

DELIVERING BUSINESS ESSENTIALS TO NTA MEMBERS

DECEMBER 2019

Courier

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British Columbia casts a wilderness spell

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NTA President

Pam Inman, CTP pam.inman@ntastaff.com

Editorial

Editor in Chief Bob Rouse bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com

Managing Editor Pat Henderson pat.henderson@ntaservicesinc.com

Writer Kendall Fletcher kendall.fletcher@ntaservicesinc.com

Writer Kay Saffari kay.saffari@faithtravelassociation.com

Contributors Pam Inman

Graphic Design Jeff Quire

Advertising

President, NTA Services Kami Risk kami.risk@ntaservicesinc.com

Director of Sales and Key Accounts Beth Engel, CTP beth.engel@ntaservicesinc.com

Senior Manager, Membership Sales June Calk, CTP june.calk@ntastaff.com

Account Executive/Western U.S. Kelley Burchell kelly.burchell@ntaservicesinc.com

Account Executive/Central U.S. & Canada Gina Rutledge gina.rutledge@ntaservicesinc.com

Account Executive/Eastern U.S. TJ Olmsted tj.olmsted@ntastaff.com

Senior Manager, Marketing Ashley Fish ashley.fish@ntaservicesinc.com

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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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Travel Exchange – Fort Worth Recap

Sightseeing, River and Big Ship Cruises

Guide: Sightseeing, River and Big Ship Cruises

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SPECIAL COVERAGE

Food and Drink

Historical Homes and Gardens

Guide: Sightseeing Rail

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Space: Jan. 3 | Material: Jan. 13



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Courier aims to facilitate member-to-member partnering by spotlighting member product and destinations worldwide, to provide information on current industry trends and issues, and to inform members about NTA initiatives, events and benefits.



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**Bob Rouse**

Editor in Chief
101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350
Lexington, KY 40509 USA
+1.859.264.6548
bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com

LIKE MOST OF YOU and your co-workers, we shot a music video. When our entire staff was together for a pre-TREX confab in late October, we turned NTA Headquarters into a studio and lip-dubbed a classic '80s song, "867-5309/Jenny," by Tommy Tutone.

Why did we do it? *Well, your honor ...*

It was sort of a pet project. I've been wanting to try something like this ever since my son's college fraternity made the national news with a lip-dub of Taylor Swift's "Shake It Off" a few years ago. And while we haven't matched their success nor heard from "Good Morning America" or the original artist, we have accomplished my goal.

I wanted to get the NTA community fired up for the '80s party on the final night of Travel Exchange in Fort Worth, and I wanted you all to see a different side of the staff.

In the process, *I* saw a different side.

I thought I would have to twist arms and cajole colleagues into stepping in front of the camera to perform, but they were totally game. We danced. We acted. We hammed it up. By the end of our brief filming session, we declared the project a success without even seeing the finished product.

We had fun—together—and felt a sense of accomplishment. We felt sort of silly, too, but that was part of the fun. Check it out for yourself: bit.ly/2KbIYwJ.

Check out this magazine you're holding, too. We're featuring recaps from three trips taken by *Courier* writers: "Mountain magic," pages 21–24, detailing Kendall Fletcher's remarkable



Videographer Ben Bennett took time away from his college classes to film the NTA staff's lip-dub video: "Jenny, Jenny, who can I turn to?"

time in British Columbia, plus two of my journeys: "Alberta bonus," pages 18–20, and "Minnesota: I found the nice," starting on page 14.

My *Courier* trips to marvelous destinations led me to think about how DMOs market their product, and with input from several NTA members, I wrote up my conclusions. See "What's your X and Y?" on pages 10 and 11.

The hits keep coming, destination-wise, as *Courier* writers Pat Henderson, Kay Saffari, and Kendall write about itinerary excellence along the U.S. Gulf Coast (starting on page 25) and in the Rockies (page 31), Portugal and Spain (page 36), and Scandinavia (page 38).

AfterWords features advice from NTA members who have solved the challenges of traveling during the holiday season.

Turn the page for a final farewell from Pam Inman, who for five-plus years has led this association with wisdom, agility, and humor. (And for more Pam pics, head to page 45.)

This issue will arrive in mailboxes just prior to Travel Exchange '19. If you have ideas for *Courier* in 2020 and you'll be in Fort Worth, just lasso a member of the editorial team. We can talk, swap business cards ... and heck, maybe shoot a quick music video.

Read on,

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**On the cover:**

River drift on the Atnarko River
near Bella Coola, British Columbia
Photo: Kendall Fletcher



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Pam Inman
President
101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350
Lexington, KY 40509 USA
+1.859.264.6551
pam.inman@ntastaff.com

THESE PICTURES are worth a thousand words. They have to be. Bob gave me only a small amount of space to sum up the last five years and four months of my incredible NTA journey.

Leading an association made up of members who are mostly Type A can be invigorating—and a challenge to stay one step ahead.

There are so many people to thank that I dare not mention anyone individually. Those in leadership—chairs, search committees, board members, *regular* members, and past presidents/past chairs—were always there to guide. Each person has influenced and strengthened me.

I especially thank the staff, who gave me their loyalty and support as we forged ahead. The unwritten mission has been—and will continue to be—to move forward and not look back.

There are so many exciting things that are happening now:

- Engage continues to be a key source for connecting members.
- The new partnership with International Tour Management Institute will bring tour operators together with tour directors looking for the right employees.
- The new look and feel for Travel Exchange is tremendous.

NTA will continue to prosper and be the conduit for making successful connections, and

I leave you in good hands. Catherine Prather will be an outstanding president, as she has been in the NTA family for more than 25 years now. Kami Risk, the NTA Services president, embodies the sense of we're all in this together as she leads our for-profit company.

Other executive team members are Dawn Pettus, vice president of events, and Bob Rouse, *Courier* editor and vice president of marketing and communications. You see their mark on successes at every turn. I'm leaving you with the most awesome staff—an incredible team that both encourages and embraces change.

When I was hired, I was cautioned that NTA is a family and that I should respect and support it. Over the past few years, NTA has become *my* family, and I have been blessed to become part of it.

I'll enjoy keeping up with you through the pages of *Courier* and seeing all the exciting things you are doing. As I start my new journey, I hope to visit each and every place. Remember, I am not retiring but "rewiring," so it's likely you will see me again.

Cheers!

Pam

[Editor's note: I gave Pam more space for photos on page 45.]



Pam with Paul Nakamoto and Jorge Cazenave



Pam with Catherine Prather and Kami Risk

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Angela Harness, CTP
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Ashley Kingman
Travel Portland
ashley@travelportland.com

Cory Mace
North Central Group –
Hilton & Marriott Hotels
cmace@ncghotels.com

Fraser Neave, CTP
Wells Gray Tours
fraser@wellsgraytours.com

Chase Poffenberger
Academic Travel Abroad
cpoffenberger@academic-travel.com

Monique van Dijk-Seppola
Scandinavia Tours
monique@scandinaviatours.no

Jerry Varner
Making Memories Tours
jerry@makingmemoriestours.com

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Custom Holidays
christina@customholidaysonline.com

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Lydia Fields
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Make connections Make opportunities Make a statement Make Contact 2020

As a receptive operator, our client base is all tour operators, so the relationships I foster through NTA are invaluable on many levels—most important from the sales perspective.

—Michelle Pino, Northeast Unlimited Tours; Massachusetts

NTA events allow tour operators like me to get to know other like-minded companies and explore ways of doing business together. Plus, I can meet with suppliers and DMOs from all over the world who understand the group tour market.

—Kevin Murphy, Open Roads Tour & Travel Solutions; California

We network with other operators to share business practices and industry contacts—as well as sharing our struggles, strategies, and new ideas. And as a wholesale operator, we also create mutually beneficial partnerships.

—Elaine Moulder, Brilliant Edventures; Georgia



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COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

ITMI-trained tour directors to attend Travel Exchange '20

In late October, NTA announced it is adding a new facet—and new faces—to Travel Exchange. Starting with the 2020 event in Reno, Nevada, the association will bring graduates of the International Tour Management Institute to its annual convention.

The ITMI grads are trained and certified as tour directors and guides who will interview with NTA-member companies seeking to fill job openings. The addition of this talent pool addresses a longstanding need for tour operators, according to NTA President Pam Inman, CTP.

“One thing I always hear at NTA Owners Network meetings from the people who run tour companies is that they have a hard time finding qualified tour directors,” she said. “Beginning with TREX '20 in Reno Tahoe, we'll bring them together face to face, and tour operators can meet and interview scores of qualified candidates.”

For decades, NTA and ITMI have each conducted annual gatherings; next year the two organizations will integrate the



ITMI Symposium into NTA's Travel Exchange. “Symposium connects job-seeking ITMI-certified tour directors and guides with employers that are looking to hire qualified tour and travel professionals,” said Ted Bravos, CEO and founder of ITMI. “And by combining our events, both organizations can expand their audience and exposure.”

One tour operator is very familiar with both organizations. “As a 2002 ITMI graduate and a tour operator-member of NTA, I am excited about this partnership,” said Taunya Wolfe Finn, CTP, owner of Wolfe Adventures & Tours. “Tour directors are some of the most important people on our team, and being able to interview, meet, and hire them at Travel Exchange—where I'm already going to develop tour product—makes it easy.”

Inman believes the ITMI Symposium will be an ideal complement to Travel Exchange. “NTA has long comprised three key elements of tour creation: operators, suppliers, and destinations,” Inman said. “Now we'll have a fourth key, with ITMI graduates representing tour direction and management.”

ITMI works with some 700 tour companies around the world, many of which do not currently attend Travel Exchange. The integration of shows means that the NTA event will have more tour operators—in terms of both the number of tour companies and the number of people from a company. The addition of job interview sessions will not affect the current appointment schedule.

ITMI was the first school in the U.S. to train tour directors and guides, and the organization has been a member of NTA for 43 years. “Our partnership with NTA will provide great opportunities for our graduates,” Bravos said. “And because many of them also have backgrounds in marketing, sales, or product development, ITMI alumni will be significant finds for tour companies, DMOs, and tour suppliers.”

NTA leaders attended the 2019 ITMI Symposium in Branson, Missouri, in early November to help celebrate the announcement and to answer questions about NTA and Travel Exchange. Similarly, ITMI leaders will attend Travel Exchange '19 in Fort Worth, Texas, this month.

Inman is impressed with ITMI's process and its people. “I have attended ITMI training sessions, and my three main take-aways are that the candidates are well-vetted, the instruction is high-caliber and rigorous, and these talented professionals will be a great fit with the NTA community,” she said.

For more information about the two organizations, visit their websites: NTAonline.com and ITMItourtraining.com.



NTA vice presidents Catherine Prather (left) and Dawn Pettus are shown with ITMI CEO and Founder Ted Bravos during an evening event at the 2019 ITMI Symposium in Branson, Missouri.

United States REAL ID provisions to go into effect in October 2020

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security will implement the final phase of REAL ID enforcement on Oct. 1, 2020. Through the program, every American air traveler must present a REAL ID-compliant driver's license, state-issued enhanced driver's license, or other acceptable forms of identification (such as a valid passport or U.S. military ID) to fly within the United States.

"This is an important step in enhancing commercial aviation security, and we urge travelers to ensure they have compliant documents," said Acting Secretary Kevin K. McAleenan. "DHS is committed to working with states as they continue their efforts to issue REAL IDs to Americans."

There has been a lot of concern in the travel industry about the level of preparedness that exists and about states' progress in making REAL ID licenses available to residents. An estimated 99 million Americans (39%) do not have any of the forms of identification that they'll need next year, and the majority of Americans (57%) are unaware of the Oct. 1, 2020, deadline.

Once the policy goes into effect, individuals who are unable

to verify their identity with a REAL ID will not be allowed to fly domestically.

Tour operators, as well as destination marketers and tour suppliers, can help raise awareness for REAL ID. There are a number of resources available at the Department of Homeland Security website, dhs.gov/real-id, that offer more specifics on the program—including specifics on what people need to do—before the deadline. Find an extensive FAQ document and many downloadable promotional materials at tsa.gov/real-id.



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What's your X and Y?

BY BOB ROUSE

I'VE GOT A FORMULA. It's neither complicated nor original, and yet I'm writing about it. This formula has helped me think about travel destinations—and the professionals who market them—in a new way. I hope it'll be useful for you.

The notion came to me when touring through Minnesota with **Jake Juliot** of the state's DMO, Explore Minnesota (see story on page 14). We drove from Minneapolis to the northern part of the state, where we stood in the headwaters of the Mississippi River, visited an old logging camp and a current iron ore mine, and then sauntered down the historical coast of Lake Superior.

These were rich, marvelous experiences, and I gained an appreciation for Minnesota's people and heritage. What Jake told me when we returned to the Twin Cities, though, is that most visitors—especially inbound international ones—visit Minnesota to go to the Mall of America.

And some do nothing else. They fly in, rail over, stay at on-site hotels, shop for two or three days, and then leave. They don't wade across a newborn Mississippi River. They don't try out a cross-cut saw. They don't see how the lighthouse keepers lived along the Great Lakes.

Now don't get me wrong: I like to shop. And I found the Mall of America to be an amazing place—absolutely worth experiencing. But it must be frustrating for the Explore Minnesota folks that so many visitors never step out into the state's forests or fish its lakes or dive into its history.

And I'm sure other DMOs share a similar frustration about their destination. Mulling over how Minnesotans might shape marketing messages to encourage mall visitors to experience more of the state—because I prefer to solve other people's problems—I thought of a simple slogan ... a play on a familiar marketing theme:

Come for the mall. Stay for the frontier.

In my own state of Kentucky, we might say, "Come for the horses. Stay for the Bourbon Trail." And we can reverse it, depending on visitors' priorities.

My thought is that any destination striving to attract visitors—and get them to stay *longer*—can boil down their pitch to a simple equation: "Come for the X. Stay for the Y."

I don't mean this should become every destination's actual marketing slogan. There might not be a simple way to express your place's X's and Y's, or maybe it sounds clunky.

But it's a useful exercise for identifying what's attracting tourists to your area—and then looking around to see what else will grab them.

So try it out for where you work or live.

Fill in the variables

What's the X in your destination—the main draw or the thing you're best known for? Now, what's the Y? What places or experiences are most visitors missing that they should absolutely enjoy?

I didn't have to go far to find help. Whenever I need answers, examples, and insight, I turn to the industry's experts: NTA members.

Jennifer Lazarz of Gallup, New Mexico, says her guests come for three reasons: Gallup is a convenient stop along I-40 between Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Flagstaff, Arizona; the city has large events that draw visitors from across the U.S.; and Gallup has fantastic outdoor adventure assets.

She wishes, though, that visitors would stay to experience the area's rich Native American arts culture: silversmiths and other artists working in homes and small businesses.

Asked to plug that into my formula, Lazarz says, "Come for the convenience. Stay for the culture."

Two Tennessee DMOs also took a swing at it. **Shelda Reese**, CTP, of the Chattanooga CVB, identified several attractions as the city's main draw—Tennessee Aquarium, Southern Belle Riverboat, Lookout Mountain Incline Railway, and others—but she'd like visitors to stay longer and experience the area's Native American and Civil War stories as well as Chattanooga's riverwalk, its sculpture gardens, and Bluff View Art District.

Reese's X's and Y's: "Come for our famous natural attractions but stay for our unique history and outdoor playground."

Colleen Palmertree, CTP, of Memphis Tourism offered a huge list of X's—led



A meal in Amish Country of Northern Indiana

by Graceland, the National Civil Rights Museum, and Beale Street—and Y's that include the Cotton Museum, Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum, and tours at Levitt Shell concert venue.

How did she plug dozens of attractions and experiences into the formula? She dished out dozens of formulas. Here are a few of Palmertree suggestions:

"Come for Elvis. Stay for the rejuvenated hip Memphis scene."

"Come for the blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll. Stay for the taste of Memphis."

"Memphis: Come for the BBQ. Stay for the beat."

That last one has bumper sticker potential. But the point of this exercise is not so much to develop a snappy slogan as it is to focus on your audience ... and extend their stays.

Jeff Bowe, CTP, of Experience Olympia & Beyond says his organization's formula begins with the "state of mind" their travelers seek.

"In the case of Olympia, Washington, the X is 'rejuvenation' or 'local immersion,' and the Y is the experience—the Olympia Farmers Market, Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, or Tumwater Falls, for example."

In Amish Country of Northern Indiana, **Sonya Nash**, CTP, says that visitors flock there to get the Amish experience—people, culture, and products—and she encourages them to stay longer and explore the area's *other* people and their products, which range from RVs and campers to Flintstone chewables and Alka-Seltzer.

Multiple messages

In Abingdon, Virginia, **Monica Hall** and her CVB team have already thought this through, and she supplied a graph to explain her messaging formula. It takes the town's top X factors—Barter Theatre, Creeper Trail (a biking/hiking trail), and Colonial and Civil War history—and adds the local music and culinary scenes to provide a series of if/then pitches.

If visitors come for outdoor adventure on the Creeper Trail, then Hall will point them toward a show at the Barter Theatre, local dining and live music, and the area's historical sites. If they're coming for history, she'll pitch the theater, cycling or hiking the trail, and local eats. And so on.



JASON BARNETTE

Barter Theatre in Abingdon, Virginia

While Hall's goal is to move visitors from one experience to another, her CVB has had mixed results. "One of our sayings is, 'Creepers Barter but Barthers don't Creep,'" she says. "We might see overlap from people who come here to enjoy our outdoors, but not from visitors who come to attend a show at the Barter."

Using the Abingdon pivot as a model, any destination could apply the formula to different markets. For student groups, like soccer teams (or choirs), you could say: "Come for the game (or the show). Stay for the mountains." To faith-based travelers, you might say, "Come for the basilica. Stay for the botanicals."

Tours, too

This formula isn't limited to DMOs. At least one tour operator has already honed a similar approach to developing programs.

Phil Sheldon, owner of HE Tours, says that his team takes a methodical approach to evaluating every destination.

"We divide what they offer into 'iconic' and 'ambiance' experiences," he says. "Iconic sites tend to be grand, beautiful, and important stops, but are usually quite predictable. Ambiance experiences have to do with what the traveler senses at a destination, and they offer connections to the lives of people living there."

Sheldon explains that most travelers want to see the signature sites, which might be monuments, grand buildings, or natural features that are widely

recognized and provide Instagrammable moments. Ambiance places and experiences, on the other hand, allow visitors to learn what locals see, hear, and taste—unrelated to what the destination is known for.

"Visiting a school or having lunch with a local family radiates authenticity about what the community is like today," Sheldon says.

He can offer several examples of iconic and ambiance in international destinations that his company packages. For example, a visit to Cairo includes the three iconic pyramids, but HE Travel also offers an optional tour to the Sakkara and Red pyramids, which are seen by few tourists and offer a more intimate encounter. And a cruise along the Nile includes the most-visited monuments but can also entail a side trip to a small village.

Although it's ambiance experiences that visitors are more likely to tell friends about when they return home, a tour operator can't overlook the obvious.

"If you don't include the iconic places, you aren't likely to fill your tour, so these stops are obligatory," Sheldon says.

Collecting ideas and input from members assures me that "my" formula is not original. Travel pros have been plying this concept for years. But with the many variations and motivations the formula addresses, I'm inclined to offer up a corollary—one that conveys the true, and often unexpected, benefits of travel.

Come for the X. Stay for the why. ☺

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

Grand attractions in Grand Rapids

Tucked away in the southwestern part of Michigan, just 30 miles inland from Lake Michigan, Grand Rapids is home to a number of popular historical attractions. Places such as the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum and the city's Heritage Hill district are popular with visitors.

Ford, who became the 38th president of the United States

in 1974, was raised in the city. During a visit to the museum, which was renovated in 2016, travelers can see updated gallery spaces and the burial sites of both Ford and his wife, Betty.

The exhibits chronicle the significant role Grand Rapids played during Ford's formative years, his days playing football at the University of Michigan, his military career, and his time in politics. They also detail his personal life and post-presidency activities.

A tour of Grand Rapids' Heritage Hill area offers a glimpse at one of the Midwest's finest collections of 19th- and early 20th-century architecture. This urban historical district includes the homes of the city's movers and shakers, and Tours Around Michigan covers these magnificent Victorian, Gothic, and Prairie residences on its guided excursions.

The company can arrange a private tour of the Meyer May House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1908. The residence of a prominent Grand Rapids businessman, Meyer May is one of the best restored of Wright's Prairie residences.

To learn more, email Dave Nitkiewicz of Experience Grand Rapids at dnitkiewicz@experiencegr.com or go to experiencegr.com.



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The colorful blooms will be on display in a number of gardens at Commissioner's Park, where the 11-day celebration is based. Local visual and performing artists are highlighted through the event's Art in the Tulips and Music & Tulips programming. As part of the former, paintings and other art installments are placed amid the tulip beds while Music & Tulips includes a minimum of three concerts each day that showcases top vocalists and instrumentalists.



To learn more, contact Kelly Dean of Ottawa Tourism at kdcan@ottawatourism.ca or go to tulipfestival.ca. ☺

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Minnesota: *I found the nice*

BY BOB ROUSE

NTA members are listed in **bold**.

For more information email
Explore Minnesota's Millie Philipp
at millie.philipp@state.mn.us or
visit exploreminnesota.com.

Visitors can walk across the Mississippi River
at the headwaters in Itasca State Park.

COME FOR THE MALL. Stay for the small. Fans of my writing (do *not* laugh) know I am touting a formula (see page 10) that helps destinations focus on what motivates visitors to come, and what might entice them to stay.

During my tour of Minnesota in August, my host was Jake Juliot, PR and communications specialist with **Explore Minnesota**. He told me that many visitors come to the state because of the **Mall of America** in the Twin Cities, but they often miss out on cool experiences in and around smaller cities and towns.

So come for the mall, and stay for the small. I'll tell you about sites of all sizes that I visited.

Full disclosure: I came for the meeting. My Minnesota visit began with an NTA Board of Directors meeting at the **Mystic Lake Casino Hotel** in Prior Lake, just outside of Minneapolis.

The property opened in time for Super Bowl LII in 2018, and it's a winner.

"We make a great hub and spoke," said Heidi Keyho, group sales account executive. "If some people want to shop, they can head to the Mall of America while others stay here and golf or game."

Our two days of meetings were punctuated by memorable evenings in neighboring towns. Denise Olsen of **Enjoy Eagan** took us to that city's newly constructed training center and headquarters of the Minnesota Vikings.

"We are very excited to have the Vikings village in our city. It's a game-changer," Denise said.

Our group toured the Vikings Museum and then had a lively dinner (with an excellent variety of beer) at Union 32 Craft House.

The board's final outing together was a dinner cruise on Lake Minnetonka, departing from the inviting town of Excelsior. If there's a more peaceful and beautiful way to spend a summer evening, lead me to it.

Meeting adjourned

When the board meeting concluded, Jake whisked me away to downtown Minneapolis, where we lunched with some of the **Meet Minneapolis** team at Hell's Kitchen, a group-friendly restaurant with quirky décor and fun people.

As we ate, the DMO's Danny Rojas told me about outdoor activities.

"The Mississippi River running through the middle of town is a great asset, with kayak and canoe tours, plus Segway and walking tours along the riverfront," he said.

Indoors-wise, the metro area has 55 museums, ranging from the American Swedish Institute to the Wells Fargo Museum. We visited a cool one: the Mill City Museum, which was built on the foundation of an 1880s mill that eventually became General Mills.

The museum features exhibits of General Mills products through the years: Gold Medal flour, Wheaties, Cream of Wheat, and Betty Crocker goodies.

The highlight of my visit was "Flour Tower," an eight-story freight elevator show—a ride, really—with scenes and voice recordings of long-ago mill workers. Their tales are both funny and poignant.

I spent my one night in Minneapolis at the luMINN Hotel. It is indeed illuminating, with elaborate ambient lighting in



NTA board members Angela Harness (left) and Ashley Kingman at the Vikings Museum in Eagan

the rooms and a floaty-change system in the lobby bar that is so cool I took a video. Originally constructed in 1914 as an office building, the boutique hotel opened in late 2017 with 55 rooms, each with a kitchen.

I didn't cook, though, because I was going to see "Mamma Mia!" that night. Because I'm locked in to the '70s for eternity, I had been looking forward to the show for weeks, ever since Jake had sent the itinerary.

Gayle Junnila, market development manager for Explore Minnesota, drove us to the Chanhassen Dinner Theatres. With a main theater that seats 600 and two more intimate performance venues, it's the largest professional dinner theater complex in the U.S.

Groups can tour the facility and arrange for a post-show Q&A. I would have liked to ask the actors a few Qs after enjoying the disco paradise that is "Mamma Mia!"—questions like, "Are you on loan from Broadway?" and "Why are you so talented?"

Headwaters and loggers

The next morning, Jake and I hit the road to Itasca State Park, where the Mississippi River begins. Once there, I was surprised at how thrilling it was to cross the Mississippi on foot. The 2,555-mile river escapes from Lake Itasca and flows over a row of rocks in a stream some 30 feet wide.

The headwaters are the main draw for many of the park's 400,000 summertime visitors, who might also spend a few days hiking and laking while camping out or staying in cabins.

One quarter of the state's remaining old-growth pine—red and white—is within the 32,500 acres of the park. Our guide, Emily Nelson, told us, "We say that people come for the river and stay for the pines."

Emily gets it.

From there we drove to the Forest History Center, located just outside of Grand Rapids. We toured through a re-created logging camp that's set to Dec. 15, 1900, when 70 loggers and



Jessie and Jake sawing at the Forest History Center

BOB ROUSE



24 draft horses lived there. They logged in the winter, when the ground is frozen, so they could skid the logs out of the forest.

At the bunkhouse and cookhouse, period interpreters convincingly described the conditions and the daily routine, including stoking each man with a diet of 5,000 calories (because of the demands for energy), with ingenious ways to incorporate prunes into the food (because of what you are imagining they're for).

Remarkable: In a few hours, I understood an industry and way of life I had never given any thought to before.

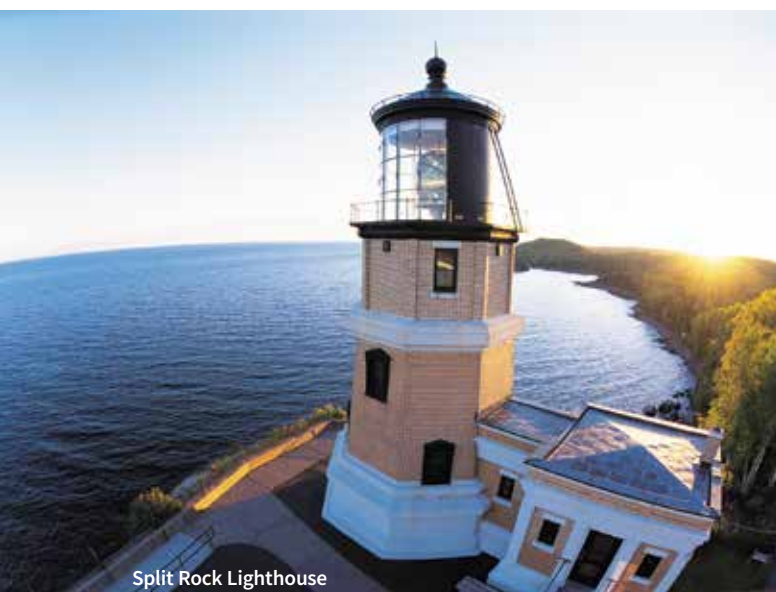
Convinced I couldn't cut it as a logger, I went with Jake and our Visit Grand Rapids host, Jessie Siiter, into town to grab a bite and a pint at Rapids Brewing Co., which had just opened. The menu includes pizzas made with local products, such as venison, and several house-brewed beers.

The very walkable downtown has shops and art galleries, and groups can arrange a cupcake decorating class or get local musicians to provide entertainment.

"You can never find a night in this town that doesn't include live music," Jessie told us.

Along with the logging industry, the region gained fame in the 1890s for its iron ore. Today, some of the abandoned mine pits that are now filled with water add to the region's 1,000 lakes and attract paddleboarders and folks who fish.

The drive out of Grand Rapids the next morning took Jake and me into a thick, spooky layer of fog that shrouded the pines. I remembered that Jessie had mentioned a Haunted Pines and Mines Ghost Tour. I was sort of glad we had skipped it in favor of the pizza.



Split Rock Lighthouse

JOE MICHIL, COURTESY MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

My "iron-made-in" tour

Our next stop was Hibbing, where we met Beth Pierce, director of the Mesabi Iron Range Tourism Bureau. We visited the Hull Rust Mahoning Mine View, which overlooks the world's largest open-pit mine: eight miles long and three miles wide. The overview is a park with mining equipment you can walk around (or in): production trucks and ginormous shovels.

I'd like to spend more time in Hibbing. It's the birthplace of Bob Dylan, and I'm fascinated by the high school. Built in the early 1920s for a then-exorbitant cost of \$4 million, the school was a showplace to promote (and atone for) a mining company's relocation of *the entire town*. They found a big deposit of iron beneath the original town, so they moved it—lock, stock, and high school.

The auditorium, where Dylan first performed, is outfitted with cut-glass chandeliers and a pipe organ, and the library is adorned with statues and a 60-foot oil painting. Groups can self-tour during the school year or get the story from a guide in the summer.

From the Hibbing mines, we journeyed to the Lake Superior coast, just as tons of iron ore have done. We stopped at Split Rock Lighthouse, commissioned in 1910 following a 1905 storm that sank or damaged 29 ships. Tours departing every 20 minutes show visitors where the lighthouse keepers worked and lived a century ago, and trails lead down to the shore. "You can make a day of it, or you make it a half-hour stop," Jake said.

Our next stop was **Glensheen**, a wonderfully preserved mansion in Duluth built by an early 1900s iron magnate. You



Mall of America

MALL OF AMERICA



Bell Museum

can take one of several specialty tours, but you're free to wander through the house and the grounds.

"We switched to self-guided tours because visitors preferred to view the rooms on their own," said Dan Hartman, director. "If you want to bang through in 30 minutes, you can."

The change made Glensheen more approachable to a wider audience—families or groups pressed for time—and it helped the estate to nearly double its visitation.

Glensheen offers activities and events that include lakeside concerts, kayak tours, and a Nooks and Crannies Tour that reveals the items and spaces that Dan and his staff are continually discovering.

"If we were to be a boring house tour, we'd just go away. So we look for new ways to create atypical experiences," he said.

During the drive from Duluth back to Minneapolis, Jake and I discussed the wonderful people we had encountered. He explained "Minnesota Nice" to me.

"It's a real thing," he said. "Whether people are from the city or from more rural areas, they are genuinely friendly."

When we arrived in the city, I was ready for the mall. My host for a quick tour of the Mall of America was Millie Philipp, also with Explore Minnesota.

"I worked for the mall when it first opened, and I love the energy," she told me.

I enjoyed our dinner and a stroll past many of the 500-plus stores. MOA touts its status as the most-visited attraction in the U.S., and Millie helped me understand why.

"People come here with no luggage. They buy and buy and they save enough on taxes—no sales tax on clothes and shoes—to pay for their flight," she said. "And if you come in wintertime, you don't need to bring your coat. You can take light rail from the airport to a hotel that's part of the mall and never go outside."

They come for the mall and stay for the mall.

I stayed one more night in Minnesota and capped off my visit the next day in the same way I started it: visiting cool sights with super-nice people—this time in Roseville.

A rose is a rose

The suburb that sits just to the north of the Twin Cities is as pretty as its name. And just as accessible.

"This is a great spot for groups to stay because we're perfectly positioned: 10 minutes from St. Paul and 10 minutes from Minneapolis," said Shannon Thomasser, director of sales for the **Roseville Visitors Association**. "And we have one of the lowest lodging taxes."

My favorite Roseville attraction is Bell Museum, the state's official natural history museum and planetarium. The organization has been around since 1872, but its new building is just over a year old.

The whole place is a love letter to the state of Minnesota, showcasing its natural resources. In the Touch & See Lab, you can feel the fur of indigenous animals and handle a collection of fossils. You'll definitely want to spend time studying a series of natural dioramas depicting animals and plants. The extremely accurate scenes were created during a span of a dozen years, beginning in the early 1940s. You can tour all of Minnesota in a single morning.

During the rest of my morning in Roseville, Shannon and her colleague Liz Nowak took me to Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, located right on the edge of Roseville in St. Paul. We strolled through the conservatory, which includes a Japanese garden, a butterfly garden, a bonsai tree gallery, and a gorgeous sunken garden.

"In the winter, when people are tired of the cold weather, they come into the greenhouse and just browse," Liz said.

And I've got to say: We're all indebted to Roseville. It's the home of the very first Target—and the first *Dairy Queen*.

Come for the Bell. Stay for the Blizzard.

My whirlwind drive-through of Minnesota provided me with a mental collage of its people: the gritty laborers of yesterday and the bright people and smiles of today. I came for the disco paradise ... and found the nice. ☺

ALBERTA BONUS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BOB ROUSE

I KNEW ABOUT ALBERTA. I had been to Edmonton, Jasper, and the Rockies, and though I hadn't traveled to Banff and Lake Louise myself, I had heard much about those places from my colleague Pat Henderson.

So when Jim Warren of Anderson Vacations invited me to tour the southern tier of the province, I would be exploring territory that was new to me.

The Alberta I knew about was already outstanding. But the Alberta I found, from Calgary down to the U.S. border, was extra special. It was an Alberta bonus.

I began my mid-September trip with two bonuses: My wife, Mary Beth, accompanied me, and we were escorted by Darcie Guarderas, director of business development for Anderson.

Our four-day tour began in Calgary at the public library. I'm sure the books and research materials are OK, but the

building, which opened a year ago, is stunning. The exterior façade's geometric patterns can look like snowflakes, buildings, or open books. And the interior is a wood palace, with planks of white oak and hemlock artfully arranged for both purpose and elegance.

On the plains

We started drinking early in Alberta—a little, anyway. Driving south from Calgary, we stopped at the Eau Claire Distillery in Turner Valley. The building is a story on its own. Where today's distillation columns and fermenters are lined up was a 1920s movie theater. What's now the tasting room, which has a speakeasy vibe, was once a brothel.

After touring the facility, we sat down for a taste or two. The distillery's shining star is its Single Malt Whisky, which won gold at the 2019 New York International

Spirits Competition. As a Kentucky bourbon man, I appreciated the whisky for its rich flavor, but what scored two thumbs up with Mary Beth and me was Eau Claire's Prickly Pear EquineOx, an award-winning white spirit that goes well with the house-made tonic water.

Continuing south—and sobering up fast—our next stop was Bar U Ranch National Historic Site, which commemorates the Canadian ranching industry. At its peak, the ranch encompassed seven townships and 250 square miles of land. Today it provides a scenic and interesting look at a century-old way of life on the Canadian plains.

The visitor center has displays and information boards, an orientation video, a gift shop, and a modest menu of lunch items. Rather than hopping aboard the open wagon for a tour led by two old cowboys, we chose to walk down



Calgary Public Library



Guides at Bar U Ranch



Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump

a gravel road to view the collection of barns and buildings that were once integral to the operation of the ranch.

Inside the buildings—a harness repair shop, post office, and others—are treasure troves of tools and day-to-day items. It was like walking into 1930, and the workers had just stepped out for lunch.

We next visited a site with one of the best names in travel: Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Members of the Blackfoot tribe staff the center, and groups can arrange for a tour or program led by a First Nations interpreter.

A very good orientation film shows how the indigenous people conducted a buffalo kill. The meat, hide, and other parts and pieces that they harvested were vital to their survival during the winter.

By stairs or an elevator, you work your way up five floors from the entrance, and each level has good information. At the top, a paved walkway leads to nice views of not only the cliff, but also of the Rocky Mountains and miles of plains. Those scenes, along with a stiff breeze on a nice day, made for an uplifting moment (especially if you can forget the image of scores of buffalo plunging to their death).

As we drove further south, I talked with Darcie about her company's programs in this region.

"Anderson is really invested in promoting southern Alberta as a destination year-round," she said. "We offer escorted tours that can be customized, and we also arrange self-drive tours for independent travelers."

I was ecstatic to let Darcie do the driving. And I'll also let her do the tour development. She described a program she cooked up for Vancouver Island, where she lives, that combines the best culinary delights of the island—seafood, fresh produce, cheese, and local wines—with walking tours, whale watching, and scenic drives.

Carriages and cobblestones

We arrived at Waterton Townsite just in time to see a beautiful sunset. It's a cozy town on Upper Waterton Lake, full of shops, restaurants, outfitters, and hotels, and it lies within a national park that combines with a U.S. park to make the Glacier-Waterton International Peace Park, created in 1932.

The Prince of Wales Hotel had just closed for the season, but Pizza of Waterton

was open—holding out for me, I suspect. I ordered the Peace Park Pizza—meats and veggies with a BBQ-ranch sauce—and was indeed at peace with the universe.

Seldom am I completely surprised by a town, but our next destination, Cardston, caught me off-guard. First, the Remington Carriage Museum located there is way more interesting than I had anticipated. The attraction tells the story of horse-drawn transportation in North America and displays 240 carriages, sleighs, and wagons arranged in a series of vignettes that are accompanied by information panels with archival photographs.

The namesake of the museum is Don Remington, a local rancher who developed a passion for carriages after procuring one to transport Santa Claus in a local Christmas parade. He traveled the world, buying carriages and shipping them home to Cardston, where he restored and displayed them.

As cool as the carriages are, I enjoyed learning that a number of common words originated with carriages: car, threshold, dashboard, and others.

We toured the museum and then we took a ride in a horse-drawn wagon, one of

Waterton Townsite

For information about Alberta, contact Anderson Vacations' Jim Warren at jwarren@andersonvacations.ca or Travel Alberta's Bart Donnelly at bart.donnelly@travelalberta.com.



NTA's Bob Rouse, his wife Mary Beth, and new friend *Albertosaurus* at the Royal Tyrrell Museum

two that holds up to 15 passengers. Groups can enjoy these and other activities.

The second Cardston surprise was Cobblestone Manor, a restaurant and B&B. Originating in 1889 as a log house, the building was bought by an eccentric Belgian carpenter in 1913. Henry Hoet collected local river rocks, imported rare hardwoods and stained glass, built wood ceiling tiles and bookshelves, and re-created one room after another, finally finishing in 1929.

It is a weird and wonderful place, and now it's for sale ... \$100 at a time. Owner Ivan Negrych told us he and his wife are holding an essay contest in which people submit a one-page letter (and \$100), describing how owning the property would change their life. The contest closes on Jan. 31.

And I'll tell you: As we drove to Drumheller, the three of us tried out some phrasing for a letter.

Darcie's Drumheller

We got the insider's take on Drumheller because it's Darcie's hometown.

Drumheller is surrounded by natural attractions, including hoodoos—sandstone pillars formed over millions of years—and Badlands beauty in places like Horseshoe Canyon, which offers stunning vistas and scenic hikes.

On our approach to Drumheller, we visited the Last Chance Saloon in the tiny town of Wayne. Our presence boosted the population to 30. I'll tell you about a raccoon story I overheard there if you ask me.

I sampled a local pilsner beer, Capstone, from Valley Brewing. The microbrewery, owned by Darcie's cousin—of course—had only recently opened, but they've got a solid lineup of beers. We later stopped by the taproom so Darcie could check it out.

Hometowns and family, man ...

We did spend considerable time at the attraction that brings most visitors to Drumheller, the Royal Tyrrell Museum, named for Joseph Tyrrell, who, as a 26-year-old geologist searching for coal seams in 1884, stumbled upon a skull of Canada's first known meat-eating dinosaur. The whole area, it turned out, was dinosaur country.

(Darcie *may or may not* have found hundreds of fossils while she roamed the hills as a kid. Breaking the laws protecting paleontological specimens carries a fine of up to \$50,000, so I'm not ratting Darcie out.)

The museum is arranged in a series of chronological galleries that show not only the fossils and finds from the past, but also the tools used in discovering and preserving these extraordinary relics. The fossils aren't confined to dinosaurs, as they include ancient plants, sea life, and mammals, and the local finds weren't all achieved by scientists. Many fossils

were unearthed by workers digging for oil—or even basements for houses.

Programs and guided hikes are available for visitors, although I had a personal expert at my side. Mary Beth, a biology teacher, detailed evolutionary science as we proceeded through the museum's exhibits.

I was sorry to say goodbye to Drumheller, but happy to be back in Calgary a while later.

The Bell tolls

Before flying out the next morning, Mary Beth and I wrapped up our stay by visiting Studio Bell. Home of the National Music Centre, the facility celebrates and preserves Canada's music, and it also facilitates the dreams of up-and-coming performers. To give you an example of the past-present interplay: Some of the country's current artists record here using vintage synthesizers.

Groups can tour Studio Bell between 10 and 5 nearly every day of the year, and Backstage Pass tours are conducted on Sundays.

We had to rush through to try to see everything at the Bell. When I return with more time to spend, I want to hear a demonstration of the enormous Kimball Theatre Organ and try out the vocal booth to learn if I'm a true bass or tenor, or even a soprano. And I'll go back and stare at the piano Elton John used when he wrote the songs for his first five albums.

I feel privileged to have explored this southern section of Alberta that's both rugged and charming ... equally ancient and inviting. And to see it through the eyes of an experienced tour operator—and to share the trip with my wife—offered just one bonus after another. ☺

Hoodoos in the Drumheller Badlands





Mountain

magic

BC Fam offers
extraordinary glimpse
into uninhibited
wilderness

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KENDALL FLETCHER

WHEN TRAVELERS circle through British Columbia, they're traveling a path of ever-changing landscapes and time periods, woven together by special people, places, and wildlife.

I joined an early October Fam trip hosted by NTA members Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association and Tourism Kamloops. I'd been enchanted by Canada's westernmost province before, and this journey would be just as remarkable, but also quite different.

I flew into Vancouver then took an easy 30-minute flight to the Kamloops airport. I'd flown out of a blanket of 95-degree heat in Kentucky and landed in 60-something-degree mountain air; it felt so refreshing when I stepped off that plane. I immediately met up with my comrades for the week at dinner.



NTA's Kendall Fletcher at Rip Rap Camp on the Bella Coola River

Petroglyph in the Great Bear Rainforest

"It's just a place where time stands still."

—Beverly Evans, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association

Flightseeing planes at Stewart's Lodge on Nimpo Lake

Although I was tired, I was pretty pumped for my first-ever hockey game that evening at the Sandman Centre—which was quite exciting to watch!

The next morning, after a comfortable sleep at Wingate by Wyndham, we visited NTA-member Sandman Signature Kamloops Hotel. With 202 rooms and 5,000 square feet of conference space, the hotel's interior featured cool mood lighting, a pool with downtown views, intriguing color schemes, and a hip adjoining restaurant: Moxie's Grill & Bar. The hotel and restaurant sit across the street from Riverside Park and the Sandman Centre.

We headed to BC Wildlife Park, which houses more than 65 species native to British Columbia and is the largest breeder of burrowing owls in North America. Most of the animals are rescued and rehabilitated. We saw bobcats, bald eagles, arctic wolves, and elk, and got to know two grizzly bear siblings that were orphaned as babies. We viewed an exercise with their trainer: The bears sat down, stood up, opened their mouths, and were rewarded with grapes. They were like two big, fuzzy dogs that I could have just squeezed! It was a joy to see how they thrived in the park environment.

"No matter how many times you go to the wildlife park, it's always different," says the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association's Beverly Evans.

"You go to lots of zoos and you see animals. These were all saved, and they're still living the dream of a wild critter. It's amazing every single time."

And while BC is known for its unique species of wildlife, Kamloops is known for its Rieslings. We shifted gears and visited the Monte Creek Ranch Winery, a 1,200-acre vineyard with views of grazing goats and the notable Lion's Head Mountain. We tasted various wines and learned about the area's burgeoning reputation as a wine community.

Our trip was destined to be an immersive experience with the province's indigenous tourism offerings, and it started with Moccasin Trails in Kamloops. We canoed with our guides down the South Thompson River and heard stories of their First Nations ancestors, learned about their languages, listened to their songs, and participated in a "feeding of the water" ceremony.

The CCCTA's CEO Amy Thacker says there are 203 distinct First Nation tribes in BC and about 44 in their region they engage with regularly. Many have tourism dreams and goals in the pipeline that will develop into a product, she says, and she sees that many of the First Nations people enjoy sharing their culture the most.

After the canoe ride and a delicious espresso at Moxie's to warm up, we joined ACT Adventures to tour downtown Kamloops—and heard exciting

tales of the Wild West days.

Tourism Kamloops' Lisa Strachan says the city is ideally located for a traveler's BC journey.

"Access is easy, with daily direct flights from Vancouver and Calgary," she says. "It's a great starting point along the route taking visitors from our sunny, sage covered hills, to lush, green forests within a few hours."

She says some of her favorite things to do in Kamloops include hiking (trails are open year-round), mountain biking along the world-renowned terrain, boating at Bruker Marina, and taking day trips to places like Clearwater and Sun Peaks Resort—the second-largest ski area in Canada.

The drive the following day to Nimpo Lake was the beginning of some dream-like scenery. The sun was rising over the vast sagebrush-covered mountains. The clouds were sitting low over the bluffs, and the morning sky spilled pink onto the water below. We watched a train wrap around the mountain for miles as we drove.

After spotting two black bears and a coyote on the way (as well as horses and cattle that roam free in the area), we arrived at Stewart's Lodge later that afternoon. The cabins have no phones or TVs, and the owner, Duncan Stewart, says his visitors open themselves up to a world they would never have



Bear training exercise at BC Wildlife Park



Canoe trip in Kamloops with Moccasin Trails

experienced otherwise. It's a well-known spot for some amazing flightseeing, and they offer those tours daily.

We were at one of the highest elevation points of the whole trip, so Nimpo Lake was cold. I slept cozily in my cabin with a fire in my wood-burning stove, and in the morning, the view of the lake was breathtaking. Frost blanketed the ground, and even though the fog was beginning to thicken, I could see the loons that I'd heard singing through the night and fish jumped out of the water—all painted against a background of the snowy coastal mountains in the distance.

Our next day's destination was the coastal Bella Coola—somewhere I had wanted to visit ever since Beverly spoke so highly of it when I was in BC last year. I knew a spot where British Columbians vacation had to be a bucket-list destination.

"It's just a place where time stands still," Beverly says.

We had a delicious lunch at the lovely Tweedsmuir Park Lodge (the veggie burger is something to write home about), and, after touring the lodge, we saw a grizzly bear grazing on the lawn! They are spotted in the area frequently (there were two just that day), and almost everyone we met on the trip is proficient in what to do if they encounter a bear. The grizzlies are known to roam at nearly every place we visited,

and I loved seeing how revered they are. They were there first, and the people who arrived built around them and simply let them be.

Along with a bear-viewing area by the river just down from the lodge and cabins, other activities Tweedsmuir offers include heli-skiing in the winter, and in the summer, heli-hiking, nature walks, river drifts, and flightseeing. The lodge will offer a glacier walk next year.

During our river drifts, we saw a black bear and several grizzly bears while taking in undisturbed views of the surrounding, towering mountains. Our seasoned guide pointed out fish, eagles' nests in the trees, and bear tracks on the riverbanks as we floated downstream.

Bella Coola is a quaint community. Eighty percent of the population is indigenous, which is quite special. There is a love for the old ways and a deep cultural influence, which is what Beverly referenced before we arrived. It's as if time stood still there.

"Everything just slows down. It's a place you go (from being) super busy to calm and peaceful," she says. "You're disconnected, but you're not disconnected. You're connected with nature. It's a place that rejuvenates you."

We stayed at the Bella Coola Eagle Lodge the next two nights. It's a beautiful, contemporary accommodation with absolutely gorgeous scenery (a given in

BC). I FaceTimed my husband and son to show them my mountain view, but it's so hard to convey the vastness and beauty of those mountains through a phone. You just have to be there.

We had a wonderful dinner at the lodge: a cauliflower and truffle tart; marinated tofu with rice, peas, peppers, and eggplant; and cherry gelato with allspice atop bread pudding. That first night was notable, too, for the camaraderie amongst our group in a warm, charming setting.

The next day, we walked through the Great Bear Rainforest alongside a crystal-clear glacier-fed creek to see ancient petroglyphs with Copper Sun Gallery & Journeys. We heard songs and stories from our guide and saw the carvings in rocks that were created up to 10,000 years ago by the Nuxalk people. The area is sacred—visitors soon won't be allowed to take photographs there—and what a unique experience it was to see the images etched in the stone still so perfect.

We visited several sites in the area, including Rip Rap Camp and Bella Coola Grizzly Bear Tours' deluxe cabins. Rip Rap has one of the most photographic scenes from its wildlife viewing station: the turquoise blue Bella Coola River, changing trees, low-hanging clouds, and views of the mountains. I could have stayed in that spot the rest of the week.

We had an early start the following morning at the BC Ferries terminal. 2019

Mountain magic

is the first year for *Northern Sea Wolf*, a new vessel that would connect us from Bella Coola to Port Hardy before our drive to Telegraph Cove. It was about a 10-hour sailing, and we saw humpback whales and beautiful fjords, enjoyed talking with the captain and crew on the bridge, and spent some downtime in the passenger lounge.

It was Beverly's first time on the ferry, and she likes what it offers travelers.

"It was very calm, and there's lots to see. It didn't matter if you were up (on top of the ferry) or down below, it was comfortable. I like the water," she says.

I was completely charmed by Telegraph Cove. It's an old sawmill and cannery community on Vancouver Island, and our hotel, the Telegraph Cove Resort, had the perfect coastal view.

Our final day together found us on a tour with Prince of Whales Whale Watching aboard the *Ocean Magic II*. I went into the tour expecting to see a whale or two, but what we encountered became one of the most wondrous experiences I've had ... ever. Dolphins and porpoises zipped beneath our boat, and we saw humpbacks, sea lions, bald eagles, and dozens of orcas.

One came very close, and our guide, Andy, a member of the local First Nations tribe, said his people believe when orcas swim close, it is their ancestors coming to say hello. Seeing them all around us was magical, and I was near tears witnessing these majestic creatures in their wild, natural habitat, happy and free.

We spent our final night in Parksville, and during my two-hour ferry ride from Nanaimo to Horseshoe Bay the next day, I took a few moments to reflect. My trip was merely a peek into what this handful of exquisite Pacific Northwest destinations have to offer, but I felt completely immersed. I breathed the cool mountain air. I saw grizzlies walking down the river, stocking up on food for their winter sleep. I went whale-watching and saw so much native wildlife.

Though it's hard for me to disconnect (I sure miss my little one when I'm gone), this journey through BC is the perfect opportunity to do just that: be still, soak up the wilderness, and learn about what came before us—and why it's vital to preserve it. 🐾



Wildlife viewing station at Tweedsmuir Park Lodge



BC Ferries' *Northern Sea Wolf*



Orca sighting during a tour with Prince of Whales Whale Watching

Gulf Coast

COMPILED BY KENDALL FLETCHER

Tanks for the memories, Florida Aquarium

Along with soaking up sun on Tampa's beautiful beaches and catching glimpses of the wild marine life, groups can visit the Florida Aquarium and experience its unique creatures up close.

"(We're) a not-for-profit attraction devoted to entertaining, educating, and inspiring visitors to be advocates for marine life conservation," says sales manager Aimie Johnson. "Located between two cruise terminals and along the historical streetcar route that connects downtown Tampa and Ybor City, the aquarium offers animal encounters and educational programs.

Johnson says some of the best experiences are included with general admission:

Moon Bay Named after moon jellyfish, this exhibit is a 1,200-gallon habitat with two pools where visitors can touch the jellies. An acrylic sphere full of moon jellies and a digitally mapped projection show impactful imagery of the natural environment.

The Wetlands Trail This exhibit reflects Florida's unique environment and houses alligators, river otters, the invasive Burmese python, and a large aviary. Visitors can see feedings of the pink spoonbill and other animals and learn more about wildlife during scheduled presentations at the Ranger Station.

Coral Reef and Waves of Wonder The awe-inspiring 500,000-gallon habitat features some of the aquarium's largest residents, including sharks, rays, sea turtles, reef fish, and moray

eels. In the adjacent Waves of Wonder gallery and Heart of the Sea exhibit, guests can learn about the aquarium's important conservation efforts, which range from growing vital coral and transplanting them in the Florida Keys to rescuing and rehabilitating sea turtles at its Center for Conservation.

Johnson says some of the activities available for additional fees include dives with sharks, swims in the Heart of the Sea, backstage experiences, and behind-the-scenes tours.

For more information, contact her at ajohnson@flaquarium.org or go to flaquarium.org.



Don't *miss* a thing on Mississippi's Gulf Coast

Mississippi's Gulf Coast DMO rebranded this year to Coastal Mississippi: The Secret Coast, to portray the region as a truly unique and undiscovered destination, says media relations manager Anna Roy.

"The Secret Coast's temperate climate, along with its astounding natural beauty, makes for the perfect year-round destination," Roy says. "There is an incredible amount to do, see, and experience across Coastal Mississippi—from outdoor activities, such as kayaking, boating, fishing, and hiking to a wide variety of attractions, museums, festivals, world-class gaming, and championship golf courses."

The area's latest addition, the luxurious waterfront Centennial Plaza in Gulfport, opened last August, and it features two unique lodging options, a water park with a lazy river and swim-up bar, dining spots, and upscale event spaces.

Another new Gulfport attraction, the Mississippi Aquarium, will open April 30, 2020.

"(It) will tell the incredible story of Mississippi's aquatic resources from the delta to the coastline and the remarkable connection that ties the state's natural resources uniquely together, from the brown to the blue and beyond," Roy says.

Along with 300 species of animals in 12 habitats, 5.8 acres of land covered in lush gardens, and more than half a mile of walking paths connecting the habitats, visitors will find these unique features at the aquarium:



Centennial Plaza

- The 360-degree suspended acrylic tunnel, which enables guests to "walk on water" with views of the aquatic wonders from every angle.
- A diving experience called SeaTrek. Participants can get up close to the creatures that call the main habitat home: fish, sharks, rays, and more. There are only a handful of aquariums in the U.S. that offer this experience, Roy says.

For more information, contact the DMO's Leisure Group Sales Manager Kristen Parker at kristen@gulfcoast.org or go to gulfcoast.org.



PORT ARTHUR CVB

Seafood, swamps, and psychedelic Porsches

Port Arthur, Texas, has lassoed the ultimate coastal experience—from history and seafood to getting a bird's eye view of the region's wildlife. The CVB's sales and marketing director, Callie Summerlin, recommends three unique itinerary stops in this southeastern Texas destination.

Swamp and River Tours Visitors can see eagles, egrets, wild bulls, fields of fauna, and dozens of gators from the company's custom-designed boats. The 90-minute trips down 25 miles of the Sabine River and through the Blue Elbow Swamp are safe, breezy, and exhilarating.

Museum of the Gulf Coast Port Arthur's Museum of the Gulf Coast is what Summerlin calls a Jurassic-to-Joplin experience, where pre-history and pop culture meet. Museum-goers can learn about creatures that once roamed the earth, drill down on the oil discovery that put Texas on the map, and see the new maritime gallery. The attraction also houses original art by Janis Joplin and a replica of her memorable psychedelic Porsche. The museum's hall of fame honors big names in music like Tex Ritter, The Big Bopper, Johnny Winter, Edgar Winter, and Tracy Byrd.



PORT ARTHUR CVB

Reel Cajun Restaurant & Bar A passion for seafood and Cajun dishes, combined with the chef's creativity and expertise, has resulted in a fine dining experience without the exorbitant cost, Summerlin says. Diners can taste the region's finest crawfish and shareable Cajun eggrolls, or enjoy non-seafood classics like blackened chicken linguine and the restaurant's famous 28-day-aged ribeyes, hand cut in-house. A perfect spot for groups, the restaurant also offers a full bar with its well-known Bottoms-Up Beers and cocktails.

For more information, contact Summerlin at callie@portarthurtexas.com or go to visitportarthurtexas.com.



PORT ARTHUR CVB



Gulf State Park, Gulf Shores



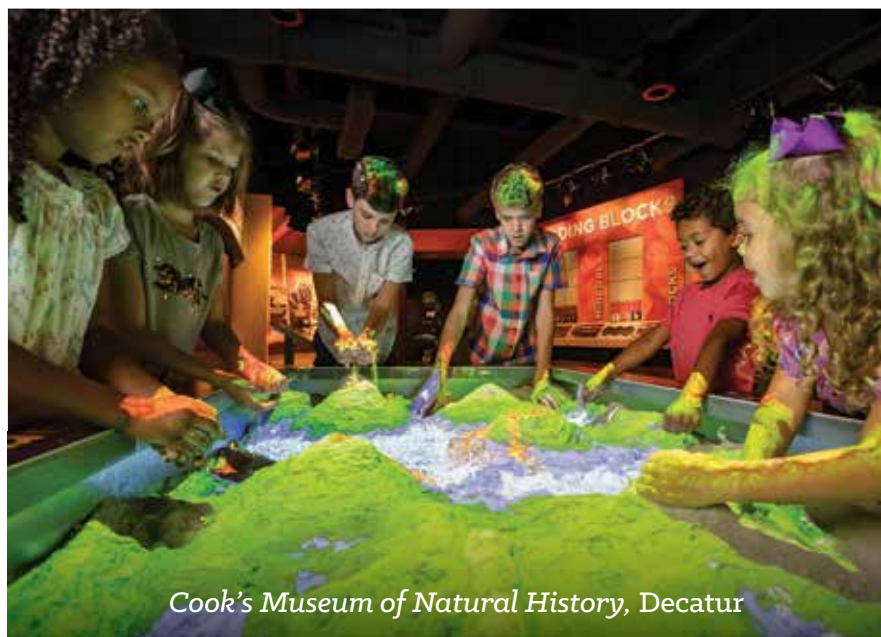
Old Courthouse, Monroeville



U.S. Space & Rocket Center, Huntsville



Bird Watching, Dauphin Island



Cook's Museum of Natural History, Decatur



GROUPS LOVE ALABAMA

"Alabama offers a great value for a solid destination. That directly converts to great profits for me. Multiple sold-out Mystery Tours have taken my groups to outer space in Huntsville and they've experienced the trials and victories of the Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham and Montgomery."

- Clayton Whitehead, CTP, CITM, Vice President, Sports Leisure Vacations.
9521-H Folsom Boulevard. Sacramento, CA, USA 95827



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- Steve Cox, International Expeditions, Helena, AL

Contact Rosemary Judkins
Sales Manager, Alabama Tourism Department

334.242.4493

rosemary.judkins@tourism.alabama.gov

Sweet Home
Alabama

The Louisiana lowdown

Louisiana Northshore/St. Tammany Parish CVB's Christina Cooper says the world has recently discovered the Northshore—with its soft adventure on 80,000 acres of green spaces and waterways, great culinary and cultural scenes, picturesque towns, and feel-good vibes.

"St. Tammany Parish, aka Louisiana's Northshore, is draped across the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain, just 45 minutes from New Orleans' French Quarter," she says. "New Orleanians have considered the Northshore a getaway since the 1880s, when steamboats brought them across the lake to stay in large resorts shaded by tall trees, where the air was cooler and cleaner, and the deep-spring water was reputed to cure ills and calm nerves."

A couple of experiences unique to the area include:



Honey Island Swamp

Abita Brewery in Covington is the 14th-largest craft brewery in the U.S. Groups can take self-led or guided tours and taste its popular beers, which are now available in all 50 states. The brewery features a new taproom, where guests can taste Purple Haze, Turbo Dog, and Abita Strawberry, to name a few.

Dr. Wagner's Honey Island Swamp Tours and Cajun Encounters takes passengers in flat-bottomed boats through the Pearl River Wildlife Management Area and Honey Island Swamp, where they'll learn about the native flora and fauna from a professional wetland ecologist—and meet the resident alligators. Cajun Encounters also offers a pavilion to host group meals, like crawfish boils, as well as live music and Cajun dancing.

Baton Rouge is a hotspot for foodie tours, which are gaining popularity at a fast rate. "Food tours are back, and we now have two different companies putting them on," says Visit Baton Rouge's Erica Sweeney Glory.

All About Baton Rouge Food Tours transports guests in climate-controlled mini-buses to four to six stops with diverse tastes—from salty and savory to sweet. The tours provide meet-and-greets with local merchants and chefs, and participants can experience the culinary culture of the city as well as its history, local music, and art scenes.

Enjoy Baton Rouge Walking Tours offers short walks between five local restaurants for groups of six to 12. With special restaurateur presentations and history talks, the tours feature Creole, Cajun, seafood, new American, and unique-to-Louisiana flavors—all while accommodating dietary needs.

For more information, contact Visit Baton Rouge's Tracy Francis at tracy@visitbatonrouge.com or go to visitbatonrouge.com, or contact Louisiana Northshore/St. Tammany Parish CVB's Tanya Leader at tanya@louisiananorthshore.com or go to louisiananorthshore.com.

Plantation footsteps BY BOB ROUSE

Invited to participate in a regional tourism summit in Louisiana, I was also treated to an immersion in the history, heritage, and hardships of sugar cane plantations. My host was Willma Harvey, CTP, director of sales and business development for **New Orleans Plantation Country**.

Willma's territory includes 10 plantations along the Mississippi River, and we visited two of them. We discussed the evolution of history-telling that attractions and properties throughout the South have undertaken.

"We don't sugar-coat the story," Willma said. "Our tours include the narratives of what slaves went through."

What impressed me during my tour of Laura Plantation was the richly researched stories of the residents.

"People lived here in very complicated situations, and we trace the footsteps of a Louisiana Creole family—white, black, free, and enslaved," said my guide, Joseph Dunn.

Tracing footsteps is not uncommon. Our second stop was at **Oak Alley Plantation**, where Hillary Loeber told me, "There's so much to share, and this is our mission: preservation, education, and research."

Oak Alley has cottages for overnight stays, and you can dine on the grounds. I enjoyed a fine buffet lunch with folks from surrounding plantations. What struck me was the level of cooperation among them.



Oak Alley Plantation

"We're competitors, but we're not afraid to talk about our challenges," said Jesse Lambert of **Houmas House Plantation and Gardens**. "That's because we're friends and we trust each other."

But each attraction is different, said Hillary: "When you've toured one plantation, you have *not* toured them all."

For more information, email Willma at willma@visitnopc.com or visit neworleansplantationcountry.com. And read my complete story on NTAcourier.com.

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Mobile Ballet

Get mo' arts in Mobile


While visitors fill their senses with ocean views and white-sand beaches in Mobile, they can also find cultural experiences in the heart of the Alabama city's downtown.

The Mobile Ballet has shaped the area's arts scene for more than 30 years, and each holiday season, the dancers bring "The Nutcracker" to life in a series of dazzling performances. The Mobile Symphony performs long-loved masterpieces as well as modern works in the historical Saenger Theatre—and the tickets are notoriously affordable. Visitors can also see the Mobile Opera, the oldest performing arts organization in Alabama and one of the oldest professional opera companies in the U.S.

The Alabama Contemporary Art Center, located in Cathedral Square in the historical downtown, is committed to the work of living artists. Its mission is to curate exhibitions and programs centered on themes and topics relevant to the Gulf Coast.

The Mobile Museum of Art, which is the largest art museum on the coast from New Orleans to Tampa, has 95,000 square feet of permanent collections consisting of more than 10,000 works of art. Featuring paintings, sculptures, and decorative art from America, Europe, Africa, and Asia in the permanent exhibits, the museum is also home to special exhibitions, art programs, a store, a library, and research center.

And every second Friday from 6 to 9 p.m., the downtown area hosts ArtWalk, a popular event where thousands gather for music, art, food, and culture in local galleries and public spaces.

For more information, contact Visit Mobile's Patty Kieffer at pkieffer@mobile.org or go to mobile.org. 



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The Rockies

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

Butte offers a mother lode of history

"Butte is known as the Richest Hill on Earth, a moniker originally attributed to the rich copper ore found in the mountains surrounding our community at the turn of the previous century," says Maria Pochervina, director of the Butte CVB. "Copper was especially important as it coincided with the invention of electricity by Thomas Edison, and Butte lays claim to being instrumental in lighting a nation."

As mining expanded, the city in the Rocky Mountains of Southwest Montana became a popular spot for Western European immigrants who sought work in the mines. "The influx of immigrants and the mining industry gives us rich ethnic and industrial history, with over 20 attractions centered around those parts of our story," says Pochervina.

Travelers can discover this heritage at the World Museum of Mining. The attraction includes a re-creation of the 1890s mining town—with 15 intact structures and 35 reconstructed buildings—and has dozens of exhibits showcasing mining equipment that was used from the 1860s to 1970s. Two underground mine tours are offered, with both including first-hand narrative from workers who spent countless hours below the surface, working the veins of the Orphan Girl Mine.

Two other ways to learn more about the city's early days are via trolley tours and on guided walks from Old Butte Historical Adventures. Using replicas of the original cars from Butte's electric trolley system, two-hour excursions cover many aspects of life during the early years and detail the magnificent architecture found in the historical downtown. Old Butte's



Underground mining tours in Butte

walking tours provide a look at the colorful places—such as speakeasies and brothels—and characters that influenced the multiethnic city.

When asked about her favorite local gem, Pochervina cites the Our Lady of the Rockies statue.

"It sits above the Continental Divide and is available to hikers, and in the summer months via tour buses," she says. "This statue is in the likeness of the Blessed Mother and is dedicated to women and mothers. The story of Our Lady is one of love, faith, commitment, construction, volunteerism, and finding resources when there are none."

To learn more, reach out to Pochervina at mariap@buttecvb.com or go to buttecvb.com.

Adventure in eastern Idaho

The Yellowstone-Teton area of Idaho around Rexburg is an outdoor-lover's paradise. Here are four options for travelers heading to this region in the eastern part of the state:



YELLOWSTONETETON.ORG

► **Fishing** There are a number of spots where anglers can cast about year-round—Ririe Reservoir and Roberts Pond are two—and Henry's Lake is popular for fly-fishers during its May-to-December season.

► **Hiking** While the lengths and difficulties of the trails may differ, paths such as Wind Caves, Golden Lake, and Cress Creek all feature views of beautiful peaks, meadows, and bodies of water.

► **ATV tours** Just west of St. Anthony there are hundreds of acres of sand dunes. The steep sands, as well as other nearby landscapes, are popular for ATV enthusiasts.

► **Skiing** With the famous Grand Targhee Ski Resort leading the way, eastern Idaho offers plenty of downhill slopes that delight ski buffs.

For more information, email Yellowstone-Teton Territory's Chris Mann at chris@rexburgchamber.com or go to yellowstoneteton.org.

Logan: A haven for arts lovers

Located in the northeastern tip of Utah, Logan boasts a long-standing tradition with the performing arts. The city is home to a number of places and events, including the following four, which help visitors and locals get their cultural fix:

The Cache Theatre Company

One of the state's longest running theater groups, the company has helped showcase the talents of a number of local adults and students who star in its performances. The fall schedule included Disney's "Frozen Jr." and Steve Martin's "Bright Star."

The Cache Valley Center for the Arts

This arts hub includes the circa 1923 Ellen Eccles Theatre, which hosts concerts and touring Broadway shows. A number of local performance groups use the center's spaces for practices and productions, and CacheArts also sponsors the city's gallery walks and offers visual arts classes and summer arts camps.

Daines Concert Hall

Thanks to a multimillion-dollar renovation project that wrapped up in 2017, this venue on the Utah State University campus is one of the region's most modern performance spaces. The 1,700-seat hall typically hosts concerts by the school's orchestra, band, and chamber groups, as well as visiting artists.

The Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre

Logan rolls out the red carpet to welcome the talented musicians and performers of the Utah Festival Opera each summer for a series of operas, musicals, and concerts. The 2020 season runs from July 5 to Aug. 8.

To learn about on arts-based options in Logan area, contact Explore Logan's Julie Hollist Terrill at julie@explorellogan.com or go to explorellogan.com.



Performance at the Cache Valley Center for the Arts

CACHEARTS.ORG



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Garden of the Gods Park

TOP 8 REASONS TO TOUR COLORADO SPRINGS

Colorado Springs is a year-round tour destination boasting mild temperatures, more than 300 days of blue skies and spectacular scenery. Create intriguing tours at unforgettable destinations like Garden of the Gods Park and the U.S. Air Force Academy.

- 01 Western Heritage** - Discover the deep roots of the Pikes Peak or Bust Gold Rush exploring old mines.
- 02 All Aboard** - Trek through Cripple Creek and along the Arkansas River in the Royal Gorge on historic trains.
- 03 The Great Outdoors** - Adventure is always close by with thousands of miles of trails and open spaces.
- 04 Arts Scene** - Enjoy hundreds of public sculptures, galleries, art walks, classes and performances.
- 05 All Seasons** - From colorful fall days to spring blooms, the region shines with a year-round mild climate.
- 06 Olympic City USA** - See where Team USA dreams are born at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Training Center.
- 07 55+** - With more than 55 unique attractions, it's easy to plan multi-day itineraries in the Pikes Peak region.
- 08 Cultural Experiences** - Soak in the region's multi-faceted culture at museums, historic sites and festivals.

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Hermit Park Open Space

VISIT ESTES PARK

Estes is a great place to park

No place is more closely aligned with the Rockies region than its name-sake attraction: Rocky Mountain National Park. And when contemplating a visit to park in north-central Colorado, most travelers make Estes Park the first stop.

“Estes Park is the quintessential little mountain town,” says Rachel Ward Oppermann, public relations coordinator for Visit Estes Park. “We have a robust lineup of special events and festivals, local mom and pop shops, a thriving craft beverage scene, restaurants for every taste, and a delightful variety of things to do—all set to the backdrop of Rocky Mountain National Park.”



There are a number of experiences awaiting groups in the park, ranging from scenic drives and a ride on the aerial tram to hiking and biking trails. For those seeking an on-the-water option, Lake Estes is a popular spot. Long Peak and the area’s abundant wildlife can be seen from kayaks, paddle boards, pontoon boats, and canoes, all of which can be rented at the marina.

If travelers want an alternative to the well-known park, Oppermann suggests a visit to Roosevelt National Forest and Hermit Park Open Space.

“Roosevelt National Forest is to the north and south of Estes Park, and Hermit Park Open Space is to the east, and both are less crowded,” she says. “Each allows a different level of outdoor adventure, a different perspective on our stunning mountains, and a different way to get outside.”


To learn more, email Visit Estes Park’s Eric Lund at elund@visitestespark.com or go to visitestespark.com.

Information on Canadian hot spots in the Rockies can be found on pages 18–24, where *Courier* writers Bob Rouse and Kendall Fletcher recap their recent trips to Alberta and British Columbia, respectively.





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Jackson's diverse lodging options

The rugged, picturesque environs around Jackson, Wyoming, offer an array of ways people can connect with nature. The accommodations at three NTA-member properties in the area provide a good complement to the Old West and outdoorsy feel.



FLYINGSADDLERESORT.COM

Flying Saddle Resort flyingsaddleresort.com

The only full-service resort on the banks of the Snake River, Flying Saddle has been welcoming guests since 1949. When they stay at the property, which is located 45 minutes south-east of Jackson in Alpine, travelers can choose between tower rooms, cabins, and traditional hotel rooms. The resort's restaurant serves up hand-cut Black Angus steaks and wild game.

Contact David Miller at
resortmanager@flyingsaddleresort.com.



MOUNTAINMODERNMOTEL.COM

Mountain Modern Motel mountainmodernmotel.com

Two of the most popular amenities at this downtown Jackson hotel are Big Hole BBQ and Beleza. The former is a restaurant specializing in ribs, brisket, pulled pork, and chicken wings, and the latter is a salon offering massages and other spa treatments. The property has 135 modern rooms with open floor plans and plenty of storage for outdoor gear.

Contact Spencer Long at
spencer.long@mountainmodernmotel.com.



TOWNSQUAREINNS.COM

Town Square Inns of Jackson Hole townsquareinns.com

Town Square Inns manages four hotels in the heart of Jackson that have more than 400 rooms. Travelers can choose between the Cowboy Village Resort, which features log cabins; the Elk Country Inn, with its spacious suites and rooms; the Antler Inn, which is just a block off Jackson Square; and the recently remodeled 49er Inn and Suites.

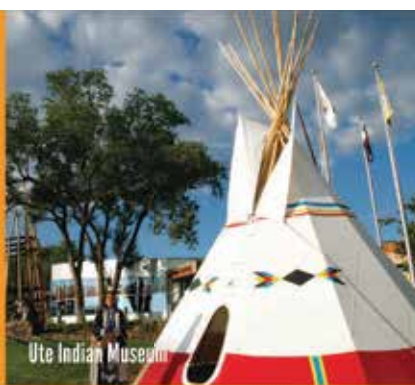
Contact Steve Meadows at
stevemeadows3@gmail.com. 📍



Trinidad History Museum



El Pueblo History Museum



Ute Indian Museum



Center for Colorado Women's History
at the Byers-Evans House Museum



History Colorado Center



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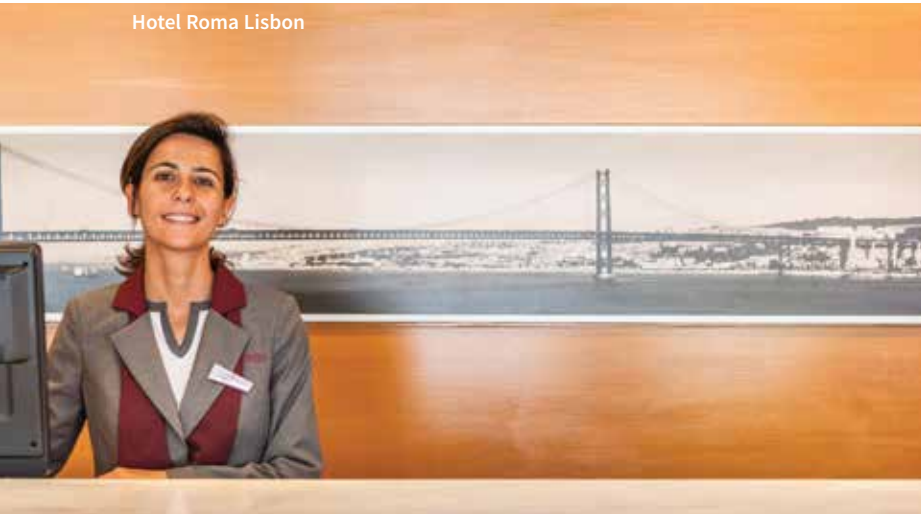
Portugal and Spain

COMPILED BY KAY SAFFARI

Marto family offers four hotel options in Portugal

For 60-plus years, the Marto family has been in the hotel business in Portugal. José Miguel Marto, managing director, explains, “My grandparents started the business in the ’50s with Hotel Santa Maria in Fátima, a small lodging with just a few rooms.” Today the Martos own four 4-star properties: two in Lisbon and two in the pilgrimage city of Fátima.

Hotel Roma Lisbon



The modern-day Hotel Santa Maria is a beautiful property with 173 contemporary rooms, many offering views of the Sanctuary of Fátima. The hotel offers a breakfast buffet and a chapel for religious services or meditation. Guests can easily walk to the nightly candlelight procession at the sanctuary.

The nearby Hotel São José is a boutique hotel just 300 meters from the shrine. Recently renovated, the São José has 76 rooms with traditional décor, cozy sitting rooms with fireplaces, a game room, a gym and Turkish bath, and a garden area.

One of the Lisbon options is Hotel Roma, which has large, renovated rooms, breakfast and dinner buffets, and soon, two new wine bars. Groups are easily accommodated, bus parking is available on-site, and the hotel is conveniently located just 10 minutes from the airport.

The beautiful Hotel Marquês de Pombal is located in Lisbon’s city center close to the historical district. The hotel has 123 soundproofed rooms with simple and elegant décor and offers a gourmet restaurant and a daily breakfast buffet.

For more information, contact Sara Baptista at commercial@hotelroma.pt or visit hotelroma.pt.

HOTEL ROMA

Spain’s *paradores* offer unique hotel experiences

Travelers heading to Spain can enjoy stays in the country’s *paradores*, which are accommodations located in restored historical buildings, such as convents, palaces, and castles. There are 95 of these state-owned hotels sprinkled across Spain, and each provides high-quality service, regional cuisine, and a unique setting—and all are value-priced.

Paradores can be found in picturesque coastal settings, in the mountains, and in Spain’s national parks. Thirteen are located in UNESCO World Heritage cities, where guests can combine visits to significant historical sites with stays in equally amazing lodging.

For example, El Camino pilgrimage trekkers end their journey in the World Heritage city of Santiago de Compostela, and they can enjoy a stay at the *parador* there. Built in 1499 and operated as a hospital until 1953, the structure is now a luxury 5-star hotel located next to Santiago’s magnificent cathedral, where Saint James is believed to be buried.

Ignacio Grijalvo of Across Spain DMC & Leisure Travel has been including *paradores* on tours for more than 30 years. Says Grijalvo, “Spain’s *paradores* offer unique and superior hotel options at very reasonable prices, and we are happy to create customized itineraries that include stays in these special accommodations.” Across Spain can even provide an itinerary in which every hotel stay is in a *parador*.

To learn more about the company’s tours and itineraries in Spain, email Grijalvo at igrijalvo@across-spain.es or visit across-spain.es.

For more information about *paradores*, contact José Manuel de Juan González at the Tourist Office of Spain at nuevayork@tourspain.es or visit spain.info. ☎



Parador Santiago de Compostela

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Fatima is one of the main World Shrines.
In 2018 more than 7 million people visited this
city – People with and without faith, seeking
inner peace and world peace.

Cofinanciado por:



Scandinavia

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

Svínafellsjökull area of
Vatnajökull National Park

UNESCO sites showcase Iceland's diversity

Iceland is home to an array of fascinating landscapes—including volcanic valleys, lava fields, and glaciers—and quirky coastal towns that continue to delight travelers. Two national parks, Þingvellir and Vatnajökull, provide looks at both the natural and cultural sides of the country. These UNESCO World Heritage sites are featured on many itineraries offered by longtime NTA-member Guðmundur Jónasson Travel, an Iceland-based tour operator.

During a visit to Þingvellir National Park, travelers can see the spot where, between 930 and 1798, Icelandic leaders would gather to make laws and settle disputes. The remains of this open-air assembly place include parts of more than 50 stalls that were used during the meetings. The cultural site is located just east of Reykjavík.

Vatnajökull National Park, which encompasses a massive area in southeastern Iceland, is the largest glacier in Europe outside of the Arctic. It is known as the park of fire and ice because of how the molten lava and magma interact with its frosty cryosphere. One of the park's signature features is Svínafellsjökull, a glacial area that was used as a filming site for episodes in Season 7 of "Game of Thrones."

In addition to covering all regions of Iceland, GJ Travel, which has been in business since 1929, offers a number of tours to Greenland. Travel planners can book combo tours featuring both destinations or Greenland-only excursions covering the west and/or east coast of the icy Danish territory.

For more information, contact GJ Travel's Renato Grunenfelder at renato@gjtravel.is or go to gjtravel.is.

Taking the stage in Norway

Scandinavia Tours works with tour operators and travel planners on itineraries that showcase its native Norway, as well as neighboring Sweden and Denmark. Group packages can cover a range of themes, and Managing Director Monique van Dijk-Seppola cites a choir tour she put together for NTA-member Travel to Remember in 2018 as an example of a typical customized program.

"When we organize the performances, we involve church members and local choirs," says van Dijk-Seppola, who mixes in sightseeing around the cities where concerts take place. "That helps our North American guests experience the authentic Norwegian culture, hospitality, and history."

The 11-day itinerary included performances in Norway at Oslo's International United Methodist Church, St. John's Church in Bergen, and at Sør-Fron Church, which dates back to the 1700s. Two of the stops included fellowship time between the guest singers and local parishoners, which van Dijk-Seppola says was a highlight.

"One church had organized supper for the entire visiting group of 110 people," she says. "This hospitality is very typical



Choir performing at International United Methodist Church in Oslo

for the Norwegian countryside, and we noticed that this gave tremendous joy to both the North American guests and to the local hosts."

"On all tours, we give guests sufficient time to adapt, to breath in the fresh and clean Norwegian air, and to be able to connect with people," says van Dijk-Seppola. "We try to avoid rushing people from A to B on a tight time schedule, and we try to take them off the beaten track."

Email van Dijk-Seppola at monique@scandinaviatours.no or visit scandinaviatours.no to learn more. ☎

Courier's Guide to NTA-member Lodging Properties

The NTA membership includes hundreds of hotels, inns, and resorts that offer a number of great amenities for groups—welcome receptions, special room rates, dining discounts, and savings on other services. The companies on the following list represent many types of accommodations, ranging from rugged park lodges and sprawling oceanside hotels to chic downtown properties and luxurious casino resorts.

Listings in this guide are based on a company's membership category or profile selections. The information was provided by the member contact and was current as of Oct. 16. Companies with more than one property are indicated by **M** (for multiple members—2 to 25 properties) and **G** (for corporate members—more than 26 properties). Please check NTAonline.com for updated information on these members and to learn more about the variety of services they offer.

CANADA

ALBERTA

Brewster's Mountain Lodge

Maureen VanMackelbergh
Banff, AB
gm@brewstermountainlodge.com
brewstermountainlodge.com

Canmore Inn and Suites

Rose Chobaniuk
Canmore, AB
info@canmoreinn.com
canmoreinn.com

The Crossing

Mike Fikowski
Lake Louise, AB
mike@thecrossingresort.com
thecrossingresort.com

Mountain Park Lodges **M**

Bernhard Schneider
Jasper, AB
bernhard.schneider@mpljasper.com
mpljasper.com

PURSUIT

Eliza Fair
Canmore, AB
efair@pursuitcollection.com
pursuitcollection.com

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Hallmark Hospitality **M**

Danny Najdovski
Vancouver, BC
danny@hallmarkhotels.com
hallmarkhospitality.com

Mayfair Hotels & Resorts **M**

Cecilia Lau
Vancouver, BC
cecilia@mayfairhotels.ca
mayfairhotels.ca

PHI Hotel Group **M**

Cecilia Guerrero
Kamloops, BC
regionalsales@phihotelgroup.com
phihotelgroup.com

River Rock Casino Resort

Diane Gaudet
Richmond, BC
dgaudet@riverrock.com
riverrock.com

Royal Scot Hotel & Suites

Greg Greene
Victoria, BC
ggreene@royalscot.com
royalscot.com

Sandman Hotel Group and Sutton Place Hotel Company **G**

Lou Yu
Vancouver, BC
lyu@sandman.ca
sandmanhotels.com

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Crescita Hotels & Resorts - Newfoundland, Labrador & Maritimes **M**

Laura Barry-Walbourne
Deer Lake, NL
sales@hiedeerlakehotel.com

Shallow Bay Motel & Cabins Conference Centre

Steven House
Cow Head, NL
info@shallowbaymotel.com
shallowbaymotel.com

NOVA SCOTIA

Dundee Resort & Golf Club

Sandippal Singh Grewal
Louisdale, NS
sonny@dundeeresort.com
dundeeresort.com

Giseles Country Inn

Munawar Khan
Baddeck, NS
khan@bellaliant.com
giseles.com

ONTARIO

Four Points by Sheraton Niagara Falls/Fallsview **M**

Rosetta Armeni
Niagara Falls, ON
rarmeni@fallsviewgroup.com
fallsviewgroup.com

Holiday Inn by the Falls

Teresa Adams
Niagara Falls, ON
tadams@holidayinnniagarafalls.com
holidayinnniagarafalls.com

Holiday Inn Toronto Downtown Centre

John Laabs
Toronto, ON
j.laabs@hitorontodowntown.ca
holidayinn.com/torontocentre

Lord Elgin Hotel

Amber Van Der Hoeven
Ottawa, ON
avanderhoeven@lordelgin.ca
lordelgin.ca

Ramada Plaza Niagara Falls

Nicki Winger
Niagara Falls, ON
n.winger@ramadaplazaniagara.com
ramadaplazaniagara.com

Town Inn Suites

Daniel Seifer
Toronto, ON
daniel@towninn.com
towninn.com

QUÉBEC

Atlific Hotels **G**

Chantal Cardinal
Montréal, QC
c.cardinal@atlific.com
atlific.com

Best Western City Centre Centre-ville

Denis Cote
Québec City, QC
dcote@hotelquebec.com
hotelquebec.com

Domaine Château Bromont

Joel Caron
Bromont, QC
jcaron@chateaubromont.com
chateaubromont.com

Courier's Guide to NTA-member Lodging Properties

Gouverneur Hotels

Nathalie Revah
Montréal, QC
nrevah@gouverneur.com
gouverneur.com

Hilton Québec

Guy Godin
Québec City, QC
guy.godin@hilton.com
hiltonquebec.com

Hotel Le Voyageur

Helene Lacroix
Québec City, QC
reservation@hotel-voyageur-quebec.com
hotel-voyageur-quebec.com

Québec's Casinos

Anie Beauchamp
Montréal, QC
anie.beauchamp@casino.qc.ca
casinos.lotoquebec.com

JAMAICA

SeaGarden Beach Resort

Tricia-Ann Bicarie
Montego Bay (St. James), Jamaica
tbicarie@seagardenjamaica.com
seagardenjamaica.com

PORTUGAL

Hotel Roma (Lisboa)

Sara Baptista
Lisboa, Portugal
comercial@hotelroma.pt
hotelroma.pt

UNITED STATES

ALASKA

Grand View Inn & Suites

Chevy Sharlow
Wasilla, AK
chevy.sharlow@gmail.com
alaskagrandview.com

Grande Denali Lodge/ Denali Bluffs Hotel

Joe Merrill
Denali National Park, AK
jmerrill@denalialaska.com
denalialaska.com

The Lakefront Anchorage

Greg Beltz
Anchorage, AK
greg.beltz@millenniumhotels.com
millenniumhotels.com/anchorage

Pybus Point Lodge

Darryl Bosshardt
Admiralty Island, AK
darryl@pybus.com
pybus.com

ARIZONA

Best Western Hotels & Resorts

Michelle Zajac
Phoenix, AZ
michelle.zajac@bestwestern.com
bestwestern.com/grouponline

Best Western Premier Grand Canyon Squire Inn

Freda Rahnenfuehrer
Grand Canyon, AZ
freda@grandcanyonsquire.com
grandcanyonsquire.com

Desert Diamond Casino Hotel

Denys Marquez
Tucson, AZ
dmarquez@ddcaz.com
ddcaz.com

Forever Resorts

Michelle Kien
Scottsdale, AZ
mkien@foreverresorts.com
foreverresorts.com

Grand Canyon Plaza Hotel

Rich Milliron
Grand Canyon, AZ
guestservices@cprgc.com
grandcanyonplaza.com

Hotel Tucson City Center

Maria Chun
Tucson, AZ
mchun@hoteltucsoncitycenter.com
hoteltucsoncitycenter.com

Red Feather Lodge

Sue Finley
Grand Canyon, AZ
sfinley@aol.com
redfeatherlodge.com

ARKANSAS

Best Western Inn of the Ozarks

Randy Wolfinbarger
Eureka Springs, AR
randy@innoftheozarks.com
innoftheozarks.com

DeGray Lake Resort State Park

Linda Hodges
Bismarck, AR
linda.hodges@arkansas.gov
degray.com

Doubletree by Hilton Fort Smith

Shannon Davis
Ft. Smith, AR
sdavis@doubletreefortsmith.com

The Lodge at Mount Magazine/ Mt. Magazine State Park

Heidi Ryan
Paris, AR
heidi.ryan@arkansas.gov
mountmagazinestategpark.com

CALIFORNIA

Airtel Plaza Hotel & Conference Center

Marianna Pinerua
Van Nuys, CA
marianna@airtelplaza.com
airtelplaza.com

Anaheim/Garden Grove Hilton Trio

Kendall Remphrey
Garden Grove, CA
kendall.remphrey2@hilton.com

Apple Farm Inn & Trellis Court

James Leigh
San Luis Obispo, CA
jamesl@applefarm.com
applefarm.com

Blue Lake Casino & Hotel

Lisa Corral
Blue Lake, CA
lcorral@bluelakecasino.com
bluelakecasino.com

Embassy Suites by Hilton Anaheim South

Erica Perez
Garden Grove, CA
erica.perez@hilton.com
embassysuitesanaheimsouth.com

Embassy Suites by Hilton San Diego-La Jolla

Brittany Aanestad
San Diego, CA
brittany.aanestad@hilton.com
sandiegolajolla.embassysuites.com

Fantasy Springs Resort Casino

Juliett Valencia
Indio, CA
jvalencia@fantasysprings.net
fantasyspringsresort.com

Foothills Hospitality Group

Julius Wilson
Oakhurst, CA
jwilson@foothillhg.com
foothillshg.com

Hilton

Mayumi Florek
El Dorado Hills, CA
mayumi.florek@hilton.com

The Hotel at Black Oak Casino Resort

Amanda Silacci
Tuolumne, CA
asilacci@blackoakcasino.com
blackoakcasino.com

Hotel Corque

Stormie Strickland
Solvang, CA
stormie.strickland@hotelcorque.com
hotelcorque.com

Hotel Zephyr at Fisherman's Wharf

Tony Swieczkowski
San Francisco, CA
tony.s@hotelzephyrsf.com
hotelzephyrsf.com

Hyatt Palm Springs

LaDona Canevaro
Palm Springs, CA
ladona.canevaro@hyatt.com
hyattpalmsprings.com

JBS Group Inc.

Yang Gao
Arcadia, CA
sarah@jbsshotels.com
jbsshotels.com

Marriott Hotels for California, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, Oregon, and Washington

Andre Barragan
Irvine, CA
andre.barragan@marriott.com
marriott.com

Palm Garden Hotel

Michelle de Bortnowsky
Thousand Oaks, CA
michelle@palmgardenhotel.com
palmgardenhotel.com

Park Central Hotel

Henree Weiner
San Francisco, CA
hweiner@parkcentralsf.com
parkcentralsf.com

The Queen Mary

Sandra Richardson
Long Beach, CA
sandra.richardson@queenmary.com
queenmary.com

Santa Barbara Hotel Group

Millie Matz
Santa Barbara, CA
mmatz@sbhotels.com
sbhotels.com

Tachi Palace Hotel & Casino

Norma Schaefer
Lemoore, CA
nschaefer@tachipalace.com
tachipalace.com

UC Santa Barbara Conference and Hospitality Services

Whitney Morris
Santa Barbara, CA
wmorris@housing.ucsb.edu
conferences.ucsb.edu

COLORADO

Best Western Plus Fillmore Inn

Suzy Esposito
Colorado Springs, CO
suzy.esposito@bwfillmoreinn.com
bwfillmoreinn.com

Clarion Inn of Grand Junction Colorado

Jessica Wallace
Grand Junction, CO
jwallace@clariongj.com
clarionhotel.com/hotel-grand_junction-colorado-co240

Grand Vista Hotel

Phyllis Veale
Grand Junction, CO
phyllis@grandvistahotel.com
grandvistahotel.com

Hampton Inn Durango

Jenny Roberts
Durango, CO
jenny.roberts@hilton.com
durangoco.hamptoninn.com

Red Lion Hotels

Gene Hagberg
Denver, CO
gene.hagberg@rlhco.com
redlion.com

Sky Ute Casino Resort

Jeff Lyman
Ignacio, CO
jeff.lyman@skyutecasino.com
skyutecasino.com

Strater Hotel

Megan Reynolds
Durango, CO
mreynolds@strater.com
strater.com

CONNECTICUT

Crescent Hotels and Resorts

Kiersty Kastner-Burr
Newington, CT
kiersty.kastnerburr@crescenthotels.com

Foxwoods Resort Casino 📍

George Yerger
Mashantucket, CT
gyerger@foxwoods.com
foxwoods.com

Mohegan Sun

Stephen Olender
Uncasville, CT
solender@mohegansun.com
mohegansun.com

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Hiltons of Washington, DC 📍

Renee Youngs
Washington, DC
renee.youngs@hilton.com
washington.hilton.com

Holiday Inn Capitol

Jeremy Huvar
Washington, DC
jeremy.huvar@hicdc.com
hicapitoldc.com

FLORIDA

Courtyard by Marriott

Lake Buena Vista at Vista Centre
Veronica Blanco
Orlando, FL
veronica.blanco@courtyardlbv.com
courtyard.com/mcobl

DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Disney Springs

Dawn Moorman
Lake Buena Vista, FL
dawn.moorman@hilton.com
doubletreeguestsuites.com

Embassy Suites Lake Buena Vista Orlando Resort

Linda Szasz
Orlando, FL
linda.szasz@hilton.com
embassysuitesresortorlando.com

Galleria Palms Hotel

Laurinda Warczak
Kissimmee, FL
dos@gphkissimmee.com
gphkissimmee.com

Holiday Inn & Suites Across from Universal Orlando

Bob Renka
Orlando, FL
bob.renka@dimdev.com
hiuniversal.com

Holiday Inn Resort Orlando Suites Waterpark

Jessie Colondres
Orlando, FL
jessie.colondres@hisuitesorlando.com
hisuitesorlando.com

Holiday Inn St. Augustine- World Golf

Meredith Delfosse
St. Augustine, FL
meredith@worldofgolfresort.com
worldofgolfresort.com

Outrigger Beach Resort

Eric Hoogstins
Fort Myers Beach, FL
eric@outriggerfmb.com
outriggerfmb.com

Residence Inn Orlando

Lake Buena Vista
Akbar Solanki
Orlando, FL
akbar.r.solanki@marriott.com
marriott.com/mcorl

Rosen Hotels and Resorts Inc. 📍

Christina Ochoa-Braun
Orlando, FL
cochoa@roseninns.com
rosenhoteles.com

Sound Hospitality Management 📍

Michele Drucker
Miami, FL
mdrucker@soundhospitality.com
soundhospitality.com

GEORGIA

Best Western in Savannah's Historic District

Maggie Harley
Savannah, GA
mharley@vestahospitality.com
promenadesavannah.com

Hotel Indigo Savannah Historic District

Christine Marshall
Savannah, GA
christine.marshall@indigosavannah.com
hotelindigo.com/savannah

Jekyll Island Club Hotel

Patty Henning
Jekyll Island, GA
sales@jekyllclub.com
jekyllclub.com/?nck=nta

LBA Hospitality 📍

Lauren Heldreth
Savannah, GA
lauren@lbaproperties.com
lbaproperties.com

North Point Hospitality 📍

Stacy Sturgis
Savannah, GA
stacy.sturgis@northpointhospitality.com
northpointhospitality.com

Savannah Lodging (Savannah Historic District) 📍

Janet Finnegan
Savannah, GA
janet.finnegan@savannahlodging.com
savannahlodging.com

HAWAII

Aqua-Aston Hospitality LLC 📍

Shirley Kawashima
Honolulu, HI
shirley.kawashima@aqua-aston.com
aqua-aston.com

Courtyard by Marriott Kauai at Coconut Beach

Jaye Gayagas-Youn
Kapaa, HI
jyoun@courtyardkauai.com
kauaicourtyardresort.com

Hawaiian Hotels & Resorts 📍

June Pagdilao
Lahaina, HI
june.pagdilao@hawaiianhotels.com
hawaiianhotels.com

Queen Kapiolani Hotel

Oliver Cajala
Honolulu, HI
ocajala@queenkapiolani.com
queenkapiolani.com

IDAHO

Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort

Dee Dee McGowan
Worley, ID
wmcgowan@cdcasino.com
cdcasino.com

ILLINOIS

Crowne Plaza Chicago West Loop

Amara Koroma
Chicago, IL
akoroma@cpwestloop.com
cpwestloop.com

Hard Rock International 📍

Michael Casillas
Chicago, IL
michael.casillas@hardrock.com
hardrock.com

Hiltons of Chicago 📍

Michael Weinberg
Chicago, IL
michael.weinberg@hilton.com
palmerhousehiltonhotel.com

HOSTMARK Hospitality Group 📍

France Langan
Schaumburg, IL
flangan@hostmark.com
hostmark.com

Jumer's Casino & Hotel

Hollie Myers
Rock Island, IL
holliem@jumerscri.com
jumerscasinothotel.com

Sheraton Suites Chicago Elk Grove

Amit Bansal
Elk Grove Village, IL
abansal@sheratonchicagoelkgrove.com
marriott.com/chies

IOWA

Meskwaki Bingo Casino Hotel

Diane Blomme
Tama, IA
dblomme@meskwaki.com
meskwaki.com

LOUISIANA

Comfort Inn & Suites Metairie

Ken Jenkins
Metairie, LA
ken_jenkins@acihotels.com
nolahotels.com

Hampton Inn Hotels of New Orleans 📍

Esther Holguin
New Orleans, LA
ester@highpointe.com
neworleanshamptoninns.com

Hotel Provincial

Kerri Donnelly
New Orleans, LA
kdonnelly@hotelprovincial.com
hotelprovincial.com

Houmas House Plantation and Gardens

Jesse Lambert
Darrow, LA
jesse@houmashouse.com
houmashouse.com

Oak Alley Plantation

Hillary Loeber
Vacherie, LA
hloeber@oakalleyplantation.org
oakalleyplantation.org

MAINE

Lafayette Hotels 📍

Donald Haggett
South Portland, ME
dhaggett@merrymanorinn.com
lafayettehotels.biz

Sunday River Resort

Troy Munford
Newry, ME
tmunford@sundayriver.com
sundayriver.com

Witham Family Properties/ Acadia Area Hotels 📍

Dede Daigle
Ellsworth, ME
dede@aobarharbor.com
withamhotels.com

MARYLAND

Choice Hotels International

Jonathan Angelo
Rockville, MD
jonathan.angelo@choicehotels.com
choicehotels.com

Coakley & Williams Hotel Management Company 📍

Mike Parent
Rockville, MD
mparent@cwhotels.com
cwhotels.com

Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center

Bill Griggs
National Harbor, MD
bill.griggs@gaylordhotels.com
gaylordhotels.com

Hilton Ocean City Oceanfront Suites

Ruth Waters
Ocean City, MD
rwaters@harrisongp.com
harrisongroupsales.com

National 4-H Conference Center

Christa Priesing
Chevy Chase, MD
cpriesing@4hcenter.org
4hcenter.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Cape Codder Resort & Spa

Lynn Williams
Hyannis, MA
lwilliams@cataniahospitalitygroup.com
capecodderresort.com

Courier's Guide to NTA-member Lodging Properties

Four Points by Sheraton Boston Logan Airport

Brenda Diaz
Revere, MA
bidiaz@dnhmhotels.com
fourpoints.com/bostonairport

The Midtown Hotel

Gregg Bolduc
Boston, MA
gbolduc@midtownhotel.com
midtownhotel.com

Nantucket Inn & Conference Center

Mark Manchester
Nantucket, MA
groupsales@nantucketinn.net
nantucketinn.net

Red Jacket Resorts M

Alan Bearse
South Yarmouth, MA
sales@redjacketresorts.com
redjacketresorts.com

Royal Sonesta Boston

Cherie Allen
Cambridge, MA
callen@sonesta.com
sonesta.com

MICHIGAN

Best Western Greenfield Inn

Suzanne Thomas
Allen Park, MI
suzanne@bestwesterngreenfield.com
bestwestern.com

DoubleTree by Hilton Detroit-Dearborn

Lattice Qualls
Detroit, MI
lattice.qualls@hilton.com
doubletree3.hilton.com

Grand Hotel

Julia Luckey-Ottenwess
Mackinac Island, MI
jluckey@grandhotel.com
grandhotel.com

The Island House

Carol Halberg
Mackinac Island, MI
carol@theislandhouse.com
theislandhouse.com

Island Resort & Casino

Cody Meshigaud
Harris, MI
cmeshigaud@islandresortandcasino.com
islandresortandcasino.com

Michigan Vacation Destinations M

Marjaree Forbes
Mackinaw City, MI
mforbes@expresspetoskey.com
mackinawcity-mi.com

Murray Hotel

Marcella Pulte
Mackinac Island, MI
mar@mymurrayhotel.com
mymurrayhotel.com

MINNESOTA

Mystic Lake Casino Hotel

Heidi Keyho
Prior Lake, MN
heidi.keyho@mysticlake.com
mysticlake.com

Treasure Island Resort & Casino

Carla Nygaard
Red Wing, MN
carla.nygaard@ticasino.com
treasureislandcasino.com

MISSISSIPPI

Beau Rivage by MGM Resorts International

Linda Spruill
Biloxi, MS
lspruill@beaurivage.com
beaurivage.com

MISSOURI

DRURY HOTELS

Drury Hotels

Amy DeFrancesco
St. Louis, MO
amy.defrancesco@druryhotels.com
druryhotels.com

At Drury Hotels, a good night's sleep is just the beginning. Our friendly tour team and generous free amenities—including Wi-Fi, a hot breakfast, and the 5:30 Kickback® featuring hot food and cold beverages—will brighten a traveler's day and make the journey easier. For reservations, call 800.436.1199. The Drury Advantage—one call for all of your tour needs—Travel Happy™.

Hilton St. Louis Frontenac

Jason Blackford
St. Louis, MO
jason.blackford@hilton.com
hilton.com

Myer Hotels M

Kathy Baltaj
Branson, MO
kathy@myerhotels.com
myerhospitality.com

MONTANA

Best Western Butte Plaza Inn

Melissa Bolton
Butte, MT
sales@butteplazainn.com
bestwestern.com/butteplazainn

Town Pump Hotel Group M

Paula Ruark
Butte, MT
paular@townpump.com
townpumphotels.com

NEVADA

Atlantis Casino Resort Spa

Fei Kass
Reno, NV
fei.kass@atlantiscasino.com
atlantiscasino.com

Boyd Gaming Corporation M

Chris Carlson
Las Vegas, NV
chriscarlson@boydgaming.com
boydgaming.com

Caesars Entertainment C

LaTanya Pritchett
Las Vegas, NV
lpritchett@caesars.com
caesars.com

Four Queens Hotel & Casino

Pamela Dreyer
Las Vegas, NV
pdreyer@tlccasinos.com
fourqueens.com

Mesquite Gaming M

Petra Jones
Mesquite, NV
pjones@mesquitegaming.com
mesquitegaming.com

Montbleu Resort Casino & Spa

Anna Soto-Vopalensky
Lake Tahoe, NV
avopalensky@montbleuresort.com
montbleuresort.com

Nugget Casino Resort

Andrew Reno
Sparks, NV
andrew.reno@marnellgaming.com
nuggetcasinoresort.com

The Row, Circus Reno, Eldorado & Silver Legacy M

Kimberley Thorndike
Reno, NV
kthorndike@silverlegacy.com

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Ocean Properties Hotels, Resorts & Affiliates M

Emily Zybert
Portsmouth, NH
emily.zybert@ophotels.com
ophotels.com

NEW JERSEY

BookMyGroup C

Paul DeMarco
Fairfield, NJ
pdemarco@bookmygroup.com
bookmygroup.com

Fairbridge Hotel & Conference Center

Bill Muench
Somerset, NJ
dos@fairbridgesomerset.com

Radisson Hotel Group C

Olivia Salinardo
Short Hills, NJ
olivia.salinardo@radissonhotels.com

Resorts Casino Hotel

Meg Lewis
Atlantic City, NJ
mlewis@resortsac.com
resortsac.com

Tropicana Casino and Resort

John Happersett
Atlantic City, NJ
jhappersett@tropicana.net
tropicana.net

Wyndham Hotels and Resorts C

Nancy Jepson
Parsippany, NJ
nancy.jepson@wyndham.com
wyndhamhotels.com

NEW MEXICO

Best Western Rio Grande Inn

Anthony Valentin
Albuquerque, NM
dos@riograndeinn.com
riograndeinn.com

Hilton Santa Fe Buffalo Thunder

Diane Hunter
Santa Fe, NM
diane.hunter@hilton.com
buffalothunderresort.com

Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort & Casino

Charles Meeks
Mescalero, NM
cmeeks@innofthemountaingods.com
innofthemountaingods.com

NEW YORK

Akwesasne Mohawk Casino

Michael Gleason
Akwesasne, NY
mgleason@mohawkcasino.com
mohawkcasino.com

Citadines Connect Fifth Avenue New York

Alexander Emam
New York, NY
alexander.emam@the-ascott.com
citadines.com

Crowne Plaza Times Square

Gayle Richards
New York, NY
grichards@cptsny.com
cpmanhattantimesquare.com

Denihan Hospitality Group M

Kerry Kelly
New York, NY
kerry.kelly@denihan.com

DoubleTree by Hilton Times Square South

Ryan Cortese
New York, NY
ryan.cortese@hilton.com
nytimesquaresouth.doubletree.com

Hampton Inn Manhattan 35th/Empire State Bldg.

Darlene Kloris
New York, NY
darlene.kloris1@hilton.com
manhattanempirestatebuilding.
hamptoninn.com

Moxy Times Square

Maysoon Nasharty
New York, NY
maysoon.nasharty@moxynyc.com
moxytimesquare.com

New York Hilton Midtown

Iris Martin
New York, NY
iris.martin@hilton.com
newyorkhiltonhotel.com

Novotel Times Square

Natasha Melesse
New York, NY
natasha.melesse@accor.com
novotel.com

Rocking Horse Ranch Resort

Debbie Copeland
Highland, NY
info@rhranch.com
rockinghorserranch.com

Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel

Valerie Dillon
New York, NY
valerie.dillon@starwoodhotels.com
sheraton.com/newyork

Staybridge Suites Times Square

Bianca Bresil
New York, NY
bb@nyhotelmgmt.com

Surfside on the Lake

Mark Dawson
Lake George, NY
mark@surfsideonthelake.com
surfsideonthelake.com

The Tiki Resort

Kathleen Hafner
Lake George, NY
sales@tikiresort.com
tikiresort.com

TravelAdvocates

Robert Miller
New York, NY
robert@traveladvocates.com
traveladvocates.com

Wellington Hotel

Veronica Karanja
New York, NY
sales@wellingtonhotel.com
wellingtonhotel.com

NORTH CAROLINA

Biltmore Estate

Leslie Brewer
Asheville, NC
lbrewer@biltmore.com
biltmore.com

Blue Star Hospitality

Claire Anderson
Fletcher, NC
canderson@bluestarhospitality.net
bluestarhospitality.net

Hampton Inns of Asheville

Ray Anderson
Asheville, NC
ray.anderson@hilton.com
ashevillehotelgroup.com

Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel

Matthew Pegg
Cherokee, NC
mpegg@cherokee.harrahs.com
harrahsherokeech.com

OREGON

Ashland Hills Hotel and Suites

Gina DuQuenne
Ashland, OR
gina@neumanhotelgroup.com
ashlandhillshotel.com

DoubleTree by Hilton Portland

Heidi Pettingill
Portland, OR
hpettingill@portlanddoubletree.com
doubletreegreen.com

Driftwood Shores Resort & Conference Center

Chris Nystrom
Florence, OR
chris@driftwoodshores.com
driftwoodshores.com

Inn at the Commons

Karolina Lavagnino
Medford, OR
karolina@innatthecommons.com
innatthecommons.com

LAM Hotels

Jennifer Morkert
Lake Oswego, OR
jenniferm@lamhotels.com

The Mill Casino Hotel & RV Park

Amy Bailey
North Bend, OR
abailey@themillcasino.com
themillcasino.com

Monarch Hotel & Conference Center

Tammy Thompson
Clackamas, OR
tthompson@monarchhotel.cc
monarchhotel.cc

Salishan Resort

Mark Hower
Gleneden Beach, OR
mhower@salishan.com
salishan.com

Seven Feathers Hotel & Casino Resort

Heather Brown
Canyonville, OR
heather.brown@sevenfeathers.com
sevenfeathers.com

Shilo Inns Suites Hotels

Scott Hartcorn
Portland, OR
scott.hartcorn@shiloins.com
shiloins.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Country Inn of Lancaster

Barry Kidd
Lancaster, PA
info@countryinnoflancaster.com
countryinnoflancaster.com

Courtyard by Marriott Gettysburg

William Muntz
Gettysburg, PA
william.muntz@interstatehotels.com
courtyardgettysburg.com

Heritage Hotel Lancaster

Jennifer Markle
Lancaster, PA
jennifer.markle@heritagelancaster.com
heritagelancaster.com

Holiday Inn Harrisburg East

Lindsay Methlie
Middletown, PA
lindsay.peters@dhotelgroup.com
holidayinn.com/harrisburge

Kitchen Kettle Village

Lisa Arrell
Intercoarse, PA
larrell@kitchenkettle.com
kitchenkettle.com

Lancaster Arts Hotel

Travis Stevens
Lancaster, PA
tstevens@lancasterartshotel.com
lancasterartshotel.com

Quality Inn Gettysburg Battlefield/ Best Western Gettysburg

Nathan Mares
Gettysburg, PA
nathan@gettysburgqualityinn.com
gettysburgqualityinn.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Hampton Inn & Suites Oceanfront

Corrie Sanchez
Myrtle Beach, SC
corrie.sanchez@hilton.com
hamptoninn.oceanfront.com

Lowcountry Hotels of Charleston

Betsay Painter
North Charleston, SC
bpainter@lowcountryhotels.com
lowcountryhotels.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Deadwood Gulch Gaming Resort

Jo Anna Taylor
Deadwood, SD
outsidesales@deadwoodgulch.com
deadwoodgulchresort.com

Howard Johnson Inn & Suites Rapid City

Lyndsey Watson
Rapid City, SD
sales@hojorapidcity.com
hojorapidcity.com

LIV Hospitality

Lynzie Montague
Rapid City, SD
lmontague@livhotelgroup.com
livhotelgroup.com

Ramada Mt. Rushmore and Baymont Inn & Suites Keystone

James Sellars
Keystone, SD
presidentialhospitality@gmail.com
ramadamtrushmore.com

Regency Hotel Management

Gloriann Kueter
Sioux Falls, SD
gkueter@regency-mgmt.com
regency-mgmt.com

Retsel Corporation dba Grand Gateway Hotel

Anna Vandegrift
Rapid City, SD
sales@grandgatewayhotel.com
grandgatewayhotel.com

TENNESSEE

Clarion Inn Pigeon Forge

Jon Bentley
Pigeon Forge, TN
jon@clarionpf.com
pigeonforgeclarion.com

Fontanel Attractions

Carol Ziegler
Nashville, TN
carol.ziegler@fontanel.com
fontanel.com

Gaylord Opryland Hotel & Resort

Tina Abellanosa
Nashville, TN
tabellanosa@gaylordhotels.com
gaylordhotels.com

Graceland & Guest House at Graceland

Shirley Conner
Memphis, TN
sdconner@graceland.com
graceland.com

The Greystone Lodge on the River

Renee Spurling
Gatlinburg, TN
rspurling@greystonelodgetn.com
greystonelodgetn.com

Hampton Inn & Suites Nashville Airport

Larry Manghane
Nashville, TN
larry.manghanejr@hilton.com
nashvilleairportsuites.hamptoninn.com

Hilton Worldwide Focused Service Division

Convonta Stone
Memphis, TN
convonta.stone@hilton.com
hiltonmanagementservices.com

Hotel Preston

Courtney Hawkins
Nashville, TN
courtney.hawkins@hotelpreston.com
hotelpreston.com

Oaktenn Hotel Management- Smoky Mountains

Megan McClure
Pigeon Forge, TN
mmclure@oaktennlodging.com
greatsmokiesgreatlodging.com

The Park Vista – A DoubleTree Hotel

Susan Brown
Gatlinburg, TN
sbrown@parkvista.com
parkvista.com

Wright Investment Properties

Tracy Uphold
Memphis, TN
tuphold@wrightinvestments.com
wrightinvestments.com

TEXAS

Hampton Inn and Suites Dallas-Farmers Branch

Ruth Gallenberg
Farmers Branch, TX
ruth.gallenberg@hilton.com

Courier's Guide to NTA-member Lodging Properties

Hilton Garden Inn Live Oak

Caitlin Zarr
Live Oak, TX
caitlinzarr@hilton.com
sanantoniooliveoakconferencecenter.
hgi.com

Holiday Inn Northwest SeaWorld

Rebecca Halderman
San Antonio, TX
rhalderman@pacificahost.com
holidayinn.com/sanantonionw

Holiday Inn Riverwalk

Victoria Brock
San Antonio, TX
victoria.brock@ihg.com
hriverwalk.com

MCR Hotels LLC

Amanda Ekboom
Dallas, TX
aekboom@mcrhotels.com
mcrhotels.com

Radisson Fort Worth North Fossil Creek

Alan Small
Fort Worth, TX
alan.small@radisson.com
radisson.com/fossilcreek

Wildcatter Ranch

Jay Brewer
Graham, TX
jayb@wildcatterranch.com
wildcatterranch.com

UTAH

Crystal Inn - Downtown Salt Lake City

Matt Heim Mueller
Salt Lake City, UT
matth@crystalinns.com
crystalinns.com

Embassy Suites by Hilton South Jordan UT

Melissa Deveraux
South Jordan, UT
melissa.deveraux@hilton.com
embassysuites3.hilton.com/en/hotels/
utah/embassy-suites-by-hilton-south-
jordan-salt-lake-city-slcjoes/index.html

Hospitality Management Services

Gina Giffin
Moab, UT
gina@burez.com
hmsmoab.com

Lodging Dynamics Hospitality Group

David Kreindel
Provo, UT
david.kreindel@ldhg.com
lodgingdynamics.com

Moab Lodging & Adventure (DBA Red Cliffs Lodge)

Judy Bane
Moab, UT
judy@redcliffslodge.com
redcliffslodge.com

Rockin' R Ranch & Lodge

Camille Ovard
Antimony, UT
info@rockinrranch.com
rockinrranch.com

Salt Lake Plaza Hotel at Temple Square

Richard Williams
Salt Lake City, UT
rich@plaza-hotel.com
plaza-hotel.com

Temple Square Hospitality

Noelle Poe
Salt Lake City, UT
npoe@templesquare.com
visittemplesquare.com

USA Hotel Management Services

Hemendra Patel
La Verkin, UT
phemendra@hotmail.com

Zion Lodge/Zion National Park

Gerard Steffan
Springdale, UT
gsteffan@xanterra.com
zionlodge.com

VERMONT

Comfort Inn & Suites-Brattleboro

Amy Manning
Brattleboro, VT
gm.vt073@choicehotels.com
choicehotels.com

Jay Peak Resort, Vermont USA

Steve Vance
Jay, VT
svance@jaypeakresort.com
jaypeakresort.com

VIRGINIA

Best Western Oceanfront Virginia Beach

Amy Miller
Virginia Beach, VA
amy@bwvabeach.com
bwvabeach.com

Best Western Plus Sandcastle Beachfront Hotel

Jan Williamson
Virginia Beach, VA
dos@bestwesternva.com
bestwesternsandcastle.com

Colonial Williamsburg Hotels

Julie Fountain
Williamsburg, VA
jfountain@cwfb.org

Hilton

Mayumi Florek
McLean, VA
mayumi.florek@hilton.com
hilton.com

Hilton McLean

Linda Koontz
McLean, VA
linda.koontz@hilton.com
mclean.hilton.com

The Oceanfront Inn

Cindy Grzesik
Virginia Beach, VA
cindy@oceanfrontinn.com
oceanfrontinn.com

WASHINGTON

The Davenport Hotels

Felicia Conklin
Spokane, WA
fconklin@thedavenporthotel.com
thedavenporthotel.com

DoubleTree by Hilton Seattle Airport

Crisanta Callejo
Seattle, WA
crisanta.callejo@hilton.com
seattleairport.doubletree.com

Emerald Queen Hotel & Casinos

Marty Youngren
Fife, WA
martin_youngren@emeraldqueen.com
emeraldqueen.com

Hilton Bellevue

Michele Oliveri
Bellevue, WA
michele.oliveri@hilton.com
bellevue.hilton.com

Hotel Andra

Jordan Hathaway
Seattle, WA
jhathaway@hotelandra.com
hotelandra.com

Lucky Eagle Hotel & Casino

Ben Scholl
Rochester, WA
ben.scholl@luckyeagle.com
luckyeagle.com

Mayflower Park Hotel

Leslie Womack
Seattle, WA
leslie@mayflowerpark.com
mayflowerpark.com

Tulalip Resort Casino

Tracy Banfield
Tulalip, WA
tracyb@tulalipresort.com
tulalipresortcasino.com

Warwick Seattle Hotel

Tami Taylor
Seattle, WA
ttaylor@warwickhotels.com
warwickhotels.com/seattle

Yakama Nation Legends Casino Hotel

Lisa Orloff
Toppenish, WA
marketing@legendscasino.net
legendscasino.com

WISCONSIN

Fairfield Inn & Suites Wisconsin Dells, WI

Neal Castle
Wisconsin Dells, WI
ncastle@roihospitality.com
marriott.com/hotels/travel/msnwd-
fairfield-inn-and-suites-wisconsin-dells

North Central Group – Hilton & Marriott Hotels

Cory Mace
Madison, WI
cmace@ncghotels.com
ncghotels.com/motorcoach

Potawatomi Hotel and Casino

Lisa Pederson
Milwaukee, WI
lpederson@paysbig.com
paysbig.com

Radisson Hotel & Conference Center – Green Bay

Amanda Lafave
Green Bay, WI
amanda.lafave@rhccgb.com
radisson.com/greenbay

Raymond Management Company Inc.

Matthew Landgraf
Madison, WI
landgraf@raymondteam.com
raymondteam.com

WYOMING

Blair Hotels

Quintin Blair
Cody, WY
blair_q@blairhotels.com
blairhotels.com

Flying Saddle Resort

David Miller
Alpine, WY
resortmanager@flyingsaddleresort.com
flyingsaddleresort.com

Holiday Inn Sheridan

Elizabeth Ramsay
Sheridan, WY
elizabeth@sheridan-wyo.com
holidayinn.com/sheridanwy

Mountain Modern Motel

Spencer Long
Jackson, WY
spencer.long@mountainmodern
motel.com
mountainmodernmotel.com

SureStay Plus by Best Western Buffalo WY

Oxana Fowler
Buffalo, WY
53001@hotel.bestwestern.com
bestwestern.com/en_us/book/hotels-
in-buffalo/surestay-plus-hotel-by-best-
western-buffalo/propertycode.53001.html

Town Square Inns of Jackson Hole

Steve Meadows
Jackson Hole, WY
steve Meadows3@gmail.com
townsquareinns.com

COMMUNITY

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE NTA FAMILY



Before Pam Inman exits as NTA president on Dec. 31, *Courier* presents snapshots of the leader who gave the community so much love and laughter.

1. Tucson, 2019
2. With Jorge Cazenave in Portland, 2014
3. With Jodi Danyluk in St. Louis, 2017
4. With Agustin Caparros in St. Louis, 2017

5. San Antonio, 2017
6. Québec City, 2016
7. Atlanta, 2016

Meet the Members

Go Global Travel

EAST ROCKAWAY, NEW YORK

NTA contact: Karen Maier,
regional manager, USA & Canada

Office phone: +1.516.592.1480

Website: goglobal.travel

NTA member since: 2019

Tell us a little about what Go Global Travel does.

Go Global Travel is an innovative leading B2B hotel consolidator and a technology provider for the tourism industry. Our partners benefit from over 230,000 hotels in more than 208 countries and 15,000 locations around the world. Established in 2000, we have 12 offices around the globe, which allows us to work closely with more than 20,000 satisfied trade client partners.

What are some of the products you offer?

A robust portfolio of hotels worldwide with a variety of category options, private transfers in over 600 destinations worldwide,



and car rentals—all exclusively for travel professionals.

I love my job because ...

I have developed so much knowledge from my clients and colleagues. My job has given me the opportunity of seeing many places, learning about other cultures, and meeting great industry colleagues.

What destination would you love to visit?
Hawaii

You get to pick dinner tonight, and it can be anywhere in the world (or right at home). Where are you going?

South Africa's Babylonstoren farm

For more information, email Maier at karen@goglobal.travel.

Deadwood Gulch Gaming Resort

DEADWOOD, SOUTH DAKOTA

NTA contact: Jo Anna Taylor, sales director

Office phone: +1.605.578.1294

Website: deadwoodgulchresort.com

NTA member since: 2013

What makes Deadwood Gulch Gaming Resort a great place for groups?

The resort is nestled along Whitewood Creek in the beautiful Black Hills. We have 87 nonsmoking rooms, over 100 slot machines for guests to enjoy, and an active Players Club with nightly drawings. We also have a beautiful backyard where guests can enjoy a cocktail and the peaceful serenity.

What's new at the resort?

We have been updating our spacious rooms and are now offering a deluxe continental breakfast buffet, which is complimentary to all our guests.

What are some popular activities you offer?

The Mickelson Trail runs right through our parking lot. It's a great trail to hike and bike in the summer, and in the winter months, snowmobiles are allowed on it. The Mickelson Trail connects with over 300

miles of snowmobile trails that run through the Black Hills. And the Deadwood Trolley stops out front and takes passengers to downtown Deadwood for some Old West history.

What do you like to do for fun?

Bowling is my passion—at least in the winter months. I have been the senior state women's champ for two years running. In the summer, I love to fish—I'm not a champion at that, however.

Where would you love to travel to someday?

I have been blessed to travel to much of the U.S., mostly for national bowling tournaments. At some point I would love to travel abroad. Ireland is where my ancestors are



from, so I would love to visit that country, as well as Italy and France.

For more information, contact Taylor at outsidesales@deadwoodgulch.com. ☎

NEW MEMBERS

The following list shows organizations that joined NTA recently. Companies that also joined the Faith Travel Association have an FTA logo by their name. To access complete information on each of these new members, log on to NTAonline.com and go to the member searches.

DMOs

Cleburne CVB

Heather Juarez
Cleburne, TX 76033 USA
visitcleburne.com

Lancaster PA Tourism Alliance

Alyssa Keshel
Lancaster, PA 17605 USA
llama.silkstart.com

Visit St. Pete Clearwater

Darryl Boggess
Largo, FL 33777 USA
visitstpeteclearwater.com

TOUR OPERATORS

Discount Travel Alliance

Leslie Thomas
Sevierville, TN 37863 USA
discounttravelalliance.com

ESI DMC Armenia

Amalia Stepanyan
Yerevan, 15 Armenia
dmcarmenia.com



Objectif France

Joël Massé
Lacenas, 69640 France
objectif-france.us

Prime Tours

Lisa Busch
Dublin, OH 43017 USA
goprimetours.com

The Travel Corporation

Julius Stecker
Cypress, CA 90630 USA
ttc.com

TOUR SUPPLIERS

Alaska Helicopter Tours

Peter Schadee
Anchorage, AK 99507 USA
alaskahelicoptertours.com

American Writers Museum

Catherine Ryan
Chicago, IL 60601 USA
americanwritersmuseum.org

The Belvedere Hotel

Eneida Rodriguez
New York, NY 10036 USA
belvederehotelnyc.com

Best Western Plus

Agate Beach Inn
Maggie Conrad
Newport, OR 97365 USA
agatebeachinn.com

DC Nation Tours

Mistral Anampa
Largo, MD 20774 USA
dcnationtours.com

Element by Westin

Times Square West
Olivia Revson
New York, NY 10018 USA
elementtimesquare.com

Embassy Suites Lake Buena Vista Orlando Resort

Linda Szasz
Orlando, FL 32826 USA
embassysuitesresortorlando.com

Ensign Hospitality

Rosanna Morera
Salt Lake City, UT 84101 USA
ensighospitality.com

The Flyer - San Francisco

Clayton Hill
San Francisco, CA 94133 USA
theflyer-sanfrancisco.com

Fort Sumter Tours/ SpiritLine Cruises

Ian Harris
Charleston, SC 29401 USA
spiritlinecruises.com

Fort Worth Museum of Science and History

Alexa Canipe
Fort Worth, TX 76107 USA
fwmuseum.org

Hilton Garden Inn Times Square Central

Ashley Calderon
New York, NY 10036 USA
hiltongardeninn3.hilton.com

Hilton McLean

Linda Koontz
McLean, VA 22304 USA
mclean.hilton.com

Holiday Inn San Antonio Downtown/Market Square

Debbie Arnold
San Antonio, TX 78204 USA
hisanantoniomarketsquare.com

Holiday Inn St. Augustine - World Golf

Meredith Delfosse
St. Augustine, FL 32095 USA
worldofgolfresort.com

The Holy Land Experience

Sherri Patko
Orlando, FL 32811 USA
holylandexperience.com



MGM Resorts International

Bradley Ellington
Las Vegas, NV 89119 USA
mgmresorts.com

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Neda Asgharzadeh
Houston, TX 77265 USA
mfah.org

Northumberland & Bay Ferries Limited

Monica MacNeil
Charlottetown, PE C1A 1A6 Canada
ferries.ca

South Carolina Aquarium

Roualeyn de Haas
Charleston, SC 29401 USA
scaquarium.org

Space Center Houston

Joelle Hardin
Houston, TX 77058 USA
spacecenter.org

Stockyards Championship Rodeo

Dawn Riell
Fort Worth, TX 76164 USA
stockyardsrodeo.com

Topgolf

Tara Hippensteel
Dallas, TX 75231 USA
topgolf.com

Walks

Nicola Cox
Austin, TX 78702 USA
takewalks.com

Windstar Lines Inc.

Heather Shulte
Carroll, IA 51401 USA
gowindstar.com

ASSOCIATES

Peakwork AG

Sandra Baum
Dusseldorf, 40549 Germany
peakwork.com

Redpoint Travel Insurance

Ted Muhler
San Mateo, CA 94402 USA
redpointresolutions.com

NTA EVENTS

Save these dates and connect with new partners and destinations. For more information on these events, click the EVENTS tab on NTAonline.com



Anchorage, Alaska
March 18-21, 2020



Washington, D.C.
April 1-2, 2020



Reno Tahoe
Nov. 15-19, 2020



Memphis, Tennessee
March 17-20, 2021



Cleveland
Nov. 14-18, 2021

How do you handle holiday travel?

SNARLY TRAFFIC, surly crowds, and crazy kinfolk can make the holiday season stressful. But NTA members are travel pros, so they must have the inside track on holiday travel, right? *Courier* went to some of our Distinguished Dozen medalists to gather their wisdom on this topic. We asked this question: **With your insider knowledge, what tactics or tricks do you use to navigate travel during December?**

Because I travel so much during the year for work, I do everything I can to *not* have to travel during the holidays. I love being home, and I so so appreciate having some downtime to spend with family, catch up with friends, and ski with my amazing 80-pound four-legged Alaska lab husky “kid.”

—Heather Dudick, Alaska Railroad Corporation

For me, Thanksgiving is a bonus holiday. Even though everything is heavily booked, getting away on Wednesday night and taking off on Friday makes a great mini-vacation, but try to go somewhere that is out of season, e.g., Scotland, Ireland, France, etc.

Investigate restaurants and menus for holidays and make reservations for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve lunch and dinner. Keep in mind, though, that many restaurants close on holidays. You don't want to end up eating Peking duck like the family in “A Christmas Story.”

Traveling on Christmas Day is always a pleasure. You can celebrate on Christmas Eve and travel on the holiday—or return on New Year's Eve. And try to schedule nonstops only.

—John McGlade, CroisiEurope America

For holiday visits to family members who live out of town, I always like to travel in early December. You skip the headaches of long lines and expensive airfares, and then you get to be back home for the actual holiday after spending some quality time with family that lives further away.

—Bob Schwartz, Boston Duck Tours

It's all about attitude. Lines are going to be long, people are going to be impatient, tickets are going to be expensive, and luggage is going to be heavy. Expectations are always high, and anxiety is always present.

However, if you have a positive attitude and deal with everything in stride and with a smile, it gets you through the rough patches.



Don't have expectations and you won't be disappointed, plus you know what you are in for. So you have a choice: You can be miserable or you can accept the experience and make the best of it.

I take my kids to Jordan every Christmas. It isn't easy because as soon as my family in Jordan hears that we have booked travel, Amazon packages begin to arrive by the dozen for us to take to Jordan. We spread the boxes among all our luggage, and we go knowing it's going to be a fantastic holiday with family and loved ones ... even though the plane seats are tight and the jet lag is not fun.

—Malia Asfour,

Jordan Tourism Board North America

As we all know, holiday travel can be filled with crowds and long lines. While I typically try to avoid that, I still like to travel and strategically look to book during the times when the holiday hustle has slowed—usually early December or early January is best for this.

—Bob Salmon,

American Queen Steamboat Company

I personally embrace holiday travel—like a reunion moving with the crowd. My secrets to success are no time limits, go with the flow, and let the wine flow. Cheers!

—Julia Luckey-Ottenwess, The Grand Hotel

One of my annual business goals is to visit my top 10 or 20 operators during the holiday season and drop off gifts in appreciation for their partnership and support. In the past, I have scheduled this for the month of December, but this year I decided to avoid adding to the “December crazies” by planning my visits during November. Adding tour operators to my itinerary that are not on the top of the list (and, of course, bearing gifts to them as well) makes for a robust and successful sales mission.

—Simi Telesco, Sight & Sound Theatres

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NTA Services, Inc., 101 Prosperous Place, Ste. 350, Lexington, KY 40509

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Publisher (Name and complete mailing address):
NTA Services, Inc., c/o Kami Risk, 101 Prosperous Place, Ste. 350, Lexington, KY 40509
Editor (Name and complete mailing address):
NTA Services, Inc., c/o Bob Rouse, 101 Prosperous Place, Ste. 350, Lexington, KY 40509
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address):
NTA Services, Inc., c/o Pat Henderson, 101 Prosperous Place, Ste. 350, Lexington, KY 40509

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Full Name: *National Tour Association*
Complete Mailing Address: *101 Prosperous Place, Ste. 350, Lexington, KY 40509*

10. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box: ☒ None

11. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement.)

PS Form 3526-R, July 2019 (Page 1 of 4) (See instructions page 4) PSN 7530-02-000-0005 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

13. Publication Title	14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
<i>Courier magazine</i>	<i>August/September 2019</i>	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	3,832	5,400
b. Legitimate Paid and/or Requested Copies (By mail and outside the mail)		
(1) Outside County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541 (include direct writer request from recipient, telemarketing, and Internet requests from recipient; paid subscriptions including member rate subscriptions, employer requests, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	3,029	4,671
(2) In-County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541 (include direct writer request from recipient, telemarketing, and Internet requests from recipient; paid subscriptions including member rate subscriptions, employer requests, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid or Requested Distribution Outside the USPS® (If by First-Class Mail®)	0	0
(4) Requested Copies Distributed by Other Classes Through the USPS® (If by First-Class Mail®)	390	540
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)) ▶	3,419	5,211
d. Non-requested Copies Distributed Through the USPS by Other Classes of Mail (Include paid and/or requested copies mailed at rates of 70% and mailed at Standard Mail® or Package Services rates)	0	0
e. Total Nonrequested Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4))	0	0
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and e)	3,419	5,211
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4, (page 4))	105	39
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)	3,524	5,250
i. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c divided by 15h, rounded to nearest whole number)	92%	97%

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16. Electronic Copy Circulation

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b. Total Requested and Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a): ☐

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17. Publication of Statement of Ownership for a Requester Publication is required and will be printed in the *December* 2019 issue of the publication.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: *Kami Risk*, *December 25, 2019*

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

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