

PLUS

10 UNDERWATER  
DELIGHTS

EXPLORING TEXAS  
HILL COUNTRY

5 MUST-HAVE  
GOLF GADGETS

# THE TASTES OF MEXICO

BOLD FLAVORS, BIG EATS



  
**Hilton**  
Grand Vacations

CLUBTRAVELER.COM



Measured by water capacity, Lake Mead is the largest reservoir in the United States, providing water to nearly 20 million people. The 112-mile-long lake is formed by Hoover Dam, and Club Members can explore the lake's waters by renting a houseboat through ClubPartner Forever Resorts.



Where is your favorite summer getaway? Tell us and send your pictures to [feedback@clubtraveler.com](mailto:feedback@clubtraveler.com).

DOMENIC GARERI/SHUTTERSTOCK

# Clubtraveler

DREAM  
PLAN  
GO

## COVER STORY



## A Taste of Mexico

Getting to know Mexico's culture and history through your palate

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COVER: MARCUS NILSSON/GALLERY STOCK  
THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT: CEDRIC ANGELES/INTERSECTION  
PHOTOS; RADIUS IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES  
INSIDE BACK COVER: ROB & JULIA CAMPBELL/STOCKSY  
BACK COVER: VINCENT NOGUCHI/STOCKFOOD

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## Travel Tip

Prefer to use paper copies of your itinerary and other travel documents? It's still worth snapping a picture of them so you have an electronic record in case your papers are misplaced.

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## Dear Club Member



I hope you are enjoying a summer full of travel with Hilton Grand Vacations Club! What better way to use your membership than spending quality time with friends and family, either in a new destination or your favorite resort?

In addition, finding your perfect vacation just got that much easier with the arrival of our new booking engine and improvements to our Member dashboard on the Club website. While we hope you have already started using these new features, you can find out more about these updates and what we have

planned for the future in the feature on page 26.

Since the last issue, we've hosted our second Member Education Event of 2017, this time in San Diego, California. The June event celebrated dads with a special Father's Day theme, complete with giveaways tailored to fathers. We continue to grow and evolve this program and have more events planned in the future. Be sure to keep an eye out for the fall *Club Traveler* magazine, which will include a special Member education feature.

As an example of Owner feedback driving change, the association and ownership at Hilton Grand Vacations Club at the Flamingo recently decided to convert all of the property's rooms to nonsmoking. The Flamingo was the last HGV resort with smoking rooms, so this change now means that 100% of HGV inventory is nonsmoking.

In honor of HGV's 25th anniversary, we plan to launch a series of initiatives later this year to thank you for your loyalty—stay tuned for more details on how you can join us in celebrating this milestone. We will also continue reaching out for your feedback through a number of topic-specific surveys. As we continue finding ways to listen to you and make improvements to your Club, I can't thank you enough for sharing your honest opinions with us. We strive to improve your experience each and every day and couldn't do it without your input.

Happy travels,



**Stan Soroka**  
Chief Customer Officer



### Hilton Grand Vacations Club

6355 MetroWest Boulevard, Suite 180  
Orlando, Florida 32835 USA

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#### ON THE WEB

Stay up to date with our monthly eNewsletter. Find top 2017 eNewsletter stories on [clubtraveler.com](http://clubtraveler.com).

- 1 "Visiting the 'Venice of the East': Bangkok"
- 2 "Club Technology: New Booking Engine and Dashboard Enhancements"
- 3 "Discover Deals: Free Sights Near Your Club"
- 4 "From Coast to Coast: Plan Your Next Spring Break in Carlsbad or Orlando"
- 5 "The Scoop: Where to Grab a Spoon and Dig In"
- 6 "Picture This: Postcard-Worthy Viewpoints"

#### Send Us Your Feedback!

What do you think about *Club Traveler*? Send us an email at [feedback@clubtraveler.com](mailto:feedback@clubtraveler.com).

# Dream

WHERE TO GO

## Dream Vacation

Club Members **Rupert and Amelita Mayuga**, Owners at Hilton Grand Vacations Club at the Flamingo in Las Vegas since 2001, dream of a Hawaiian getaway with their kids and grandkids. First stop: under the sea. "We'd love to take them snorkeling at Hanauma Bay, and then we'd visit the Polynesian village at the cultural center. Being Chicago natives, the tropical weather and the way it prompts locals and tourists alike to dress in casual, colorful attire is a draw in and of itself." And for dinner? "Maui Zau'i pizza!"—a favorite at the pizza joint at Hilton Hawaiian Village. The family isn't a complete stranger to the Aloha State: The Mayugas visited as Hilton Grand Vacations guests before they were Members—and before there were grandchildren in the picture—and it was that vacation that enticed them to join the Club.



**Where to Stay:** Luxuriate at The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club, within the Hilton Hawaiian Village. With access to a saltwater lagoon as well as the world-famous Waikiki Beach, the Grand Islander hosts children's recreational activities and is just 20 minutes from Honolulu airport.



The Polynesian Cultural Center hosts the annual Samoan World Fire Knife Dance Competition, where visitors can see champions like Hale Motu'apuaka, pictured.

@ Want to be featured in *Club Traveler*? Tell us your dream destination by emailing us at [feedback@clubtraveler.com](mailto:feedback@clubtraveler.com).

# Look Ahead

Events worth the trip—whatever your time frame

## 3 months

### Los Cabos Billfish Tournament, Los Cabos, Mexico, October 15–19

Known for drawing spring-breakers and summer beach heads, Cabo has a secret: It's a haven for fishing types in the fall. Compete in one of the best billfish tournaments in the world over three intense days on the water while enjoying all Cabo has to offer—hip bars, trendy restaurants, stunning nature—sans the crowds. If you don't want to go it alone, grab a friend and join a team competition for guaranteed memories and possibly an even bigger prize. If that's not enough for you, never fear: Bisbee's Black and Blue Marlin Tournament, October 24–28, is just a few days later. [loscabostournaments.com](http://loscabostournaments.com)



## 6 months

### South Carolina Square & Round Dance Convention, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, January 2018

Put on your dancing shoes for this 43rd annual marathon of stepping, swinging and do-si-do-ing. For those with two left feet, square dancing is easy to pick up, and the convention hosts anxiety-free classes for beginners and kids. Bring the family for days of wholesome fun, including singing calls, line dancing, fashion shows, hot hash and hex dancing. When the dance shoes come off, take in the wining and dining of Myrtle Beach. [scsqdancedance.com/stateconven.html](http://scsqdancedance.com/stateconven.html)

## 9 months

### Spring Gröv, Park City, Utah, April 2018

Feel the vibes and get silly at this zany 16-day marathon of live music in Park City's two villages. Eleven years strong, the free outdoor concert series is full of music, events and competitions. Don't miss the Gröv's crowning glory—the annual pond skating competition, in which contestants, in costumes, attempt to make their way across a 100-foot man-made pond by board or ski. Suffice it to say, it makes for some of the most hilarious wipeouts you'll ever see. [parkcitymountain.com](http://parkcitymountain.com)



## 12-plus months

### World Series of Poker, Las Vegas, July 2018

Make a pilgrimage to the world's spiritual home of poker during the game's biggest and best-known event. Share in the exhilaration of seeing someone win a fortune in the blink of an eye. There are variations to suit all levels of risk, whether you'd like to watch high-rolling women compete in the \$10,000 Ladies No-Limit Hold'em Championship, or the less bold in the \$888 Crazy Eights No-Limit Hold'em 8-Handed. As always, the Strip will have the luxurious, tasty distractions and indulgences that the city is famous for. But don't miss the tournament's main event: the World Championship games. It's sure to be a full house. [wsop.com](http://wsop.com)



# Where to See Amazing Marine Species

## 1. Bali, Indonesia

Want to look a 2,000-pound fish in the eye? Gargantuan *Mola mola* “sunfish”—the heaviest bony fish in the world—are fairly common in the waters surrounding this tropical paradise, where you’ll find vibrant reefs and abundant sea critters at popular dive and snorkel sites such as Menjangan Island and Tulamben.

## 2. COZUMEL, MEXICO

A divers’ favorite, this Caribbean isle boasts the Palancar Reef—a coral wonderland teeming with turtles, eels and fish in a rainbow of colors. Snorkelers love the shallow reef at Punta Sur Eco Beach Park on the island’s southern tip.

## 3. HAWAII ISLAND, HAWAII

The state of Hawaii is rife with sea life, but only Hawaii Island offers the opportunity to dive and snorkel among giant manta rays. A surreal experience, nighttime boat tours use underwater lights to attract these exquisite creatures.

## 4. GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS, ECUADOR

This chain of remote Eastern

Pacific islands harbors perhaps the most eclectic collection of aquatic species on earth—from penguins to sharks to the world’s only swimming iguanas. Odds are good you’ll see them all, plus sea turtles and dolphins, at top snorkel spots like Isla Isabela and Isla Fernandina. Visit in style with Hilton Grand Vacation Club’s new cruise partner, CruisesOnly, which offers seven-night Galápagos cruises.

## 5. MALDIVES

The crystal-clear Indian Ocean waters around this chain of atolls consisting of more than 1,000 islands are bursting with sea life. Beyond the white-sand beaches, on a snorkeling or dive boat tour of a marquee spot such as Ari Atoll, you

are likely to spy sea turtles, dolphins, eels and rays among the countless tropical fish.

## 6. CRYSTAL RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, FLORIDA

November through March, hundreds of Florida manatees migrate to this Gulf Coast preserve, where you can swim with these massive yet graceful giants nicknamed “sea cows,” or stay dry and observe them from boardwalks at the Three Sisters Springs complex.

## 7. CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO

Hop aboard a whale- and dolphin-watching boat tour to marvel at migrating gray and humpback whales from December to April. In the cetacean off-season, experience what Jacques Cousteau once called “the aquarium of the world” (the Sea of Cortez) by booking a guided trip to snorkel the pristine reefs of Cabo Pulmo National Park.

## 8. ALASKA

Otters, porpoises, seals and whales—humpbacks to belugas to killer orcas—call the icy waters of Alaska home. Whether you’re sipping Champagne on a luxury cruise ship or getting an up-close view of the creatures while on a small boat tour, you’ll be able to see them in spectacular settings like Kenai Fjords and Glacier Bay national parks.

## 9. GREAT BARRIER REEF, AUSTRALIA

On the bucket list of every *Finding Nemo* fan, the planet’s largest coral reef system stretches some 1,400 miles along Australia’s Queensland coast. Don your dive mask and fins, then lay eyes on a mind-boggling number of marine species, including more than 1,600 types of fish and enough

sharks, rays and dolphins to keep you Instagramming all the way home. Share your best photos with [feedback@clubtraveler.com](mailto:feedback@clubtraveler.com) for a chance to be featured in *Club Traveler*. Help protect this beautiful part of the world by collecting information during your visit for the Eye on the Reef program.

## 10. NEW ZEALAND

You needn’t freeze in Antarctica to see penguins in the wild when everyone’s favorite aquatic bird can also be spotted waddling along New Zealand’s South Island beaches. Penguin tour operators are based in Dunedin and Oamaru, the latter home to a colony of little blue penguins.



### LEARN MORE

Club Members’ worlds recently became more flexible with the introduction of the new Hilton Honors Points & Money Rewards payment slider. The payment plan allows Members to use any combination of Points and money for accommodations. One way to take advantage of the slider: Hilton’s Conrad Maldives Rangali Island, which is home to Ithaa, the world’s only undersea restaurant. To enter the all-glass restaurant, travelers go through the world’s largest aquarium tunnel. Once seated, enjoy a meal in this magical spot and take in views of the Indian Ocean’s exotic marine life. Members can also convert ClubPoints to Hilton Honors Points for a stay at the resort.





## LEARN MORE

Get to know Jasper with ClubPartner Tauck, which offers guided journeys throughout Canada and beyond. The eight-day Best of the Canadian Rockies tour lands you in Jasper for your choice of whitewater rafting, a wildlife tour or a voyage on the Jasper Tramway to the alpine town of Jasper.

Use 2,125 Points for a \$250 travel certificate toward a Tauck journey (or get a \$500 certificate for 4,250 Points). For more information on Tauck, including how to request a Tauck travel certificate, visit the ClubPartner Perk section of the Club website.

# Jasper National Park

Canada is looking pretty good for being 150 years old as of July 1, and the nation is celebrating its birthday in style by giving free admission to its 46 national parks (and historic sites and marine conservation areas) all year. Chief among those is the glacial jewel of Jasper National Park, a babe in the woods at 90. It has the vast beauty you'd expect from 4,200 square miles of Canadian Rockies, but what sets Jasper apart is its wildlife. Elk, moose and caribou; wolverines, coyotes and lynx; porcupines, marmots and pikas—all have a sanctuary in the protected wilderness.



Once the seat of the Church of Scotland, The Hub (at left) is now the home of the famed Edinburgh Festival.

use the Lothian app, which lets you locate nearby stops, check times and buy tickets. Lothian Day Tickets are valid on Lothian Buses and Edinburgh Trams; buy them on the first bus you use during the day. Bus tours start from Waverley Bridge in the city center next to the main railway station.

### Where to Drink

Whisky is Scotland's national drink, and the country has more than 100 distilleries where you can sample a wee dram. Next to the Edinburgh Castle, head into the Scotch Whisky Experience ([scotchwhiskyexperience.co.uk](http://scotchwhiskyexperience.co.uk)), where you can learn how whisky is produced.

To toast Scotland's other libations, make gin at the Edinburgh Gin Distillery ([edinburghgindistillery.co.uk](http://edinburghgindistillery.co.uk)), or peruse the offerings at Innis & Gunn's The Beer Kitchen ([thebeerkitchen.co.uk](http://thebeerkitchen.co.uk)), a brewery and pub with beer pairings. Be careful: You may end up gubbed, guttered or blootered (local lingo for levels of tipsiness).

### Where to Eat

Farm to table—or, as they say in Edinburgh, nature to

plate—is a trend in Scotland, too. For home-cooked dishes using seasonal produce, try The Kitchen ([thekitchen.com](http://thekitchen.com)) or the Scran & Scallie gastropub ([scranandscallie.com](http://scranandscallie.com)), which features modern dishes alongside traditional fare (yes, they serve haggis). Timberyard has a garden that provides herbs and edible flowers for its own dishes. Artisan growers and foragers supply other local ingredients ([timberyard.co](http://timberyard.co)).



### Where to Stay

Visitors have a number of boutique options. For the outdoor enthusiast, **Hilton Grand Vacations Club at Dunkeld**, in the heart of a 280-acre estate of forest and moors, is a two-hour ride from Edinburgh. The resort is along the River Tay, perfect for salmon fishing.

# The Dram Report

A peek inside Edinburgh

### Where to Stroll

Get a sense for Old Town's medieval feel as you roam its tight alleys and cobblestone streets. It's here you'll find The Royal Mile, which runs from Edinburgh Castle to the Palace of Holyroodhouse. New Town—the hub of the city's business life—stands in contrast with a symmetrical layout and neoclassical architecture. Edinburgh offers many walking tours rich with history and

entertainment. Whether it's a stroll for foodies or a subterranean jaunt in the city's haunted vaults, going on foot is a practical way to navigate the Scottish capital and learn its legends.

### How to Get Around

Edinburgh has a robust bus system dominated by Lothian Buses ([lothianbuses.co.uk](http://lothianbuses.co.uk)). At all stops, there will be a sign indicating routes, making it easy to navigate. You can also



### Fun Fact

The magic of Edinburgh is truly the stuff of legend: J.K. Rowling penned the first book of the Harry Potter series here. If you're smiling about *Harry Potter* and *the Sorcerer's Stone*, you're almost there. The British title, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, was changed for the American release, as Americans aren't familiar with the European tale of the "philosopher's stone," an alchemical substance that could help one achieve immortality. Potterheads should try The Potter Trail walking tour ([pottertrail.com](http://pottertrail.com)).

# Plan

HOW TO  
GET THERE

Sparkling Pointe is a must for lovers of bubbly—all its offerings are effervescent.

09

## Ask the Resort

New York City is splendid in the summertime—Shakespeare in the Park, rooftop dining, a whirl on Coney Island’s Cyclone roller coaster. It’s also *hot*. On those sticky-humid days, make like a New Yorker and get out of the city for a day or overnight trip. We asked **Laurie Del Sole**, general manager at West 57th Street by Hilton Club, for ways to escape for a spell.

“Everyone has heard of the Hamptons, and they really are a different experience of New York. Fire Island is two hours away from the city and is well-suited for boating—and for lounging on its pristine beaches. Seafood lovers should venture to Patchogue Bay to go oystering at Ketcham’s Seafarm ([ketchamsseafarm.com](http://ketchamsseafarm.com)). Go farther north for dozens of world-class wineries. Start at Macari Vineyards in Mattituck ([macariwines.com](http://macariwines.com)), listed as one

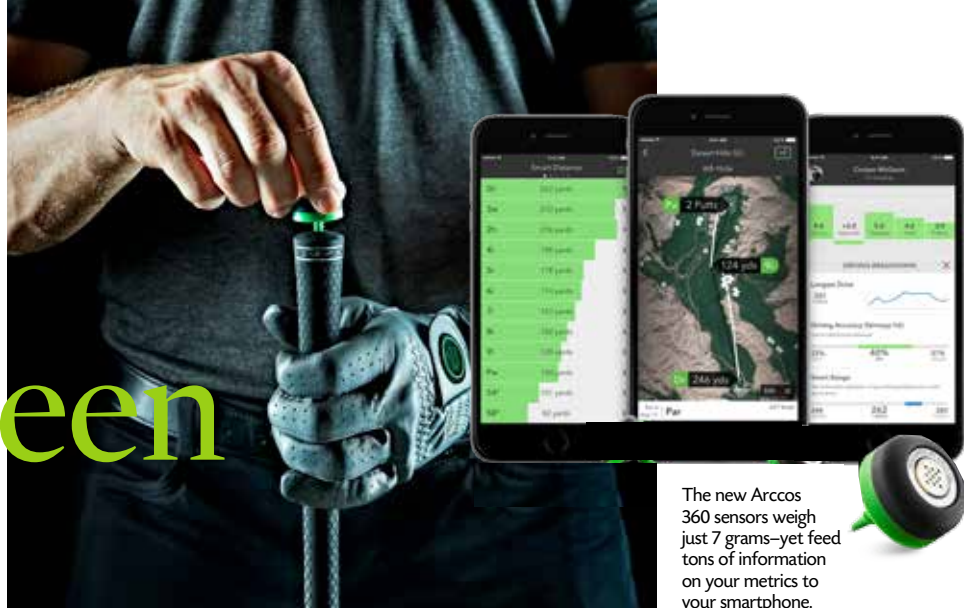
of *Food & Wine* magazine’s favorite wineries to visit, then fuel up at the Village Cheese Shop ([thevillagecheeseshop.com](http://thevillagecheeseshop.com)). Head east to Peconic to sample a flight at Raphael Wine ([raphaelwine.com](http://raphaelwine.com)), known for its Mediterranean-style offerings, then finish up with bubbly at Sparkling Pointe Vineyard in Southold ([sparklingpointe.com](http://sparklingpointe.com)). Club Members who own at The Hilton Club—New York and other Hilton Club properties can enjoy unique benefits at all those establishments and more through Elevated Rewards.

“If a day trip is more your style, Palisades Interstate Park in New Jersey is half an hour away. It has 2,500 acres of river shorefront, 30 miles of hiking trails and a boat-launch ramp. It also has plenty of space for picnicking. Pick up sandwiches at Balducci’s beforehand ([balduccis.com](http://balduccis.com))—a branch of the legendary gourmet shop is just an eight-minute walk from the Club.”



# On the Green

Get your swing on with the latest in travel-friendly golf tech



The new Arccos 360 sensors weigh just 7 grams—yet feed tons of information on your metrics to your smartphone.

Maybe you've decided to test your mettle with irons. Or maybe it's that your work has you seeing more green. Whatever your reason for getting into the game of golf, there's no substitute for practice, and what better time to get some under your belt than vacation? But there is one detractor: inferior gear, because we all know subpar won't get you under par. With this portable tech, a better swing is within grasp.

## Ahead-of-the-curve vision

Add serious scope to your game with Bushnell's compact, binocular-style laser yardage marker. It boasts 7x magnification and ranges up to 1,500 yards, and can even calculate slope

angle. Waterproof and just 10 ounces, it requires no caddy—just a pocket (unless, of course, you take advantage of its built-in tripod mount). With this kind of spyware, victory, we promise, will be easier to see. [bushnellgolf.com](http://bushnellgolf.com)

## Watch your swing

Sharpen your swing, sans lessons, with the Approach S6 watch from Garmin, which uses its SwingTempo and Tempo Training technology to bring you closer to the ideal upswing-downswing ratio. Behind its full-color display lies GPS-powered magic that instantly summons yardage and hole information on 40,000 golf courses. It's true what they say: It really is all in the wrist. [garmin.com](http://garmin.com)

## Grasp your numbers

Get intel on what your clubs just did with Arccos' nifty digital sensors, which screw into the holes already in your handles and send real-time swing data to the Arccos app on your smartphone for on-the-fly adjustments (and to the cloud for long-term patterns). Its GPS can calculate distances for your next shot, and Tour Analytics can suss out a player's handicap in driving, approach, chipping, sand game and putting. Your clubs have been waiting for this. [arccosgolf.com](http://arccosgolf.com)

## Rule of thumb

Compared with other sports, it's safe to say that golf is tame. But what happens when, say, a sudden "gust of wind" sails your ball beyond the fence, or a dog on the lam turns your seventh-hole chip into a game of fetch? When things get hairy on the links, it's crucial to have lesser-known rules at your fingertips. The Rules of Golf app by the United States Golf Association is a foolproof way to prepare for the unexpected—and it's free. [iTunes](http://iTunes), [Google Play](http://Google Play)

## Get spiked

Renew the sole without getting a new one. Champ's PiviX spikes are lightweight and lower to the ground, which will give you sharper traction on the green. They come in a bouquet of translucent shades, and the center of the spike turns solid when it's ready to be replaced. Their universal design will fit any shoe, including Jordan Spieth's, who's already a fan. [champspikes.com](http://champspikes.com)



## Sport Totes

Any extreme-sports enthusiast knows well the pain of traveling with big gear. Fortunately for Club Members with Elite status, **Luggage Forward** spares the headaches with seamless delivery of your big, awkward (but important!) luggage. Here are three pieces of gear that make traveling-while-athlete even easier.

**Burton Wheelie Gig Bag.** As the name implies, two tiny but

crucial wheels will indeed turn your snowboard schlep into a delightful wheelie gig (shown here). But should you face a stair, a removable shoulder strap makes for easy slinging. [burton.com](http://burton.com)

**Rhino Travel Bag.** Pro-Lite's surfboard bag makes the simple

beautiful with its trim, lightweight design. A hardy zipper, an external pocket and an air vent say one thing: It was made with actual humans in mind. [prolite.com](http://prolite.com)

**ClubGlider Meridian.** Named Editors' Choice for Golf Travel Bag by *Golf Digest*, the bag by Sun Mountain is hard where it needs to be for maximum gear protection and soft where you want flexibility. And its two front legs on wheels will spare your back for the course. [sunmountain.com](http://sunmountain.com)



# Fly by the Numbers

News and resources to make travel easier



**3.5**  
hours

*New York-to-London flight time aboard a supersonic aircraft Richard Branson, Virgin Group founder, and Denver startup Boom are developing*

**1,000+**

**Number of airport lounges offering Priority Pass. Club Members can use Bonus Points to purchase the Standard Plus Priority Pass, which offers 10 free lounge visits and \$27 visits thereafter. Visit the Member offers and promotions page on the Club site to learn more.**

**747**

Model number of Boeing's iconic jumbo jet, which heads into the sunset as fewer fly the aircraft. Delta and United, the last North American carriers to use the plane, retire their fleets by year's end. The first commercial 747 flights took off in 1970, playing a key role in making international travel mainstream.

**16 hours, 23 minutes**

*Duration of the world's longest nonstop flight, from Doha, Qatar, to Auckland, New Zealand, on Qatar Airways*

**1,175**  
SQUARE FEET

*Size of Roam Fitness' first full-service, post-security airport gym at Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport*

**15**  
minutes

*Travel time from Baltimore to Washington, D.C., on a proposed ultra-high speed maglev train*

## Stuck on a Layover?

**Don't worry—there's plenty to do at these hubs**

### Japanese cultural events at Narita Airport (NRT)

Enjoy monthly exhibits and performances such as an interactive Kabuki display, Japanese classical dance performances and a Hello Kitty photo spot.

### Rocky Mountain sunsets at Denver International Airport (DEN)

Head to the west end of terminal C, near C23, for an impressive view of the sun going down over the Colorado Rockies.

### Flight Path Museum at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)

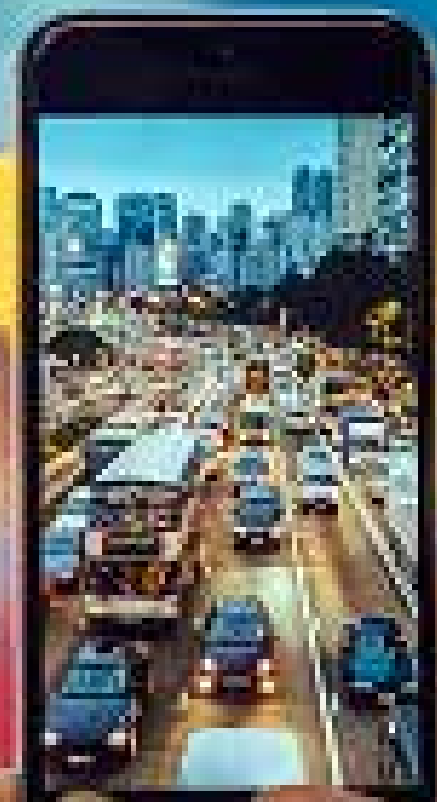
Take a free trip through the history of aviation in Southern California at the Flight Path Museum & Learning Center in LAX's Imperial Terminal.

### Terminal 5 at John F. Kennedy International Airport

Explore JetBlue's post-security outdoor rooftop space and the world's first blue potato farm within an airport.

# Smartphone, Smart Camera

Simple smartphone cameras are here to stay—even if you have a DSLR by your side. Venture beyond the default camera phone settings to record more compelling, creative travel images with your device that's usually never more than an arm's length away.



## LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

Lighting can make or break vacation photographs. To ensure your sunrise and sunset photos turn out, use a portable smartphone tripod to stabilize these long exposures so enough light can enter the camera. When featuring people, move to the shade of a building or a tree to avoid harsh midday shadows. And just before clicking the shutter button, always tap the main focal point of the image on the camera screen for a final exposure and focus adjustment.



Tried any of these tips? Email your best smartphone pics to [feedback@clubtraveler.com](mailto:feedback@clubtraveler.com) to potentially be featured as a Big Picture in an upcoming issue of *Club Traveler*.

## HDR.

Turn on the high-dynamic range setting, usually found at the top of your screen when you reveal expanded menu options, in high-contrast situations to create an exposure that looks balanced. Try it out when capturing bright, snowy mountain scenes against a dark blue sky, or near reflective water.

## Grid.

Go to the phone's Settings menu, choose Photos & Camera and turn on the optional screen grid to assist with creating photos using the rule of thirds. Placing subjects near the grid's intersecting lines creates visually pleasing compositions.

## Panoramic capture.

Choose this setting to record wide vistas without the need for special lenses or software. Hold the shutter button and pan your smartphone's camera horizontally while following the in-camera prompts, then release your finger to finish.

## Burst mode.

If you want to take several photos in quick succession, press—don't tap—the shutter button. Your smartphone's camera will click several frames, making sure you don't miss the moment.

## Filters.

Get artsy and create pictures in a tone that mimics slide film or darkroom processing techniques. This feature is noted with three overlapping circles.

## Flash.

The lightning bolt indicates that your camera has a built-in flash. Turn it off in museums, turn it on in dark restaurants, or choose the auto setting to allow the camera to decide when additional illumination is necessary.

## Time-lapse.

When video-recording a slow process, such as a friend climbing a rocky cliff, choose the time-lapse feature. The final recording speeds up the frames, adding a comical twist to the memory.

## Slow-mo.

If you want to slow down the frames of a fast video scene, like the annual running of the bulls in Spain or an auto race, use slow-mo. You can later review fine details that passed too quickly to fully absorb in real time.

## Timer.

This setting triggers a delayed shutter, so you can prop up your smartphone (or use a tripod) and get into the scene for a wider view than a hand-held selfie. Look for a clock symbol.

# Mealing and Dealing

Ways to save on food during your next trip

14

Vacation is often a time to splurge on delicious meals you wouldn't necessarily shell out for at home. But indulging on dining doesn't mean you have to bust your food budget. Here's how to save by eating smart.

## Go big for lunch.

Whoever deemed that multiple-course meals were just for dinner was obviously not on vacation. One of the ultimate pleasures of a getaway is having a leisurely meal right smack in the middle of the day. Bonus: Prix-fixe lunch menus are generally less expensive than those for dinner, often for the same foods, and reservations are often easier to snag. With what you save by eating big during the day instead of the evening, you can even spring for an early afternoon cocktail without busting the budget.

## Hit up happy hours.

Many restaurants and bars offer happy hours that begin before the average worker leaves the office. So when on vacation, you can scope out these watering holes and begin imbibing and snacking well before 5 p.m. Ask your resort concierge for his or her favorite afternoon deals, and check the Hilton Grand Vacations mobile app's community page to see where Members recommend eating in the area. Then hit up one or two spots in place of going out to a single restaurant for a sit-down dinner.

## Always have a snack.

For those who tend to get "hangry," one rule to live by on vacation is to have a snack with you at all times. Pulling a granola bar or a piece of fruit out of your bag may prevent you from both annoying your travel companions and falling victim to purchasing overpriced nosh from the nearest vendor.

## Avoid tourist traps.

Depending on your vacation destination, there may be restaurants that are more geared toward travelers and less toward locals. While these

establishments can be fun, chances are their prices will be substantially higher than those at a local pub or family-run joint. If you want to taste the true flavor of the region you've chosen to visit—and save a little dough while you're at it—avoid the tourist traps. Ask your resort concierge where he or she would choose to go for a meal on a day off, and make a beeline in that direction. Alternatively, pick up cold cuts, cheeses, chips and salad ingredients and pack a picnic lunch before leaving your suite to visit a touristy part of town.

# Go

## WHAT TO DO

### Local Perspective

Situated in north San Diego County between the city of San Diego and Orange County, Carlsbad sits on the Pacific coast and is known as the "Village by the Sea." Club Members can stay at the **Grand Pacific Palisades Resort** on a lush ridge with incredible views. Experience your next trip like a local with these insider tips from longtime area resident **Laura Dolata**.

"Carlsbad is a great family destination with something for people of all ages. My favorite thing to do is walk with friends

on the dedicated oceanfront walkway and have coffee, brunch or lunch nearby afterward. My favorite Mexican restaurant is Las Olas ([lasolasmex.com](http://lasolasmex.com)). Dini's ([dinisbistro.com](http://dinisbistro.com)) is also popular with locals and tourists for happy hour, and both are great for watching the sunset. On the weekend you will see surfers, bicyclists, Rollerbladers and walkers all taking in the view. There are yoga classes and volleyball on the beach, and during the winter you may spot dolphins offshore. Nearby, families with young children can take in Legoland. There is so much to love about Carlsbad."

The Flower Fields in Carlsbad have more than 50 acres of ranunculus for visitors to enjoy. [theflowerfields.com](http://theflowerfields.com)

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# Cheers! Spring and Summer Sips

Spring-like cocktails to sip in all seasons

The original mai tai, Royal Hawaiian's famed version uses local rums from a distillery on Maui.



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Sampling flavors and dishes that reflect destinations' locales is part of the overall vacation experience. The same can be said of libations, especially in light of talented mixologists who use regional flavors when creating their cocktails. Take a spring (or summer) break in any of these cities, and you'll discover refreshing concoctions that deliciously complement their home base.

## Honolulu

If you conjure up images of tropical cocktails when thinking about Hawaii, your imagination is spot-on. Victor Bergeron, founder of Trader Vic's, is said to have served the first mai tai on Waikiki Beach in 1953 when he introduced his recipe, which included pineapple juice, to the bartenders at the Royal Hawaiian. Now you can enjoy this fruity drink throughout the island, from the Royal Hawaiian's Mai Tai Bar to the Hukulani Waikiki's rooftop Nā Lani bar. Earlier this year, Stripsteak ([michaelmina.net](http://michaelmina.net)) debuted a colorful cocktail menu combining premium spirits and local ingredients. Sips to try include local favorite Shaka Sour 2.0, which blends St. George Terroir Gin, Chartreuse, shiso, lime and egg whites, or Sun's Out Rum's Out, a fun yellow cocktail with Caliche Rum, orange Curaçao, pineapple and mango, topped off with coconut foam. *Okole maluna!*

## Miami

As expected, the Miami cocktail scene's shakers are overflowing on South Beach and beyond. Slip away

from the beach and over to Wynwood to find Beaker & Gray ([beakerandgray.com](http://beakerandgray.com)), where Ben Potts has concocted a three-part cocktail menu: Shaken, Stirred and Strange. From Shaken, try the Re-Pete, with Avuá Amburana Cachaça, Campari, pineapple and cinnamon. To the south, take in the skyline views of downtown Miami from rooftop lounge Pawn Broker ([pawnbrokermiami.com](http://pawnbrokermiami.com)). If you're with a small group of friends, order the George A. Romero, served in a pineapple and big enough to share: Old Forester Templeton rye, passion fruit, pineapple, barbecue syrup, Angostura, grapefruit bitters and lemon. *¡Salud!*

## Park City

When a day on the slopes or adventuring around Park City calls for a toast, you're in luck—this Utah mountain town has plenty to pour. The cocktail menu at Edge Steakhouse ([westgatedestinations.com](http://westgatedestinations.com)) gives the steaks a run for their money, which is saying a lot—Edge won Best Steakhouse in Utah in the 2016 Best of State Awards. For local flavor, try 7000 Blackberries, which features locally distilled High West 7000' Vodka, Chambord, muddled blackberries and Prosecco for a bit of bubbly at the end, like that champagne powder on the mountain. On Park City's Main Street, the mixologists at The Nickel Bar at Firewood ([firewoodonmain.com](http://firewoodonmain.com)) offer up the Wasatch Garden, a delicious blend of Hendrick's Gin, muddled English cucumber, mint, fresh lime and local honey. Cheers!

# Hands-on Fun

Dive in and get dirty!

Vacations are all about leaving the routine of the day-to-day at home and trying something new. When you can cut loose and get down and dirty while learning about your destination, joy is sure to follow. Consider these fab, family-friendly programs for hands-on fun—and leave the cleanup for later.

## Pan for Gold in New Zealand

All that glitters could very well be gold in Arrowtown, a historic gold mining town 20 minutes from Queenstown on New Zealand's South Island. Several places in town rent gold pans to visitors looking to get lucky. Walk a few minutes from town to the banks of the Arrow River, where you can tip your pans into the icy water and scout for shimmering flecks amid the black sand. Even during summer (December–February), the kids' hands

are sure to be feeling frosty by the time you're done panning. Make time to warm up with a mug of hot chocolate (and a piece of cake!) at one of the cute cafés in town after your outing. [arrowtown.com](http://arrowtown.com)

## Play Farmer in Hawaii

Treat the family to a tasty lesson on Hawaii's farm-to-table ethos during tours at Kahumana. Situated in the lush hinterlands of west Oahu, this organic farm is where some of the scrumptious ingredients served at top island restaurants are grown. Pack sunblock and clothes you don't mind dirtying up for a firsthand look at sustainable chicken farming and the cultivation of the farm's produce, with an introduction to aquaponics and permaculture in the mix, too. After the tour, settle in with your budding farmers under the shade of a mango tree at the on-site cafe for a farm-fresh meal served in the true spirit

of Aloha. Almost everything on the menu has been grown on-site, and you can taste the difference. [kahumana.org](http://kahumana.org)

## Dig for Fossils in Utah

Open every day except Sundays from April through October, the U-Dig Fossils quarry in Delta, Utah (a 2.5-hour drive from Park City), is a thrilling spot for kids to forage for trilobites—marine fossils of animals that became extinct more than 250 million years ago. The hourly fee to dig includes tools, and staff members are on hand to offer advice on the best places to search within the piles of shale. Your kids are sure to look akin to coal miners after breaking apart all that rock in search of treasures. And, of course, finders are keepers here—so whatever they uncover is theirs to take home. [u-digfossils.com](http://u-digfossils.com)

## Tips for Getting Them Clean Again

**1.** In addition to a change of clothes, invest in an **Itzy Ritzy Travel Happens Wet Storage Bag** ([itzyritzy.com](http://itzyritzy.com)) to stow dirty gear until you can wash it.

**2.** Pack travel stain removers such as **Tide to Go** sticks and **Shout Wipes**.

**3.** Good news: Most Hilton Grand Vacations resorts have an on-site laundry facility. But for small jobs, the **Scrubba Wash Bag** (below, [thescrubba.com](http://thescrubba.com)) is a cool portable washing machine modeled on old-fashioned scrubbing boards—perfect for when you have to clean it *now*.




# 3 Days in... Texas Hill Country

Boasting charming small towns, rolling green hills, backyard barbecues, wineries, swimming holes and hiking trails, the Texas Hill Country offers an abundance of ways to spend your days. Whether you prefer an adventurous or relaxing getaway, this 14,000-square-mile region of central Texas—loosely defined as west of Austin and north of San Antonio—offers both.

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William Chris Vineyards focuses on low-impact wine. Reds from this region lean toward the tannic; whites, toward the minerally.

COURTESY WILLIAM CHRIS VINEYARDS



## Day One

Seventy-eight miles west of Austin, the historic town of Fredericksburg is rich with German heritage and filled with small-town appeal, making it one of the most-visited towns in Texas Hill Country. Main Street is lined with museums, shops and restaurants, featuring German cuisine like spaetzle and bratwursts. While exploring, sample a flight of craft beer and a soft pretzel at Fredericksburg Brewing Company ([yourbrewery.com](http://yourbrewery.com)) before turning in for dinner. For dining, Der Lindenbaum ([derlindenbaum.com](http://derlindenbaum.com)) is a local staple, serving classic dishes in a European-influenced stone building, a style found throughout the town. End your evening by following the sounds of live music into one of the many beer gardens.

## Day Two

With Fredericksburg as your origin, you're in the midst of the Texas Wine Trail, showcasing award-winning wines and picturesque vineyards. On the trail, discover bluebonnets in full bloom during spring, and fresh peaches and lavender in early summer. Enjoy a cheese plate and wine under the shade of live oaks on the lawn of William Chris Vineyards in nearby Hye ([williamchriswines.com](http://williamchriswines.com)). If you prefer whiskey, schedule a tour of Garrison Brothers—the state's "first legal whiskey distillery," tucked away on a ranch ([garrisonbros.com](http://garrisonbros.com)). In Albert, 20 miles east of Fredericksburg, you will find an authentic, historic dance hall with its original wood floor waiting for your moves. As you work your way back to Fredericksburg, have a sandwich at Hye Market, a former post office converted into a deli and tasting room ([hyemarket.com](http://hyemarket.com)).

## Day Three

Leave a day to explore the great outdoors and head to one of the region's emblematic landmarks—Enchanted Rock. The largest pink granite dome in the U.S., at an elevation of more than 1,800 feet, is 20 minutes from Fredericksburg. Hike to the top for views of the surrounding valleys and glistening salmon earth below. Afterward, reward yourself with a scenic drive along Willow City Loop—16 miles through canyons and ranch land and along country creeks. Wind up and down switchbacks as the loop's route exposes you to a topography unique to the Hill Country. It's especially popular in spring when it's lined with bluebonnets and Indian paintbrushes. Stop by Harry's on the Loop right in Willow City—an old house turned barbecue joint featuring hammocks in the trees, a fine jukebox and an antique piano.



## Where to Stay

Rest your heads in the heart of Texas Hill Country at **Hampton Inn & Suites Fredericksburg**, which is within walking distance of the town's main attractions.

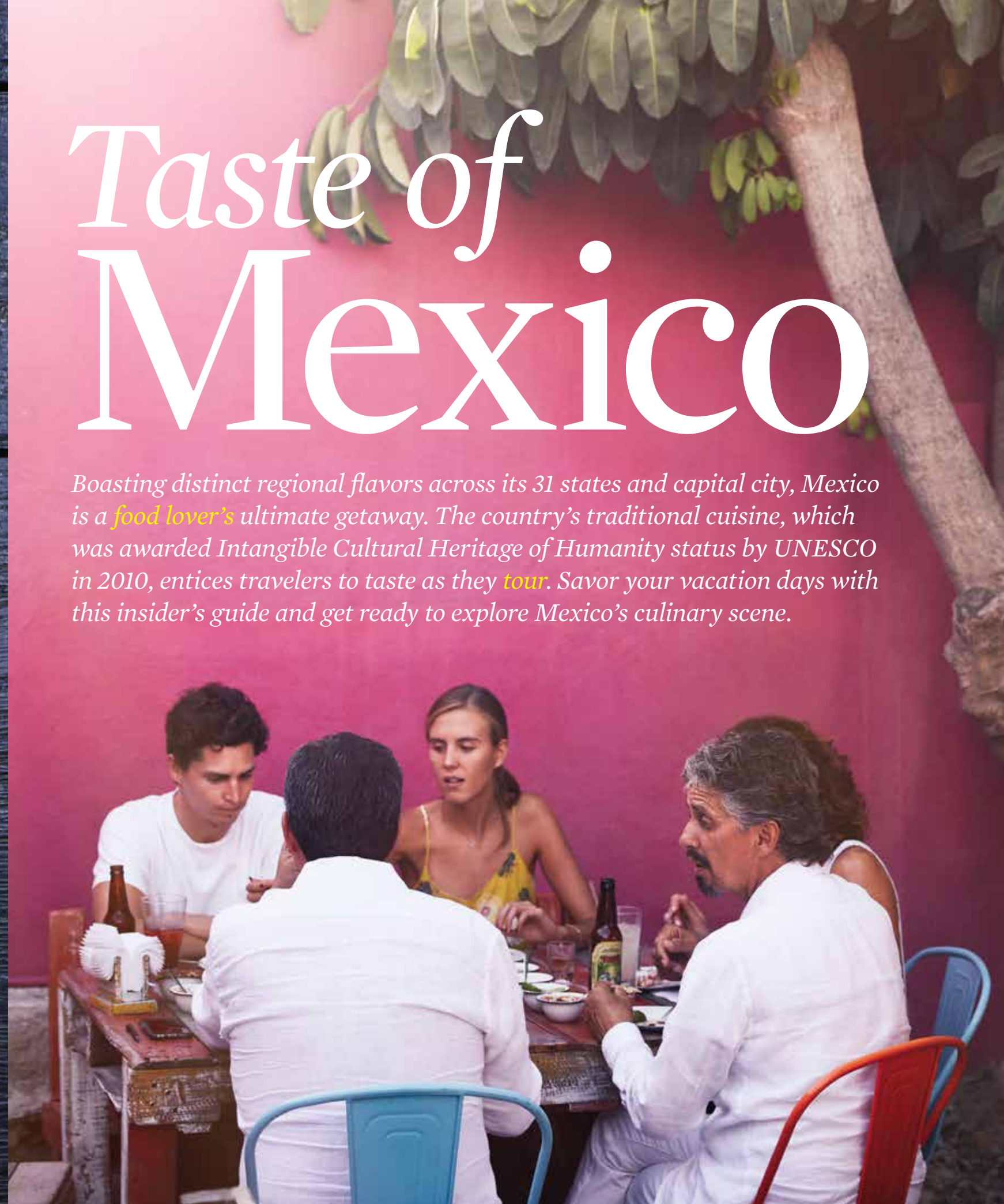
# Taste of Mexico

Boasting distinct regional flavors across its 31 states and capital city, Mexico is a *food lover's* ultimate getaway. The country's traditional cuisine, which was awarded Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity status by UNESCO in 2010, entices travelers to taste as they *tour*. Savor your vacation days with this insider's guide and get ready to explore Mexico's culinary scene.



A typical dish you might find on the coasts: grilled scallops and clams with butter, chiles and coriander.

FROM LEFT: MARCUS NILSSON/GALLERY STOCK; SQUIRE FOX/AUGUST IMAGE





Clockwise from left: tacos filled with steak, shrimp, pineapple and avocado; a worker farming the Blue Weber agave plant, the heart of which is used in the creation of tequila; the sweet-spicy shaved ice treat known as *chamoyada*, often served with a stick of tamarind candy as seen here; scallops in coconut milk with pineapple and salicornia, a delicacy from K'u'uk, in Mérida; a typical outdoor dining scene in Mexico City. Opposite page: a worker at Flora Farms, which supplies Flora's Field Kitchen in Baja.



THIS PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARCUS NILSSON/GALLERY STOCK, GREGG SEGAL/GALLERY STOCK, AARON THOMAS/STOCKS, JULIE SCHWERT/ATLANTIDE PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES, OPPOSITE: JULIE SCHWERT

**T**aste the complex, alluring combination of spices and local herbs, including epazote and hoja santa, in Oaxaca. Treat your taste buds in Guadalajara to birria, the spicy, slow-cooked stew of goat, lamb or pork. Then there's fresh-from-the-sea octopus, clams and shrimp served in Baja California's resort destination, Los Cabos. On the country's eastern coast, Mayan-informed recipes like *cochinita pibil* (pit-cooked pork) have been perfected over generations. Sound appetizing? Check out these five destinations where you can dig into the particulars of Mexican cuisine.

### 1. Oaxaca

Chiles, chocolate and corn are central to Oaxacan cuisine. Bite into tortillas piled high with toppings, including ingredients you might consider exotic, such as *chapulines*, aka toasted grasshoppers, which—if you're curious—are delicious, airy and light, a bit like popcorn. For upscale dining, make a reservation at Pitiona, where Oaxacan-born chef José Manuel Baños Rodríguez shows off the skills he learned while working at famed Spanish restaurants such as Arzak and the now-shuttered El Bulli. Baños takes classic Oaxacan recipes and makes them brand new through clever, creative techniques and impressive plating.

Visitors should also try the local libation, mezcal. Tequila's smoky cousin, mezcal is best sampled at Mezcaloteca, which has more than 80 varieties, many of them unique, artisanal, single-batch bottles.

**RESOURCES:** [pitiona.com](http://pitiona.com), [mezcaloteca.com](http://mezcaloteca.com)

### 2. Los Cabos & Baja California

Throughout the centuries, farm-to-table has been a way of life in Mexico, but in Baja California, the just-picked harvest makes its

way to tables at a number of local restaurants. Acre Baja, Flora's Field Kitchen and Huerta Los Tamarindos are the hottest tables around, so make reservations. All three have open-air tables that look directly onto their own farms.

For a more casual taste of the region, stop by El Mercado, a food hall that opened in 2016 and features more than a dozen stalls specializing in everything from seafood tacos to barbecue. If your travels take you north of Los Cabos, don't miss Deckman's en el Mogor restaurant, nestled into one of the Valle de Guadalupe vineyards.

**RESOURCES:** [acrebaja.com](http://acrebaja.com), [flora-farms.com](http://flora-farms.com), [lostamarindos.mx](http://lostamarindos.mx), [elmercado.mx](http://elmercado.mx), [deckmans.com](http://deckmans.com)

### 3. Guadalajara

The birthplace of the playful *jarabe tapatío*—aka the Mexican hat dance—Guadalajara also holds its own at the table. In fact, some of Mexico's iconic dishes originated in this area. Chief among them: the spicy meat-based stew called birria and the drowned sandwich. While these are casual foods, Guadalajara also has world-class restaurants, including the wildly popular Lula Bistro, where tasting menus range from six to 16 courses. You'll be forgiven

if you insist on photographing every one of them.

Many visitors to Guadalajara also make a side trip to the town of Tequila to visit agave farms and learn how Mexico's favorite spirit is made.

**RESOURCES:** [lulabistro.com](http://lulabistro.com)

### 4. Mexico City

Thanks to environmental and social reforms and an increasingly visible international profile, Mexico City is now a go-to travel destination, especially for travelers with an appetite.

Two of the capital's restaurants, Pujol and Quintonil, appear on the 2016 edition of *Restaurant* magazine's World's 50 Best Restaurants list, and their exquisite tasting menus are exceptionally priced. Even if you can't secure a reservation at one of these coveted tables, you won't be disappointed. The city abounds with excellent restaurants, including Azul Histórico, on the ground floor of a 17th century mansion. The menu changes monthly, with the flip of each calendar page bringing a deep exploration of a specific region's traditional recipes.

Other standouts include Italian-inflected Rosetta, seafood-centric Contramar and French-Mexican eatery Máximo Bistrot Local. Can't choose? Try a tour with

Eat Mexico or Mexican Food Tours; guides will take you on a food adventure, where you can sample specialties of several restaurants and learn about attractions along the way.

**RESOURCES:** [pujol.com.mx](http://pujol.com.mx), [quintonil.com](http://quintonil.com), [azul.rest.com.mx](http://azul.rest.com.mx), [rosetta.com.mx](http://rosetta.com.mx), [contramar.com.mx](http://contramar.com.mx), [maximobistrot.com.mx](http://maximobistrot.com.mx), [eatmexico.com](http://eatmexico.com), [mexicanfoodtours.com](http://mexicanfoodtours.com)

### 5. Mérida, the Yucatán Peninsula & the Riviera Maya

Once Mexico's wealthiest city, made rich by sisal barons who called the fiber "green gold," Mérida is an under-the-radar delight. The city is replete with colonial-era architecture (visit the Casa de Montejo for an exceptional example—and a peek at how the upper crust lived), charming scenes (horse-drawn carriages rattle along cobblestone streets) and cultural celebrations (the city sponsors musical and dance performances in its main square every day).

Mérida also has exceptional restaurants, the best of which is K'u'uk. Housed in one of those barons' mansions, this eatery is run by self-taught chef Pedro Evia, whose fascination with the Yucatán's ingredients, like habanero and achiote, borders on the obsessive. Ask to be taken into the lab, where a massive map of the peninsula hangs on the wall and is nearly papered over with Post-it notes that detail Evia's research. Indulge in the tasting menu, which might feature bone marrow spooned into a crispy sleeve of a yuca—a plant, also known as cassava, that's cultivated on the peninsula.

**RESOURCE:** [kuukrestaurant.com](http://kuukrestaurant.com)





## WHERE TO STAY

Thanks to Club affiliate **Fiesta Americana**, Members can reserve vacations at an additional three resorts\* in Mexico.

### Club Members can stay at any of **Grand Fiesta Americana Los Cabos All Inclusive Golf & Spa**

Twelve restaurants and bars keep guests sated, and the on-site SOMMA Wine Spa, one of only seven such spas in the world (and the only one in Mexico), draws inspiration from Baja California's wine-producing Valle de Guadalupe for its exclusive, luxurious treatments.

### **LAT20 by Live Aqua**

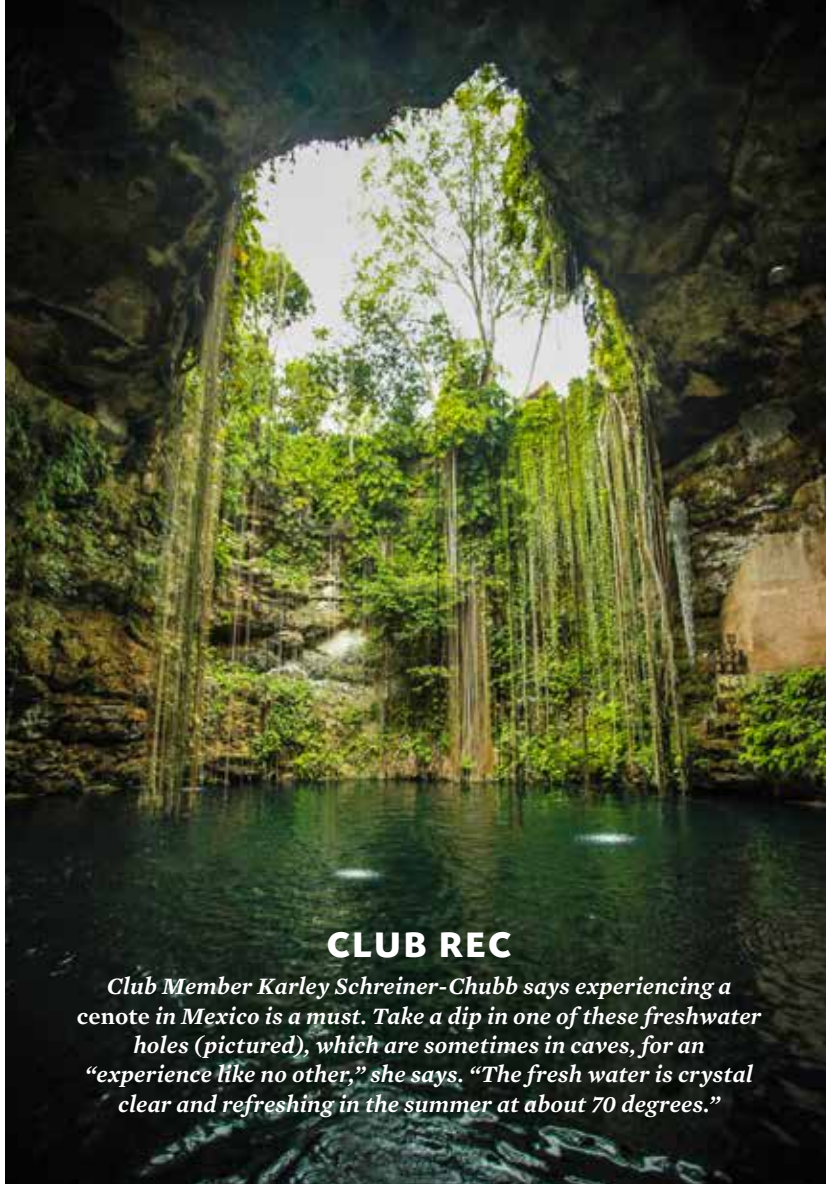
This boutique, adults-only, all-inclusive resort is close to all the action of Playa del Carmen, but it may be hard to leave the property since there are so many on-site dining and recreational options, including the rooftop infinity pool. Be sure to book a table at Chef's Kitchen for a locally sourced menu and a view of the Caribbean and the island of Cozumel.

### **Grand Fiesta Americana Puerto Vallarta**

Foodies won't be disappointed at this beachfront, all-inclusive, adults-only resort. Dinner spot Rojo Corazón interprets Mexican favorites with contemporary notes, and La Cevicheria will satisfy anyone with a seafood craving.

Don't skip Tequila Lounge, where you can try a variety of Mexico's favorite libation.

*\*A daily all-inclusive fee of \$80 per person is required for all three resorts. To learn more or book your reservation, go online or call a Club Counselor.*



## CLUB REC

*Club Member Karley Schreiner-Chubb says experiencing a cenote in Mexico is a must. Take a dip in one of these freshwater holes (pictured), which are sometimes in caves, for an "experience like no other," she says. "The fresh water is crystal clear and refreshing in the summer at about 70 degrees."*

## A FESTIVAL FOR EVERY SEASON

### **Spring**

The country's capital, Mexico City, has a seemingly endless number of festivals, but a long-standing favorite is the Festival del Centro Histórico, an international arts and culture extravaganza spanning two weeks in late March and early April in the revitalized Historic Center neighborhood. The full calendar of music, art and theater also includes special events and meals hosted by the Historic

Center's restaurants and culinary museum.

### **Summer**

Guadalajara, the birthplace of mariachi music and *charrería* (horsemanship), hosts an annual summer celebration of both during the International Mariachi and Charro Festival. Think you're not interested in these traditions? Think again! The colorful and lively displays of musical and athletic prowess will

be sure to entice. Don't forget to indulge in Guadalajara's cuisine, including its iconic *torta ahogadas*, or "drowned" sandwiches.

### **Fall**

2018 marks the 45th annual Festival Internacional Cervantino (International Cervantes Festival), held in Guadalajara. Don't be fooled by the name: While 16th century Spanish writer Miguel Cervantes inspired the

festival that's named for him, the lineup is a who's who of international dance, music and theatrical talent. Past performers have included musicians ranging from American icon B.B. King to Latin music great Rubén Blades.

### **Winter**

Oaxaca's Guelagüetza (a celebration of indigenous cultures held the last two Mondays of July) and Day of the Dead are perhaps the city's best-known

festivals, but the curious and endearing La Noche de los Rábanos is also worth traveling for. Held annually on December 23, the festival features artisans who turn a most unlikely object, the humble radish, into an astonishing array of hand-carved and constructed figures and scenes displayed in the main square. The origins of the festival date to 1897, when a contest was held that intended to promote local agriculture.

# Club

## YOUR MEMBERSHIP

### Ask a Club Counselor

In each issue of *Club Traveler*, a Club Counselor will answer questions about how the Club works. Club Member **Deb Novotny** asked:

#### **Can you explain the Cancellation Protection that can be purchased?**

Cancellation Protection gives you peace of mind in case of unforeseen events. Should you need to cancel your vacation plans at any time prior to check-in at the resort, your Points will be returned to your account with their normal expiration date. Unlike travel insurance, you are not required to provide documentation should you need to cancel your reservation. Cancellation Protection is offered for Home Week, Home Resort, Hilton Club Priority, Club and RCI exchange reservations using ClubPoints at the time the reservation is confirmed (up to one day prior to arrival)\*. For more information, visit the help section of the Club website, where you'll find useful videos explaining Cancellation Protection and other Club topics.

**– Shay Heyman, Elite Specialist**

*\*Bonus Points reservations are not eligible. A fee is applicable and is not refundable or transferable.*



# Make the Most of Your Membership

News, tips and tricks from your Club

From Club technology advancements to the grand opening of **The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club** to Team Member tips, we've got ways to help you make the most of your membership.

## Improved Online Booking Engine

Thanks to a new booking engine, which rolled out in spring, Members can now search across multiple properties in a location and across multiple unit types without having to refer to individual resort pages. Members can easily shift their travel dates to find what works.

For example, search for "Orlando," and all four Hilton Grand Vacations Club properties will appear in one view you can scroll through. The new, user-friendly search, which many Members had been asking for, is similar to the former Revolution booking engine. Members can also now book Club affiliates like Fiesta Americana and Anantara online, with more booking options in development.

## Member Dashboard Improvements

From your Member dashboard on the Club website, you can now directly manage and book Home Week reservations, access your Hilton Honors points balance and account information, and directly link to your HGV/RCI account.

## New Intelligent Call Routing

With the Club's new Intelligent Call Routing, when you call a Club Counselor, the system matches the number you are calling from to your phone number on file to route you to the Club Counselor best able to meet your specific needs. (So make sure your profile on the Club website is updated with any phone number you might use



Be greeted Hawaiian-style with a lei (above) at The Grand Islander.

to contact the Club.) Plus, if there is a wait time, you can use the new call-back feature to hold your place in queue, and a Club Counselor will call you as soon as he or she is available.

## Grand Islander Opening

Soaring above Waikiki's white-sand beaches, The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club celebrated its grand opening in Honolulu in March. It boasts local influences in the interior decorating, such as art and photography from area artists and bold furnishings that pair crisp

materials with rustic textures. The 37-story property is the newest addition to the 22-acre Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort.

Stay in exquisite one-, two- and three-bedroom suites or luxurious two- and three-bedroom penthouses with amenities like fully equipped kitchens, private balconies, and washers and dryers. Love to swim? If you're staying at The Grand Islander, take a dip in the resort's exclusive pool or one of four additional swimming pools on the property, including a 10,000-square-foot superpool, beach and saltwater lagoon.



# People Person

## Get to know Ernella Matsuda

Once you've pulled up to Kings' Land by Hilton Grand Vacations Club, you might have the luck to meet Ernella Matsuda. A service agent at the front desk, she's the point of entry for Members arriving at the Waikoloa Beach resort on Hawaii Island. The essence of her work is talking with Members—"I just like people," she reports—to help them enjoy their vacations as much as possible. *Club Traveler* chatted with Ernella about her job at Kings' Land.

### What drew you to Kings' Land?

It's neat to see people living out their travel dreams. Sometimes you'll see a guest arrive at night when it's dark, so Hawaii isn't really what they've pictured—and then you see them the next morning after they've rested. They've woken up in the sun, in this beautiful place, and *that's* when they know they're on vacation. To see the change in people just from night to day is such an experience. It's just where I'm supposed to be.

### Can you tell us about some of your most memorable guests?

There are so many. We had one Member stay for a month. We saw her every morning, every afternoon, exercising, taking the shuttle, and we'd help her in any way we could. At the end of her stay she came to me and said, "Because you helped me," and handed me tea from China, where she was from. We also have people who come here to recover. When you've been through an illness, you need to relax. Having

the opportunity to help people through that time is really special.

### What sets Kings' Land apart?

We're very family-oriented. That really begins with the people who work here. People can bring their kids to plenty of places, but since we treat each other like family, that feeling transfers to the guests—and that's how it should work. If you're a smiling, happy person, people reflect that back to you and wind up having a better vacation.

### Where do you send hungry Members?

Sansei's is wonderful. It's a Japanese steakhouse, but it has all sorts of food, so it's good for different kinds of diners. If people just want to relax, Daylight Mind café is a good place to hang out. But on my night off, I just might be at Roy's for the chocolate soufflé.

### What's your favorite recommendation for an off-the-beaten-path activity?

It's literally walking a path—the shoreline. You find beautiful shells, beautiful glass that's been softened by the ocean. When I was a child you could walk the shoreline and find whole glass floats that Japanese fishing boats used to keep fishing nets afloat. You don't see those much anymore, but you can still find the weathered glass. I love to walk and look for shells. If I get a nice shell, I might put it in my hand and say a quiet prayer for somebody, or just think good thoughts. It's relaxing.



# Walk on the Wild Side

Use RCI® affiliated resorts as a base for these splendid day hikes

Intrepid travelers know that one of the best ways to explore a new setting is by hitting the trails. From New England to the American Southwest to far-flung destinations such as New Zealand and the Indian subcontinent, make the most of these popular paths in four exciting locales.

## SEDONA, ARIZONA

In the heart of the American Southwest, Sedona is famous for its otherworldly red-rock mountains, pine forests and New Age enthusiasts, making it the perfect spot for a soul-renewing hike. Try the Soldier Pass, pictured here. This 4.2-mile loop trail leads to the top of Brins Mesa for 360-degree views of Secret Canyon Wilderness and Wilson Mountain, the area's highest peak. It also allows access to the sinkhole known as Devil's Kitchen and the Seven Sacred Pools, an ancient water source of the Sinagua Indians. Soldier Pass is named for the U.S. Cavalry troops who followed this route in 1871. As you retrace their steps, keep an eye out for carved natural arches, cypress and juniper trees, and javelina, which resemble wild boar.

Before your hike, fuel up in town at Indian Gardens Oak Creek Market ([indiangardens.com](http://indiangardens.com)), a grocery and café known for its rustic atmosphere, local goods and Southwest-themed dishes.



## JIM CORBETT NATIONAL PARK, INDIA

A journey through Jim Corbett National Park in northern India, shown above, will conjure images of Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, and you may even spot one of the subcontinent's most treasured animals, the royal Bengal tiger. The park is also home to more than 550 species of birds, 488 types of plants, and 37 varieties of dragonflies, many of which you can discover on foot.

A favorite day hike is to Corbett Falls near the town of Kaladhungi. A mile-long loop path leads you through a teak forest to a peaceful waterfall with views of Indian pond heron and enchanting butterflies. Further exploration into the park's wilderness is best viewed by safari. Birdwatchers should keep an eye out for the black-chinned hummingbird, the rosy minivet and the majestic gray-headed fishing eagle. Don't forget your binoculars!

KILLINGTON, VERMONT

Nestled in the Green Mountains of New England, Killington is best known for its ski slopes. But when the snow melts, it becomes a hiker’s paradise. Deer Leap Overlook is one of the area’s best viewpoints and can be accessed by Deer Leap Trail, a 4-mile loop. This route also connects to the famed Appalachian Trail, which cuts across the eastern U.S. from Georgia to Maine. Gifford Woods State Park is known for its old-growth hardwood forests; tree lovers can spot century-old sugar maples, beech, white ash and hemlock groves. Another option within the park is the 3.5-mile Pond and Waterfall Loop. This trail is especially rewarding in summer, as many of the water features make great swimming holes.

While in the area, don’t miss the nearby Long Trail Brewing Company (*longtrail.com*). Dine riverside (as seen below) for some East Coast ales and pub fare featuring Vermont cheddar cheese—perfect after a long day of hiking.

GARRY RIDSDALE/ROBERT HARDING, INSET: COURTESY OF LONG TRAIL BREWERY



LAKE WANAKA, NEW ZEALAND

No trip to Lake Wanaka, shown here, would be complete without a hike. Surrounded by glacial peaks, beech groves and crystal-clear waters, it’s no wonder travelers flock to this city on New Zealand’s southern island. Dive into the area’s natural wonder on the Blue Pools Track—a 1.8-mile return path that takes you on a photogenic swing bridge over the Makarora River’s famous aquamarine pools. Beyond the bridge, the trail ends at a breathtaking river-gorge viewpoint.

For more adventure, visit the nearby Mount Aspiring National Park, which is part of the South West New Zealand UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Diamond Lake Track is a popular 3.6-mile loop route; the views of Mount Aspiring to the west are the most spectacular because the generous rainfall makes the landscape particularly lush. Flora and fauna include red rata flowers, fuchsia trees, parakeets and falcons.



Club Members can use Points to stay at RCI® affiliated resorts in stunning natural settings across the globe\*. To find resorts in hiking-friendly destinations, log in to your Club account at [club.hiltongrandvacations.com](https://club.hiltongrandvacations.com) and navigate to the RCI® Exchange site. Then, click “Vacation Ideas” at the top of the page, select “Featured Interests” and click “Outdoors & Parks” for vacation ideas and where to stay.

\* These vacations are limited and subject to availability.

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# Best of Both Worlds

Members share their favorite vacation memories

“

My husband retired from his work as a police officer two years ago, and we wanted to get the whole family together to mark that. We all love the beach, and we'd never been to Myrtle Beach, so we knew Ocean 22 would work out.

It was exactly what we had in mind when we became Club Members. When we traveled with our kids when they were younger we could just pile everyone into a room, but now that our kids have kids we all need our space. It was wonderfully spacious, with room for privacy and for us to all hang out, too.

Every family picked a day that was theirs to plan. One of my daughters picked a day trip to Fort Sumter as her day; that's where the Civil War officially began. My other daughter did a boardwalk day—it was within walking distance and it had a Ferris wheel and restaurants. We really fell for an area called Broadway at the Beach, which wasn't a far drive and had an aquarium, kids' entertainment and some fantastic restaurants.

For my husband's and my day, we walked to Bagel Factory to get breakfast for everyone. That night we went to Bummz Beach Cafe next door to Ocean 22. And in between: beach day! That's really what we were there for, and Ocean 22 was perfect because it was right on the beach. We actually began most of our days at the pool. They

had an outdoor pool plus a covered one, so it didn't matter if it was rainy. You could order food there, so we'd have snacks at the pool and then head to the beach, or go back and forth between the two.

That “best of both worlds” feeling was what made our trip so stress-free. There was enough nearby that everyone could do their own thing when they wanted—my sons-in-law might go golfing in the morning, or we'd go shopping—and then we'd regroup, so everybody had their own vacation plus the group vacation, too.

I'm returning to the area later this year, and to be honest I'm not sure who's coming with me! It might be a family trip if people can get off work, or it might just be a couples' trip, or maybe a girlfriends' getaway. Whatever the case, I can't wait to go back.

”

## The Cataudella Family

Club Members since 2001

Featured Trip: Ocean 22 by Hilton Grand Vacations Club, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, September 2016

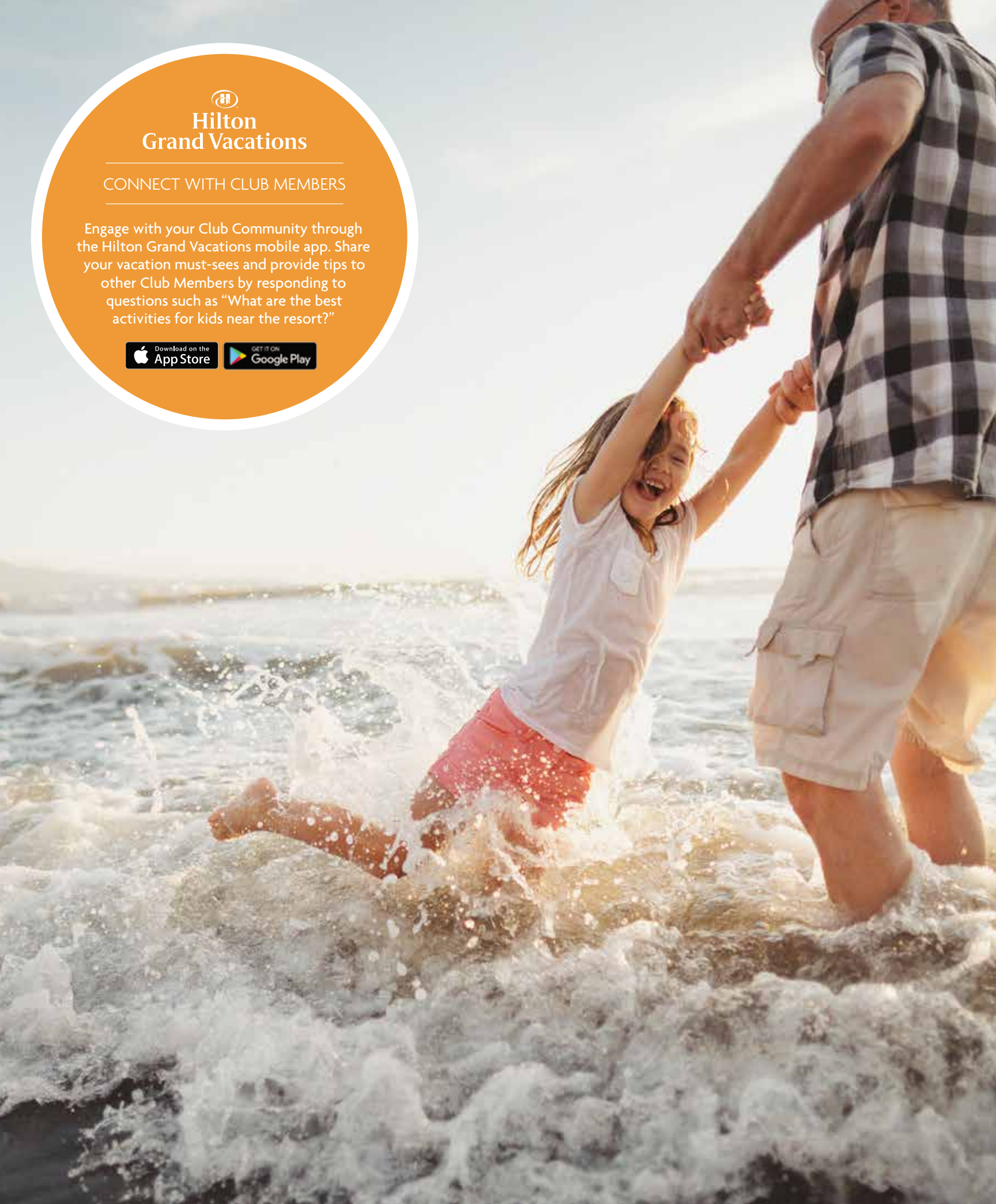




## Hilton Grand Vacations

### CONNECT WITH CLUB MEMBERS

Engage with your Club Community through the Hilton Grand Vacations mobile app. Share your vacation must-sees and provide tips to other Club Members by responding to questions such as “What are the best activities for kids near the resort?”



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# A VACATION STATE OF MIND

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