

INSIDER  
GUIDE

50 BEST NEW U.S. RESTAURANTS

# TRAVEL + LEISURE

MAY 2009

## WHERE TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL!

**FREQUENT-FLIER SECRETS  
HOW TO MAX  
YOUR MILES**

**18 GREAT  
GADGETS  
THAT WILL  
CHANGE  
THE WAY  
YOU TRAVEL**

**FRANCE  
ITALY  
COSTA RICA  
ALASKA  
ISTANBUL  
ENGLAND  
INDIA**

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**GRAND HOTEL  
CENTRAL,  
BARCELONA**  
**\$256**  
PER NIGHT



**UNA HOTEL  
VITTORIA,  
FLORENCE**  
**\$183**  
PER NIGHT



**MINE HOTEL,  
BUENOS  
AIRES**  
**\$177**  
PER NIGHT

## Best Deals: T+L Reader Exclusives

■ **CALIFORNIA** Ranch Hand special at the Ace Hotel, in Palm Springs (877/223-5050; [acehotel.com](http://acehotel.com)). **What's Included** Four nights for the price of three in a Patio Fireplace room; a 60-minute horseback ride in the Indian Canyons; one hour-long spa treatment per person; a private outdoor movie screening; and a barbecue dinner for two. **Total Cost** \$1,000 (\$250 per night), double, May 1–June 30. **Savings** 47 percent.

■ **FLORENCE** Cultural Escape to Florence package from the UNA Hotel Vittoria (39-055/888-8310; [unahotels.it](http://unahotels.it)). **What's Included** Two nights in a double room; two welcome drinks; dinner for two at the UNA restaurant (including wine); two tickets to the Uffizi Gallery; a bottle of champagne; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$366 (\$183 per night), double, through December 31. **Savings** 25 percent.

■ **BUENOS AIRES** Stay, Eat, and Listen at the Mine Hotel (54-11/4832-1100; [minehotel.com](http://minehotel.com)). **What's Included** Three nights in a Classic room;

a three-course dinner for two (excluding wine) at the Mine Bistro; a tango CD; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$531 (\$177 per night), double, May 1–June 30. **Savings** 20 percent.

■ **ARUBA** Sunset Sail package from the Westin Resort (800/228-3000; [westinaruba.com](http://westinaruba.com)). **What's Included** Three nights in a standard room; a two-hour sunset sail for two; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$807 (\$269 a night), double, May 1–December 18. **Savings** 22 percent.

■ **BARCELONA** Barcelona Discovery package at the Grand Hotel Central (34/93-295-7900; [grandhotelcentral.com](http://grandhotelcentral.com)). **What's Included** Two nights in a Superior room; a copy of the hotel's city guidebook; choice of a bus tour of Barcelona or a four-hour rental of two electric bikes; two passes to the Picasso Museum, Gaudi's La Pedrera, and the MACBA; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$512 (\$256 per night), double, May 1–August 27. **Savings** 20 percent. —ALEXANDER BASEK

### DEAL OF THE MONTH

**VIETNAM** Hue's moated citadel and ancient pagodas, in central Vietnam, are best explored by bicycle, provided in this 36-percent-off exclusive from La Residence Hotel & Spa (84-54/383-7475; [la-residence-hue.com](http://la-residence-hue.com)). **What's Included** Two nights in a Superior room; a Vietnamese-cooking class; a facial and massage; bike rentals; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$398 (\$199 per night), double, through September 30.



## EAST COAST ESCAPES

### RHODE ISLAND

Foodie Getaway from the Nylo Providence (401/734-4460; [nylohotels.com](http://nylohotels.com)). **What's Included** Two nights in a Loft room; a three-course dinner for two at Nylo's restaurant; two tickets to the Johnson & Wales Culinary Arts Museum; a tour of local vineyards via limousine; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$599 (\$300 per night), double, May 1–June 30. **Savings** 40 percent.

### MONTREAL

Peaceful Weekend at the Sofitel Montreal Golden Mile (877/285-9001; [sofitel.com](http://sofitel.com)). **What's Included** Three nights in a Luxury room; two tickets to the Montreal Museum of Fine Art; one 60-minute in-room massage per person; the Montreal's Parks souvenir book; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$671 (\$224 per night), double, May 1–June 30. **Savings** 30 percent.

### MASSACHUSETTS

Bikes & Brews package from Nantucket's Jared Coffin House (800/248-2405; [jaredcoffinhouse.com](http://jaredcoffinhouse.com)). **What's Included** Two nights in a Main House room; afternoon drinks, including wine and beer from local vineyards and breweries; bike rentals; chocolate-covered cranberries; and daily breakfast. **Total Cost** \$280 (\$140 per night), double, through June 25. **Savings** 25 percent.



**TRIP SWEEPSTAKES** It's not too late to enter **Curaçao Tourism's Treasure Hunt** ([curacaotreasure.com](http://curacaotreasure.com)).

From now until May 23, a lucky winner of a free trip for two will be drawn every day. Plus, 10 entrants will be chosen to compete for the grand prize—\$500,000—in an adventure-packed treasure hunt taking place on the island this August.

**HOT SUMMER DEALS! SIGN UP AT TRAVELANDLEISURE.COM FOR SAVINGS AT THIS SUMMER'S TOP VACATION SPOTS.**



**High Style** From left: The pool at Savannah's Mansion on Forsyth Park; the hotel's façade; the garden suite at the Cocker Hotel, in Buenos Aires.

**Q:** Can you suggest an itinerary for a last-minute weekend in Savannah? —JAMES REYNOLDS, LOS ALTOS, CALIF.

**A:** Spring is the ideal time for a trip to Savannah: the weather is mild, azaleas are in bloom, and many of the city's private antebellum houses are open to the public. Stay at the 126-room **Mansion on Forsyth Park** (912/238-5158; [mansiononforythpark.com](http://mansiononforythpark.com); doubles from \$259), a meticulously restored 1888 castle with playful details—think red velvet sofas, gilded cove moldings, leather banquettes—located in the Historic District (the Mansion's sister property, the 75-room Bohemian Hotel, makes its debut on the Savannah riverfront in June).

**Savannah Walks** (912/238-9255; [savannahwalks.com](http://savannahwalks.com); \$15) leads two-hour afternoon Gates and Gardens tours spotlighting the district's mid-19th-century gardens. Or, take a trip around uninhabited Little Tybee Island with **Savannah Canoe & Kayak** (912/341-9502; [savannahcanoeandkayak.com](http://savannahcanoeandkayak.com); half-day trips from \$55). Come evening, head to the 30-table **Cha Bella** (912/790-7888; [cha-bella.com](http://cha-bella.com); dinner for two \$90), where chef Matthew Roher dishes up Georgia white-shrimp risotto with fresh asparagus and tarragon.

**CONTACT T+L** E-mail [asktandl@aexp.com](mailto:asktandl@aexp.com) with your questions or, for online advice, go to [travelandleisure.com/ask](http://travelandleisure.com/ask). Questions may be edited for clarity and space.

**Q:** My husband and I are looking for a stylish but well-priced hotel in Buenos Aires. Any ideas?

—EMMA PENNEY, PLANO, TEX.

**A:** Set in one of the city's shopping districts, the classic **Art Hotel** (54-11/4821-4744; [arthotel.com.ar](http://arthotel.com.ar); doubles from \$95) has 35 rooms with paintings by Argentine artists and a twisting marble staircase in the lobby, which doubles as a contemporary-art gallery. The five-room **Cocker Hotel** (54-11/4362-8451; [thecocker.com](http://thecocker.com); doubles from \$100), in historic San Telmo, is furnished with one-of-a-kind pieces (a Louis XV-style bed; a 1927 Remington typewriter; a General Electric phonograph). And just a five-minute walk north from Palermo Soho's center, the 19 modern rooms at **Home Hotel** (54-11/4778-1008; [homebuenosaires.com](http://homebuenosaires.com); doubles from \$125) have vintage French wallpaper and Eero Saarinen-designed tulip chairs and nightstands.

**Q:** Is it true that some airlines are now accepting only credit cards for in-cabin purchases?

—CLAIRE WASHINGTON, MIDDLETOWN, CONN.

**A:** While many airlines are still cash-only, starting next month American Airlines will join several domestic carriers—including United, Alaska, JetBlue, AirTran, Midwest, Southwest, and Virgin America—in processing only credit and debit cards for midflight transactions. According to Tim Smith, American's director of national media relations, the new policy makes traveling easier for both passengers and flight attendants by eliminating the need to carry and count money. And the numbers show that passengers prefer plastic to greenbacks—some airlines have seen in-flight spending nearly double since launching cashless cabins.

**ASK AN EXPERT** T+L ASSOCIATE EDITOR CLARA SEDLAK

**Q:** “I want to go hiking in Canada this summer. Which outfitters are offering guided treks?” —MATTHEW HENNESSY, BANGOR, MAINE



**A:** “There are great options for every skill level,” says T+L associate editor Clara Sedlak. “**Country Walkers**’ culture-minded Quebec trip (800/464-9255; [countrywalkers.com](http://countrywalkers.com); from \$3,098 for six days) heads northeast from the capital to explore the French-speaking villages of the Charlevoix region, including La Malbaie and Tadoussac. If you're feeling more adventurous, veteran tour operator **Off the Beaten Path** (800/445-2995; [offthebeatenpath.com](http://offthebeatenpath.com); from \$3,495 for six days) stops in three of the country's national parks—Banff, Jasper, and Yoho—where you'll spot elk, moose, and golden eagles, as part of its Crown Jewels journey. And **Mountain Travel Sobek**'s Whistler Explorer excursion (888/831-7526; [mtsobek.com](http://mtsobek.com); from \$2,795 for seven days) goes deep into British Columbia's backcountry with a daylong hike along the glacial Cheakamus River to a volcanic crater created 10,000 years ago.”



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF THE MANSION ON FORSYTH PARK/THE KESSLER COLLECTION (2); COURTESY OF THE COCKER HOTEL; COURTESY OF COUNTRY WALKERS; COURTESY OF CLARA SEDLAK