

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

THE LIST

ROADTRIP. READY?

Before a road trip, inspecting and servicing your vehicle helps insure a safe and hassle-free vacation. RepairPal, the definitive consumer resource for all things auto (www.repairpal.com), suggests these tips for a seamless ride.

1

TAKE A TEST RUN

Small things can cause big headaches. Check your AC, test windows, make sure radio and video components are working. Test your brakes on a few hills. Repair if you hear screeching or grinding.

2

READ IT AND (DON'T) WEEP

To properly monitor gauges and understand the meaning of each warning light, read your car manual to understand all dashboard signals.

3

BEAT THE HEAT

Monitor the external temperatures as well as your gauges. In excessive heat, engines can overheat, wearing out brakes, electrical and cooling systems, hydraulics, tires, and batteries.

4

ARM YOURSELF WITH APPS

Before your trip, download helpful apps that include roadside assistance features and maps.

5

IT'S ALL ABOUT FUN

Download music, games, and videos; pack snacks and drinks for the road.

NECEE REGIS



THE TIP

Cyclists can recycle their energies in Burlington, Vt.

Roll up to The Mounted Cat in Burlington, Vt., and you'll find unique offerings for visitors just like you: a covered parking area and a bike maintenance station with pumps and loaner tools for anyone staying here or just passing through. This new biker bar, located off the lobby of the fully refurbished Hilton Burlington, blends the feel of a classic New England lodge with such high-tech amenities as tablet docking stations, and hearty fare made with fresh ingredients from nearby farms.

Tend to your bicycle and then wander over to the bar, which is made of reclaimed wood from local farmhouses and solid stone reminiscent of New England soapstone. Grab a Mounted Cat lager and head out to The Cat-io, as it's called, a raised terrace with stunning views of Lake Champlain and the Adiron-

dack Mountains. Here, you'll find a fire pit and enough seating for you and 40 of your biker friends. Or relax in the lounge and enjoy new beers from Vermont's Trapp Family Lodge and Magic Hat brewery. The menu features modern American cuisine with a local twist: Vermont-raised pulled pork, poutine with Maplebrook cheese curds and grilled onions, and slow-poached halibut with sauerkraut and steak frites.

When you're ready to leave, refill your water bottles, pedal over to the Burlington bike path adjacent to the bar, and head off on another adventure. Small plates \$5-\$9; entrees \$20-\$28; Bike amenities: Really, they're free.

THE MOUNTED CAT *Hilton Burlington, 60 Battery St., Burlington, Vt. 802-658-6500, www.themountedcat.com*

KARI BODNARCHUK

CHECK IN

JUST REWARDS

The accommodations may be humble but the dramatic location, set between the peaks of Wildcat Mountain and Carter Dome, is five star. Carter Notch Hut, the oldest hut in the Appalachian Mountain Club's system, turns 100 this year, and remains a welcome oasis for weary hikers. It takes a little effort to get here — a 3.8-mile trek along the Nineteen Mile Brook Trail, climbing about 1,900 feet in elevation. But the rewards are immense; at your doorstep, you'll find acres of forests, craggy cliffs, mountain lakes, and sweeping views.

Carter Notch Hut is the easternmost hut in the AMC system of eight "off-the-grid" mountain huts spaced a day's hike apart, along a 56-mile-long stretch of the Appalachian Trail. It's perched at 3,288 feet and includes two detached bunkhouses and a stone hut, accommodating 40 guests in bare-bones basic, coed bunk rooms. (Mattresses, pillows and wool blankets are supplied but you'll need to bring your own sheets or a sleeping bag.) The crew prepares hearty, family-style dinners and breakfasts (included). Explore the Ramparts, a rock slide field of boulders the size of Volkswagens, and swim and fish in the nearby Carter Lakes, pristine ponds deep in the notch. Hike up to wide-open Carter Dome and Pulpit Rock, for eagle-eye views of the vast Carter-Moriah Range.

The Nineteen Mile Brook Trail is off Route 16, about a mile north of the Mount Washington Auto Road. \$111 adults per night (non-member), \$100 for ages 13-17, \$58, ages 3-12, 603-466-2727, www.outdoors.org.

DIANE BAIR
AND PAMELA WRIGHT

HERE

SAND SCULPTURES AT REVERE BEACH

Join the crowds on the beach ogling the works of 15 master sand sculptors from around the world, all competing for first place in the Master Sand Sculpting Competition at the 2014 Revere Beach National Sand Sculpting Festival. (July 18-20) The three-day extravaganza features live entertainment, gourmet food trucks, exhibit booths, children's sand sculpting lessons, interactive learning zone, and fireworks. Free. 781-902-9742, www.reverebeachpartnership.com/national-sand-festival

WHALING VESSEL IN PROVINCETOWN

Nearly 100 years after its last whaling voyage, the Charles W. Morgan (pictured below) sails into Provincetown Harbor as part of its summer journey along the New England coast (July 10-15). Although there is no visitor access to the ship in P-town, events and festivities reflect the voyage's goal to raise awareness about whales and whaling, including an exhibition on the town's whaling heritage, "Forgotten Port," at the Provincetown Museum (www.pilgrim-monu



ment.org); a NOAA/Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary educational exhibit pavilion — with model sperm whale — at MacMillan Wharf (sanctuaries.noaa.gov/whales); lectures by marine biologists and others, including Sylvia Earle (coastalstudies.org); and more. The vessel will visit the Stellwagen Bank sanctuary, former whaling grounds, July 11-13. (Follow the Morgan's voyage at www.mysticseaport.org/38thvoyage)

DANCE FESTIVAL IN VERMONT

Get out your tap shoes and tuts and head to Brattleboro for the Second Annual Southern Vermont Dance Festival (July 17-20). The four-day event features 100 lectures and workshops for

all ability levels and ages, as well as 10 performances, exhibits, live music, and free community events. Embracing the theme "Dance Is for Everyone," the festival (participant at left) includes the celebrated Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, and many of Boston's top artists, including Adrienne Hawkins, the Dance Complex, and Impulse Dance Company; Lorraine Chapman, the Boston Conservatory; Kirsta Sendziak, director of the School of Classical Ballet; and Ryan Casey, tap artist; and others. Classes include ballet, jazz, contemporary, Graham technique, contact improvisation, belly dance, Afro-jazz, tap, yoga, and more. Single event/day \$10-\$100; 4-day full immersion \$325. www.southernvermontdancefestival.com

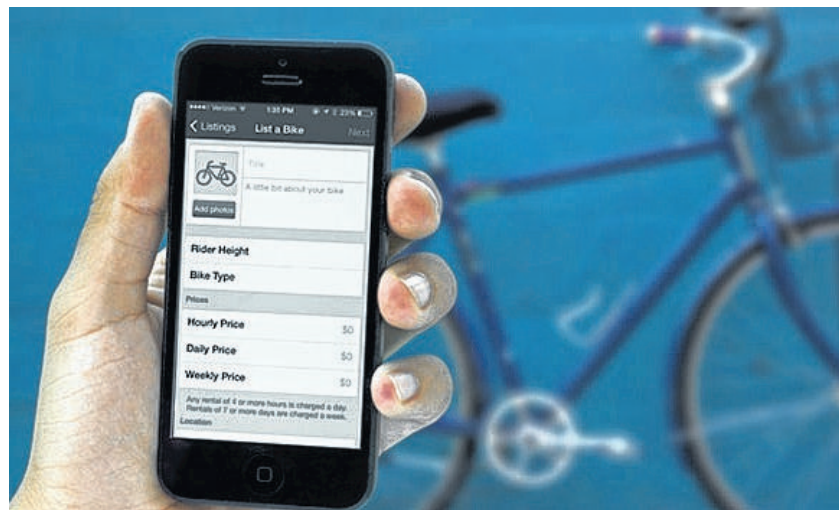
THERE

MIAMI TWICE

The luxury hotel Conrad Miami is celebrating its 10th anniversary with two "throwback" offers. During its 100 Nights of Summer package, a special rate of \$100 per night is a throwback to its special opening prices from 2004. (Available for 10 reservations per week though Sept. 30.) Or try to win one of two grand prize trips to Miami in the #throwback photo-contest on the hotel's Facebook page (facebook.com/ConradMiami). Two winners, one announced in July and the other in August, will receive a trip-for-two to Miami, including airfare, two-night accommodations, breakfast, \$50 gift certificate to Conrad Spa, and two-hour rental of Wheels 2 Go Miami electric bikes. Located in the downtown Brickell district, the hotel has 203 rooms and 103 residence suites. 305-503-6557, conradhotels.com/miami

ABORIGINAL HOTEL DEBUTS IN VANCOUVER, B.C.

Learn about Canada's rich First Nations culture at Skwachays Lodge, a new 18-room boutique hotel debuting at the crossroads of Vancouver's his-



toric Gastown and Chinatown. First opened in 2012 by the Vancouver Native Housing Society, two floors of the building have been transformed into an experiential hotel. Aboriginal artists teamed with Vancouver-based interior design firms to design each themed room featuring various animal spirits — raven, eagle, bear, wolf, orca — and original indigenous artwork. Guests may access a sweat lodge, artist's workshop, smudge room (for religious ceremonies), and lounge. The Victorian façade is crowned by a traditional northern longhouse with 40-foot pole. At street level, an interactive 3-D display celebrates aboriginal art and culture. Rates from \$225. 888-998-0797, www.skwachays.com

PEER-TO-PEER BIKE SHARES

Don't want to ship your bicycle to your travel destination? Sports enthusiasts will want to check out Spinlister, a web platform (pictured above) and app that encourages peer-to-peer sharing of bikes globally. Owners can list their cycles, and those seeking a ride can rent them for the day. Spinlister offers a diverse database of bikes from low to high end, all of which are insured up to \$5,000, making the experience safe for those listing their gear. Spinlister also promotes sharing other sports equipment, such as snowboards, surfboards, and stand up paddleboards. Free. www.spinlister.com

NECEE REGIS

EVERYWHERE

MOTORCYCLE BLUETOOTH SYSTEM

Change the way you communicate as you ride with Sena's newest motorcycle-powersports Bluetooth system. The 20S uses Bluetooth 4.0 technology with dual Bluetooth communication modules, incorporating audio multitasking to allow conversation with others while simultaneously listening to music or GPS. A multiway conference intercom allows users the ability to intercom up to eight users for up to a 1.2-mile radius. \$299. www.sena.com/promo/20s

