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“Silver linings” sparkle in spite of stalled travel, and NTA members share the lemonade they’ve made from COVID lemons.
NTA President
Catherine Prather, CTP  catherine.prather@ntastaff.com

Editorial
Editor in Chief  Bob Rouse, CTP  bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com
Managing Editor  Pat Henderson  pat.henderson@ntaservicesinc.com
Writer  Kendall Fletcher  kendall.fletcher@ntaservicesinc.com
Contributors  Catherine Prather, Shannon Ricles, Rochelle Turner
Graphic Design  Jeff Quire

Advertising
President, NTA Services  Kami Risk, CTP  kami.risk@ntaservicesinc.com
Director of Sales and Key Accounts  Beth Engel, CTP  beth.engel@ntaservicesinc.com
Account Executive  Gina Rutledge  gina.rutledge@ntaservicesinc.com
Senior Manager, Marketing  Ashley Fish  ashley.fish@ntaservicesinc.com

PLANNING AHEAD
To view the 2020 editorial calendar, visit NTAonline.com/advertising. NTA members can submit tour product information or editorial queries to bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com. And for advertising information, contact Kendall Fletcher at +1.859.264.6559 or kendall@ntaservicesinc.com.

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SPECIAL COVERAGE
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Preview to Contact Memphis
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DEADLINES
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Atlantic City Expert Heather Colache is available at 609-318-6097 or hcolache@meetac.com to make sure you enjoy Atlantic City as it was meant to be experienced. Call today to book your Atlantic City Experience.
WELL that was fun.

In the days before we completed this issue of Courier—time I normally reserve for fast writing—I got caught up in something profoundly positive and fun. That’s rare for 2020. When I read that the Toronto Blue Jays were looking for a place to play their home games in the COVID-shortened Major League Baseball season (Canada’s border is closed to U.S. travelers, including visiting teams), I emailed several of the Jays’ front-office staff with a simple proposal: Come to my Kentucky hometown and play ball.

It was a lark, of course. Midway, a town of 1,800, has fantastic restaurants and is surrounded by gorgeous horse farms and aromatic bourbon distilleries … but no hotels. And the new ball field at Midway University doesn’t even have bleachers yet. And I was honest about all of that when I stepped to the plate and sent my email. That was on a Monday afternoon.

A few hours later, the team’s director of fan services called to tell me that my far-fetched suggestion was a welcome diversion during a stressful time. I had made it to first base. My new friend wanted to share my email with a reporter, and Shi Davidi called the next day to interview me.

His story (sportsnt.ca/39rcj3e) led to a Wednesday appearance on CTV, Canada’s most-watched TV news outlet (bit.ly/3hswiQc). Thursday had me on a Toronto radio station and in local online stories (bit.ly/2WRYaFT). On Friday we completed this issue.

And it’s a bit different. In true 2020 form, we’ve pivoted away from print and are offering August/September as an e-pub. We’ll post individual stories on NTAcourier.com in the days and weeks to come, assuring a widespread audience. They’re worth reading now, though. Kendall Fletcher offers keen observations about several NTA-member museums in “To revive and retell” (starting on page 21). Pat Henderson shines our City Spotlight on neighborhoods, museums, and members in Washington, D.C. (p. 18). And Kendall and Pat take you around the world in destination coverage, from the Great Lakes to the Great Barrier Reef, starting on page 28.

As Courier pivots, so does the travel industry. Read how tour operators expect to continue working with group leaders when travel resumes (p. 8), and learn what one expert predicts in “Consumer trends in a post-COVID world” (p. 13).

So about those Blue Jays who uplifted from Toronto: As we complete this issue on Friday, the MLB team is still searching for a spot to land. I’m 99.9% certain it won’t be Midway. But that leaves a 0.1% chance. And in 2020, nothing is certain … which means anything is possible.

That’s my silver lining.
Dear Tour Operators,

I hope that you and your loved ones have stayed safe and well during the pandemic, and I thank you for the countless letters and emails of support I have personally received over the past few months. Many of you have kindly asked about the welfare of our ship-based crew and our office-based employees while others are daydreaming along with us about a return to the seas.

Your eagerness to set sail with us again has come across loud and clear as has your interest in learning more about how the cruise experience will change once we resume operations.

Please know that during our cruise line’s more than 53-year history, the safety, health and well-being of our guests, crew members and the communities we visit have been and continue to be our #1 priority—both on board and on shore. Before we all recognized the magnitude of the global pandemic, we put in place some of the most stringent health and safety measures across the industry. And as we prepare to return to operations, it is important now more than ever to further develop our health and safety protocols.

Accordingly, we have spent the past months working with experts in their respective fields, world-leading safety vendors and our internal safety and medical teams, to ensure your safety so that you can explore the world with the ultimate Peace of Mind™. We continue to work closely with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and are developing even more stringent protocols to meet and exceed their standards once those have been finalized.

We are excited to share recent enhancements to our health and safety standards that are extraordinarily robust—far too detailed to fully list in a letter. It is our belief that when taken as a whole, these protocols will allow a vacation with Norwegian Cruise Line to be among the safest vacation options available. For those interested in reading through the details, and we encourage you to do so. Please click on the links below that detail our 6 key areas of focus:

- Enhanced Screening Protocols
- All-New Air Filtration
- Increased Sanitation Measures
- Responsible Social Distancing
- Enhanced Medical Resources
- Extended Ship to Shore Safety

Moving forward, we expect to implement additional safety measures as we continue working with the CDC, global health organizations and domestic and international government agencies.

As I mentioned earlier, your health and safety are our top priority. We commit to taking every precaution to protect you, placing the highest value on your well-being over profits so you can continue to explore the world with those you love, safely.

We would love your feedback on these new protocols as well as other measures that would provide you additional Peace of Mind, so please send your thoughts to peaceofmind@ncl.com. I look forward to your suggestions!

We appreciate your support and look forward to welcoming you back on board soon to explore the world in comfort and safety. Together, we’ll return to our favorite place—the ocean. In the meantime, stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Harry Sommer,
President & CEO, Norwegian Cruise Line

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I KNOW YOU CAN RELATE when I say this: There are days I want to go back to sleep and wake up only when this madness has stopped. The lives lost. The careers ended. The businesses closed. The seemingly never-ending uncertainty.

But then there’s always that spark of hope, that ray of positivity, that recharge of energy. And it typically comes from you, dear NTA member.

You send emails, make posts, or give us calls to share your thanks for what NTA is doing to help you navigate these uncharted waters. Through your simple acts of gratitude, I am recharged to get going, to plunge deeper, and to keep trying to do the best I can.

I also am inspired and motivated by your resiliency and by your ability to pivot.

Yes, pivot. It’s one of my new favorite words, and I’m certain I’ll wear it out. (In fact, my co-workers may feel I’ve already worn out its welcome.) Yet, it is exactly what we all have been doing—and must continue to do—in order to survive and thrive.

We don’t know what travel will look like when the coronavirus dust settles, and really, the only certainty is that our landscape will be very, very different. Every day is a new day in terms of Battle COVID, so pivot we must.

I’ve heard of staunch multi-day tour companies treading into the waters of one-day outings. There are operators who only sell cruises or package international travel, and they are now turning their eyes closer to home with itineraries within their communities. Attractions are adapting their experiences for mask-wearing, physically distanced visitors. Destinations are gearing their messages to exploring nature and being active—even when they’ve rarely spotlighted those attributes before.

You’re using technology to keep clients inspired, you’re “simply reaching out” instead of selling, you’re sending baskets of local treats to remind travelers of what they are missing, and you’re offering boxed lunches on your rooftop terrace because you can no longer have catered meals in your facility.

You are pivoting with every new regulation, obstacle, and twist along this winding road.

My hope is that you connect with your fellow NTA colleagues so they are aware of these amazing pivots. Use Engage to communicate what you’re doing. Keep your websites current with this new information and product offerings, noting who the contacts are, and if you are closed, how someone can get information when you do reopen.

And perhaps most important, think about your DMO as your first responder.* Tour suppliers, make your DMO aware of what’s going on so they have the most current information for tour operators. And operators, you can head to your DMO partners for everything you need.

We should come together now like no other time. We need to be patient with one another, we need flexibility, and we need to collaborate on that next pivot.

Be safe and be well,

*Catherine Prather, CTP
President
101 Prosperous Place, Suite 190
Lexington, KY 40509 USA
+1.859.264.6545
catherine.prather@ntastaff.com

*Shout out to Todd Stallbaumer with Oklahoma Tourism for “Your DMO as your first responder.”
vTREX, it’s what’s for 2020

WHERE THERE’S A WILL, there’s a way.

And for National Tour Association members, there’s a will to connect, but with many budgets cut to the bone, business travel has been all but eliminated. There’s still a way, though, in 2020: The association’s signature event, Travel Exchange, will be conducted entirely online.

Instead of gathering this November in Reno, Nevada, the NTA community will get together on laptops, desktops, and mobile devices from Nov. 17 to 19. The virtual Travel Exchange, dubbed vTREX, will be a combination of one-on-one and small group appointments, and a mix of seminars and sessions.

“During the three-day show, members can meet with each other in a condensed appointment schedule and in live seminars and roundtables, says Dawn Pettus, CTP, NTA vice president for events. “We’ve built in a number of community-building events, too. Along with general sessions to start each day and happy hours to end them, we’ll have some fun with afternoon breaks and check-in moments from NTA leaders.”

NTA President Catherine Prather, CTP, who will host the event along with 2020 NTA Chair Jim Warren, adds, “With registration fees less than half of our regular show and with no expenses for travel, we expect to see our regular delegates and pick up some new attendees, too.”

The event also will welcome travel professionals whose engagement in the NTA community was interrupted by COVID-related job loss.

To get details on pricing and the schedule—and to register for vTREX—go to NTAtravelexchange.com.

ITMI, WFTA to be part of vTREX

NTA will continue its collaboration with the International Tour Management Institute and the World Food Travel Association. During a special pre-vTREX session, NTA members will be able to meet with ITMI-certified tour directors about open positions they have with their organizations. WFTA will hold its first FoodTreX North America Nov. 12–13, and NTA members can attend the virtual show at a reduced price.

NTA asks for U.S. mask mandate

In a July letter to Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and his colleagues on the White House Coronavirus Task Force, NTA President Catherine Prather, CTP, asked for a federal mask mandate in the United States.

In her letter, Prather outlined the economic devastation that COVID-19 has caused the travel and tourism industry. She pointed out that Redfield and other public health experts’ findings indicate that the use of face coverings can help contain the spread of the disease.

“Unfortunately, we have yet to see coordinated federal leadership on a mandate for face masks,” Prather wrote. “We believe a federal mandate regarding face masks would be an important, commonsense step that would not only protect more American lives, but would also speed economic recovery, especially for our industry.”

BUSINESS

NTA tour operators have post-COVID advice, encouragement for their partners: Group leaders

THE SHORT ROAD AHEAD for the travel industry is pot-holed with COVID closures and protocols. But around the corner, when the disease is under control, tour operators and group leaders can plan with confidence ... and they’ll look to each other for help.

“Group leaders need to remain strong and hopeful. Travel will come back once our clients understand how much hotels, restaurants, motorcoach companies, and attractions are doing to keep them safe,” says Cathy Greteman, CTP, president of Star Destinations. “When group leaders choose a tour operator that focuses on providing the best travel experiences in a safe and measured environment, they will come away with a successful series of tours they can be proud to offer.”

Courier asked five veteran NTA tour operators about working with group leaders in the months and years ahead.

Group leaders can gather like-minded travelers—such as these trekkers at Mount Norquay in Banff, Alberta—for tour operator-led adventures.

Courier: How do group leaders fit into your business model?
Larsen: Group leaders come in many flavors, and as an operator of custom tours, we work with all types of group leaders. They can be teachers, faith leaders, music directors, bank club leaders, business leaders, a traveler who initiates trips with their friends, an activity director at a senior center, a book club leader, a wine connoisseur, or a travel agent who recruits groups.

Osbon: We are a wholesaler, and they fit very well within our model of selling our tours through travel agents, operators, and group leaders.

Courier: How did you connect with your group leaders?
Wolfe Finn: We connect in person—visiting them or at trade shows—or via personal emails and phone calls. We love working with our group leaders and helping them get their groups on the road.

Greteman: The best way for us to find group leaders is by word of mouth. Our outstanding customer service and ease of working together brings group leaders to us, especially if they have other jobs or are new to gathering groups. We attend trade shows and markets to introduce ourselves, but most often we rely on references. We always welcome group leaders to call us and have a conversation about the future of group travel.

Larsen: With faith leaders, it is often a matter of going to where they are, such as coffee shops, conferences, or social activities in the community. Print promotions work, too, but that takes more financial investment than a cup of coffee—and a
lot more time to develop the relationship. As Ed-Ventures’ reputation grew, referrals became a big part of the picture as well. Teachers will respond to local events hosted for them, and letting them know they are appreciated is a good way to start. Websites and social media can be effective, but building a relationship is what brings long-term results.

Courier: What’s your idea of a perfect group leader?
Osbon: The perfect group leader keeps their group informed and works with the tour operator to ensure the clients have a trip of a lifetime. They are organized and well-informed, and they understand the trip is for their clients.

Dalrymple: A perfect group leader is clear and decisive with me about the travel package in which the group is interested. They are also clear about the process by which a tour package will be chosen, letting me know if we are in competition with other operators and when a decision will be made. Finally, a perfect group leader makes a strong effort to market the package to their travelers through mailings, newsletters, and emails.

Post-COVID, the role of the group leader will be much the same, with one exception: They will be needed to reassure the traveler that it is time to take off again.

—Paul Larsen, Ed-Ventures

Wolfe Finn: Our current group leaders care about their groups and the experiences they have. A great leader’s groups would follow them to the end of the earth and not even think twice! Trust is huge.

Larsen: A perfect group leader is a partner who understands the importance of their role as well as the expertise of the tour operator. They love to travel and relate to people. They have a purpose for their travel, and they have a group of people who trust them and like to travel with them.

Greteman: The best group leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about sharing new and exciting destinations and experiences with their club, their membership, or their clients. They are more concerned about choosing destinations that appeal to their travelers rather than themselves. They are organized, timely, and communicative.

Courier: What can group leaders be doing now, while travel is on hold?
Dalrymple: In the time of COVID, they should maintain communication with their travelers so when the pandemic passes, they can quickly deliver a viable group. Don’t let travelers forget about the travel group!

Greteman: We are encouraging our group leaders to stay in touch with their

See a show, explore authentic historic attractions, arts, wineries, breweries, the great outdoors and award-winning dining. The perfect getaway is here, and ready when you are.

visitfred.com
BUSINESS

travelers. We also suggest that they survey their travelers to see how far they will be comfortable traveling in the coming months. Will they only want to travel by motorcoach? Will they fly domestically or internationally? This also helps to discover what destinations are at the top of their bucket list.

Osbon: They can be doing research to see where their travelers want to go, learn about the destinations, determine which tour operators specialize in those places, and start a dialog with those operators. Then when it is safe to travel again, everyone can hit the ground running.

Larsen: They can go on some day trips—and really get creative. Visit the local German brewery to see if someone might someday have an Oktoberfest trip to Germany on their bucket list. Go to a museum or take a cruise on one of the Great Lakes. Host a virtual party with a local guide from overseas. The possibilities are endless.

Courier: What will the role of group leaders look like after COVID concerns pass?

Wolfe Finn: Group leaders are going to continue to be someone their students, parents, and adult travelers seek out to make sure they can trust the tour company, the itinerary, and their overall experience. Travelers will want to know their health and safety concerns are being taken seriously, and group leaders can work with their tour operator to make sure everyone is on the same page with appropriate precautions being taken by all the sites, transportation companies, hotels, and guides.

Larsen: The role of the group leader will be much the same with one exception: They will be needed to reassure the traveler that it is time to take off again. They will be helpful in the education process and can help speed the recovery along. Every group leader we talk to and educate will reach a much larger pool of people who trust them, and those travelers will be reassured.

Greteman: We have encouraged our group leaders to not worry about filling the bus. For a number of years, we have based our tours on smaller group sizes, and this is exactly what the post-COVID environment will look like, at least in the near future. Communication is key, and travelers trust their group leaders to make the best choices for them in the travel providers that they work with. Teamwork will get us all through this.

Osbon: Travelers will look to group leaders for guidance, and when the leaders are ready, they will rally the troops and start filling tours. They will be the Pied Piper that tour operators enjoy working with.

Larsen is confident that travel experts will get through the uncertain times of travel’s recovery. “It is important for all parts of the industry to work together in any way we can,” he says. “We in the travel and tourism industry will have a significant role to play in bringing the world and its people back together.”

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The NTA Loyalty Program keeps you pointed toward success

BY PAT HENDERSON

AT THE BEGINNING of 2019, your association launched the NTA Loyalty Program as a way for you to get more involved and, in the process, earn rewards.

“The goal for the NTA Loyalty Program is to give members a fresh way to engage with the association,” says NTA Senior Manager of Member Engagement Jennifer Royse, CTP. “In the second year we hope participation will grow as members realize they can earn points in a variety of ways—ranging from attending events and volunteering to being a sponsor or an advertiser—that translate into getting additional benefits.”

See the boxes below to learn more on how your company can earn points and to see specifics on the levels and rewards. The point count starts afresh on Jan. 1 of each year.

For more information on the program, email Jen at jennifer.royse@ntastaff.com.

Current standings

Even amid COVID-19, members are earning points toward one of the four reward levels. Here is a look at the top 10 as of June 30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CroisiEurope America</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore St. Louis</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Closer Look Tours</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brilliant Edventures</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian Cruise Line</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed-Ventures</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly Excursions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street Experiences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Travel and Tours</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wyoming Office of Tourism</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How are points earned?

Here is the list of the categories in which member companies can earn points, along with the values for each. Some of the categories are based on individual actions, and those count toward the organizational total. NOTE: A company only earns one set of points per category even if they have multiple employees that qualify for individual points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend vTREX</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register for Contact</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully participate in NTA Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earn your CTP</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer a new member</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renew membership by Dec. 31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to NTA’s advocacy efforts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register for vTREX by early-bird deadline</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a speaker at an NTA event</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase a print ad</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase a digital ad</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor at vTREX</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor at Contact</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update company profile at ntaonline.com</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in discussion at Engage</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use NTA logo on company website/collateral</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reward levels

As the year goes along, companies can earn points in hopes of reaching one of four levels: Trailblazer (the highest level), Adventurer, Explorer, and Pathfinder. The specific rewards for each category are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>REWARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(points required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trailblazer (36 or more)</td>
<td>25 percent off one of four things *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition at Travel Exchange/vTREX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mention in a Courier article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mention in NTA’s Tuesday newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventurer (32–35)</td>
<td>20 percent off one of four things *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mention in a Courier article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mention in NTA’s Tuesday newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer (28–31)</td>
<td>15 percent off one of four things *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mention in NTA’s Tuesday newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathfinder (24–27)</td>
<td>10 percent off one of four things *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A member company can choose to use its percent off discount for one of the following four things:
  - NTA membership
  - Travel Exchange registration
  - A digital advertisement
  - A sponsored content article at NTAcourier.com
ON MARCH 9, 1862, the USS Monitor and the Confederate ironclad, CSS Virginia (originally the USS Merrimac), fought to a draw in the Battle of Hampton Roads. The historic clash of ironclads changed naval warfare and shipbuilding forever.

Sadly, on New Year’s Eve 1862, the Monitor sank off the coast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, taking the lives of 16 crew members with it. In 1973, a team of scientists found the shipwreck, and in 1975 it became the United States’ first national marine sanctuary.

To explore this history, travelers begin their journey at the Mariners’ Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia. As the primary visitor center for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, the museum sits in an urban oasis surrounded by the Noland Trail and 550 acres of natural park and lake.

Guests will find 90,000 square feet of exhibition galleries, including the award-winning USS Monitor Center. These galleries offer lessons about the Civil War, the battle, the crew, and how the Monitor saved the Union.

A state-of-the-art conservation lab houses 210 tons of artifacts from the ironclad that were recovered from the sanctuary, and visitors can watch conservators at work in the lab and see the turret, Dahlgren guns and carriages, and the steam engine. (Admission is $1.)

The next stop is Monitor-Merrimac Overlook Park in Newport News. This tucked-away gem includes a beach, fishing pier, and interpretive signs. It’s not difficult to visualize the battle that took place just offshore, where the Monitor and Virginia (Merrimac) fought for over four hours. The park is free and open seven days a week from sunrise to sunset.

Another interesting site in Hampton Roads is the Fort Monroe National Monument. During the Civil War, Fort Monroe was a defensive stronghold at the entrance of the Chesapeake Bay, and it was there that the Monitor arrived on March 8, 1862. Early the next morning, iron met iron in the first battle between ironclads. With free admissions, visitors can walk the beaches, climb the fortress, visit the Case Mate Museum, and learn more about the battle.

History, naval, and military buffs who wish to learn more about the Monitor’s legacy can venture south to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. In Manteo on Roanoke Island, the North Carolina Aquarium holds the Ironclad Exhibit, which includes a one-third scale model of the Monitor shipwreck, lying in a 306,000-gallon tank that depicts the vast marine diversity off the coast.

Driving south down Highway 12 towards Hatteras Island takes visitors through the National Park Service’s Cape Hatteras National Seashore. At the Cape Hatteras Light Station, they can learn how the Monitor encountered a storm when it rounded the cape and also how it lost its final battle, sinking 230 feet below the surface.

The last stop is a short distance south: the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum. The attraction features fascinating maritime stories of the many ships—including the Monitor—that met their demise in the turbulent seas just off the coast. Admission is free.

Shannon Ricles is education and outreach coordinator for the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. For more information, visit monitor.noaa.gov.
Consumer trends in a post-COVID world

BY ROCHELLE TURNER

COVID-19 has shaken our society to its core, transforming behaviors and turning lives and businesses upside down.

For most of us in the Western world, we have never had such restrictions placed on our actions. Through the immense difficulties of staying locked down, there have been positives, though, like having cleaner air, spending less money, and building stronger links with our families and local communities.

Forced into new ways of working and learning online, we have also developed new habits and have reconsidered issues that we are prepared to stand for in the future. Rather than simply replicating past behaviors, we can embrace beneficial new habits in a post-COVID world.

Prior to the pandemic, a number of new consumer trends were rising. For some time, people had already been moving their purchases to companies with greater purpose, and many were calling out poor practices that did not benefit the environment or align with changing social values. Trends in online shopping and working from home were steadily growing, driven by a need for convenience and enabled by innovations in high-speed technology.

Getting back to traveling

We have greatly missed travel and vacations, but the headlines about the continued spread of the virus and announcements of job losses have scared and scared us. It has become clear that certain people have been disproportionately affected and there are deep structural divisions in societies, and many feel out of control and unsure and anxious as to the right ways to behave or to plan for the future.

When travel returns, the companies that understand the attitudes and values that drive underlying consumer trends will have a stronger chance at thriving in the post-COVID world.

Four trends to act upon

Considered consumption The appearance and spread of this deadly disease are likely to have been a direct outcome of our drive for ever-greater economic growth and individual gain at the expense of community, climate, and biodiversity (nyti.ms/2Cen8aP). Thrifting and upcycling have had huge growth, and we are seeing a backlash on status flaunting and ostentatious luxury.

• Brands can help consumers feel more in control over their money by focusing on reliability, trust, and value.
• Increased price sensitivity means that providing reasons for consumers to trust a brand is more important than ever.

Companies that understand the attitudes and values that drive underlying consumer trends will have a stronger chance at thriving in the post-COVID world.

Kindness and community In the response to the pandemic, certain people have had to put themselves at great risk in order to help others. Valuing and showing gratitude to these front-line workers, supporting neighbors and communities, and buying goods and services locally have been major shifts in the months just passed.

• Consumers will be looking for real evidence of how the travel industry can create greater personalization, safety, sustainability, and benefit to their experiences.
• Wearing masks and social distancing do not sit naturally with hospitality, so ingenuity will be needed to help ensure these practices do not take away from the travel experience.

Fairness, honesty, and transparency The shift of business toward purpose is accelerating, and consumers expect companies to step up. Americans say they will remember both the missteps and the good turns that businesses made during the pandemic long after it is over (bit.ly/2OiVnRr).

• For businesses, proving social purpose is now more important than ever.
• Social media has made all companies wide open to live scrutiny and critique, and companies must show through their actions that they are human and genuine.

Reset not rebound COVID-19 has brought a renewed focus on the need for greater preparedness and resilience. This is being met through engagement with digital technology, financial planning, valuing wellness and mental health, and ensuring that our surroundings are clean, safe, and secure.

• Customers have extremely high expectations for hygiene and flexibility. Safety is the top priority, and companies need to work hard to assuage concerns. Good design, low touch, and organized processes involving digital technologies are key to this.
• The growing focus on the holistic approach to wellness encourages opportunities for future travel experiences and collaborations.

This is a tough time for people who run a business. Those who can put their organization’s core values into action, take the time to understand their customers, invest in their employees, and do right by their wider stakeholders are positioning themselves to come out far stronger—and much more resilient—for the months and years to come.

Rochelle Turner is the head of research and insight for MaCher (macher.com), a sustainable design and manufacturing firm that provides information and advice about changing habits that can help reduce waste in the world. Reach her at rturner@macher.com.
When concerns about the COVID pandemic ease, travelers will be eager to hit the road (or the swamp) again—and every destination's hotels, restaurants, activities, and attractions will be equally eager to welcome them. Here are six NTA-member destinations, each with a collection of distinctive and diverse things to see and do.

**Top spots for groups**

- **National WWII Museum** in New Orleans features immersive exhibits, multimedia experiences, and an expansive collection of artifacts and first-person oral histories. See more on page 22. ([nationalww2museum.org](http://nationalww2museum.org))

- **Festival International in Lafayette** is a five-day celebration of culture through music, food, art, and performance that takes place each year at the end of April. Celebrating its 35th year in 2021, this event is the largest international music and arts festival in the United States. ([lafayettetravel.com](http://lafayettetravel.com))

- **Built in 1913 as a private home, the Biedenharn Museum & Gardens in Monroe offers three unique experiences for the price of one.** The tour features the historical Coca-Cola Museum, a Bible museum, and the ELSong Botanical Gardens.

- **Take the Bayou Rum Distillery Tour in Lacassine and learn how the liquor is made from locally sourced Louisiana sugarcane.**

- **LSU’s Rural Life Museum and Windrush Gardens in Baton Rouge offers a large collection of artifacts and architecture from cultures of 18th- and 19th-century rural Louisianans.**

- **Atchafalaya National Heritage Area showcases the unique environment and culture of 14 Louisiana parishes, including the rich and mysterious landscapes.**

**Pleasant surprises**

“Visitors are treated like family when you visit Louisiana. We love to share our food, music, culture, and stories with everyone,” says Marie Stagg of the Louisiana Office of Tourism. “Visitors see and feel our genuine friendliness and hospitality everywhere they travel.”

**Health measures**

Visitors are encouraged to check with specific destinations for updates on any restrictions. The state of Louisiana is following guidelines outlined by the White House and CDC regarding protocols for the reopening of attractions, restaurants, bars, and hotels.

**What do you say to travel planners new to your destination?**

“Louisiana offers one of the most memorable and unique experiences you will find, like traveling to a foreign country without leaving the United States,” Stagg says. “It comes from our heritage of African, Caribbean, Spanish, French, German, Irish, and Italian influences. Louisiana isn’t for spectators … it’s for participants who want to feed their souls.”
Top spots for groups
The adventures in Colorado are endless, according to Julianne Fredrick, CTP, executive director of Tour Colorado. “We have eight scenic railroads*, four national parks, eight national monuments, 26 scenic byways, and 41 state parks. Groups can witness the beauty of Colorado from a train or motorcoach, and by car or foot.”

*including these NTA members: Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, and Georgetown Loop Railroad

Pleasant surprises
“Guests will be pleasantly surprised by our sincere, warm Colorado welcome and the rich history of our state,” Fredrick says.

Health measures
“Colorado’s open spaces and fresh air are just what we all need right now,” Fredrick says. “Please do remember to drink more water than normal, as you most likely will be at a higher altitude than you are accustomed to.”

What do you say to travel planners new to your destination?
“Most groups use an itinerary that blends our natural parks with our cities’ attractions and dining. They can do everything in Colorado,” says Fredrick. “During the COVID concern, we’re seeing more hub-and-spoke tours so that people can limit their hotel stays to just one room, and then venture out from there every day for the adventures, beauty, and fresh air of Colorado.”
Salt Lake City, Utah

Top spots for groups
Red Butte Garden, the Natural History Museum of Utah, FamilySearch at Temple Square (familysearch.org), City Creek Center, and the Great Salt Lake.

Pleasant surprises
“Great local cuisine, dozens of independent breweries and boutique distilleries, clean smelling air, beautiful rugged mountains, and a fit and youthful populace,” says Michael Mack, director of strategic partnerships at Visit Salt Lake.

What do you say to travel planners new to your destination?
“Salt Lake City is an old pro at accommodating and welcoming group tours,” Mack says. “Reasonably priced, well-situated hotel rooms are available in the city center. While Salt Lake has the same issues as most major cities, it is a very walkable and friendly city.”

Baltimore, Maryland

Top spots for groups
The National Aquarium (aqua.org/groups), Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, the American Visionary Art Museum, Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, and Fleet Week.

Pleasant surprises
“Visitors enjoy the walkability of Baltimore,” says Eric Masterton of Visit Baltimore. “It’s full of picturesque bay views, diverse cultural attractions, and an incredible dining scene, including fresh local seafood.”

What do you say to travel planners new to your destination?
“Visitors to Baltimore are charmed by the architecture, the waterfront location, the historical relevance to the founding of America, and the diversity of our arts and culture,” Masterton says. “From world-class luxury hotels to quaint family-owned bed and breakfasts, expansive green spaces, and world-famous attractions, Baltimore really surprises people.”
Charleston, South Carolina
charlestoncvb.com
NTA contact: Jennifer A. Cecil | jcecil@explorecharleston.com

Top spots for groups
The Charleston Tea Garden, Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum (patriotspoint.org), Fort Sumter National Monument, and The Schooner Pride.

Pleasant surprises
"Hospitality is our way of life," says Jennifer Cecil of Explore Charleston. "I think people will be pleasantly surprised at how friendly everyone is. You will not meet a stranger in Charleston, and you’ll leave with new best friends!"

What do you say to travel planners new to your destination?
“We partner well with our friends in Myrtle Beach and Savannah, and we are a destination you can visit year-round," Cecil says. “It may sound cliché, but there is something for every age and interest. And seriously, don’t forget the food!”

St. John’s, Newfoundland
destinationstjohns.com
NTA contact: Paul Buggé | pbugge@destinationstjohns.com

Top experiences for groups
Sea kayaking, snorkeling with the whales, hiking the East Coast Trail, enjoying the George Street Entertainment District, and visiting Quidi Vidi Village.

Pleasant surprises
“Newfoundland and Labrador is Canada’s youngest province, but it’s home to St. John’s, one of the oldest cities in North America,” says Paul Buggé of Destination St. John’s. “Ours is a vibrant and colorful city, close to nature and full of wide-open green spaces.”

What do you say to travel planners new to your destination?
“National Geographic has named St. John’s as the top coastal destination in the world,” Buggé says. “Also, St. John’s has more than 3,500 hotel rooms in the center city, all within 10 minutes of downtown.”

For information on FBI From Al Capone to Al-Qaeda & other special exhibits visit ReaganLibrary.com/Events

NTAcourier.com 17
WHAT MAKES a big city compelling? While there are likely as many ways to answer that question as there are responders, common thoughts would be interesting history, intriguing attractions, natural beauty, great restaurants, funky shops, and friendly locals.

All of those descriptors apply to Washington, D.C., but the U.S. capital city’s most fascinating asset may be its vibrant group of neighborhoods.

“DC is full of dynamic neighborhoods, architecture, and history for groups of any kind,” says Elliott L. Ferguson II, president and CEO of Destination DC. “We’re always focused on making sure when groups are in the city, they’re not just on the National Mall, but they’re also enjoying our neighborhoods.”

While there are many compelling, eclectic areas across the city worth a visit, this article offers a sampling of the following five: Capitol Riverfront, Ivy City, Shaw, Anacostia, and The Southwest & The Wharf.

**Capitol Riverfront and Ivy City**

Home to the new stadium of the World Champion Washington Nationals, the Capitol Riverfront neighborhood is a hot spot for outdoor recreation. In addition to the baseball park, the area south of the U.S. Capitol near the Anacostia River includes The Yards Park and Canal Park.

With a history that’s tied to the nearby Washington Naval Yards, Yards Park has a harbor area that is the launch point for kayak tours and rentals for excursions on the river. Canal Park has a number of unique sculptures and popular seasonal offerings such as a bustling farmer’s market and a winter ice rink.

“It’s amazing to see how the city is redeveloping the neighborhoods along the Anacostia River, like Yards Park at Capitol Riverfront,” says Ferguson. “And the National Arboretum has some of the best-kept nature preserves in the city.”

The 446-acre arboretum is one of the highlights of Ivy City, an area located northeast of the National Mall. As they roam the natural landscape, travelers can see elaborate gardens, water features, and monuments, including the famous National Capital Columns at the National Arboretum.
No trip to the U.S. capital city would be complete without a visit to a museum, and, boy, does the Washington, D.C., area have a lot of great options. The following five NTA members are great places to keep in mind as travel restarts:

**Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum**

NTA contact: Holly Williamson
hwilliamson@si.edu

The Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum shares the history of human flight and space exploration through its unparalleled collection and online resources. The museum’s two locations in Washington, D.C., and Chantilly, Virginia, display some of the most important airplanes and spacecraft from U.S. history.

**International Spy Museum**

NTA contact: Lori Scott
lscott@spymuseum.org

The new International Spy Museum, located just steps from the National Mall and The Wharf, draws back the curtain on this secret world. The dazzling space includes state-of-the-art galleries, the world’s largest public display of authentic spy gadgets, and interactive exhibits with first-person accounts from real spies.

**Hillwood Estate Museum & Gardens**

NTA contact: Joey Hreha
groupoutours@hillwoodmuseum.org

This attraction is the 25-acre estate of philanthropist and collector Marjorie Merriweather Post. Visitors can stroll through the gardens, explore the mansion, or browse the unique exhibits. Coming up in 2021: “The Porcelain Flowers of Vladimir Kanevsky” and “Roaring Twenties: The Life and Style of Marjorie Merriweather Post.”

**National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum**

NTA contact: Thomas Canavan
tcanavan@nleomf.org

The museum, located at the Judiciary Square Metro station, tells the story of American law enforcement through interactive exhibits, world-class artifacts, special exhibits, and thought-provoking programs. The adjacent memorial is the only national monument that honors officers killed in the line of duty.

**The Army Historical Foundation, National Museum of the United States Army**

NTA contact: Pauline Bonilla
pauline.bonilla@armyhistory.org

This new museum looks forward to offering a unique way for Americans to connect with their Army and the people who serve in it. The attraction will help visitors experience the Army’s history through the eyes of the American soldier. Email Pauline Bonilla for the latest updates.

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**Making museum-y memories**

Anacostia was home to noted abolitionist Frederick Douglass, and his residence, Cedar Hill, offers a look at the statesman’s life and legacy. Another of the neighborhood’s gems is the Anacostia Community Museum, which focuses on urban life and local Black culture.

The area also is a haven for walkers and bikers. Its Riverwalk Trail is just one of the places where locals and visitors alike can stay active. And, if groups want to spend a few hours volunteering to help preserve the area’s ecosystem, they can link up with Anacostia Riverkeepers or the Anacostia Watershed Society.

**The Southwest & The Wharf**

Two names and one exciting place, The Southwest & The Wharf has undergone a major facelift in recent years. The Wharf, a $2 billion redevelopment a few blocks south of the National Mall that debuted its first phase in 2017, is a mix of restaurants and bars, retail spots, and concert venues.

The waterfront area draws from its roots as a 1700s shipyard where immigrant fishermen sold their catch right off their boats. A market was established in 1802, and what is now known as Municipal Market is a popular spot where people go to grab some fresh fish.

The proximity to the Potomac River also makes The Southwest & The Wharf a hub for on-the-water recreation, and stand-up paddleboards and kayaks can be rented at the Wharf Boathouse.

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Capitol Columns. The National Bonsai and Penjing Museum also is on the grounds.

Ivy City, a former industrial area, has seen its warehouses transformed into vibrant public spaces. The culinary scene is noteworthy, as it includes Michelin-star restaurants and a group of craft distilleries.

**Shaw and Anacostia**

Two Washington, D.C, neighborhoods—Shaw and Anacostia—have strong ties to the city’s Black history. The Shaw, located east of the U Street corridor, is renowned for its historical row houses that date back to the 1800s and entertain venues that helped it earn the moniker of the Black Broadway. The Lincoln Theatre and the Howard Theatre—both still in operation today—have made their mark across the past century by bringing a who’s who of Black performers to their stages. The southern part of the Shaw is a favorite for shoppers.

The area also is a haven for walkers and bikers. Its Riverwalk Trail is just one of the places where locals and visitors alike can stay active. And, if groups want to spend a few hours volunteering to help preserve the area’s ecosystem, they can link up with Anacostia Riverkeepers or the Anacostia Watershed Society.
Choosing your best-loved Washington, D.C., place or experience is a tall order. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of options among the city’s A-list museums, brilliant greenspaces, sumptuous restaurants, hidden gems, and waterfront spots. Courier magazine asked NTA members who live in the D.C. area to offer their favorites, and here are the responses:

**Ashley Birdsell,**
National Theatre
groupsales@thenationaldc.com

One of my favorite DC things is the Kogod Courtyard at the National Portrait Gallery. It’s the perfect place to sit with a book and be inside—yet outside— at the same time! The courtyard provides a welcome, quiet respite from the downtown crowds and weather.

**Chris Babb,**
The Group Tour Company
chris@grouptourcompany.com

One of my favorite places to visit off the National Mall is Rock Creek Cemetery, located next to the Old Soldiers Home and Lincoln Cottage. My favorite sculpture in Washington—“Grief”—is at the gravesite of Marian Hooper Adams of the political Adams family. It is a cast bronze statue by Augustus Saint-Gaudens found on a plot designed by Stanford White; a space that offers a beautiful, peaceful place for quiet contemplation.

**Lori Scott,**
International Spy Museum
lscott@spymuseum.org

My favorite DC day starts with renting a kayak and enjoying a morning paddle down the Anacostia River, followed by a stroll along the DC Wharf, being certain to grab a few fresh-steamed Maryland blue crabs from the fish market. To cap the day, I’d be hitting the ballpark early and catching batting practice before settling in for a game, rooting on our 2019 World Champion Nationals, and having a hot dog and adult beverage.

**Chase Poffenburger,**
Academic Travel Abroad
cpoffenburger@academic-travel.com

This is a simple one, as one of the greatest bike rides is from downtown Washington, D.C., to Mount Vernon along an 18-mile bike trail. Stopping at Gravelly Point, adjacent to National Airport, is a great thrill, as the planes’ landing path is directly overhead, and you have an incredible view of takeoffs and landings.

**Gordon Stearns,**
Tour Designs
tourdesigns@igc.org

Along with the iconic monuments and free museums, Washington boasts a wonderful set of gardens. I’ve enjoyed visiting the National Arboretum (northeast DC) and Botanical Garden (on the Mall). I’ve also loved visits to the National Cathedral gardens and the adjoining Rock Creek Park at Dunbarton Oaks. Finally, in the spring the Japanese cherry blossoms beautify several locations around the city, many of which aren’t nearly as crowded as the Tidal Basin.

**Lindsay Hill,**
Destination DC
lindsay.hill@destinationdc.com

Washington, D.C., is my soul city. One neighborhood that brings me joy is Eastern Market. It is a great place to walk to after visiting the U.S. Capitol and Library of Congress (another hidden treasure). The area is filled with beautiful historical row houses and the iconic market that gives it its name. On the weekend the market area is brimming with city artisans and farmers selling their wares. Don’t forget a stop at Ted’s Bulletin for homemade pop-tarts or at District Donut for a gourmet treat!
THERE’S ONE THING we know to be true during uncertain times, it’s this: Absence makes the heart grow fonder. The absence of travel has made NTA members discover a deeper appreciation of what they already loved, whether it’s operators leading groups to incredible places, or destinations and attractions receiving those wild-eyes adventurers.

Patrons have been absent from museums for many weeks following closures due to COVID-19. But as these attractions move to reopen, they’re prioritized visitor safety by implementing health protocols while curating new and exciting exhibits and modifying their programming.

The following NTA-member museums are moving forward—their eyes set on a post-COVID world—and we’re pretty fond of what they have to offer.

Man, I dig those rhythm and blues

With facility construction and exhibit fabrications winding down at the National Museum of African American Music in Nashville, the new venue will open its doors for the first time this fall. The attraction has been in development for more than 20 years.

The 56,000-square-foot museum is one of a kind, upholding a mission to educate, preserve, and celebrate more than 50 music genres and styles that were created and inspired by Black Americans. Galleries will focus on spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, R&B, and hip hop, sharing narratives and perspectives through state-of-the-art technology as well as memorabilia, clothing, and artifacts. Exhibits will all convey how a distinct group of people used their artistry to impact American music and change the world, according to the museum’s website.

One of the exhibits, titled “One Nation Under a Groove,” tells of the blending of gospel, jazz, and blues to create R&B, a sound that emerged after World War II. Soul, funk, and disco are a few of the categories of music that were born from the movement, which made quite a noise during times of cultural and political change in America.

The Wade in the Water gallery throws time back a little farther; it chronicles the history and influence of religious music—from indigenous African songs...
that were kept alive during slavery to the formation of Black American spirituals and hymns. It also covers the Golden Age of Gospel—from the 1940s through the 1960s—as well as the overall influence gospel has had on secular and new religious music.

The museum also will have a research library, which will serve as a resource center for visitors to do their own studies of African American music history.

Museum staff members have looked ahead and put in place some procedures and guidelines to keep themselves and the public safe in the midst of the pandemic. They’re currently operating with several people working from home, and the construction team is also working with reduced staff. They’re aiming to stay on schedule with the grand opening, and in the interim, their artifact collection is safely stored away at NTA-member Country Music Hall of Fame. All youth and adult public programs have been suspended to align with closures at Metro Nashville Public Schools, but the museum is evaluating digital delivery options to maintain connection with the community.

For more information, contact Dionne Lucas as dlucas@nmaam.org or go to nmaam.org.

An experience that will live in infamy

Stretching across six acres of New Orleans’ unique downtown landscape, the National World War II Museum is a trove of six pavilions with more than 250,000 artifacts and 9,000 personal accounts from veterans that piece together the war that changed the world. The museum’s newest permanent exhibit, “The Arsenal of Democracy,” is an experience that takes visitors down the road to the war and describes how it was fought on the home front. They can walk through a 1940s-style home and learn how families dealt with food shortages, how women took on new employment, and how children and the elderly contributed through bond purchases and scrap drives when 16 million American citizens joined the military during the war.

Other galleries within the exhibit include the depiction of the American response through theater marquees and clips of propaganda movies, a reproduction of military barracks that detail the rapid training that mobilized civilians to fight around the world, and the story of the Manhattan Project and the atomic bomb the U.S. secretly raced to create before the Nazis could.

A notable artifact that hangs above “Road to Tokyo: Pacific Theater Galleries” is a shark-faced P-40 Warhawk. The exhibit shines a light on what led the U.S. into the war in the Pacific. Displays detail the story of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S.’s island-hopping strategy, and the final assaults on Japan—atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Visitors also can see a replica bridge of the USS Enterprise.

An upcoming special exhibit, “Ghost Army: The Combat Artists of World War II,” will be on view until Jan. 3, 2021. The U.S. Army’s 23rd Headquarters Special Troops and their deception operations in Europe are highlighted through artwork, uniforms, an inflatable tank, and other items. “Elvis: Through the Years” will be on this fall in BB’s Stage Door Canteen, journeying through the career of Elvis Presley. Spencer Racca will pay tribute to the King with hits like “All Shook Up,” “Are You Lonesome Tonight?,” and “Suspicious Minds.”

Throughout the initial phase of reopening, most galleries, exhibits, and experiences will be available with controlled attendance—especially within galleries, says the museum’s Emily Eagan.

“The museum will operate at reduced capacity while enacting new safety
measures, including advanced online ticket purchases, social distancing guidelines throughout pavilions, and enhanced sanitizing and cleaning protocols,” she says. “To help ensure public safety and avoid crowds, timed ticket purchases will be required. It is strongly recommended that visitors pre-purchase museum admission online, and tickets are now available for advanced purchase.”

Special rates are offered for groups of 10 or more for visits to the museum and BB’s Stage Door Canteen. Box lunches are also available with notice. For more information, contact Lisa Ochromogo at lisa.ochromogo@nationalww2museum.org or go to nationalww2museum.org.

Keeping history afloat

The USS Midway may have opened as a museum in a San Diego harbor in 2004, but its story begins in a much earlier period—back to 1945 when it made history as the first in a three-ship class of large carriers with an armored flight deck that could hold 120 planes.

The ship played important roles during the Cold War, as it was the first American carrier to operate in the midwinter sub-Arctic as well as the first to launch a captured German V-2 rocket. The Midway was the longest-operating aircraft carrier of the 20th century, serving the Atlantic Fleet for 10 years and deploying to European waters seven times throughout its career. It was also the takeoff point for more than 3,000 naval air force combat missions during Operation Desert Storm.

As the sturdy ship withstood nearly a century of war and rescue missions, it’s emerging strong again as the waves of the COVID-19 pandemic wash over the world. It was built to prevail. And the museum’s marketing director Dave Koontz says that while the attraction reopened July 1, areas that don’t accommodate social distancing are off limits.

“The USS Midway Museum is only offering its flight deck and hangar deck to visitors,” he says. “For guests’ safety, the museum did not open confined spaces, including the Battle of Midway Theater, flight simulators and virtual reality experiences, aircraft cockpits, and any below-deck tour spaces.”

Staff members also instituted health and safety protocols for visitors, including installations of more than 170 hand-sanitation stations, non-invasive temperature checks before boarding the ship, face cover requirements, and 6-foot physical distancing guidelines.

“Guests will see the museum’s cleaning crew constantly wiping down all high-touch surface areas and restrooms. A touchless transaction process was activated, and plexiglass contact barriers were placed at point-of-sale locations,” Koontz says. “A number of the museum’s military aircraft were relocated on the flight and hangar decks.”

As it proves difficult to keep some guest experiences dark while waiting for conditions surrounding the virus to improve, Koontz expresses his excitement for the newest addition.

“The USS Midway Museum is now exhibiting a full-scale model of a TBD Devastator torpedo bomber aircraft that was used in the making of the 2019 ‘Midway’ motion picture,” he says. “The Devastator is now on display on the hangar deck.”

For more information, contact Joe Wagstaff at jwagstaff@midway.org or go to midway.org.

Sunrise over the deck of the USS Midway
TO REVIVE AND RETELL

Museums standing strong

Many NTA-member museums are getting their bearings amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and they’re breathing new life into their offerings. As they evolve and push forward during these ever-changing times, a few things haven’t changed—including their abilities to curate one-of-a-kind exhibits and share them with the world.

Here are two sponsoring attractions that are shining examples of how NTA members are withstanding the storm while continuing to create unique exhibits and programming:

Hagley Museum and Library

Wilmington, Delaware

Bonnie Wirth
Group tour manager
+1.302.658.2400 (x259)
bwirth@hagley.org
hagley.org/tours

Take a journey through the DuPont Company’s historic black powder yards and the first home and garden of the du Pont family in America. Experience what makes Hagley unique with demonstrations of 19th-century water-powered machinery and a black powder explosion. Explore the family home, stroll through the French garden, discover archival treasures with a Hagley historian, and enjoy lunch in a private room. Located minutes from Longwood Gardens, Winterthur, and I-95 in Wilmington, Delaware.

Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum

Chantilly, Virginia

Holly Williamson
Public affairs specialist
+1.202.633.2373
hwillamson@si.edu
airandspace.si.edu

“Wow!” That’s what many visitors say when they enter the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, one of northern Virginia’s favorite museums. The Center’s more than 346,000-square-foot exhibit space features thousands of iconic spacecraft and aircraft outlining the history of aviation. Artifacts include Space Shuttle Discovery, an Air France Concorde, the B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay, and the last remaining World War I-era Sopwith Camel. Please visit the museum’s website for information, including its public health and safety measures.

Ancestral Adobe • Historic Homes • Heritage Gardens

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As travelers make their way across North America, they have plenty of attractions where they can learn more about a variety of topics. When they go to arts and science museums, history-themed attractions, and presidential libraries and homes that are members of the National Tour Association, they can enjoy dozens of unique offerings that range from behind-the-scenes tours and interactive programs to themed exhibits and special events.

Listings in this guide are based on each company’s primary NTA membership designation or profile selections, and the information provided by the member contact was current as of July 8. Please check NTAonline.com for updated information on the association’s museum members.

**CANADA**

**ALBERTA**

Heritage Park Historical Village
Sandy Wilde
Calgary, AB
heritagepark.ca

**MANITOBA**

Parks Canada
Jennifer Burnell
Winnipeg, MB
parkscanada.gc.ca

**ONTARIO**

Canadian Museum of Nature
Lorna Sierolawski
Ottawa, ON
nature.ca

National Gallery of Canada
Hélène Donaldson
Ottawa, ON
gallery.ca

**QUÉBEC**

Canadian Museum of History
Stephanie Fortin
Gatineau, QC
historymuseum.ca

Québec Copper Art Studio & Museum
Albert Gilles
Palmyre Gilles
Chateau-Richer, QC
albertgilles.com

**UNITED STATES**

**ALABAMA**

U S S Alabama Battleship Memorial Park
Rhonda Davis
Mobile, AL
ussalabama.com

U.S. Space & Rocket Center
Sara Vowell
Huntsville, AL
spacecamp.com

**ARIZONA**

Old Tucson
Joe Camarillo
Tucson, AZ
oldtucson.com

**CALIFORNIA**

Academy Museum of Motion Pictures
Citlalie Gallegos
Beverly Hills, CA
academymuseum.org

California Academy of Sciences
Jun Watanabe
San Francisco, CA
calacademy.org

Hearst Castle
Jim Allen
San Simeon, CA
hearthcastle.org

The Huntington Library, Art Museum & Botanical Gardens
Jane Sandmeier
San Marino, CA
huntington.org

Intel Museum
Kelli Ambrosi
Santa Clara, CA
intel.com/museum

The Living Desert
Judy Esterbrook
Palm Desert, CA
livingdesert.org

Maritime Museum of San Diego
Theresa Amos Smullen
San Diego, CA
sdmaritime.org

**PHOTO:** U.S. SPACE & ROCKET CENTER

Courier’s Guide to NTA-member Museums

**PHOTO:** U.S. SPACE & ROCKET CENTER
Pacific Battleship Center
Jonathan Williams
San Pedro, CA
pacificbattleship.com

Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum
Dr. Jane Zhang
Yorba Linda, CA
nixonfoundation.org

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum
Melissa Giller
Simi Valley, CA
reaganlibrary.com

USS Midway Museum
Joe Wagstaff
San Diego, CA
midway.org

Winchester Mystery House
Nathan Emmett
San Jose, CA
winchestermysteryhouse.com

COLORADO
History Colorado
Zach Werkowitch
Pueblo, CO
historycolorado.org

CONNECTICUT
Mystic Seaport Museum
Rebecca Shea
Mystic, CT
mysticseaport.org

DELAWARE
Hagley Museum and Library
Bonnie Wirth
Wilmington, DE
hagley.org

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Hillwood Estate Museum & Gardens
Joey Hreha
Washington, DC
hillwoodmuseum.org

International Spy Museum
Lori Scott
Washington, DC
spymuseum.org

National Geographic Museum
Brianna DeOrsey
Washington, DC
ngm.org

National Law Enforcement Museum
Thomas Canavan
Washington, DC
lawenforcementmuseum.org

FLORIDA
Coral Castle
Laura Maye
Miami, FL
coralcastle.com

The Dali Museum
Grace Reynolds
St. Petersburg, FL
thedali.org

Edison & Ford Winter Estates
Lisa Sbuttoni
Fort Myers, FL
edisonfordwinterestates.org

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex
Gabrielle Bauer Cornish
Kennedy Space Center, FL
kennedyspacecenter.com

ILLINOIS
American Writers Museum
Catherine Ryan
Chicago, IL
americanwritersmuseum.org

Chicago Architecture Center
Deb Rodak
Chicago, IL
architecture.org

Museum of Science and Industry
Jeanine Gillott
Chicago, IL
msichicago.org

KENTUCKY
Ark Encounter
Eddie Lutz
Williamstown, KY
arkencounter.com

Kentucky Derby Museum
Jennifer Riddell
Louisville, KY
derbymuseum.org

LOUISIANA
The National World War II Museum
Lisa Ochomogo
New Orleans, LA
nationalww2museum.org

Oak Alley Plantation
Hillary Loeb
Vacherie, LA
oakalleyplantation.org

MASSACHUSETTS
Boston Attractions Group
Doug Hall
Boston, MA
bostonattractionsgroup.com

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum
Ian Shepherd
Boston, MA
jfklibrary.org

Plimoth Plantation, Mayflower II & Plimoth Grist Mill
Janet Young
Plymouth, MA
plimoth.org

Salem Witch Museum
Merry Ward
Salem, MA
salemwitchmuseum.com

MICHIGAN
The Henry Ford
Vickie Evans
Dearborn, MI
thehenryford.org

MISSOURI
Gateway Arch Riverfront
Amber Barbeau
St. Louis, MO
gatewayarch.com

Saint Louis Science Center
Michael Wense
St. Louis, MO
slsc.org

NEVADA
The Mob Museum
Sabine Von Henning
Las Vegas, NV
themobmuseum.org

Springs Preserve
Pietra Sardelli
Las Vegas, NV
springspreserve.org

NEW JERSEY
Old Barracks Museum
Michelle Doherty
Trenton, NJ
barracks.org

NEW YORK
American Museum of Natural History
James Cuebas
New York, NY
amnh.org

Corning Museum of Glass
Melissa Rose
Corning, NY
cmg.org/groups

National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum
June Dolhun
Cooperstown, NY
baseballhall.org

National September 11 Memorial & Museum
Jeannette Gutierrez
New York, NY
911memorial.org

Ripley’s Believe It or Not! Times Square
Benjamin Maddy
New York, NY
ripleysnewyork.com

The Strong National Museum of Play
Karen Dodson
Rochester, NY
museumofplay.org
## NORTH CAROLINA
- **Biltmore Estate**
  - Tim Hill
  - Asheville, NC
  - biltmore.com

- **NASCAR Hall of Fame**
  - Bryan Cowert
  - Charlotte, NC
  - nascarhall.com

## SOUTH CAROLINA
- **Magnolia Plantation**
  - Christine Potter
  - Charleston, SC
  - magnoliaplantation.com

- **Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum**
  - Kevin Sutton
  - Mount Pleasant, SC
  - patriotspoint.org

## TENNESSEE
- **Cheekwood Estate & Gardens**
  - Tina Tackett
  - Nashville, TN
  - cheekwood.org

- **Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum**
  - Dana Romanello
  - Nashville, TN
  - countrymusichalloffame.org

- **Graceland & Guest House at Graceland**
  - Kelly Renee Woods
  - Memphis, TN
  - graceland.com

- **The Hermitage: Home of President Andrew Jackson**
  - Tina Goodrow
  - Nashville, TN
  - thehermitage.com

- **National Museum of African American Music**
  - Dionne Lucas
  - Nashville, TN
  - nmaam.org

## TEXAS
- **Friends of San Felipe de Austin SHS**
  - Toni Franklin
  - San Felipe, TX
  - thc.texas.gov/historic-sites/san-felipe-de-austin-state-historic-site

- **Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum**
  - Stephanie Price
  - Canyon, TX
  - panhandleplains.org

- **Space Center Houston**
  - Joelle Hardin
  - Houston, TX
  - spacecenter.org

## UTAH
- **FamilySearch at Temple Square**
  - Cherie Bush
  - Salt Lake City, UT
  - familysearch.org

## VIRGINIA
- **The Army Historical Foundation, National Museum of the United States Army**
  - Cameron Lynn
  - Fort Belvoir, VA
  - armyhistory.org

## WASHINGTON
- **The Museum of Flight**
  - Bethany Carrillo
  - Seattle, WA
  - museumofflight.org

- **Space Needle and Chihuly Garden & Glass**
  - Nicole Smoucha
  - Seattle, WA
  - spaceneedle.com

## WISCONSIN
- **Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame**
  - Krissy Zegers
  - Green Bay, WI
  - packers.com

- **House on the Rock**
  - Susan Donaldson
  - Spring Green, WI
  - thehouseontherock.com

- **Milwaukee Public Museum**
  - Tim Malenock
  - Milwaukee, WI
  - mpm.edu

## WYOMING
- **Buffalo Bill Center of the West**
  - Josie Hedderman
  - Cody, WY
  - centerofthewest.org

- **National Museum of Wildlife Art of the United States**
  - Jennifer Tremblay
  - Jackson, WY
  - wildlifeart.org
Great Lakes

Racine is very structurally sound

The most-loved works of Wisconsin-born architect Frank Lloyd Wright can be viewed at the SC Johnson headquarters campus in Racine, just 25 miles south of Milwaukee.

Racine County sits on the lovely shores of Lake Michigan and is a little over an hour’s drive from Chicago O’Hare International Airport. Its SC Johnson headquarters campus is home to the largest commercial and residential Frank Lloyd Wright architecture: the SC Johnson Administration Building and Wingspread.

Completed in 1939, the administration building includes The Great Workroom, which covers nearly a half-acre of floor space. Its 31-feet-tall, golf-tee-shaped columns have been deemed one of the most advanced structural supports in modern architecture. And Wingspread, a 14,000-square-foot private residence Wright designed, was the home of H.F. Johnson, third-generation leader of SC Johnson, and now serves as an international educational conference facility open for tours.

Also on the SC Johnson campus is the Golden Rondelle Theatre, which was constructed at the 1964-65 World’s Fair in New York and moved to Racine. It houses community events as well as a shifting schedule of films.

Beyond the area’s architectural tours, groups can visit the Wind Point Lighthouse, the oldest and tallest working lighthouse on Lake Michigan. It’s an arduous hike up the 144 steps, but the views are rewarding: beautiful countryside and the northern shores of Racine Harbor. The original 1880s-era mineral oil lamp, with its beacon magnified by a French-imported Fresnel lens, was converted in 1964 to electricity. Tower climbs are offered the first Sundays of June, July, August, September, and October.

For more information, contact Eileen Arnold at eileen@realracine.com or go to realracine.com.

Craving caving? Southern Indiana has you covered

“Below the rolling hills, majestic forests, and winding Blue River lies a secretive network of caverns and caves just waiting to be explored at Indiana Caverns, Marengo Cave, Squire Boone Caverns, and Wyandotte Cave,” says Stacy Pirtle, director of sales and visitor services with the Harrison County Indiana CVB. “Guided tours take you deep into our greatest natural treasure, where you can walk alongside underground streams, investigate captivating cave formations, discover fossils, and observe fascinating plant and animal life hundreds of feet below the earth’s surface.”

Discovering the below-ground beauty of the southern Indiana county includes mostly easy walks, so people of all ages have the option to go down and explore. The tours vary in length and terrain, and weather is never an issue; the caves stay 52 degrees year-round.

For something more extreme, Harrison County visitors can view the caverns from the air at Squire Boone Caverns Zipline Adventures.

“From introductory trips designed to give newbies just a taste of zip line action to whizzing down Indiana’s longest zip line, we have an exciting excursion for everyone,” Pirtle says.

The Bat Chaser aerial coaster at Indiana Caverns takes riders 50 feet up to the takeoff tower, then down 603 feet of twists and turns over the treetops and caverns with the option to free fall; Pirtle calls the ride a must-do. Similar to hang gliding, the Bat Chaser is the second of its kind in the U.S. and the first in the Midwest.

For more information, contact Pirtle at stacyp@thisisindiana.org or go to thisisindiana.org.
The flavors and fa-la-las of Frankenmuth

Deeply rooted in its German heritage, the small city of Frankenmuth has been dubbed “Michigan’s Little Bavaria,” and that is evident in its beautiful architecture, festivals, and food.

Chicken dinners are world-famous here; the city is known far and wide to serve up the best of the comfort dish: German-style golden fried chicken with mashed potatoes, buttered noodles, dressing, and fresh bread. Two iconic spots to try it out are Zehnder’s of Frankenmuth and the Bavarian Inn Restaurant.

It’s always Christmas in the city, too. Visitors can shop at Bronner’s CHRISTmas Wonderland, with thousands upon thousands of ornaments, decorated trees, and gifts. At dusk (all year long), shoppers at Bronner’s can step outside for a display of 100,000 Christmas lights stretching a half mile. A horse-drawn carriage ride stops at The Old Christmas Station, a European restaurant stocked with German ornaments, cookie cutters, and handcrafted figurines.

Frankenmuth parties year-round, too, hosting one-of-a-kind events. Although festival schedules are a bit up in the air these days, the following noteworthy events will return: German-themed Bavarian Festival and Oktoberfest; Bringin’ Back the ’80s Fest, which generates proceeds of nearly $70,000 each year for cancer-related causes; the World Expo of Beer, Michigan’s largest beer-sampling event; and Zehnder’s Snowfest, which displays large and intricate snow sculptures and ice carvings.

For more information, email Christie Bierlein at groupsales@frankenmuth.org or go to frankenmuth.org.

Oh, the places you’ll go (in Illinois)

Illinois is home to five NTA-member DMOs, each offering up unique tastes of the Prairie State.

Aurora Area CVB The region 37 miles west of Chicago is a grouping of counties where visitors can follow hiking and biking trails, paddle along the lovely Fox River, see the Victorian and Italianate architecture of the Fox River Valley, and experience a few thrills at Illinois’ largest waterpark, Raging Waves. enjoyaurora.com

Chicago Southland CVB The 62 suburbs that make up Chicago Southland are teeming with activity: arts and culture, shopping in historical downtowns, and golf courses—600 holes, actually. The area includes more than 400 square miles of “just beyond the city limits” experiences. tourchicagosouthland.com

Choose Chicago The lakeside city is known for its 77 distinctive neighborhoods and thousands of diverse restaurants. Classic Chicago experiences are found at NTA supplier members: Shedd Aquarium, 360 CHICAGO, Chicago Architecture Center, the American Writers Museum, the Museum of Science & Industry, Broadway in Chicago, and Wendella Sightseeing Boats. choosechicago.com

Heritage Corridor CVB Miles of trails and waterways that connect suburban Chicago to Starved Rock State Park make this area west of the city a haven for outdoor adventurers. There are thousands of acres of lakes, rivers, forests, and parks to explore, and visitors can take part in activities like fishing, hunting, and hiking. heritagecorridorcvb.com

Springfield CVB The capital is the go-to for attractions that detail the life of the 16th U.S. president—from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum to the Abe Lincoln Rail Splitter Statue. The city is full of other historical sites, too, like the Route 66 Twin Drive-In and the Vachel Lindsay Home. visitspringfieldillinois.com

360 Chicago Observation Deck TILT
Rivers and roads

A Minnesota adventure offers an opportunity for groups to get the true Great Lakes region experience—from beautiful state parks and quaint communities to river cruises and shopping. Explore Minnesota has compiled routes to see the best of the North Star State, and here’s a closer look at a couple of those courses:

The North Shore Scenic Byway  “A journey on the North Shore Scenic Byway is the perfect road trip for all seasons, but especially in the summer and fall,” says Explore Minnesota’s Jake Juliot. “Highway 61 follows the shore of Lake Superior from Duluth to the Canadian border and passes by some of Minnesota’s most memorable landmarks and parks as well as lake towns.”

- Duluth is Bob Dylan’s birthplace and a shipping hub where boats of all kinds pass through the iconic lift bridge, Juliot says.
- Split Rock Lighthouse was constructed in 1910 after a string of shipwrecks, and admission includes a tour of the lighthouse and access to surrounding trails.
- Grand Marais is a lovely harbor village nestled between Lake Superior and the Superior National Forest, where visitors can hike, mountain bike, gallery hop, and do some crafting.

The Great River Road  “Minnesota has the distinct honor of being home to the headwaters of the Mississippi River at Itasca State Park. The location is the perfect place to begin or end a trip on the Great River Road, following the Mighty Mississippi as it runs through a sprawling metropolis, pristine nature, and charming river towns,” Juliot says.

- Minneapolis and St. Paul offer a variety of paddlewheel boat cruises, from basic trips to themed cruises (think margaritas and tacos). Onshore, visitors can see NTA-member Mall of America (mallofamerica.com), the largest entertainment and shopping center in the U.S. minneapolis.org
- Wabasha is home to the National Eagle Center, offering wild eagle viewing, interactive exhibits, and cultural and historical displays. Visitors can stand within feet of bald and golden eagles with no barrier—an experience found in few other environmental interpretive centers.
- Winona is for art lovers. The small community’s Minnesota Marine Art Museum features a unique collection, with each piece having something to do with water. Artists whose works are on display include Vincent van Gogh, Claude Monet, and Georgia O’Keeffe.

For more information, contact Millie Phillip at millie.philipp@state.mn.us or go to exploreminnesota.com.

In the know with Ohio

Ohio is a top-to-bottom group destination, and a handful of its cities and sites are detailed here by region.

Northeast
- As a site for many pioneering businesses, Akron/Summit County offers attractions in this historical thread, including the Lockheed Martin Airdock, the Hower House, and the National Museum of Psychology. visitakron-summit.org
- Ohio Amish Country in Holmes County is the place to find cultural sites, unique shopping, and eateries serving up generational recipes within the country’s largest Amish settlement.

Central
- Columbus, the capital and the state’s most populous city, has well-known attractions including the enormous Columbus Zoo & Aquarium and the new LEGOLAND Discovery Center. Live music, breweries, and the theater district offer exhilarating nightlife. experiencecolumbus.com/tours
- The Ohio Herb Center in Gahanna is a wonderland of gardening, culinary experiences, and health and wellness. Workshops include Tea Blending and Thrifty Herbal Homecare.
- Grandview Heights, just minutes from downtown Columbus, is a quieter area with several unique coffee roasters, local shops, and an innovative food scene.

Southwest
- Dayton is packed with aviation history, and some of its world-class sites are the Wright Brothers Memorial, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, and Carillon Historical Park. The 2021 Vectren Dayton Air Show will be July 10–11, headlined by the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds. daytoncvb.com
- Carlisle-based Indian Creek Distillery serves up early American frontier whiskey, distilled in the same copper pot stills from almost 200 years ago.
- Golden Lamb in Lebanon is one of America’s most historical inns; it’s been a gathering place since 1803 for locals, travelers, statesmen, and presidents.

For more information, contact Chrissy Blackwell with Ohio Has It! at tours@ohiohasit.com or go to ohiohasit.com.
Lots to love along the ‘American Riviera’

Nestled between mountains and the Pacific Ocean, and surrounded by undeveloped coastline, Santa Barbara has been called “The American Riviera” for decades.

“The city’s distinctive Spanish-influenced architecture and lush landscape evoke the topography and aesthetic of the European Riviera—with a carefree California spirit,” says Karna Hughes, Visit Santa Barbara’s director of public relations. “Santa Barbara welcomes visitors with relaxing resorts and hideaways, outdoor escapes, world-class wineries, arts and cultural attractions, and a hyper-local food scene.”

Two of the city’s top attractions are the Santa Barbara County Courthouse and the Old Mission Santa Barbara.

The courthouse, which was constructed in 1929, is a castle-like structure built in the Andalusian style. As they explore the facility, travelers can see original artwork, colorful tapestries, hand-painted tiles, and thousands of other ornate details. Two notable features are the Mural Room that depicts historical scenes and the Clock Tower that offers sweeping views of the city.

The Old Mission Santa Barbara is a time capsule of California history. The rich heritage of the 10th of the state’s 21 missions is detailed during a tour that goes to the church, the museum, and the gardens. As they roam the 13-acre property, visitors can see handcrafted archways and the distinctive twin bell towers, and a number of Mission-era plants and trees.

Another popular stop is Santa Barbara Harbor, which anchors the city’s waterfront district. Visitors can get active by going kayaking or stand up paddle-boarding. Those who want to relax can pull up a chair at a local restaurant and enjoy fresh seafood, local veggies, and a glass of the area’s renowned wine.

Speaking of, Hughes calls the city’s Urban Wine Trail a must-do.

“The trail includes nearly three dozen tasting rooms in the city alone, most of which are walkable and in close proximity to each other,” she says. “We recommend exploring areas like the historic Presidio neighborhood and the cobblestone paths of El Presidio, which boast the tasting rooms of some of the most respected winemakers in Santa Barbara.”

To learn more, reach out to Visit Santa Barbara’s Jocelyn Schumacher at jocelyn@santabarbaraca.com or go to santabarbaraca.com.
7 Natural Wonders of San Diego

While San Diego’s calling card may be its wide-open, sand-swept beaches, the city boasts a treasure trove of outdoor experiences away from the Pacific shores. Non-beach, outdoor options are plentiful, and many of the top spots are included on the 7 Natural Wonders of San Diego list.

“The majority of the 7 Wonders are enjoyed inland, thus providing visitors a look at a completely different side of our destination,” says Benjamin Eastman, director of tourism development for the San Diego Tourism Authority. To learn more, email him at beastman@sandiego.org or go to sandiego.org.

**Potato Chip Rock**  This Instagrammable spot, located on the east side of Lake Poway, is reached by a long hike on the Mount Woodson Trail. The giant boulders along the path also are photo-worthy.

**La Jolla Underwater Park**  The first coastal underwater preserve on the U.S. West Coast, the park is inhabited by marine life that includes orange Garibaldi, octopus, sea turtles, and more.

**San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve**  Hikers can journey along Annie’s Canyon—a true slot canyon—in the reserve, which is one of the largest remaining wetlands in San Diego.

**Anza-Borrego Desert State Park**  The largest state park in California, Anza-Borrego is home to 12 wilderness areas. It teems with desert wildlife and, in the spring, thousands of wildflowers.

**Torrey Pines State Nature Reserve**  The reserve, one of only two places where you can find the Torrey Pine tree, has six hiking trails with views of sandstone rock formations and the ocean.

**Sunset Cliffs’ Hidden Sea Cave**  Tucked away below an oceanfront neighborhood that is a top sunset watching spot, this fascinating cave is at the southern end of Luscomb’s Point.

**Cedar Creek Falls**  Located in the Cleveland National Forest in rural East County, this spectacular set of falls rewards those who make the 6-mile round-trip trek.
A pair of notable aquariums

Two of the greater Bay Area’s most iconic waterfront attractions are the Aquarium of the Bay in San Francisco’s Fisherman’s Wharf and the Monterey Bay Aquarium. These two marine centers offer a look at the connections between people and the fascinating ecosystems of the Pacific Ocean and the San Francisco Bay.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium (mbayaq.org) is a world-renowned museum and research and center. Its signature exhibits include the first giant kelp forest exhibit in the world, the million-gallon Open Sea tank, and pools with mesmerizing jellies and delightful sea otters. The aquarium’s back deck, which overlooks the Pacific Ocean, offers abundant wildlife viewing opportunities. Coming up in March of 2022 is the debut of the “Into the Deep: Exploring Our Undiscovered Ocean” exhibit.

Located in the bustling PIER 39 complex, the Aquarium of the Bay (aquariumofthebay.org) features more than 24,000 marine and terrestrial animals, most of which are local to the San Francisco Bay. Two massive tunnels—the Nearshore Tunnel and the Sharks of Alcatraz Tunnel—are home to giant sea bass, multiple rock fish species, leopard sharks, sturgeon, and much more. During the pandemic, the attraction has offered a variety of virtual programs and digital lessons, all led by biologists and educational specialists.

Could your NTA membership be free?

NTA members receive exclusive discounts from NTA Corporate Partners* on credit card processing, insurance, shipping, office supplies, and more. Be sure to take full advantage of these Corporate Partner programs; you can save enough in discounts to cover your NTA dues! You’ll find details at ntaonline.com/partners.

*Not all benefits/discounts are available for all members. These discounts are offered through NTA Corporate Partners, not NTA.
**South Pacific**

**All aboard Australia**

The newly rebranded 39 Degrees South is a Victoria-based destination management company focused on providing solutions for wholesale tour operators who are putting together programs for Australia.

CEO Nayaz Noor says the company has supplied reliable services for NTA members over the past three years for their senior groups as well as their cruise groups doing a pre-stay in Australia. The current focus for NTA operators includes Signature Experiences and Australian train journeys aboard The Ghan and the Indian Pacific.

The 2,700-mile trip offered on the Indian Pacific takes travelers through the majestic Blue Mountains and across the flat grounds of the Nullarbor. The Ghan concentrates on luxury and comfort—and includes trekking through parts of Australia not often explored by other sightseeing companies.

“There are not many tour operators in North America that offer a tour that includes The Ghan or the Indian Pacific, and we have had NTA groups on both trains,” Noor says. “This is something they can think about for the October 2021 through March 2022 period. It is the right time to put this together.”

All of 39 Degrees South’s itineraries include a Signature Experience—whether it’s visiting an iconic Australian cultural attraction, staying in a luxury lodge, discovering an aboriginal culture, or following a wine trail—and it’s something overseas visitors never forget, Noor says. The Signature Experiences program is designed to promote the country’s outstanding niche tourism while delivering memorable experiences that align with travelers’ specific interests.

39 Degrees South also packages Australia and New Zealand together. For more information, contact Noor at nayaznoor@39degreessouth.com.au or go to 39degreessouth.com.au.

**Help and harmonize in Hawaii**

As a Honolulu-headquartered receptive operator, EMI Hawaii is a go-to company for travel services on each island and works directly with its tour operator partners’ student and adult groups.

“The Hawaiian Islands are one of the most enlightening places on earth to study history, culture, and culinary, from coffee farms to local eateries,” says the company’s Mary Jo O’Neal. “We handle all land arrangements, assisting our partners with hotels, restaurants, transportation, and local cultural experiences.”

And here are a couple of EMI Hawaii’s special focuses:

**Student performance groups** “Performances at Pearl Harbor and other historic locations around the islands introduces students to cultural experiences not found anywhere else on the earth,” O’Neal says. Pearl Harbor’s visitor center is ideal for dance, band, and choir groups, she says, as they have up to an hour to perform and can gather afterward for a moving flag-folding ceremony. EMI Hawaii also helps in creating itineraries for adult performance groups—from church choirs to alumni associations.

**Hawaii Global Voluntourism** The “Adopt a Beach” program allows visitors to aid in cleaning up marine debris from the beautiful beaches. “Hawaii Global Voluntourism was created to provide an opportunity for groups to make a difference in people’s lives and to give back to the Hawaiian community. Malama in Hawaiian means to take care of, to serve, to honor, to protect, and to care for each other,” O’Neal says. EMI Hawaii also assists in designing pre- and post-cruise itineraries to the islands.

For more information, contact O’Neal at mjoneal@emihawaii.com or go to emihawaii.com.
**Zealous to get to New Zealand**

The collection of wildly unique scenery, outdoor adventures, and happy-go-lucky people makes New Zealand a jewel of the South Pacific. And Great Tour Experiences, owned by Charmaine Edwards, is on the front lines of inbound travel to New Zealand, which will soon open its borders to international travelers.

“You have unlimited opportunities to experience breathtaking landscapes around almost every corner—snow-clad mountains, rolling sand hills, golden alluvial plains, green pastures. There are gushing geysers and snow-fed rivers that are trout-stocked for fly fishing, and beautiful cities and villages throughout,” Edwards says. Many of her itinerary options feature the South Island. Groups can see Christchurch, which has emerged as a modern conference and art city after the devastating earthquake nine years ago, and Edwards says it’s the most beautiful city in New Zealand. Iconic attractions include the Cardboard Cathedral and the Antarctic Centre.

Groups can discover a mix of farming operations in the Canterbury Plains, an area that rises into the Southern Alps. “You can take notice of the turquoise lakes and the pure, clean rivers, and view Aoraki Mt. Cook and Mt. Tasman,” Edwards says. “We recommend you stay a night or two at the foot of Aoraki Mt. Cook.”

The Mountain Machine transports passengers to the Tasman Glacier lake jetty, where Edwards says they can hop on a Mac boat, take a ride among the icebergs, and even taste the 500-year-old ice. Helicopter rides and sampling the diverse cuisines are also penciled-in experiences.

On the western side of the island, Milford Sound is a lovely day-stop to see a remote fjord on the way to Queenstown. Edwards describes Milford Sound’s Mitre Peak as mighty, majestic, and magnificent, towering one mile straight out of the water. “Landscapes constantly change here. It’s beautiful on misty, wet days with rocky mountains, waterfalls, streams, and tussock plains. The Real Journeys cruise vessels are here to take you out on Milford Sound,” she says.

Great Tour Experiences is a group destination management company that specializes in customized itineraries. For more information, contact Edwards at greattourexperiences@outlook.com or go to greattourexperiences.com.au.

**Gone to Guam**

While Tamuning-based Pacific Island Holidays ramps up its safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as it brings tourists back to Guam, the company will also offer its same dependable services as a tour operator.

“Visitors can go city sightseeing, river cruising, kayaking, paddle boarding, and shopping. They can go to the restaurants and shows they want,” says PIH’s Lester Sison. “It will be a slow pace going back to normal, but we will make sure that our customers are safe.

Several of Guam’s intriguing attractions are stops on a sightseeing tour of Hagatña. Visitors can see the Statue of Liberty replica in Paseo Park; the Basilica of Our Lady Mary (the first Catholic church in Guam); and the mysterious Latte Stone Park, lined with towering stone pillars dating back to A.D. 500. The Plaza de España, home to Apugan Fort, is a scenic spot with incredible views of Tumon Bay. The tour covering the main attractions is about 2.5 hours.

Visitors can also board two-seater kayaks, drift along the Talofofo River, and spot large catfish and crabs along the way. After an invigorating river adventure, kayakers can enjoy a barbecue lunch and take a walk through the ancient ruins of the Chamorro Village. The kayak tour is offered through PIH’s sister company, Turtle Tours.

Sison says the government plans to reopen tourism at the end of July. To learn more, contact Pacific Island Holidays’ Yasuhide Torigoe at torigoe@pihguam.com or go to pihguam.net.
Central Europe

Blending culinary and luxury in Poland

For the past dozen years, Poland Culinary Vacations has provided travelers with authentic experiences in the Central European country where Malgorzata “Sarna” Rose grew up. True to its name, the company offers highly crafted culinary-focused itineraries that take clients to every region of the nation.

“Our immersive, small-group experiences go off the beaten path into the countryside of Poland to small towns and villages,” says Rose. “[That] is my favorite thing to share with my North American travelers.”

While the food and drink take center stage on every itinerary, Rose has worked to gradually add a range of luxury components. As part of her “Five Days with Polish Wine...” series, which includes tours that go to various Polish wine regions, accommodations can include four- and five-star properties.

“Visitors to Poland have the option of spending their nights at luxury hotels in the cities or in elegant castles, palaces, or manors with world-class spa and wellness experiences in idyllic rural Polish villages,” says Rose.

She also can work with individual travelers on high-end private programs, which blend fine dining, sightseeing, and VIP experiences, or customize existing tours based on the special interests of group members.

“Poland Culinary Vacations has always specialized in small groups—minimum 6 to maximum 12 guests—and we will continue with that focus going forward,” says Rose. “We encourage families and private groups to book custom vacations with us as we resume travel with COVID-19 still around.”

To learn more, email Rose at info@polandculinary.com or go to polandculinaryvacations.com.

Setting sail through the scenic isles of Croatia

The summer brought good news for Katarina Line, a tour operator that uses its own fleet for small-group cruises along the Croatian coast.

“We did manage to start our operations/cruises on June 20, but on a much smaller scale—only one to two ships per week,” says Daniel Hauptfeld, marketing director for Katarina Line. “Our ships, which range from 16 to 36 maximum passengers, are also operating with strict safety and health regulations that we have set in motion, doing much more than required by health regulator instructions.”

The longtime NTA member has focused its efforts on two of its most popular itineraries—Southern Explorer and Kvarner Bay of Islands. The sparkling Adriatic Sea on Croatia’s west coast is the star of both programs.

The 7-day Kvarner Bay tour, which begins and ends in Opatija, island hops through the northern part of the Adriatic. Passengers can enjoy swimming, snorkeling, and relaxing, and take in the historical and culinary delights of the pristine islands.

From wine tasting in Korčula and strolling the walled city of Dubrovnik to more adventurous activities in Mljet and the canyons along the river Cetina, the Southern Explorer itinerary highlights coastal cities and island villages down south.

“These tours show that Croatia is still untouched,” says Hautfeld. “The natural beauty, clear sea, and coastline with over 1,200 islands and islets are our most precious possessions.”

During the pandemic, staffers have also been reinventing Katarina Line’s series of land tours.

To learn more, email Hauptfeld at daniel@katarina-line.hr or go to katarina-line.com.
Discovering Baltic bliss

Thanks to ESA Baltic, travelers can discover the beauty, history, and traditions of Lithuania. While the country is still a newer destination for most people, according to the company’s Agne Samkuviene, it has plenty of treasures.

“Lithuania has a very deep and rich history,” says Samkuviene, who is ESA Baltic’s general manager. “Guests have the possibility to explore UNESCO sites; to see centuries-old architecture featuring Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque styles; and to get to know the ethnic communities and different cultures.”

The country’s capital city of Vilnius is the starting point for exploration. Its Old Town area, which dates to the Middle Ages, is a blend of the old (historical buildings and cobblestone streets) and the new (eclectic shops and restaurants).

Tours also go out into the Lithuanian countryside to virtually untouched places. Samkuviene says highlights are visiting the castle at Trakai, built in the 14th and 15th centuries on an island; the UNESCO-recognized Curonian Spit and its small fisherman villages; and the Hill of Crosses, where people from around the world have placed many type of crosses over the centuries.

“Usually tourists do not have any expectations before they come to Lithuania, but when they visit they are pleasantly surprised,” says Samkuviene. “I always hear: ‘Wow, your country is amazing; we didn’t know’, ‘You guys have lots to tell and show to the world’, or ‘I regret only one thing, that I didn’t discover your country earlier.’ That feedback from travelers helps motivate me.”

ESA Baltic also offers packages including neighboring Lithuania and Estonia, and St. Petersburg, Russia, is part of some itineraries.

To learn more, reach out to Samkuviene at info@esabaltic.lt or go to esabaltic.lt/tour-services.

On the trail of Christmas markets

“Christmas markets, which are a celebration of Christmas spirit during the four weeks of Advent, originated in Europe and trace their history back to the late Middle Ages,” says Marcela Lauková, CTP, managing director, Discover Slovakia Tours and Explore Eastern Europe. “A very important part of our Christmas markets is showing our traditional hospitality through singing, dancing, drinking, and eating.”

The tour operator features its native Slovakia and major cities in bordering countries on its holiday-themed packages. Travelers get to visit Prague, Vienna, and Budapest, as well as Bratislava, the Slovak capital. Depending on the schedule, Krakow, Poland, is a possible add-on.

“But, for the really local flavor, we also include some smaller towns with markets, where far fewer international visitors go,” Lauková says. “Those stops, with local culture and foods, make the memories even stronger.”

She says that seasonal drinks include Slovak meads; hot ciders; punch featuring local rums; and Gluhwine, a typical Austrian and German drink. A number of special holiday dishes are also featured, ranging from Austrian lebkuchen (gingerbread) and Hungarian kínásos (deep-fried dough) to Polish Christmas poppy seed cake and Slovak lokša (potato-flour pancakes filled with sweet jams).

In addition to sampling the food and drink and enjoying the festive atmosphere, travelers get to see live Nativity scenes and towering trees with thousands of lights.

To learn more, contact Lauková at mlaukova@agritours-slovakia.com or go to exploreeasterneurope.com.
Asia and India

Compiled by Pat Henderson

‘There is no tour like a tour to India’

To say that Vinay Sharda is proud of his native India may be an understatement. “No matter how many tours you have done or how many countries you have visited, India will hit you like a gale-force wind—a storm of colors, diversity, sound, and smell,” says Sharda. “The country is strikingly diverse, and there is absolutely no tour like a tour to India.”

Sharda serves as the vice president for Indo Asia Leisure Services, a travel company that offers tours to India and other destinations in the Indian subcontinent: Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Tibet. One of the multi-country programs he suggests for North American groups is India and Beyond, which covers the southern India state of Kerala and Sri Lanka.

“In Kerala, you will see the exquisite lagoons, wandering rivers, and astonishing nature,” Sharda says. “One of the main highlights in Sri Lanka is witnessing the Kandy Perahera, a religious festival that’s been celebrated from the times when the tooth relic of Lord Buddha was brought to Sri Lanka in the fourth century.”

Indo Asia has plenty of options for groups that want to focus solely on India. The northern part of the country is covered during the Highlights of Rajasthan with Pushkar Festival tour. “You will witness exceptional architectural grandeur of royal palaces, feel the love at Taj Mahal, enjoy delicious Indian delicacies, and revel in the vibrant camel festival in Pushkar,” says Sharda. “The colorful men and women, music in the air, and spirituality make Pushkar one of the most famous festivals of Rajasthan.”

To learn more, email Sharda at vp@indoasiatours.com or go to indoasiatours.com.

Japan, naturally

Because of its vibrant big cities and ultra-modern culture, Japan is a country whose natural beauty is often overlooked. Travelers seeking the latter can immerse themselves in pristine national parks, high-altitude lakes, and jagged mountain peaks thanks to Samurai Tours.

Founded by Mike Roberts, the company offers a number of packages that focus on the great outdoors. Two he recommends are Hokkaido Rail and Drive, and Best of Japan Alps.

As part of the 15-day Hokkaido Rail and Drive package, travelers head to Japan’s northernmost major island, Hokkaido. This natural wonderland is known for its mountain ranges, virgin forests, volcanoes, and deep caldera lakes.

“Among the Japanese, Hokkaido has become synonymous with sensational food, stunning scenery, and some of the country’s best mineral hot springs,” says Roberts.

The two-week Alps tour features the country’s mountainous central section. A number of nature-based experiences await as travelers head into the quaint villages and remote valleys that dot the inland region.

“There are many reasons travel in Japan is special,” says Roberts, “but the one thing our tour members always comment on is the service and hospitality (omotenashi in Japanese). Once you experience omotenashi, you will be spoiled.”

To learn more, email Roberts at mike@samuraitours.com or go to samuraitours.com.
Sponsoring Tour Operators

The following tour operator companies are supporting the National Tour Association by advertising in this issue of Courier.

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Since 1984, Iowa-based Star Destinations has been a family-owned and -operated group travel company with an incredible passion for worldwide travel. We have one mission: creating custom-designed travel programs with extraordinary services, enriching experiences, and unique components that satisfy travelers in groups of all sizes. From tours for alumni and public television donor networks to bank travel groups and more, our programs offer the industry’s highest level of customization to fit each group’s needs of purpose, quality, and value.

KEEP EXPLORING!

If you like the travel ideas you’re seeing on these pages … there’s more. NTA’s Courier magazine features new articles year-round; our writers get continual updates from travel professionals around the globe about destinations, activities, and travel trends.

And you can, too. Our website is an ever-growing collection of tour ideas, so before you pack your bag, unpack NTAcourier.com.

To get updates when new articles become available, go to NTAcourier.com and click “Sign up for Courier content” in the lower-right corner.
The following pages include a list of tour operators and travel agents, all members of the National Tour Association, who work with group leaders and travel planners. Listings in this guide are based on each company’s primary NTA membership designation or profile selections, and the information was current as of July 8. Please check the searches at NTAonline.com for updated contact details on these NTA-member tour companies.

ARGENTINA

Cazenave Argentina
Jorge Cazenave, CTP
San Isidro, Buenos Aires, Argentina
cazenaveargentina.com

ARMENIA

ESI DMC Armenia
Amalia Stepanyan
Yerevan, Armenia
dmcarmenia.com

AUSTRALIA

39 Degrees South
Nayaz Noor
Fountain Gate, Victoria, Australia
39degreessouth.com.au

Great Tour Experiences
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andersonvacations.ca

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calworld.com

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wegother.ca

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frontiersnorth.com

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freedomtours.com

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1000islandstours.com

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rgctours.ca

Voyages FQCC
Valérie Joubert
Boucherville, QC
voyagesfqcc.ca

Westcoast Connection
Jason Tanner
Montréal, QC
westcoastconnection.com

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica Travel Excellence
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CROATIA

Katarina Line – Incoming Croatia
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Opatija, Croatia
katarina-line.com

Pro Sensus
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unlimitedcroatia.com

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explo rebritaintours.co.uk

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Harrow, Middlesex, England
gttnt.com

Pathfinders
Justin Taylor
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pathfinders-tours.co.uk

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selecttravel.com

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Global Travel Alliance  
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Green Light Group Tours  
Corey Black  
St. Augustine, FL  
greenlightgrouptours.com
Tour Operator and Travel Agent Guide

Group Travel Consultants
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Orlando, FL
grouptravelsconsultants.com

Kompas Holidays International
Predrag Krivokapic
Fort Lauderdale, FL
kompas.net

 Orient International Travel
Mei Wang
Orlando, FL
orientinttravel.com

Poland Culinary Vacations
Sarna Rose
Vero Beach, FL
polandculinaryvacations.com

Rainforest Cruises
Jeremy Clubb
Miami Beach, FL
rainforestcruises.com

Voyager Travel/Euro-American Tours
Thomas E. Barnette
Brooksville, FL
uschinaconnection.com

GEORGIA

Best Friends Travel & Tours
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igotours.com

Brilliant Edventures
Elaine Moulder
St. Simons Island, GA
brilliantedventures.com

Tales of the South
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Tybee Island, GA
talesofthesouth.com

There and Back Again Adventures
Dixon Singleton
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thereandbackagain.com

US China Connection
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Wannar Travel
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wannar.com

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Galaxy Tour – Honolulu
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Hawaii Summer Tour Group
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MC&A/JTB Global Travel Service
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Pan Pacific Enterprises Group
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Boise, ID
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Winterset, IA
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Jeffrey Kirkman
Clive, IA
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Travel To Remember
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traveltoremember.net

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Happy Vacations (NY)
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Tour Operator and Travel Agent Guide
Working (?) from home While Courier’s Pat Henderson doesn’t have a blog and isn’t on Facebook, he has been capturing his various home work spaces during COVID-19 through a series of daily photos (90 as of July 24). Here’s a sampling … welcome to Pat’s neighborhood.
Meet the Members

Rainforest Cruises
MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

NTA contact: Jeremy Clubb
Office phone: 888.215.3555
Website: rainforestcruises.com
NTA member since: 2019

What can guests expect when they get on a boat with Rainforest Cruises?
In the process of customizing an experience for our guests, we go to great lengths to ensure they are on the most suitable vessel, in the most appropriate destination, and enjoying the itinerary that best matches their interests. Essentially our aim is for them to be as relaxed and excited as they can be once they step on board, safe in the knowledge that their adventure has been carefully chosen for them.

What are a couple of your most popular cruises?
The Amazon and Galapagos are our strongest destinations. Given that the sweet spot vacation length for American travelers is around 11 or 12 days, our 5-day cruise itineraries prove very popular as they give enough time to include a visit to Machu Picchu and Cusco, the destination in South America most often included in our customizable tours. In the Galapagos, I prefer the more intimate 16-passenger catamarans, such as the Endemic or Ocean Spray. In the Peruvian Amazon, two very popular ships are the luxury Aria and Delfin III riverboats.

Tell us about any new safety protocols you’ve implemented in response to COVID-19.
Social distancing aboard a boat is a challenge. Some of the protocols in place include testing and temperature reading prior to boarding. Meal times can be staggered to allow for social distancing. And, splitting the groups into family units during excursions may put guests at ease and achieve a greater level of social distancing.

Routine testing of all crew is also important.

What’s a hobby you enjoy?
When I’m not playing tennis or doing yoga, exploring new destinations with family is my greatest passion. We’re fortunate to be living in Miami Beach, which allows us to enjoy the ocean, so diving and sailing are our go-to family activities when we get the chance.

You get to pick dinner tonight, and it can be anywhere in the world. Where are you going?
I’d be torn between a Vespa street food tour in Saigon, Vietnam, or eating at one of Lima’s top restaurants, such as Central or Maido.

For more information, contact Clubb at jeremy@rainforestcruises.com.

Introducing … NTA’s newest members

LU Send – Liberty University
LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
Educator

LU Send (Liberty University’s centralized group travel/international education office) helps to craft a variety of experiential learning opportunities for students during their time at Liberty. The team at LU Send wants students, faculty, and alumni to have the opportunity to see the world, and it develops incredible global experiences for the community that integrates faith, academics, cultural intelligence, and service learning.

David Welch
Executive director
+1.434.879.6753
dmwelch@liberty.edu
liberty.edu/usend

“We are in our fourth year serving as the executive director of LU Send. I am passionate about travel because it has the power, when stewarded correctly, to inspire creativity, innovation, compassion, and empathy!”

Woodford County Tourist Commission
VERSAILLES, KENTUCKY
DMO

Known for picturesque countryside, rock-lined fences, and all things bourbon, wine, and bloodlines, Uniquely Woodford County provides an unforgettable experience of life in the Bluegrass. Visitors can visit champions like American Pharoah on one of the many nationally recognized Kentucky horse farms, and they’ll also find eclectic shops and antiques, delicious restaurants, and charming accommodations with open doors and arms full of hospitality.

Emily Downey
Executive director
+1.859.753.6649
emily@reservewoodford.com
reservewoodford.com

“The place I am blessed to call home is the epicenter for bourbon, wine, and the world’s best horses. This makes my job of promoting Woodford County the easiest and most enjoyable! I always say, if you have a bad day here, it’s your own fault.”
Beat 2020

How do you fight back in 2020?
You stay connected!

And how do travel pros connect with each other when budgets are busted and in-person is iffy?

You PIVOT!

Practical
Innovative
Valuable
Online
Timely

PIVOT to vTREX, NTA’s online Travel Exchange.

It’s a virtual show, but the connections, the business, and the education are the real thing.

So fight back against 2020 and grab hold of something that’s certain.

Register today:
NTAtravelexchange.com

vTREX
NOVEMBER 17-19, 2020
AFTERWORDS

Silver linings

Compiled by Bob Rouse

While the pandemic has taken lives and stalled travel, the change in daily schedules has produced, for many, a silver lining. Courier asked NTA members if they took COVID’s lemons and made lemonade.

What silver linings have you experienced?

My father had a saying, “Family is forever,” and I always took that to mean my blood relatives. However, working with the many wonderful folks in tourism and hospitality, our partners and clients have become extended family, giving new meaning to my father’s favorite line.

Julie Colson
Capital City Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Office
Irmo, South Carolina

I spent my free time developing a massive cactus garden, and I showed it around the world on Facebook.

Misha Jovanovic
Misha Tours
San Diego, California

I am a general handyman for a number of elderly customers-turned-friends. Due to complications following surgery back in late February, one has become bedridden. Normally I’m on the road nonstop through the months of March, April, and May, but this unexpected “vacation” from travel made me available for her daily needs. A strange blessing, perhaps, but a blessing nonetheless: She’s getting the care she needs, and I have a newfound purpose.

Clayton Whitehead, CTP
Sports Leisure Vacations
Sacramento, California

I was married on Feb. 16 and followed the wedding with the honeymoon of a lifetime—just as the pandemic was hitting the U.S. My husband and I traveled to the Maldives Islands for a blissful trip. We made it back to the U.S. just in time, right before the shutdowns began. We are so thankful that we were able to make that trip and have that experience fresh in our minds … until we can travel once again.

Tracy Goolsby (formerly Banfield)
Tulalip Tribes/Quil Ceda Village
Tulalip, Washington

This is the first time in many years I’ve been able to spend a lot more time with my family. Normally this is impossible, as from spring to fall I am completely overwhelmed with the pressure of handling new quotes, bookings, and client departures. What a relief I felt this year! In a way I wish it could always be this way, but on the other hand, I am itching to get back to the everyday of the travel business. It was nice while it lasted, though, and I can’t be mad at that.

Carmen Metcalf
Rail Source International
Olin, North Carolina

I wanted to get a bit tech savvy and totally out of my comfort zone. I successfully completed a certification course that covers all aspects of information technology, and then I enrolled in a short-term postgraduate program that leads to a Certificate of Cyber Security at Deakin University in Melbourne. How out of sorts is this?

Nayaz Noor
39 Degrees South
Fountain Gate, Victoria, Australia

This pandemic has given me the opportunity to take a step back and relax—to look at my life, what I have achieved, and why I am still working in our family Copper Art Studio. It has given me a chance to reflect on my work, and if I want to continue, but mostly I have taken time to refocus on what’s important: life and family! Amazingly, I also realized that I was able to outdo myself and get through difficult times.

Palmyre Gilles
Québec Copper Art Studio & Museum
Château-Richer, Québec

How often in our lives, pre-pandemic, would we say we don’t have time for anything other than work, family, and of course, travel? The pandemic has provided an opportunity to learn, reflect, and take advantage of educational opportunities. In May, Tourism Cares launched its Meaningful Travel Platform, focusing on responsible travel, and the response has been tremendous.

Greg Takehara
Tourism Cares
Norwood, Massachusetts

Joy and I have used much of our free time to clean out and eliminate files—enough to fill four recycling barrels over a two-month span. We had what we call “bookshelf files” for every U.S. state and Canadian province and many countries in Europe, South America, and the Caribbean. We had files on groups that have been inactive for 20 years, plus trip files and NTA profile forms from the last century! Now if I can only clean up my office. Anyone need some filing cabinets?

Bob Marx, President
Landmark Tours & Cruises
Southwick, Massachusetts
Your next opportunity is a flight away. Just ask the 170 million passengers who choose to fly to one of our 327 destinations.
Now available online for you and your clients!

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Call 1.800.388.1470
Fax 516.294.0609
Email geni.priolo@aon.com

- Enroll in the NTA Travel Protection plans – Easy as 1,2,3
- Enroll anywhere anytime!
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- Add link to your website browser www.nta.aontravelprotect.com

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