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TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

THE TIP

MAKEA 'FLIER-MILES' WISH

Not sure what to do with all those frequent flier miles that have built up from your travels? Are they about to expire? If you answered yes to either of these questions, why not consider donating your airline miles to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that grants wishes for children with life-threatening medical conditions. The charity has launched a campaign, Wishes in Flight, to raise awareness about the need for airline miles for travel-related wishes for sick kids and their families. "More than 75 percent of the wishes we grant include air travel, and with the cost of airfare continually on the rise, airline mile donations are critical in helping us to defray our expenses and ensure that every one of our children travels to his or her magical wish destination," said Charlotte Beattie, chief executive officer of Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Once donated, the miles never expire. Participating airlines include Delta, US Airways, and United/Continental. *More information at www.massri.wish.org/miles.*

JULIET PENNINGTON



Eleanor Brogan, 8, of Wayland, went to Hawaii with her family last year.



CHECK IN

DON'T ASK AND YOU SHALL STILL RECEIVE

At the five-star Swissôtel Living in Istanbul, the service goes beyond exceptional and into the seemingly clairvoyant. At breakfast the morning after I checked in, my waiter greeted me bearing a basket of gluten-free pastry. I'd let the hotel know before I arrived that I had celiac disease, but had not given my name or room number to anyone before I sat down.

"How did you know?" I asked.

He smiled, put a kindly hand on my shoulder and said, "It's our job to know, Mr. Kandarian."

It didn't end there. Arriving for my first dinner at Gaja, the open-air, roof-top restaurant with views of the city and the Bosphorus as stunning as the food (and as the roof-top pool, pictured above), the

maitre d' greeted me by name as if I'd been there a hundred times. I didn't ask how he knew.

But that's the tone they set, first class and attentive, in one of the best hotels I have ever visited, from the Khuan Chew-designed suites of floor-to-ceiling glass and twice-a-day treats they leave on your dining table (including Turkish delight, naturally), to dinners crafted by chef William Mahi, including sea bass cooked in a sea-salt cocoon.

It is said there's nothing as sweet as the sound of your own name. At Swissôtel Living, it's practically supernatural.

SWISSÔTEL LIVING No: 2 Maçka Besiktas, Istanbul. 011-90-212-326-8181, www.swissoteliving.com

PAUL E. KANDARIAN

HERE

LUXURY SUITES AT NEW MAINE LIGHTHOUSE INN

If you thought sleeping in a lighthouse meant rugged accommodations, tour the newly launched website for the Inn at Cuckolds Lighthouse. The inn (pictured below) is located inside a restored 19th-century lighthouse on the Cuckolds, a pair of granite islands off the coast of Boothbay Harbor. For the first time, these Maine islands are open to tours, educational and recreational activities, and overnight stays. The website features virtual tours of the inn's two guest suites and common areas, tour info, online reservation inquiries, and images of the 360-degree ocean views. Inn opens June 27. Sun-Thu \$350 per night per suite, two-night minimum; Fri-Sat \$500 per night. 855-212-5252. www.innatcuckoldslighthouse.com/

INN + THEATER PACKAGE IN CONNECTICUT

Combine luxury inn accommodations, fine dining, and an entertaining night at the theater with the Raise the Curtain package at The Copper Beech Inn in Ivoryton. Includes overnight accommodations for two in a super deluxe room, a \$100 credit toward dinner at the inn's Oak Room restaurant, breakfast, and two tickets to the Ivoryton Playhouse, a 280-seat cultural institution where Katharine Hepburn, Marlon Brando, and Mae West once performed. Upcoming productions include "Fingers & Toes," a musical evoking the era of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and "La Cage aux Folles," the Tony award-winning musical. Through Nov. 16. Rates from \$330 Sun-Thu, \$400 Fri-Sat. 888-809-2056, www.copperbeechinn.com



THERE

BEER AND BIKES IN BELGIUM

Cyclists who love beer have reason to rejoice. The travel team at Arlington-based Ciclismo Classico has crafted a new tour, Bike Across Belgium, where more than 1,300 beers are brewed. The nine-day, eight-night expedition visits boutique breweries, including Brasserie d'Orval, one of seven Trap-

pist breweries left in the country. While cycling along miles of scenic paths — past small towns, castles, canals, and rolling hills — the tour (June 21, July 19, Aug. 2) adds a bit of history, such as La Roche-en-Ardenne, a village in the forested hills of Ardennes, the World War I theater for the Battle of the Bulge. Cost is \$4,495; includes accommodations, all breakfasts, two lunches, six dinners, guides, bikes, and more. 800-866-7314, www.ciclismoclassico.com/bike-belgium/

SOUTH AFRICA TOUR CELEBRATES MANDELA

Indus Travels offers a new, 12-night, small-group tour to South Africa. Nelson Mandela, A Life Celebrated commemorates his life including a visit to his birthplace; Regina Mundi Church, the site of secret underground meetings; a tour of Robben Island, where



he was imprisoned for 18 years; a visit to his final resting place; and the Nelson Mandela Museum (July 14-26). Tour also includes historical Johannesburg, Knysna Lagoon, Featherbed Nature Reserve, Cango Caves, safari in the Amakhala Private Game Reserve, wine tasting, and more. From \$2,900 per person, includes upscale accommodations, sightseeing with private guide, many meals, and all land and airport transfers. Book by May 31 for \$400 discount. 866-978-2997, www.industravel.com/tour/nelson-mandela-a-life-celebrated

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