


TravelBITS


GRAPE EXPECTATIONS



 Held in the fall during crush season when grapes are plucked from their trellises, Crush Camp is a three-day intensive program at Diageo Chateau & Estate Wines in California that teaches students how to take wine from vine to glass while feasting on gourmet food. (www.diageowines.com)

SOURCE: TRAVEL + LEISURE


THE ROAD AHEAD

 AAA's new senior safety and mobility website, AAASeniors.com, provides valuable information related to senior mobility challenges and tools to help extend safe driving, and assist in difficult discussions about transitioning from driver to passenger.

SOURCE: PR NEWSWIRE

TAKE A LLAMA TO LUNCH!



 Sign up for a tour at Wild Earth Llama Adventures in Taos, NM, and let the llamas bear your load and escort you on a naturalist guided hike. The critters are known for their alertness for anything unusual, their keen intelligence, plus they're more than happy to carry your stuff. This leaves you and your back free to enjoy this pristine wilderness at its finest. (www.llamaadventures.com)

SOURCE: JAUNTED.COM

Modern Mexican


Distrito is the new restaurant concept by Jose Garces, the chef behind the acclaimed Philadelphia restaurants Amada and Tinto. Distrito is a high-energy restaurant inspired by the spirited culture and cuisine of Mexico City. The Distrito menu features Chef Garces' fresh interpretations of classic Mexican fare and beverages include over 65 tequilas and margaritas made with fresh seasonal fruits. A striking decor includes a hot pink and bright green color scheme, a wall constructed from over 600 colorful, campy masks of lucha libre, or "free fight" professional wrestlers, and a booth crafted from a Volkswagen Beetle, a typical Mexico City taxi cab. (www.distritorestaurant.com)



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SOURCE: OPENTABLE.COM

SUNNYSIDE UP

 The only solar powered plane capable of carrying a person, the Sunseeker II, will be setting off on a European tour. It uses battery power to get into the air, while solar power takes over during the flight for the controls and other operations.

SOURCE: GREENSPOT.TRAVEL


WORK AND PLAY

 Due to a landmark 12-month visa program, Australians ages 18 to 30 have been granted permission to spend a year working in the United States, and their American counterparts have been given the chance to do the same thing Down Under. For more info on the Work and Holiday Visa for Americans (subclass 462), visit www.immi.gov.au

SOURCE: PETERGREENBERG.COM

STAR STUDDED AFFAIR



 Designed specifically for stargazing, French tourism company Bocages has created a pop-up cabin for four that features a transparent dome in the roof, a telescope and a sky observation kit. (www.bocages.fr)

SOURCE: DESIGNCORNER.BLINKR.NET




Gone to the Cats & Dogs

At Pet Airways cats and dogs fly in the main cabin of the airplane, not in cargo. Each flight has a pet attendant on board at all times and fees start at \$150. Sadly, only your pet can fly, not you (they won't even put you in the cargo area of the plane). (www.petairways.com)

SOURCE: NY DAILY NEWS


DRINK IT IN

 The Velvet Tango Room in Cleveland, OH, could easily be the Shangri-La for lovers of the perfectly prepared cocktail, where shortcuts and large orders give way to spirited libations that can take up to 10 minutes to measure and mix. True aficionados don't mind the wait.

SOURCE: BARNETT ON BUSINESS TRAVEL

TO BOOK OR NOT TO BOOK...




 Family Vacation Critic™ is a newly launched site that offers the low-down on “family-friendly” hotels, resorts and destinations, helping families decide which are truly “friendly” and which should be avoided. (www.familyvacationcritic.com)

SOURCE: CNBC


JEFFERSONIAN STYLE



 The Poplar Forest Retreat in Lynchburg, VA, that Thomas Jefferson designed has recently been restored and reopened. The first octagonal house in America, it is considered an architectural masterpiece and is a National Historic Landmark. (www.poplarforest.org)


SOURCE: USA TODAY

REACHING OUT

 It may seem like a new trend, but Global Volunteers has been providing volunteer vacations that allow travelers to live and work with local people on life-affirming programs both abroad and in the USA for 25 years. (www.globalvolunteers.org)


SOURCE: WASHINGTON POST

OUT OF THIS WORLD

 Visitors to one of America's oldest oceanside resorts, Cape May, NJ, can stop by one of its historical Victorian homes for a supernatural experience. Emlen Physick Estate, an 1879 Victorian home, can be viewed complete with a séance room and earthly guide.


SOURCE: FORBES.COM

SET YOUR PACE

 Drive the circumference of New Zealand's South Island by signing on for the “Self-Drive: 12-day South Island Circumnavigate” tour at Aspire Down Under. Be sure to save some energy for bungee jumping in Wanaka, Queensland, before you head for the west coast to explore the Franz Josef and Fox glaciers. (www.aspiredownunder.com)


SOURCE: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

 Grand Cayman Island is quickly becoming a destination for kiteboarding — a sort of kite-powered surfing — that is catching wind. A kite program created at Compass Point utilizes a protected large lagoon on the island's isolated East End that's great for learning but has enough gaps in the reef to create superior surf for more experienced kiteboarders. (www.compasspoint.ky)


SOURCE: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER

THE LOW DOWN

 The San Diego's Rancho Bernardo Inn is offering a rather novel lodging special by asking “How low will you go?” Dubbed the Survivor Package, the inn is letting cash strapped guests set their price by excluding the amenities they can live without. No word yet on whether anyone has been willing to pay \$19 to sleep on the floor, but it definitely makes for an eye-catching price strategy.

SOURCE: SPRINGWISE.COM

GONE IN A FLASH

 Ever heard of “flashpacking?” Flashpacking is simply a marketing term to encapsulate a type of traveler who is similar to a backpacker, but one who prefers bare-bones transportation (such as low-cost airlines, second-class rail service, etc.), and will spend a little more for a decent room and a bath.

SOURCE: USA TODAY