


TravelBITS

MOVE OVER PICASSO




 These animals can paint! The rockhopper penguins are the latest paint-pushers to join the Indianapolis Zoo's animal arts program, which debuted last spring with elephants and expanded this year to include penguins and sea lions. The activity removes the facility's usual barriers, allowing guests to mingle with the Picassos of the wild kingdom while granting the animals a break from their in-captivity routines.

SOURCE: THE WASHINGTON POST


PACKING WITH A PURPOSE



 Pack For A Purpose connects people who are happy to pack a little something extra with projects that are seeking that something for children in need. And the beauty of this idea is that anyone can do it — just log onto their website, pick your destination and find out what you can pack. (PackforaPurpose.org)

SOURCE: THE VIRTUOUS TRAVELER

BACK TO NATURE

 The China Guide is offering overnight excursions just outside of Beijing for those travelers who need a break from the city pace. (thechina.guide.com) SOURCE: BREAKINGTRAVELNEWS.COM

The Waiting Game



Jeff Michaels, a musician, has turned his many delayed airport experiences into a book, *Please Hug Me, I've Been Delayed*, that is packed with well-researched tips, tricks, quizzes, Airport Time Wasters, and unusual air travel trivia to make the time pass faster while you...wait. (www.please-hugmeseries.com).

SOURCE: SMARTMEETINGS.COM


THE REAL DEAL



 Go to FlightStats.com to obtain actual real-time data on U.S. airline operations both on an hour-by-hour airport basis and a flight-by-flight basis. And for live aircraft movement in European airspace go to Flightrader24.com.

SOURCE: PORTFOLIO.COM

OUT OF THE ORDINARY


 Three of Lake Lubbers' list of the World's Most Unusual Lakes:

- 13,020 feet above sea level on Hawaii's tropical Big Island, tiny Lake Waiau freezes during winter.
- Through a natural phenomenon, Virginia's Mountain Lake has emptied and re-filled about six times during the past 4,500 years.
- On the Greek island of Kefalonia, tourists are rowed — and pulled by rope — through the underground Melissani Lake, in a massive cave decorated with stalactites and stalagmites.

SOURCE: LAKELUBBERS.COM

GREEN STAR




 The Casa Ceibo Boutique Hotel & Spa in Ecuador's only "eco-city," Bahia de Caraquezhe is the first recipient of the American Academy of Hospitality Services' (AAHS) prestigious Five Star Green Award in all of South America. (casaceibo.com)

SOURCE: PRNEWSWIRE

TIP TOP DINING



 Make way in L.A. for the double-decker bus (worldfare.com), complete with a rooftop restaurant. What might well be America's first "bustaurant," World Fare, a mobile restaurant, serves up a variety of high-end dishes from around the world.

SOURCE: TRENDSETTER NEWSLETTER

Jolly Old Cornwall




What's so great about Cornwall? It's a paradise for those that love good hearty food, fun pubs, charming cottag-

es, country walking along winding roads atop rugged cliffs, and hearing the sounds of crashing waves. Plus, it has the mildest climate in Britain and it is devoid of all things touristy... (cornishhorizons.co.uk)


SOURCE: THE EXPLORATEUR

APP ARRIVAL




 Need A Lift? With the new Super Shuttle App for iPhone, booking your next ride to and from the airport just got even easier. The new App also provides you with the location of your assigned vehicle by incorporating the SuperShuttle "Where's My Van?" Google map locator function. (super-shuttle.com) SOURCE: U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

WILDLIFE NEAR YOU

 A UK-based site lets animal lovers share their experiences and locate wildlife around the globe. Focusing on nature reserves, zoos, parks and other organized wildlife locations, WildlifeNearYou.com lets users search for particular animals or search by area to learn where the wildlife that matters to them is likely to be found.

SOURCE: SPRINGWISE.COM


SADDLE UP PARTNER!

 The Pisgah View Ranch, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, is an affordable all-inclusive dude ranch that offers lodging in cottages and cabins, three "hearty ranch-style" meals a day, horseback riding, swimming, tennis, fishing, hiking and nightly entertainment. BYO mountain bikes. Golfing, whitewater rafting and the gorgeous Biltmore Estate are nearby. (pisgahviewranch.net)

SOURCE: CAROLINA COUNTRY


CLOSE TO NATURE



 Virtually untouched for centuries, Little St. Simons Island is one of the most unique barrier islands on Georgia's coast. Only 20 of the island's 10,000 acres are developed, and six cabins, some dating back to 1917, offer accommodations for just 32 overnight guests. (littlestsimonsisland.com)


SOURCE: MOTHER NATURE NETWORK

EAST COAST WIN

 Coopers Beach, N.Y. took the number one spot in the 20th Annual Top 10 Beaches ranking produced by coastal expert Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman (AKA Dr. Beach). It is the first time a New York beach was named number one. (drbeach.org)


SOURCE: TRIPADVISOR

UNION SQUARE WONDERLAND

 The new, 15,000-square-foot Union Square Park Playground is exactly the hip kid hangout you'd expect to find in New York City. With input from cognitive development experts, fun features include futuristic climbing structures, swinging apparatus, water play areas and carefully selected landscaping. Rubber tiles on the ground prevent boo-boos, too! (unionsquarenyc.org/park)

SOURCE: NYGS E-NEWSLETTER


THE PERFECT SPOT

 AccessCamping.com provides links to more than 500 campground databases across the country providing consumers with the ability to quickly find where they want to camp. The site includes information on privately owned and operated campgrounds, RV parks and resorts as well as government run campgrounds across the country.

SOURCE: THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE


A SPECIAL PLACE



 The Margaret River Region of Western Australia, a 1,600-square-mile area flanking the eponymous river, is one of those rare destinations on earth: a remote area filled with unique, off-the-beaten-path experiences that has the infrastructure to support tourism. (margaretriver.com)


SOURCE: PETER GREENBERG NEWSLETTER

OUT OF IT

 Relax. Koh Phayam, a diminutive and laid-back tropical isle on Thailand's Andaman Sea coast, remains a vibrant, yet quiet spot to unwind and unplug. Travelers will find scooters for \$8 a day to tool around the island and through the cashew and rubber orchards, two main beaches and another popular pastime, beachside Thai massages.

SOURCE: WALL STREET JOURNAL

NIGHT SCHOOL

 A recent travel promotion has proved quite successful for Seattle's Sorrento Hotel. Dubbed "Night School," it is a collaboration with Chef Michael Hebb and "an array of intellectuals, artists, writers, filmmakers, mixologists, chefs and the leading cultural institutions in the Northwest" designed to provide experiences to enrich guests' stays.

SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES