

# t&g alley

stuff we love...

our collection of people, places  
and all things fun and functional



PHOTOS COURTESY: FOURSSEASONS.COM/HUALALAI

## HAPPY in HUALALAI

We were greeted at the vast, flower-filled lobby of the Four Seasons Hualalai with colorful plumeria and kukio nut leis, a cool towel and a refreshing Mai Tai. It was a lovely introduction to the North Kona Coast and the five-star resort. During our first few hours, my husband and I also encountered some four-legged natives of the Big Island of Hawaii — sea turtles sunning themselves on the large expanses of lava rocks in the Pacific Ocean. They would be there throughout our stay, alternating basking in the sun with frolicking in the water, sleeping, and feasting on tasty items from the sea. We did our best to follow their example.

For basking in the sun and water frolicking, we had our choice of five beautiful pools. We spent most of our time at the adults-only Palm Grove Pool and Beach Tree, the main pool with unobstructed ocean views. We loved the special amenities that came our way, which included a sunglass-cleaning service, ice cream treats and my favorite: strawberry, coconut and vodka popsicles.

Snorkeling is available right on the property in King's Pond, a saltwater pool carved out of lava and stocked with more than 3,500 fish. After putting on our complimentary masks, snorkels and fins, we eased our way into the cool water and slowly swam around the pond to view the huge array of sea life.

One day, for some exercise I took an Aqua Class in the pool at Hualalai Spa with Rip, a former ultra marathoner. He patiently

coached me from the side of the pool, instructing me on how to use various equipment, lap after lap. The laps I ran with the noodle between my legs did not make me feel silly *at all*, especially as the only other person in the pool, who was swimming *beautifully*, swam in two Olympics in the 1980s.

For sleeping, we had one up on those sea turtles. All 243 rooms at the Four Seasons are housed in two-story bungalows designed to complement the surroundings, have ocean views and are decorated in Hawaiian-style luxury. I especially loved our large balcony for relaxing in the evenings, and the huge granite soaking tub where I made good use of the candles and bath salts.

As for the feasting, the first night we enjoyed a magnificent dinner at Beach Tree, steps away from the sand with a full view of the Pacific Ocean. We dined on local delicacies such as lasagnette made with wild boar and fresh tomatoes. Another night we dined at ULU, where we could have practically reached out and touched the water from our table, as we devoured grilled lobsters fresh from the ocean.

We were drenched in beautiful luxury, but Mother Nature gave us our most memorable sighting: a full rainbow and a sunset at the same time, producing magnificent splashes of oranges and pinks until the sun sunk in a split-second green flash. The sounds of a ukulele entertained us from a small beachside wedding, and our sea turtle buddies were there to enjoy it with us.

—Jan Schroder

[www.fourseasons.com/hualalai](http://www.fourseasons.com/hualalai)



PHOTO COURTESY: OCCIDENTAL GRAND XCARET

## XPERIENCE XHILARATING XCARET

I couldn't stop giggling as our four new dolphin friends weaved their way in between our group of five, leapt over our heads and circled us at high speeds. We took turns dancing with them, then "surfing" down the length of the tank as two dolphins pushed us by our feet so fast we could rise up out of the water.

The 60-minute Delphinus Primax Experience at Xcaret Park in Playa del Carmen in Mexico is just one of the highlights of the Unlimited Xcaret Xperience available from Occidental Grand Xcaret. This lush 62-acre Mediterranean-style all-inclusive resort is adjacent to this one-of-a-kind archeological park. The Experience — with rates starting at \$98 per person per night — includes VIP hotel check-in, complimentary mini bar, unlimited access to Xcaret Park, a private eco-cultural tour and reserved area seating for the "Xcaret México Espectacular," a performance that traces the history of Mexico.

We also snorkeled through an underground river and marveled at the daring feats of the Panpantia Flying Men as they flew through the air around a tall pole, reenacting an ancient tradition. A trip up the Rotating Scenic Tower afforded us views of the surrounding landscape and the Caribbean.

After all the fun, it was a short walk back to the Occidental Grand Xcaret. Amazingly intact ruins on the property are evidence of the ancient Mayan culture that once dwelled in this part of Mexico.

—Jan Schroder

[www.occidentalhotels.com/static/xcaret\\_experience](http://www.occidentalhotels.com/static/xcaret_experience)

“Why do you go away? So that you can come back. So that you can see the place you came from with new eyes and extra colors. And the people there see you differently, too. Coming back to where you started is not the same as never leaving.”

—Terry Pratchett

## CHIHULY SPARKLES

Do you remember the “wow” feeling you had when you saw fireworks for the first time? Now you can rediscover that childish wonder at Chihuly Garden and Glass, located at the base of the Seattle’s Space Needle and housing a comprehensive collection of the works of the famous artist, Dale Chihuly.

I heard lots of visitors whispering “Wow!” while taking in this incredible display. Each of the eight galleries has a different theme and evokes a range of feelings. In some galleries people were reverently silent, while in others they laughed joyfully.



The exhibition is a flowing retrospective of Chihuly’s work, from his early series of baskets, bowls and cylinders, to intricate sea forms, reeds, spears, floats, ceilings, chandeliers and massive towers of glass. I floated through the Sealife room as if I was snorkeling through an enchanted world of dazzling glass starfish, shells, manta rays

and swaying sea grass. Outside, in the *Alice in Wonderland*-like garden, Chihuly’s magic art pieces seem to sprout in flaming color.

Don’t miss the two short documentary films about his monumental installation in Jerusalem, visited by more than a million people, and his exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Have a drink, lunch or weekend brunch at the Collections Café, featuring regional Northwestern dishes, craft beers and a wine list with Washington and Oregon premium wines.

—Marybeth Bond



PHOTOS BY MARYBETH BOND



Regular adult admission is \$19  
[www.chihulygardenandglass.com](http://www.chihulygardenandglass.com)

>tg alley: **stuff we love**



## IRRESISTIBLE ISTANBUL

Luxury is seductive. And no one does it better than the Four Seasons. Live like an Ottoman sultan at the posh Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet, steps from the Blue Mosque and Topkapi Palace. Housed in a century-old, magnificently renovated neoclassical Turkish prison, the hotel captures everything magical and mysterious about Istanbul. Watch the orange sunset from the rooftop tea garden with views of the Sea of Marmara and Hagia Sophia. Relax with a cocktail of sahleb, the traditional orchid-based drink that was considered by the Ancient Romans to be a powerful aphrodisiac. Let the concierge arrange a private yacht tour up the beautiful Bosphorus, which divides the continents of Europe and Asia, where you'll glide past the waterfront palaces of sultans. Bask in the aura of the Ottoman elite spoiled by superb service.

—Marybeth Bond

[www.fourseasons.com/istanbul](http://www.fourseasons.com/istanbul)

PHOTO BY: MARYBETH BOND



## FLYING HIGH OVER GEORGIA

Once you've had your fill of city life in the Georgia capital, head for the mountains north of Atlanta. And if you want a more exciting view of the rolling landscape, try taking it in from 14,000 feet up! For adrenaline junkies who need to shake up a visit to Atlanta, check out Skydive Georgia (less than an hour away in Cedartown) for a day trip that will give you some real bragging rights. It's an easy drive for Alabama and Tennessee residents too. You'll sign a zillion waivers before you leap, but not to worry, the instructors do these jumps every day. It's a half-day adventure and a one-time tandem jump will run you \$230 — but I warn you, this can be addictive! That first step over the plane's threshold into nothingness is a bit daunting, and when you start to freefall, the feeling is indescribable. *Travelgirl tip: Wear earplugs if you have issue with wind in your ears.* This travelgirl has done it twice and would go again in a heartbeat! Call ahead, and let the adrenaline rush begin.

—Janice McDonald

[www.skydivegeorgia.com](http://www.skydivegeorgia.com)

PHOTO COURTESY JANICE McDONALD BY SKYDIVE GEORGIA

PHOTO COURTESY BOCA RATON RESORT & CLUB



## PAMPERED AT THE PALAZZO

There's plenty to do at the 80-year-old Boca Raton Resort & Club, which has seven pools, a Beach Club, two golf courses, 30 tennis courts, a new Surf School by Billabong and even ice-skating in the winter. But don't check out of here without checking out Spa Palazzo. As I enjoyed lunch by the lushly landscaped outdoor pool, I pondered how the interior of the Mediterranean-style spa could be as beautiful. The exterior is stunning, designed to resemble Alhambra Palace in Morocco. Turns out, the 60,000-square-foot interior is equally gorgeous, and I was definitely in for the royal treatment with the Spa Palazzo Ritual Bath.

This signature 50-minute treatment, available as a prelude to any service, is designed to "provide an overall feeling of decadence and well-being." The Ritual Bath is a five-step process, beginning with either a short visit to the steam room or the sauna. I selected the sauna, which was filled with energizing eucalyptus. I felt like a privileged character in a James Bond movie as I was led to a magnificent candlelit marble-and-mosaic-tiled room where I enjoyed the rest of the steps: a soak in a personal soaking tub with body scrubs; a Swiss shower; a warm water massage and a final soak in a Jacuzzi. Decadence and well-being? Mission accomplished. Next challenge? Choosing from the seemingly endless treatment menu...

—Jan Schroder

[www.bocaresort.com](http://www.bocaresort.com)

## BEACH BLING!

Whether your favorite beach is in California, the Caribbean, or even the Cook Islands, you can now wear it in style, with a beautiful piece from one of the many signature collections of Dune Jewelry. Just select your favorite beach from the company's extensive Sandbank, and then select a necklace, earrings, ring or bracelet and your chosen grains will be added to the design. You can also send in your own sand; you'll only need a soda cap full for most designs. —Jan Schroder

[www.dunejewelrydesign.com](http://www.dunejewelrydesign.com)



## Beautiful on Broadway

Here's a Broadway show that's perfectly titled — *Beautiful* is sensational and filled with hit songs: *You've Got A Friend*, made famous by the incredible James Taylor, *Will You Love Me Tomorrow*, sung by The Shirelles, *Up On the Roof*, originally performed by The Drifters, and *(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman*, immortalized by Aretha Franklin. You know them by heart, but did you know these songs were all written by the talented team of Carole King and Gerry Goffin, husband and wife at the time? Carole wrote the music and Gerry wrote the lyrics. They were the wiz kids, married in their teens and mega-successful by their twenties, producing a treasure trove of memorable songs.

Fast forward a few years to these melodic gems: *I Feel the Earth Move*, *So Far Away* and *It's Too Late* — all written and performed by the incredibly talented Carole King, who by the time she had written these iconic songs, was divorced from Gerry Goffin and had embarked on her solo career.

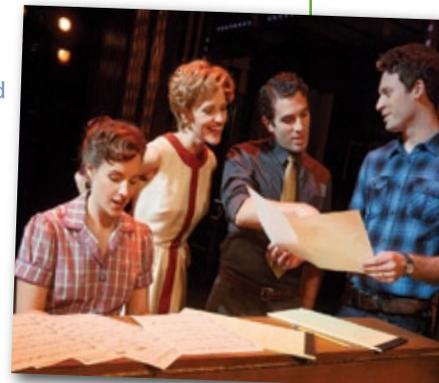
*Beautiful*, now playing at the Sondheim

Theatre, is a biopic tribute to this legendary composer and performer, telling her life story in a magnificent songfest. Carole Klein from Brooklyn changes her name to Carole King, meets the man of her dreams, writes hit tunes for major vocal groups in the '50s and '60s, has a baby at 18 and is divorced and on her own at 36. She calls herself a square but her music is anything but.

Along the way, you'll also enjoy a roster of hits from Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil, King's talented friends, responsible for hits such as *On Broadway*, *We Gotta Get Outta This Place* and *You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling*. This fabulous night of theater is a tour de force for actress Jessie Mueller, who magnificently brings King to life on stage. She embraces the role and effortlessly grows from Carole Klein of Brooklyn into the mega talented Carole King. Don't miss the opportunity to see Jessie at her best; you'll find yourself reminiscing and singing along.

—Renee Werbin

[www.beautifulonbroadway.com](http://www.beautifulonbroadway.com)



>tg alley: **stuff we love**

# pretty in pons

When it's finally warm enough to ditch my boots, I'll be sporting a pair of Pons Avarcas. Originally worn by workers in Menorca, a small Spanish island in the Mediterranean, these soft leather sandals are still made there and are now available in the United States. When Noelia and Jose Pahissa moved from Barcelona to California 10 years ago, Noelia brought along a few pairs of Avarcas sandals from her native country. After receiving many compliments, she and her husband decided Americans would enjoy Avarcas and founded Pons Avarcas to sell the authentic versions. The sandals are available for men, women and children, and come in several colors and styles.

—Jan Schroder

Prices for women's start at \$77  
[www.avarcasusa.com](http://www.avarcasusa.com)



PHOTO BY: MATTHEW MURPHY / COURTESY AFTER MIDNIGHT

## AFTER MIDNIGHT

Tap, scat and big band magic — if that's music to your ears, pack your dancing shoes for your next trip to NYC and snag a seat for *After Midnight*, Broadway's Cotton Club musical, now playing to a packed house at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre. Evocative dance numbers relive the glory days of Harlem's Golden Age with an orchestra chosen by Wynton Marsalis and glorious tunes written by a host of musical greats including Harold Arlen, Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington. There's no plot and no intermission, just a 90-minute song-and-dance fest that's a rousing tribute to the incredible melodies of yesteryear. A rotation of notable singers including Vanessa Williams, Fantasia Barrino and Tony Braxton head a cast that can belt out a song and master a dance! Key to the production is The Jazz at Lincoln Center All-Stars, the 16-piece orchestra that jives from the back of the stage. Broadway loves positive energy and this show radiates with vitality. This is musical time travel at its best; you'll be dancing in your seat, savoring the Harlem's dancing heyday. There's no *Stormy Weather*; you'll be *On the Sunny Side of the Street* for sure, as you exit the theatre with these fabulous songs in your head.

—Renee Werbin

[www.aftermidnightbroadway.com](http://www.aftermidnightbroadway.com)



## friends for life

If you love to travel and are short on funds, no need to put off your dream trip. Friends for Life has made it simple. You invite your girlfriends (a minimum of seven, plus yourself) and they do the rest — including pay for all or part of your trip as the organizer! Trips are tailored for women and include castle tours, cooking classes and shopping, with accommodations in local inns in safe neighborhoods. Sample tours include the New Orleans Experience, San Francisco and Wine Backcountry, Paris and the Loire Valley, and Venice and Palladio. Friends for Life will build a web page for your trip and tweak the program to your heart's desire. It's a new idea and we love the concept!

—Marybeth Bond

[www.friendsforlifetravel.com](http://www.friendsforlifetravel.com)



## HEAD TO THE HEATH

Even though I'm not a fan of British food I have to give The Heath Restaurant in The McKittrick Hotel in New York a rave review. The most innovative concept I've seen in years, the Heath radiates originality and you sense it the moment you enter the main dining area, reminiscent of a 1920's speakeasy. The room's mystical atmosphere is complemented by a talented five-piece orchestra. Elegantly attired men and women stroll about the tables, checking on guests and offering tidbits of intriguing conversation. For those preferring their own space, The Heath offers private dining "cars" located across from the main room. This isn't just dining; it's entertainment and the evening is memorable. It's not just another night out!

A boost to New York's nightlife, this innovative dining scene comes from London-based production company Punchdrunk. Chef R.L. King has conceived a menu using sustainable food with a heavy slant toward British fare. Delicious libations accompany hearty nibbles including Pickle Pot, seasonal vegetables in individual brines, delicious Fall Vegetable Crisps and divine Spicy Lamb Crunchy. Appetizers include Jerusalem Artichoke-Apple Soup, Grilled King Trumpet Mushroom Salad with green faro and pickled chanterelles, and a Black Caesar with dinosaur kale, fried bread, pecorino and anchovy dressing, which I found to be both healthy and tasty!

Another selection called Boards offers up terrines, cheeses and pickled and smoked fish. Entrées include three traditional pies: Beef and Ale, Broccoli and Rice and Fisherman's Pie — and a wealth of vegetarian, fish, chicken and meat dishes. I loved the Caramelized Cauliflower and the Benne Crusted Cod. Of course, no dinner is complete without dessert and The Heath offers some stellar choices; my favorite was Bread and Butter Pudding with salted caramel ice cream.

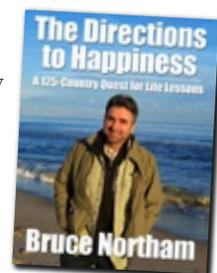
There's more in store but I don't want to spill all the beans; be sure to make a reservation to dine in the delightful atmosphere of The Heath. —Renee Werbin

[www.theheathnyc.com](http://www.theheathnyc.com)

## A LITERARY COMPASS:

125 COUNTRIES, INFINITE LESSONS, 1 BOOK

This collection of travel tales speaks to every globetrotter's soul. Travel writer Bruce Northam journeyed to more than 125 nations to gather the infinite wisdom of strangers. He shares the lessons learned in his soon-to-be-released book, *The Directions to Happiness*. From New Jersey to the Kalahari Desert, Mozambique to Montenegro, the author spent the last few decades navigating the globe in a continuing search for words to live by — and live for — while living on an income often pegged as poverty. His key reflections include guidance garnered in Australia: "Measure your wealth by how much you'd be worth if you lost all your money," and inspiration gleaned from adventures in the Adirondacks: "Don't run out of ideas — run out for ideas." My personal favorite is from China: "If the only familiar thing you can see is the moon, pinch yourself." Northam is an award-winning journalist and the author of *Globetrotter Dogma*, *In Search of Adventure* and *The Frugal Globetrotter*. He created "American Detour," a show following the travel writer's journey. He's also a *Travelgirl* contributor; turn to page 23 for his humorous account of a metamorphosis at sea with his eight-year-old daughter, Bella.



—Stephanie Oswald

[www.AmericanDetour.com](http://www.AmericanDetour.com)

## rainy day magic

When Stacy Struminger attended a meeting and her exit was greeted with a downpour, she wished she'd had her cozy pashmina — in a waterproof version. Finding nothing resembling what she had dreamed up, Stacy decided this was a product that women needed. She shared her idea with friend (and now business partner), Rachel Teyssier — and soon, the Rainrap was born!

Before a recent trip to rainy London, I threw one in my carry-on. It was the perfect lightweight, stylish alternative to lugging around a bulky raincoat or umbrella. Its soft, silky material easily goes from casual to glam, and because it comes in its own little portable pouch, it transfers in a snap from a carry-on to purse or backpack.

Now that I'm home, I'm keeping one in my glove compartment, because we all know that travelgirls should *always* be prepared for a rainy day!

—Valerie Kessler

\$60 ■ [www.rainraps.com](http://www.rainraps.com) ■ available in assorted colors



>tg alley: **stuff we love**

PHOTO RENDERING COURTESY THE WIZARDING WORLD OF HARRY POTTER — DIAGON ALLEY, UNIVERSAL ORLANDO



## Worth a Return Visit: *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter*

Even if you have been to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter—Hogsmeade at Universal Studios Islands of Adventure multiple times, you will fall under its spell again this summer. Make plans now to visit Universal’s latest addition to the famous home of Harry and friends: Diagon Alley. Anyone purchasing the park-to-park ticket will be eligible for an incredible and immersive experience on the Hogwarts Express, the train connecting the two parks. That’s a thrill in itself; imagine being transported from the Muggle world through the brick wall to King’s Cross Station and the wizarding world. Diagon Alley will double the size of the already open Hogsmeade. There will be a new thrill ride, Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts, and of course lots of shops and restaurants inspired by the popular books and movies.

—Robyn Klugman

[www.universalorlando.com/harrypotter](http://www.universalorlando.com/harrypotter)

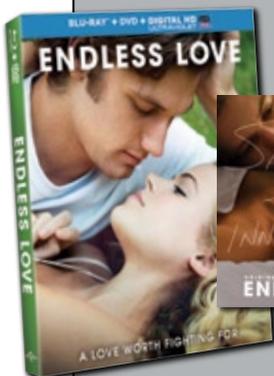


## BLACK BEAUTY

It’s a beautiful black onyx bead bracelet with pretty crystal spacers. But wait, there’s more!

The filigree charm holds fragrance beads so your fragrance goes where you go, simply by slipping on this lovely bracelet. Select your signature scent from six Lisa Hoffman fragrances, with travel-inspired names such as Tuscan Fig, French Clary Sage or Madagascar Orchid. With no worries about getting a perfume bottle through security or having it spill in your suitcase, it’s perfect for travel. —Jan Schroder

\$85 ■ [www.lisahoffmanbeauty.com](http://www.lisahoffmanbeauty.com)



## ENDLESS LOVE

Endless Love stars Alex Pettyfer (*Magic Mike*) and Gabriella Wilde (*The Three Musketeers*) star in the story of a privileged girl and a charismatic boy whose instant desire sparks a love affair made only more reckless by parents trying to keep them apart.

Available May 27, 2014 on DVD and Blu-ray

Soundtrack courtesy of Warner Brothers Records

ARMCHAIR TRAVELS WITH  
TRAVELGIRL - FOR FREE!

Sign up now to receive the digital edition of *Travelgirl* at no charge! Just visit our website and enter your e-mail address as indicated. Don't miss out! It will only be free for a limited time!

[www.travelgirlinc.com](http://www.travelgirlinc.com)



*Renew. Refresh. Recharge.*



Discover 60 miles of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and find new experiences that never disappoint, where memories will be talked about and shared and where the only thing better than visiting, is coming back again.

visit  
**MYRTLE BEACH**  
SOUTH CAROLINA

[VisitMyrtleBeach.com](http://VisitMyrtleBeach.com)