## Club



## FALLING FOR FOR HAWAII INSIDER'S GUIDE

#### PLUS

THE WORLD'S BEST BUDGET EATS

ORLANDO, ADULT-STYLE

LUGGAGE TECH

Hilton Grand Vacations CLUBTRAVELER.COM



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## Your Ticket to Paradise

Tropical beaches, sumptuous resorts, supersized waves and more

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Need a ride from your Club to the airport? The solution is at your fingertips. Members can now order a ride from Uber directly from the My Trip screen of the HGV mobile app.

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### Dear Club Member



The year is off to a great start at Hilton Grand Vacations Club! Our newest Club resort opened in Honolulu this past March, giving you brand-new accommodations and increased availability in Hawaii. Find out more about The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club in the feature story on page 20.

This year also marks Hilton Grand Vacations' 25th anniversary. We're honored to have spent the past two and a half decades helping you explore your love of travel, and we look forward to continuing on that mission in the years ahead.

I hope you've noticed more and more opportunities to share your thoughts with us during the past several months, and your feedback has led to action. We launched new program and fee changes in 2017 driven by your input, and we will continue to look for new ways to enhance your membership experience.

Our Member education program, which started with a pilot last year, is already underway for 2017. We held a successful first event in Charlotte, North Carolina, and have three more planned–stay tuned for additional information later this year.

Another major focus this year will be our website and mobile app. You've logged on more than ever and shared your thoughts, and we've heard you. We are working diligently to ensure that these tools make it even easier to use your membership, so we plan to introduce significant upgrades to the functionality of the website and app in the coming months.

As we continue listening to and learning from you, I can't thank you enough for your honest insights and opinions. Hilton Grand Vacations Club truly is your Club, and we remain committed to using your input to help guide the future.

Happy travels,

Stan Soroka Chief Customer Officer

#### (a) Hilton Grand Vacations Club

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#### ON THE WEB

Stay up to date with our monthly eNewsletter. Find top 2017 eNewsletter stories on **clubtraveler.com**.

"Check Out 3 New Vacation Opportunities in Mexico"

"Got Club Questions? More Workshops Ahead"

"Meet Our Newest Cruise Partner: CruisesOnly"

"Big Things Ahead for the Club Website in 2017"

"Say Salute to Tuscany's Wines"

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"Explore Hawaii Like a Five-O"

#### Send Us Your Feedback!

What do you think about *Club Traveler*? Send us an email at feedback@clubtraveler.com.

## Dream WHERE TO GO

### **Dream Vacation**

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Club Member **Josh Abrams**, Owner at Elara, a Hilton Grand Vacations Club in Las Vegas since January 2015, says his dream vacation would include a blend of sports, games like blackjack and craps, rich culture and pampering.

"Monte Carlo can check all those boxes if I attend the Monaco Grand Prix," he says. The Cannes Film Festival, which, like the Formula 1 race, takes place annually in May, would be a must-see attraction during the trip, too, he adds. "While over there, I'd tour Monaco, Venice and Rome. I'd sample the best French and Italian foods, eating more than my share of gelato and cannoli. Oh, and, of course, there would be (at least) daily massages."

Where to Stay: Start your adventure at Hilton Milan in Milan, Italy, conveniently located a few hours' drive from both Monte Carlo and Florence and one block from the city's Central Train Station. Once you're in the region, stay just a stone's throw away from Monte Carlo in the heart of Nice, France, at **Residence** Massena, by RCI.

Want to be featured in Club Traveler? Tell us your dream destination by emailing us at feedback@clubtraveler.com.

## Plan Ahead

Events worth the trip-whatever your time frame

#### 3 months

#### Fiesta of the Virgin of Carmen, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, July 16

Summer is right around the corner, but you're in luck— Cabo is all about spontaneity. Experience the rich culture of Baja California during this storied holiday, honoring a woman viewed as a protector of Mexico. Start the day walking the streets, chock-full of vendors selling local food and handiwork, then catch a parade of puppets and schoolchildren.

#### 6 months

#### A Month of Magical Food, Orlando, Florida, September

With all of autumn's beautiful transitions, why not transform your palate as well? Orlando's Magical Dining Month is a foodfrenzied marathon drawing worldrenowned chefs and adventurous eaters from the world over. Eat your greens, if you want—but at \$33 for three courses, this excursion won't be eating yours. Bonus: Orlando landed among *Wine Enthusiast*'s 10 Best Wine Travel Destinations in recent years. Check out *visitorlando.com/ magicaldining* for more information.



### 9 months

#### Volcano Sightings and Mochi Pounding Festival, Hawaii Island, December 30

Treat yourself before the onslaught of holiday stress with a getaway to the balmy, breezy Hawaii Island. While you're there, wear a lei and lounge on the beach, or try your luck

at glimpsing a lava flow from one of the most active volcanoes in the world—Kīlauea. Or join the hundreds of visitors who arrive in Hakalau village every year for the annual mochi pounding to hammer away at sticky rice for good luck in the new year.

### 12-plus months

#### Sunny Side Up Tropical Festival, Bali, Indonesia, August 2018

Addictive electro-pop music and authentic Balinese flair converge for two adrenaline-fueled days in the hip and burgeoning Seminyak. Stay at Anantara Vacation Club Seminyak Bali and be minutes away from trendy bars, chic restaurants and local designer shops—that is, if you can pull yourself away from the jams of world-class musical talent, which has included the likes of Ellie Goulding, Azealia

Banks and Mark Ronson. Club Members with Elite status can take advantage of the Elite booking window at Anantara properties—up to 365 days from their checkout date. The standard Anantara booking window is 275 days from check-out date.



## Look Up 10 incredible stargazing spots

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## Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain

Let your imagination swim wild in an ocean of stars off the coast of Morocco on the Canary Islands. The tourist-friendly isle of Tenerife is home to the famed Teide Observatory, which has hosted the likes of Stephen Hawking and Neil Armstrong.

#### 2. Mauna Kea, Hawaii

**THE 10** 

Beyond the island of Hawaii's idyllic beaches and luxury resorts you'll find a lofty window to the universe atop the dormant Mauna Kea volcano–a perch for powerful research telescopes and a public observation station high above the clouds.

#### 3. Atacama Desert, Chile Chile's high desert, nestled along the Andes Mountains, touts what Astronomy magazine deems "the greatest observing conditions on planet Earth." See the Magellanic Clouds (dwarf galaxies) from the small town

1 Bet all

of San Pedro de Atacama, the region's hub for globetrotting stargazers.

#### 4. Death Valley National Park, California

Exceptionally dark, typically cloud-free desert skies dazzle stargazers at the lowest, driest, hottest spot in North America, a geologic wonderland only a two-hour drive from the bright lights of Las Vegas.

#### 5. Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve, New Zealand Ringed by snow-capped peaks

on New Zealand's dramatic

South Island, the world's largest Dark Sky Reserve is a prime location for marveling at the southern lights (*aurora australis*) between March and September.

#### 6. Galloway Forest Park, Scotland

One of the United Kingdom's darkest locales offers mountainand woodland-framed views of the twinkling heavens. Peek through telescopes at the hilltop Scottish Dark Sky Observatory.

#### 7. Alqueva, Portugal

Astrotourism is booming in the country's rural Alentejo region, which delights amateur astronomers with dark, dependably clear skies above Lake Alqueva. Take a nightcanoeing excursion on the lake or saddle up for a moonlight horseback ride.

#### 8. Big Bend National Park, Texas

The stars at night are big and bright, deep in the heart of Texas–or, in the case of rugged, remote Big Bend, in southwest Texas along the U.S.-Mexico border. The park is so dark, you'll have no trouble finding the Andromeda galaxy–2.5 million light-years from Earth– with the naked eye.

#### **SOLAR ECLIPSE: 2017**

The last time a total solar eclipse occurred over the continental United States, the Bee Gees topped the charts and gas cost less than \$1 a gallon. Thirty-eight years later, on August 21, 2017, the moon will slide in front of the sun and a narrow path of total eclipse will cross 12 states, from Oregon to South Carolina. The rare celestial spectacle has everyone from astronomy geeks to great-grandmothers making travel plans to witness the brilliant corona.

The largest city in the path of totality (the moon completely covering the sun) is Nashville, Tennessee; the longest period of totality (2 minutes, 42 seconds) will occur near Carbondale, Illinois.

#### 9. Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park, Florida

Declared an International Dark Sky Park in 2016, these central Florida grasslands boast an inky black sky virtually free of light pollution. Keep an eye peeled for the flash of rocket launches from nearby Cape Canaveral.

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#### 10. Denali National Park & Preserve, Alaska

The Alaskan wild treats you to eye candy with the northern lights (*aurora borealis*)–curtains of colorful light waving across the night sky. Peak activity at the sky's darkest lasts from early September till about April 20.

## Tuscany, Taby Centuries ago, Tuscans built store walls around their villages to kee out invaders; today, many of those ancient walls still stand, though t region now welcomes visitors fro all over the world. The best way Centuries ago, Tuscans built stone

walls around their villages to keep out invaders; today, many of those ancient walls still stand, though the region now welcomes visitors from all over the world. The best way to soak up Tuscany's history and see its seemingly endless verdant fields is to meander from town to town, drinking in the local flavor at the wineries or exploring the countryside on a bike. Book your trip for October or November, during Tuscany's famed white truffle season and after the summer crowds have departed.

ngs, too. Nov



Club Members can stay at Hilton Grand Vacations Club at Borgo alle Vigne in Selvatelle, Pisa, among the rolling hills of historic Tuscany and close to beautiful beaches, exclusive golf courses and the art of Florence. Choose from one, two or three bedrooms, all with balconies, full kitchens, an outdoor pool and many more amenities.

## Thailand's Rose of the North

Your guide to visiting Chiang Mai

#### How to Get There

CITY LIFE

Travelers can reach Chiang Mai from Bangkok by bus, overnight train or plane-which is the fastest route to this city in northern Thailand, with a 75-minute direct flight to Chiang Mai International Airport. Choose from more than 10 air carriers, such as Bangkok Airways, which connects Chiang Mai with Bangkok eight times a day and offers direct flights to Myanmar and the islands of Phuket and Samui from the capital of the north.

#### How to Get Around

Tuk-tuks, small auto rickshaws, are great for short distances inside and out of the city moat, but always agree on a price before getting in to avoid misunderstandings. If you're covering a lot of ground, consider hiring a tuk-tuk driver for the day; your driver will whisk vou from destination to destination, then wait at a designated place. It may not always be the smoothest ride, but nothing says Thailand like a tuk-tuk. Just ask the recent Thai Miss Universe

contestant who dressed as one and won the pageant's best national costume prize.

#### What to Eat

If Chiang Mai had an official dish, it would without a doubt be *khao soi*, a combination of soft and crispy yellow noodles in a heady curry broth that traces its roots back to ancient Burma and Muslim Chinese traders. Crowds at family-run favorite Khao Soi Islam order classic versions topped with chicken or beef or more unusual seafood or vegetarian variations. Saenkham Terrace offers the dish

in a refined Lanna, or northern Thai, setting. Want to pass for a local? The garnishes of pickled greens, chopped shallot and fresh-squeezed lime juice are not optional. Stir them in and add chili oil to taste. And though these days you'll see it on many dinner menus, don't order *khao soi* after dark. It's traditionally a lunchtime dish.

#### Where to Stroll

The soi, or alleyways,

Chiang Mai boasts one of Thailand's most vibrant night markets, making it the perfect place to pick up souvenirs like parasols.

on each side of busy Nimmanhaemin Road are packed with surprises. During the day, wander among the cozy cafés, colorful boutiques and galleries. *Khun* (Madam) Anchalee, the gracious owner of Srisanpanmai, is rightly proud of her rare antique and contemporary textiles and her personal collection of fine hill tribe clothing. Nimman nightlife is a vibrant mix of casual and well-heeled venues. Take in the sunset views from Rise Rooftop Bar before hitting the street.

#### Where to Stay

Members can choose their home away from home with a two-bedroom suite at Anantara's Chiang Mai Resort. The property exudes tranquility despite being in the heart of the city. Bespoke experiences include private cooking classes with Chef Songpol, one-on-one training in muay thai (kickboxing) or cocktails crafted by Service 1921's awardwinning mixologist, Dr. X. Service 1921 also boasts a secret dining room hidden in plain view. Can you find it?

For future reference, the Hilton Bangkok has phenomenal dining options.

## Plan HOW TO GET THERE

### Ask the Resort

It's never too early to start planning your escape from the cold weather, especially when that escape is to Hawaii. We asked **Grant Nouchi**, general manager of The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club in Honolulu, what activities and attractions he recommends Club Members see during the holidays.

"In our fall and winter months, some of nature's wonders reveal themselves. It is *kohola* [humpback whales] watching season, which generally starts in December and then picks up from January through March, and ends in May. I would recommend taking a hike up Makapu'u Lighthouse Trail–from the trail, you can see whales making their way through the Kai'wi Channel between Molokai and Oahu. During the season's peak months, you will be able to witness pods of whales passing through the channel, with some moments of breaching the surface in the distance. Don't forget to pack your camera, water and some snacks!

"Another natural wonder happens at the North Shore, where the winter swells of 20to 50-foot waves start to make their presence known. From November through December, the Vans Triple Crown of Surfing competition kicks off, hosting three events on the North Shore. And then there is the ever-elusive Big Wave Invitational, known as 'The Eddie,' which is held at Waimea Bay. It requires waves to hit 40 to 50 feet for the competition to take place. The waiting period begins with an opening ceremony on December 1 and then runs until February 28. In its 31-year history, the event has only happened nine times, so if you are visiting, keep your fingers crossed and keep checking the wave reports."

LEADER OF THE PACK

## Go-to Gadgets

Smart devices to pack for your next journey, from travel writer Larry Olmsted

Passport? Check. Boarding pass? Check. Wallet? Check. Add to your list of travel essentials a few new gadgets that will help make your trips smoother, safer and more enjoyable.

#### **Bag trackers**

Just a few years ago, if an airline lost your luggage there was nothing you could do. Even worse was if someone grabbed your bag and took off. Now, GPS-enabled trackers allow you to locate your bags using a computer or smartphone. Some function like luggage tags, but, unlike traditional luggage tags, they're difficult enough to remove that they won't get torn off or targeted by a thief. Bestselling in-bag tracker models include the LugLoc and Trakdot models, which are about the size of a pack of cards and weigh just a few ounces.

#### A super-slim e-book reader

It's easy to get bored on a long flight, train or bus ride if you haven't packed enough entertainment. The Amazon Kindle Paperwhite e-book reader features beach-ready technology that lets you read without screen glare, even in full sun. If you're taking a really long trip, the new, thin and super-light Oasis Kindle can run for months with only a single charge thanks to a battery integrated into its leather cover.

#### A multitasking tablet

With more in-flight Wi-Fi than ever, services that let you download content in advance and airlines offering free on-demand streaming, you have no excuse to not be entertained. Any laptop or tablet will get you connected, but if you're looking to upgrade, the Microsoft Surface Pro 4 (pictured above) saves weight and space. It's a full-blown computer masquerading as a tablet, with plenty of storage, an exceptional HD screen and nine hours of battery life.

#### Surround-sound headphones

If you want to drown out noise around you, neither regular nor "passive" noise-canceling headphones do the job. The new Sennheiser PXC 550 Wireless headphones offer SRS surround sound for a full-blown movie theater experience, an upgraded version of the company's proprietary NoiseGard cancellation and wireless connectivity. The Sennheiser PXC 550 are light and comfy, fold flat, double as a phone headset and feature an unrivaled 30hour battery life—so no nonstop flight on Earth is too long for a single charge.

#### A solar charger

If you're headed off the grid and into the wilderness, you won't want to run out of juice. One device providing a solution is a portable solar charger. Consider Anker's PowerPort Solar Lite 15W dual port folding charger. Resembling a flexible wallet, this portfolio, much smaller than a magazine, unfolds to reveal two thin solar panels. It weighs 12 ounces and can fully charge an iPhone or Android device by sunlight in under four hours while charging a second device simultaneously.

### Plugged In

Bags that do more than carry your belongings may be worth the investment. Many now feature built-in luggage scales, phone chargers and other extras. Here are three brands to consider exploring.

Bluesmart One. Its "Smart Luggage" (pictured below) is a fourwheel rolling lightweight carry-on with worldwide GPS location, a built-in SIM card slot, two charging ports that can juice up your devices six times before needing another charge, a built-in luggage scale and even remote locking via smartphone.

**Travelpro.** This venerable brand that pioneered the roll-aboard carry-on was launched by an airline pilot and has long been the choice of flight attendants, pilots and frequent travelers. Now Travelpro is incorporating USB charging ports with a removable battery in several models, from four-wheel spinners to briefcases.

**Raden.** This New York boutique luggage maker incorporates a charger with two external USB ports that can fully charge four phones on one charge, a Bluetooth radio transmitter that pairs with an app to let you locate your luggage nearby, and a digital scale in the handle.



## Ease & Speed

News and resources to make travel simpler

#### All Aboard

Amtrak's recent announcement that it will increase its fleet with 28 new Acela Express train sets comes as good news for frequent vacationers in the Northeast. This next generation of high-speed trains, which will enter into service in 2021, will come equipped with one-third more space per passenger; modern interior design; personal outlets and USB ports; improved Wi-Fi; and upgraded food carts, according to the U.S. railroad. The new train sets will operate along the Washington, D.C.-New York City-Boston Northeast Corridor at 160 mph. The trains will be able to go up to 186 mph as the corridor's infrastructure is improved, according to Amtrak.

#### Grab a Ride

After a nice dinner out on the town, or a full day's worth of activities, it's easier than ever before to find your way back to your vacation home. Thanks to Hilton Grand Vacations Club's partnership with Uber, Club Members can now book a ride with the car-sharing service directly from the My Trip screen of the mobile Club app. Better yet? You don't even have to enter your destination details. The app comes preset to take you directly to your Club.

#### App Baggage

Delta debuted real-time checked bag tracking on its Fly Delta mobile app. The system uses radio-frequency identification (RFID) chips embedded in luggage tags, which allows travelers to keep an eye on their bags from the moment they check them. The airline, which handles 120 million bags each year, is tracking the bags as well, replacing bar-code hand scanning in hopes of lowering baggage mishandling by an estimated 10 to 20 percent.

#### In the Clear

Clear, the membership service that allows travelers to use a designated lane for Transportation Security Administration screening or PreCheck lines, is expanding to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Los Angeles International Airport, and New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport and LaGuardia Airport. The service, which costs \$179 per year, or \$155 for Club Members with Elite status, uses biometric scanning technology to verify identity, allowing members to skip the physical ID check that precedes security. (Members still have to go through security.) The additions bring the number of airports offering Clear lanes to 22.

#### **Orlando Expansion**

Travelers are encouraged to mind the dust at Orlando International Airport as it undergoes expansion. The \$1.8 billion south terminal project will add 16 to 21 gates and is expected to open in 2020. A \$1.1 billion expansion of the north terminal began two years ago. Among the changes travelers can expect: updated ticket lobbies and baggage systems, a new parking garage and a new train station to connect the airport to SunRail, Central Florida's commuter train.

#### Happy 1,000, Priority Pass

Priority Pass added 130 lounges to its program in 2016 and now offers members access to more than 1,000 airport lounges worldwide. Annual club membership starts at \$99 and has three levels: Standard, which lets members use lounges for a \$27 fee; Standard Plus, which can be purchased using Bonus Points and offers 10 free visits and \$27 visits thereafter; and Prestige, which offers unlimited free lounge entry.

#### Seat With a View

For the best mile-high views, here's where to sit when flying into the following airports.

**San Francisco International Airport.** Sit on the left side of the plane for views of the Golden Gate Bridge, or the right to see Alcatraz.

Ronald Reagan National Airport. Choose a seat left of the aisle for views of the National Mall, Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial.

#### Los Angeles International Airport.

Seats on the right side will usually showcase downtown, Century City, the San Gabriel Mountains and the iconic Hollywood sign.

All Other Destinations. Roll the dice-either way, you're seeing the world from above, and that's special whatever the view.

PICTURE PERFECT

#### Set it right.

Beginners should tackle bright daytime shoots using small aperture settings. On manually adjustable cameras, start with f16 or f32 and ISO 100 or ISO 200 for results with fine-grain and sharp detail. On mobile devices, choose the pano setting and follow the onscreen instructions.

#### Scope the scene.

Keep the imagery simple by focusing on a small palette of colors, repeated textures or uncommon designs found in nature. Mountainous landscapes, oceanfront views or rows of a vineyard successfully translate into panoramic shots.

#### Hold steady.

For best results use a tripod, which will steady your camera, tablet or smartphone, reducing blur and making it easier to line up the series of exposures. Pan slowly from left to right or sky to ground. Those holding a camera should capture at least five images of a scene, and should stop momentarily while panning to capture each individual shot.

## <sup>12</sup> Taking It All In

BBBB

Tips for pro-quality panoramic shots, from photographer Angela Tague

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#### Take your best shots.

Since lighting conditions, clouds and shadows can change in an instant, especially during sunrise and sunset, complete a series in a minute or two to make the final panoramic image—which you'll assemble using digital imaging software on your computer or mobile device—look seamless. Shoot multiple series and pick the best later as you stitch together the photos into one long, panoramic image. Some cameras and smartphones have panoramic settings to guide the framing of your succession of shots, making this final step a quick, automated process.

#### Go manual.

Select the camera's manual metering mode to ensure each frame is exposed exactly the same. Variations in exposure settings make it difficult to later join the photos together without seeing the edges of each image.

The only way to truly capture a sweeping landscape such as a swath of crashing waves, a busy piazza or a bustling cityscape is to take a panoramic shot. Use a basic 50 mm prime lens on a camera (a wide angle lens can distort the edges of the images) or choose the pano setting on a smartphone or tablet (avoid zoom, which makes the image less crisp).

t panoramas? Email your best panoramic pics to **feedback@clubtraveler.com** e featured as a Big Picture in an upcoming issue of *Club Traveler*. GOOD SAVE

## Affordable, Exotic Eats

Inexpensive dishes you must try, worldwide

Traveling the world can be expensive, but eating well on the go doesn't need to be. From the best bread you've ever tasted to an unexpectedly rich dessert, here are off-the-beaten-path, musttry local dishes that can fill your belly without breaking your budget on your next international journey.

#### Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

No trip to Saudi is complete without a taste of *kabsa*, the national dish. From the earthy warmth of allspice to the tang of black lime, this rice and meat dish-you can find it made with chicken, lamb, shrimp and even camel-highlights the unique flavors of this Arabian city. While highly spiced, it's not actually spicy, making this biryani-like dish an easy try for the whole family.

**Try it:** Order chicken kabsa at Najd Village (At Takhassusi St., Al Olaya, Riyadh 12331, Saudi Arabia)

#### Shah Alam, Malaysia

Natives of coastal Selangor's state capital flock to the Cendol Pak Akob stand in front of the Jamek Raja Tun Uda mosque. The draw? *Cendol*, a mix of shaved ice, coconut milk, palm sugar, red beans and green rice-flour noodles. This famous stall uses homemade ingredients to create a creamy, sweet, rich and refreshing dessert that's worth hanging out on the sidewalk to eat.

**Try it:** Order cendol at Cendol Pak Akob (Persiaran Selangor, Seksyen 16, 40200 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia)

#### Nairobi, Kenya

If you eat nothing else in Nairobi, get yourself a plate of tilapia pulled from Lake Nakuru and deep-fried. Crispy, salty and smoky all at once, Mama Oliech Restaurant prepares the fish in the preferred style of the Luo people. Cooked over a wood fire, it's a well-priced treat that pairs well with a side of vegetables and local staple *ugali*, a dough made of white cornmeal.

**Try it:** Order fried tilapia at Mama Oliech Restaurant (Marcus Garvey Road, Nairobi, Kenya) Sulguni, the cheese in Georgian khachapuri, is also known as "pickle cheese" for its tang.

#### Tbilisi, Georgia

What's not to love about chewy, savory bread filled with creamy, bubbly cheese, melted, salty butter and a perfectly cooked egg? Sakhachapure #1 makes great pizza, but it's *khachapuri*, the city's specialty, that shines the brightest. Take a friend, order the largest size you can handle, then rip off pieces of the boat-shaped bread bowl and use them to scoop up the yummy goodness inside. **Try it**: Order acharuli khachapuri at Sakhachapure #1 (Rustaveli Ave., 5, East Point Mall, Tbilisi 0108, Georgia)

#### Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia

Need a quick snack? The *salteña* (pictured below) is perfect for eating while you explore this walkable, sky-high city. It looks like an empanada, but thicker, sweeter dough sets it apart from the classic Latin American dish. Traditionally baked with juicy, spicy chopped beef, garlic, egg and stewed onions, many stands and restaurants also offer chicken, pork and vegetarian versions, so there is a salteña for everyone. **Try it:** Order salteña at Salteñas

Potosinas (Av. Beni 1500, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia)





In Cabo, travelers will discover not only around 350 days of sunshine a year, but also more striped marlin than anywhere else in the world.

### Local Perspective

Sitting on the southernmost tip of the Baja California peninsula in Mexico, Cabo San Lucas-known simply as Cabo to most-is a prime vacation spot for hitting the beach, catching the sunset and making a splash. Perhaps the most recognizable symbol of Cabo is The Arch, locally known as El Arco, a unique three-story-tall formation of rugged rocks in the water that attracts tourists and sea lions alike, and sits where the Pacific Ocean meets the Gulf of California. Club Members can stay just 10 minutes from downtown at **Grand Fiesta Americana Los Cabos All Inclusive Golf & Spa**. Local resident **Roberto Estrada** says there's a lot to do in Cabo, but the best way to experience the city is to plan ahead of time. He recommends exploring not only Cabo, which is filled with beautiful beaches and many water activities, but also the surrounding area. Here are some of his insider tips:

"A beautiful structure right in downtown to visit is the San Jose del Cabo Church, which was built on the site of the original mission founded in 1730 by the Jesuits. We also have a magical town about an hour from Cabo San Lucas [named] Todos Santos."

## **Dine** Around Orlando The fun doesn't end when you leave Orlando's theme parks-these local hot spots

**DoveCote Brasserie** 

From the chef-owners of the popular Ravenous Pig and Swine & Sons comes their latest project, DoveCote Brasserie in downtown Orlando, a modern incarnation of the classic French brasserie. Start with the pork terrine or the beef tartare, or go right to the main event for a croque monsieur or fine herb omelet, for lunch or dinner. Enjoy your meal with a glass of grog featuring citrus, spiced maple, hibiscus milk-washed rum and absinthe.

#### Homecoming

Moonshine on tap. Now that we have your attention, allow us to introduce Homecoming: Florida Kitchen and Southern Shine at Disney Springs. Chef Art Smith, a Florida native, whips up his favorite Southern classics, including fried green tomatoes and his famous fried chicken, not to mention the Shine Cake, soaked with a moonshine-spiked simple syrup. At the bar, sip a flight of the four moonshines served on tap, or try your 'shine mixed into craft cocktails like the watermelon-infused Moonshine Mash. Cheers!

serve up thrills of their own

#### The Osprey Tavern

The Osprey Tavern serves up contemporary American cuisine in Orlando's Baldwin Park neighborhood. Before dinner, sip on a Ruby Rose made with vodka, cherry liqueur, hibiscus, lemon and bitters; or maybe a Fireside Chat, with bourbon, hazelnut, Demerara and bitters, topped off with beef jerky. At the table, keep it light with the Ponce Inlet golden tilefish featuring Italian heirloom carrot, Italian faro and ginger pickled raisins, or go for something heartier such as the cottage pie served with braised short rib, whipped Yukon gold potatoes, carrots and peas.





#### Sip and Savor

Enjoy signature cocktails at your Hilton Grand Vacations Club resorts in Orlando.

#### Las Palmeras

It's hard to worry when you're enjoying a Stress Relief, with Tito's Handmade Vodka, Gosling's Black Seal Rum, orange and cranberry juices and simple syrup, served on the rocks.

#### Parc Soleil

Try a refreshing taste of summer year-round at Parc Soleil with the Summer Splash: Absolut Citron, blueberries, fresh mint and lemonade.

#### SeaWorld

The luck of the Bermuda Moongate will be yours when you sip the resort's Moon Gate Mojito, a combination of Bacardi Mango, mango purée, fresh lime juice and mint leaves with a splash of club soda.

#### **Tuscany Village**

Bacardi Tangerine Rum blended with mango and poured atop strawberry purée erupts with flavor in the Pompeii, a volcanic frozen specialty cocktail at Toscana Pool Bar and Grill.

## Capital Ideas

An insider's guide to kid-friendly D.C.

Heading to the nation's capital this spring? Explore the city like a local with these family-friendly activities.

#### Visit

With 17 free area museums and galleries, and even a zoo, the Smithsonian Institution offers the ultimate way to entertain your entire family. You can scratch a different itch every day: Start with the butterfly garden at the National Museum of Natural History (the garden is free on Tuesdays), say hi to the giant pandas at the National Zoo, then spring for rides in the interactive flight simulators (\$10 per person) at the National Air and Space Museum.

#### Watch

Don't let the serious name fool you: The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has much to offer even the youngest family members. This spring brings kid-centered To Sail Around the Sun, a show that blends storytelling, film, music and dance to illustrate the changes of the season; one-man spoken-word show Mouth Open, Story Jump Out; and Peter and the Wolf in Hollywood, an adventure story told through animation, live music and theater.

#### Wander

Head to The District by Hilton Club to meet "George," an illustrated (and stuffed) eagle with the inside track on the best places to visit in the city. Let him take your family on a guided tour of D.C.'s most famous sites, from the cherry blossom trees to the U.S. Capitol and the White House. Leave time to stop at Olivia Macaron along the way; one taste of the blood orange, Fruity Pebbles or Champagne macarons will show why they were voted the best in the city.

#### Eat

Sate your appetite and soak up some history at the same time. Teddy & The Bully Bar is a tribute to the 26th president, complete with cowboy-tastic faux taxidermy. The seasonal menu sources local produce and includes bison and wild boar for grown-up palates, but your little ones will enjoy the house-made cornbread and fried chicken.

#### Recreate

Have several hours to fill? Head to 1,700-acre Rock Creek Park. With a nature center, planetarium, horse center, golf course, tennis courts and more, there is something outdoorsy for nearly everyone. Help the rangers feed the snakes, then pick up tickets to a free astronomy program or take a horseback riding lesson or a pony ride. Hike or bike the 32 miles of trails, rent a kayak or book a space in the picnic grove.

5 Tips to Keep Your Kids Engaged While Traveling

**Involve them.** Helping to plan will get them excited about the trip.

**Create travel journals.** Notebooks, markers and old-school disposable cameras will serve you well.

**Lean on tech.** Never underestimate the power of an iPad full of new apps, such as NPS National Mall, a free guide to this must-travel part of the city (free for Android and iPhone).

**Slow down.** Leave time for naps, snacks and spontaneous play now, avoid meltdowns later.

**Stay wisely.** Let your hotel help; choose a kid-friendly location, like The District.

Come face to face with lions and more than 1,500 other animals at the Smithsonian's National Zoo.

# Discover Denver

3 (week)days in Denver

Snug between the Rocky Mountains and expansive plains to the east. Denver is a mile-high city offering near-constant sunshine (300 days each year!) and countless ways to spend your days.

Whether culture, history or scenery is your fancy, there's a pocket of Denver ready to welcome you-any day of the week.

Spend a weekday in Denver and explore the state capital with one of these three itineraries.

#### **Itinerary** 1

Spend your day taking in the fresh air. No matter the season or how you prefer to spend your nature time, Denver has a park, trail or slope for you. Visit the city's acclaimed Red Rocks Park and Amphitheatre and hike or bike the 1.4mile Trading Post Trail, weaving through massive brick-red rock formations. From the top of the amphitheatre, at more than 6,400 feet above sea level, the Denver skyline is revealed in the valley below, beckoning you back to recharge at one of the city's hip neighborhood eateries. If vou're a skier or snowboarder, venture just 67 miles to Winter Park Resort, where you'll appreciate world-class runs-and advance-purchase lift tickets, so you won't have to wait in line. If you prefer a leisurely day at the park, spend it at historic Cheesman Park.

#### **Itinerary 2**

Denver is known for its microbreweries and live-music venues. And after a day in the great outdoors, you've earned some downtime. The city's River North area (RiNo) has a handful of cozy cafés, craft breweries and amazing restaurants. Create your own craft brew crawl, stopping by Epic Brewing Company and Our Mutual Friend Brewing for a house-made beer. And when you're ready for a nightcap, Larimer Lounge and Lost Lake Lounge regularly showcase regional and national bands.

#### **Itinerary 3**

Enjoy Denver's incredible selection of museums without the weekend crowds. Eight of the city's museums and galleries, as well as the State Capitol, reside in the Golden Triangle Museum District, making it easy to spend a full day in this area. If you happen to be in Denver on the first Friday of the month, take advantage of free First Friday Art Tours, which let visitors enjoy local food and art at participating galleries, museums and artists' studios-at no cost. Explore the exhibits at the Denver Art Museum, renowned for both its art and architectural exhibits. Nearby, you'll find History Colorado, housing nine distinct museums in one-from the Ute Indian Museum, reopening with a new building and exhibitions this summer, to the El Pueblo History Museum.



#### ere to Stav

Club Members can rest their heads in the mountains at Valdoro Mountain Lodge, a Hilton Grand Vacations Club property in Breckenridge. Enjoy relaxing evenings with the Rocky Mountains ambience as your backdrop and the convenience of driving just an hour and a half to spend a day in Colorado's capital city. Or, use Hilton Honors points to stay at one of several cozy Denver properties, such as Hampton Inn & Suites Denver-Downtown and Hilton Garden Inn Denver-Downtown, both within walking distance of many sights. A minimum stay is required at Valdoro Mountain Lodge. Optimize

your Points and consider booking your trip in the middle of the week.

Coosevelts the Oueen of Roma nia, Babe Ruth and Buffalo Bill

## YOUR TICKET TO PARADISE

Tropical beaches, sumptuous resorts, superb snorkeling, supersized waves and mai tai sunsets await your lei-draped arrival on the islands of Oahu and Hawaii. Start daydreaming of your next trip to paradise with our insider guide. ome to bustling Honolulu, fun-andsun Waikiki Beach and monster North Shore waves, actionpacked Oahu is the first island that springs to the minds of many when envisioning the Aloha State. Others may picture the island of Hawaii, nicknamed the Big Island and known for its black-sand beaches, lava-spewing volcano and rural, laid-back vibe.



Accurately nicknamed Turtle Beach, Laniakea Beach attracts green sea turtles year-round. Here, it's easy to spot a honu, which means 'turtle" in Hawaiian, lying in the sand and soaking in the sun, especially during summer



Gathering Place, is the most populated isle in the Hawaiian chain and a frequent choice for Hawaii first-timers. It's tough to argue with a place that rolls stunning natural beauty, big-city sophistication and a rich history all into one 597-square-mile tropical Eden.

> Some 190 miles across the sparkling Pacific, Hawaii makes its vacation destination case with ample opportunities

for sublime solace. You can still indulge in plush resorts, delicious restaurants and shopping galore, but on an island as vast as this one it's far easier to find a secluded beach where the rest of the world melts away.

Whether you choose Oahu, Hawaii Island or the other major islands, Maui and Kauai, they're all magical locales that will fill you with the infectious spirit of aloha.

#### SAND, SURF AND SUN

Oahu boasts two of the world's most famous beaches. Backed by high-rise hotels, the soft, white sand of Waikiki Beach has been the island's tourist epicenter since the 1950s. Usually peaceful waters make this a prime strand for swimming, novice surfers and outrigger canoe rides. Or simply spread a towel, slather on the sunscreen and enjoy the island's best people watching.

On the rugged North Shore, Sunset Beach and its neighboring Banzai Pipeline reef break attract pro surfers from around the world in winter, when the waves can reach as high as 20 feet. Spring through fall, head for the North Shore's gorgeous Waimea Bay. Go swimming or snorkeling in the clear, aquamarine waters.

Seeking Oahu beach solitude? Wiggle your toes in the powdered sugar-like sand of the east shore's Lanikai Beach, or rent a kayak to explore Lanikai's rocky offshore Na Mokulua islets.

Hawaii Island boasts some of the best snorkeling in the state. Though often busy, it's tough to beat Kahaluu Beach Park for its convenient location (just south of Kailua-Kona town), abundant tropical fish and shallow, clear water. While there, keep an eye peeled for sea turtles or book a guided boat tour to snorkel Kealakekua Bay, home to dazzling undersea scenery and the historic Captain Cook Monument spire. On the Kohala Coast, near a trio of Hilton Grand Vacations Club properties, you can lounge in the shade of a kiawe tree at idyllic Waialea Beach. (Tip: Weekdays are rarely crowded.) Hawaii Island is known for its volcanic rock black-sand beaches; the most famous is palm-lined Punaluu Beach on the south coast. As it's a popular stop for tour buses, you won't be alone here. However, it's almost guaranteed you'll spy sea turtles lazing on the beach.

submerged hull of the battleship sunk December 7, 1941. Pay your respects to America's fallen heroes, then tour the retired USS Missouri battleship and USS *Bowfin* submarine. No rental car? Honolulu's public bus system and a trolley tour company are easy, economical ways to reach many city attractions. The Bishop Museum houses an astounding collection of Hawaiian artifacts as well as an interactive Science Adventure Center for keiki ("children" in Hawaiian). Tour the lavish Iolani Palace, built in 1882, and walk in the footsteps of 19th-century Hawaiian royalty. No visit to Honolulu is complete without exploring the vibrant streets of its historic Chinatown. While Hawaii Island isn't as flush with traditional tourist attractions,

### DID YOU KNOW ...

The island of Hawaii is frequently referred to as the Big Island, which is not only a nod to its size, but also a nickname used to help differentiate the island from the state? The island is also home to Papakōlea Beach, one of four green-sand beaches in the world.

#### TOURS AND ATTRACTIONS

Both Oahu and Hawaii Island have a bounty of tour outfitters ready to take you snorkeling, diving, whale-watching, sailing, fishing, kayaking, zip-lining, allterrain vehicle riding or soaring above the islands on scenic helicopter flights.

History buffs won't want to miss Oahu's Pearl Harbor and the USS Arizona Memorial, which straddles the

it does hold the wonderful, ancient Hawaii archaeological site Puuhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park. Java hounds will enjoy guided tours and tastings at a handful of Kona coffee plantations such as friendly Greenwell Farms. And stargazers agree there are







few better places on the planet for stargazing than the summit of dormant Mauna Kea volcano. For more stargazing, see **page 5**.

#### **GO NATURAL**

Away from the beach, both isles are flush with tropical botanical gardens, rainforest hikes, emerald-green valleys and thundering waterfalls. Your best bets for these experiences are the islands' windward coasts. In Hawaii Island's case, the town of Hilo is one of the globe's rainiest spots and has the incredibly lush plant life to prove it. And, just 10 miles north, discover the 442-foot-tall free-falling Akaka Falls in Akaka Falls State Park. In addition, two natural wonders top nearly every visitor's list.

On Oahu, the extinct volcanic crater Diamond Head serves as a dramatic backdrop for Waikiki Beach. Hike to the crater's 760-foot-summit via a 1.6-mile round-trip trail. Though fairly steep, your effort is rewarded with a glorious 360-degree view of Honolulu, the shimmering ocean and the west side of the island. Arrive early, before 9 a.m., to avoid crowds.

On Hawaii Island. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park is home to mighty Kilauea, which has been in a continual state of eruption since 1983. If you're lucky enough to visit during significant activity when rivers of red lava are pouring into the sea, you're in for a thrilling spectacle. Yet even without flowing magma, the park does not disappoint. Fascinating geology, outstanding hiking and the primordial red glow emanating from the lava-filled Halemaumau crater make it a must-see.

## HAWAIIAN MIXED PLATE

Club and Team Members shared their favorite Oahu and Hawaii Island eats with *Club Traveler.* Check out some of their picks for *ono grinds* (delicious food).

#### Oahu

Michael Jones loves **The Pig & The Lady** in Honolulu's Chinatown. **Kona Grill** in Waikiki's International Market Place also wins his praise.

For Neal Prensky, nothing beats a juicy cheeseburger with grilled pineapple and fried egg from **Cheeseburger Waikiki**.

Lee Ferguson points to the teriyaki-style "hulihuli" chicken dished up by **Ray's Kiawe Broiled Chicken**, a roadside stand in the North Shore town of Haleiwa.

#### Hawaii Island

Lenna Sikes raves that "the best pizza I've ever eaten" is the Hawaiianstyle pie at **Kona Brewing Co.** 

Saucy Dogs, in the town of Hilo, is Tammy McCormick's go-to spot for gourmet hot dogs and lots of bang for the buck.

#### Lava Lava Beach Club

is another one to add to your list, says Team Member Rob Gunthner. It's within the Waikoloa Village and has great food and views.



#### WHERE TO STAY

Club Members can use their membership to stay at this new Hilton Grand Vacations Club resort in the heart of the action on Oahu.

The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club: Steps from the

beaches of Waikiki, the newest flower in the Club's Hawaiian lei is an elegant 37-story tower on the grounds of the Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort. Be among the first Members to admire a sunset from the private balcony of a one-, two- or threebedroom suite, or two- or three-bedroom penthouse-all featuring fully equipped kitchens and sleek, contemporary decor. Go for a swim in The Grand Islander's own pool or choose from the resort property's additional four pools.

#### Other Oahu resorts:

Grand Waikikian by Hilton Grand Vacations Club
Hokulani Waikiki by Hilton Grand Vacations Club

• Kalia Suites by Hilton Grand Vacations Club • Lagoon Tower by Hilton Grand Vacations Club

#### Hawaii "Big Island" resorts:

Kings' Land by Hilton Grand Vacations Club
Kohala Suites by Hilton Grand Vacations Club
The Bay Club at Waikoloa Beach Resort

## Club YOUR MEMBERSHIP

### Ask a Club Counselor

In each issue of *Club Traveler*, a Club Counselor will answer questions about how the Club works. If you have a question you would like to submit to a Club Counselor, email it to **feedback@ clubtraveler.com** and it may be answered in the next issue.

#### What is the best way to check my Hilton Honors points balance and check resort availability?

Checking your Hilton Honors points balance on the Club Member website is fast and easy. Simply log in to your Member account and you'll see your Honors points balance in the lower lefthand corner of the Member Dashboard. We've also launched a new availability and booking process that allows you to see availability across multiple properties and unit types in a location, similar to the old Revolution booking engine.

- Emily Holmes, Elite Specialist

Have a question for a Club Counselor? Email it to feedback@clubtraveler.com and it may be answered in the next issue.

## What's New With Club? Discover new properties, program enhancements and more destinations

From program changes that make vacation planning simpler and more efficient to a new cruise partner offering more options than ever before, here's a summary of the exciting news 2017 has delivered to Club Members so far.

#### New and Improved

Earlier this year, Members said aloha for the first time to The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club, the newest addition to the 22acre Hilton Hawaiian Village in Honolulu. Soaring above Waikiki's immaculate white-sand beaches, this 37-story property offers elegant one-, twoand three-bedroom suites, or grand two- and three-bedroom penthouses with amenities like fully equipped kitchens, private balconies, and washers and dryers.

In the Sunshine State, Las Palmeras, a Hilton Grand Vacations Club officially opened in early 2017. The fourth and most recent Orlando property underwent an exciting transformation, and now has 226 deluxe one- and two-bedroom condominium-style units and well-appointed studios. Members will enjoy the spacious lobby, heated outdoor pool, new waterslide and splash pad, whirlpool spa, fitness center, business center, conference room, lobby and pool bars, restaurant and more.

#### Get Cruising

Hilton Grand Vacations Club's new cruise partner is CruisesOnly, the largest cruise agency in the U.S. Members have special access to a wide variety of deals and perks on luxury cruises and river excursions to destinations around the world. Through this ClubPartner Perk, Members are offered options on all major cruise lines–Disney, Carnival, Royal Caribbean and more–at a "best price guarantee."

Speaking of cruises, come August, Members will be experiencing life's finer things on a breathtaking Bordeaux journey, a 10-night ClubPartner Perk Grand Adventure river cruise. Sailing on the Garonne and Dordogne rivers aboard the *Scenic Diamond*, Members will embark on an unforgettable trip through the Bordeaux region of France, full of Old World charm. Call Hilton Grand Vacations Club's new cruise partner, CruisesOnly, at 888-492-6683 for more information and to secure your place on this once-in-a-lifetime Members event.

Glide past historic towns, and stop in a few, too, on your way to centuries-old vineyards during a cruise through Bordeaux.

#### **New Club Enhancements**

With 2017 came new ways to use your Saved Points, simpler ways to convert Hilton Honors points and more flexibility when it comes to making Home Resort and Club reservations.

As long as you save your Points by the expiration date, they can be used for everything except Home Week reservations. You no longer have to plan ahead and deposit next year's Points to the following year to retain their value. Nor do Club Members need to confirm a hotel stay to convert current-year, next-year or previously Saved Points to Honors points at a 1:20 ratio. (Please note that Members with Elite Plus and Premier status enjoy a 1:25 ratio for immediate use for current, previously saved and next-year Points.) Now, Members will be able to convert the number they need and use them how they'd like to within the Hilton Honors program.

Additionally, for those who have accidentally selected the nonchangeable option when booking with a Club Counselor and regretted it, you won't have to worry about this happening again. When making Home Resort or Club reservations, your booking will be changeable, whichever way you book. (Exclusions apply for SFX, Anantara, RCI and ClubPartner Perks.)

Learn more about program changes in the Help section of the Club website.

#### More in Mexico

Mexico's geography ranges from tropical beaches to mountainous desert. Thanks to Club affiliate Fiesta Americana, Members can reserve vacations in this destination haven. And starting in March, Members gained access to an additional three resorts: in Cabo San Lucas, Puerto Vallarta and Playa del Carmen. To learn more or to book your reservation, call a Club Counselor at 800-932-4482 or worldwide at 407-613-3141.

#### **FAQ Videos**

Want to know how to achieve Elite Status? Interested in finding out more on Cancellation Protection? Hilton Grand Vacations Club has answers. In fact, to answer some of Members' most frequently asked questions, Hilton Grand Vacations Club will roll out a series of FAQ videos, available in the Help section of the Club website.

## Planon Planon Planning Get to know Stewart Bloom

Whether you're looking to add stamps to your passport or plan a family reunion, Hilton Grand Vacations Club Elite Specialist Stewart Bloom's trip expertise will come in handy. He recently chatted with *Club Traveler* about all things booking—and let us in on a few lesser-known tips, too.

### What's the most common question you're asked, and what's your answer?

The most common Member request is to review what Points they have for the year and how can they use them. I provide Members an overview of their accounts, the number of saved ClubPoints and current ClubPoints, as well as their Bonus Points. An important part of my position as an Elite Counselor is to understand the Members' vacation needs for the year. This will help me to recommend the most strategic use of their ownership to fulfill the Members' vacation goals.

#### How do you work with families or large groups?

The key is to ask the right questions. I have to fully understand the number of adults and children who will be traveling, the number of rooms required, how flexible the family's vacation window is, as well as the property and location they wish to book. In this way, I not only look for the availability for the desired date and location, but can also suggest alternatives.

### What do Members tell you they enjoy the most?

The Members are always impressed with the quality of the Hilton Grand Vacations resorts, the professionalism of the Club Counselor and the incredible on-site staff.

#### What's been the most popular destination?

There are many "most popular" Club destinations. We find that Members often want to experience our newest properties, so the most popular destinations right now are Ocean Oak Resort by Hilton Grand Vacations Club in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina; Las Palmeras by Hilton Grand Vacations Club in Orlando, Florida; and The Grand Islander by Hilton Grand Vacations Club in Honolulu, Hawaii.

#### What's your most important planning tip?

Start planning early! The key to a successful trip is planning ahead, and the Club website is a great resource for checking availability and finding the right resort. Should you have a question along the way, a Club Counselor is available to help.

How can Club Members make the most of their memberships while at their vacation properties? I recommend that our Members speak to the concierge at the property, but also use the HGV mobile app. Our app has a full listing of on-property activities and even has travel tips from other Members at each resort.

#### What's your favorite part of your job?

The best part is speaking to our Members. I really enjoy finding great vacations for their families because, as Club Counselors, we become memory makers. I love to hear the excitement in the voices of the Members when I unlock the true potential of our program and show them the great vacations awaiting them.

**RCI EXCHANGE** 

# Peer Through Artists' Eyes

Discover artistic treasures around the world through RCI® affiliated resorts











Art is everywhere; it provides an outlet for both its creators and admirers. Combine art with travel, and your experience will be further enriched as you explore the culture, history and traditions of your chosen location. Join us as we travel around the globe to explore the blossoming art scenes in three regions.

#### BEIJING

Beijing's bustling art scene is on fireand there's still time to see the spark as up-and-coming artists are producing unique and affordable works fueled by political and social commentary. Stemming from the Dashanzi Art District just inside Fifth Ring Road, Factory 798 is the quintessential home to Beijing's artistic elite, comprising both Chinese nationals and foreigners. Arguably Beijing's most renowned artist, Ai WeiWei has paved the way for burgeoning expressionists to create

contemporary works that nearly any collector can procure without breaking the bank.

Beyond the Bauhaus-inspired walls of Factory 798, the Caochangdi District also houses several galleries featuring emerging artists with a focus on things avant-garde.

While you can navigate these districts on your own, Bespoke Travel Co. offers guided tours designed to help facilitate artist introductions and negotiate purchases.

Α

#### MÁLAGA, SPAIN

Birthplace of Pablo Picasso, it's not surprising that Málaga has a flourishing art scene that starts in the Soho Art District alongside the Guadalmedina River. Amid the cafés and galleries you will find art being created virtually in any space and form. Keep a lookout for street art you will find peppered on common surfaces throughout this bohemian neighborhood. Two of the most renowned works sit directly behind the Centro de Arte Contemporaneo de Málaga as side-by-side seven-story murals. The first depicts a fighter pilot and was created by London-based artist D\*Face (Dean Stockton), and its sister mural, Paz y Libertad, depicts a scene of a woman warrior and bears the namesake of Shepard Fairey, also known as Obey, creator of the 2008 Barack Obama "Hope" poster.

After you take in the impressive street art, head inside for some cultural titillation–Málaga boasts several world-class art museums, including the Picasso Museum, Centre Pompidou Málaga, Museo Carmen Thyssen featuring Andalucian art, photography gallery El Estudio de Ignacio del Río and the Museo Ruso, with works from Saint Petersburg's Russian Museum.







#### TAOS, NEW MEXICO

Georgia O'Keeffe, Ansel Adams and Ernest Blumenschein are just a few who have called Taos home. The scenic high-desert town in northern New Mexico sprinkled with traditional adobe-style architecture is steeped in rich Spanish and Native American culture and traditions. Find inspiration in the stunning landscape and more than 80 art galleries and museums.

At the Taos Center for the Arts, experience a range of artistic and cultural activities through visual and performing arts, educational lectures and children's programs. The nearby Taos Art Museum, located in the former house of Russian artist Nicolai Fechin, showcases a collection of paintings from the early 20th century by the masters of the Taos Society of Artists. In September, attend the notable Paseo festival, which brings to life installation and performance art over three days, or stop by the Taos Artisans Cooperative Gallery to see art in action and pick up your own unique work.

Club Members can use Points to stay at RCI<sup>®</sup> affiliated resorts in spectacular artistic destinations across the globe.\* To find resorts in creative destinations, log in to your Club account at **club.** hiltongrandvacations. **com** and navigate to the RCI<sup>®</sup> Exchange site. Then, click "Vacation Ideas" at the top of the page, select "Featured Interests," and click "Arts and Museums" for a list of resorts near artsy cities.

<sup>\*</sup>These vacations are limited and subject to availability.

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## An Island Full of Memories

Members share their favorite Hawaii vacation memories

Patty Chong

Thompson and

**Bobby** Thompson

Club Members since September 2011

Featured trip: Oahu, Hawaii,

November 2016, Grand Waikikian

by Hilton Grand

Vacations Club

Our most recent vacation was a return trip to Oahu in November. We went for two reasons: One was to celebrate Patty's birthday, and the second was to mark the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

We were so blessed to stay on the Hilton Hawaiian Village property at Grand Waikikian by Hilton Grand Vacations Club. We just had to walk downstairs to enjoy daily special events that Hilton set up for the surviving World War II veterans from all over the world. One day,

they had a meet-and-greet with the vets; another day, question-and-answer sessions, photo ops and multiple fireworks displays in their honor. It was really special and a chance-of-a-lifetime memory that we wouldn't have experienced if we didn't have our ownership.

What's amazing about Oahu is that if you want all the hustle and bustle, shopping, dining and fast-paced fun, it's there on one side of the island. There is no place like the worldclass shopping in Waikiki, or the largest outdoor shopping mall, the Ala Moana! Then, of course, there are the most incredible golf courses in Honolulu.

And if you want to just sit back with an umbrella drink and watch the surfers lie back on their boards waiting for the next good wave, or

catch the sunset, there is no better view than at Turtle Bay. We had some rainy days on this trip, so we went to the Honolulu Zoo! Who knew that in the middle of all the beaches and restaurants and shopping and surfing that there is this beautiful zoo with exotic animals from all over the world-from zebras, monkeys, elephants, tigers and rhinos to one of my favorites, the giraffes!

Our all-time favorite vacation memories in Hawaii were with our family, of course. We attended the amazing Starlight Luau at the Hilton Hawaiian Village, and one of the warrior dancers came and swooped my sister onstage! We had great laughs and fun!

There's nothing better than sitting with our bare feet in the sand, listening to the waves gently crashing on the beach in front of us ... Ahhhhhhhh ...



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#### (1) Hilton Grand Vacations

#### WANT ACCOUNT ACCESS ON THE GO?

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Search "Hilton Grand Vacations" in the Apple Store or on Google Play.

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## A VACATION STATE OF MIND

