

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

CHECK IN | PARIS

HAUTE HOSTEL IS HIP ON A BUDGET

PARIS — For many travelers, Paris is the ultimate romantic escape, but one that comes with a heart-stopping price tag: In a June 2014 study by TripAdvisor, Paris ranked as the second-most expensive city in the world for tourists. (London was tops, New York third.) An overnight in a hotel typically costs more than \$300, and two dry martinis at a cozy nightspot might set you back more than 50 bucks, according to the survey. Quelle horreur!

But here's some good news. Come February, a spiffy new four-level hostel will open in the boho-trendy 10th Arrondissement near Canal St. Martin, bringing 916 beds and a dash of style to the micro-hotel ("all I really need is a comfy bed") experience.

Billed as a "haute hostel," minus the backpacker grunge that many associate with hosteling, Generator Paris will offer a range of four-to-10-bed shared rooms, private twin rooms, and penthouse rooms with private terraces, all with en-suite bathrooms. The average size is 140 square feet for standard twin rooms, with the smallest 123 square feet and the largest 284 square feet. This isn't the Ritz, for sure, but Generator creators are emphasizing affordability and vibrant social spaces (Bonjour, millennial jet set!), including a bar, a restaurant with a veranda, a spacious "chill out" area, and a rooftop terrace with sunset views of Montmartre and Sacre Coeur.

Interiors are designed under the supervision of Anwar Mekhayech of DesignAgency, whose clients include Soho House and Momofuku. Fun touches like the lighted marquee suspended over a Mondrian-inspired reception desk are meant to put a smile on your (weary, jet-lagged) face. As will the tariff: The price point starts at the equivalent of about \$31 per bed in a shared room to about \$60 for a private room.

There's nothing else quite like this in the hotel market in Paris, but other Generators abound. The brand operates hip, urban-design hostels in nine other European cities, including London, Berlin, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Dublin, Barcelona, and Venice. Generator Rome is coming, as well as Amsterdam and, rumor has it, US capitals.

GENERATOR PARIS 9-11 Place du Colonel Fabien, 75010 Paris. 011-33-170-98-84-00, www.generatorhostels.com
DIANE BAIR AND PAMELA WRIGHT



ANNIE SCHLECHTER/THE LUDLOW

CHECK IN | NEW YORK

LUCK CAN SAVE YOU ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE

Feeling lucky, or channeling Mark Wahlberg's "The Gambler" (minus scary John Goodman, we hope)? Between now and March 31, check into The Ludlow hotel on New York's Lower East Side, roll the (metaphorical) dice, and you might stay for free that very night. (Cue happy dance!) One in 100 guests gets a free night, but you won't know until you check in. It's good for week-end and weeknight stays, even on Valentine's Day, if rooms are available, and it's good on all categories of rooms.

Don't be dissuaded by the neon sign outside that reads "Dirty" — it refers to Dirty French, The Ludlow's buzzy on-site French bistro, not the hotel's hygiene. This funky-

trendy, 184-room property, opened last fall, is located just around the corner from culinary landmark Katz's Delicatessen, where people line up for the famous hot pastrami. (And where the iconic "I'll have what she's having" scene from "When Harry Met Sally" was shot in 1989.)

Even if you don't get lucky, you'll have a good time. The Ludlow, created by Sean MacPherson, the hotelier behind the Maritime and the Jane hotels, has a fun, playful feel. The decor is a mash-up of Paris-meets-Morocco, with interesting details such as a distressed-limestone fireplace in the lobby lounge, accented by oversized chandeliers and vintage furnishings. Guest rooms have large windows, Moroccan lamps, petrified-wood nightstands and handmade Indian

silk rugs. Some rooms have small balconies that offer a view of the still slightly gritty Lower East Side, a neighborhood that has drawn generations of immigrants and now offers a colorful lineup of mom-and-pop shops and eateries and boisterous bars within walking distance. (Rooms are blessedly quiet, though.) You'll want to get out and explore, and of course you'll make the obligatory stop at Katz's. Plan to wait a while.

THE LUDLOW 180 Ludlow St., New York. 212-432-1818, www.ludlowhotel.com. Rooms start at \$195. To access promotion, go to "get a room," choose check-in/check-out dates, then "continue" to selected rate and choose "get lucky."

DIANE BAIR AND PAMELA WRIGHT



GENERATOR PARIS

HERE

VERMONT SNOWMOBILE TOUR IN A CHILD'S SIZE

Take your pint-sized adventurer to Vermont, where he or she can take a spin on a mini snowmobile built for kids. Okemo Mountain Resort in Ludlow has launched children's snowmobile tours, during which anyone 5 to 12 years old can hop on an Indy 120 XC and go for a 15-minute tour on a specially designed course at the Jackson Gore Paleo Field. Children, who max out at speeds of 8 miles per hour, will be led by an adult riding a full-size sled. Kids cannot weigh more than 120 pounds or be taller than 5 feet 4 inches. Okemo provides helmets, which must be worn. The cost is \$29 per child per ride; reservations recommended. The family-oriented ski resort also offers ice-skating, snow tubing, and a four-season mountain coaster ride, which takes passengers 7 and older along a 3,100-foot-long twisty track at speeds of up to 25 miles per hour. 800-228-1600, www.okemo.com

NEW HAMPSHIRE WELCOMES OLD-TIME SNOWMOBILES

Adults can get in on the snowmobile action, too, during New Hampshire's annual Lancaster Grand Prix, the country's oldest vintage snowmobile race. Intrepid drivers will race their sleds, dating from the 1960s to the '80s, around a quarter-mile oval ice track in an effort to win \$10,000 in cash prizes. Bring your old sled or cheer on other



racers during this weekend-long event, which runs Jan. 30 to Feb. 1 and draws up to 20,000 visitors. The event includes the Vintage Snowmobile Show on Jan. 30, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; the Grand Prix Ball with dinner and music, Jan. 30, 5:30-11 p.m.; and a snowmobile parade Jan. 31 following the races. Snowmobile races (pictured above) start at 10 a.m. on Jan. 31, and the Lancaster Grand Prix featured race begins at 9 a.m. on Feb. 1. Ticket to watch races either day: \$10, under 13 free. 603-788-2193, www.lancastergrandprix.com

THERE

AN APP FOR CALMING YOU FOR TAKEOFF

Anxious airplane passengers take note: There's a new app to help settle your nerves. A recent survey by Japan-based All

Nippon Airways revealed that 68 percent of US airline passengers find takeoffs to be the most stressful part of flying. ANA has just launched a free app that aims to help passengers relax. (Note: It works only on flights that allow electronic devices to be used during take-off.) The ANA Takeoff Mode app, available only through iTunes, provides a simple puzzle that requires users to maneuver a ball on the screen to collect points, while relaxing music plays in the background. The key: The app measures the amplitude and frequency response of the ambient noise inside the aircraft cabin, meaning that when the aircraft's engines are at full throttle during take-off, the audio profile triggers a special animation and message for the user.

HAWAII'S NEW POLYNESIAN FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

Calling all football fans: Don't

miss a chance to visit the Polynesian Cultural Center in Laie on Oahu's North Shore. This weekend, the PCC became the new home for the Polynesian Football Hall of Fame, which honors 14 inductees from the first two classes, including Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota, the University of Oregon quarterback who was the inaugural Polynesian College Football Player of the Year in 2014. The 2015 Polynesian Football Hall of Fame inductees include Jesse Sapolu, Mosi Tatupu, Mark Tuinei, Luther Elliss, Ray Schoenke, and Russ Francis. The exhibit showcases the honorees' achievements with plaques, photos, interactive displays, and mementos. It also features elements of ancient Polynesian architecture, with lava stones, tropical plants, natural woods like ohia and koa, and accents of lauhala mats and other native textures and fabrics. It's located in the

new guest orientation center adjacent to the Hukilau Marketplace. Free admission. 800-367-7060, www.polynesia.com

EVERYWHERE

A KID-FRIENDLY ANDROID SMARTPHONE

Keep closer tabs on your children when you travel and give them a way to easily reach you or emergency services with the Kurio Phone, an unlocked GSM smartphone built specifically for kids. The phone has a 4-inch screen and Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, and 3G connectivity, and comes preloaded with more than 30 games and apps. Kids can use it to make calls, text, play games, surf the Web, watch movies, take pictures, and more. A parent can impose restrictions as needed, such as setting call and text limits, allowing and blocking certain contacts, and managing apps. The Kurio Genius Filtering System filters 450 million sites daily to block inappropriate content, and lets you set your own filters. The phone also has an internal GPS that monitors the phone's location, so you can establish safe and danger zones; you will get notified when your child leaves or enters one of these zones. The SIM card is sold separately, so you can choose your provider and plan; the phone works using only Wi-Fi outside of the United States. \$159.99. www.kurio.world.com

THE SOLE CHARGER FOR POWERING DEVICES

Throw this hip and durable charger in your travel bag so you can refuel two devices on the go, including phones, cameras, tablets, and GPS units. XSORIES' Sneaker Power Bank, about the size of a deck of cards, has an 8400 mAh battery that can typically juice up a smartphone twice before it needs to be recharged through its micro-USB port. The power bank (pictured below), which looks like the sole of a sneaker, is made with tough rubber and silicone, meaning it can withstand tumbles and still keep on working. It has dual USB output ports (1A and 2.1A), and comes with a handy USB cord that has a micro-USB connector nestled inside a 30-pin Apple connector. LEDs indicate how much power is left. \$79.99. 442-244-0516, www.xsories.com

KARI BODNARCHUK

