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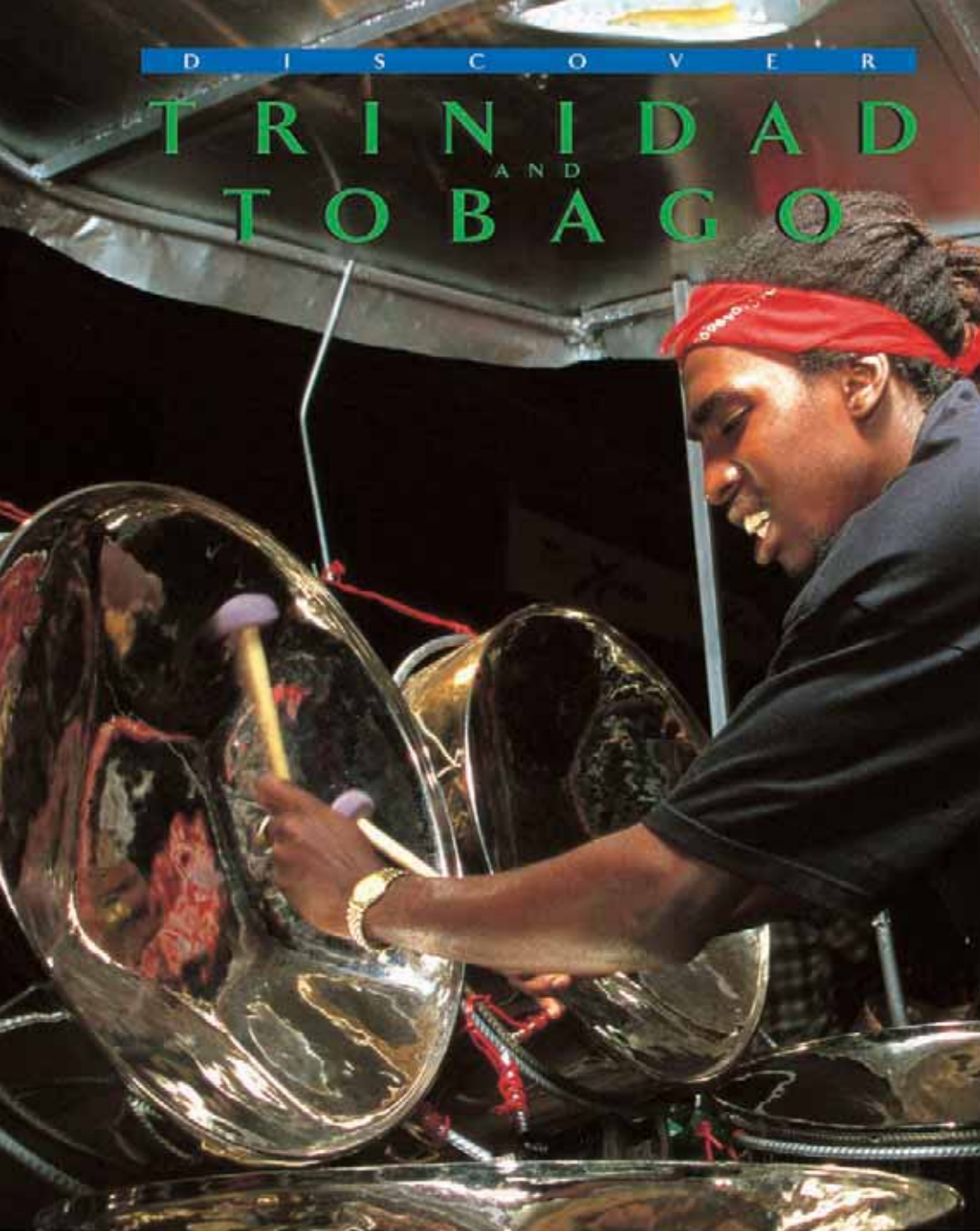
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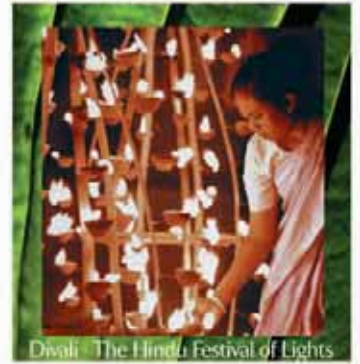
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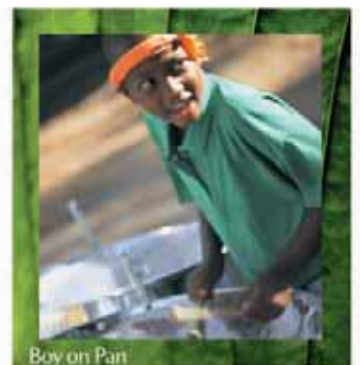
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TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

# Canadian TRAVELLER

THE DESTINATION SALES RESOURCE FOR TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS

JANUARY 2006 Volume 21, Issue 1



12



42

## Features

- 12 **Beyond The Beach**  
Antigua has something for everyone under the sun
- 18 **Sell The Thrill**  
Theme parks are perfect for those family summer vacations
- 22 **Dynamic Duo**  
Beijing and Shanghai embrace the past while they look to the future
- 42 **Sizzling Scottsdale**  
Golfers, spa lovers, shopaholics, kids – they all love Scottsdale
- 50 **Seizing the Opportunity**  
Post Hurricane Ivan Grenada is better than ever
- 55 **Railways of the World**  
What's new, plus Steve Crowhurst's selling tips
- 58 **Let The Good Times Roll**  
Orlando blends old favourites with new additions

## Keeper Supplement

- 25 **Israel**

## Contests

Win a \$6,500 trip to the South Pacific  
See page 6

Win a \$6,000 trip to Israel  
See page 41

Win \$300 cash  
See page 60

## Travelines

- 7 **All Over The Map**
- 8 **Selling with Steve**
- 9 **World Report**
- 16 **Internet Traveller**
- 62 **SeeAmerica**



### ON THE COVER:

There are a trainload of commissions to be made selling rail travel. Find out what's new and hot starting on page 52, then read Steve Crowhurst's sales tips on page 55.

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# Canadian TRAVELLER

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ISSN 1207-1463

Canada



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3. Which island was the inspiration for James Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific*?
4. What does "Bula!" mean? What language is this?
5. What name did the Samoans give to Robert Louis Stevenson? What does it mean?
6. Which is the only South Pacific nation to never be colonized?
7. Where do you go to see Nagol land-diving?
8. What is *lolo* made from?
9. Which country is considered the sailing capital of the South Pacific?
10. In which city is there a Police Band parade held every morning?



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### THE RULES:

1. To enter the contest, a candidate must be a resident of Canada who has reached the age of majority in the province in which he/she resides, who is not an employee of, a member of the immediate family of, or domiciled with, an employee of ACT Communications Inc., its agents or distributors, or any of the prize donors.
2. Entrants must complete all questions, and include their name, telephone number and signature.
3. Mail or fax entries to "Air Pacific Contest" Canadian Traveller, #203-1104 Hornby Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 1V8. Fax: (604) 699-9993. Entries must be received by March 31, 2006.
4. The draw will be made April 14, 2006 from all correct entries

received. All questions must be answered. The answers can be found in the Air Pacific Sales Guide in the December 2005 issue of Canadian Traveller.

5. One prize will be awarded consisting of a pair of "positive air" round trip tickets economy class courtesy of Air Pacific, 3 nights accommodation plus 4 day/3 night cruise. The approximate retail value of the prize is \$6,500.
6. The prize must be used between June 1, 2006 and May 31, 2007. It must be accepted as awarded, is not redeemable for cash and is not transferable. Black out dates apply; winner is responsible for travel documents, i.e. passport, visa, etc. and Airport taxes/customs fees.

7. The winner will be advised by telephone during the week of April 17, 2006 and announced in the June issue of Canadian Traveller. An alternate winner will be chosen if first drawn name declines or is otherwise unavailable.
8. All entries become property of Canadian Traveller which assumes no responsibility for printing error or lost or misdirected entries. No communication will be entered into except with the winning entrant.
9. One entry per person. Duplicate entries will be disqualified.
10. If more than one agent in your office wishes to enter, please photocopy this page.



**By Anita Draycott**  
Associate Editor  
Eastern Canada

# New Year's News

*Cézanne, Salsa and Buckaroo Bucks*

## Playa Plus in Puerto Rico

When you're selling Puerto Rico, **Terestella Gonzalez Denton, executive director of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company**, urges you to "explore beyond the shore." That's the theme of the island's new promotional campaign. Sure PR has lovely beaches but there's also fascinating history and culture to be found along the cobblestone streets of Old San Juan as well as caliente cuisine and plenty of nightspots where visitors can master the salsa. PR also boasts 24 golf courses with designs by Gary Player, Greg Norman Rees Jones and Tom Fazio.

For meetings and incentives groups, a new 53,882 square-metre Convention Centre opened last November. The state-of-the-art facility is the largest and most technologically advanced in the Caribbean. Starwood Hotels & Resorts will manage the Convention Centre's new flagship 500-room hotel scheduled to open in 2008.

Visit [www.gotopuertorico.com](http://www.gotopuertorico.com).

## France Celebrates Cézanne

**Jacqueline Dillmann-Faure, director general of Maison de la France** for Canada, her staff and tourism representatives from the south of France, recently hosted a lunch at the Royal Ontario Museum to announce that 2006 has been declared The Year of Cézanne. The city of Aix-en-Provence and surrounding towns are organizing a series of events throughout the year to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the painter's death. For your Francophile clients with an artistic bent, this is a golden opportunity to sell the Provence region.

For the first time 110 works by Cézanne from museums and private collections around the world will be on display at the newly renovated Musée Granet in Aix from June 9 to 17.

Paul Cézanne and his friend Vincent Van Gogh, both fascinated by the countryside, intense light and shimmering colours of the Provence region, captured the Mediterranean luminosity in their canvases. From February to December 2006, visitors will be invited to follow in the footsteps of Cézanne by visiting many of the sites where he worked including the Bastide du Jas de Bouffan, his family home and workshop which will be open to the public for the first time. For a more hands-on holiday a series of guided tours and painting classes will be offered, as well as balloon rides over Sainte Victoire Mountain.

The Provence-Alps-Côte d'Azur Tourism Boards have prepared a fascinating artistic trail with stops in Marseille, L'Estaque, Martigues, Arles, Saint Remy de Provence, Avignon, Aix-en-Provence, Toulon, Saint Tropez, Nice, Vence and Digne Les Bains. For more information, contact [www.crt-paca.fr](http://www.crt-paca.fr).

## Texan Buckaroo Break\$

Here's a first. The new Buckaroo Break\$ booklet highlights a selection of Canadian tour operator packages to hotspots in the Lone Star State. The bi-lingual booklet, priced in Canadian loonies, allows you to book directly for your clients. Of the 13 participating tour operators the

following eight offer agent commissions: Escapades by Huntington, Flextour/Standard Tours, Franklin Tours, Great Canadian Holidays Inc., Merit Travel, Road Trips Inc., Royal Scenic and Total Vacations.


"With Buckaroo Break\$, we've taken travel partnerships to an entirely new level in Texas by featuring programs from 13 individual operators in one state-sponsored guide targeted specifically for Canadians," says **Julie Chase, director of Texas Tourism**.

The following is a taste of the Texan offerings:

- Royal Scenic's Houston City package includes return airfare and three nights accommodations starting from \$477 pp;
- Total Vacations puts your clients on the beach in Corpus Christi or Galveston for three nights with return air starting from \$579 pp;
- Merit Travel offers a Texas/Caribbean Cruise that includes round-trip airfare to Galveston, two-night luxury hotel and a seven-night cruise aboard royal Caribbean's *Rhapsody of the Sea* starting from \$1,875 pp.

Get your copies of the Buckaroo Break\$ by contacting Rebecca Seeds, TravMark Group Inc, (416) 622-6250, ext. 26 or [rseeds@travmarkgroup.com](mailto:rseeds@travmarkgroup.com). ✦

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# The Breath of a Salesman

Tips to tame the big green monster

By Steve Crowhurst

This isn't about the Arthur Miller classic, nor is it about what Wally Loman could have been or was. It is about one side of selling that very few workshops or books ever talk about and if they do it is buried under the heading of personal hygiene. If you are talking to clients but not closing them and they don't seem to make contact with you after the initial Q&A there could be another reason that only your friends are supposed to tell you about – but don't.

### One Breath At A Time

As you know life starts with one breath and ends with one breath and it's the same in the sales profession. Selling travel has got to be a blessing. People want to buy it. People like it, love it, have built a trip into their personal life style and habits. What can go wrong? Well, one exhale from a bad breath salesperson and it's game over. Politeness will keep the customer there, gagging mind you, but as soon as they can say, "Okay great, thanks for the info... gotta go, I'll call you..." and head out to get some fresh air... the opportunity of a sale has gone.

So what can you do? Now we are not talking about teeth whitening here. This is all about the breath and each time you are up selling. As I researched this subject I found out that if you are in a job where you talk a lot, and sales people do, your mouth dries out which can cause an odor.

### You Are What You Eat

What you eat and drink can affect your breath

and that in turn, as mentioned above, will affect your sales. Lack of food in your stomach will cause an intestinal response that your clients won't like. Imagine them leaving your agency with an image and impression of you related to your breath! Ugh. Not nice and no referrals either. So, make sure you eat breakfast and make sure you take time for lunch, too. Not only will this help solve the breath problem it will fuel your body and brain so that you are selling sharp.

What you eat is very important. Save the garlic and onions for dinnertime. No self respecting salesperson would intentionally want to build a garlic breath reputation. Remember, too, that garlic stays with you. Even if you have it for dinner – it's with you in the morning.

### Booze On The Breath

You know as well as I do that the booze from last night's bash will still be "evaporating" through your skin the next day. How many times have you met someone, very well dressed and groomed, but reeking from mouth and skin of liquor – too many times. Once again – if you plan on being a sales pro in the travel industry with a dream of closing that 90-day around the world cruise at over \$300,000... US... per person, you might be just one breath away from the deal.

### Smokin'

Smoking is an enjoyable habit for many – and that's the way it is. A sales pro who smokes will make sure that they wash their hands and brush their teeth before engaging a client.

Smoke residue lingers on the skin, hair, hands, clothes and breath. Smokey breath will be smokin' your sales – no question. Or, you could start a niche and handle only smokers if you do smoke.

### A Brush With Professionalism

Do you carry a toothbrush? You should. Most sales pros do. Sales pros plan not to eat garlic or drink the night before. They always carry mints, breath fresheners and take a few minutes to brush up after eating and prior to any planned client visit. Day to day, when clients are walking in, you cannot be popping up and down to brush and you don't need to if you follow the basics of breath etiquette.

### Tell Your Friend

Be a friend to your fellow salesperson and if their breath is bad – tell them. Managers – make sure you are on top of this issue, too. Some people do not know or realize they have a problem and offering a stick of gum or a breath freshener may not deliver the real message. If they say, "No thanks..." you must reply with a comment along the lines of, "Well actually you need it". You'll work out what to say, I know.

### A Breath of Fresh Air

So there it is. It's on the table. The Breath of a Salesperson must be fresh. Google "bad breath" and read the results, as the outcome of bad breath goes far beyond sales. Bad breath reduces promotion, salary increases, invitations to events and many other opportunities in life and love. ✦

Steve Crowhurst, CTC, of Vancouver-based SMP Training Co., is a management trainer/consultant to retail travel agents, wholesalers, airlines, departments of tourism and hospitality- and leisure-based companies in Canada and the U.S. He specializes in new business generation. Steve loves to hear from readers so please e-mail your comments and questions to him at: [trainingideas4u@telus.net](mailto:trainingideas4u@telus.net) or see his Web site at [www.smptraining.com](http://www.smptraining.com).

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## Events

The American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) is organizing its first **International Destination Expo in Prague** March 21 to 26. The Czech capital will provide a stimulating cultural and historic backdrop for the more than 2,000 travel professionals, mostly from Canada and the U.S., who are expected to take advantage of the extensive in-country training this new annual event aims to provide. The program features an open-floor trade show that will showcase regional suppliers representing the special product of Eastern and Central Europe; individual meetings with suppliers; product seminars and focused destination training; networking events and numerous sightseeing tours including a selection of 17 pre- and post-tours. Details are available at [www.astanet.com](http://www.astanet.com).

In 2006, **Holland** will celebrate the **400th birthday of Rembrandt**. His birth year will be commemorated with an extensive and exciting program of exhibitions and events in Amsterdam, Leiden and The Hague. Learn more at [www.rembrandt400.com](http://www.rembrandt400.com).

It's all **Mozart**, all the time, as **Austria** prepares for the composer's 250th birthday celebrations. A year-long round of concerts and events is scheduled not only for the maestro's hometown of **Salzburg** but in cities and towns all over **Central Europe**.

Key players in Canada's aviation industry are teaming up with government to present the **Canadian Aviation Security Conference**, to take place in Ottawa from March 29 to 30. The conference will focus on terrorism-related threats to our country's aviation system and national security, and the corresponding actions being taken by industry and government, as well as our international partners, to address the ongoing challenges posed by these threats.

## Destinations

**Cuba's** rolling hills and lush countryside are an ideal destination for **cyclists**. **Active Journeys'** seven-day centred tours are based in the less populous city of **Santiago** with accommodations at the Melia Santiago. Daily travel is via secondary roads, off-road trails and through the city and surrounding forests, farmlands and plantations. Highlights include landmark castles and cathedrals, historical Santiago, and sun soaked beaches. Call 1-800-597-5594 or visit [www.activejourneys.com](http://www.activejourneys.com) for more information.

A massive project to restore the 2,500-year-old **Acropolis** monuments in **Athens**, Greece, which has spanned more than 30 years, is



AIR NEW ZEALAND

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nearing completion. All "urgent repairs" to the marble monuments – built at the height of ancient Athenian glory in the fifth century BC – will be finished by next Christmas. Extensive repairs have been made to the main Parthenon and Athena Nike temples, as well as the massive Propylaea gate. All three suffered from decades of exposure to Athens pollution, and were badly damaged by botched restoration in the 1930s, which used iron clamps that rusted, cracking the marble.

This winter Canadian golfers can stay and play in **North Carolina** with some special deals. **Ultimate Golf Vacations** has created a golf package priced at \$809 available through March 29 at Pinehurst Resort. [www.ultimategolf.ca](http://www.ultimategolf.ca). **Air Canada Vacations** has launched a new Wilmington golf program priced from \$449 per person, quad occupancy. [www.aircanadavacations.com](http://www.aircanadavacations.com). The **Country Club of Whispering Pines** in central North Carolina is offering an exclusive to Canadians for US \$149 per person. [www.whisperingpinesnc.com](http://www.whisperingpinesnc.com).

**Silk Holidays' Thailand long stay** programs offer clients 28 nights in either Pattaya or Cha Am. Price includes air fare from Vancouver to Bangkok via Hong Kong with Cathay Pacific, return transfer and daily breakfast. The Phuket long stay is 27 nights in a beachfront hotel. Package includes 27 nights accommodation, return air ticket from Vancouver to Phuket via Singapore with Singapore airlines, and transfer from hotel to Phuket airport. Visit [www.silkholidays.com](http://www.silkholidays.com) for details.

Updated for 2005-06, the new **Tucson Golf Guide** is a comprehensive guide to Tucson and Southern Arizona golf courses containing in-depth course reviews, a listings directory, and regional maps for 75 golf courses. Request a free copy at 1-800-638-8350.

Clients often equate **Alaska** with cruising – one-day shore excursions – but the state offers many attractions that make it a saleable destination for longer vacation stays – even in winter. While sailing up to glaciers is popular with legions of travellers, many of those same clients could be interested in some of Alaska's home-grown events, like the world-famous Iditarod dog sled race. **Winter** is truly one of **Anchorage's** best-kept secrets. Not only can visitors enjoy three cool events during one hot weekend (Fur Rendezvous, Iditarod, Tour of Anchorage), it's truly Alaska's value season. Rates are often two-thirds of what they are during the peak summer season and clients don't have to worry about waiting in line to get on the ski lifts. The crowds are mostly gone, but the fluffy white powder is there to enjoy in Anchorage's winter wonderland. For more information, explore [www.Anchorage.net/coolvents](http://www.Anchorage.net/coolvents).

## Eco-Tourism

**Grenada** is trying to preserve the island's natural beauty by offering Eco-tourism adventures that will not take a toll on the environment. Options include **River Tubing** down the Balthazar River ([www.adventuregrenada.com](http://www.adventuregrenada.com)); **Scuba Diving** – in Grenada or its sister island Carriacou ([www.aquanautgrenada.com](http://www.aquanautgrenada.com) or

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## World Report

[www.scubamax.com](http://www.scubamax.com)); **Turtle Nesting**—Ocean Spirits, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the leatherback sea turtle, provides guided tours of the turtles' nesting sites ([www.oceanspirits.org](http://www.oceanspirits.org)).

Guests of the **Little Cayman Beach Resort**, renowned for its outstanding wall diving, are also helping scientists by recording observations of sea turtles while on vacation. Three species of marine turtles actively nest in the Cayman Islands: the green, hawksbill and loggerhead turtles. Divemasters educate divers to distinguish among the endangered turtle species so they can record detailed information on dive slates underwater, which is gathered for REEF and the Cayman Islands Department of the Environment. From May to October, Resort staff and island residents who have been trained to assist with monitoring surveys, search for signs of marine turtle nesting. [www.littlecayman.com](http://www.littlecayman.com).

At the **Fairmont Acapulco Princess** and **Fairmont Pierre Marques** sea turtle eggs are collected and protected in a special farm with 243 semi-natural nests located on the Fairmont grounds. In 2004, 18,275 eggs were collected and 15,710 baby turtles were released. Interested guests can choose to help return young turtles to the ocean. Children who participate are given an adoption certificate displaying their turtle name of choice. [www.fairmont.com](http://www.fairmont.com).

### Cruise Travel

**Norwegian Cruise Line** has partnered with the Youth Environmental Programs, Inc. to offer the **Officer Snook Water Pollution Program** onboard its ships. The Officer Snook program, which will be offered exclusively on all NCL and NCL America ships in 2006, seeks to educate young people about the importance of clean water, and the affects of marine pollution and ways to prevent it. Elements of the program are incorporated into the NCL Kids Crew and include activities for kids of all ages including a teen component that will allow high school students to earn one to five community service hours depending on their level of involvement in the program. These hours may be used at the teen's school as part of their community service allotment. [www.ncl.com](http://www.ncl.com).

**Silversea Cruises** is offering 11 luxury Alaska cruises aboard its all-suite, 382-guest *Silver Shadow*, which the company describes as the only ultra-luxury cruise ship scheduled to call in **Alaska** in 2006. Voyages range from nine

to 14 days. Clients can receive savings of up to 40 per cent per guest. "Designed to provide a truly exceptional travel experience, our Silver Shadow is the perfect option for the discerning world traveller who wants to be pampered in luxury and comfort while exploring Alaska's spectacular scenery," said David Morris, Silversea's senior vice president of sales for North America. [www.silversea.com](http://www.silversea.com).

### Train Travel

**Orient-Express Hotels, Trains & Cruises** has unveiled its new **Journeys in the United Kingdom** brochure featuring the *British Pullman*, *Northern Belle* and *The Royal Scotsman*. The brochure offers historical and cultural days out, celebratory occasions, luxurious weekend trips, and sporting events. The brochure also showcases the range of fully inclusive itineraries from one to seven nights onboard *The Royal Scotsman*. The UK programme, which includes more than 50 special steam hauled departures, provides clients the opportunity to explore the landmarks and sights of Britain in opulent surroundings, while being served delicious

cuisine and being looked after by attentive stewards. Visit [www.orient-express.com](http://www.orient-express.com).

### Special For Agents

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts has announced the makeover of its travel agent program. The brand's new **Fairmont FAMous** program, themed around Fairmont's "FA" chain code, now makes it easier for travel professionals to earn complimentary room nights for selling Fairmont experiences. Fairmont has also expanded the program to include a fully accredited educational component. To usher in the new program, Fairmont is offering a **special enrollment incentive**. Up until March 31, all new members will receive 10 bonus credits when they log their first reservation in the Fairmont FAMous booking tracker. Additionally, the company will also reward the top room producer of the month with a Willow Stream spa gift certificate. For more information or to become a Fairmont FAMous member, visit [www.fairmontfamous.com](http://www.fairmontfamous.com). Agents can also e-mail questions or comments to [FairmontFAMous@fairmont.com](mailto:FairmontFAMous@fairmont.com). ✦

— Compiled by Laurie Carter

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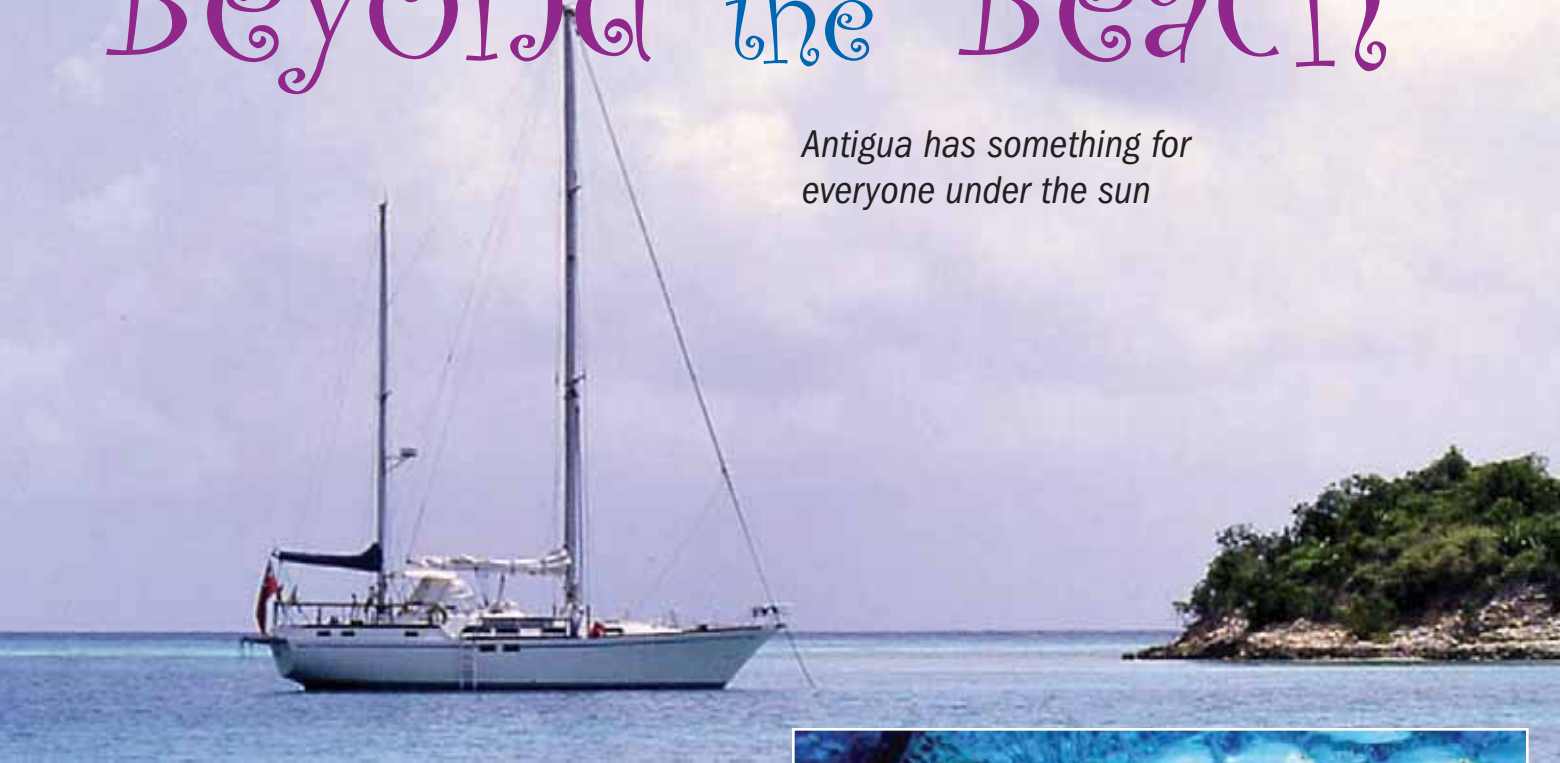
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# Beyond the Beach

*Antigua has something for everyone under the sun*



## Text and photos by Bruce Kemp

Toward the end of the Caribbean spring the sailing crowd begins to congregate in Antigua, like migratory birds before returning to their nesting grounds. Judging by the homeports painted on the transoms of their boats, the nesting grounds for these birds are spread across half a world. Guernsey, Portofino, Ville Franche, Gdansk, Chicago, Rhode Island... They've come to indulge in a special magic that emerges from the gorgeous seas and exquisite pink sands of the beaches surrounding Antigua.

It is Race Week and across the Caribbean, Race Week means only one thing – Antigua. Thousands of sailors make the island an annual pilgrimage. They come to test themselves against each other and to explore one of the happiest destinations the Caribbean has to offer.

Antigua is a curiosity among Caribbean islands. From Race Week to Carnival; from bird watching to scuba diving; from kayak paddling to sitting in the sun with a book and a tall drink, this isle really does have something for everyone.

For most visitors the main attraction of the island is its beaches and perfect weather. Tourism officials claim there are 365 beaches on Antigua – one for every day of the year. All are accessible to tourists and most have a recreational complex like the stunning Jolly Harbour Marina Beach and Golf Resort just beyond the coral pink-tinged sands.

A majority of visitors to the island arrive aboard cruise ships. The magnificent natural harbour at St. John's has undergone massive renovations and construction costing US \$20 million to accommodate the new breed of super cruise ship. The entrance to the harbour has been widened and deepened while Heritage Quay (the main cruise ship dock) has been



**Above: Diving around Antigua is extraordinary. Cades Reef is a popular site. The visibility is upwards of 25 to 30 metres and water temps hover around 26°C, and because the diving is on the inside of the reef, currents are minimal.**

**Right: Nelson's Dockyard, on the shores of English Harbour, was established by the British naval hero in the 18th century. Today the Dockyard is a national park where clients can journey back to the heyday of the Royal Navy.**

**Clients can charter a yacht to cruise around the islands from quiet anchorage to secluded bay. Options include bare-boat charters and skippers for hire to take the liability out of a few pleasant days on the briny.**

extended and a new quay off Redcliffe Quay is being built to handle four of the 140,000-ton mega-ships at one time.

Like its Newfoundland cousin, the capital city of St. John's, Antigua, is built overlooking the harbour. Passengers from the cruise ships spend their days in St. John's shopping and sightseeing.

Dozens of boutiques offer a complete shopping experience from handcrafted gold jewelry by Hans Smit at The Goldsmithy on Redcliffe Quay to prestigious French fashion designs at Longchamp on Heritage Quay.

St. John's is also a great place to sample traditional fare like broiled snapper and fongee and pepper pot or man soup at the Commissioner Grill, Joe Mike's or The Hub.

For a table with a world-class view, head down to English Harbour and up to the top of Shirley Heights. Shirley Heights Lookout overlooks Nelson's Dockyards and offers a sunset view that is truly spectacular and once the afterglow has subsided, the myriad lights aboard yachts and cruise ships mirrors the millions of stars up above.

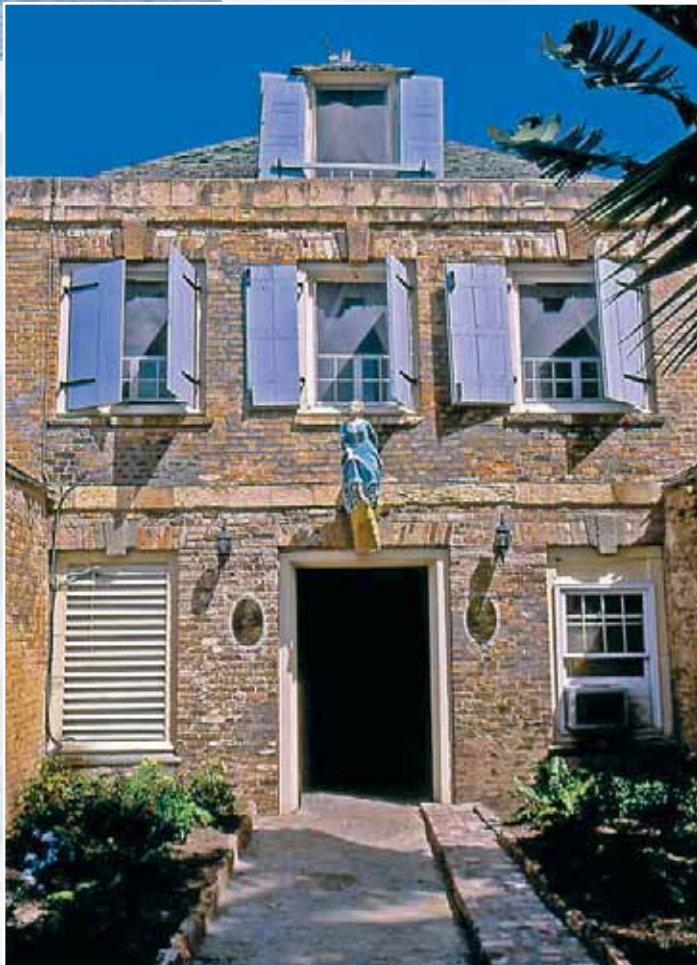
Even with just a day's layover, there is time for cruise ship passengers to rent a car for a tour of the

island. Antigua covers only 280 square kilometres and has a very good system of paved two lane roads radiating out in spokes from St. John's.

By comparison to other Caribbean destinations, driving in Antigua is pretty sedate, but it should be noted that Antigua uses the British system of driving on the left and Canadians have to pay special attention to what they are doing.

For travellers who just have to get their sports fix, Antigua is a sporting paradise. Sailing goes beyond race week and clients can charter a yacht from Horizon Yacht Charters to cruise around the islands from quiet anchorage to secluded bay. Would-be skippers need a minimum CYA (Canadian Yachting Association) certification before charter operators will let them take off onto the blue with their very expensive toys. Skippers for hire are also available to take the liability out of a few pleasant days on the briny.

Diving around Antigua is extraordinary. Clients can visit Cades Reef, the barrier reef that surrounds the western and southern portions of the island, aboard Ken Thibodeau's 38-foot dive boat. Ken is a transplanted Edmontonian who owns and operates Jolly Dive.



**Entry Requirements:** A valid passport is required.

No visa is required for Canadian citizens. All visitors must have a valid onward or return ticket.

**Getting There:** Air Canada, Air Jamaica, BWIA, American Airlines, US Airways and Continental service Antigua from North America.

**Driving:** A temporary 90-day permit is required. The cost is US \$20. Drive on the left and be on a lookout for goats, potholes and traffic circles. Roads are not marked and neither are the towns nor villages, get a good map and use Texaco gas stations as reference points.

**Getting Around:** Taxis are plentiful and drivers are helpful, most provide guided tours of the island. Bus service is limited yet reliable and inexpensive. A half-hour bus trip from English Harbour to St. John's is EC \$3.50.

**Currency:** Eastern Caribbean Dollar, but USD are accepted and any bank and most hotels will exchange Canadian dollars. Most major credit cards are welcomed widely American Express being the most widely accepted.

**Time Zone:** Antigua is in the Atlantic time zone.

**For More Information:**

Antigua and Barbuda Department  
of Tourism and Trade  
60 St. Clair Avenue East  
Suite 304

Toronto, ON M4T 1N5

**Tel:** (419) 961-3085

**Fax:** (416) 961-7218

**E-mail:** [info@antigua-barbuda-ca.com](mailto:info@antigua-barbuda-ca.com)

**Web site:** [www.antigua-barbuda.org](http://www.antigua-barbuda.org)

Antigua Fast Facts



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Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Office

## Antigua

Plunging to a depth of 15 metres clients swim through an amazing garden of coral canyons, over coral heads and between gently waving sea fans.

Visibility here is upwards of 25 to 30 metres and water temps hover around 26°C. Most of the dives feature depths of less than 30 metres, and because the diving is on the inside of the reef, currents are minimal.

On my trip, Dan, Ken's dive master, steered divers over the submarine terrain. At one point he began waving frantically and pointing into a small grotto in the coral indicating a photo opportunity. It was a nurse shark pup hiding from its more predatory neighbours until it could take its place in the food chain. Other photo ops included schools of yellowtails, squirrelfish, groupers, and two king-sized rock lobsters.

Back on land, Antigua is home to one of the world's rarest snakes – the Antiguan Racer. The Hawksbill Turtle uses the red mangrove swamps on the eastern shore as a sanctuary and breeding ground. Visitors can explore these with a number of adventure tour companies who sponsor kayaking and jeep expeditions around the island.

Other folks' taste, however, is more attuned to golfing. At Jolly Beach (just across the road from Jolly Dive) on the southwest tip of the island, the resort offers golf packages for their guests or play on a day pass. If they want, clients can go by hire car from St. John's up to Cedar Valley Golf Course to play a relaxing nine or eighteen.

Cricket is the national passion and mania. Some of the world's most famous cricket players, like Sir Viv Richardson of the legendary Westies cricket team, still live on the island. Even though he no longer plays professionally (he's retired), he shows up on occasion at charity events to bowl a few against punters willing to contribute EC \$5 to the cause.

Nonetheless, check out the Stanford Cricket Ground at the V.C. Bird International Airport and go for a drink or a meal afterwards at the Sticky Wicket Restaurant (also in the airport complex).

More and more visitors are travelling to Antigua for events like Carnival that takes place during the last week of July and first week of August. Unlike Carnival in Trinidad, which is tied to Lent, Antigua's festival celebrates the emancipation of the slaves in 1834.

Carnival is a street party, a costume ball and a raucous blowout where partiers are the noisy neighbour and nobody else minds. It all begins in the pre-dawn hours with Jouvett.

Revellers rise well before the sun and gather in mas yards (mas is short for masquerade and yards are where the mas bands gather before flooding into the streets) where they don



**On Antigua Carnival starts the last week of July and celebrates the emancipation of plantation slaves in 1834. Clients don't have to stand on sidelines, they can make arrangements to acquire a costume and join a mas band.**

costumes and paint themselves a rainbow of colours. Then the music starts and rhythms of soca and calypso ring out from the bands and sound trucks that accompany the parade.

Clients don't have to stand on sidelines for carnival. The concierge at their hotel (with enough notice) can make arrangements for them to acquire a costume and join a mas band.

The best place to appreciate Antigua is Boggy Peak. At 413 metres the highest point on the island is a dormant volcanic ridge. Looking to the north, from its summit you can see the Soufriere Hills and the smoking volcano on Montserrat.

Carib and Arawak Indians were Antigua's first inhabitants and Christopher Columbus gave it a passing nod in 1493 leaving it with the name Santa Maria de la Antigua after a church in Seville, Spain. The British arrived in the 1630s and established sugar plantations and were there until the mid-1980s. It is still a premier destination for tourists from the UK.

Today the island's population is 78,000 and the major ethnic group is made up of the descendants of West African slaves who worked the plantations.

Diagonally across the island from St. John's, on the southeast shore, lies English Harbour. This is an historic preserve and yachting harbour.

Nelson's Dockyard, on the island's south coast, is arguably one of the prettiest harbours in the Caribbean.

The one-eyed hero of Trafalgar established the Dockyard in the 18th century to service the ships-of-the-line that made the Atlantic Ocean



tiful period buildings that have been preserved and re-purposed as pubs, inns and shops.

The Dockyard is now a national park. Clients begin the journey back to the heyday of the Royal Navy with a visit to the Dow's Hill Historical Centre. Tour guides dressed in period costume lead visitors through the large brick building known as the Admiral's House, which is now a museum. From there clients can wander along the waterfront, which hasn't changed much over the centuries, stopping at the Admiral's Inn for a mug of grog or the HQ2 Restaurant for tea or supper. The spacious Copper and Lumber Store is now an elegant boutique hotel with rooms overlooking the harbour.

Nelson's Dockyard is still the hub of sailing adventures. And, for one mad week in late April, it is an international sailing capital. Attracting amateur and professional sailors alike, Race Week is considered one of the top five regattas in the world.

Yachts ranging in size from eight metres to more than 30, gather to race in a series of events that takes them completely around the island. Each race is followed by a party at that evening's anchorage.

To get to the party, one has to race. This is serious partying for serious racers and to prove themselves serious (and gaining entry to the final Admiral's Ball), sailors start with the first race – the Dickenson Bay Race and complete the entire series.

For the Dickenson Bay Race, the boats scoot the 54 km up the Atlantic coast from a line off Falmouth Harbour to a finish just off Dickenson Bay. This takes them around the northern tip of the island and into calmer waters on the Caribbean side. While sailing along the eastern seaboard, the boats are exposed to the full strength of the ocean's surge.

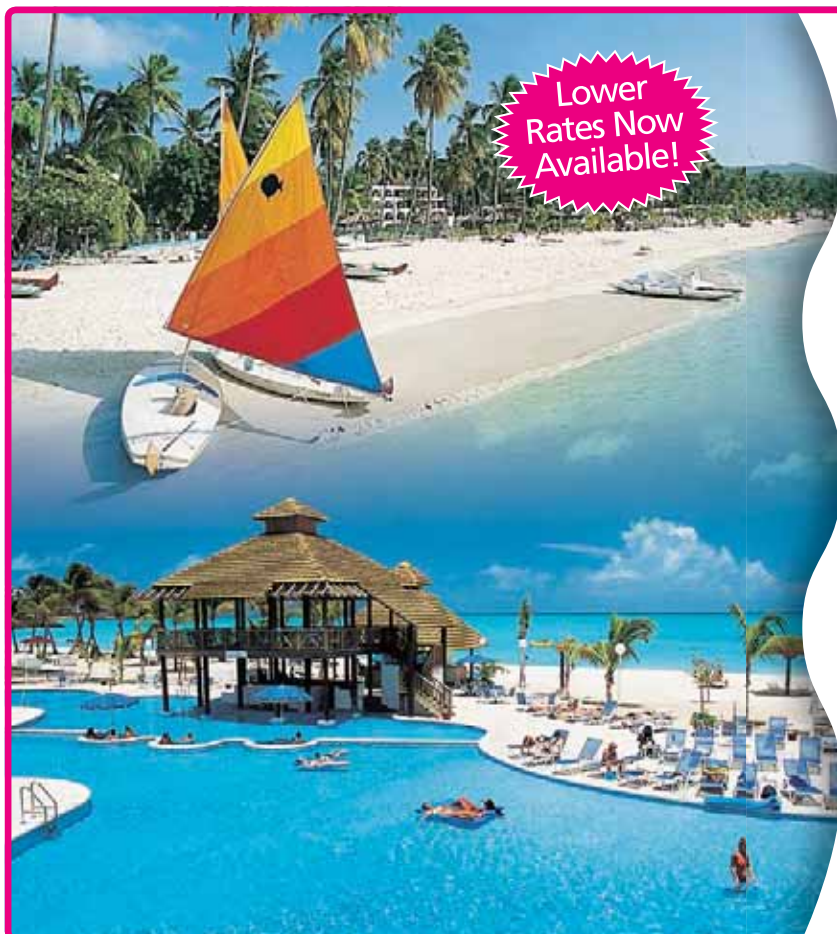
The Dickenson Bay party is the major opening beach bash. Vendors from all over the island crowd the mile long stretch of sand to sell everything from coal pot fongee to Wadadli beer. Sir Viv Richardson and conferees give the crowd a shot at bowling against them for charity and few manage to get a ball past the famous batsman.

You don't need to own a bank or a boat to join in the racing. A number of the charter operators take on paying crew for one or all legs of the regatta. This is an inexpensive way to join the fun and gain admission to the parties. ★

and Caribbean Sea the private yachting pond of the British Navy.

Nelson's tour of duty here came before the European events that brought him fame. He was Senior Captain and Second-in-Command of the Leeward Islands Station. Although his name is irrevocably tied to the former base, he never actually lived ashore, preferring his cabin aboard his ship, the *Boreas*.

Although the British fleet actually stayed in Freeman's Bay, they left behind a legacy of beau-



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# Tectonic Travel Rumbles

## Ever-Shifting Platforms

By Judy Waytiuk

Sabre's been subscribers to stop abusing the vendor's sabre-rattling services with the alleged improper use of with a new non-billable "passive segments" billed as policy that went into "YK". These are segments booked and effect in December 2005 – warning U.S. ticketed outside the Sabre GDS, but

imported into the system for management. Habitual offenders are threatened with the loss of Sabre for certain passive segments that the company considers legitimate, and they'd have to pay for the passive segments to get functionality restored. Sabre's fighting back against what it calls increased incidence of improper use of YKs by airlines, agencies, fare aggregators and corporate booking tools. YK bookings Sabre considers legitimate include management of groups, and handling PNRs when consolidators hold the active reservations.

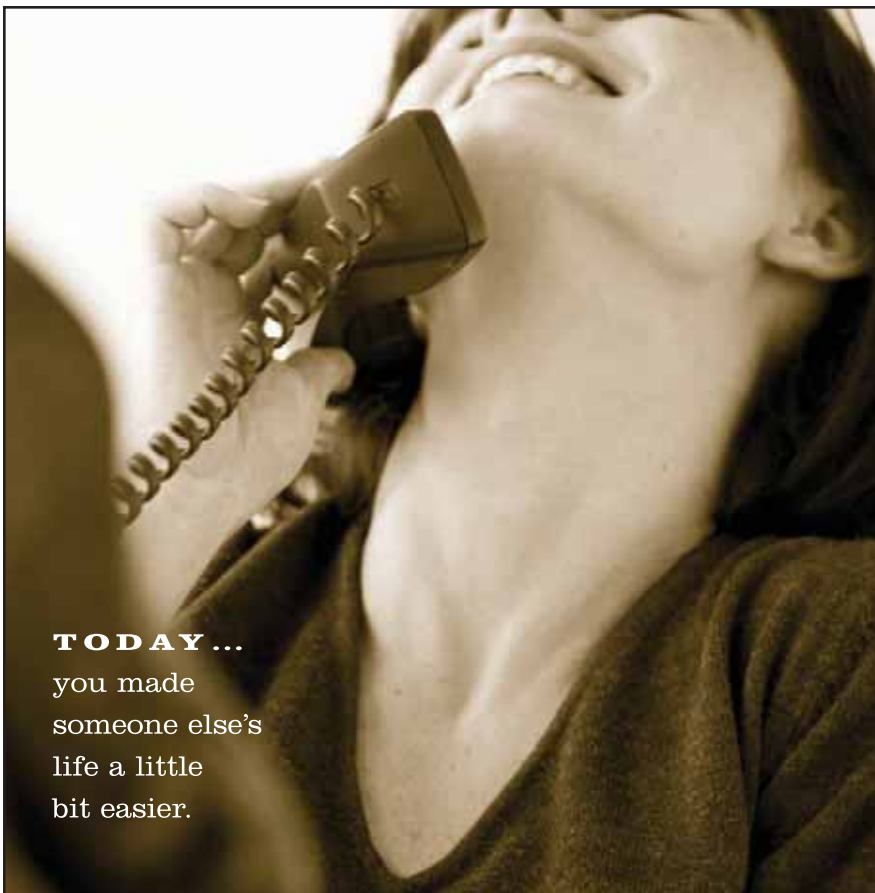
Sabre's GetThere DirectCorporate and GetThere DirectMidMarket booking tools are, at the moment, the only authorized applications for these acceptable YK bookings. But Sabre says other tools will be evaluated over the next few months for potential authorization. (A limited, temporary exemption conditionally permits other applications to handle non-Sabre content within the Sabre system, including those furnished by Agentware, Amadeus E-Travel, Datalex, Outtask, Rearden Commerce, Travelport and TRX.)

### Confused yet? Here's more...

G2 SWITCHWORKS has introduced a beta version of G2Agent, a Web-based distribution platform for midsize, ARC-accredited agencies. Set for launch early this year, it will offer free registration for ARC-accredited agencies, and won't require long-term contracts. The platform includes guaranteed content from nine airline partners (American, United, Delta, Continental, US Airways, Northwest, America West, AirTran and Alaska, and a letter of intent from JetBlue). Leisure agencies can access and book inventory from these partners, and can shop (but not book) hundreds of other airlines.

Still with us? Good, because SideStep, Inc. ([www.sidestep.com](http://www.sidestep.com)) has signed American Airlines ([www.aa.com](http://www.aa.com)) to its Web site. SideStep gets more than 4.7 million consumer hits each month, and drives them to product from travel marketers like JetBlue Airways, Continental Airlines, Hyatt Corporation, Best Western, National Leisure Group and Thrifty Car Rental. ✈

*(Internet Traveller Judy Waytiuk follows travel technology developments with awe, admiration and utter incomprehension. Her Web site's at [www.wordsink.ca](http://www.wordsink.ca) and you can e-mail her at [Waytiuk@wordsink.ca](mailto:Waytiuk@wordsink.ca).)*



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# Sell The

Theme parks are perfect for those family summer vacations

By Laurie Carter



Families, honeymooners and empty-nesters – one thing these clients all have in common is a perennial interest in theme park vacations. Here's an overview of 2006 highlights for some of your best-selling parks.

### Universal Studios Hollywood

- **War of the Worlds Joins Studio Tour:** The original movie sets from Steven Spielberg's *War of the Worlds* are the latest highlight to be added to Universal Studios Hollywood's signature behind-the-scenes Studio Tour. Along with the sets, themed streets, soundstages, facades and special effects attractions such as Earthquake, King Kong, Flash Flood and Jaws, guests aboard the 45-minute tram ride now traverse a key scene from *War of the Worlds*. Depicting a small town devastated by an elaborately choreographed 747-jetliner crash, the town's facade is dramatically surrounded by wreckage and debris resulting from a Martian attack.

- **Shrek 4-D:** Shrek, Donkey and Princess Fiona take visitors along on an all-new honeymoon adventure featuring Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz and John Lithgow playing their original roles. In a stunning multi-dimensional attraction that incorporates 3-D film with additional special effects, the OgreVision experience lets your clients see, hear and actually feel the action.

### Universal Studios Orlando

- **Upcoming Events:** Clients may want to time their Universal Studios Orlando stay to take in one of this spring's special events. During Mardi Gras, slated for February 11 to April 22 the streets are filled with beads, bands, and a rocking parade. And for this year's party that marks 150 years of New Orleans Mardi Gras festivities, the park will be setting up its own French Quarter complete with authentic cuisine and musicians straight from The Big Easy.
- **Harbor Nights Wine Tasting & Jazz:**

**Universal's month-long Mardi Gras celebration features 11 authentic New Orleans musical acts – bands which have performed in the city's colourful nightclubs, blues cafés and even on street corners.**

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS ORLANDO

Hosted by Portofino Bay Hotel, Universal Orlando, this wine tasting and jazz event is designed to capture the ambiance of the Mediterranean and showcase select wines, gourmet food samples, live jazz, complimentary hand-rolled cigars and music by Michael Andrew of Swingerhead. The event is held under the lights of the hotel's Harbor Piazza in February, May, October and December.

- **Fear Factor Live:** In May, clients can see if they have what it takes at the most extreme audience participation show ever – Fear Factor Live at Universal Studios. Guests can choose to take part or just cheer their brains out for contestants performing gravity-defying stunts – live – as they compete head-to-head against other guests. It's unscripted and unpredictable.

For event schedules, news and specials, log on to [www.universalstudios.com](http://www.universalstudios.com) and click on Parks & Resorts.

### SeaWorld

- **SeaWorld Launches Believe:** SeaWorld Parks Orlando, San Diego and San Antonio have embarked on the most ambitious entertainment project in the brand's 41-year history, a new production called *Believe* that showcases SeaWorld's killer whales with remarkable choreography, a three-storey set, original musical score and panoramic LED screens. The new show creates a "killer whale ballet" of grace and agility, as every movement of the powerful whales is matched to the corresponding beat of the original musical score. The



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## Theme Parks

centrepiece of the new set design is a three-storey tail fluke flanked by four, six-metre-wide video screens which operate independently and also move together to create a single, 24-metre-long panoramic screen. Those screens provide guests with views of the whales from above- and below-water cameras, including a camera suspended directly over the main show pool. SeaWorld's trainers have developed a repertoire of nearly 160 killer whale behaviours, 100 of which will be part of the new show. *Believe* debuts this spring.

- **A Whale of a Lunch:** SeaWorld San Diego will relaunch Dine With Shamu in 2006. The park's buffet-style restaurant allows visitors to meet trainers and get a whale-size view of Shamu. Located at the new Shamu: Close Up pool, Dine With Shamu will feature new menu items, more daily dining opportunities, and increased viewing of the whales, all in a unique backstage environment.

For more on SeaWorld Adventure Parks and sister theme parks, visit [www.seaworld.com](http://www.seaworld.com).

### Busch Gardens

- **Sheer Terror:** At 60 metres, Busch Gardens' SheiKra now takes the crown as Florida's tallest roller coaster. This Tampa Bay thrill machine is also the tallest dive coaster in the world and the first of its kind to incorporate a rolling Immelmann loop, a second, 42-metre dive into an underground tunnel and a water-feature finale. With more than a kilometre of steel track, SheiKra offers a total ride time of just over three minutes. As the eighth member of the park's family of coasters, the name SheiKra evokes the power and speed of an African hawk as it plunges, twists and turns, giving riders a bird's-eye view of an adventure unlike any other. SheiKra serves as the centrepiece of Busch Gardens' newly themed Stanleyville area, which also includes shopping options and the new 500-seat, indoor/outdoor Zambia Smokehouse. The restaurant is situated on the coaster's perimeter, allowing guests to be a part of the action while dining.

Canadians continue to benefit from the Busch Gardens/SeaWorld Dollars At Par program, back for the seventh year and continuing to April 2006. Log on to [www.buschgardens.com](http://www.buschgardens.com) for details on the Williamsburg, Virginia and Tampa Bay, Florida parks.

### Walt Disney World

- **Running Start for 2006:** A record 29,000 participants registered for this year's Walt Disney World Marathon and Half Marathon. The Half Marathon was run on January 7 while the full 26.2-mile trek through all four Walt Disney World theme parks and hotel resort areas was run on the following day. With the new split-day format, race participants were invited to participate in Goofy's Race-and-a-Half Challenge, running both races and the



**SeaWorld's new Shamu show, *Believe*, showcases the parks' killer whales with remarkable choreography, a three-storey set, original musical score and panoramic LED screens. The new show plays in all three SeaWorld parks.**

SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO

overall 39.3 miles across Walt Disney World Resort during the two days. Nearly 3,000 runners accepted Goofy's Race-and-a-Half Challenge. Other weekend highlights included Disney's Family Fun Run 5K and Kids' Races. Registration for the 2007 Marathon and Half Marathon are now open online. Contact Disney Sports Travel by e-mail at [wdw.disney.sports.travel@disney.com](mailto:wdw.disney.sports.travel@disney.com).

- **ESPN the Weekend:** ESPN and Walt Disney World Resort will again be offering fans the opportunity to see and hear ESPN personalities and current and legendary athletes during ESPN The Weekend Presented by Speed Stick® 24/7 at Disney-MGM Studios, March 3 to 5. The event will feature on-site ESPN telecasts including SportsCenter, Baseball Tonight and Cold Pizza; star motorcades and Q&A sessions featuring athletes and ESPN personalities; sports shows in the ESPN Theater with ESPN commentators and athletes; a visit from ESPN The Truck; live

ESPN Radio broadcasts; ESPN Deportes Fuera de Juego telecasts; the ESPN Sports Zone interactive area; and a special sports edition of the game show attraction Who Wants To Be A Millionaire-Play It! Your clients will also be able to enjoy all the popular shows and attractions, including the new Lights, Motors, Action! Extreme Stunt Show.

- **Love Is In The Air – Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival:** Donald and Daisy topiaries cruise through a floral tunnel of love while topiaries of Cinderella and Prince Charming waltz amid blossoms and greenery. Disney sweetheart topiaries based on happily-ever-after classic romance stories add whimsy to the 13th annual Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival April 21 to June 11. Celebrity guest speakers, hands-on seminars and planting demonstrations highlight the seven-week festival in the park's Future World and World Showcase. Thirty million blooms, intricately designed floral beds, artfully crafted bonsai trees, lush rose gardens and more Disney character topiaries will grace the park's 120 hectares. Nightly Flower Power concerts will rock the landscape with live entertainment from top acts of the 1960s and '70s. More attractions include Minnie's Magnificent Butterfly Garden; the child-friendly I Dig Bugs weekend; Art in the Garden weekend and the time-honoured Mother's Day weekend. Visit [www.disneyworld.com/flower](http://www.disneyworld.com/flower).

### Disneyland

- **Monsters, Inc. Mike & Sulley to the Rescue!:** There's going to be lots more fun for the little ones when Disneyland launches its new Monsters, Inc. ride early this year. Youngsters will get a wild ride through the streets of Monstropolis when they hop in a taxi and follow along as Mike and Sulley embark on a mad scramble to return Boo to her bedroom, while keeping her safe from the sneaky Randall Boggs and the Child Detection Agency. The new ride will debut in Disney's California Adventure Park early 2006.
- **The Happiest Race - Inaugural Disneyland Half Marathon Weekend:** Drawing from 13 years of history with the Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend in Florida, this new event will welcome thousands of runners to the Disneyland Resort and the city of Anaheim September 15 to 17. Registration is now open. Find details for your marathon-minded clients at <http://disneyworldsports.disney.go.com>. ✦

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# DYNAMIC Duo

*Beijing and Shanghai embrace the past while they look to the future*

By Robert Matheson and Benoit Legault



**Beijing houses many, many significant historic sites, like the Temple of Heaven. In the heart of a lovely park, the temple's collection of ancient altars and halls are representative of China's spiritual and imperial past.**

**B**eijing can still do a pretty good impression of its old self. Cyclists move in droves at rush hour. Women sweep the sidewalks at dawn. Large, black Chinese characters dominate storefronts. Chairman Mao maintains his steadfast watch over Tiananmen Square from his billboard altar on the main Forbidden City wall. Most of what we remember from old *National Geographic* articles, on the city formerly known in the West as “Peking”, still exists, but only in small pockets.

As Beijing prepares for the 2008 Olympics, large commercial developments, high-rise residential housing, subway lines, modern airport terminals, and a network of crowded highways dominate the current life of this city. But only a few tourists would cross the Pacific to see the new Beijing, even if it at times looks like our own future with huge electronic billboards and giant neon lights.

Old Beijing is a city built upon a foundation of orderliness, harmony and feng shui, a matrix of long, straight avenues arranged in squares, described 700 years ago by Marco Polo as “like a chessboard.” Even today, the tall expressways retain a desire for harmony: built very tall to avoid shredding the urban fabric below and lined with cheerful flower beds.

Hutongs or back alleys feature homes built in mini blocks of four, all facing into a common courtyard. Thirty years ago, most of the Beijing population was living in hutongs. Fifteen years ago, roughly half the urban population resided in these traditional neighbourhoods, snugly nestled alongside schools, restaurants and even opera houses. In 2006, the few remaining hutongs are living museums, where tourists can visit the past in rickshaws.

Vibrant markets, Panjiayan in particular, feature vendors selling their wares to locals, as well as a sweetly-scented whiff of China's past to a growing crush of wide-eyed tourists. Yet it is the manufactured goods that attract an increasing number of tourists. As almost everything under the sun is now made in China, foreign tourists fill large suitcases with bargains found in markets and department stores. Year after year, the Chinese prices increase, and the good Chinese brands now cost almost as much as Western brands. Still, there are bargains to be made. Wangfujing Street is the super-sized pedestrian shopping area that starts from the historic Beijing Hotel. The Silk Market, another favourite, is reinventing itself year after year; clothes are sold at unbeatable prices for those who know how to drive a hard bargain.

Of course, Beijing is more than a shopping destination. Historic sites in the Chinese capital rival any in the world. The Forbidden City was the lifelong residence of 25 Chinese emperors. Surrounded by 13-metre walls and a 20-metre wide moat, this 100-hectare gated community once housed 6,000 residents including the Empress, concubines and a staff of man servants made trustworthy by their forced “conversion” to eunuchs. Bridges, courtyards and grand archways connect 1,000 carved wood and red brick buildings, most dating back to the early 1400s. Vast gold, silver and jade art displays lend a mythical, ornamental splendour.

Nearby, the Temple of Heaven is a stunning vision of China's spiritual and imperial past. This symbol of Beijing is at the heart of a lovely park where locals exercise at dawn. Tourists gaze upon a magnificent collection of ancient altars and halls. Round ceilings represent heaven and square foundations symbolize earth. Blue is the dominant colour integrating each temple with the sky.

Tiananmen Square, adjacent to the Forbidden City's south entrance, is a 40-hectare parade and celebration ground where a half million people can gather. This is where Mao and his followers raised the Red Flag on October 1, 1949, and where pro-democracy demonstrators were effectively "silenced" 40 years later. Foreigners may join the long but fast moving cue in front of the east-side memorial hall, where the body of Mao is publicly displayed inside a crystal case.

The 6,000-km Great Wall is a brush stroke across northern China from east to west, and the only man-made structure visible from space. With sections as old as 2,600 years, the wall earns its place among the Seven Wonders of the World, extending through five provinces and cutting across the Yellow River twice. The most impressive section is Badaling, located 60 km from Beijing. Eight meters in height and nearly six across, the wall rides the backs of mountains as far as the eye can see. Watch towers and landings are installed every 100 meters, wide enough for 10 foot soldiers, or five mounted soldiers, to patrol abreast. The wall is a picturesque – and challenging – walk. The slopes can be severe in places and the old stone steps are rounded on the edges and slick in the rain. Breathtaking, in every sense.



Food is a key attraction in China's capital. Beijing roast duck or mutton hotpot (the original Chinese fondue) are not to be missed. Beijing opera is an acquired taste, but it is a must to any first visit to China. Another must is a foot massage, which has recently become a common ritual of Beijing life. An upscale foot massage place has just opened under the name Tian Heliangzi Foot Massage on Jianwai Street (tel. 6507 9285); it is clean, friendly, professional, and completely refreshing.

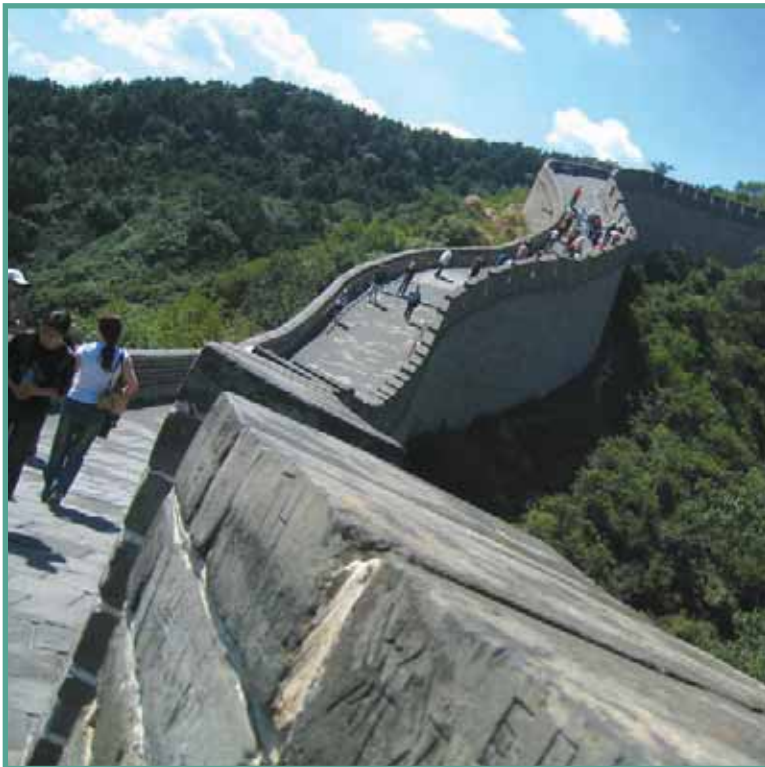
### Shanghai Takes Its Rightful Place

As an old fishing village, Shanghai ("above the sea") is emerging as China's trade, banking and shipping capital, and the newest giant in the world economy.

When the Treaty of Nanjing ended the first opium war in 1842, central Shanghai emerged as a colonial playground, partitioned into French, British and American concessions. For nearly a century, Western architecture and values dominated these quarters in the form of gardens, post offices, hotels, banks, restaurants and country clubs made off-limits to all Chinese (except as servants).

In the old French Concession, the ghosts of Western colonialism still float softly, carried on the good-natured wind of tourism. Once known as "Paris of the East," modern Shanghai is a mélange of ancient China, New World economics and restored remnants of old Europe. Laundry lines and tree branches form Parisian-style arches over densely-populated avenues filled with the bustle of commerce and serenity of tai chi.

The Bund is Shanghai's famous, tree-lined waterfront promenade running south to the old town alongside the Huangpo River. Merchant ships and junks take port under brilliant sunrises and sunsets, which give orange pastel shading to the ever-present mist. An evening stroll here is a wonderful opportunity to mingle with the locals and view a boulevard of lights. This grand avenue now features "Bund 18" (at 18 Zhongshan East Road), a bundle of high-end shops, galleries, restaurant and a bar, all overlooking the river.



**One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the 6,000-km Great Wall extends through five provinces and crosses the Yellow River twice. The most impressive section, Badaling, 60 km from Beijing, is a picturesque but challenging walk.**

**Top Left: Shanghai's old districts are a paradise for tourists looking for both history and good buys. The famous Nanjing Road still features a lively pedestrian corridor, while the Old City has retained much of its heritage and added new shops and restaurants.**

BENOIT LEGAULT

CHINA NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION

## China

The Bund was where foreign powers built their banks, trading posts and consulates. The buildings which line the Bund today evoke a sense of history, from the Customs House to the Peace Hotel, a prized, colonial landmark where Noel Coward wrote *Private Lives* in 1930. The lobby is of the grand, old European style, beautifully decorated with elaborate woodwork. Its jazz bar is famous for its Irish coffee and legendary Old Jazz Band that has entertained thousands of Westerners including American Presidents Carter and Reagan. Now, Shanghai has a full-fledged International Jazz Festival.

Shanghai truly takes its place as a major world city. It now hosts major international conferences, and globally watched sports events such as Formula 1 racing, tennis of the Masters Series, and the HSBC golf tournament.

Of course, the famous Nanjing Road still features a lively pedestrian corridor with restaurants, bright neon lights and shops that remain open until 10 at night (like almost everywhere now in Chinese shopping areas). It only gets bigger and better, year after year.

On the western end of Nanjing Road is the People's Square, a beautiful green space surrounded by an array of monumental buildings. The French-designed Shanghai Grand Theatre is shaped like a pagoda and boasts a glass and chrome exterior that glitters at night. The Shanghai Museum is fashioned after a traditional Chinese cooking pot. Inside, six floors of calligraphy, paintings, furniture and sculpture (jade, porcelain and bronze) are on display. Shanghai is the hub of the new and trendy Chinese contemporary art. A key showcase for this intriguing art is "Bridge 8", a large, uplifting gallery where artists work and display.

At the south end of the Bund, the Old City is something of a living museum. Once a walled retreat for Shanghai's masses, this district has retained much of its ancient heritage, including the pre-colonial Yuyuan Garden. New shops and restaurants add a modern touch to a vintage streetscape.

Pudong, on the east side of the Huangpo River, is the new commercial hub and the product of an initial turbo-charged, US\$40 billion development. In less than 15 years, the district has added an international airport, a stock exchange, a new shipping port and the third tallest skyscraper in the world. The architectural symbol of Pudong remains the Oriental Pearl Tower, a gigantic and photogenic bubbly sight.

Pudong is linked to old Shanghai by a dozen new bridges and tunnels. The crossing can be exhausting at times, but clients can view both sides of the river from the restful vantage point of a tour boat deckchair. Everywhere else, the new and very efficient subway is by far the most reliable way to move around. Traffic is now unbearable and even getting a taxi has become a challenge at certain times, in a city where the population equals that of Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes combined!

Clients can enjoy a last thrill by taking the lightning fast Maglev (magnetic levitation) train from the Longyang Road Station to the Pudong International Airport. The fastest train in the world, it reaches a top speed of 430 km/h during a 30 km shuttle performed in 7 minutes and 20 seconds. Trains pass by at a relative speed of 700 km/h.

For more information contact the China National Tourist Office: tel. 1-866-599-6636 or (416) 599-6382, [www.tourismchina-ca.com](http://www.tourismchina-ca.com). ✪

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4. With Negev's capital of \_\_\_\_\_ as a comfortable base, contemporary wayfarers can discover the desert's ancient highways.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ resort area attracts sun-worshippers, diving enthusiasts and desert explorers.
6. Contact the IGTO and they will send you a \_\_\_\_\_ including a dynamic PowerPoint presentation, brochures and other materials.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ both operate non-stop flights to Israel direct from Toronto.
8. The four Nabatean towns of Haluza, Mamshit, Avdat and Shivta mark the \_\_\_\_\_ from what is now central Jordan to the Mediterranean.



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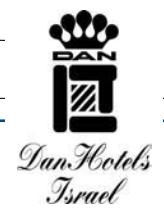
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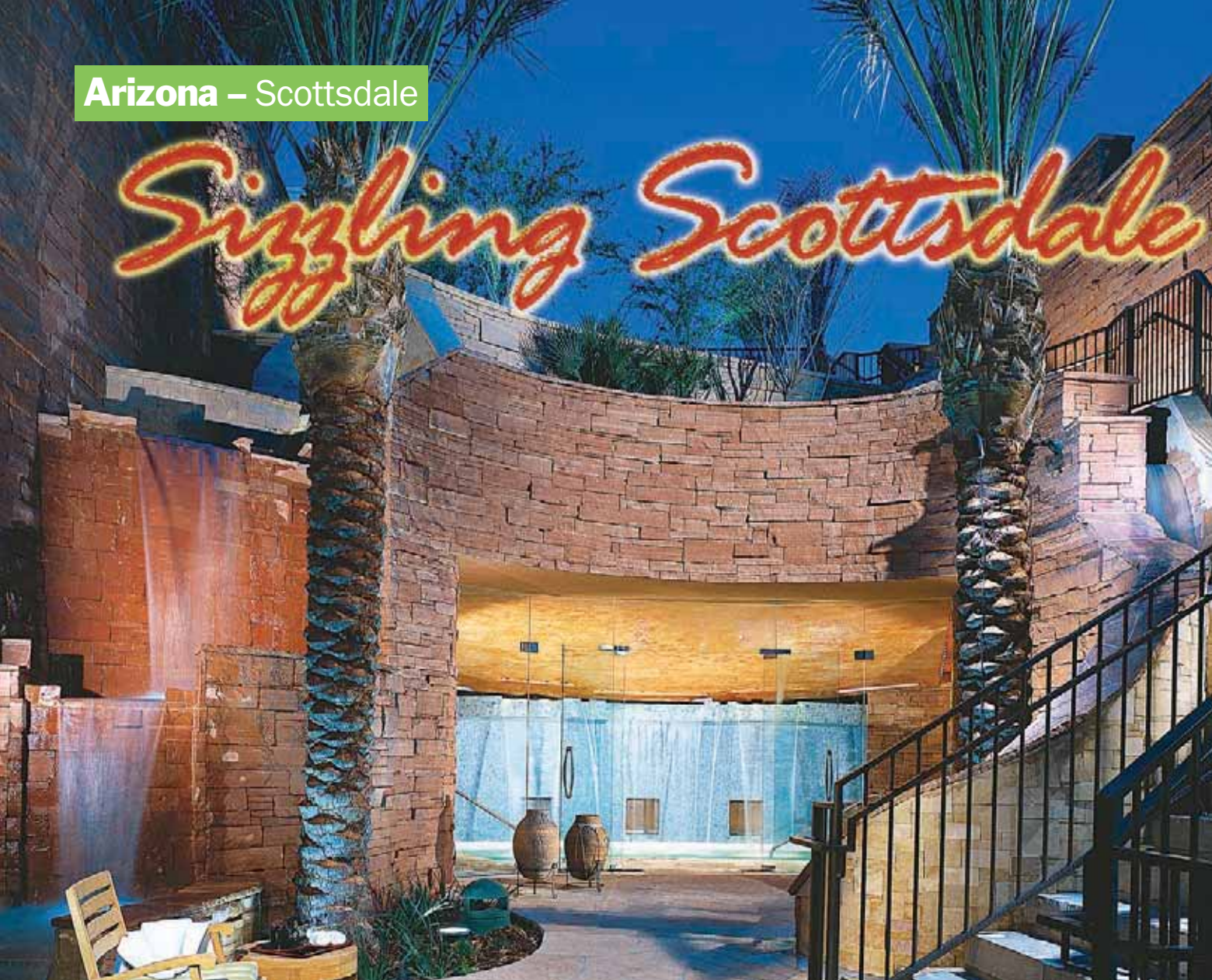
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#### THE RULES:

1. To enter the contest, the entrant must be a bona fide travel agent actively working in the industry, a resident of Canada who has reached the age of majority in the province in which he/she resides, who is not an employee of, a member of the immediate family of, or domiciled with, an employee of ACT Communications Inc., its agents or distributors, or any of the prize donors. Note: Contest is not valid in any jurisdiction where prohibited by law. Odds of winning are contingent upon the number of entries received.
2. Entrants must complete all questions, and include their name, telephone number and signature.
3. Mail or fax entries to "Israel Contest" Canadian Traveller, #203-1104 Hornby Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 1V8. Fax: (604) 699-9993. Entries must be received by April 30, 2006.
4. The draw will be made May 15, 2006 from all correct entries received. All questions must be answered. The answers can be found in the Israel supplement in the January 2006 issue of Canadian Traveller.
5. One prize will be awarded consisting of a pair of "positive air" round trip tickets courtesy of Air Canada plus 7 nights accommodation. The approximate retail value of the prize is \$6,000.
6. The prize must be used between September 1, 2006 and September 1, 2007, subject to availability and excluding Jewish and public holidays and the month of August. The prize must be accepted as awarded, is not redeemable for cash and is not transferable.
7. The winner will be advised by telephone during the week of May 15, 2006 and announced in the August issue of Canadian Traveller.
8. All entries become property of Canadian Traveller which assumes no responsibility for printing error or lost or misdirected entries. No communication will be entered into except with the winning entrant.
9. One entry per person. Duplicate entries will be disqualified.
10. If more than one agent in your office wishes to enter, please photocopy this page.

# Sizzling Scottsdale



FAIRMONT HOTELS & RESORTS

*Golfers, spa lovers, shopaholics, kids – they all love Scottsdale*

By Hilary Genders

Blessed with a sunny climate year-round, stunning desert and mountain scenery, a rich cultural scene, world-class golf, luxury spas, spectacular shopping and plenty of family-friendly adventures, Scottsdale truly offers something for every client.

## Great Golf

With more than 330 days of sunshine and 200-plus public and private courses to choose from, golf in Scottsdale is world-class. The **Boulders Golf Club** has received such accolades as *Golf Magazine's* "Gold Medal" and *Golf Digest's* "Top 25 United States Resorts."

Hole Number 14 at **Troon North's Monument Course** was voted one of the "Best 18 Holes You Can Play," by *Golf Digest*. **We-Ko-Pa**, designed by Scott Miller and located within the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation was named by *Sports Illustrated* magazine as one of the top ten new courses in the world. The aptly named **Sanctuary Golf Course at West World** features a wildlife preserve regulated by the Audubon International Institute.

Aside from unique desert layouts, there are some purely Scottsdale aspects to the game of golf:

- Check out the latest equipment at **In Celebration of Golf**, a 1,200-square-metre shopping extravaganza.

**Scottsdale's many luxury spas offer a wide variety of pampering treatments. The design of the Willow Stream Spa at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, inspired by a hidden oasis in the Grand Canyon, features a mesa rooftop pool and a Havasupai Waterfall that cascades over red Sedona rocks.**

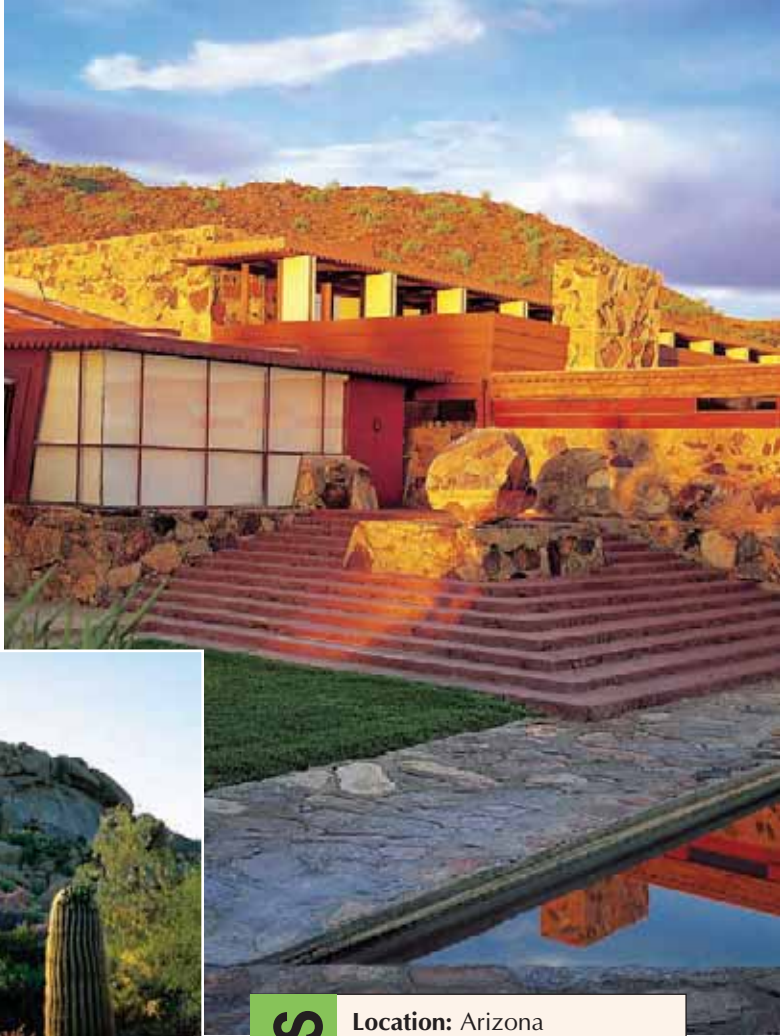
- Enroll in The Boulders' "Women to the Fore" program and enjoy a comprehensive approach to the game that is designed for beginners and to help advanced players; or try The Phoenician's "Ladies Links", which combines golf with a spa experience.
- Golfers can improve flexibility and get rid of any golf related stiffness with a **Golf Specialty Massage** at the Four Seasons.



**Right:** A tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West, a U.S. National Historic Landmark, and one of the architect's homes and studios, is a Scottsdale must-do.

**Below:** Scottsdale boasts more than 200 golf courses. Among the favourites is the Boulders Golf Club, named one of *Golf Digest's* Top 25 United States Resorts.

SCOTTSDALE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



SCOTTSDALE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

## Scottsdale Fast Facts

**Location:** Arizona

**Population:** 218,940 (July 2003)

**Resorts and Hotels:**

More than 63 with combined 12,000+ rooms, 63,170 square metres of meeting space

**Golf Courses:** More than 200 in Scottsdale and the Valley of the Sun

**Restaurants:** More than 600

**Art Galleries:** More than 125

**Annual Number of Visitors:** 7.1 million in 2001

**Getting There:** Air Canada, WestJet, Alaska Airlines and America West Airlines all offer flights from Canada to Phoenix.

**Contact Information:**

Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau

4343 Scottsdale Road, Suite 170

Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Tel: 1-800-805-0471 or

(480) 421-1004

Web site: [www.experience-scottsdale.com](http://www.experience-scottsdale.com)

Warm golf balls are used to knead tight muscles and alleviate tension.

- Toast your partner with a romantic **Tee Box dinner** at The Boulders or The Phoenician that includes a sunset dinner on one of the greens.
- Enjoy a cool, comfortable day on the links in the height of summer with an **air-conditioned golf cart** at the Kierland Golf Club at the Westin Kierland Resort & Spa.

### Spa Nirvana

Spas seem to go hand-in-hand with golf at many Scottsdale resorts. Massages developed

for golfers and yoga classes designed to help golfers improve their game are just a couple of ways resorts have married the two. But local resort spas also have discovered ways to combine Native American-inspired treatments using local desert elements with traditional European treatments.

At **The Phoenician's Centre for Well-Being**, guests can avoid getting tunnel vision on the fairway by asking for the *Golf Visualization* experience. As part of this treatment, the resident meditation consultant takes the guest out on the course for a personalized visualization session. Here, the guest

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## Arizona – Scottsdale

can improve their mental game by envisioning the hole and how they will play it. Other golf-specific spa services include *Yoga and Pilates for Golfers*, *Golf Massage*, and the *Oasis Golf Facial* especially designed for sun-damaged skin.

The Willow Stream Spa at the **Fairmont Scottsdale Princess** recently introduced an industry-first: its MVP Room is a full-service treatment room specifically designed for male guests. The room features plasma screens with wireless headsets, handsome leather and wood décor, multi-tasking massage beds, the latest issues of sports magazines and business journals and home-baked cookies. Women need not worry: the award-winning spa continues to offer a full range of treatments, including its signature Havasupai Body Oasis Experience, which begins under the spa's Havasupai Waterfall.

### Shopping Mecca

Shopping in Scottsdale is just as distinctive. Local specialties include Hopi Kachinas, Navajo turquoise and silver jewelry, Soleri Wind Bells from Cosanti, Prickly Pear cactus jelly and candy, Pima baskets and cactus bowls. There are also some one-of-a-kind shopping destinations:

- The **Borgata of Scottsdale** is modeled after the Italian hillside town of San Gimignano and features 50 boutiques, outdoor cafes and restaurants.
- **Scottsdale Fashion Square** is the largest mall in the Southwest, covering about 165,600 square metres and holding more than 225 shops and restaurants. It has recently undergone an extensive remodelling, and several new stores, including Gucci, have been added.
- **El Pedregal Festival Marketplace** is a collection of 40 stores and restaurants in a Moroccan-inspired setting, plus a branch of the renowned Heard Museum.
- **Kierland Commons** is a pedestrian-friendly urban village that boasts almost 50 upscale shops and restaurants.
- Scottsdale's downtown art and shopping districts encompass the upscale **Fifth Avenue Shopping District**, the specialty art, curio and antique emporiums of the **Main Street Arts & Antiques District**, the galleries of the **Marshall Way Contemporary Arts District** and the trendy and traditional shops of **Old Town Scottsdale**.

### Arts & Architecture

The arts, both visual and performing, are an integral part of Scottsdale. The desert has attracted renowned artists like Fritz Scholder, Ed Mell, Jesse Benton Evans, Muriel Magenta, Beth Ames Swartz and Genevieve Reckling, as well as architectural visionaries Frank Lloyd Wright and Paolo Soleri. More than 125 galleries showcase works by artists from around the world, and the city itself is one large gallery with one per cent of its capital improvement budget earmarked annually for public art. Stroll the streets, galleries and public places to see the massive display of public art.

Whether your clients are seasoned collectors, art enthusiasts or new to the art scene, **Culture Quest Scottsdale** is the consummate guide to Scottsdale and the Valley's thriving arts and cultural community. From the latest news on special exhibits, gallery openings and theatrical performances to hands-on workshops, special events and more, Culture Quest Scottsdale provides all

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Please note as of January 19, 2006  
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E: [steve@smpttraining.com](mailto:steve@smpttraining.com)

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## Arizona – Scottsdale

the information they need to experience the culture they crave.

- Enjoy a celebration of Native American culture at the fourth annual **Native Trails**, a series of free noontime musical and dance performances most Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays between January 10 and April 15, at the Scottsdale Civic Center Mall. Native foods, arts, crafts and jewelry will also be available. Admission is free.
- Visit the **Cosanti Foundation**, a unique complex of concrete structures designed and built by Paolo Soleri, and browse the studios where the Soleri Wind Bells are made and sold.
- Tour the renowned **Heard Museum** with its vast collection of Native American treasures.
- Tour **Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West**, a workplace, home and U.S. National Historic Landmark.
- View modern and contemporary art, architecture and design at the **Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art**.
- Join the weekly Thursday night **ArtWalk**

where galleries have opened their doors and exhibitions between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. for the past 21 years.

### Outdoor Adventure

From unusual desert excursions to the most familiar family fun, Scottsdale has plenty to occupy even the most hard-to-please vacationer:

- Move cattle at **Fort McDowell Adventures**, or enjoy a sunset trail ride through the Verde River Valley on the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.
- Get real ranch-working experience at the no-frills **Arizona Cowboy College**.
- **Float** or **kayak** the Salt River.
- Hike the mountain trails on **Camelback Mountain, Pinnacle Peak Park** or in the **McDowell Sonoran Preserve**.
- Admire the remarkable wildlife and landscape while drifting over the spectacular Sonoran Desert in a **hot air balloon** and top it off with a gourmet champagne breakfast.
- Take off in a glider and soar silently over the desert.

- Bump over rocky trails in a **desert tour** aboard a Jeep or Hummer.
- Go **sailing** on a local lake.
- Explore the **Desert Botanical Garden** and see the world's largest collection of arid-land plants from around the world.
- Visit the **Barrett-Jackson Car Auction** and see the world's greatest collectible and classic cars.
- **Hike** or **mountain bike** the city's many trails, or go "bike-seeing" on a guided desert excursion.
- Head to the wild west at **Rawhide Wild West Town** and tour Arizona's largest western-themed attraction.
- **Climb** the desert rock formations around Scottsdale for extreme adventure.
- See an actual prehistoric Hohokam Indian ruin and other archeological exhibits at the **Pueblo Grande Museum**.
- Tour the internationally acclaimed **Heard Museum** and enjoy changing exhibits, children's hands-on activities and tours, or see exhibitions of works by Native American artists at the **Heard Museum North** in Scottsdale.



For families looking for fun, couples looking for quiet times or the business traveler seeking comfort and convenience, The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa offers an entire community of spa, golf, dining, history, meeting facilities and nearby shopping and entertainment. Enjoy the only Scottsdale resort that features Westin's innovative Heavenly Bed® and Heavenly Bath.® Treat yourself to a true resort experience with 27 holes of desert golf, a full-service spa honoring the healing cultures of old Arizona, exceptional dining, and extensive pool areas.

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## Family Fun

Not just for the underage, Scottsdale's family attractions are fun for everyone:

- Visit **CrackerJax Family Fun & Sports Park** for 11 hectares of rides, games and sports activities.
- Head to **Fiddlesticks Family Fun Park** for laser tag, mini golf, go-karts, bumper boats, video arcade and Kiddie Land.
- Ride the train through 12 hectares of park at **McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park**, and then enjoy the Scottsdale Charros Carousel.
- Check out the kids camps offered at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort at Gainey Ranch, The Phoenician, The Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess and the Marriott's Camelback Inn Resort, Golf Club & Spa.
- Experience the Old West of the 1880s at **Rawhide Wild West Town**. Visit the blacksmith shop, the shooting gallery, take in a stunt show, try panning for gold or watch the crazy antics of the colourful characters on Main Street.

## What's New

- **Downtown Scottsdale Waterfront Project:** The first phase of the commercial component of the Scottsdale Waterfront Project, a US \$250-million, 4.5-hectare residential, retail and office development was recently completed. The project, located along the northern banks of the Arizona Canal in downtown Scottsdale, will also be home to the Fiesta Bowl headquarters and museum. A pedestrian-only bridge will link the Waterfront to Scottsdale Fashion Square mall, Scottsdale's Fifth Avenue shopping district and the South Canal Bank Project, which will feature independent restaurants and shops. The entire project is set for completion in 2007.
- **Museum Expansion:** The **Phoenix Art Museum** is undergoing a major expansion project. Scheduled for completion this spring, the project includes a new entrance; a 2,323-square-metre, four-level gallery wing; enhanced outdoor courtyard; and expanded museum store.
- **Hotel Renovations:** Originally built in

1956, the **Hotel Valley Ho** re-opened its doors in December after undergoing a US \$70 million rehabilitation and expansion. The resort features 194 rooms, a spa, 37 high-end condominiums and two signature restaurants – **Café ZuZu** and the legendary **Trader Vic's**. Rooms are appointed with design elements reminiscent of the 1950s with modern amenities, including flat-screen televisions and the latest Internet connections.

Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants recently purchased the **Caleo Resort & Spa**, formerly the SunBurst Resort. Just before the purchase, the property completed a US \$9 million renovation project, including upgrades to its 204 guest rooms, meeting space, public areas and pool, as well as a new restaurant. Additional renovations and improvements are planned to elevate the resort to Kimpton's signature style, services and amenities. The renovation is scheduled for completion by the end of 2006.

- **New Hotels:** Several new hotels have opened in and around Scottsdale recently,

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SCOTTSDALE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

including the 248-room **Radisson Fort McDowell Resort & Casino**, that combines Native American influences with contemporary architecture and features more than 2,300 square metres of meeting space, flat-screen TVs in all guest rooms, a fitness and workout studio and two heated swimming pools.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. recently broke ground

on its first W Hotel in Arizona located in downtown Scottsdale, one block east of the famed intersection of Scottsdale and Camelback roads. The **W Scottsdale Hotel and Residences** will consist of a seven-storey building, encompassing 28,000 square metres, and feature 224 guestrooms, a spa, restaurant, two bars, and 18 luxury W residences.

- **New Spa:** The **Hyatt Regency Scottsdale**

**Resort and Spa at Gainey Ranch** recently opened **Spa Avania**, a 2,000-square-metre luxury spa featuring 18 treatment rooms, five exterior treatment gardens, mineral pool, lotus pond, men's and women's relaxation lounges, yoga room, state-of-the-art exercise facility, steam room and sauna, hot and cold plunges, and a full-service salon. Guests will enjoy personal iPods with music tailored to individual treatments.

- **Custom Shopping Tours:** Visitors can shop 'til they drop with **Spre!** **The Art of Shopping**, which provides custom, private shopping excursions to unique Scottsdale-area boutiques and shops. These exclusive tours can include home décor, new and unique boutiques, art studios, discount designer clothing, and men's stores. Many of the stores offer shoppers private, after-hours shopping and courtesy services from wine and refreshments to gift wrapping and shipping. Transportation is provided and upgrades include limousine service and image consulting. ✦

## Signature Events

### January

Tostitos Fiesta Bowl  
Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction  
The FBR Open  
Arizona Sun Country Quarter Horse Show  
Celebration of Fine Art (through March)  
Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction  
Native Trails (through March)

### February

Indian Artists of America Show  
Scottsdale Fine Art & Chocolate Festival  
Scottsdale Jaycees Parada del Sol Parade & Rodeo  
Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show  
Spring ArtFest of Fifth Avenue  
State Farm Women's Tennis Classic

### March

Franklin Templeton Tennis Classic  
Carefree Fine Art & Wine Festival

National Festival of the West  
Scottsdale Arts Festival

### April

Sonoran Festival of Art  
The Countrywide Tradition  
Scottsdale Culinary Festival  
Tostitos Southwest Salsa Challenge

### July

Summer Spectacular ArtWalk

### October

Western ArtWalk Weekend

### November

Hidden in the Hills Artist Studio Tour  
Metris Thunderbird Balloon Classic

### Year-Round

Scottsdale ArtWalk



SCOTTSDALE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

**Travellers join in a Round Dance at Native Trails, a celebration of Native American culture presented by the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation and produced by the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts each year between January and April.**





# Scottsdale

For travel information, contact the Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau at 800-782-1117 or [www.scottsdalecvb.com](http://www.scottsdalecvb.com).



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# Seizing the Opportunity

*Post Hurricane Ivan Grenada is better than ever*

By Anita Draycott

In 2004 Hurricane Ivan (the terrible) huffed and puffed and tried to drown and decimate Grenada. But after a recent visit, I am happy to report that the island is ready and eager to welcome tourists. The resilient Grenadians used Ivan as an “opportunity” to refurbish, upgrade and expand many hotels and facilities. And the new cruise port is thriving.

With its 45 pristine black and white beaches, lush tropical forests, volcanic mountains and cascading waterfalls, Grenada is blessed with natural beauty. Best of all though, mass tourism hasn’t spoiled or jaded the gracious, fun-loving Grenadians. Unlike some islands where tourists spend most of their time behind the gates of their all-inclusive resort, in Grenada you’re welcome to mingle with the locals, shop where they do in the markets and join them for a wee nip in the rustic rum shops. If friendly and safe are important criteria, Grenada fills the bill.

## Local Flavour

It was dark when I arrived on a Friday night. On the way from the airport to the hotel, reggae music was blaring from places with names like “Fish and Chicks” and other roadside eateries where barbecued chicken was sizzling on charcoal grills. I was ravenous. “Smells good,” I said to my driver, Kennedy, who immediately pulled over, unrolled his window, paid for two drumsticks and handed them to me. It was drive-through fast food, Grenada-style. Delicious.

I tried to reimburse him but he insisted it was his little treat. I encountered that sort of spontaneous generosity and thoughtfulness all over the island.

Next morning I was wandering around the lively Saturday Grenville market, where the air smells like mulled wine and curry. Grenada, known as the Spice Island, produces much of the world’s nutmeg and mace, as well as cinnamon, ginger, bay and cloves, hence the heady aromas. I stopped to chat up Emma, a vender who knew all about spices and natural potions. “Got anything to make me slim,” I joked. She told me to come back later and she’d tell me how to make tea from an indigenous “bread and cheese” plant. As I was leaving, she insisted on giving me a present of cinnamon sticks. Alas, I didn’t have a chance to return and try some of Emma’s miracle diet brew – there were too many things to see and do.

## St. George’s

The capital is full of narrow roller-coaster streets radiating out from Carenage Harbour. Take a stroll, stopping at one of the many cafés for a fresh-squeezed tropical juice and sample the soused lambi (marinated, stewed conch). Note: On Saturdays, most shops and restaurants close in the afternoon. If you’re looking for nightlife you won’t find it in St. George’s. Finish your capital tour with a trek up to historic Fort George for a great view.

## Grand Etang Forest

Nature lovers will want to take a hike in this 12-hectare rain forest in the centre of which stands a crater lake surrounded by banana groves.

## Spice it Up

Take an informative tour at the Gouyave nutmeg process station. Grenada produces

**The main street on Carriacou is crammed with rum shops, immigration and customs office, craft boutiques, restaurants and small guest hotels, but wide expanses of sugary beaches lie just beyond.**

about a third of the world’s supply. I discovered that nutmeg is used for more than spicing up your eggnog; it’s also a key ingredient in medicines for muscle relief.

## Divine Diving

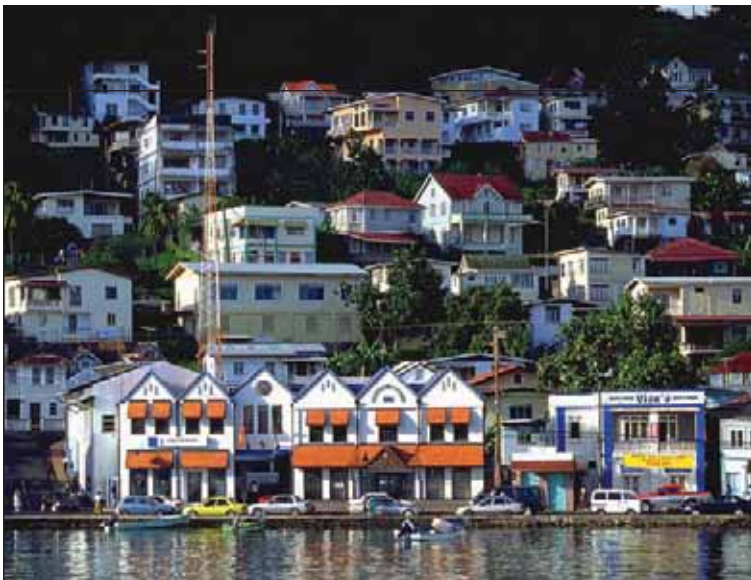
Grenada provides some of the very best snorkeling and scuba diving in the entire Caribbean. With close to two dozen major sites, water babies can easily do two dives a day for a week without exhausting options. Grenada boasts the largest shipwreck in the Caribbean – *The Bianca C* – a 182-metre Italian ocean liner.

## Sidetrip to Carriacou

The nation state of Grenada is made up of three islands: Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique. A ferry to Carriacou leaves from Grenada’s harbour every morning, returning later in the afternoon. The trip takes about an

### TOUR OPERATORS SELLING GRENADA

Air Canada Vacations,  
[www.aircanadavacations.com](http://www.aircanadavacations.com)  
GG Tours, [www.ggtours.ca](http://www.ggtours.ca)  
Ali, [www.alitours.com](http://www.alitours.com)  
Titan Tours, [www.titantours.com](http://www.titantours.com)  
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**St. George's is full of narrow roller-coaster streets radiating out from Carenage Harbour, where visitors are welcome to mingle with the locals, shop where they do in the markets and join them for a wee nip in the rustic rum shops.**

- **Location:** Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique in the Eastern Caribbean are the most southerly of the Windward Islands, located between St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the north and Trinidad and Tobago to the south.
- **Airlines:** Air Canada Vacations offers a weekly direct flight to Grenada from Toronto, with connections from Montreal and Ottawa. Air Canada and BWIA operate regularly scheduled flights via Barbados and Port-of-Spain. Regional airlines offer connections to Grenada and include Air Caribbean, Avior Airlines, BWIA, Caribbean Star, SVG Air and LIAT. Titan Tours (Toronto) offers special charters during the year. American Airlines operates daily flights from the U.S. via Puerto Rico. American Eagle serves the destination as does Air Jamaica.
- **Airports:** Point Salines International Airport is located on the southwestern tip of Grenada, eight kilometres from the capital of St. George's, and a short drive to the main hotel areas. Lauriston Airport in Carriacou can only accommodate light aircraft.
- **Entry Requirements:** A valid passport and return or onward ticket is required. However, two proofs of

citizenship, one bearing a photo, are acceptable from Canadian citizens. Visas are not required.

- **Currency:** Eastern Caribbean Dollar. Canadian and U.S. Dollars are easily exchanged at banks. The current conversion rate is EC\$1.75 = CDN\$1. Most hotels, car rental companies and tourist shops accept major credit cards
- **Departure Tax:** Persons 13 years of age and older are required to pay Eastern Caribbean Dollar (EC) \$50 (approximately CDN \$30). Departure tax for persons from 2 to 12 years of age is EC\$25 approximately CDN\$14.75). Children under 2 years are exempted.

- **Language:** English is the official language.
- **Size:** Grenada is 34 km long and 19 km wide. Carriacou has an area of 34 sq. km, while Petite Martinique is 20 hectares.
- **Population:** 102,000 people made up of African, East Indian and European descent.
- **Climate:** Daily temperature ranges from 24 to 32 degrees Celsius. January to May is considered the dry season; during the remainder of the year brief showers may occur.
- **Electricity:** Voltage is 220 volts - 50 cycles. Appliances rated at 110 volts normally work with a transformer. Most hotels provide dual shaver units. Bring an adaptor plug for small appliances.
- **Time Zone:** Atlantic Standard
- **Shopping:** Best buys are locally made handicrafts, spice baskets, straw work, wood carvings, batik and screen-painted items, spices, herbal teas, and locally produced jams, jellies and syrups, nutmeg in particular.
- **Driving:** British-style on the left. To obtain a local permit, a driving license must be presented at the local traffic department on the Carenage. The cost is EC\$30. Most car rental firms issue local permits.

**For More Information:**

Grenada Board of Tourism

Tel: (416) 595-1339

Web site: [www.grenadagrenadines.com](http://www.grenadagrenadines.com).

hour and costs about \$50. You might spot flying fish off the bow. If you thought you were getting away from the rat race in Grenada, you'll find that Carriacou even more laid back. The island has about five hotels and a number of guesthouses scattered along the western side. The ferry docks at the jetty in Hillsborough, the capital. The

main street is crammed with rum shops, immigration and customs office, craft boutiques, restaurants and small guest hotels, but just beyond lay wide expanses of sugary beaches.

At the Carriacou Silver Diving shop we were outfitted with snorkeling gear and boated over to Sandy Island just minutes

away. For scuba enthusiasts, the Sister Rocks, is world-class. Plummeting cliffs offer some of the most spectacular wall diving in the Caribbean with the opportunity to glimpse black coral, eagle rays and angel fish. At about 40 metres, the walls level off into striking coral gardens for exceptional drift diving. ★

**Curry Tour** includes a ride on the Denali Star from either Anchorage or Talkeetna to the historical townsite of Curry where a naturalist guide conducts the ghost-town tour. For details visit [www.akrr.com](http://www.akrr.com).

## The Luxury Trains of India

A variety of all-inclusive tours aboard the **Deccan Palace on Wheels** take in some of the most fascinating destinations and sites in India aboard a train with décor befitting the style of the Maharajas. While menus offer a wide selection, guests are urged to try freshly prepared Indian curries – not too hot for foreign taste buds. A special meet-n-greet service is provided for all guests along with a complementary full day sightseeing tour. The traditional journey is the **Deccan Odyssey**, a one-week tour of the State of Maharashtra, Goa and mystic caves of the Ajanta and Ellora. Stops include Mumbai, Ganapatipule, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Tarkarli, Sawantwadi, Goa, Pune, Kolhapur (new attraction) Aurangabad, Ellora, Ajanta and Nashik. A variety of other itineraries include the 10-day **Deccan Palace on Wheels Luxury Train Holiday**; a five-day Goa to Mumbai route; the four-day Mumbai to Goa holiday; the 11-day Goa to Goa round trip; and the 15-day **Deccan Palace on Wheels with Kerala Backwaters Luxury Train Holiday**. Until April 2006 The Luxury Trains is also offering combination train-cruise journeys including the 11-day **Deccan Palace on Wheels with Lakshadweep/Goa Luxury Cruise Holiday** and the seven-day **Deccan Palace on Wheels with Goa Luxury Cruise Holiday**. Call 1-877-904-6342 or visit [www.theluxurytrains.com](http://www.theluxurytrains.com).

## S&S Tours

S&S Tours specializes in rail tours in **Mexico's Copper Canyon** and **Yucatan Peninsula** and **Machu Picchu** in Peru. The Company offers a rail fan trip once a year through Copper Canyon with special features for rail buffs. The average tour includes only eight participants and is usually composed of active seniors. Specializing in the **Copper Canyon**, S&S offers year-round all-inclusive land packages, fully escorted by expert bilingual guides, with six-, seven- and eight-day standard tours. The private **Maya Express** is an eight-day trip through the classic Mayan centres of Chichén-Itzá and Uxmal, the historic seaport of Campeche, the nearby Maya site of Edzna, Palenque and Villahermosa. In Peru, a journey by narrow-

# HOT TRACKS



ALASKA RAILROAD

News and updates in the world of rail travel

By Laurie Carter

## Alaska Railroad Corporation

Alaska Railroad provides daily service from mid-May to mid-September between Anchorage and Seward, Anchorage and Whittier and Anchorage to Fairbanks with an

**Sierra Madre Express celebrates 25 years of operations to the Copper Canyon with new itineraries and promotions, including an Early Booking Discount of US \$300 per person when clients book six months in advance. Inset: Onboard tour guides point out sights including the wandering wildlife and spectacular mountain scenery visible from Alaska Railroad's glass-domed viewing cars on routes between Anchorage and Seward, Whittier and Fairbanks.**

onboard tour guide. Alaska Railroads also offers all-inclusive summer vacation packages and a selection of creative special trains that run throughout the year. New for the 2006 season: Two new double-deck coaches featuring **GoldStar Service** on the Denali Star train. The 4-1/2-hour **Flagstop Rail and Susitna River Float** tour aboard the local flagstop train, **Hurricane Turn**, will let clients ride from Talkeetna to Chase and enjoy a gentle float trip back to Talkeetna on the Susitna River. The **Glacier Explorer** tour will begin in Anchorage where clients board the **Glacier Discovery Train** for the run to Spencer Glacier and a deli-style lakeshore lunch before exploring Spencer Lake in a modern version of an Alaska Native canoe. Alaska Railroad and Mahay's Riverboat Service have plans to introduce a new tour for mid-summer, 2006. The **Historical**

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## Deccan Odyssey – 7 Nights & 8 Days Tour

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## Railways of the World

gauge tourist railroad from the archaeological capital of Cusco takes clients to **Machu Picchu**. For 2006, S&S is running an additional eight-day **Special Rail Fan Tour**, February 20-27. The journey takes in the whole length of the Copper Canyon route from Los Mochis to Chihuahua City. Also special for 2006 is the **Batopilas Canyon Special Tour**, November 9-17, 2006, journeying by private vehicle through three of the major canyons to the remote bottom of Batopilas Canyon and its historic mining town. Custom independent itineraries are also available for all destinations. For full details visit [www.ss-tours.com](http://www.ss-tours.com).

### Sierra Madre Express

Sierra Madre Express anticipates that 2006 will be a landmark year as it celebrates 25 years of operations to the **Copper Canyon**. Special events will include several new itineraries and promotions. In addition Sierra Madre Express will reintroduce its *Chile Verde* rail car to operation. The car was taken out of service in 2001 for refurbishment and after going through a complete renovation, including new carpet and flooring, paint, bedding, and lighting as well as the installation of a new stainless steel kitchen, it returns to service in early 2006. The *Chile Verde*, which was built in 1946 by the Pullman Company, ran on the *Empire Builder* between Seattle and Chicago and accommodates eight passengers in single roomettes. On March 2, 2006 Sierra Madre Express will increase capacity by almost 40 per cent with the inauguration of a new car, the *Patagonia*. A 1950 standard Pullman, the *Patagonia*, features seven single roomettes and six twin double compartments. With the addition of this car Sierra Madre Express will host its largest ever group on the **Roots on the Rails** 2006 tour. Throughout the year, Sierra Madre Express will announce other special activities as the company commemorates its past,

present and future. Sierra Madre Express offers an **Early Booking Discount** of US \$300 per person when clients book six months in advance. Visit [www.sierramadre-express.com](http://www.sierramadre-express.com) for more information.

### White Pass & Yukon Railroad

The White Pass & Yukon Railroad will transport your clients to new heights of scenic enjoyment 2,865 feet above tidewater at Skagway, Alaska. This narrow gauge railroad was built in 1898 during the Klondike Gold Rush and stands among an elite company of engineering marvels like the Panama Canal and Eiffel Tower as an International Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. An array of fully narrated tours runs from Skagway and ranges from the three-hour round-trip **Summit Excursion** to rail and bus combinations that connect with Fraser, BC and Whitehorse in the Yukon including the eight-hour **Lake Bennett Adventure** and the **Fraser Meadows Sunday Steam**. Rail fans rode the WP&YR in record numbers last year and the 2006 season promises new excitement. Late in 2005, the WP&YR took delivery of steam locomotive No.69, a Baldwin 2-8-0, which was originally built for the White Pass in 1907. It was reacquired from the Stuhr museum and has undergone two years of restoration. Commissioning and testing is complete and the locomotive will enter service next year to complement No.73 in an enhanced steam charter program. Construction of an extension to the Broadway dock has already commenced and will be completed over the winter, enabling White Pass to accept the new, longer ships scheduled to arrive in Skagway over the next few years. For schedules and excursion details, visit [www.whitepassrailroad.com](http://www.whitepassrailroad.com).

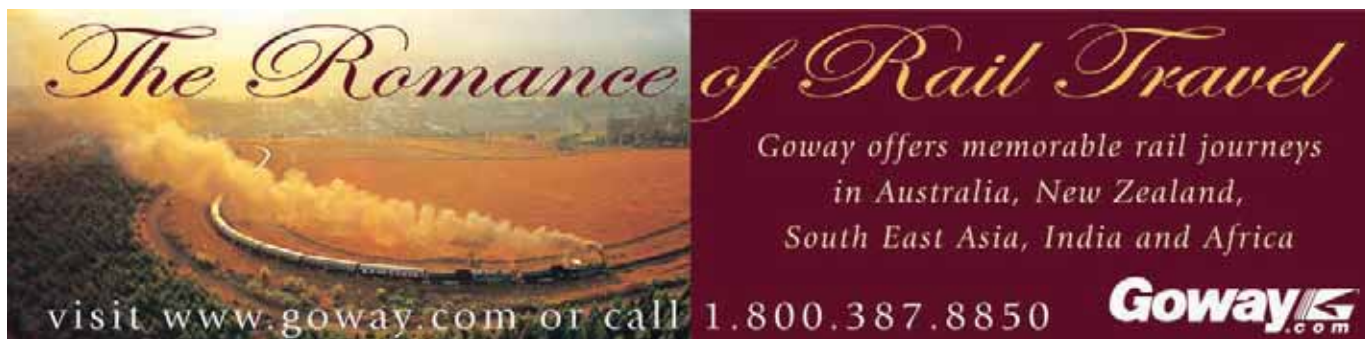
### Tourcan

Tourcan Vacations, a division of the Skylink Group of companies, is a travel consolidator

/tour operator, able to arrange bookings on all of the well-known luxury trains around the globe. In Africa, options include **Rovos Rail**: Cape Town to Pretoria, Victoria Falls – Pretoria and Cape Town to Dar es Salaam; **Shongololo Express**: The Southern Cross Adventure 1 and 2, the Good Hope Adventure 1 and 2 and the Dune Express Northbound; and **Blue Train**: Cape Town – Port Elizabeth. Australian service is aboard **The Ghan**: Adelaide – Alice Springs or reverse. Rail routes in Asia include **The Palace on Wheels**: India; and **Eastern Orient Express**: Bangkok – Singapore and reverse. European excursions are aboard the legendary **Venice Simplon**: London – Paris – Venice, Venice – Rome, Venice – Budapest – London, Venice – Vienna – London, and Venice – Prague – Paris – London. For complete details visit [www.tourcanvacations.com](http://www.tourcanvacations.com).

### Goway Travel

Agents looking for one-stop-shopping on a supermarket full of train trips should check out Goway Travel. For many of the destinations Goway offers, trains can be the most economical way to get around, or the most luxurious. For those planning a rail trip Down Under, the options include **Rail Australia**, **The Indian Pacific**, **The Sunlander**, **The Tilt Train**, and the **Waltzing Matilda Tour** aboard the legendary **Ghan**. In Asia, Goway represents the **Eastern & Orient Express** (Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore) and India's **Palace on Wheels** along with the **Trans Mongolian Express** in Russia and the **Reunification Express** in Vietnam. Travellers to Africa have the choice of several very different experiences with **The Blue Train** and **Shongololo Express** in South Africa, **Rovos Rail** in South and East Africa and the **Desert Express** in Namibia. See details at [www.goway.com/trainjourneys/index.html](http://www.goway.com/trainjourneys/index.html). ✦



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# Spring TRAINing

Hop aboard the express to higher railway commissions

By Steve Crowhurst

It's not too late! If you start running now you could catch the last train to Clarksville and you know what that means. Well hey, hold the whistle and listen up to the lyrics of that old song: *Take the last train to Clarksville, And I'll meet you at the station. You can be here by four thirty, 'Cause I made your reservation. Don't be slow, oh, no, no, no! Oh, no, no, no!* Keywords? Be there... reservation made... don't be slow... and at least one round of "Oh, no!" – especially if you miss the chance to get onboard a very lucrative opportunity.

Yes we're back ridin' the rails. This time out of the station we'll take a new route. We'll take a look at selling rail travel to springtime destinations. If you don't give a hoot about train travel that's okay – but come along for the ride anyway and perhaps by the end of the article you'll realise that what you thought was a sleeper is in fact a faster than fast sleek machine that can transport your clients across a number of continents. Or, if your clientele like the sleepy route – there is always a train that travels slow mo'. So let's get your spring TRAINing back on the rails.

## Think Spring!

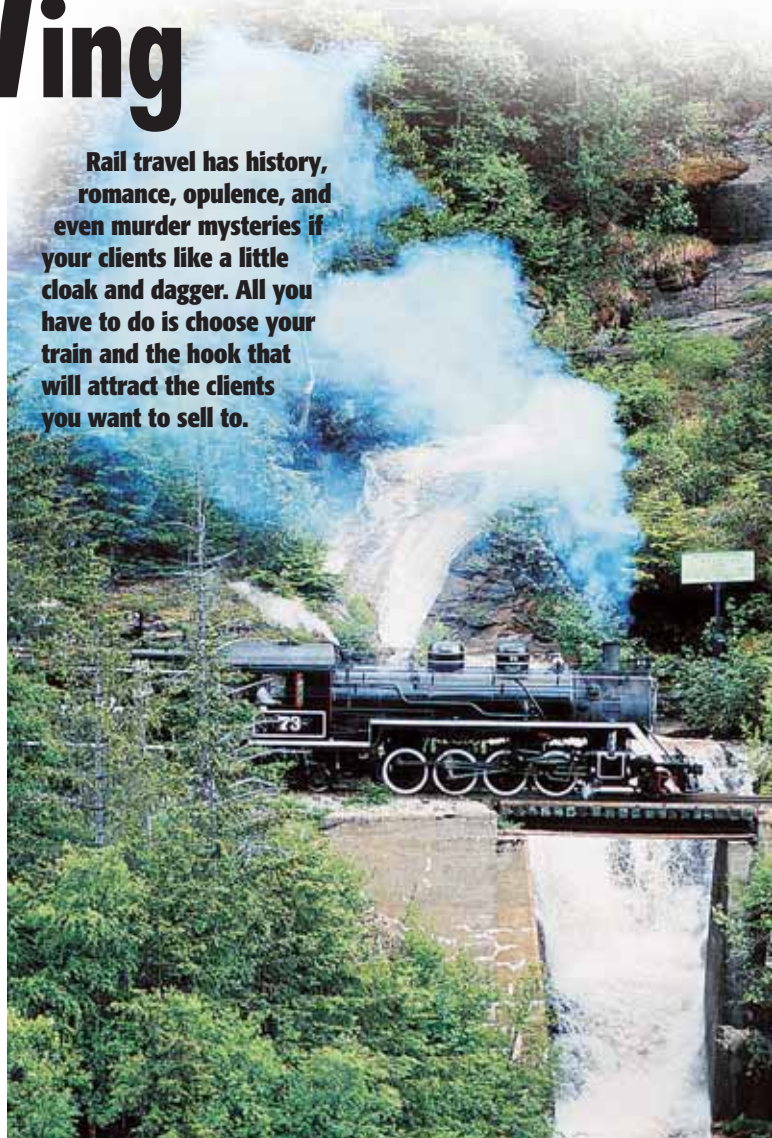
Okay, let's put the old noggin to work and think about spring places to rail around. What destinations offer a wonderful spring vacation? How about Japan? Like that idea? Okay keep chuggin'. What about the UK, Europe, India, South Africa, Aussie? Pretty much the entire world and we can put Canada in there, too. If you agree that you can arrange spring TRAINing for your clients in and around numerous countries let's move on and attend to the marketing of this idea.

- **Spring Break:** It arrives just in time – perhaps too early for you this time around but how about planning for next year if your time is short. Point is, this vacation break offers you both the time frame and the seasonality to promote any of the spring destinations mentioned. Subject to that spring being dry, sunny, green. You know what kind of springtime you want to sell, so make sure you do your due diligence and review online weather channels for advanced reports.

Kids go with trains. They always have. With the kids there always seems to be a couple of parents in tow making sure everything goes according to the kids. Funny how that works. Here's how you sell your family Spring TRAINing program. Use images of families. Use key emotional marketing words such as "togetherness" and "family" – don't forget there are many single parent families, so you'll need to appeal to them too.

- **Anniversary:** As you well know everyone has an anniversary of some sort each and everyday of the year. You'll have to target it by type of course, but once you're past that hurdle your marketing genius can switch on. What will you go for? Wedding anniversaries

Rail travel has history, romance, opulence, and even murder mysteries if your clients like a little cloak and dagger. All you have to do is choose your train and the hook that will attract the clients you want to sell to.



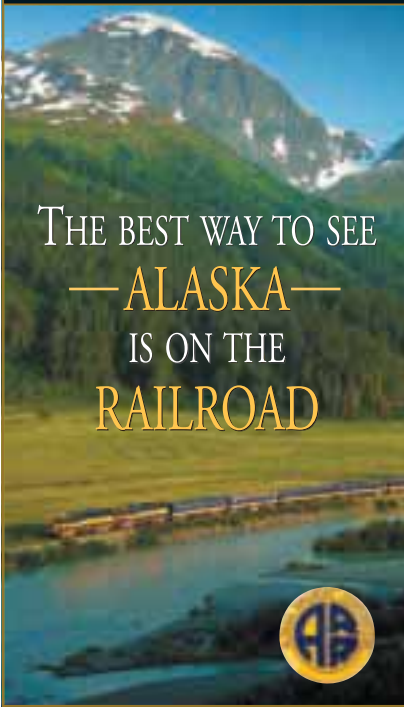
JOHN HYDE/WPYR

Would you believe in North America alone there are 82 dinner trains to choose from?

are good. From one to 60 gives you a terrific hit list! "Celebrate your first year together and enjoy the romance of train travel..." For many people the train has figured in their lives a great deal. Perhaps there are memories to be rekindled. You'll be back with emotional marketing ideas here, using the keywords such as "memories" to help stage the sale.

- **Golden Wedding:** Going for gold? Why not? Those celebrating their 50th would be in their 70s if they were married in their twenties. Why not promote: "Your 50th? What a golden opportunity to take the A-train." Or, "The Train... You Know!"
- **Honeymoon:** Weddings are still in. That means honeymoons are still happening. Sure many will head to the beach or the cruise ship for the mass market style of post marital Q&A. However a honeymoon onboard a train is romance. Imagine a seven-day honeymoon travelling across the plains, through mountainous terrain, pulling into foreign stations, Winnipeg... a springtime romancing of Jane Wilder proportions!

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## How To Sell – Railways

### Training Yourself

Train yourself to look for e-ideas that will allow you to reach out and e-card someone. Specifically your train enthusiasts. Take a journey to [www.railgreetings.com/rail\\_ecard/index.html](http://www.railgreetings.com/rail_ecard/index.html) and view their e-Rail Cards. There are 80 cards to choose from. All terrific rail artwork painted by real rail artists. Any one of these cards could be used to promote your Spring TRAINing ideas. Attach a verse, change the background or embed a railroad song or train whistle.

### Spring Time Dining

You've heard of dinner trains. Sure you have. From Canada to Europe to other parts of the world – having dinner onboard a train is a highlight. Also a high price. Followed by a high commission. With the entire TV world hooked on cooking shows and gourmet this and that – why not try to get a group of food lovers, wine lovers or just plain train lovers on a platform somewhere in the world of train travel this spring. Would you believe in North America alone there are 82 dinner trains to choose from? A Grand Dinner Train Tour perhaps?

### Blowing Your Own Whistle

As you well know – if you don't toot your own horn no one else will. So get on that whistle and let it blow loud and clear. Tell your trading area that you are agency of record when it comes to train travel and then get busy with your spring promotion. Here are a few ideas to help you toot:

- Agency window: if your agency window is visible to walk and drive-by traffic place train related graphics where they can be seen. Make them large. Look for reproductions of old railway posters. These can be found in most art galleries or online at [www.allposters.com](http://www.allposters.com).
- Use window lettering to spell out the offer. If you can manage it, arrange small speakers outside your agency (preferably located high up, out of reach, above your agency door) – play the sound of a train whistle every so often.
- Play train travel videos in the agency window.
- Send direct mail featuring a DVD of train footage. Add a flyer to promote your tour. Add a whistle in the shape of a train.
- Hold your presentation at the local train station. Be brave. Get that Casey Jones gear on. Suck it up and go tell 'em what they're missin'.

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- Another place to present would be Chapters book store. You can apply to use their rotunda where they have speakers each Saturday. Work with the local manager and see what they think about the idea. They will have plenty of beautiful books to place around you and these will encourage anyone who turns up to listen to you, to take the trip.

### TrainWeb

You must clickety click to this Web site: [www.trainweb.org](http://www.trainweb.org). There is so much, in terms of information, to help you spark your ideas. The site boasts the largest links directory on the Web, more than 1,000 railroad books and over 300 railroad videos.

### TrainParty

Here is a Web site that is pure fun, with a kid focus, but you can take a peak and look for ideas and goodies to use in your promotion of train travel. Once again, too much to mention here, so I'll have to send you directly to [www.trainparty.com/](http://www.trainparty.com/).

### Attracting Train Lovers

Most of your clients will respond to your offer of Spring TRAINing through the notion of romance, childhood memories, something new. Others, perhaps a few, but that's fine, will be dyed in the wool train lovers in more ways than one. If you'd like to join the group that tells you they can send such people to your Web site you'll need to visit [www.railring.com/](http://www.railring.com/) and register. They boast 60 million visitors per year to this Web site – perhaps they know a thing or two.

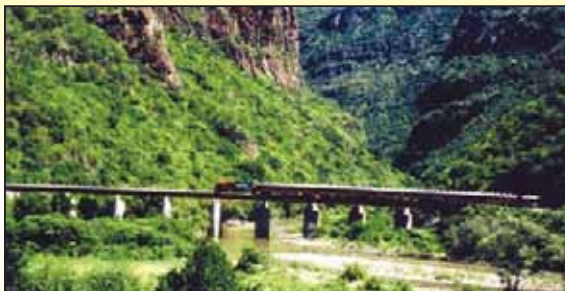
### Time To Board!

No more chatter. Time to get onboard with your springtime marketing. Do your research. Choose your continent and your train and the hook that will attract the clients you want to sell to. Go for the short there and back trips or the 10-day trips in central Europe. Whichever you choose to market, let your research prove to you that rail travel can be a very lucrative niche market for you.

This product is year round. It is supported on every continent. It has history, romance, opulence, even murder mysteries if you are into a little cloak and dagger. The train is in the station. Spring is around the corner. It's about to be sprung in some of the world's most beautiful countries with rail routes to match. ✦

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# Let The Good Times Roll

*Orlando blends old favourites with new additions*

By Donna Carter



ORLANDO CVB

It's hard to believe today that just over 30 years ago Orlando was a sleepy little community surrounded by citrus groves and swampland. That was before Mickey Mouse rolled into town. The 1971 arrival of Mickey's Walt Disney World theme park marked the launch of the most famous holiday and amusement Mecca on the planet. While the Disney empire has established itself as the city's entertainment icon – joined by a vast array of other attractions and mega theme parks like Sea World and Universal Studios – growth and change continue to shape and advance the town that originally began as a Seminole Indian village.

In terms of the city's enormous vacation appeal for Canadians and others, Orlando has reached an enviable plateau, however, there's an old saying that proclaims if you're not moving forward, you're falling behind. This is a philosophy the entertainment capital has obviously bought into since the city shows no signs of stalling or losing ground. In fact, it's quite the opposite. The Florida holiday hot spot that attracts more than 43 million visitors a year continues to evolve with enhanced and expanded attractions, resorts, shopping, golf courses, hotels and eating places. Each year, new selling features emerge that further sweeten the pot and provide agents with an ever-expanding arsenal of ways and means to entice clients.

## Always Something New

Vacationers looking to the sky for thrills will find a new addition at Fantasy of Flight, an aviation-themed attraction about 20 minutes west of downtown that features the world's largest private collection of vintage aircraft from around the world. Recently added to this family friendly venue is the chance to take flight in a fully restored 1929 bi-plane. This open-cockpit model, reminiscent of the barn storming days, seats four passengers and pilot. The thrill ride takes off from the Fantasy of Flight runway with passengers wearing vintage goggles and white silk scarves, just as they did in times past. Alternatively, visitors can soar in a two-seater trainer bi-plane and those who wish can take a supervised turn at the controls.

Adding to Orlando's various water-based attractions the Ron Jon Surfpark will be one of Orlando's newest extreme sport options. Planned for completion sometime this year, it will feature pools for intermediate and pro-level surfers and body boarders as well as beginner and novice wave riders.

**More than 150 golf courses are located within a 45-minute radius of downtown Orlando. Clients can choose from a range of courses that feature lake-side layouts, links-style, flat, hilly or artificially mounded.**

At Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex, guests can now go behind-the-scenes to see modules being processed for the International Space Station (ISS), discover the contributions of the space station and observe the final check-out of the next components to fly in space.

The 11th annual Mardi Gras celebration returns to Universal Orlando every Saturday from February 11 to April 22. During the celebration, the streets of Universal Studios will come alive with festivities, special concerts and parades.

Likewise, there's always something new at Walt Disney World (WDW). The Happiest Celebration on Earth, commemorating Disneyland Resort's 50th anniversary

## Orlando By The Book

As an assistance tool, the Orlando CVB has just released its 2006 Official Tour & Travel Reference Manual. The guide is designed to provide travel agents and tour operators with up-to-date information on accommodations, attractions, restaurants, shopping, cultural and special interest events, leisure activities and air/ground transportation.

## Hotel News

- **Sage Resort**, a 260-unit, 10-storey condominium hotel, is the latest in a growing list of properties planned for the International Drive zone surrounding the Orange County Convention Center. The resort's groundbreaking is planned for April 2006 and grand opening is slated for June 2007.
- **The Royal Plaza in the Walt Disney World Resort** will reopen this month after undergoing a multi-million dollar renovation. As part of the renovation, all guest rooms have been outfitted with new carpet, drapes, "Royal Beds," granite countertops and in-room media packages.
- **Doubletree Guest Suites in the Walt Disney World Resort** has completed a US \$2 million renovation of the guest rooms, pool area, landscaping and meeting rooms. Beds in all 229 of the designer-appointed guest suites now feature a plush-top mattress and each suite includes a clock radio with MP3 capabilities, new microwave and refrigerator.
- The **Quality Inn Maingate Four Corners** has completed a makeover coinciding with new ownership of the property. The hotel underwent extensive renovations to upgrade the 104 guest rooms and suites, atrium and lounge.

continues throughout 2006. The milestone event includes a collection of attractions and shows imported from other Disney theme parks including Japan, Paris and Disneyland Resort in California. Disney World's ever-expanding attractions include Expedition Everest, an under-construction thrill ride in Disney's Animal Kingdom park. Slated to open in 2006, the high-speed mountain train adventure will combine coaster-style thrills with the excitement of a close encounter with the abominable snowman.

Big news in the Orlando area this past year is the re-opening of the venerable Cypress Gardens Adventure Park. Located south of the city and closed since 2003, millions of dollars have been spent to revitalize the attraction that

now features 38 fun rides including four roller coasters. However, the park continues to showcase the elements that made it famous for decades – the water ski show and historic botanical gardens. The rebuilt family adventure park now features a butterfly house, ice skating shows, a charming dining and shopping village and a live concert line-up throughout the year that includes big name stars like Kenny Rogers and Loretta Lynn.

### More Fairways

More than 150 challenging golf courses are located within a 45-minute radius of downtown Orlando and many of them were designed by some of the world's top golf course architects like Palmer, Nicklaus, Norman, Dye and Fazio. Golf buffs can choose from a range of courses that feature lakeside layouts, links-style, flat, hilly or artificially mounded.

But it doesn't stop there. Responding to the enormous demand for golf, remarkably, Orlando courses continue to sprout up. Grand Lakes Orlando, is a vast resort complex that embodies the 1,000-room JW Marriott Orlando, the 584-room Ritz-Carlton Orlando and a championship Greg Norman-designed course that opened in July 2003. The upscale Reunion Resort & Club of Orlando is about 25 minutes south of downtown and features two superb championship courses designed by Palmer and Nicklaus, with a third championship Nicklaus track scheduled for completion in 2006. Playing Reunion's trophy courses, however, requires that players be guests of the resort.

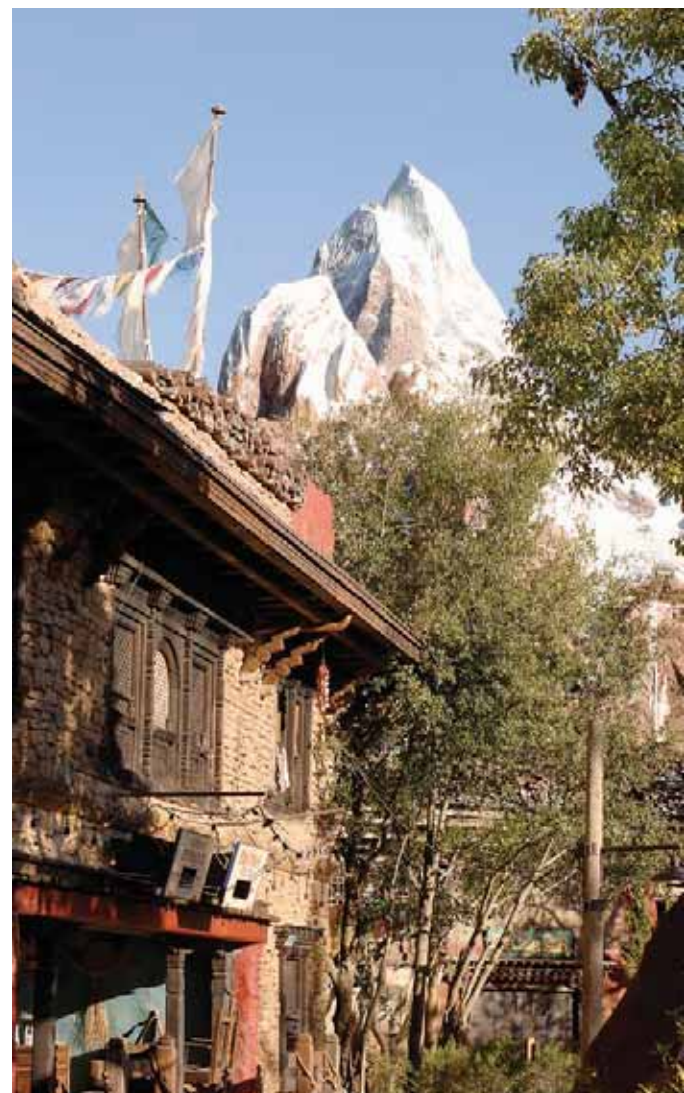
Unlike Reunion, the ChampionsGate Omni Orlando Resort and its two Greg Norman-designed courses do not restrict play to resort guests. Both courses feature challenging, top-drawer layouts and for clients seeking to improve their games, Champions Gate is also the home of one of the renowned David Leadbetter golf academies. Each of the courses, Grand Lakes, Reunion and ChampionsGate are trophy courses that command

upper tier green fees often in excess of US \$100 a round, but clients can be assured that among the area's plethora of courses, there's an abundance of respectable tracks that can be played, with cart, for as little as US \$30.

In addition, the 99 holes of golf at the Walt Disney World Resort make up one of the largest single golf complexes in the country. In addition to its six immaculately maintained courses located within the 121-square-kilometre theme park, the Disney golf program offers a variety of instructional clinics and training programs. ✦

**Expedition Everest – at Disney's Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World Resort includes a high-speed mountain train adventure will combine coaster-style thrills with the excitement of a close encounter with the abominable snowman.**

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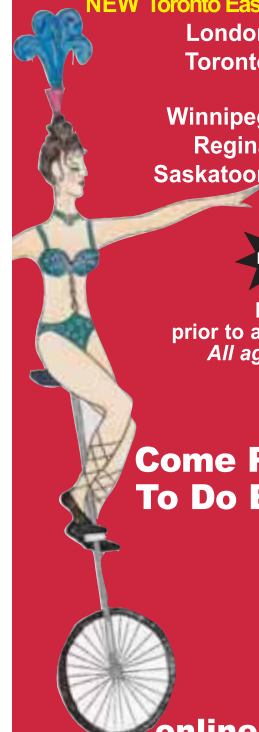
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# Peaks of Perfection

West Virginia boasts several stunning mountainside golf courses that are cool and pleasant throughout the summer. The Arnold Palmer-designed course at the Stonewall Resort, adjacent to the state's largest state park, is one of the state's finest.

STEVE SHALUTA/WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF TOURISM

*West Virginia's famous mountains are home to some of America's best courses*

By Hilary Genders

It might not be the first destination that pops into your head when you think golf, but it pays to keep West Virginia in mind when planning a vacation for a golf-crazed client.

The state is home to the first organized golf course in the U.S., Oakhurst Links, which was established in White Sulphur Springs in 1884. Its nine holes are still open for play today.

The Mountain State's unique geography lends itself to several spectacular courses, all easily accessible via major Interstate highway routes. From I-77 and I-79 headed south to I-64 on the southeastern route, West Virginia makes an ideal stopover for clients headed south. But there is plenty to keep them occupied right here.

Some of the most popular of West Virginia's spectacular mountain courses:

- **Stonewall Resort:** West Virginia's newest resort is also probably the most accessible for Canadian travellers heading south. Set adjacent to Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park, the resort's deluxe lodging, dining, spa and golf are a step above the rusticity one might expect. The Arnold Palmer-designed course has received rave reviews – including a designation as one of America's top ten new courses by *Golf Digest* – for its incredible lakeside beauty and long, challenging

holes. The park is just three minutes off the I-79 Roanoke exit in north central West Virginia. [www.stonewallresort.com](http://www.stonewallresort.com).

- **The Greenbrier:** Widely considered one of the world's best golf resorts, the Greenbrier in quiet White Sulphur Springs continues to thrill those fortunate enough to sample its three championship courses. The Sam Snead legacy continues here, where old-fashioned service never became old-fashioned. For more info, visit [www.greenbrier.com](http://www.greenbrier.com).
- **Snowshoe Mountain:** The Gary Player-designed Raven Golf Course is tops among mountain courses and a favourite for West Virginia golf aficionados. Now there's world-class lodging at spanking new Allegheny Springs and incredible dining at The Red Fox in the Village at Snowshoe. With more than US \$100 million in improvements in the last few years and an array of outdoor activities, Snowshoe Mountain is among the best golf destinations in the Mid-Atlantic. [www.snowshoemtn.com](http://www.snowshoemtn.com).
- **Oglebay Resort:** Steel put Wheeling on the map in the 20th century, but today tourism is the area's biggest draw and Oglebay is its unique centrepiece. A municipal park, Oglebay offers three courses, including one by Arnold Palmer and the other by Robert

Trent Jones, Sr. Clients can go golfing and take their family, considering there's a zoo, a kids' train ride, the country's largest holiday light show, museums, environmental education centre, restaurants, clubs and an array of outdoor fun. [www.oglebay-resort.com](http://www.oglebay-resort.com).

- **Twisted Gun:** This course tucked into the coalfields of southern West Virginia offers a unique golf experience. Built on a reclaimed surface mine site, this course is a joint partnership with Arch Coal and Premium Energy Corp. This 7,015-yard, links-style golf course is the only 18-hole course in a three-county area because of the naturally occurring steep terrain. The U.S. Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining named Twisted Gun Golf Course one of the nation's best reclamation sites. The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection also gave Arch Coal its top reclamation award for demonstrating the highest standards in post-mining land use for Twisted Gun. [www.twistedgungolf.com](http://www.twistedgungolf.com).

For information on more of West Virginia's excellent golfing opportunities, plus plenty of other attractions and adventures to round out your clients' holiday, visit [www.wv-tourism.com](http://www.wv-tourism.com). ♣

**By Chris Ryall**

Vice-President, Communications  
SeeAmerica Committee – Canada

## Of Crabs, Musers and Strawberries

*A collection of festivals & events to chase away the winter blues*

As we start 2006 Old Man Winter has made his presence felt in many areas of the United States but that is no reason to hibernate. It's time to get your clients to put on that new ski jacket, gloves and other winter apparel and send them to the many events taking place around the U.S.

### Go For The Cold

While athletes from around the world will be going for the gold in February at the 2006 Winter Olympics, visitors to Rochester, New York can "go for the cold" at the city's annual *Cold Rush Festival*. This festival was created to get people outdoors during the winter and enjoy the many sporting and cultural events. The *Annual Lakeside Winter Celebration* takes place February 6 and includes a Polar Dip, snow sculpture contest and the "Chilly Chili Challenge". For more information visit [www.visitrochester.com](http://www.visitrochester.com) or [www.cityofrochester.gov](http://www.cityofrochester.gov).

### Maine is for Musers

The state of Maine doesn't let snow get in the way of fun – in fact it embraces winter with numerous events happening throughout the winter season. One of the most popular events is the annual *Musers Bowl* in Fryeburg, which features snow-dog racing competitors from throughout the northeastern U.S. and parts of Canada. Spectators love watching the thrilling races as well as participating in hay rides, craft fair, skijoring and other free events. For more information visit [www.desdc.org](http://www.desdc.org).

### It's Time to Party

Winter is also a time to party – Mardi Gras style. Though New Orleans will always remain synonymous with *the* Mardi Gras, there are other Mardi Gras celebrations going on in the United States including a big one in Galveston. The *Galveston Mardi Gras* will take place February 17 to 28. It will be a 12-day celebration featuring live music with more than 30 bands, spectacular parades, masked balls, flamboyant costumes, sporting events and more. So get your clients to put on their party hats and visit [www.mardigrasgalveston.com](http://www.mardigrasgalveston.com).

### Get Crabby in San Francisco

For some people February is a month when they become crabby and need something to pick up their spirits through the winter doldrums. Why not change their mood at San Francisco's *Crab Festival* – this exciting and cosmopolitan city will certainly treat your clients with a love of delicious Dungeness crab but without the foul mood! The month-long festival takes place February 1 to 28, and features crab cracking contests, giant crab feeds, music and other special events. Many of the events take place throughout San Francisco's well-known tourist attractions. You can guarantee your clients will never sing *I Left My Appetite in San Francisco*. Check out San Francisco's Web site for this and many other events at [www.sfvisitor.org](http://www.sfvisitor.org).



**Whether your clients prefer sunny destinations or winter-based activities, start 2006 off by sending them to interesting and fun events like Native Trails in Scottsdale, and earn some commissions at the same time. For more info check out [www.seeamerica.org](http://www.seeamerica.org).**

### Experience Native Culture

Arizona's rich native culture is featured during *Native Trails* – a festival that begins January 10 and runs through to April in Scottsdale. These series of free festivals in Scottsdale's Civic Center Mall in downtown Scottsdale focus on the various native cultures of the Southwest. Performers from the Yavapai, Apache and Navajo tribes share their dances, songs, and stories with visitors. There are also many demonstrations in craft making and culinary preparation. For further information visit [www.CultureQuestScottsdale.com](http://www.CultureQuestScottsdale.com).

### Strawberries Forever

March is a month where many Canadians are looking for an escape and thinking of a warmer climate and the advent of spring. Florida is of course a very popular destination for Canadians and Plant City, Florida (between Orlando and Tampa) has another reason for enticing Canadians to come down in March – it's the *Florida Strawberry Festival*, which takes place March 2 to 12. Delicious strawberries will be featured but it is also a festival with top-notch entertainment, crafts, livestock, fine arts, various agricultural exhibits, social events, competitive contests, parades with fabulous floats, and marching bands. For further information visit [www.flstrawberryfestival.com](http://www.flstrawberryfestival.com). ♣

*To find out more about the SeeAmerica Committee – Canada, attend its meetings or receive the bi-monthly newsletter, contact them by telephone or fax at (416) 352-557 or by e-mail at [info@seeamerica.org](mailto:info@seeamerica.org) or visit [www.seeamerica.ca](http://www.seeamerica.ca).*

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