

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

THE TIP

ESCAPE THAT DREAD PORT OF CALL: FAT CITY

There's an old saying in the cruise industry: The average weight gain on a ship is one pound per day. It's easy to see why: Cruises offer oceans of opportunities to eat, eat, eat — with belt-loosening breakfasts, lard-laden lunches, and calorie-cascading dinners, along with snacks of pizza, ice cream, coffee drinks, cookies, and everything else on the fattening food chain. Some passengers, who want to assure they get their money's worth, will actually eat a couple of breakfasts and lunches in one day, along with dinner and a midnight buffet.

So, how to maintain your playing weight on a cruise?

ASK After booking your cruise and prior to boarding, you can let the cruise line know that you have special dietary requests. When my husband and I recently sailed on Windstar's new ultra-luxury Star Pride ship, we requested (before boarding) nonfat, 90-calorie yogurts, 30-calorie almond milk, and

35-calorie bread, among other things, which Windstar happily met. They placed these items in our refrigerator in our stateroom, and we were thrilled. [www.windstarcruises.com](#)

BRING YOUR OWN Yes, cruise ships offer an abundance of food, usually loaded with calories. But if you want to indulge without the bulge, bring some of your own healthy snacks. ■ Sunsweet 20-calorie cherry-, lemon-, and orange-essence dried plums; [www.sunsweet.com](#) ■ PB2 fat-free powdered peanut butter; [www.bellplantation.com](#) ■ Laughing Cow 35-calorie cheese wedges (the cheddar is awesome); [www.laughingcow.com](#) ■ Blue Diamond flavored almonds in 100-

calorie packets; [www.bluediamond.com](#) ■ Figamajigs: The 140-calorie lovechild of a chocolate chip Balance bar and a Fig Newton, loaded with fuel and fiber; [www.melzyinc.com](#) ■ Turkey pepperoni

ORDER SPECIAL-REQUEST FOODS For example, when we recently sailed on The Yachts of Seabourn, right after embarkation we met with the chef to tell him that we always crave low-calorie, nonfat foods, and to see what he could create for us. Many cruise lines even have a dedicated "special request chef," whether it's for gluten-free, sugar-free, or low-calorie foods. Here's what else we do: Since we love a good tuna fish sandwich, we go on board with our own jar of lowfat mayonnaise, which the Food and Beverage department can store in the kitchen refrigerator. [www.seabourn.com](#)

BRING A FAVORITE SPECIAL RECIPE Perhaps you have a favorite low-calorie item from the Hungry Girl website? Or you just love Grandma's tomato sauce? Or want a veggie burger? Bring the recipe onboard, because cruise lines are all-too-happy to make you happy.

ORDER HEALTHY DINNERS Many cruise lines offer lowfat items on the menu. But if nothing on the menu floats your boat, just order grilled chicken or shrimp, a butter-free vegetable, and a baked potato, and a bowl of fresh berries for des-

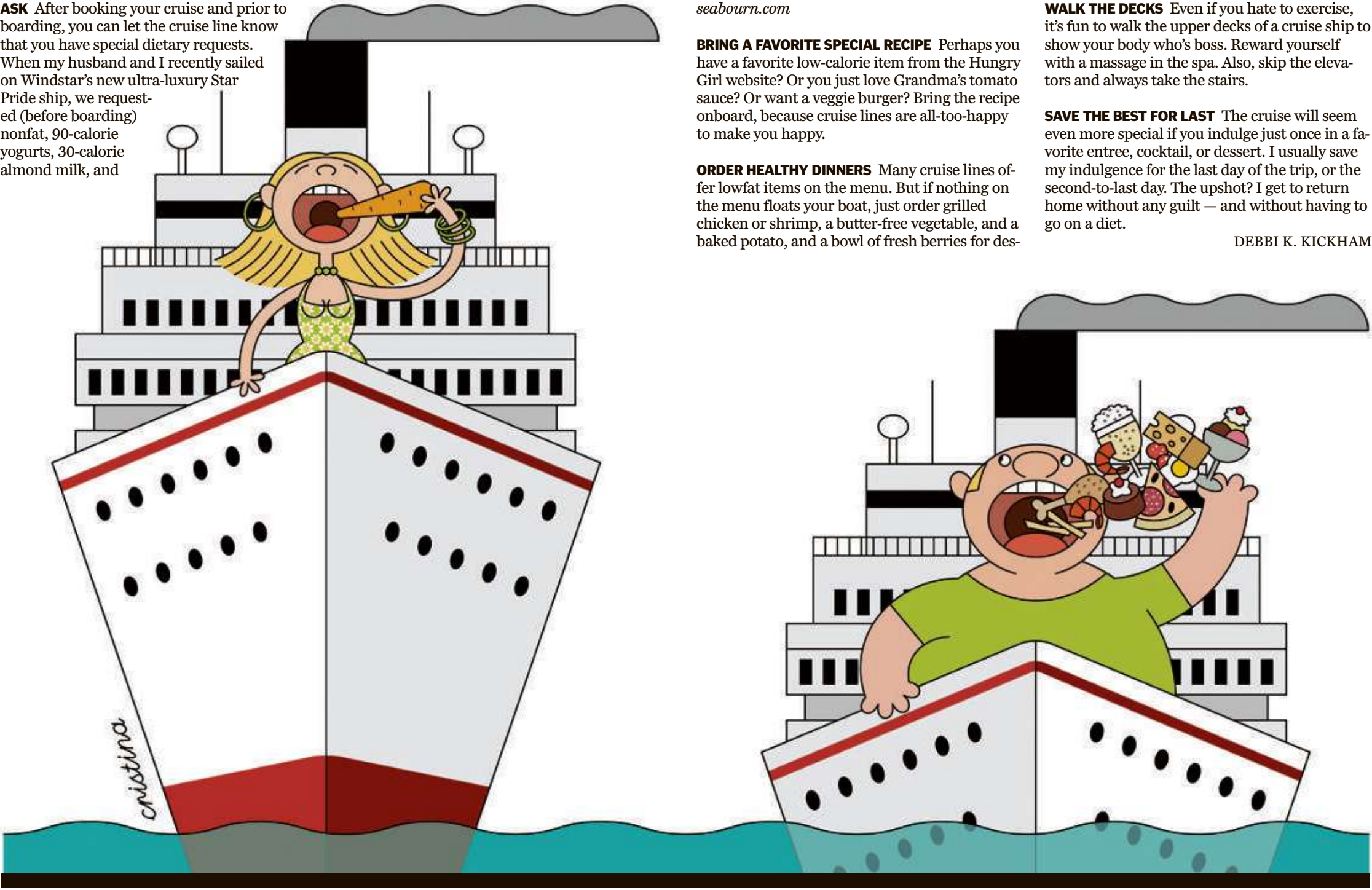
sert. You can also bring your own packets of fat-free salad dressing. I order my packets through [www.minimus.biz](#). I also bring flavored water packets, so I'm not tempted by fattening umbrella drinks.

DO WHAT VETERAN CRUISE EXPERTS DO Mary Jean Tully is the owner of the Cruise Professionals ([www.cruiseprofessionals.com](#)), an award-winning cruise travel agency, and she takes dozens of cruises every year. What does this veteran cruiser do to stay thin? She said she has the waiters leave the bread off the table so she obviates temptation and usually orders the spa cuisine. Next, she pre-books sessions with a personal trainer on the ship, so that she's committed to working out — and can't back out.

WALK THE DECKS Even if you hate to exercise, it's fun to walk the upper decks of a cruise ship to show your body who's boss. Reward yourself with a massage in the spa. Also, skip the elevators and always take the stairs.

SAVE THE BEST FOR LAST The cruise will seem even more special if you indulge just once in a favorite entree, cocktail, or dessert. I usually save my indulgence for the last day of the trip, or the second-to-last day. The upshot? I get to return home without any guilt — and without having to go on a diet.

DEBBI K. KICKHAM



CRISTINA SAMPAIO FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

HERE

GET A RENOWNED PRO'S TRICKS FOR IMPROVING TRAVEL PHOTOS Grab your notebook and head to the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester to hear renowned Argentine photographer Ossian Lindholm talk about the art and craft of creating magical landscape photos, Sept. 21 (that's tonight), 6:30-8:30 p.m. Or join him at Gordon's Fine Wine and Liquors in Waltham, Sept. 22, 6:30-8 p.m., or at the Schoolhouse Gallery in Kingfield, Maine, Sept. 25, 6-8:30 p.m. Through storytelling and images, Lindholm will take guests on a visual journey of his favorite Argentine places. He'll share his tips and tricks on composition and framing, saturating a photo with color, choosing the right shutter speed and lens, and more to help you improve your travel photos. The events also feature Colomé wines from Argentina. Inspired? Arlington-based Ciclismo Classico has launched Travel Vision Journeys, which are photography expeditions to places such as northwest Argentina. Trip prices start at \$5,100 per person; the New England workshops and wine tastings are free. 617-640-4837, [www.ciclismoclasico.com](#)

MAINE INN'S NEW (FOUR-LEGGED) PET-FRIENDLY PACKAGE Bring your pooch with you for a luxury stay at Kennebunkport's historic Captain Jefferds Inn, a former sea captain's home that has launched a new Four-Legged Fun package. Good through May 2015, it includes two

nights in a pet-friendly room; a personalized dog treat and tennis ball upon arrival; towels, linens, and food and water bowls for your canine companion; a bottle of wine for you; a \$30 gift certificate to the local Scalawags Pet Boutique; discounted theater tickets to the Ogunquit Playhouse; and dog-sitting services (for an additional \$10 per hour) so you can go out at night. A stay at this 16-room property includes a three-course breakfast, and afternoon tea and cookies, with or without the package. Rooms start at \$199, based on double occupancy, plus \$99 for the doggie package. 207-618-5037, [www.captainjefferdsinn.com](#)

THERE

CRUISE LINE OFFERS FREE INTERNET SERVICE Book a ticket in a suite or Concierge Level stateroom onboard any of Oceania Cruises' five midsize ships and you will receive free Internet access during your trip, starting with the 2015 winter season. Passengers who book an Owner's, Vista, or Oceania suite will get unlimited Internet access throughout their voyage, while guests booked in Penthouse suites or Concierge Level staterooms will get blocks of complimentary Internet time based on the length of the cruise, beginning with 200 minutes for a 7-night cruise to 500 minutes for trips running more than 16 nights. On each ship, the service is available through the Wi-Fi system, which extends to all public spaces, outdoor decks, and suites-state-

rooms, or at the Oceania@Sea Internet cafe. Internet access typically costs anywhere from 99 cents per minute to \$27.99 per day. 855-623-2642, [www.oceaniacruises.com](#)

EXPLORE A NEW PROTECTED UNESCO SITE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA UNESCO has recognized Botswana's Okavango Delta as the 1,000th World Heritage Site, based on its exceptional natural significance. The inland delta serves as an ecological oasis and shelters a wide variety of wildlife in the arid Kalahari Sand Basin, including Africa's largest elephant population, white and black rhinoceros, and 530 bird species. Explore this destination on African Travel Inc.'s The Magic of Elephants safari, which includes transfer from Johannesburg to Botswana's Linyanti Reserve for three days of river boat tours, game drives, and a visit to an underground hide. Then spend three days in the Okavango Delta on the

lookout for giraffe, impala, and buffalo from a unique vantage point: on the back of an elephant (pictured). The 8-day trip includes upscale lodging, guided game-viewing excursions, most meals, tour flights, and land transfers, starting at \$7,495 per person, double occupancy, for Nov. 1-Dec. 19; flights start at \$919, good Nov. 1-30 (offer code: ATP459), but you must book by Oct. 31. 800-421-8907, [www.africantravelinc.com](#)

EVERYWHERE

KEEP YOUR PHONE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

The small Nite Ize Steelie Dash Ball Mount sticks to the back of your phone or GPS with strong, removable 3M adhesive and then secures to your dashboard using the Steelie Magnetic Phone Socket, a powerful magnet that won't harm your phone. The mount should attach to any device or its hard shell case, and is also compatible with the Steelie Pedes-

tal Kit. The unobtrusive mount weighs just 2.5 ounces. It costs \$20 at REL. 303-449-2576, [www.niteize.com](#)

DEVICE BOASTS ONLINE, CHARGING, AND FILE-SHARING CAPACITY

D-Link's small and lightweight Wi-Fi AC750 portable router and charger (pictured) lets travelers create a secure Internet connection and also refuel devices on the go. The DIR-510L lets you establish a Wi-Fi hot spot from an existing Internet connection using 3G, 4G, Wi-Fi, or Ethernet connectivity, while the 4000mA rechargeable battery lets you quickly charge your mobile devices, including tablets. The router offers two bands, 2.4GHz and 5GHz, that can operate as separate Wi-Fi networks (use one to offer guests partial access to a network). Use the free mydlink SharePort mobile app and a flash drive that you plug into one of the device's USB ports for uploading, downloading, and streaming multimedia and documents anywhere in the world. Currently \$96.99 at amazon.com. 800-326-1688, [www.dlink.com/DI-510L](#)

KARI BODNARCHUK

