

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOWN AND ABROAD



CHECK IN

NATIVE TASTE OF ANDEAN PARADISE

Tucked in a cloud forest at the foot of ancient and mystical Machu Picchu, Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel is a bit of paradise in the Peruvian Andes. The award-winning, eco-friendly retreat features 35 Peruvian-styled one- and two-story luxurious bungalows, surrounded by acres of native forest and the gushing Urabamba River. As nice as these rooms are, you'll want to venture out to explore the grounds. Take a guided walk through 12 acres of recently-restored native forest, home to 192 species of birds (18 of them hummingbirds) and tour the resort's orchid garden, with one of the world's largest collections of plants. Rate: \$274 per person including transportation from train station, breakfast, dinner, and guided property excursions. www.inkaterra.com

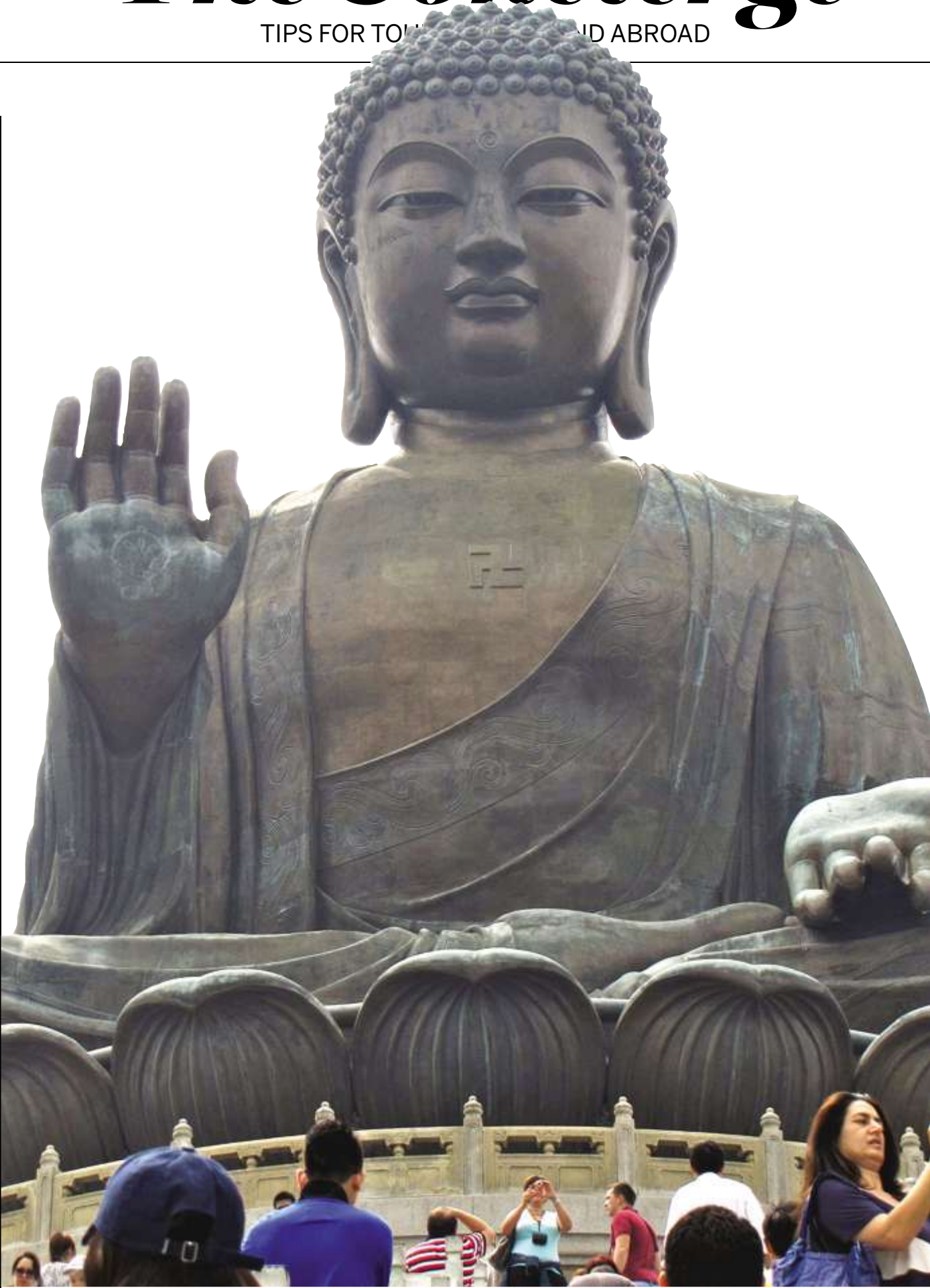
DIANE BAIR AND
PAMELA WRIGHT



THE SIGHT

Hiking the Kalalau Trail along Kauai's Na Pali coast to a "secret beach" requires crossing the Hanakapiai River right before it rushes into the Pacific.

FRANK VITALE, SUDBURY



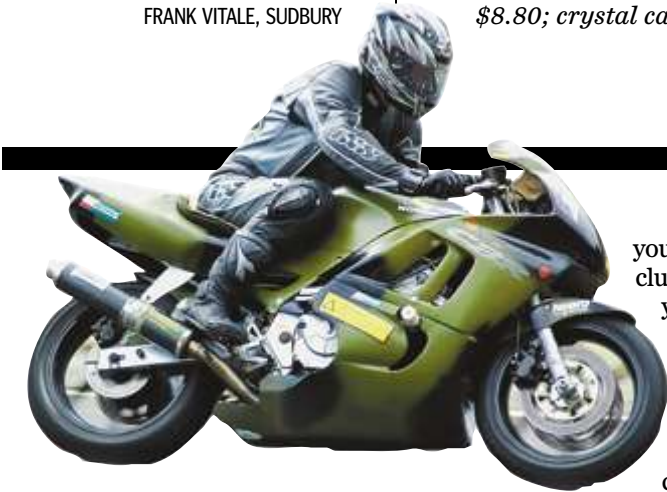
NECEE REGIS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

SUNDAY MORNING | HONG KONG

LARGER (AND HIGHER) THAN LIFE

The Tian Tin Buddha, a 98-foot-tall bronze sculpture known as "Big Buddha," sits atop Ngong Ping Plateau, 2,420 feet above sea level, on Lantau Island in Hong Kong (www.plm.org.hk/eng/home.php). Getting to the island is a memorable experience, especially if you catch the first cable car on Sunday morning (9 a.m.) to avoid the long lines and crowds. The 25-minute ride above the waters of Tung Chung Bay offers stunning views as the towers of Hong Kong recede and Big Buddha appears like an apparition atop the lush mountain landscape. On the island, a short walk through a commercial village leads to the Po Lin Monastery and the statue. It's best to wear comfortable shoes to climb the 260-plus stairs to the viewing platform where six larger-than-life-size bronze statues of devas offer flowers, incense, and other gifts to the Buddha. *Round-trip standard cabin: adult \$17.50, children ages 3-11 \$8.80; crystal cabin (glass bottom): \$27.50/\$18.80.* www.np360.com.hk/en

NECEE REGIS



HERE

A CONNECTICUT MOTORCYCLE TOUR The innkeepers at Hickory Hill Bed & Breakfast in Pomfret, Conn., will take you and your motorcycle on a scenic guided tour of the state's sleepy northwest corner, on weekends through Aug. 31. Motor along Route 169, a National Scenic Byway; Route 97, another designated scenic road; or the forested and windy Route 89. This summer package, called the Motorcycle Tour of the Quiet Corner, includes one or two nights' lodging, a full breakfast daily, lunch at the biker-friendly Vanilla Bean Cafe, and ice cream at a local spot. Stay for two consecutive nights and your lodging bill will be tax free. Rates: \$179 one night, \$289 two nights, based on double occupancy. 860-963-0306, www.hickoryhillbandb.com

UNLIMITED GOLF IN RURAL VERMONT Improve your golf game when you stay at The Woodstock Inn & Resort, which offers a summer special featuring unlimited play on an award-winning course designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr. The 18-hole course offers challenging fairways, sand traps, and water hazards, but pros are on hand to help

you select the best clubs and perfect your swing. Rates for this package, good through Oct. 31, start at \$264, based on double occupancy, and include one night's accommodation, unlimited play, use of a cart, continental breakfast for two, use of the practice range and putting green, and one yardage booklet (taxes and resort fee extra). 888-481-8802, www.woodstockinn.com

TOUR POTTERS' STUDIOS IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS The renowned Hilltown 6, a group of potters based in the hilltowns of Western Mass., open their studios and showrooms to visitors July 27-28, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., for the 7th Annual Pottery Tour and Sale. Print a detailed map for touring the studios, which are located in Windsor, Cummington, Worthington, Ashfield, and Westhampton. See each artist's tools, kilns, drawings, and objects of inspiration. Many of the potters use special homemade brick kilns, and their high-quality

ceramics range from functional to decorative and sculptural. Explore the region's scenic back roads, farmstands, and swimming holes en route. 413-695-7994, www.hilltown6.com

THERE

WAX ENTHUSIASTIC OVER A CRAYON EXPERIENCE Create your own crayon color and then design a label for it at the Crayola Experience in Easton, Pa., the birthplace of the crayon. This hands-on experiential center just opened a new facility with four floors of interactive exhibits that allow kids to explore art and technology. Find out how the colorful writing tools are made during a live theater show featuring a Crayonologist and his animated friends, and then scramble around a Crayola-inspired indoor playground with its melted wax tower, paint bridge, crayon box slide, and fun obstacles. Tickets: \$15.99 ages 2-64, \$13.99 65 and older, free under 2. 610-515-8000, www.crayolaexperience.com

WEATHER APP FOR APPLE USERS The Weather Channel app has new features for Apple users that help if

you are planning or packing for an upcoming trip in this country or abroad. Have an iPad? Click on the suitcase icon and get historical weather information that shows the hottest, coldest, wettest, and driest months at your travel spot, along with maps, images, and seven-day weather data. Using an iPhone? Click on the car icon within the maps section, enter your start and end points, choose a route, and then check the weather along your driving route as you go. The iPhone app also includes a new Hurricane Central section with seasonal details. The apps are available through iTunes or the App Store. www.weather.com/apps/iphone

EVERYWHERE

LOCK AND GO: EASY-USE SHOELACES Lock Laces can help you speed through airport security without fussing with untying and retying your shoes. These easy-to-use fasteners have a spring-loaded lock that holds your laces in place when needed, but quickly loosens when you want to remove your shoe. The elastic laces offer a firm but flexible fit, and let you easi-



1

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR GUIDES.

Experienced guides make a world of difference. It takes years to master the skill of guiding commercial rafts in white water.

2

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN BUSINESS?

Longevity comes from satisfied customers. Travel review websites can provide firsthand reports and helpful advice.

3

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE AND MAINTAIN YOUR EQUIPMENT?

Clean, well-kept rafts, life jackets, helmets, and paddles make a rafting excursion safer and more enjoyable.

4

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

Look for a company with raft trips on multiple rivers and of varying length, for experience levels ranging from beginner to expert, with lodging and activity packages.

5

WHAT MAKES YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT?

All outfitters are not the same; give them a chance to explain what makes their outfit special.

NECEE REGIS



ly slip shoes on and off. They come in more than a dozen colors, from brown, navy blue, and pink cotton candy to orange creamsicle. \$7.99 per pair, or \$19.99 for a set of three. 717-877-8829, www.locklaces.com

TAKE YOUR MOVIES (AND MORE) WHEREVER YOU GO The award-winning SmartStick turns virtually any high-definition TV into a giant Android tablet. Download apps for Flixster, Netflix, and Pandora, for instance, and you can stream your movie and music collections while traveling. Also access your photos, e-mail accounts, and favorite games, or surf the Web. Plug the SmartStick into the HDMI port of any HDTV, whether at a friend's house or in a hotel room, get online, and then use the wireless SmartStick Keyboard Controller to easily navigate around the TV screen. The slim and portable controller has four Android hot keys, a standard keyboard, and a tiny but easy-to-use touchpad. It connects to the SmartStick using a mini USB receiver. \$49.99-\$79.99 (4GB/8GB) SmartStick; \$39.99 keyboard. 248-805-1080, www.favientertainment.com

KARI BODNARCHUK



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