

# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



## SEAS OF LOVE

QUASAR EXPEDITIONS (BELOW); WINDSTAR CRUISES

Check out the islands of Tahiti aboard the four-masted Wind Spirit.

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**Y**ou'd love to go on a cruise. After all, you're the kind of couple who likes to party — and by party, you mean sipping a nice wine in a romantic French village, succumbing to a couples' massage on a sexy Tahitian beach, or taking in mind-blowing views of icebergs and glaciers — with as few other people as possible.

Here are five cruises for romantics who love to be out at sea — without the scene.

### TAHITI SWEETIE

Island hop the 118 islands of Tahiti — a collection of the sexiest and most romantic destinations on the planet — with a sail on the four-masted Wind Spirit. The ship, one of the Windstar Cruises fleet, accommodates only 148 passengers, and makes stops in Bora Bora, Moorea, Raiatea, and Huahine. Expect spacious suites, private motu dinners, and couples' massages in a private beach cabana on a private island. Surf and turf: new this year, is an overnight romance package at the Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort — midcruise you'll have a private boat ride to the resort to spend the night in an overwater bungalow. [www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com)

### WIND AND A SAIL

An evening under the stars while snuggled in the bowsprit netting of a sailing ship is even Cupid's

idea of a romantic escape. Book a Star Clippers experience and you'll cruise on 430-foot, five-masted sailing ship and sail the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Indonesia or Thailand. The ships hold 220 passengers, small enough to navigate ports that some of the larger cruise ships can't access, like Antigua's Falmouth Harbour; the ship docks just offshore and you're delivered to the exclusive small marina by small tender boats. [www.starclippers.com](http://www.starclippers.com)

### CULINARY QUEST

Oceania Cruises is known for its rich culinary experiences and elegant ships, and calls on 370 ports in Europe, Australia, Africa, the South Pacific, and Asia. Book one of the 1,250-guest ships, Marina and Riviera, and you'll experience Master Chef Jacques Pépin's only namesake restaurant, Jacques. And, for an immersive culinary adventure, there's the Culinary Center, a state-of-the-art hands-on cooking school on each ship — 12 stations where couples work in tandem to create apps, entrees, and desserts. Luxe it up and reserve a Penthouse-level suite and you'll get 24-hour butler service and in-suite dining. [www.oceaniacruises.com](http://www.oceaniacruises.com)

For a taste of France with seasonings, reserve Emerald Waterways' Sensations of Southern France River Cruise, a romantic river journey that stops in the charming towns of Tournon and Avignon. When in Avignon, an on-board, Provençal-style dinner is cooked by Chef Fabien Morreale, finalist on Top Chef France. And you can work off all that butter by biking the Burgundy by Bike trail system, one of the activities offered in the EmeraldActive program. [www.emeraldwaterways.com](http://www.emeraldwaterways.com)

### PRINCESS CRUISE

Galapagos Islands on your 2018 bucket list? Book the stunning Grace Kelly Suite on the M/Y Grace, a just-renovated 18-passenger yacht that's part of Quasar Expeditions. The yacht was a wedding gift from Aristotle Onassis to Prince Rainier and Princess Grace Kelly of Monaco. The cruise operates seven-night itineraries and includes outer islands and remote spots like Tagus Cove and Bartolome Island — with hiking trails, tuck-away coves, and stunning beaches. [www.quasarex.com](http://www.quasarex.com)

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Cruise the Galapagos Islands on the M/Y Grace.



## HERE

### ACADIA NIGHT SKY PHOTO CONTEST

Calling all photographers! The Acadia Night Sky Festival (Sept. 5-9) is sponsoring a contest for its 10th anniversary poster image and marketing materials. All photographers over the age of 18 are welcome to submit their original, high resolution photos depicting Acadia and/or Down East Maine's stellar night sky. The winning image will be featured on the 2018 festival poster, brochure, website, and all related marketing materials. The chosen artist will receive two round-trip tickets between Bar Harbor and Boston, courtesy of Cape Air. Submissions close on March 16. The September festival features dozens of workshops and events, including stargazing atop Cadillac Mountain, evening cruises on Frenchman Bay, telescope lessons, and more. [www.acadianightskyfestival.com/Events/2018-Poster-Artwork-Contest.aspx](http://www.acadianightskyfestival.com/Events/2018-Poster-Artwork-Contest.aspx)

### SALEM ART AND HOTEL PACKAGE

Those heading to the Peabody Essex Museum's stunning new exhibit, Georgia O'Keeffe: Art, Image, Style ( [www.pem.org/exhibitions/georgia-okeeffe-art-image-style](http://www.pem.org/exhibitions/georgia-okeeffe-art-image-style) ), will want to check out a special "stay-and-view" hotel package offered by The Merchant. The former home of prominent sea merchant, the boutique hotel's 11 luxury guest rooms — inspired by Salem's longtime history as a trading port — are a short walk to the museum. For an additional \$50 added to any reservation, the guests receive two entry tickets to the museum (valid for any



day of the year, including entry into the special O'Keeffe exhibition); Georgia O'Keeffe adult coloring book; and package of colored pencils. To book this deal call The Merchant directly and mention the Georgia O'Keeffe package, or enter PEM in the "Notes and special requests" field when booking online. Available through April 1. Rates from \$149. 978-745-8100, [www.themerchantsalem.com/specials](http://www.themerchantsalem.com/specials).

## THERE

### RIVER CRUISES REINVENTED

If you think that river cruises are exclusive to old fuddy duddys, think again. U by Uniworld is debuting river cruises exclusively for travelers between the ages of 21 and 45. Two jet-black ships, simply named The A and The B, sail through France, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, The Netherlands, and Hungary along the Danube, Seine and Rhine rivers. What makes these different from other celebrated cruises? The activity packed and culturally immersive adventures and excursions include everything from mountain biking to pub crawls to blokarting on the beach. (If you need to Google

"blokart," you're probably too old for the cruise.) In addition, local entertainment and onboard programming is curated for a younger crowd with complimentary Wi-Fi, silent discos, rooftop yoga, and more. Eight-day cruises from \$1,519. Five-day Christmas cruise from \$1,099. 800-883-8785, [www.ubuniworld.com/us](http://www.ubuniworld.com/us).

### OPEN FOR BUSINESS IN FLORIDA KEYS

Three cheers for the Florida Keys, rebounding and rebuilding from the destruction caused by Hurricane Irma last September. In Islamorada, midway between Miami and Key West, The Moorings Village is once again open and accepting reservations. One-, two-, and three-bedroom villas (with living rooms, dining rooms, and kitchens) are nestled within this former coconut plantation's 18 beachfront acres. Amenities include 25-meter lap pool, tennis court, fitness center and spa, as well as paddleboards, kayaks, and bikes. Rates from \$599. 305-664-4708, [themooringsvillage.com](http://themooringsvillage.com). In Key West, take advantage of smaller crowds and added value at Hyatt Centric Key West Resort & Spa where recently unveiled enhancements include a rebuilt sun dock event area, new boat slips, updated landscaping, and more. Rates from \$469. 305-809-1234, [keywest.centric.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html](http://keywest.centric.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html).



## EVERYWHERE

### MINI DRONE NAVIGATES BY HAND GESTURES

Your Instagram vacation posts just got a whole lot more interesting with the debut of Spark, DJI's first mini drone. Weighing just 10.6 ounces, Spark can be easily packed in almost any bag, and is ready to launch within seconds by a remote controller, a mobile device, or — amazingly — by hand gestures alone. When Spark takes off it automatically enters Gesture Mode, featuring new advanced controls that let you direct the unit with hand

movements such as sending Spark up and away from you, taking a selfie, and calling it back. Features 2-axis stabilized gimbal camera for shake-free shots; 1.2-mile transmission distance; and 16 minutes of flight time. Available in five colors. \$399 includes free shipping. [www.dji.com/spark?site=brandsite&from=nav](http://www.dji.com/spark?site=brandsite&from=nav)

### LUXURY EIGHT-SEAT JET DEBUTS

PlaneSense, a fractional aircraft ownership company based in Portsmouth, N.H., announces the arrival of a PC-24 Super Versatile Jet to its fleet. It is the first company in the world to receive this luxury jet whose takeoff and landing performance allows it access to more airports than other jets its size without compromising speed. Flights begin in mid-March, with the delivery of five additional aircraft expected over the next two years. The highly anticipated jet will serve as the signature aircraft in the PlaneSense jet fleet that now features approximately 35 Pilatus PC-12s, and Nextant 400XTi jets. The company's fractional ownership program offers all the benefits of private aircraft ownership without the hassle of managing aircraft operations. The Flight Operations Center team schedules flights on behalf of owners, coordinates aircraft and pilots, and monitors the latest weather and air traffic, allowing you to arrive at your vacation or business destination in a timely and stress-free manner. [www.planesense.com](http://www.planesense.com)

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