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*Restrictions apply. Good 5/9/14-5/29/14 Does not include Holiday weekend. Call for details. Code BGES



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The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



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THE TIP

BRAND-NEW RIDE ON NOVA SCOTIA ROUTE

If Canada is calling to you this summer, you're in luck: Starting on May 15, the Nova Star, a brand-spanking-new 528-foot ferry, leaves from Portland, Maine, on a 10-hour cruise to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. You can walk on and walk off, or take your car, your pet, your kids, your motorcycle, your bike — or all of the above.

The ferry features a full-service spa; live entertainment; a casino; a wide choice of dining options from upscale (with fine wines) to a buffet

(serving regional specialties and home-cooked food) to pub fare that includes gourmet coffees, pastries, and sandwiches. Other amenities include a piano bar lounge; two bars; a gym free to any passenger over age 16; an art gallery; a kids' zone with climbing structures, movies and board games; and even a smoking lounge (the ship and cabins are smoke-free).

You can choose to cruise in an oversized recliner, which is like a business-class seat on a plane, or book one of the 162 private cabins. Each of the latter can accommodate up to four

passengers, and has a private bathroom and shower.

Depending on the season, an adult ticket is \$79-\$139; children under 5 free. Round-trip tickets are 10 percent off. And for Fifi and Fido, the cost is \$29-\$49, but kennel space is limited.

Depending on size, cars cost \$139- \$199. Cabins are \$79-\$249. A bike is \$16-\$22. And there are port fees per person and vehicle.

For more information, go to www.novastar.com.

JUDITH FEIN

CHECK IN

NEW BRUNSWICK ANEW

ST. ANDREWS, N.B. — The elegant Algonquin Resort in this historic town nicknamed St. Andrews-by-the-Sea reopened this spring after a two-year, nearly \$30 million renovation. The iconic Tudor-style hotel, overlooking scenic Passamaquoddy Bay, was originally built in 1889 to accommodate travelers to New Brunswick on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and rebuilt in 1914-15 after a devastating fire (by which time it was owned by the CPR). Today, the new and improved Grande Dame among Canada's most treasured resorts has been carefully restored. Its half-timbered and stucco façade, 96 Juliet balconies, and 16 second-floor patios were preserved, and the glass in the 200 original 11-foot arched windows replaced. Inside guests find a spruced up lobby area, a new indoor pool with a three-story water slide, and a new 1,400-square-foot spa (scheduled to open this month) with treatments based on the ancient techniques of the native Algonquin people using seawater and honey from the resort's beehives.

There's a great outdoor area, too, including fire pits, another pool, and hot tubs, surrounded by 15 acres of landscaped lawns and gardens.

Rooms and suites — all 233 of them — have been completely refurbished with refined Victorian decor, along with all the modern bells and whistles that savvy travelers have come to expect, including radiant heat bathrooms, luxe linens, MP3 players, and flat-screen TVs.

The highly-touted Braxton's Restaurant & Bar, also open to the public, serves a seasonally-changing menu, with a heavy focus on traditional preparations and locally-sourced products. Expect such dishes as seafood chowder, crispy crab cakes, Bay of Fundy scallops, and honey-glazed free-range chicken, served in the polished black, tan, and creamy white dining room.

Some things have not changed. Guests can still enjoy the seaside setting in the charming town of St. Andrews and the award-winning, water-front golf course; the par 72 course is ranked as one of the country's top 100 courses. Rooms from \$159-\$389.

ALGONQUIN RESORT 184 Adolphus St., St. Andrews, New Brunswick. 855-529-8693, www.algonquinresort.com.

DIANE BAIR AND PAMELA WRIGHT

HERE

BAR HARBOR'S CULINARY SCENE GETS FESTIVE IN MAY

Watch waiters compete on a restaurant obstacle course, purchase a three-course dinner for \$20.14, and sample 10 different beers on a self-guided tour at the 4th annual Taste of Bar Harbor, May 15-18. The event also features a self-guided dessert tour, during which you sample and vote on your top sweet treat at local restaurants, and a chef's table with a five-course dinner and wine pairing. Nearly 50 food vendors and artisans will market their products at the new Local Food Producer's Showcase. Prices: \$15 per person desert night, \$20 per person pub tour, \$75 chef's table (book ahead); other events free. 207-288-5103, www.barharborinfo.com



PROVIDENCE HOTEL BLENDS HIGH-TECH AND HISTORIC

Stay in one of the 294 newly renovated guestrooms at the Providence Biltmore and enjoy the authentic character of this 1922 downtown Providence hotel, along with new high-end amenities



ISTOCKPHOTO

ties such as flat-screen TVs, iHome speakers, and custom-made beds. The landmark hotel has one of the only full-service hotel spas in the city, and will soon have an expanded fitness center with all new equipment. For business travelers: Hold a meeting in the updated conference areas with downtown views, or at the legendary rooftop Grand Ballroom. Room rates start at \$139. 401-354-2069, www.providencebiltmore.com.

THERE

SNORKEL WITH SHARKS AND EELS AT ST. PETE BEACH RESORT

Travel 30 minutes south of Tampa to the new RumFish Grill & Bar and you can dine beside a 33,500-gallon aquarium and then slip into the tank and go snorkeling. The restaurant, owned by artist and conservationist Guy Harvey, opens mid-May at the Guy Harvey Outpost, a TradeWinds Beach Resort on St. Pete Beach. The aquarium, created by design stars Wayde King and Brett Raymer of Animal Planet's "Tank'd" series, has tarpon, grouper, snapper, small sharks, and eels, among other creatures. Only resort

guests can snorkel in the tank. Guests can also take a behind-the-scenes tour that includes feeding the fish and learning about tank management. Room rates start at \$146 per night, double occupancy, plus \$35 daily resort fee; entrees \$19-\$26. 844-786-3474, www.rumfishgrill.com

NYC HOTEL GRANTS INDULGENCE IN ITS ROOMS' MINI-BARS

Hotels often charge hefty fees for snacks and drinks from the in-room mini bar. At the newly renovated Loews Regency Hotel in New York, you can consume the entire contents of your mini bar for \$30 per stay. Grab a midnight snack, relax with a glass of wine, or pacify hungry kids without leaving your room or worrying about the cost of each item. Choose from juice, wine, beer, chips, and sweet treats, such as shortbread cookies and chocolate-covered pretzels. The Milk the Mini-Bar special runs through Aug. 31. The fine print: You can't have the mini-bar restocked during your stay. The hotel, which reopened mid-January, has 379 guestrooms, 58 suites, and a bar and grill. Room rates start at \$419. 800-235-6397, www.loewshotels.com

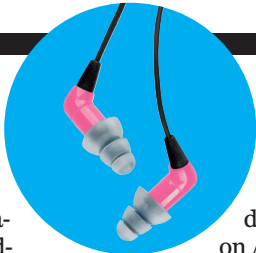
LEARN MARINE LIFE AT SUMMER CAMP

Take your kids to Atlantis on Paradise Island in the Bahamas and your budding adventurers can learn how to care for marine animals like these dolphins or get certified to dive around underwater critters. At Marine Adventure Camp, junior aquarists ages 10 to 14 spend three days working with marine life, learning to prep food for and feed animals, and snorkeling around coral reefs. Children 10 to 15 in the Junior SCUBA Explorers program earn their PADI Open Water SCUBA certification, and then explore a man-made lagoon and dive around coral reefs. Marine Adventure: \$595 (not including accommodations), June 30-July 3, July 21-24, and Aug. 11-14. SCUBA Explorers: \$695 (camp only), July 7-11, July 28-Aug. 1, and Aug. 18-22. 888-877-7525, www.atlantis.com

EVERYWHERE

CHILDREN'S EARPHONES KEEP VOLUME UNDER CONTROL

The ETY Kids 5 earphones help protect little ears by blocking out background noise, offering high-quality sound at reduced noise levels so listeners don't need to crank the volume to hear their music, games, or movies. These in-ear noise-isolating earphones, made by Etymotic Research, limit maximum output to 88 decibels, equivalent to a noisy restaurant. By comparison, standard earbuds and ones that don't seal ears can produce damaging sound that's on par with a rock concert or an ambulance siren. The soft rubber ear buds safely fit into small ears, and are recommended for



children 4 and older. The earphones (pictured here) come with three pairs of different size tips. \$39-\$41 on Amazon.com. 888-389-6684, www.etymotic.com

BURLY CHARGER KEEPS EVERY DEVICE TOPPED UP

Keep your devices charged at the beach, on your boat, while skiing or hiking or on other outdoorsy adventures with New Trent's Powerpak Ultra. This waterproof, shock-proof, and dirt-proof charger (pictured below) comes with a completely sealed protective cover so it can withstand rugged environments. It even works after being submerged in water for 30 minutes. The 14,000 mAh has two USB ports (1A and 2.1A) for charging your smartphone, tablet, GPS, and other USB-compatible device. \$69.95. 510-651-2885, www.newtrent.com

KARI BODNARCHUK

