entertainment system offers other services, including duty-free shopping, e-magazines, news updates and in-flight menus. Complimentary and fee Wi-Fi access is also offered.

AWARD-WINNING DESIGN

China Airlines 777 NexGen Cabin won the 2015 Red Dot Design Award, named the Best of the Best in what is widely considered the Olympics of design, and marking the first time an airline has been awarded the honor in recent years. Red Dot was impressed by the cabin's design in terms of innovation, function, ergonomics, environmental friendliness, symbolism and emotion.

NEW UNIFORMS

China Airlines introduced brand new uniforms, tapping Oscar-nominated William Chang to design the futuristic, fresh look. Bold color blocks in red, violet, white and blue-gray fuse a traditional Mandarin look with modern Western fashion. Three different color combinations are available for both men and women.



Learn more and check out a 360-degree virtual tour of the new aircraft at www.china-airlines.com.



Tranquility in the City | Tailor your uniquely relaxing experience at Cornelia Spa at The Surrey. BY KATIE SKRZEK



PERSONAL TOUCH:

Spa treatment room

PHOTO: © THE SURREY

I was in New York City for the weekend, spending time with friends at a bachelorette party. A spa treatment provided the perfect way to start my day following a busy night out celebrating the bride-to-be. The Cornelia Spa at The Surrey hotel offers a tranquil escape in New York City's Upper East Side.

I arrived early for my appointment, giving me ample time to relax before starting my spa experience. Jonathan, the spa director, was on site to welcome guests and helped me get settled. I enjoyed a cup of tea with lavender-glazed cookies and crystallized ginger while lounging in one of the comfy relaxation room chairs.

The goal of Cornelia Spa at The Surrey is to offer guests a unique experience, tailored to their individual needs with total relaxation and revitalization of mind, body and soul. I browsed available spa packages including A Night on the Town, a three-hour complete beauty plan to prepare you for a night out in the Big Apple. For my visit, I enjoyed an oxygen renewal facial and Somadome session.

My therapist greeted me and brought me to a treatment room to begin my facial. I began my experience in the dimly lit room with a small spoonful of artisanal honey to provide antibacterial, digestive and sensory benefits.

After the sweet start, I settled in for my oxygen renewal facial. The treatment is inspired by the “must-haves” of nourishment and oxygen, both vital to the maintenance and restoration of beautiful, healthy skin. With these elements in mind, Cornelia delivers a treatment with maximum skin hydration and a natural lifting effect.

I settled into the divine bed, allowing myself to let go of all tension from navigating the crowded city streets. My therapist worked with me to customize my treatment. Based on my comfort level, she applied the perfect amount of pressure for optimum relaxation. The treatment began with a seaweed and sea mud product acting as powerful enzymatic exfoliants for deep pore cleansing. Next, she applied a caviar masque and shortly thereafter peeled it back, revealing newly soft skin. While letting the masque set, my therapist focused on applying an indulgent hydrating serum of ocean botanicals to my neck, shoulders and chest. This combination left my skin feeling supremely smooth and refreshed. She then spread a light layer of liquid oxygen product over my face before adding a sheet of thin gauze. Before this procedure, she asked if I was claustrophobic — I'm not, though due to the closeness of the gauze, I would advise those prone to claustrophobia to decline this step of the treatment. Following the gauze application, she added a thicker oxygen

enrichment masque. Despite the double dose of product, my skin felt surprisingly light and rejuvenated. Sadly, my treatment was winding down, and my therapist finished the facial with a cutting-edge stem-cell serum, meant to encourage new skin growth. My skin felt dewy, taut, hydrated and revitalized.

I returned to the relaxation area for another cup of tea, this time accompanied with a lemon poppyseed cupcake infused with Cornelia Super Food. Still in a state of bliss from my facial, I made my way to the Somadome pod for my next experience.

Somadome is a uniquely personal experience. The 20-minute session in a cocoon-shaped pod gently guides you through a meditation of your choice, designed to speak to your specific needs. Cornelia Spa is the first on the East Coast to feature Somadome.

Meditation is scientifically proven to lower blood pressure, increase serotonin, boost the immune system, enhance creativity, increase focus and intuition, decrease tension-related pain and decrease anxiety and insomnia. The pod integrates ambient sounds at varying frequencies. LED color therapy envelops the guest in healing light along with microcrystalline tiles — a device based on acupuncture to block and dissipate the harmful emissions from electromagnetic fields we experience daily. Green light stimulates rejuvenation; dark blue relieves headaches, high blood pressure and stress; light blue alleviates stress while improving intuition; violet slows down an overactive heart; and white raises the vibrations of consciousness and promotes healing.

Jonathan walked me through the process and assisted me in my selection from the various session options. There are eight to choose from, three of which include verbal guidance: Love improves clarity, increases charisma and employs verbal guidance; Manifest uses verbal guidance with spiritual references to help users attract what they desire; Heal boosts the immune system through verbal cues; Overcome increases energy and metabolism; Succeed improves mood and self-esteem; Focus improves concentration and increases energy; Recharge relieves tension and headaches while promoting creativity; and Relax calms your mind to relieve stress and tension. One or more of five mental states can be achieved during the session: Alpha, Beta, Delta, Gamma and Theta.

After weighing my options, I selected Manifest. I climbed into the pod and put my feet up, adjusting the pillows for comfort before closing the lid. I put on the noise-canceling headphones and allowed myself to take in the surroundings for a moment before beginning the session. Somadome utilizes binaural beat meditation;

sounds enter the right and left ears at different frequencies, creating a third sound (the binaural beat). Normally, I do not consider myself adept at meditation. I allow distractions to take over and have trouble refocusing. This was not the case with Somadome. The combination of the ambient sounds, serene verbal guidance and healing light provided an inspiring meditation experience. Hours (and even days) later, I found myself repeating the gentle phrases from Manifest.

Following my appointment, I departed the hotel and New York to head home. Walking through the busy city streets, I

CORNELIA SPA AT THE SURREY

20 E. 76th St.
New York, NY 10021

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SENSE OF SERENITY: *Somadome (top), and the spa relaxation area (bottom)*

PHOTOS: © THE SURREY



Signature Style

Executive Chef Todd Kelly creates culinary masterpieces at Orchids at Palm Court in Cincinnati. BY KIMBERLY KROL

Living on the island of Mauritius off the coast of South Africa as a young boy, Todd Kelly, New York native and current executive chef of Orchids at Palm Court in Cincinnati, tried to bring the flavors of home to the island, using local ingredients. This early start, which included cooking with fish sold door to door by locals and fresh bread delivered via moped, sparked the culinary passion in Kelly.

After studying at the American Academy of Independent Studies, Kelly worked in restaurants around the country such as Ember Grille/Bar 10 at The Westin in Charlotte, N.C.; Peter James Townhouse, also in Charlotte; and Rubicon in San Francisco. In 2006, he moved to the AAA Five-Diamond-rated Orchids at Palm Court at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza. The French-inspired cuisine has earned the restaurant numerous awards and honors. Kelly himself is also decorated as one of only six Hilton Signature Chefs in the United States and the 2011 American Culinary Federation USA Chef of the Year.

Kelly also handles the culinary operations at The Grille at Palm Court and The Bar at Palm Court as well as in-room dining and banquet/wedding menus. Under Kelly's direction, all the culinary outlets at Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza maintain the standards set at Orchids.

His culinary skills translate outside of the restaurant. On his family-owned small farm, Kelly and his wife, Emily, grow seasonal fruits and vegetables and teach their daughters about food production. He also runs and has completed multiple marathons.



WHAT THREE GO-TO INGREDIENTS ARE ALWAYS IN YOUR HOME KITCHEN?

Corn tortillas, Cholula hot sauce and good Dijon mustard, preferably Maille

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SEASON FOR COOKING, AND WHY?

That's a tough one to answer; they are all special in their own way. If I had to pick one, it would be spring. You have so many wonderful ingredients — ramps, morels, green garlic, dandelion greens and so on. All of the ingredients have such unique and wonderful flavors that you don't really have to do much to showcase them.

ASIDE FROM YOUR CURRENT POSITION, WHAT'S THE BEST JOB YOU'VE EVER HAD?

Working as the sous chef at Rubicon in San Francisco — we didn't carry any food over from the previous day. So every day was like starting from scratch. It taught me a lot about organization and discipline. The culture with the food seasons was also a great experience. We didn't use ingredients unless they were at the peak of the season. If the chef didn't feel they were the best they could be, we just didn't use them.

WHAT'S THE FIRST MEAL YOU EVER COOKED?

Steak frites at around 12 years old, living on the island of Mauritius in the middle of the Indian Ocean. My brother and I were trying to duplicate the flavor of home.

WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST THOUGHTS WHEN YOU HEAR "FARM-TO-TABLE"?

Trendy — seems the current farm-to-table movement is really people trying to catch up to what all the top chefs have been doing forever. I have been privileged to work around the country with great agricultures, so farm-to-table is just something that happens.

Orchids at Palm Court

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TAHITI

LOS ANGELES

PARIS

TOKYO

AUCKLAND

SYDNEY

Battle of Myrtle Beach

Meet the challenges of Heather Glen Golf Links.
BY FRANCIS X. GALLAGHER



ROUGH

PLAY: *White Course Hole 8*

PHOTO: © FRANCIS X. GALLAGHER

By Myrtle Beach golf standards, Heather Glen Golf Links is ancient. During the golf boom of the 1990s until the golf bust after the 2009 recession, courses popped up in the Myrtle Beach area like mushrooms after a summer storm. The beloved championship course at Heather Glen was born before all that, in 1987. When it opened, *Golf Digest* ranked it America's No. 1 New Public Course, and it continues to enjoy a high rating in many surveys. Heather Glen is one of four courses in The Glens Group, along with Glen Dornoch, Shaftesbury Glen and Possum Trot.

Heather Glen offers 27 holes made up of three nines — the Red, White and Blue courses — and includes some of the best holes in Myrtle. Driving up to the clubhouse, you get a true Southern planta-

tion feel from the live oaks that line the driveway. You might not admire the tight fairways and tall pines that line the course, however, as you drive your ball too far afield.

Famed golf course architect Willard C. Byrd, a World War II veteran who served on a Navy minesweeper, designed the course. Byrd designed or renovated nearly 100 courses in his lifetime. A sampling of Byrd courses includes Atlanta Country Club, The Country Club of North Carolina, Pinehurst and Wild Wing Plantation in Myrtle Beach. Golfers know what to expect from one of his well-designed courses.

I teed up to attack Heather with Mike Donahue, Bobby Hancock and Gerry “Gerbils” Patrick. We wonder if we will ever be welcomed back!

WHITE COURSE

HOLE 1 | 430 yards, par 4 'The Redan'

Always nice to tee up on the first hole and prepare for battle. "The Redan" offers a balanced approach to ruin your day, and it is an equal opportunity hole. For the high handicappers — we had a few in our group — a missed tee shot can get you wet or land you in a perfectly positioned waste bunker. These difficult areas have a certain magnetism for Gerbils. For those who nail a shot off the tee without perfect control, trees and a long bunker await to the right. The worst feature — nicknamed "Hacker's Haven" — is the large, fearsome bunker guarding the front of the green, where I believe I heard a few naughty words spoken.

HOLE 4 | 165 yards, par 3 'The Pot Hole'

One would think this hole would be located in Denver in the backyard of some stoner, but "The Pot Hole" resides at Heather and is the home of the "Devil's Mistress," which I added to the list of the most hated pot bunkers in the United States. This is where Jimmy Whelehan (certainly not in our group) scored an ace twice in one day, with the same club and the same ball, during two different 18-hole rounds on March 1, 1992. If you think that sounds like a difficult task, you are correct — and he is the only person to accomplish it.

HOLE 8 | 409 yards, par 4 'The Spectacle'

You need more than 200 yards to clear the pond and the waste bunkers if you take the shortcut and drive the ball toward the green on this dogleg left. Aim for the right fairway for a safe bet, but you still must contend with a fair amount of moguls. I took the safer route, which still gave me a rather long iron to the green. As you can imagine, our group made quite a spectacle as we heaved balls into the pond or the various bunkers Willard Byrd so proudly supplied. Perhaps his minesweeping would have found a few of our sunken drives.

BLUE COURSE

HOLE 8 | 525 yards, par 5 'Perfection'

I believe I witnessed the most spectacular shot in golf, made by Mike Donahue. It involved a rock, a steel storm pipe and water. But first some information about this hole, one of the more challenging at Heather Glen. You need a near-perfect drive to clear a drainage ditch (which I did) to a luscious fairway. From here, you have to land your second shot in front of the water that guards the green while crossing the drainage ditch once again. The green, partially tucked in on the left, adds to the difficulty and increases the possibility of reaching the water first (which I did). Mike failed to clear the first ditch, landing squarely in the center but not in any water. The hole turns left here, so he aimed for the landing zone, saying something like "This is no problem," and took a full swing. The ball headed too far left and too low, traveling through the steel pipe, hitting a rock on the other side and returning back into the pipe — this time twirling around about 10 times and nearly returning to its original position. Bobby



exclaimed, "Did you see that? That was the coolest thing I ever saw! It twirled around like a corkscrew!"

HOLE 9 | 410 yards, par 4 'Bunker's Hill'

On June 17, 1775, the British defeated the Continental Army at the battle of Bunker Hill. Although defeated, the ragtag American troops nonetheless delivered a blow to the British, who suffered significant casualties. As you approach the green on Hole 9, nine bunkers set up a defensive line. The first is about 100 yards out; from here, they dot the right-side approach and circle the green in fortification. Mounding and bunkering create a valley effect as you approach another redan-style green. "Redan be damned!" was the battle cry as we completed a successful round at one of our favorite Myrtle Beach haunts.

PIPE DREAM: *Blue Course Hole 8*

PHOTO: © FRANCIS X. GALLAGHER

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New Waters

Meander the Mekong Delta, just one of many unique itineraries to explore.

BY J.D. BROWN AND MARGARET BACKENHEIMER



UNCHARTED:
AdventureSmith
Explorations' Cuba
People-to-People Cruise

PHOTOS: © ADVENTURESMITH
EXPLORATIONS

Most cruise lines offer at least one voyage with a twist each year, giving passengers a chance to explore in depth a destination that's terra incognita among their competitors. Sometimes it's the destination itself that's truly unique, as with AdventureSmith Explorations' Cuba People-to-People Cruise starting this December. Employing the three-masted, 49-passenger schooner *Panorama*, AdventureSmith will venture into new waters, carrying Americans round-trip from Miami to five Cuban ports, including Havana, for the first time in 50 years. It's a chance to sail to Cuba ahead of the growing number of cruise lines eyeing this unique destination for later in 2016.

While there's no shortage of other off-the-chart ports served by top international cruise lines, even familiar destinations can spawn unique itineraries. In Hawai'i, for example, where Norwegian Cruise Line has a monopoly on big-ship inter-island excursions, Un-Cruise Adventures now offers an unusual alternative, with week-long yacht-style voyages on a deluxe 36-passenger vessel. Un-Cruise's unconventional itinerary transports its passengers between Hawai'i's Big Island and Molokai, with stops at Lanai for hiking and Maui for night snorkeling.

Viking Cruises, preeminent in the European river cruising market, recognizes the appeal of running unique voyages in less visited regions of the world. Expanding into the exotic waters of Asia, Viking now runs cruises on the Yangtze River in China and through the Mekong Delta in Vietnam and Cambodia almost weekly.

We recently booked Viking's Magnificent Mekong cruise and land tour as an alternative to the standard big-ship cruises that call on a port or two in the same region. This enabled us to travel to exotic interior locations while Viking's local guides furnished us with full and easy access to the major cities; world-renowned archaeological sites; and shoreline villages, factories and schools in the rapidly developing Mekong Delta.

Viking's 15-day Mekong itinerary stretches from Ho Chi Minh City in the south to Hanoi in the north of Vietnam, with extended stays in between in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, and Siem Reap. No other cruise and land tour of the region is as extensive or varied. The week-long river cruise and all shore excursions, as well as land tours and stays in superb 5-star hotels, are included. Viking's top-flight tour director, Lam Thanh Ut, accompanied us step by step, dawn to dusk. With an overriding emphasis on cultural immersion, Viking's Mekong itinerary lives up to a well-known Vietnamese proverb: "A day of travel brings a basketful of knowledge."

We set out from Ho Chi Minh City (the former Saigon) on the northbound route in April, a month of blistering heat and high humidity. After two nights at the luxurious Sofitel Saigon Plaza and a memorable city tour, we traveled by bus to My Tho on the Mekong Delta, where we boarded the 56-passenger *RV Viking Mekong* for the eight-day cruise. The wide and muddy Mekong immediately reminded us of the Mississippi, although the fishing boats, farming villages and floating markets were distinctly Southeast Asian. Said

to be the most productive river in the world, the Mekong is home to 300 million people, a hundred ethnic groups, a thousand fish species and endless fields of rice patrolled by water buffalo.

The *RV Viking Mekong* is a colonial-style, brass and teak boutique riverboat built expressly for Mekong cruising by Pandaw River Cruises, a Scottish, family-owned company incorporated in Singapore. With 28 nearly identical compact cabins (no suites, no televisions, no balconies and, alas, hardly enough closet space), the *Viking Mekong* did prove less commodious than the famous longships Viking employs in Europe, but our only real disappointment with the hotel side of the ship was its woeful air-conditioning, inadequate to ameliorate the scorching heat of the Delta in April. Nonetheless, the en-suite shower proved ample and refreshing, the service razor-sharp and friendly. Lacking nothing we needed, we happily let Viking show us a new part of the world. And show us they did.

This cruise was all about the shore excursions, beginning the first afternoon with a tour of the Cai Be floating market, stocked with puffed rice candies, snake wines and pythons for show and sale. Market followed market. The next morning we disembarked and sailed by sampan to Sa Dec via the canals feeding into the Mekong. After strolling among Sa Dec's street merchants, we took tea in the Lovers' House, the historical setting for a film that had aired on board the night before (*The Lover*, 1992, a very adult look at the ways of love in French colonial Vietnam). Resuming our river cruise the same afternoon, we tied up to tour a massive waterfront brick factory, a floating catfish farm and a farming village on Evergreen Island, where a local Vietnamese family welcomed us into their stilt house.

Crossing seamlessly from Vietnam into Cambodia, we anchored for several days in Phnom Penh, where a local guide led us on cyclos, the bicycle taxis dating from colonial times, to the lavish Royal Palace and National Museum. These sweet attractions were followed by a bitter (and optional) excursion

to the Killing Fields of the infamous Pol Pot regime, a grim experience indeed.

From Phnom Penh, our vessel detoured up the Tonlé Sap Channel to Kampong Trolach, where jolting ox carts, then an air-conditioned bus, delivered us to Cambodia's largest Buddhist center, Udon Monastery, a pilgrimage site second in popularity only to Angkor Wat. A stroll through a village of silversmiths brought us back to the ship at Preak Kdam, and we returned to Phnom Penh for free-time wanderings.

The next day our agile ship headed up the Mekong to Chong Koh, where we were guests of yet another village, a traditional Khmer settlement known for its cotton and silk weaving. At Kampong Cham we rambled through the temple ruins of the Twin Holy Mountains of Phnom Pros and Phnom Srey. Afterward, in what was a highlight for many, we visited an 87-child orphanage, speaking with the kids and sorting through their original artworks for souvenirs.

Disembarking at Phnom Penh for the final time, we ended our river cruise and were driven north to Siem Reap, Cambodia's boomtown, home to Angkor Wat. Settling into the sumptuous Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra for three nights, we spent our days on guided tours of half a dozen ancient religious complexes in the most impressive such display in Southeast Asia.

From Siem Reap, Vietnam's national carrier flew us north to Hanoi, a city that surprised us, from its colonial alleyways to the historic "Hanoi Hilton." Our hotel was a historical landmark, as well. The Sofitel Legend Metropole, opened in 1901 and host to world leaders and celebrities (from Jane Fonda to John McCain), is the location of an underground air raid bunker from the Vietnam War years, concealed beneath the hotel's glittering bar and recently unsealed for tours.

Between a week on the river among villages, markets, schools and factories and another week on extended forays into cities and ancient monuments, we could think of no more mesmerizing a fortnight than one spent meandering in just this way through the Mekong Delta.

AdventureSmith Explorations
adventuresmithexplorations.com

Norwegian Cruise Line
ncl.com

Un-Cruise Adventures
un-cruise.com

Viking River Cruises
vikingrivercruises.com

STILL WATERS: *Mekong River*
(left) and *RV Viking Mekong* (right)

PHOTOS: © VIKING RIVER CRUISES





Best Practices

Learn the key principles for succeeding in any business. BY KARIN LEPERI

It doesn't matter whether your business is a corporation, a non-profit or a small business. Nor does it matter if you are an entrepreneur, employer, advisor or consultant, or whether you manufacture or sell products or services. Strangely enough, the keys to succeeding in business involve common principles and best practices that transcend particular personalities, brands and industries. In other words, successful people share common tenets and characteristics. But beware, as they don't always correlate with age or experience.

KNOW YOURSELF. Aristotle understood this axiom many centuries ago when he said, "Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom." It simply means you must know yourself and have a vision that embodies your values. But it's important to keep your story and message simple. Are you about efficiency, quality or service? Or are you about saving lives, improving the quality of lives or making life easier?

By using introspection and embracing both your gifts and your weaknesses, you can determine where to focus your efforts for personal improvement. But also maintain an unshakable belief in yourself by knowing that with hard work and tenacity you can become more than what you are today. Or as Shakespeare said, "We know what we are but know not what we may be."

IDENTIFY THE VOID. Back in 1908, Henry Ford was no stranger to the auto industry. However, he was appalled at the cost of early cars and that only the wealthy could afford them. He wanted to make autos available for the masses by finding ways to make them sturdier and cheaper. He identified the void when he said, "Don't find fault, find a remedy." His remedy was the Model-T Ford, an innovation that opened car travel to the middle class by focusing on efficient fabrication that owed its success to the moving

PHOTO: © EVERYTHINGPOSSIBLE | DREAMSTIME.COM

assembly line rather than individual handcrafting.

When Alfred Chehebar developed a new technology concept for taking the hassles out of traveling, he didn't expect to found a thriving entrepreneurial business. "My wife and I were preparing for our honeymoon and we were seeking new luggage for our trip. I found that in the market there was no luggage brand that was focusing primarily on functionality and organization, so I was immediately inclined to fill this niche."

According to Chehebar, "To be successful in any aspect of life, you need to create opportunities ... actually enhance people's lives; and if you create something amazing, the money will follow."

By identifying the void — an empty area ripe for solutions — Chehebar created an opportunity to meet travelers' needs. Rather than complain about the state of affairs, he innovated to make something better. Today, he is president of Genius Pack, a privately held firm specializing in travel products that eliminate common nuisances of travel.

BE A LEADER. Make sure you lead by conviction and example. And don't forget to communicate, articulate and listen. Colin Powell once said, "Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers who can cut through argument, debate and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand."

No one understands that better than Dr. Matthew Moront, director of trauma services and chief of pediatric surgery, St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia. He attributes

'Research shows that 83 percent of customers want to buy products that benefit a cause. Combining your business with a charity of your choice is a great way to gain consumer attention while increasing sales.'
— Dan McCabe, director, SixDegrees.org

his success in later life largely to his earlier military career as a major in the Marine Corps: "As a leader, my formula is that I lead by example and from the front — something I learned in the military." He believes he must be part of the process and the solution and be willing to work alongside the rest of his team. Additionally, he adamantly avers that a leader is responsible for everything that happens. "I can delegate authority, but the responsibility is always mine," he says. "The saving of a child is everyone's victory, but the life of the child is strictly my responsibility."

For Moront, the art of communication, articulation and listening means everything. "The ability to communicate, appropriately assess the situation, convey my vision and then solicit feedback — even in trauma — shows my respect for the expertise of others. Leaders have all the resources, so they must use them effectively."

BUILD A TEAM FOR SUCCESS. In order to lead, you must have a team. But before you recruit, develop your own skill set and



PHOTO: © ALPHASPIRIT | DREAMSTIME.COM

ter pilot. As a personal pilot and guide, he delivers “white glove” service to clients while managing all the organizational details in between. That translates into troubleshooting, problem solving and sometimes thinking outside the box. “Fortunately, I can usually resolve issues over lunch where everyone walks away happy,” says Turpin.



On a recent customized air safari, Turpin dealt with issues involving an elderly couple who left passports and money in their room safe and discovered it only after flying two hours to the next remote way station; an American who suffered a traumatic head wound in the middle of the Kalahari; and a solo traveler who kept forgetting her personal belongings and then had the unfortunate experience of being robbed in the middle of the night. He dealt with all challenges on a 24/7 basis promptly and with compassion.

Turpin strongly believes a combination of leadership and motivation along with excellent service and a superior-quality product translates into business success when and only if there are good business practices in place. He says, “I have a relentless drive to improve, and this is incredibly important to establishing standards of excellence.”

technical proficiencies by becoming an expert in your chosen field. In other words, be technically and tactically proficient. Then build a team for success by choosing the right people with the right skills, empowering them and listening to feedback. Embark on a constant quest for improvement by learning from mistakes and by identifying what works and what doesn't.

Focus on leveraging those strengths, passions and skills into an effective team that is empowered but not micromanaged. According to Moront, a common rookie mistake is to act as if you know everything. “Instead, listen to suggestions and treat your team with respect. Empower them but don't micromanage, as that will only stifle initiative and it doesn't work in a high-functioning team environment. If you must, criticize in private but praise in public. By accepting responsibility and not blaming others, you will inspire loyalty, trust and confidence among team members.”

Building a highly functioning team proves challenging even in the best of conditions, so you might want to keep Henry Ford's words close to heart: “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

EMBRACE AND DELIVER QUALITY. Here you focus on nitty-gritty details while embracing and delivering quality. Steve Jobs exemplified the importance of this when he said, “Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected.”

For Nicholas Turpin, president/CEO, SafariScapes, his African safari business requires more than being a technically proficient char-

ter the key to improving business and building for the future. For some, it's the only way to succeed. Let failure motivate you to strive for excellence rather than limit and define who you are. As Turpin says, “Never let something get you down despite bumps in the road. Learn from the bumps and constantly strive to improve.”

To do this, put a clear process, outcome and evaluation method in place that allows for continuous refinements in your relentless pursuit of perfection. This includes the willingness to take criticism and to not make excuses when things fall short of the goal. Get what you need and have a dogged determination to learn from every mistake as a way to make things better. It's the only way to succeed.

Most of all, build for the future by recognizing, creating and growing opportunities even when obstacles surround you. As Winston Churchill once said, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.”

DO WHAT IS RIGHT. A successful business leader will have the moral courage to know what's right and effect it, whether or not it comes at a personal cost. As Theodore Roosevelt so eloquently said, “Knowing what's right doesn't mean much unless you do what's right.”

It goes without saying that while people who follow you don't expect you to be perfect, nevertheless they do expect you to have the moral courage to do the right thing. This separates true leaders from opportunistic individuals. With Moront it comes down to this: “My most fundamental rule is having the moral courage to do what is right and not what is popular. A side benefit is that I gain the loyalty and trust of my team.” It's harder than it sounds.

LEARN FROM FAILURE. Most successful people know learning from failure provides



EVERY TIME YOU TRAVEL,
THERE ARE THINGS THAT
STAY WITH YOU

Stay
WITH US



FIESTA AMERICANA, IT'S A PLEASURE



STAY IN STYLE: *Mercure Melbourne Treasury Gardens, Garden View King room*
PHOTO: © ACCORHOTELS

New and Improved

AccorHotels moves forward with rebranding and a bold growth strategy. BY MARK CHESNUT

With a new name, an expanded distribution platform, strategic digital acquisition and a revamped consumer app, the company now known as AccorHotels is making changes like never before.

Business travelers remain a key target audience as the company moves forward, according to Jean-Luc Chretien, executive vice president, digital services development, AccorHotels, and co-CEO, Fastbooking, a company AccorHotels acquired this year to enhance its digital capabilities.

“Business travelers already represent more than half of our customers,” Chretien said, adding the hotelier’s rebranding from Accor to AccorHotels is part of a strategy to emphasize the company’s identity and expertise. “With our new name we claim that we’re first and foremost hoteliers,

and proud of that. Our competitive environment is shifting further and further into the digital arena and becoming increasingly impersonal. So our expertise as hotel operators and our 180,000 people in touch with our customers every day are our key strengths.”

The new name debuted in June and accompanies a new slogan: “Feel Welcome,” which Chretien calls “a link between all our brands.”

Also in June, AccorHotels announced the transformation of its distribution platform into a more open marketplace, allowing the presence of independent hoteliers not owned or operated by AccorHotels. “We have received a very good response from independent hoteliers in many countries and a lot of requests to join our platform, despite the fact that we have not launched the platform commercially

yet,” Chretien said, just before the new platform launched in July.

The expanded platform benefits travelers by providing more options, he added. “It will cement AccorHotels.com’s position on the Internet by featuring a much larger choice of destinations and hotels — 10,000 in the long run.”

The independent hotels added to the system will likely appeal to business travelers, according to Chretien. “We shall primarily look at hotels in the midscale, upscale and luxury categories, as AccorHotels already has a very large choice of economy hotels in its portfolio. We will also look at quality. We shall use the hotel’s TripAdvisor rating and ask it to at least reach the same average score of AccorHotels properties in each category. Hotels will also be systematically visited to control the [accuracy] of their description and services.”

To improve the overall guest experience, Accor launched a new version of its app to eventually replace the company’s other branded applications. The new edition has been downloaded 3.4 million times, according to Chretien, and is designed as a work in progress. “Updates every three weeks will ensure the AccorHotels app is constantly improved and enriched at a sustained pace,” he said. “We will be enhancing [the app] with content about services and activities inside and around the hotels. The AccorHotels app will thus be a true travel companion, used before, during and after the guest stays.” The new features this year include a “wallet” component, allowing users to register their credit cards for fast booking and payment.

AccorHotels’ growth isn’t limited to the virtual world; the company is also expanding its inventory of hotel rooms — especially in the Asia Pacific market. “More than 40 percent of our expansion last year was in the region, and it will continue,” said Chretien, adding the five-year goal is to create a company “that’s connected, that offers a whole range of modern services and whose development strategy is always ahead of its time.”

ADADIO/ADAGIO ACCESS

Demographic: Midscale and budget travelers seeking apartment-style accommodations for extended stays

Offerings: The Adagio and Adagio Access brands comprise 96 “aparthotels” in 11 countries in Europe plus Brazil and the United Arab Emirates. Each apartment includes a full kitchen, hotel services and free WiFi or broadband Internet connection. Adagio targets midscale travelers, while Adagio Access offers more economical prices.

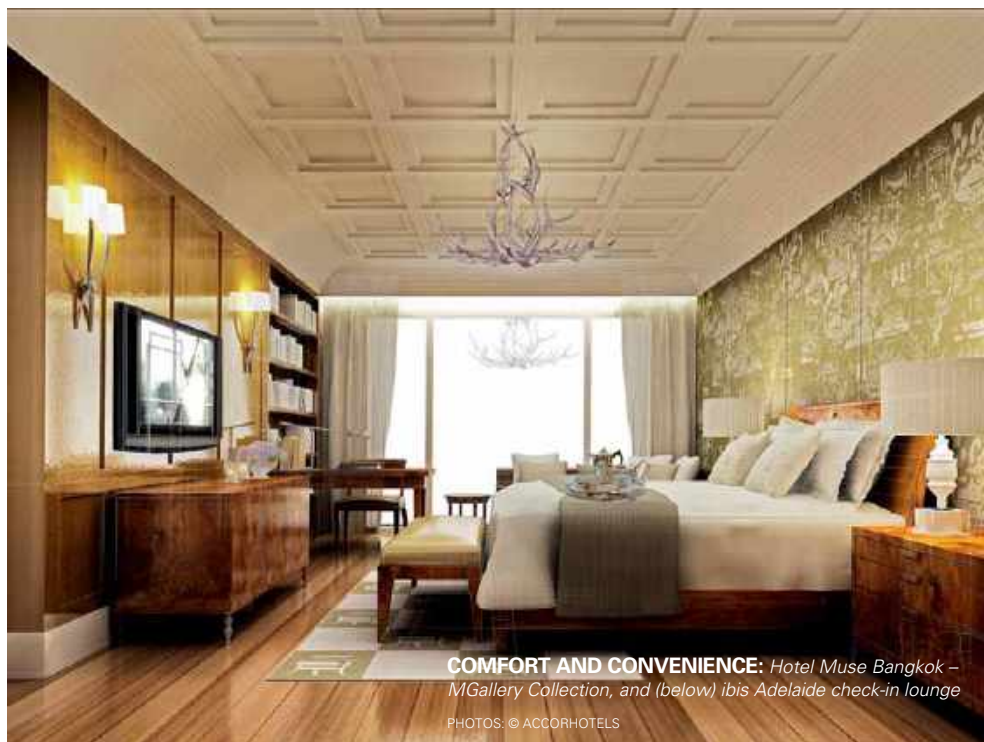
Highlight: The Adagio Paris Opéra’s 99 apartments range from two-person studios to two-room apartments accommodating four people. Guests staying longer than a month receive a welcome pack with local organic products.

GRAND MERCURE

Demographic: Business and leisure travelers in Asia Pacific

Offerings: Operating in the region for more than 20 years, Grand Mercure includes 14 Mei Jue properties (Chinese adaptation of the brand) as well as Grand Mercure Apartments, offering luxury accommodations in Australia and New Zealand.

Highlight: The 288-room Grand Mercure Shanghai Central features two



COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE: Hotel Muse Bangkok – MGallery Collection, and (below) ibis Adelaide check-in lounge
PHOTOS: © ACCORHOTELS



restaurants, a bar, a spa and five meeting and event rooms within walking distance of the main railway station.

HOTELF1

Demographic: Budget travelers in France

Offerings: Formerly Formule1, hotelF1 is a basic, value-priced option for cost-sensitive travelers, with 238 hotels in France.

Highlight: hotelF1 Marseille Valentine, located in a business district, offers budget-priced accommodations with free WiFi and free indoor parking.

IBIS/IBIS STYLES/IBIS BUDGET

Demographic: Budget-conscious travelers

Offerings: The main ibis brand operates 1,031 hotels in 59 countries. Ibis Styles, with 277 hotels in 24 countries, offers room rates that include breakfast and Internet access, while ibis Budget, the most economical of the three



brands, offers no-frills options at 537 hotels in 17 countries.

Highlight: A short walk from Central Station, the 77-room ibis Styles Amsterdam Central Station offers free WiFi and breakfast.

MAMA SHELTER

Demographic: Travelers who prefer a hip, stylish ambience

Offerings: Mama Shelter's six hotels in France, Turkey and the United States feature guestrooms with 27-inch iMacs, free movies and WiFi, and organic skincare products custom-made in conjunction with Absolution.

Highlight: Mama Shelter Los Angeles, located in West Hollywood, features guestrooms in three cheekily named sizes (Medium Mama, Large Mama and XXL Mama) as well as a restaurant, bar, coffee shop and a gift shop stocked with travel essentials and offbeat gifts.

MERCURE

Demographic: Midscale business and leisure travelers seeking accommodations in city centers and scenic, non-urban areas

Offerings: Mercure has 711 hotels in 54 countries, with contemporary décor that reflects local design.

Highlight: The 144-room Mercure London Bridge in England's capital lies within walking distance of many attractions and offers free WiFi, a bar and restaurant and four meeting rooms.

MGALLERY

Demographic: Travelers seeking an upscale hotel experience with one-of-a-kind settings

Offerings: With 71 hotels in 22 countries, MGallery properties feature architecture, interior design and service that vary by destination and fall into three categories: Heritage reflects the historic nature of the setting, Signature emphasizes the property team's personality, and Serenity provides relaxing space in a natural or urban setting.

Highlight: At the 19-room Hotel Francés in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, guests can sip Champagne as they explore the city's historic colonial heart by horse-drawn carriage, followed by a candlelit dinner at the historic hotel.

NOVOTEL

Demographic: Midscale business and leisure travelers who prefer central locations in cities and tourist destinations

Offerings: With 414 hotels in 61 countries, Novotel features clean, contemporary design; eco-friendly materials; free WiFi; and on-site dining and meeting space plus leisure facilities like fitness areas, swimming pools and gardens.

Suite Novotel offers all-suite accommodations at 31 hotels in 10 countries.

Highlight: Novotel Panama City, one of the brand's newest properties in Latin America, has a fitness center, two meeting rooms and a restaurant that exhibits the work of local artists.

PULLMAN

Demographic: Business and leisure travelers looking for a sophisticated hotel experience with a technological edge

Offerings: The brand has 93 hotels in 26 countries focused on providing high-tech connectivity throughout, from public areas to guestrooms. Restaurants feature open kitchens, and the Co-Meeting concept provides one-stop contacts and assistance for groups.

Highlight: The 240-room Pullman Hanoi, located in a popular business district, offers a large swimming pool and panoramic city views from upper floors.

THE SEBEL

Demographic: Travelers seeking apartment-style accommodations in Australia and New Zealand

Offerings: Sebel operates in 21 locations in Australia and New Zealand. Each apartment has a separate living area, dining table and access to the Sebel Lounge.

Highlight: The Sebel Sydney Manly Beach, less than 20 minutes from Sydney's Central Business District, offers two outdoor swimming pools and six meeting rooms.

SOFITEL

Demographic: Upscale business and leisure travelers

Offerings: Billed as the "only French luxury hotel brand with a presence on five continents," Sofitel operates more than 30,000 rooms in nearly 40 countries. Sofitel Legend properties are set in historic buildings, and Sofitel So blends French luxury with local culture.

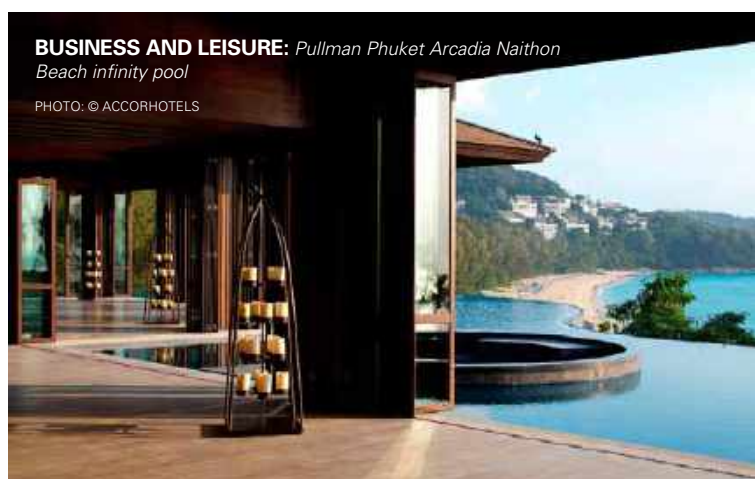
Highlight: The 173-room Sofitel Agadir Thalassa Sea & Spa, located on a private beach in Morocco, includes a spa and three restaurants.

THALASSA SEA & SPA

Demographic: Travelers interested in health, beauty and spa services

Offerings: Thalassa's 18 locations in France, Italy, Morocco and Bahrain combine postcard-perfect scenery with the latest trends in health-minded spa treatments and operate in conjunction with other AccorHotels brands.

Highlight: Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa, on a scenic waterfront in the Kingdom of Bahrain, offers 14 treatment rooms, sauna, hammam, freshwater swimming pool and a studio for yoga and Pilates.





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Taking It Easy

GT celebrates the winners of The Trazees and another successful year in the travel industry. BY KIMBERLY KROL | PHOTOS BY GREG COHEN

The *Global Traveler* team took it back to The Roaring Twenties with friends and colleagues at our yearly reception to celebrate the annual Global Business Travel Association convention. Held at the brand-new, speakeasy-style Itta Bena in Orlando, Fla., *GT* hosted the event in conjunction with co-sponsor Meliá Hotels International.

There was more than one reason to celebrate this year, as we also honored the inaugural winners of The Trazees, the awards distributed by *GT*'s sister Web publication, trazee.com. Acceptees from a number of award-winning travel providers joined us on behalf of their companies and to celebrate another successful year in the industry.

Trazee Travel is dedicated to all things travel for travelers aged 18–35. Updated daily, the Web publication covers trends, products, tips and so much more in the world of travel. Nominations for the

inaugural awards were accepted via online ballot and from trazee.com's intrepid contributors. A committee of select FX Express Publications, Inc., management selected the final winners.

"This year proved to be another successful GBTA convention," said Francis X. Gallagher, publisher and CEO, *Global Traveler*. "As we announced the launch of trazee.com at last year's show, we thought it only fitting to honor the inaugural The Trazees winners at this year's event. We all had a great time celebrating the successes of our partners at the incredible, 1920s-themed Itta Bena, a must-visit in Orlando."

This year marked the 47th annual Global Business Travel Association convention, with more than 6,000 attendees from hotels, airlines, travel companies and corporate travel departments. The 48th annual convention will be held in Denver in July 2016.



1. Daniela Villarroel, coordinator of global sales, business travel, the Americas, Meliá Hotels International; Alex Lizama, regional director of global sales, business travel, West USA and Canada, Meliá Hotels International

2. (Back row, left to right) Nicky De Jesus, director of global sales, business travel, the Americas, Meliá Hotels International; Alejandra Garfunkel, director of sales, Meliá Buenos Aires; Joyce McKinley, director of global sales business travel, East Coast and Canada, Meliá Hotels International; Andre Newbold, director of sales, Meliá Nassau Beach; Mariela Pesci, senior account manager, Meliá Buenos Aires Hotel;

(Front row, left to right) Luz Frick, sales manager, business travel, Cluster Barcelona; Daniella Villarroel, coordinator of global sales, business travel, the Americas, Meliá Hotels International; Rebecca Meyers, director of global sales, business travel, Meliá Hotels International

3. Francis X. Gallagher, publisher and CEO, *Global Traveler*



4. Jonathan Pansacola, manager, sales and marketing, The Americas, Saudi Arabian Airlines; Brian Hurta, regional account manager, Houston, Saudi Arabian Airlines; Richard Alkhazen, account manager, Washington, D.C., Saudi Arabian Airlines

5. Daryl Yu, NYC passenger sales manager, EVA Air; Sandy Huang, deputy senior vice president, America head office, EVA Air; Gary Huang, junior vice president, EVA Air; Yuju Chou, ATL passenger assistant manager, EVA Air





Winners' Circle

Favorite International Airline

American Airlines

Favorite Aircraft Type

Boeing 787

Favorite Airline Website

JetBlue

Favorite Frequent-Flyer Program

United MileagePlus

Favorite Airline in North America

Favorite Budget Airline

Southwest Airlines

Favorite Airline to South America

LAN Airlines

Favorite Airline in Europe

Aer Lingus

Favorite Airline in Africa

South African Airways

Favorite Asian Airline

EVA Air

Favorite Overall Airport in the World

Munich Airport

Favorite Airport in North America

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport



- 1. Doug Fischer, regional director, The Boeing Co.
- 2. Steve Mayers, airport director – customer relations, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
- 3. Lorena Villar, marketing and trade relations manager, Tourist Office of Spain
- 4. Alice McQuade, director of intermediary sales, Americas sales, InterContinental Hotels Group
- 5. Asad Ahmed, vice president of sales EAME, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide
- 6. Marty Grant, director of sales, Element, Aloft and Four Points by Sheraton
- 7. Chema Alvarado, director, sales, oneworld
- 8. Lourdes Perez, managing editor sales – South, United Airlines
- 9. Juan Camilo Caicedo, corporate and leisure director, North America, LATAM Airlines Group
- 10. Todd Neuman, vice president commercial, South African Airways
- 11. Sandy Huang, deputy senior vice president, EVA Air
- 12. Brooke Wiegand, director of field marketing – luxury and lifestyle brands, Americas, Hyatt Hotels Corp.
- 13. Rafael Lizarraga, vice president, corporate sales, Grupo Posadas



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Winners' Circle

Favorite Individual Hotel

The James Chicago

Favorite Hotel Chain

Kimpton Hotels

Favorite Lifestyle Hotel

Andaz

Favorite Hotel Website

Marriott

Favorite Hotel Rewards Program

IHG Rewards Club

Favorite Hotel Chain in Latin America

InterContinental Hotels Group

Favorite Hotel Chain in Mexico

Fiesta Americana Hotels & Resorts

Favorite Hotel Chain in the Middle East

Starwood Hotels & Resorts

Favorite Green Hotel

Element Hotels

Favorite Country

Spain

Favorite Worldwide City

Dublin

Favorite Wireless Service

Verizon

Favorite Event Around the Globe

Oktoberfest

Favorite Rental Car Company

National

1. Robert Stern, digital customer insight, JetBlue

2. Scott Morgan, senior director of national sales, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants; Christine Lawson, senior vice president, sales and catering, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants; Robert Cvik, director of national accounts, East Coast, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants

3. Marzena Weglowski-Pallazzo, marketing manager, German National Tourist Office/Bavaria Tourism Marketing; Ricarda Lindner, director, German National Tourist Office

4. Kim Rodriguez, associate vice president of business rental administration, Enterprise Holdings

5. Charles Jackson, associate director of strategic sales, Verizon Wireless

6. Eric Hall, manager of distribution and air programs, Southwest Airlines

7. Becky Casey, director of national sales, Denihan Hospitality Group

8. Jeff Wright, director of corporate sales, Aer Lingus; Helen Maguire, director of consumer sales, Aer Lingus

9. Alison Metcalfe, executive vice president, USA and Canada, Tourism Ireland

10. Fabiana Farias-Jenkins, director, global ecommerce and digital, Marriott

11. Fernand Fernandez, vice president, global marketing, American Airlines

12. Angela Geissler, account director, North America, Munich Airport International



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12



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8

1. Susan Morgan, sales manager, United Airlines; Patrick Khoury, senior director, sales, USA, Air Canada; Lourdes Perez, managing editor sales – South, United Airlines
2. Richard Evans, senior vice president, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*; Kimberly Krol, managing editor, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*; Francis X. Gallagher, publisher and CEO, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*; Monique Barrett, associate editor, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*; Rob Setzman, advertising manager, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*; Olivia Falcione, advertising manager, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*; Mike Donahue, interim sales manager, *Global Traveler* and *trazeetravel.com*
3. Victor Lopez, coordinator, Teamwork Marketing; William Morcote, fleet engineer, Avianca Airlines; Mateo Echeverry, marketing administrator, North America, Avianca Airlines
4. Ana Paula Coelho, corporate sales manager, TAP Portugal; Rob Setzman, advertising manager, *Global Traveler*; Fern Ottavio, director, passenger sales and marketing, TAP Portugal; Jessica O'Keefe, director of sales, EgyptAir
5. Pablo Maes Galindo, executive, national accounts, Grupo Posadas; Laurie Feder, national accounts manager, Grupo Posadas; Rafael Lizarraga, vice president, corporate sales, Grupo Posadas; Daniel Muñoz, sub-director, business travel and consortia, Grupo Posadas; Sara Jurado, manager, international consortia and crew – sales, Grupo Posadas; Eugenia Fregoso, national account manager, Grupo Posadas; Tina Naves, national account manager, corporate, Grupo Posadas; Arelly Moran, GDS and global accounts manager, Grupo Posadas
6. Chema Alvarado, director, sales, oneworld; Steven Waterfield, manager, global corporate sales, oneworld
7. Nicky de Jesus, director of global sales, business travel, the Americas, Meliá Hotels International
8. Lauren Funke, ad director, travel, *The New York Times*; Roberto Cuesta, Jr., vice president, the Americas, airberlin; Kerry Cannon, managing director, MMGY Global

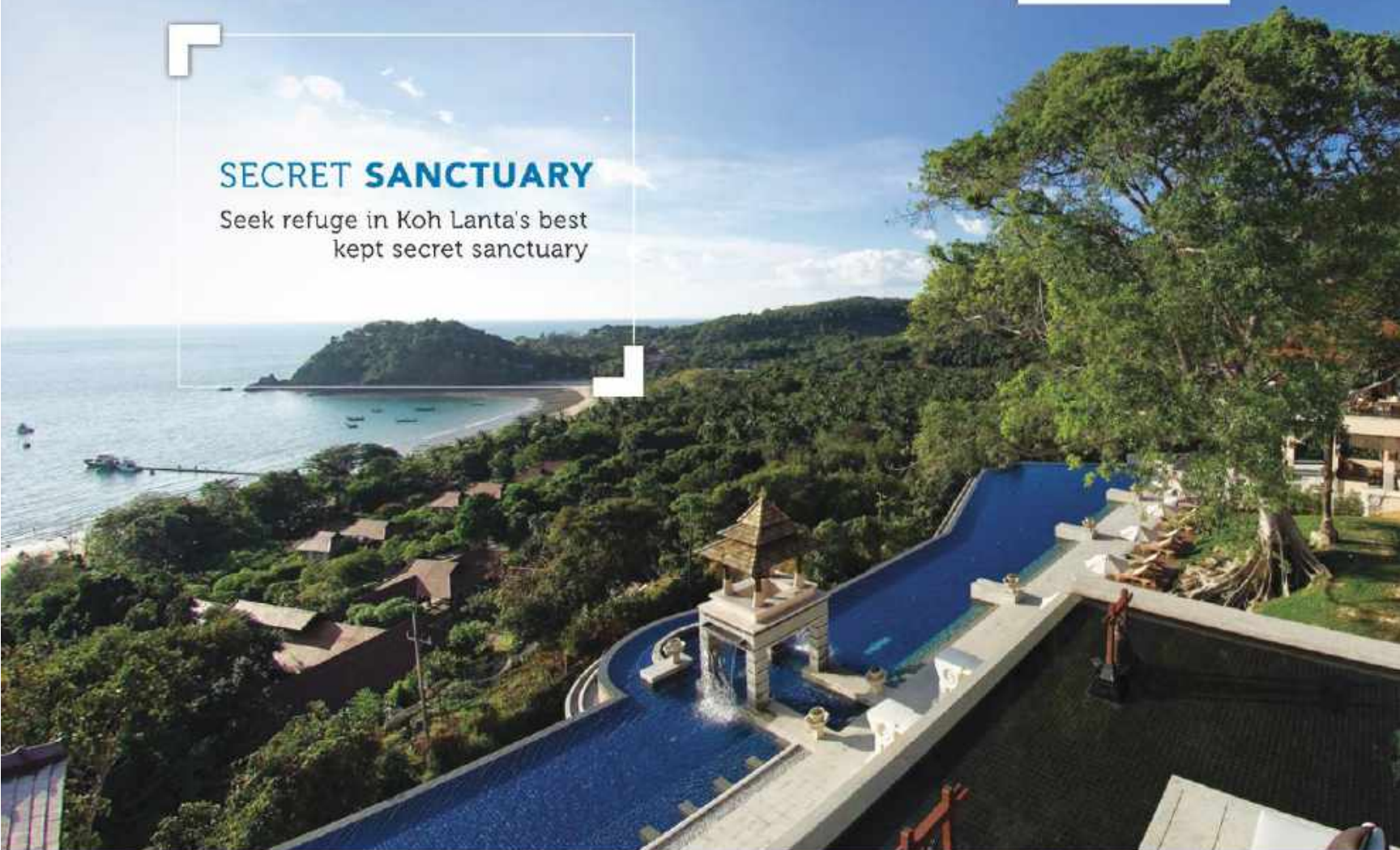


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Big Business

São Paulo hosts meetings and events on a grand scale. BY MARK CHESNUT

The 2014 FIFA World Cup may have put São Paulo on the global stage for sporting events, but for corporate meetings, incentives and business travel, South America's largest city has long been a must-visit destination. And with greater connectivity and more focus than ever on service, cuisine and style, perhaps there has never been a better time to meet in São Paulo.

“What makes São Paulo one of the most important MICE destinations is the great hotels, airports, transportation and location,” said Marusa Trevisan, spokesperson, São Paulo Turismo, the local tourism organization. “São Paulo has the largest hotel [offering] in Latin America: 410 hotels with 42,000 rooms.” Add the city's status as one of the most important business hubs in the hemisphere, and it's easy to see why the MICE segment is so important here.

The range of options is indeed impressive. São Paulo boasts no fewer than 11 large convention centers as well as countless cultural venues that also host groups for meetings and private events. Local destination management companies like IVI DMC2 Brazil help groups find the most appropriate locations for conventions and other gatherings and also provide transportation and logistical help — especially important, given São Paulo's notoriously dense traffic.

The top choices for international meetings and conventions, according to IVI DMC2 Brazil, include the Brazilian British Center, with a 350-seat restaurant, 160-seat auditorium and three exhibition galleries; the Anhembi Convention Palace, featuring three auditoriums, five exhibition halls and four breakout rooms; and Casa Fasano, which hosts corporate events for up to 800 attendees.

São Paulo's many cultural institutions — several of which are showplaces for Brazil's most iconic modern architecture — offer opportunities for both free-time activities and unique events. “São Paulo is not only the financial capital of Latin America and the whole Southern Hemisphere, but it's also the cultural capital, with thousands of wonderful options,” said Flavia Liz Di Paolo, a São Paulo specialist and guide who creates custom itineraries and programs for corporate and leisure groups. Di Paolo organizes corporate group excursions that range from architecture tours to graffiti tours and visits to *favelas*, where groups can learn about Brazil's poorest neighborhoods.

Among São Paulo's renowned MICE-friendly museums is the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, often referred to simply by its initials, MASP. Sitting imposingly on Avenida Paulista, one of the city's most important avenues for business travelers, the venue houses one of Latin America's most impressive collections of Western art and offers two auditoriums — one with 80 seats and the other with 374 — for private events and presentations. Also in the artistic vein is the Museu de Arte Moderno, located in the sprawling and peaceful Ibirapuera Park.

MICE:
meetings,
incentives,
conventions and
exhibitions



CROWD-PLEASERS: Anhembi Convention Palace auditorium (top), and Pacaembu Stadium (bottom)

PHOTOS: © JOSE CORDEIRO, © ALEXANDRE FAGUNDES DE FAGUNDES | DREAMSTIME.COM

The facility's sculpture garden accommodates 300 people for cocktail parties, and a 200-seat auditorium also is available.

Culinary arts, fashion and nightlife can add extra flavor to any meeting or incentive outing. “Here in SP, every day there are new, interesting things opening, especially in terms of gastronomy, nightlife, art, fashion and design,” said Di Paolo, who mentioned art galleries like Mezanino, Verve and Luis Maluf as examples of the city's burgeoning creative scene.

São Paulo's role as a host city for the World Cup also provides interesting opportunities for the meetings and incentives market, noted Rose Almeida, publisher, MICE Business, a website that focuses on that segment in Brazil. São Paulo's *futebol* (soccer) stadiums are worthy of a visit, she said, not only for guided group tours but also as a host venue for private meetings and events. The

Museu do Futebol, opened in 2008 in Pacaembu Stadium, hosts private events in four separate spaces, allowing meetings and incentive groups to capture some of the excitement of Brazil's most popular sport.

São Paulo's hotel scene — including nearly every major international brand as well as several noteworthy business-friendly independent properties — adds to the city's appeal for the MICE market. Top choices include the Hilton São Paulo Morumbi, featuring 15,000 square feet of meeting space and direct access to a shopping center, a helipad and major corporate offices. The property allows groups to plan carbon-free events and also offers packages that include guided visits to local art galleries. Other major meeting hotels include the 466-room Grand Hyatt São Paulo, which accommodates up to 1,200 for events; the Renaissance São Paulo, with almost 30,000 square feet of meeting space; and Sheraton São Paulo WTC, located in the World Trade Center São Paulo and adjacent to the WTC Events Center.

Brazil's biggest city also exhibits its business flair at independent properties like the aptly named Hotel Unique, featuring futuristic architecture and minimalist style. Another recommended property for upscale MICE groups, Casa Fasano, offers elegant design as well as one of the city's best hotel restaurants.

Speaking of restaurants, São Paulo's chefs are increasingly known for their sophisticated culinary skills as well as for creating MICE-friendly venues for private dining, meetings and other events. "Gastronomy is one of the strengths of the city, [which] already has 11 restaurants with Michelin stars," said Almeida.

Among the top picks: A Figueira Rubaiyat, where diners savor international cuisine while seated beneath the giant

More than half of all visitors arrive in São Paulo for business, and more than 22 percent arrive for meetings and conventions.

ficus tree that towers over the front yard. For contemporary Brazilian cuisine, groups head to Mani, headed by Brazilian model-turned-chef Helena Rizzo, or D.O.M., featuring the creations of local celebrity chef Alex Atala.

Business travelers feel more comfortable than ever transiting in and out of São Paulo thanks to the new international VIP lounge LAN and TAM airlines opened in October 2014 at Guarulhos International Airport. The first unified lounge serving both carriers, it features a draft beer bar, 9-foot buffet area and furnishings from the Andréa Putman studio.

To increase connectivity with North America, TAM Airlines this year added service linking São Paulo with Toronto's Pearson International Airport, with an intermediate stop at New York's JFK, aboard Boeing 767 aircraft with flat-bed Premium Business seating. Other Brazilian airlines ramped up partnerships with larger carriers to expand their presence. Gol Airlines, Brazil's second-largest airline, partners with Delta Air Lines, while United Airlines this year announced plans to take a \$100 million interest in Azul, the third-largest player. Azul recently began service between São Paulo's Viracopos/Campinas International Airport and Orlando International in Florida.

Regardless of how MICE groups arrive, they'll likely feel the excitement of South America's biggest metropolis soon after arrival. "São Paulo is cosmopolitan," said Almeida. "Being in São Paulo is to experience a city that is open 24 hours, with a lifestyle that combines work and leisure as if they were two sides of the same coin."

A Figueira Rubaiyat
rubaiyat.com.br

Anhembi Convention Palace
anhembi.com.br

Brazilian British Center
cbb.org.br

Casa Fasano
fasano.com.br

D.O.M.
domrestaurante.com.br

Flavia Liz Di Paolo
flavializ.com

Grand Hyatt São Paulo
grand.hyatt.com

Hilton São Paulo Morumbi
hilton.com

Hotel Unique
hotelunique.com.br

IVI DMC2 Brazil
ividmc.com

MICE Business
micebusiness.com.br

Museu de Arte de São Paulo
masp.art.br

Museu de Arte Moderno
mam.org.br

Museu do Futebol
museudofutebol.org.br

Renaissance São Paulo Hotel
marriott.com

São Paulo Convention & Visitors Bureau
visitesaopaulo.com

Sheraton São Paulo WTC Hotel
starwoodhotels.com



CREATIVE SCENE: Museu de Arte de São Paulo PHOTO: © JOSE CORDEIRO

The Heart of Seoul

Discover the ultimate in luxury and service at THE PLAZA.



THE PLAZA, located in the heart of Seoul, redefines luxury. Following an extensive renovation, THE PLAZA transformed into the epitome of elegance with its 410 guestrooms, six dining outlets, meeting and event space, first-rate facilities and convenient location. Get to know the most desired address in Seoul.

CUSTOM DESIGN IS a highlight of THE PLAZA experience. Italian designer and architect Guido Ciompi headed the renovation, expanding all the guestrooms and choosing the specially designed interiors. Guestrooms also feature complimentary WiFi, touchpad room control systems and furniture made of eco-friendly materials.

A HOST OF health and recreation facilities ensure a top-notch wellness experience for guests. Plaza Spa Club, covering two floors, boasts seven treatment rooms and a spa suite with a therapeutic hydro bath, a powder room and private lounge. Other amenities include a swimming pool, indoor golf practice range and the Plaza Fitness Club with high-tech equipment, an aerobics studio and sauna.

THE ON-SITE BUSINESS center offers a full range of secretarial services and office equipment. All of the hotel's function space has the most up-to-date, state-of-the-art technology to serve MICE and business travelers. The largest ballroom accommodates up to 600 guests at a cocktail reception, or 500 people

seated. Technical and professional services, coupled with advanced systems and equipment, guarantee successful events of any size and type.

THE PLAZA IS also a popular wedding venue, with its classic marble interior and new Wedding Concierge, designed to assist in planning a dream wedding for every guest from engagement to wedded bliss.

A RANGE OF cuisines will delight any taste bud at THE PLAZA. Taoyuen serves Chinese cuisine inspired by contemporary Shanghai, while Seven Square offers all-day à la carte treats and a buffet. Italian restaurant Tuscany focuses on fresh, seasonal ingredients and pairing excellent food with great wine. Japanese restaurant Murasaki presents Neo-classic Kaiseki in a private tatami-floored setting.

INTRINSICALLY LINKED TO Seoul's history, THE PLAZA's location in the heart of the city puts travelers close to cultural treasures including Deoksu Palace, Gyeongbuk Palace and Sungnyemun, while also placing business travelers within the financial and business district.

Learn more about THE PLAZA, the ultimate choice for every traveler, at hoteltheplaza.com.



South Africa boasts 299 mammal species and 858 bird species. There is an extensive system of national parks and game reserves and numerous private reserves.

BUSINESS destinations

50

ABU DHABI

56

NEW YORK CITY

60

JEDDAH

62

KYOTO



LEISURE destinations

63

HONG KONG

66

ISRAEL

70

SOUTH AFRICA

74

USVI



Great Leap Forward

Rapid transformation propels Abu Dhabi into a daring future.

BY RICHARD NEWTON

Abu Dhabi's history remains within living memory; some inhabitants can recall the age before skyscrapers, before wealth, before oil.

The transformation of the past 50 years is almost beyond imagination. In the 1960s, indigenous Bedouin tribes lived life as they had for centuries. On the Arabian Gulf coast, they fished and collected pearls for sale to foreign traders. In the desert interior, they trekked with camels from one oasis to the next, rarely putting down roots.

Of all the changes that have taken place during Abu Dhabi's incredible leap into the 21st century, perhaps the most fundamental has been the shift in the basic approach to life. From time immemorial, the people had been constantly on the move in search of water and food. Today, the essentials of life are brought to the people.

More than 16,000 tons of fresh produce arrive by ship and plane every day (rising to 21,000 tons during Ramadan). State-of-the-art

desalination plants process seawater before piping fresh water to the city's faucets.

Although the people have become more sedentary, they have simultaneously become more outward-looking. The best of the world's culture and sport is imported to Abu Dhabi's doorstep. A new cultural district will feature Abu Dhabi branches of the Louvre Museum and the Guggenheim. On manmade Yas Island, the city boasts one of the world's most futuristic motorsport venues, the Yas Marina Circuit, which hosts the annual Abu Dhabi Formula 1 Grand Prix. On the outskirts of the city, the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium currently houses the Pakistan national cricket team (displaced from their own country by security issues).

The city even imported its population. In the 1960s, Abu Dhabi was home to around 60,000 people, the majority of whom were local. By 2013, the population had risen to almost 2 million, with foreign nationals accounting for 80 percent.

On the face of it, the source of Abu Dhabi's success is obvious: oil. Vast reserves, both offshore and under the desert sands, were initially discovered in the 1930s, though the city did not begin to reap the benefits until commercial exports began in the early 1960s.

But the shrewd political move by the local emir, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, to initiate a federation with the rulers of six

ON THE CIRCUIT:
Yas Viceroy hotel and
Yas Island Marina
Circuit

PHOTO: © DIANA GRADEVA |
DREAMSTIME.COM

neighboring emirates proved to be just as important. On independence from Britain in 1971, the United Arab Emirates came into being. As the largest and wealthiest of these seven emirates, the city of Abu Dhabi became the capital, with Sheikh Zayed as president.

While it has always dominated the U.A.E. politically, in the past two decades Abu Dhabi found itself competing for global recognition with its brash, upstart neighbor, Dubai. For a time, both emirates seemed locked in a battle to build the most glittering skyline. But lately, Abu Dhabi has deliberately repositioned itself as the New York to Dubai's Los Angeles. Abu Dhabi serves as the commercial and cultural heart of the U.A.E., while Dubai remains more populist, with an economy centered on tourism and real estate.

Dubai had no choice. With relatively modest oil reserves, it must rely on other economic sectors. Overemphasis on real estate pushed Dubai to the brink after the global financial crash of 2008, and only intervention from Abu Dhabi averted complete economic disaster.

Abu Dhabi learned the lessons of its neighbor. Although the emirate is blessed with 95 percent of the U.A.E.'s total oil reserves and 92 percent of the gas reserves, it makes a concerted effort to plan for a future without hydrocarbons.

One of the boldest statements of intent centers on Saadiyat Island ("Happiness Island") which until recently lay barren and neglected to the east of downtown. Now the focus of a \$27 billion project to create homes for 150,000 people, it also will feature beach resorts (the St. Regis and the Park Hyatt Hotel & Villas already opened), a Gary Player-designed

LODGING

ANANTARA AL SAHEL VILLA RESORT

Sir Bani Yas Island, 110 miles southwest of Abu Dhabi city, is a wildlife haven. This resort, with 30 luxury villas, provides the perfect base for a get-away-from-it-all Arabian safari. *Sir Bani Yas Island* \$\$\$\$

JUMEIRAH AT ETIHAD TOWERS

The five Etihad Towers opened in 2011. The Jumeirah Hotel offers 382 sumptuous guestrooms in Tower One, with excellent service and breathtaking views. *West Corniche* \$\$\$\$

YAS VICEROY ABU DHABI

Located in the middle of the motor racing circuit, this is the ultimate hotel for gearheads. Be warned, though: The nightly rate rises to more than \$2,000 during the Formula 1 Grand Prix (Nov. 27–29). *Yas Island* \$\$\$\$

DINING

FRANKIE'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT & BAR

At the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr hotel, this restaurant is a joint venture between two British-Italian celebrities: jockey Frankie Dettori and Michelin-starred chef Marco Pierre White. *Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, Khor Al Maqta* \$\$\$

SPICE MELA

Abu Dhabi boasts plenty of great Indian restaurants. This one, with its colorful décor and cuisine drawn from across the sub-continent, is among the best. *Rosewood Abu Dhabi hotel, Al Maryah Island* \$\$\$

ZUMA ABU DHABI

Located in the waterfront Galleria Mall, this acclaimed restaurant specializes in contemporary Japanese cuisine. With its open plan, you can watch the frenetic chefs at work. *Sowwah Square, Al Maryah Island* \$\$\$\$



LOUNGE IN LUXURY: Park Hyatt Hotel & Villas on Saadiyat Island

PHOTO: © PARK HYATT HOTEL & VILLAS

CHECKING IN WITH MUBARAK AL SHAMISI

Director, Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DOES ABU DHABI OFFER AMERICAN INVESTORS?

As the capital of the U.A.E., Abu Dhabi is poised to become one of the most important cities in the world. Our Economic Vision 2030 strategy to diversify the economy includes investment in tourism, culture, business and renewable energy solutions. Abu Dhabi is a zero-tax jurisdiction and is a strategic hub for investment because of its location.

WHAT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES SHOULD AMERICAN INVESTORS BE AWARE OF?

Abu Dhabi is a sophisticated, modern city boasting a multinational population. While the culture is firmly rooted in Arabia's Islamic traditions — including a strong commitment to tolerance and hospitality — we strive to create a welcoming, inclusive environment where all visitors feel comfortable, regardless of the reason for being in Abu Dhabi.

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE BUSINESS SECTOR TO ABU DHABI'S TOURISM INDUSTRY?

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority promotes business tourism to the emirate through the continued development of infrastructure and expansion

of the hotel, food and activity offerings. Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau, a division of TCA Abu Dhabi, drives and supports the development and promotion of business events throughout the emirate efficiently, effectively and transparently and in partnership with all its stakeholders, aligned with the Abu Dhabi Government's 2030 Economic Vision to deliver social and global empowerment and strategic and economic impact.

Studies commissioned by TCA Abu Dhabi and Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre suggest the economic impact from business events will increase by approximately 7 percent per annum on average until 2020, based on historic performance. We've also created an incredibly easy visa process and implemented preclearance at our airport to encourage business travel to our country.

WHAT ARE KEY FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS?

We've worked hard to develop an infrastructure that supports and nurtures a sustainable tourism industry, which includes the creation of outstanding meeting facilities, venues and services, in addition to a variety of accommodations, restaurants, activities and attractions. We look forward to the continued development of Saadiyat Island, poised to host the globe's largest concentration of premier cultural institutions including Louvre Abu Dhabi, Zayed National Museum and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. We anticipate the opening of an increased capacity and

new permanent cruise terminal at Zayed Port as well as a number of new hotels including international brands such as Four Seasons, Fairmont, Hyatt and Marriott.

Abu Dhabi is emerging as a must-visit destination for savvy travelers looking for new and unique experiences, and we received more than 123,000 U.S. visitors in 2014, a 37 percent increase from 2013. We look forward to welcoming even more U.S. travelers this year and believe all these developments will only increase interest in our beautiful emirate.

WHICH ATTRACTIONS IN ABU DHABI DO YOU RECOMMEND?

Abu Dhabi is an incredibly diverse destination. In the vibrant, cosmopolitan city of Abu Dhabi enjoy a guided tour of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, voted by TripAdvisor as the world's fourth most popular landmark attraction, or experience falconry at Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital. For thrills, head to Yas Island for a driving experience at Yas Marina Circuit or ride the world's fastest roller coaster at Ferrari World. Gain an understanding of Emirati culture at Al Ain, the birthplace of our ruling Al Nahyan family. The Al Gharbia region features the world's largest sand desert. We have a number of great annual events: the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Abu Dhabi Food Festival, Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship, Abu Dhabi Art and more.



GRAND DESIGN: *Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque*

PHOTO: © LUCIANO MORTULA | DREAMSTIME.COM

golf course and the cultural district featuring big-name museums and galleries designed by big-name architects.

The project at Saadiyat Island has not been without criticism. In contrast to its grandiose aspirations, it is being built by thousands of low-wage laborers from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Although working conditions undoubtedly improved since the world's media began to take an interest, concern remains for the many workers who, due to illegal recruitment in their home countries, are effectively trapped in indentured servitude.

The furor over migrant labor proves an acute embarrassment to Abu Dhabi. In the past decade, the emirate invested heavily to raise its international standing. High-profile ventures included the purchase of English Premier League soccer club Manchester City (whose Etihad Stadium is named after Abu Dhabi's airline) and a seven-year deal to stage the season finale of the Formula 1 Championship at the Yas Marina Circuit.

The current attempt to fly an experimental solar-powered aircraft, Solar Impulse, around the world took off from Abu Dhabi in March, with the aim for the plane to complete the circumnavigation in 2016. The emirate is a major investor in the project.

Abu Dhabi's active promotion of solar technology may seem at odds with its position as a major producer of hydrocarbons, but it is consistent with a longstanding commitment to renewable energy.

The clearest manifestation of that commitment is rising out of the desert beside Abu Dhabi International Airport. At an initial cost of up to \$22 billion, Masdar City aims to be a world leader in clean technology as well as a showcase for sustainable living. This is science fiction made real. An automated public transport system will shuttle the 40,000 inhabitants around in driverless vehicles. Every building is designed for maximum efficiency in energy and water usage. Public spaces are designed to capture prevailing winds, providing natural air-conditioning.

Abu Dhabi's evolution is far from complete. It remains on the cusp of radical transformation, poised between two worlds. Older inhabitants still recall the rustic past while young Emiratis look forward to a bright, new future. Visit Abu Dhabi in 2015 and you can experience past, present and future, all at the same time.

DIVERSIONS

A tilt of the head is all it takes to move from tradition to modernity. At Abu Dhabi's Heritage Village, a meticulously recreated oasis town, old stone houses sit within a sandy yard. Date palms cast dappled shade. A camel walks across the foreground. But look beyond, and just across the narrow width of the former dhow harbor rises the skyline of downtown Abu Dhabi. The vista continues to evolve. With every passing month, Heritage Village becomes more anomalous; the history it preserves feels increasingly remote from the gleaming present.

The juxtaposition is even starker from within Qasr al-Hosn,

the 18th-century whitewashed fort in the heart of downtown. In the shaded passageways between its formidable walls, you can imagine it in its heyday as the dominant building of a small coastal settlement. That illusion falls away when you ascend to the battlements and find a forest of glass and steel skyscrapers now overlook the fort. A permanent exhibition inside the fort chronicles its history.

Until 1966, Qasr al-Hosn served as the emir's palace. It is remarkably modest in comparison to the \$3 billion Emirates Palace hotel, opened in 2005 and host to a succession of royalty and international celebrities in "7-star" luxury. Even if you're not staying there, it remains a must-see, especially the jaw-dropping ornate dome above the marble lobby.

One of the greatest pleasures of Abu Dhabi costs nothing. The pedestrianized Corniche runs through shaded parkland

With proven oil reserves of nearly 100 billion barrels, Abu Dhabi accounts for 9 percent of the world's total.

PRESERVATION: Emirates Heritage Club and Heritage Village entrance (top), and tourist stall, Heritage Village (bottom)

PHOTOS: © OUTCAST85 | DREAMSTIME.COM, © ALEX SCOTT | DREAMSTIME.COM





along the shore of the dhow harbor, which now boasts two pristine, manmade beaches. Jog, cycle, skate or stroll the length of the Corniche, mingling with locals and stopping for ice cream or cold drinks. Be aware: From June to August temperatures often exceed 104 degrees, and extended time outdoors can rapidly become an ordeal.

Yas Island, close to the international airport, is the city's premier leisure venue for both kids and adults. Yas Waterworld, a huge water park with rides, slides and artificial surfing waves, provides the perfect family day out. Close by, at the Grand Prix circuit, you'll find Ferrari World, the ultimate immersive experience for car fans of all ages. Enjoy rides that simulate the thrill of fast driving, race go-karts and drive an actual Ferrari on the Yas Marina Circuit.

For a complete change of pace, Sir Bani Yas Island, 110 miles southwest of downtown Abu Dhabi, focuses on intensive conservation efforts to restore habitats and reintroduce indigenous wildlife. The island provides a rare opportunity to see Arabian oryx, sand gazelles, cheetahs, hyenas and golden jackals in their natural setting. Purists may balk, however, at the presence of species not native to Arabia, including giraffes and emus. The island also features valuable archaeological sites, including the remains of a Christian monastery dating back to 600.

Visitors often overlook the desert hinterland of mainland Abu Dhabi, though it is not without its attractions. Dune-bashing tours run by companies such as Nuzhath Ideas offer a great way to experience the high dunes of the deep desert.

Encounter the desert's biggest surprise after a 90-minute drive east of Abu Dhabi city. On the border with Oman lies the oasis town of Al Ain. After relentless aridity, the city presents an improbable burst of lush greenery. It is no mirage. Irrigated by the natural waters welling up from beneath the desert, Al Ain lives up to its moniker: the Garden City.

RACE TIME: Ferrari World Abu Dhabi

PHOTO: © ANDREA LA CORTE | DREAMSTIME.COM

JUST THE FACTS

Time Zone: GMT +4

Phone Code: Country Code: 971 City code: 2

Entry/Exit Requirements: All U.S. citizens require a passport valid for at least six months beyond arrival and a confirmed round-trip airline ticket. Visas are available on arrival for stays of up to one month. If you require an extension, contact the Abu Dhabi immigration office.

Currency: Dirham

Official Language: Arabic, though English is widely spoken. Other languages include Persian, Hindi and Urdu.

Key Industries: Oil and gas, financial services, tourism, real estate

INFO TO GO

Scheduled international flights arrive at Abu Dhabi International Airport, 19 miles east of downtown. The airport is the main hub for Etihad Airways, which runs non-stop flights to every inhabited continent. The airport offers border preclearance for flights to the United States.

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority
tcaabudhabi.ae

Anantara Al Sahel Villa Resort
al-sahel.anantara.com

Emirates Palace
kempinski.com

Ferrari World Abu Dhabi
ferrariworldabudhabi.com

Frankie's Italian Restaurant & Bar
fairmont.com

Heritage Village
torath.ae

Jumeirah at Etihad Towers
jumeirah.com

Masdar City
masdar.ae

Nuzhath Ideas
desertsafariinabudhabi.ae

Qasr al-Hosn
qasralhosnfestival.ae

Saadiyat Island
saadiyat.ae

Sir Bani Yas Island
sirbaniyasisland.com

Solar Impulse
solarimpulse.com

Spice Mela
rosewoodhotels.com

Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi
viceroyhotelsandresorts.com

Yas Waterworld
yaswaterworld.com

Zuma Abu Dhabi
zumarestaurant.com



ONLINE EXTRA

Jump to gtravmag.com/scd to read about the Saadiyat Cultural District.



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Burgeoning Borough

Grand initiatives revive business and culture in Downtown Brooklyn. BY SUSAN FINCH

Downtown Brooklyn's modern-day infrastructure problems started during an ambitious upgrade dating back to the 1930s. Areas of its downtown business core, as well as nearby Brooklyn Heights and Dumbo (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass), were flattened to make room for new expressways and parks. Today the neighborhood's businesses, condos and high-rises have sprung up around the tangle of roads, on-ramps and disjointed green spaces scattered throughout Downtown.

Brooklyn quickly grew into the most populated of New York's five boroughs and, despite infrastructure issues, its downtown area is the third-largest Central Business District in New York City after Midtown and Downtown Manhattan. Downtown Brooklyn is already home to more than 17 million square feet of office space, shopping centers and luxury high-rise condominiums. Its boundaries envelop some 60 cultural organizations and 10 higher-education institutions with 60,000 college students.

Sandwiched between its towering buildings and crumbling warehouses, Downtown Brooklyn boasts a burgeoning cultural scene and attracts more than half a million visitors to the Brooklyn Academy of Music. BAM, America's oldest performing arts center, produces more than 220 performances each year. Brooklyn's push for cultural revival

CITYSCAPE: View of Lower Manhattan skyline and Brooklyn Bridge from Brooklyn Bridge Park

PHOTO: © MANDRITOU | DREAMSTIME.COM

led to the recent renovation and reopening of the palatial Loew's Kings Theatre in Flatbush. Former borough president Marty Markowitz made the historic venue his pet project and managed to raise \$95 million in restoration efforts. Superstorm Sandy blew the roof off just two days before its construction was set, but Kings Theatre finally celebrated its grand re-opening with a sold-out concert by Diana Ross.

Another historic theater looks to undergo massive renovations in the Flatbush area. Long Island University approved a 49-year lease of the former Brooklyn Paramount Theater to developers to reopen for live entertainment. Once used as the university's gym and all-purpose hall, the theater boasts a Wurlitzer organ, only one of two ever built, which still functions and is heard across the LIU campus during tuning. The re-imagined venue will house 2,800 seats with a capacity to hold 3,500 with standing room.

In July 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced promising new initiatives to transform the area into a thriving 21st-century downtown. Ongoing plans call to zipper together Downtown Brooklyn's commercial strip, business district and parks with the hope of making it a more cohesive and dynamic place to live and work. The borough, already a thriving business center, eagerly looks for more office space after celebrating a 19.3 percent growth in private sector jobs from 2003 to 2012.

The initiative will also help connect the rapidly changing Dumbo and Brooklyn Bridge Park to its downtown core. Frequent business travelers and tourists probably notice the blossoming of Brooklyn Bridge

Park with eateries, free waterside workouts, the historic Jane's Carousel and development over at Pier 1. Passersby might assume the area was already razed and set for new green space and redevelopment, but until 2010, the National Cold Storage Warehouses obscured the expansive Manhattan views. The historic warehouses were finally demolished to make way for the new Pier 1 development approved in 2005. Upcoming plans include a Starwood 200-room hotel; 100 residential units; 16,000 square feet of restaurant space; and 2,000 square feet of retail space, with completion expected by winter 2016.

The area of Pier 1, Brooklyn Bridge Park and surrounding Dumbo was once a mere footprint of the surrounding warehouses and industrial businesses. Dumbo's abandoned waterfront warehouses once stored coffee. Despite their spectacular views of the Manhattan Bridge, they mostly sat empty. Original historic coffee chutes and other industrial touches will remain as a nod to the warehouses' heritage. When it opens in 2016, the warehouse-turned-Empire Stores will house a food market, a restaurant, a beer garden and booming retail space.

Downtown Brooklyn's business district and Brooklyn Bridge Park aren't the only swatches of the borough's downtown gearing up for development. After New York City's grim occupation by the British during the American Revolution, President John Adams authorized

construction of the first five naval shipyards, including the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Largely abandoned by 1966, the Navy station is now seeing its largest expansion since World War II.

In November 2012, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, DUMBO Improvement District and Brooklyn Navy Yard developed a master plan to further develop the once-neglected 300-acre Brooklyn Navy Yard and grow the Brooklyn Tech Triangle. The entrepreneurial hub already houses more than 500 technology companies and 10,000 employees and is projected to expand its jobs to 15,000 by 2020. A new \$380 million, 675,000-square-foot building called Dock 72 will be completed by late 2017. Anticipated to be the largest commercial building built outside of Manhattan in years, it will house hundreds of small businesses and shared work space.

The Navy Yard's Admiral's Row once featured a line of Second Empire-style homes used by Navy officers. The 11 homes have long since fallen into ruin, swallowed by overgrown ivy and a tangle of forest. The houses are slated for demolition to make room for a new \$120 million, 285,000-square-foot mixed-use development that will include a Wegman's, multiple retail shops, parking and commercial and office space. Until then, passersby peer curiously at the crumbling urban decay once home to the Navy's elite.

Bear Mountain State Park
nysparks.com

BLDG 92
bldg92.org

Brooklyn Academy of Music
bam.org

Brooklyn Bridge Park
brooklynbridgepark.org

Brooklyn Navy Yard
brooklynnavyyard.org

Brooklyn Paramount Theatre
liu.edu/paramount

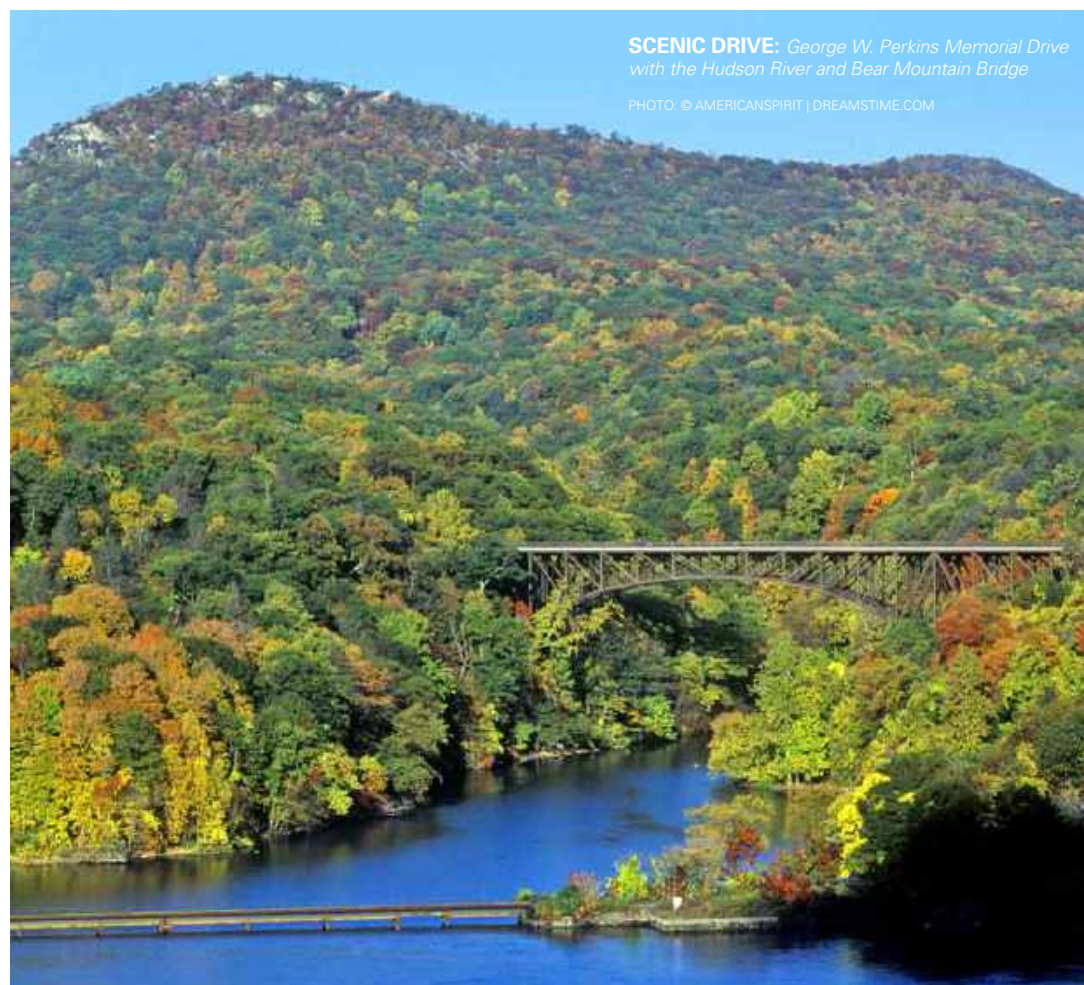
Brooklyn Tech Triangle
brooklyntechtriangle.com

Downtown Brooklyn
downtownbrooklyn.com

The Little Red Lighthouse
nycgovparks.org

Loew's Kings Theatre
kingstheatre.com

Lyndhurst
lyndhurst.org



SCENIC DRIVE: *George W. Perkins Memorial Drive with the Hudson River and Bear Mountain Bridge*

PHOTO: © AMERICANSPIRIT | DREAMSTIME.COM

SCENIC DRIVES

Head to the West Side Highway and cross the George Washington Bridge for waterfront views on your way to Bear Mountain State Park. Before you exit for the bridge, look underneath its leg along the Hudson for the 40-foot Little Red Lighthouse in Fort Washington Park. This historic lighthouse, inoperable since the 1940s, was nearly auctioned by the Coast Guard. A public outcry helped save it and prompted the children's book *The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge* by Hildegard H. Swift and Lynd Ward. After crossing the George Washington Bridge, take in the scenic views of the Palisades and watch as the mountain emerges alongside the Hudson River. At Bear Mountain State Park (about 50 miles from Brooklyn), look for the merry-go-round with its hand-painted scenes and 42 hand-carved seats including a bobcat and black bear.

Cruise north up Route 287 to Tarrytown and pay a visit to the Lyndhurst mansion just 24 miles from the city. Listed with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, this Gothic Revival mansion served as home to New York City Mayor William Paulding, merchant George Merritt and railroad tycoon Jay Gould. Today guests can tour the home and learn about its architecture, 19th-century decorative arts and landscape.

SAUDI ARABIA

Riyadh

The capital and largest city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh is home to more than 5 million people in the heart of the Arabian Peninsula. Once a nomadic settlement, this modern desert city offers visitors plenty of opportunities to explore its blend of old and new. Discover ancient Saudi Arabia in Old Riyadh and browse local souks before exploring the Bedouin desert on a camel ride or practicing the sport of *tat'ees* (dune driving). A visit to the National Museum provides an escape from the heat as well as an opportunity to explore the country's rich and diverse history and culture.

GETTING THERE

Major international and domestic airlines such as Saudi Arabian Airlines, Etihad Airways, Emirates, British Airways, Jet Airways, Turkish Airlines, Cathay Pacific and Lufthansa fly to King Khalid International Airport, located approximately 30 minutes from the city center. Taxis are the only mode of public transportation available to and from the airport. Authorized taxis, marked with the airport logo, are available 24 hours a day. Average prices start from approximately \$16. Many major car rental companies also serve the airport.

GETTING AROUND

Construction continues on the multibillion-dollar Riyadh Public Transport Project; slated to finish by 2018, the project will add metro, bus and other transport services in the city. Visitors can travel around the city in rental cars; Riyadh's white taxis, for a starting fare of approximately \$1.30; or Uber, for a base fare of about \$1.60. Be advised the country's Islamic establishment bans women from driving, and it is the law in Saudi Arabia that every woman must be accompanied by a male guardian.

9-5

Brasserie on Four

Before getting down to business, visit Brasserie on Four, located inside the Radisson Blu Hotel, Riyadh, for a power breakfast. The restaurant serves a super breakfast buffet every morning, including fresh-baked breads, fruits, pastries, cereals and international cuisine.

Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh

Set close to vital sites for business, the dining venues at Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh at Kingdom Centre offer the perfect spots for a business lunch meeting, offering cuisine fit for any palate, from Middle Eastern and Asian to Mediterranean. The Grill features an express business lunch menu including a choice of appetizer, main course and dessert, all served within 45 minutes.

CLAY CLIFFS SURROUNDING RIYADH

PHOTO: © SWISSHIPPO | DREAMSTIME.COM

**The Ritz-Carlton, Riyadh**

Catering to business travelers, The Ritz-Carlton, Riyadh features 62,000 square feet of hotel conference space ideal for international summits, high-profile board meetings and corporate celebrations. With the latest technology and stunning décor, venues including ballrooms, boardrooms, symposiums and meeting rooms can accommodate as few as 20 or as many as 2,000 attendees.

AFTER 5

Addiwan Tea Lounge

Treat a client to after-work drinks of the non-alcoholic variety, as the country prohibits alcohol consumption, at the Addiwan Tea Lounge inside the InterContinental Hotel Riyadh. Open until midnight, the lounge serves light snacks, coffee, tea and non-alcoholic cocktails, including its famous Lazy Morning and Purple Rain drinks especially popular with both locals and guests.

Globe

Perched atop the Al Faisaliah Tower in a gold geodesic orb, the Globe is an exclusive fine-dining restaurant boasting spectacular panoramic views of the city as well as a menu offering modern European dishes like duck with honey, vanilla and celeriac purée; or lamb with pumpkin, tomato and pecans.

Strike Bowling Alley

Open daily until 12 a.m., Strike Bowling Alley is

a popular high-end attraction at The Ritz-Carlton, Riyadh, offering a variety of entertainment options including billiards, bowling and sports viewing on impressive 100-inch televisions. In addition to six bowling lanes, the spot features a juice bar and serves American bar food favorites, shared platters and finger foods. Special themed events take place throughout the year highlighting holidays like Cinco de Mayo and Halloween, and Saturday and Tuesday nights are exclusively reserved for ladies.

RESOURCES

For more information, visit arriyadh.com

Addiwan Tea Lounge

ihg.com

Brasserie on Four

radissonblu.com

Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh at Kingdom Centre

fourseasons.com

InterContinental Hotel Riyadh

ihg.com

The Ritz-Carlton, Riyadh

ritzcarlton.com

Riyadh King Khalid International Airport

riyadh-airport.com

Strike Bowling Alley

ritzcarlton.com

EDITOR'S PICK ...

Consider the InterContinental Riyadh for your next visit to the city, surrounded by 100 acres of gardens.

Welcome to World-Class Service

With a new fleet, expanding network and world-class service, Saudia celebrates its 70th year with renewed vigor and optimism.



SEAT COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE ARE A PRIORITY IN SAUDIA'S SERVICES, characterized by state-of-the-art equipment and the latest in in-flight entertainment. Saudia's First and Business Class seats are among the most luxurious and comfortable today.

The three-class configuration B777-300ERs that fly to certain destinations have flat-beds in First Class and a 3-3-3 Guest Class (Economy) seat configuration with plenty of legroom for all.



FOUNDED IN 1945 WITH A SINGLE DC-3, Saudia now has a modern fleet of more than 100 jets flying to more than 70 destinations worldwide. As a member of SkyTeam, it has a global network that combines 20 world-class airlines servicing more than 1,000 cities.



SAUDIA'S IN-FLIGHT CUISINE IS WORLD CLASS in quality and presentation with many choices available for the passenger. Arabic, Western, international and delectable dishes of the destination country are on offer along with fresh juices and beverages. On the ground, in select airports, lounges are available for First and Business Class passengers as well as Gold and Silver Alfursan members.



SAUDIA'S FLEET MODERNIZATION PROGRAM is well underway with the latest wide-bodied jets being put into service every year. In the United States, new B777-300ERs have been delivered and B787-900 Dreamliners are on order. As a full-fledged member of SkyTeam global alliance, some of Saudia's aircraft carry the SkyTeam livery with pride.

Learn more at www.saudiairlines.com





TRADITION: Jeddah Old Town

PHOTO: © ULRICH MUELLER | DREAMSTIME.COM

Usual and Customary

Get to know Jeddah's traditions before arriving in the cosmopolitan city. BY SHARON KING HOGE

For 15 centuries, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia's largest city, served as the historic gateway to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and every year millions of pilgrims flock there. But Jeddah, the kingdom's second-largest city and only port on the Red Sea, ranks as an important Middle East commercial center, attracting people from all over the world to do business here.

Although fire demolished much of the ancient city, dating back to 522, modern Jeddah proves a thriving, rapidly expanding metropolis of 4.3 million people. One of the most liberal cities in the kingdom, it encourages business activity, with the government focused on developing the city into a leading force in science and engineering. Jeddah welcomes business activity, with innovation.

Jeddah presents a cosmopolitan air, yet despite the relaxed atmosphere, it is important to observe the rules of business etiquette. Western dress is acceptable for men; however, long hair and piercings are not. Women must not drive; and while foreign women aren't required to cover their heads and wear black robes, it is appreciated when they do. Avoid discussion of the

royal family since any word interpreted as an insult could result in the death penalty. Overseas investors must include a local partner who is not required to participate financially but who retains the option to control and close the business and must be paid.

Since tourism is strictly regulated, the preponderance of non-pilgrim overseas visitors arrive on business, landing at the striking, white King Abdulaziz

International Airport, the country's busiest, located about 15 miles north of town. The design features exposed structural piping and a yellow and red "kite" motif overhead. While the airport undergoes extensive expansion, the North Terminal handles foreign carriers. For those whose hotels don't provide shuttle service from the airport, door-to-door shuttle buses depart from the lower floor of the North Terminal just outside baggage claim and charge around \$15 for the 45-minute trip to town. A metered taxi ride to the city center takes about half an hour and costs around \$50. Within town, taxis are numerous, but drivers often require a reminder to turn on the meter.

Expanding wildly since the 1940s, Jeddah now spreads 17 miles north along the Corniche coastline road to the Abhor beach area. King Abdulaziz Street is the principal north-south axis, while corporate offices and commercial developments are concentrated on Prince Saud al-Faisal Street. Department stores and boutiques line the fashion and shopping thoroughfare, Tahlia Street. Numerous malls offer dining, shopping and escape from the heat. The yacht-themed Mall of Arabia even features a

winter wonderland Snow Village.

Because of traffic congestion, most business travelers prefer to select a hotel with proximity to the airport and offices. A favorite, the Rosewood Jeddah, rates high marks for its location, food and fitness center. Although not beachside, guestrooms in its tall, curving tower offer views of the Corniche. Rooms feature dark wood accents and textile awnings over some beds. Just 20 minutes from the airport, the immense Jeddah Hilton offers beach views and a lobby adorned with waterfalls and fountains. Boasting one of the city's largest conference centers, it provides reliable rooms and amenities plus squash and tennis courts, a Hilton Fitness spa and shopping arcade.

The 5-star Park Hyatt Jeddah – Marina, Club and Spa attracts visitors to sparkling white guestrooms accented with Arabian textiles and glass console bathroom counters. Its several meeting and conference rooms include two facing the sea, “suitable for high-profile product launches.” A ladies’ spa and a sports and wellness center for gentlemen augment tennis and squash courts, a gym, sauna and traditional hammam. Although aging, the five-story InterContinental Jeddah lies near the city center and directly on the Corniche. Guestrooms outfitted with draperies and traditional décor are scattered in structures around the property. The health club is acclaimed and the staff lauded for efficiency.

In a city with an influx of global visitors, it's no wonder restaurants feature an array of international cuisines. Most upscale hotels provide a selection of dining options. The open show kitchen of Park Hyatt's Nafoura offers an à la carte lunch menu for business travelers, and its ladies-only restaurant Dardasha features a traditional afternoon tea. But visitors who venture beyond the hotels find an array of choices, many focused on fish and seafood.

Those with a hankering for Italian fare can visit Margherita in a typical seaside house or Il Gabbiano on the North Corniche. Enjoy Indian fare at Zaika on office-heavy Prince Saud al-Faisal Street. On the same street, try Turkish Köşebaşı for quick business lunches or The Butcher Shop & Grill, a popular steakhouse. Sushi and sashimi feature on the menu at ZN in the Roshan Mall on Talia Street.

Al Nakheel on the North Corniche serves traditional Hijazi Saudi cuisine, with beautiful views of the Red Sea. Two favorite venues specialize in Lebanese fare: Yonine on Malik Road serves classics with a modern twist in a palace-like setting, and Byblos, perhaps the most popular high-end restaurant, caters to a wide audience, with local and international businesspeople favoring it for



lunch. The same owners feature Chinese and Asian food at Toki and Indian food at Bharat on Sari Street in the Stars Avenue Mall.

Visitors should find time to visit Old Jeddah, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Its Souq al-Alawi has changed little through the centuries, still thronged with pilgrims and traders from all over the world. The Al-Balad district — called “one of the most enchanting places in the kingdom” — is a traditional neighborhood with buildings made of coral overhung by intricate carved balconies. One of the coral structures houses the Jeddah Museum, and the Regional Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology was once the Khuzam Palace of King Abdul Aziz.

Financed by the 1970s and 1980s oil boom, a wealth of public art makes Jeddah one of the world's largest open-air art galleries. You'll find works by Jean Arp, Alexander Calder, Henry Moore, Joan Miró — plus sculptures of bicycles and wrecked cars embedded in concrete — in roundabouts and on promenades along the Corniche. Hard to miss is King Fahd's Fountain, more than a thousand feet high, cited by Guinness World Records as the highest water jet in the world. In September 2014, Jeddah hoisted a huge Saudi flag up what is currently the world's tallest unsupported flagpole, according to Guinness. Fountain and flag offer two superlative landmarks welcoming pilgrims and business travelers to Saudi Arabia's most cosmopolitan city.



ONLINE EXTRA

Jump to gtravmag.com/hookah to read about hookah smoking.

SEA VIEWS: Dining at Park Hyatt Jeddah – Marina, Club and Spa

PHOTO: © PARK HYATT JEDDAH – MARINA, CLUB AND SPA

The Butcher Shop & Grill

thebutchershop-me.com

InterContinental Jeddah
ihg.com

Jeddah Hilton Hotel
hilton.com

Jeddah Municipality
www.jeddah.gov.sa

Köşebaşı
kosebasi.com

Mall of Arabia
mallofarabia.com.sa

Park Hyatt Jeddah – Marina, Club and Spa
park.hyatt.com

Rosewood Jeddah
rosewoodhotels.com

Enchanted Evenings

Kyoto entertains after dark with clubs, local cuisine and kabuki. BY VICTORIA ABBOTT RICCARDI

Once the sun sinks behind the mountains of Kyoto, the city darkens, quiets and closes its doors. However, if you know where to slide open the proverbial screen, you'll encounter a vibrant night world in this former capital of Japan, established in 794. In addition to steamy noodle shops and student-filled dance clubs, you'll find elegant riverfront restaurants, lively pubs and entertainment ranging from kimono-clad singers to kabuki theater actors.

While business travelers to Japan tend to be escorted by their Japanese hosts, occasionally you may be on your own. If so, consider a pre-prandial cocktail at your hotel, since Kyoto's bar scene tends to rev up after dinner. In the sleek, candlelit The Bar in The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto, you'll find an impressive array of classic and modern drinks, while the cozy, antique-filled Touzan Bar in the Hyatt Regency Kyoto serves more than 30 different premium sakés, including several made in Kyoto.

Because of its inland location, Kyoto is famous for its vegetables, not sushi, along with Buddhist vegetarian fare (Kyoto boasts more than 2,000 temples and shrines) such as *yudofu* (homemade tofu simmered in water with various accompaniments). Because the emperor once lived in Kyoto, the cuisine is delicate and refined, light on spices, oils and soy. Options range from the budget-friendly Japanese savory pancake (*okonomiyaki*) to *kaiseki*, a multicourse meal rooted in the Japanese tea ceremony and considered Japan's most lauded cuisine.

You'll find exceptional *kaiseki* at the century-old Kikunoi, where, overlooking an illuminated garden, you'll encounter a parade of small, seasonal dishes featuring such ingredients as chestnuts and fresh ginkgo nuts. In autumn dishes arrive adorned with flame-colored maple leaves. Yoshikawa near the Imperial Palace serves some of the best tempura in the city, while Ikkyu, just outside Daitokuji Temple, serves sumptuous vegetarian Buddhist temple fare as it has since the 1400s.

For after-hours entertainment, the Gion has the highest concentration of teahouses filled with *geiko* (the Kyoto term for geisha) and *maiko* (geisha in training) amusing clients through song, drinking games and dance. While it's almost impossible to enter an exclusive teahouse without a Japanese host, you can book a performance at Gion Corner to view *maiko* dancing or hear zither or Japanese court music.

If you want a nightcap, realize most Japanese bars feel hidden, often tucked away down lantern-lit alleys and behind



unmarked doors and smoked glass. Hello Dolly in the lively Pontacho district offers strong drinks and great jazz, while nearby Bar Cordon Noir serves approximately 600 kinds of whiskey, including several standout brands made in Japan. LGBT travelers will find few places to connect in Kyoto, unlike in Tokyo and nearby Osaka. That said, the gay-friendly bar Azure welcomes foreigners.

A final tip: Be sure to carry a card from your hotel. That way, no matter what time your evening ends, a taxi can deliver you safely (and in style) to your door.

JAPANESE STYLE: *Kyoto at night (top), and a traditional elegant kaiseki meal (bottom)*

PHOTOS: © AAA187 | DREAMSTIME.COM,
© LCC54613 | DREAMSTIME.COM

Azure
azure-kyoto.info

The Bar
ritzcarlton.com

Kikunoi
kikunoi.jp

Kyoto Tourist Information Center
his-kyoto.com

Touzan Bar
regency.hyatt.com

Yoshikawa
kyoto-yoshikawa.co.jp



Day Out

Escape Hong Kong's bustle with a spree in Stanley.

BY BETH REIBER

Hong Kong Correctional Services Museum

csd.gov.hk/emuseum

Hong Kong

discoverhongkong.com

Stanley Market

hk-stanley-market.com

VILLAGE LIFE: Stanley Market (left), and the Blake Pier (right)

PHOTOS: © BETH REIBER

I can't keep track of how many times I've been to Hong Kong over the past 30 years, but I always make a point of spending at least half a day in Stanley. In fact, compared to bustling Central or Kowloon, going to Stanley is like taking a mini vacation. First, there's the roller-coaster bus ride in a double-decker from Central that careens around curves and zips over hills on its 30-minute journey, providing tantalizing views of the South China Sea along the way. Although bargain shopping makes my heart beat faster, a leisurely meal is also always in the picture.

Stanley village, sprawled along a peninsula on the south side of Hong Kong Island, exudes a relaxed and laid-back ambience, making it popular among foreign residents and visitors alike. Just a minute's walk from the bus stop, Stanley Market provides the top tourist draw, an intimate warren of narrow streets lined with stalls and shops selling clothing for the entire family — shoes, watches, linens and Chinese souvenirs.

A woman at one of the stalls spotted me eyeing one of her silk scarves on my last visit. As she told me, the first customer brings good luck, so she gave me a good price.

Actually, I bought several scarves because purchasing more than one item from any one vendor usually fetches an even better price.

You'll find loads of inexpensive clothing — think silk dresses, linen blazers, cashmere sweaters, sportswear — as well as Chinese art (a framed calligraphy of

your English name is popular), beaded purses, jewelry, embroidered tablecloths and many other crafts and souvenirs.

After shopping, reward yourself with a meal at one of the open-air restaurants on the waterfront promenade at the far end of the market, where you have a view of boats bobbing in the harbor; the historic Murray House, first erected as officers' quarters in Central in 1844 and moved here stone by stone in 2002; and Blake Pier, with ferry service to Aberdeen and Po Toi Island.

You can also visit the quirky Hong Kong Correctional Services Museum with its canes, handcuffs, replica gallows and jail cells, and other artifacts stretching back more than 170 years to Hong Kong's early colonial days. Stanley's name in Cantonese, in fact, is Chek Chue, literally "Bandit's Post," supposedly after a notorious pirate said to have holed up and stashed his treasures here in a cave.

Nowadays, though, I am the one who feels she has made out like a bandit because escaping to Stanley proves so much fun.

To make a day of it, head to nearby Stanley Beach popular with families for its lifeguards, changing facilities and barbecue grills.

UNITED STATES

Miami

Miami, Fla., beckons sun-seekers to its coastline, beaches and buzzing nightlife. Alive with a spark and flair unlike any other U.S. city, Miami also serves as a leading hub in the finance, commerce, culture, media, entertainment, arts and trade sectors. World-class in every way, from the sand and surf to the cuisine and culture, Miami is also known as the Cruise Capital of the World, ranking as the No. 1 cruise port worldwide.

GETTING THERE

A recent \$6.2 billion capital investment added a fourth runway to Miami International Airport, and completion of the project will expand terminal space to 7.5 million square feet. From the airport travelers can connect to the Metrorail network of public transportation via AirportLink. The Airport Flyer express bus runs every 30 minutes 6 a.m.–11 p.m. daily for \$2.35 one way. Taxis are also readily available. Blue cabs service the immediate area for \$10–14. Regular cabs travel to Coral Gables, the Port and South Beach for flat rates, at \$16, \$24 and \$32, respectively.

GETTING AROUND

Miami is a driving city, so renting a car may be the best option for getting around town. Taxis are also plentiful, but be advised the entire fleet is not yet fully digital, so it is best to have some cash on hand. The Metrobus, Metrorail and Metromover public transportation systems are reliable; Metrobus offers more than 90 routes, and Metrorail is a 22-mile, 22 station commuter rail line. Both cost about \$2 per ride. The complimentary Metromover makes a 4.4-mile loop downtown. In Coral Gables and Downtown, trolley service is available.

9–5

Edge, Steak & Bar

High-quality, locally sourced and stylish — these are apt descriptions for Edge, Steak & Bar in the Four Seasons Hotel Miami. The chef grows many of his own ingredients in the garden located on the hotel's pool terrace. With all-day dining available, power up for your day or impress clients with breakfast here, beginning at 6:30 a.m.

National Hotel

For unique meeting space, head to National Hotel on South Beach. With more than 4,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space, extra-special flourishes include Art Deco details, rooms that open to the pool terrace and a Blues Bar.

Zuma

Get down to business over lunch with a meal at Brickell Avenue's Zuma. Chef Rainer Becker's modern Japanese has impressed at locations around the globe and will help you impress clients in the South Florida city. Lunch is served 12–3 p.m., and private dining and event space are also available.

MIAMI BEACH

PHOTO: © FOTOMAK | DREAMSTIME.COM



AFTER 5

Bocce

Here, it's called "aperitivo hour." Daily 4–7 p.m. at the bar and on the patio, Bocce's after-work menu offers food and drink specials, including \$7 pizzas and \$6 cocktails. The midtown Miami eatery specializes in authentic Italian and innovative beverages while also boasting the city's only official bocce court.

Coya

Looking for an impressive dinner in downtown Miami? Consider Coya, serving authentic Peruvian food with a modern flair. From ceviche to bespoke Pisco cocktails, the experience embodies Latin American culture. The Incan-inspired décor complements the expertly crafted dishes designed for sharing.

Nikki Beach

Experience the legendary Miami nightlife at this South Beach hotspot. On the beach, private cabanas are ideal for enjoying the outdoors and an evening libation. The property is perfect for dancing the night away with an exclusive clientele. Pearl South Beach & Champagne Lounge defines South Beach chic.

RESOURCES

For more information, visit miamiandbeaches.com

Bocce

bocceistorante.com

Coya

coyarestaurant.com

Edge, Steak & Bar

fourseasons.com

Miami International Airport

miami-airport.com

Miami-Dade Transit

miamidade.gov/transit

National Hotel

nationalhotel.com

Nikki Beach

nikkibeach.com

SLS South Beach

slshotels.com

Zuma

zumarestaurant.com

EDITOR'S PICK ...

See and be seen at SLS South Beach, a luxury property from Sam Nazarian, Philippe Starck, Chef José Andrés and Lenny Kravitz.



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TIMELESS VIEW: Caesarea
aqueduct at sunset
PHOTO: © ELLEN CLARK

Land of Creation

Israel inspires with a rich blend of ancient history and modern culture. BY ELLEN CLARK

I wasn't sure what to expect on my business trip to Tel Aviv, but the city definitely exceeded any possible expectations. Almost immediately I felt the energy and buzz of this modern and passionate city. Unquestionably the business center of Israel, it is also known for its happening cultural scene and, located right on the Mediterranean, its lively beach vibe. Though a relatively new city, founded in 1909, it isn't far from its historic counterpart. While the modern rules in Tel Aviv, history abounds in the 4,000-year-old port city of Jaffa.

As lively and intriguing as Tel Aviv was, once the business part of my trip concluded, it was time to explore. One can't visit one of the world's most historic countries and miss seeing Jerusalem and Masada nor floating in the Dead Sea.

We could hit many must-sees as daytrips out of Tel Aviv, but decided to spend a few nights in Jerusalem. Given that Jerusalem, Israel's largest city, pulses with history and things to see, I wanted time to absorb and

reflect. So early the next morning, it was time to set off for one of the holiest cities in the world.

Before diving into Jerusalem's center, however, there was a stop at the Mount of Olives to get an overview of the area. Though not particularly Bible-savvy, even I had heard of the Mount of Olives. The spot figured prominently in Jesus' life and is said to be the place he ascended into heaven. One of the world's oldest cemeteries is sited here, with an estimated 150,000 people buried on the mountain over a period of 3,000 years. But beyond its rich history, the mountain affords uninterrupted views of one of the world's most legendary cities.

In Jerusalem, on the way from the hotel to the Old City, we walked through the recently opened pedestrian-only Mamilla Mall. High-end stores and alfresco dining stood in striking contrast to what we found beyond the Jaffa Gate. When I got into the labyrinth that makes up the Old City souk, the abundant hustle, noise, color and activity made me

HIGHLIGHTS: Daniel Kafri's Gate of Faith sculpture at the Peak Park in Jaffa (top), fresh bread just outside Jerusalem's walled city (middle), and the Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem (bottom)

PHOTOS: © ELLEN CLARK



positively giddy. Merchants vie for attention, urging one to “just have a look.” Smells from tiny restaurants and spice dealers permeate the air, the crush of ethnically diverse shoppers overwhelms, and everything is for sale, from the tackiest souvenirs to religious icons, brass menorahs to belly dancing costumes. All prices are negotiable; haggling is not just tolerated but expected.

Four sections comprise the Old City: the Armenian, the Christian, the Jewish and the Muslim quarters. Predictably, the famous Western (Wailing) Wall is located in the Jewish Quarter, serving as the site for Jewish prayer and pilgrimage for centuries. As one of Judaism's holiest sites, it remains the place where devout Jewish men come to pray. In keeping with the Orthodox tradition, this is a male-only activity, although women have a small section. I looked for a spot above the wall where I could observe the action. This turned out to be trickier than I thought, and I spent a fair amount of time taking wrong turns, winding up in narrow alleys and hitting dead ends. Finally, I found my way to an overlook which had a view of a large square, the famous wall and the constant flow of mostly men, mostly dressed in black, coming and going.

For foodies, check out Machane Yehuda Market, where locals have bought their food for years. Recently it has become the place to eat as well. Various chefs give culinary tours of the market, allowing visitors to shop and eat in one fell swoop. We signed up with Chef Tali Friedman and happily followed her as she led our small group through the market, educating us about unusual spices, produce and cheese while she shopped. The shopping completed, we retired to her studio apartment over the market where we all donned aprons and helped cook a sumptuous dinner. A unique experience and just too much fun.

Two final adventures: Visiting a 2,000-year-old fortress with a grisly past and taking a dip in a sea in which you cannot sink.

LODGING

BROWN BEACH HOUSE HOTEL

This boutique hotel, just a few minutes' walk from the beach, boasts a hip retro design, a gourmet kosher restaurant, a sundeck with city views, a spa, business facilities and personalized service. 64 Ha'Yarkon St., Tel Aviv \$\$\$\$

KING DAVID HOTEL

Opened in 1931, the King David has hosted scores of luminaries from Barack Obama to Madonna. Besides outstanding accommodations and service, the hotel offers wonderful views of the Old City. 23 King David St., Jerusalem \$\$\$\$

THE NORMAN TEL AVIV

Housed in two beautifully restored 1920s residences, this 50-room hotel offers a tranquil vibe and understated elegance. Enjoy an impressive modern art collection, a rooftop infinity pool and two gourmet restaurants. 23-25 Nachmani St., Tel Aviv \$\$\$\$

DINING

THE EUCALYPTUS

Chef Moshe Basson serves a modern interpretation of biblical cuisine. Every dish has its origins in biblical scenes and uses spices and herbs grown, as in ancient times, in Jerusalem and Judea. 14 Hativat Yerushalayim St., Jerusalem \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

HAHALUTZIM 3

Eytan Vanunu, one of the most creative young chefs in Israel today, makes every element of his recipes by hand and serves them in a laid-back, intimate atmosphere. 3 Hahalutzim St., Tel Aviv \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

MACHNEYUDA RESTAURANT

Located in Jerusalem's Machane Yehuda Market, the restaurant's three chefs shop for ingredients in the market and prepare menus accordingly in their fully interactive open kitchen. 10 Beit Yaakov St., Jerusalem \$\$\$\$



AWASH IN HISTORY: *Dead Sea float (top), the Wailing Wall (middle), and entrance to the Jaffa Museum (bottom)*

PHOTOS: © MICHELLELJAW | DREAMSTIME.COM, © SEAN PAVONE | DREAMSTIME.COM, © SEAN PAVONE | DREAMSTIME.COM



Masada, literally translated as “fortress,” perches on top of a steep hill, so most visitors opt to take the cable car to the top. The ruins are remarkably well-preserved, in part due to the climatic conditions, and provide lovely views of the Dead Sea. But in the year 70 this was the scene of a gruesome event that defined the site forever. When Jewish rebels, who had escaped to Masada and managed to hold off the Roman garrisons for three years, realized they would soon be captured, they chose mass suicide instead. Even though this happened long ago, as I walked around the ruins I couldn’t quite shake a melancholy feeling, as if the souls of the victims lingered.

Before heading for the beach, I stopped at Masada Visitors Center’s extensive gift shop, where I couldn’t resist buying a package of black Dead Sea mud.

Fortunately, public beaches provide bathrooms, changing rooms and showers, so I changed, slathered the gooey mud everywhere I could reach and slid into the ridiculously salty water. And it’s true: You cannot sink in the Dead Sea, no matter how hard you try. But this isn’t a sea for swimming; and after we floated around for a bit, the novelty wore off.

Back in Jerusalem, dine at The Eucalyptus Restaurant. Owner/chef Moshe Basson’s interest in biblical culture led him to research and resurrect recipes from ancient times. The menu includes dishes made from ingredients indigenous to Israel, including spices and herbs grown locally. In Jerusalem, I can’t imagine a more appropriate dinner than one inspired by biblical times, just a stone’s throw from the Old City wall.



ONLINE EXTRA
Jump to gtravmag.com/cnp to read about archaeological digs at Caesarea National Park.



INFO TO GO

Ben Gurion Airport, Israel’s main airport, lies in the heart of the country, about 25 miles from Jerusalem and 10 miles from Tel Aviv. Its two main terminals handle domestic and international flights. Israel Railways, located on the lower level of Terminal 3, takes passengers to the Tel Aviv Savidor Central Railway Station in about 18 minutes. The airport is also served by regular intercity bus lines, limousine and private shuttle services, Sherut shared door-to-door taxi vans and standard taxis.

Brown Beach House Hotel
brownhotels.com/beach

Machane Yehuda Market
machne.co.il

The Eucalyptus
the-eucalyptus.com

Machneyuda Restaurant
machneyuda.co.il/en

HaHalutzim 3
halutzim3.com

Mamilla Hotel Rooftop Lounge and Restaurant.
mamillahotel.com/rooftop

Israel Ministry of Tourism
goisrael.com

Masada National Park
masada.org.il

King David Hotel
danhotels.com

The Norman Tel Aviv
thenorman.com


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 Classic Japanese cuisine makes a stop at the @WaldorfAstoria Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates. Read here: bit.ly/1PJc1IW



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OUTER BEAUTY: Leopard (left), and Burchell's zebra (right)

PHOTOS: © RICHARD NEWTON

On the Wild Side

Encounter rare sightings on a South African safari. BY RICHARD NEWTON

I have spent most of my life avoiding South Africa's Kruger National Park. Since childhood, I have enjoyed safaris in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi (where I worked as a wildlife officer), Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana and private South African reserves.

Kruger always struck me as too tame, with its asphalt roads and fenced camps, and too popular — dozens of vehicles crowding the roadside for a single sighting.

But there are also arguments in favor of South Africa's oldest, largest and most famous park. It is vast — almost the size of New Jersey — and protects a diverse patchwork of habitats. Away from the main camps, one can easily lose the crowds and enjoy a genuine sense of wilderness, especially on the dirt roads branching from the main routes.

Last year, my wife and I finally set aside our prejudices and spent two weeks self-driving in Kruger. We became instant converts. So much so, we decided to go back for another two weeks this year. This time, however, we combined the standard self-drive experience with something much more exclusive.

On the eastern side of Kruger National Park, adjacent to South Africa's border with Mozambique, resides a 33,000-acre concession managed by the celebrated high-end safari company Singita.

Singita Lebombo Lodge consists of 15 luxurious suites perched on a cliffside overlooking the N'wanetsi River. After the functional facilities of Kruger's government-run camps, our arrival at Singita presented instant culture shock.

Pulling up in our dust-covered VW Polo, we were instantly offered wet towels and cold drinks. Our luggage was seamlessly spirited to

our suite and the car driven away. When we next saw it, on departure three days later, it had been cleaned inside and out.

In contrast to the rustic vernacular of many luxury safari lodges, the public areas at Singita Lebombo incorporate natural materials into an architectural style that is unashamedly modernist. The striking architectural language carries over into the glass-walled, loft-style suites which offer 21st-century comfort while simultaneously integrating with the surrounding wilderness.

We had a short time to settle into the room before returning on the long, winding walkway to the lounge area for teatime snacks ahead of the main event: the game drive.

Within Kruger proper, visitors are entirely restricted to the roads, and there is a curfew from sunset to sunrise. Here, in an open Land Rover, our driver/guide, Enos, was free to take us on detours through the bush, directed by the tracker, Howard, from his perch above the front bumper.

Within minutes of leaving the lodge, we were in the middle of an elephant herd. A young male put on a show of ear-flapping bluster, but most of the animals remained relaxed. We were close enough to smell them and to hear the rumble of their low-frequency communication.

Farther on, Howard relinquished his exposed position and joined us in the back before we approached a huge pride of 36 lions on a recent buffalo kill. Enos steered across rough ground to a prime viewing position, and there we sat as the sun set, surrounded by happily engorged big cats.

After a stop for sundowners at a scenic viewpoint, we resumed our drive in darkness. Howard was back in place, scanning the bush with a spotlight. Our list of sightings lengthened: hyenas, black-backed jackals, grazing hippos and owls.

Back at the lodge, after dinner beside the ethereally illuminated swimming pool (meals, drinks and snacks are included in the price), we were escorted to our suite by a guard — there is no fence around the lodge, and wild animals often wander through.

Up before dawn, we dressed warmly for the day's first game drive. After coffee in the lounge, we returned to the vehicle with Enos and Howard. During the first hour we saw very little. (Such lulls are common on safari.) Then Howard spotted a female leopard.

With expert intuition, Enos drove us away from the sighting, picked a way down to a sandy riverbed, and then took us back to the animal. She had recently killed an impala and was attempting to drag the carcass up the steep riverbank. Eventually she gave up. For 30 incredible minutes, we enjoyed a clear, close view of the magnificent cat.

Much as we appreciated the luxury at Singita Lebombo Lodge, this was what made the place so special — the quality of the sightings.

Singita is peerless for the Big Five (elephant, rhino, buffalo, leopard and lion), but safari veterans are always looking for rarer game. My wife and I had heard of another exclusive lodge, close to South Africa's border with Botswana and offering a good chance of seeing one of the continent's most elusive creatures.

And so it was that we arrived at the exclusive Fireblade Aviation Terminal at Johannesburg International Airport to board a private Pilatus aircraft for the 90-minute flight to the 250,000-acre Tswalu Kalahari Game Reserve, South Africa's largest private reserve, owned by one of the country's wealthiest dynasties, the Oppenheimer family.

On touchdown, we knew we had arrived in a magical place. The arid land displayed a patchwork of striking colors: bleached grass, underlying sand in swathes of red and fawn, dark green trees, stratified purple hills.

Our driver/guide, Nicole, and Jackson, the tracker, met us. The basic safari routines would be the same as at Singita, though with significantly different wildlife. No elephants, for a start. Instead, Tswalu is famed for its desert species, including the Kalahari lion (the world's biggest lion subspecies, much larger than



OUT THERE: Suites at Singita Lebombo Lodge (top and middle), and a cheetah (bottom)

PHOTOS: © RICHARD NEWTON



the lions we'd seen at Singita), gemsbok, springbok, desert black rhino and — we hoped — aardvark.

After checking in to our spacious thatched suite at the Motse, Tswalu's main lodge, we headed out for our afternoon game drive. It didn't take long to find the animal we'd waited our lifetimes to see. A bumbling shape rustled through the long, white grass. "Aardvark," said Nicole matter-of-factly.

We abandoned the vehicle and, in silence, judging each footfall to avoid noise, we stalked our quarry through the bush. Soon we had a clear view. There it was with its rabbit-like ears, its kangaroo-like tail and its long snout. Elsewhere in Africa, aardvarks are strictly nocturnal and immensely shy. But at Tswalu they become active in late afternoon and have grown used to being tracked by tourists.

We returned to the vehicle contented, having joined the small coterie of people who can boast of having seen an aardvark in the wild.

Tswalu is divided into two fenced sections by a government road. On the Motse side, the main predators are hunting dogs. When we passed through gates to the other side, we entered lion country.

Reading fresh tracks in the sand, Nicole and Jackson zeroed in on a pride. These hefty cats were every bit as impressive as we'd imagined. They lay within feet of our open vehicle, ignoring us.

On our final morning, Tswalu had one last magical experience in store. We walked to a barren clear-

ing pocked with the entrance holes of a labyrinthine burrow. Eventually, one by one, the wily inhabitants began to emerge. Standing in rows on their hind legs, they basked in the warmth of the rising sun. Meerkats.

Like the aardvark and lions, the meerkats accorded us the ultimate privilege — they completely ignored us. We crouched among them and saw the world from a meerkat's perspective. Their heads constantly twitched this way and that, scanning the air for eagles, checking the ground for snakes.

Eventually, when the sun had warmed them sufficiently and they were satisfied the coast was clear, they headed off for a day of foraging. We watched them go.

Our own time was also nearly up. We made one last game drive, encountering a pair of cheetahs, an impressive kudu bull and, at the end of the airstrip with our waiting plane in view, a large giraffe herd.

The end of a safari always provides a wrench. After the timeless idyll of the wild, we were returning to the reality of modern life. Yet we were leaving with new experiences to draw on as an antidote to daily stresses. The time we spent at Singita and Tswalu was all too brief, but the memories are indelible.



ONLINE EXTRA

Jump to gtravmag.com/cheetah to read about the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre.

BIG AND LITTLE: *An elephant (left), and meerkats (right)*

PHOTOS: © RICHARD NEWTON

INFO TO GO

Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo International Airport is the ideal staging post for both Kruger National Park and Tswalu Kalahari Game Reserve. We flew to Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport by scheduled flight, then drove by rental car to Kruger — a drive of just over an hour. (From the gate it's another five hours to Singita, including wildlife-viewing along the way.) Transfers to Tswalu are from either Johannesburg or Cape Town International Airport with Fireblade Aviation.

Fireblade Aviation

firebladeaviation.com

Kruger National Park

sanparks.org/parks/kruger

Singita Lebombo Lodge

singita.com/lebombo-lodge

South African Tourism

southafrica.net

Tswalu Kalahari Game Reserve

tswalu.com



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BEACH BEAUTY: Buck Island, St. Croix

PHOTO: © U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM



Virgin Territory

Feel worlds away on a vacation in the U.S. Virgin Islands. BY KRISTY ALPERT

At some point in every adult's life, an exotic beach vacation becomes less a fantasy and more a necessity. I reached that point in my early 20s. After weeks spent meeting with clients and gasping under the pressure of looming deadlines in my first office job, I booked a ticket and boarded a plane for the sandy paradise of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Within hours of landing, I enjoyed a scene I had only seen on the postcard pinned to my cubicle wall. I slid off my sandals and sank my toes into the sun-warmed white sand, hearing the faint sound of steel drums in the distance as the warm breeze glazed over my body. Filling my lungs with the salty-sweet sea air, I couldn't have felt farther from the office — but in reality, I hadn't even left the country.

Located just east of Puerto Rico in the Caribbean Sea, the U.S. Virgin Islands boast a year-round warm temperature that bounces between 77 and 82 degrees. The islands represent the northernmost portion of the Leeward Islands in the Lesser Antilles but are an organized, unincorporated territory of the United States, meaning passports aren't

required for U.S. citizens. Despite proudly waving a flag as an "American paradise," the islands developed a definitive culture from their blended histories and now present a flavor and tradition all their own.

Christopher Columbus claimed discovery of these islands in 1493, although two arboriginal tribes already inhabited them: the Caribs and the Arawaks. Since then, the islands have flown no less than seven flags from their corner of the Caribbean. Influences from each ruling country still freckle the islands, from Spanish courtyards and Danish architecture to French culinary influences. The primary influence came from the more than 251-year stretch the islands spent under Danish rule. The Danes set up vast sugar and tobacco plantations, grand estates set among lush gardens and the famous "step streets" (*frigangs*) that work their way up the hills. Even though the Danes haven't been in control here since the United States took possession March 31, 1917, the Danish aesthetic still sparkles through as you walk along the pristine streets and gaze at the vibrant red roofs and colorful shutters of the well-preserved yellow-brick buildings.

ALL ASHORE: *Mahogany Run Golf Course, St. Thomas (top); and Mermaid Beach at The Buccaneer, St. Croix (bottom)*

PHOTOS: © U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

With so many rulers stirring the pot, it'd be easy to write off the USVI as a destination without an identity; but, thankfully, the untiring and lively spirit of the Virgin Islanders persevered through the changes. The islands managed to blend their history into an enchanting essence that's at once tenacious, hospitable and enduring.

Today, most visitors think of the three most prominent "saints" — St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John — which, along with the petite and unsullied Water Island, make up the main destinations of the chain. But the territory actually comprises more than 50 minor islands, islets and cays. Each island plays a significant role in seasoning the USVI with a spicy and vibrant flavor, but to the locals who call the islands home, the balance is a bit more defined. They view the islands in city planning terms, where St. Thomas serves as the city, St. Croix represents the suburbs, and St. John is the country.

A cosmopolitan energy surrounds St. Thomas, where you can spend your days luxuriating in the sands of a private beach, shopping exclusive designer collections at The Shops at Yacht Haven Grande, sipping craft cocktails at one of the hottest bars in Frenchtown or savoring gourmet dining at the Old Stone Farmhouse restaurant nestled in the hills of a former Danish sugar plantation. Yet even with its city reputation, a laid-back ambience surrounds this 32-square-mile island.

World-famous golf courses and more than 40 pristine white-sand beaches set aside a sea of stunning turquoise waters paint a backdrop of serenity across St. Thomas. All the beaches (even those along the gorgeous Ritz-Carlton property) are open to the public, from the famous mile-long stretch along Magens Bay to the secluded shores that make Lindquist Beach the perfect spot to get away from it all. The shallow shorelines and deep waters make all the beaches on St. Thomas great for snorkeling, sailing or diving — even night kayaking at the Marriott Frenchman's Reef inside clear-bottomed, LED-lit kayaks with the Adventure Center.

Most visitors favor St. Thomas as a shopping mecca, a reputation that dates back to 1607 when settlers on their way to Jamestown stopped off to stock up on supplies. Today, eager tourists flock to the swanky shops along downtown Charlotte Amalie (the capital of the USVI and one of the most visited cruise ports in the Caribbean) to try to reach their duty-free limit of \$1,600 with treasures like imported watches, high-end spirits, gorgeous diamonds and more. Even the historic passageways that wind through the Royal Dane Mall offer amazing ways to "spend" the afternoon. While you're there, stop at Gladys' Café for local Caribbean dishes or check out the newly opened Virgin Islands Ice Cream Co. for a homemade waffle cone filled with Danish-style ice cream (try the local soursop flavor).

Although St. Croix is the largest of the U.S. Virgin Islands, boasting more than 82 square miles, it exudes an unmistakable small-town feel. Sit at a bar long enough and you'll likely discover the man next to you is the guide leading

INFO TO GO

U.S. citizens do not need a passport in the U.S. Virgin Islands, although it's recommended to carry one. (In lieu of a passport, proof of citizenship is required, such as a birth certificate plus a government-issued photo I.D.) Two major airports serve the USVI: the Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas and the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix. The flight is considered domestic; fly non-stop to either airport from Atlanta (ATL), Charlotte (CLT), Fort Lauderdale (FLL), Miami (MIA), Newark (EWR), New York (JFK) or Philadelphia (PHL). Commuter service flies to St. Croix and St. Thomas from San Juan (SJU). Commuter airlines and ferries run daily between the islands.



LODGING

THE BUCCANEER

Family-run since the 17th century, The Buccaneer has been meticulously modernized and maintained to remain St. Croix's leading hotel. *5007 Estate Shoys, Christiansted, St. Croix* \$\$\$\$

CANEEL BAY RESORT

This sanguine sanctuary doesn't offer televisions or telephones in its 166 guestrooms, but it does offer an understated opulence for refined guests looking to unplug. *St. John* \$\$\$\$\$

THE RITZ-CARLTON, ST. THOMAS

Set on 30 acres offering easy access to the exquisite Great Bay and Coconut Cove beaches, this 180-room hotel defines luxury on St. Thomas. *6900 Great Bay, St. Thomas* \$\$\$\$\$

DINING

OLD STONE FARMHOUSE

Dine in elegance inside this restored 200-year-old field house where Chef Christopher Spesak prepares upscale weekly dinner menus and a decadent Sunday brunch. *Mahogany Run Tennis Village, St. Thomas* \$\$\$\$

ZION MODERN KITCHEN

Savor the season's best sustainably raised foods in a contemporary garden atmosphere. The bar offers a unique selection of handcrafted cocktails. *2132 Company St., Christiansted, St. Croix* \$\$\$\$

ZOZO'S AT THE SUGAR MILL

Fresh-made pasta and hand-formed ravioli top the menu at this Italian restaurant inside the ruins of the sugar mill at Caneel Bay Resort. *Caneel Bay Resort, St. John* \$\$\$\$



HISTORIC TOWN: Fort Frederick In Frederiksted, St. Croix

PHOTO: © U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

Adventure Center
adventurecenters.net

Big Beard's Adventure Tours
bigbeards.com

The Buccaneer
thebuccaneer.com

Buck Island Reef National Monument
nps.gov/buis

Caneel Bay Resort
caneelbay.com

Caribbean Tourism Organization
caribbeantravel.com

Frenchman's Reef & Morning Star Marriott Beach Resort
marriott.com

Friedensthal Moravian Church
moravians.net

Magens Bay
magensbayauthority.com

Mongoose Junction
mongoosejunctionstjohn.com

Ocean Grill
oceangrillstjohn.com

Old Stone Farmhouse
oldstonefarmhouse.com

Renaissance St. Croix Carambola Beach Resort
marriott.com

The Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas
ritzcarlton.com

The Shops at Yacht Haven Grande
shopsatyhg.com

SkyDive Virgin Islands
virginislandsskydiving.com

The Tap Room – St. John Brewers
stjohnbrewers.com

U.S. Virgin Islands Tourism
visitusvi.com

Zion Modern Kitchen
zionmodernkitchen.com

ZoZo's at the Sugar Mill
zozos.net

your next day's snorkeling adventure, or the woman two seats down is best friends with the owner of the hotel you're staying in. There's an underlying sense that everyone knows everyone on St. Croix, and that welcoming vibe makes it easy to feel you're part of the family in this casual utopia.

St. Croix's substantial history sets it apart from its USVI siblings: home to the Caribbean's longest-running resort, The Buccaneer, family-owned since the 17th century; the oldest Moravian church in America, Friedensthal Moravian Church; and tons of historic forts and landmarks dating to a time when pirates plagued the island.

This is also a water sports paradise, where adventurous aquaphiles take advantage of the year-round warm waters by snorkeling, scuba diving, paddle boarding, surfing and more. One of the island's greatest attractions, the "don't-miss" activity, is snorkeling the underwater trail at the Buck Island Reef National Monument with Big Beard's Adventure Tours. Buck Island — one of only two underwater

national monuments in the United States — provides the rare opportunity to swim alongside the threatened and endangered species that inhabit this protected reef.

While St. Croix hosts some of the USVI's most historic and quirkiest gems, make sure to visit the world-famous beer-drinking pigs at Mt. Pelier Domino Club. The island is also lush with modern resorts, like the Renaissance Carambola Beach Resort, and brand-new dining options ranging from the historic Danish dishes at 40 Strand Eatery to the haute cuisine at Zion Modern Kitchen.

With acres of unspoiled terrain and forests of lush green flora rolling across its petite expanse, it's no wonder St. John has been the favorite beach destination for names like Kenny Chesney, Laurance Rockefeller and Denzel Washington. This 19-square-mile island blends natural beauty with effortless charm and elegance that attract the most discriminating visitors.

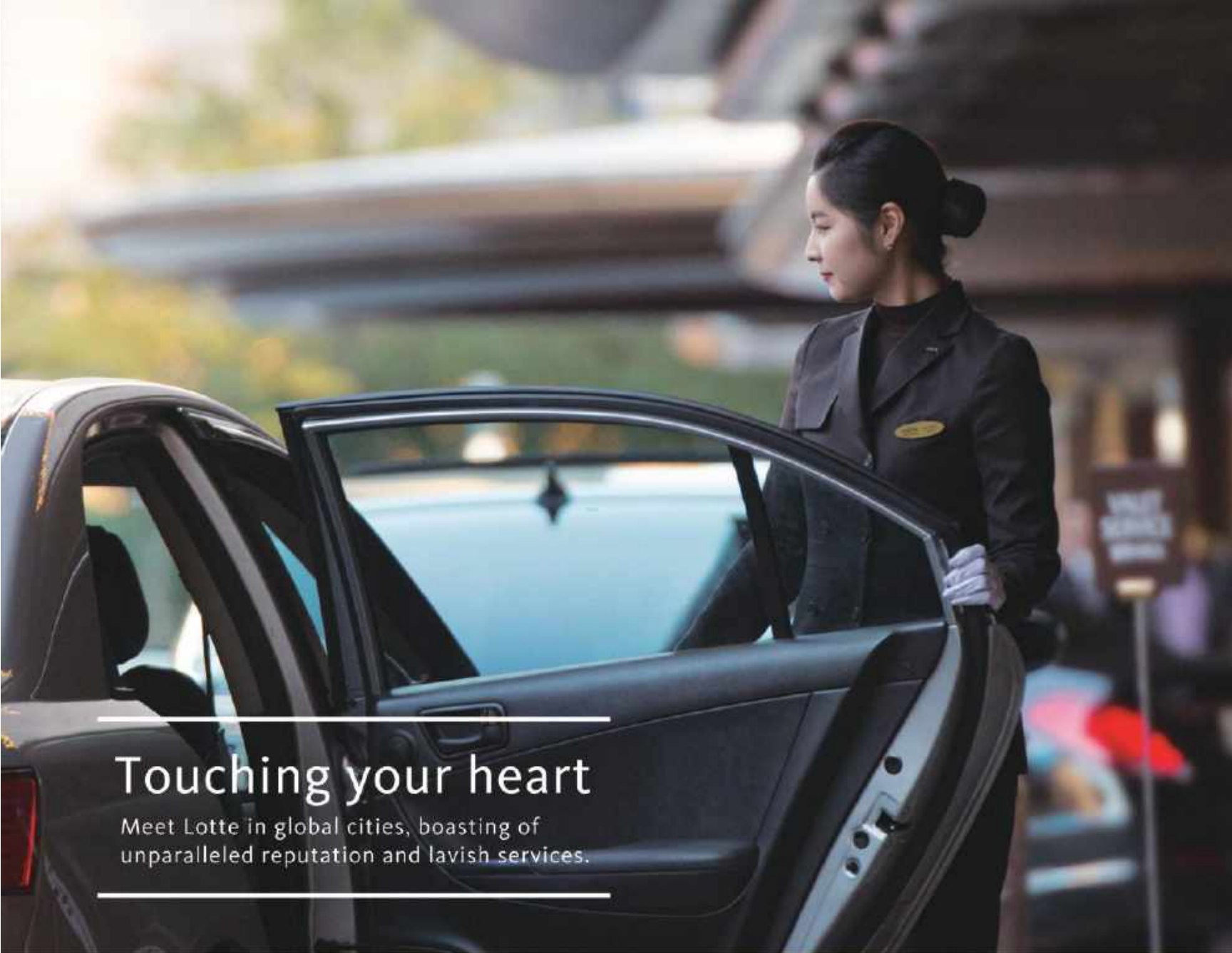
St. John is only accessible by ferry from the surrounding islands, but once you arrive, you have unrestrained access to a mix of chic shopping, fine dining, outdoor activities and trendy subcultures. Fashionable folk flock to downtown Cruz Bay to meander through the shaded terraces and tropical plants at Mongoose Junction, where quaint boutiques and high-end shops seamlessly intertwine with hip cafés like the Ocean Grill and the locally favored Tap Room. Here, best friends Chirag Vyas and Kevin Chipman brew up mango-sweetened micro-brews and other St. John-specific beers.

Just outside the downtown area and along the route to the scenic town of Coral Bay lies what many call the "pearl of the Virgin Islands." Part of the Luxury Hotels of the World, this isolated enclave embodies the island's aesthetic and ideology of unassuming luxury. The Caneel Bay Resort has played host to everyone from Harrison Ford to the entire Pitt/Jolie clan. But despite the celebrity-speckled guest book, visitors from all walks of life can expect star treatment when dining at the hotel's scenic restaurant, ZoZo's at the Sugar Mill, a romantic Italian restaurant perched within the ruins of a 19th-century sugar mill overlooking the bay.



ONLINE EXTRA

Jump to gtravmag.com/rum to read about the Cruzan Rum distillery.



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Festival on Ice

Embrace the season Canadian-style at Québec's Winter Carnival. BY BARBARA RADCLIFFE ROGERS



CHILLING: Snow sculpture (left), and view from the ice palace (right)

PHOTOS: © STILLMAN ROGERS PHOTOGRAPHY

Hôtel de Glace

hoteldeglace-canada.com

Québec Winter Carnival

carnaval.qc.ca

Tourisme Québec

tourisme.gouv.qc.ca

For admission everywhere, buy a light-up Carnaval Effigy of the snowman mascot.

You don't have to love snow and ice to enjoy Québec City's annual extravaganza of all things winter, but it helps. For an activity-packed 17 days — Jan. 29 to Feb. 14, 2016 — the Québécois don't just skate and ski on it. They celebrate it, slide down it, carve it into works of art, drive dog teams over it, build castles with it, make candy out of it, even sleep in it.

Québec Winter Carnival engulfs the city. On a toboggan slide beside the historic Château Frontenac, three toboggans filled with revelers race down parallel chutes. A huge ice palace with towers to climb fills Place Loto-Québec. Find the best view of the palace from above, atop the city's famous ramparts — Québec is North America's only walled city.

On two frosty Saturday nights, the whole city bundles up to watch a parade where more than 600 colorfully costumed people create a mobile stage show of floats, performers, dancers and bands. More cheering spectators crowd the riverside terraces to watch a canoe race across the wide St. Lawrence. Competing teams propel massive canoes through the freezing water and over an expanse of moving, tilting ice slabs that jam its surface.

Most of the activities take place on the Plains of Abraham,

Québec's huge city-center park on a high bluff overlooking the river. Lining its wide promenade, dozens of giant sculptures await the judges at the International Snow Sculpture Competition. Beyond stretch snow-covered acres of sleigh and dogsled rides, a giant outdoor hot tub, ice towers to climb, tubing and snowboarding parks, igloos, zip lines, skating rinks, free ski lessons for kids, live entertainment stages and events that include the popular Snow Bath, with competing teams in bathing suits rolling in the snow.

Look for the Cabane à Sucre — Sugar Shack — where you can sample traditional chewy sweet candy made by pouring maple syrup onto snow. The nearby Ice Bar serves up another winter tradition: a steaming Caribou concocted of warm Port wine, rum and maple syrup.

You may want another of these if you elect to spend the night at the continent's only ice hotel. Guests at Hôtel de Glace sleep bundled into down-filled sleeping bags on beds carved of ice in a building constructed entirely of ice. Themed rooms and suites are designed anew each year and melt away in the spring. You can tour the hotel and have a drink at its Ice Bar without staying the night.

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Future in Mind

Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport expands to meet growing demand. BY LISA MATTE



Less than a decade after its initial opening in 2008, Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport is already looking ahead. It is located about 19 miles south of central Hyderabad, one of India's fastest-growing urban centers and home to special economic zones dedicated to encouraging development in the realm of information technology, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, and the financial industry. The airport's future ties in directly to a comprehensive regional plan.

Announced in January 2013, the Hyderabad Master Plan 2031 for Hyderabad Metropolitan Region covers a 2,300-square-mile area, home to 18.4 million people, including Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. The plan includes development of a comprehensive travel infrastructure to address growing demand well into the mid-21st century. Currently serving about 12 million passengers a year, Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport expects to accommodate annual traffic of 40 million passengers, serving as the gateway to central and southern India under the master plan implementation.

Phase 1 of the master plan, encompassing existing development, comprises the airport's primary runway. The second-longest in India, the runway can accommodate the current generation of superjumbo jets including the Airbus A380. A secondary, paral-

lel runway accommodates aircraft up to the size of a Boeing 747. Existing infrastructure includes a cargo terminal, rescue operation facilities and state-of-the-art air traffic control and operational database technology.

Planned with the future in mind, the modular design of Rajiv Gandhi International Airport's main passenger terminal will expedite transition as expansion continues. Current facilities include multiple-contact boarding bridges, remote stands, common user terminal equipment, check-in stations, self-service kiosks, customs and immigration facilities and a transit hotel. An "Airport Village" functions as a central location for shopping, dining, meeting points, lounges, a children's play area and access to parking and transfer assistance.

Additional development outlined in the master plan calls for a dual runway connected by two cross taxiways, two integrated passenger terminals and dedicated cargo terminals.

In the meantime, the airport marches forward one step at a time. In August, Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International became India's first airport to secure regulatory approval for eBoarding. A significant component of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Digital India" initiative, paperless eBoarding will ease passenger transit while establishing Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport as a leader in India's airport technology landscape.

UP AND COMING:

Hyderabad Rajiv
Gandhi International
Airport

PHOTO: © JOE RAVI |
DREAMSTIME.COM

Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport

hyderabad.aero

Save Your Liver

Learn the risks of hepatitis C, D and E infection. BY MARY B. GALLAGHER, RN, MSN, CCRN

Viral hepatitis is inflammation of the liver caused by viruses. Other infections, toxic substances such as alcohol, certain drugs, drug abuse and autoimmune diseases also cause the disease. Hepatitis can be self-limiting or can progress to fibrosis, cirrhosis or liver cancer.

HCV (hepatitis C virus) causes hepatitis C. You can become infected if the blood of someone infected with HCV enters your skin, eyes or mouth. You are at risk for hepatitis C if you inject street drugs or share a needle with someone; share personal items such as toothbrushes and razors with someone with HCV; have unprotected sex; receive a tattoo or acupuncture with needles not disinfected properly after use on another person; have regular contact with blood, such as a health care worker; receive long-term kidney dialysis; were born to a mother with hepatitis C; receive an organ transplant from a person with HCV; or received a blood transfusion in the United States before 1992.

Most people who are recently infected with hepatitis C do not have symptoms, although some experience yellowing of the skin (jaundice) that goes away. Chronic infection often causes no symptoms, but tiredness, skin disorders and other problems can occur. Long-term infection often causes no symptoms until the liver becomes scarred (cirrhosis); most individuals with this condition are ill and many have pre-existing health problems.

Symptoms of hepatitis C include pain in the upper right abdomen, abdominal swelling, clay-colored or pale stools, dark urine, fatigue, fever, itching, loss of appetite, and nausea and vomiting. Contact your health care provider if you have symptoms or have been exposed to someone with hepatitis C.

Two blood tests check for HCV: the EIA assay detects HCV antibody, and the hepatitis C RNA measures virus levels. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend everyone born from 1945 to 1965 get a one-time test for hepatitis C, since people born in these years are five times more likely to be infected. Genetic testing can check for the type of hepatitis C (there are six types); test results help the doctor choose the correct treatment. Additional tests — albumin level, liver function, blood-clotting time and liver biopsy — identify and monitor liver damage.

Treatment includes peginterferon and antiviral drugs that help the body get rid of the virus and reduce the risk of cirrhosis and liver cancer. For best results, take medications as directed. A good response to treatment occurs when the virus is no longer detected in the blood. A liver transplant may be recommended for persons who develop cirrhosis and liver cancer. As new and more effective medications are developed, more people with HCV avoid serious liver damage and liver cancer.

Currently there is no vaccine for hepatitis C. To prevent its spread, do not share needles with anyone, only receive tattoos and body piercing from a state-licensed technician, practice safer sex, and do not share personal items such as razors and toothbrushes.

Hepatitis D (HDV) infects 15 million people worldwide and spreads through contact with infected blood. It causes symptoms only in people who have hepatitis B and sometimes in those who carry hepatitis B but never had symptoms.

Risk factors include abusing intravenous or injected drugs, being infected while pregnant (the mother can pass it to the baby), carrying the hepatitis B virus and receiving many blood transfusions. Men who have intercourse with other men are also at risk. HDV worsens the symptoms of hepatitis B. Symptoms include abdominal pain, dark urine, fatigue, jaundice, joint pain, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting.

Contact your doctor if you have symptoms of hepatitis B. You may need anti-delta agent antigen, liver biopsy and blood tests to assess liver enzymes. Many of the medications to treat hepatitis B are not effective in treating HDV. You may receive the medication alpha interferon for up to 12 months for a long-term HDV infection. A liver transplant for end-stage chronic hepatitis B may be effective.

People with acute HDV infection most often get better in two to three weeks. Liver enzymes return to normal within 16 weeks. About one in 10 of those infected develop long-term liver inflammation. Possible complications include chronic active hepatitis and severe inflammation of the liver leading to liver failure.

Prevent hepatitis D by detecting and treating hepatitis B infection as soon as possible, getting vaccinated and avoiding IV drug abuse and sharing needles. Adults and children at high risk for hepatitis B infection should receive the hepatitis B vaccine.

Hepatitis E spreads through food and water contaminated by feces from an infected person. Although uncommon in the United States, waterborne outbreaks have occurred in South and Central Asia, tropical East Asia, Africa and Central America. Outbreaks can involve hundreds to thousands of people. Those most likely to be exposed to hepatitis E include international travelers, particularly those traveling from developing countries; those living where hepatitis E outbreaks are common; and those who live with or have sex with an infected person.

Hepatitis E usually resolves on its own in several weeks to months. Globally, about 20 million incidents of hepatitis E occur every year. There is no vaccine; reduce exposure by avoiding tap water when traveling in developing countries and practicing good hand sanitation.

**Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention**
cdc.gov/travel

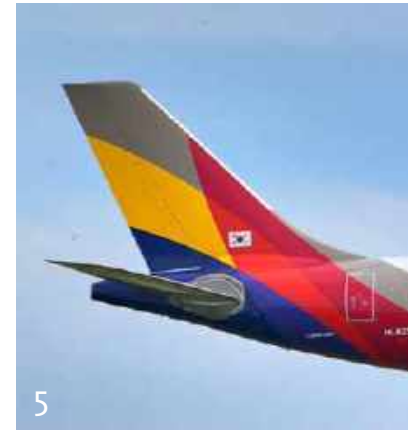
World Hepatitis Alliance
worldhepatitisalliance.org

The content of this article is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

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- a. Brussels Airlines
- b. Asiana Airlines
- c. Delta Air Lines
- d. Air China
- e. Turkish Airlines
- f. Air Canada
- g. Emirates
- h. British Airways
- i. United Airlines
- j. Ryanair



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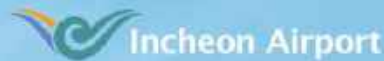


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