

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

REMEMBERING WHEN BAGGAGE BRAGGED

BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER | GLOBE STAFF

Vintage travel posters, the kind that fetch thousands of dollars, are highly sought-after reminders of a time when chic travel on Pan Am or Braniff was truly a once-in-a-lifetime event. Many of the artists who illustrated these midcentury treasures have become well known among collectors.

But another vestige of the golden age of travel can be collected like posters, but often at a fraction of the price. Luggage labels were once common at grand hotels around the globe. Hotels would hand out the beautifully illustrated stickers to guests, who would then affix the memento to their suitcases. It was win-win. The suitcase stickers gave the guests bragging rights, and they gave the hotel free advertising. As the 1960s came to a close and hard leather suitcases fell out of fashion, these labels disappeared, much like Grace Kelly-style head scarfs or the Singing Nun.

To find out what happened to the luggage labels, we turned to Richard Davies, the spokesman for AbeBooks. The company is an online marketplace for bookstores and ephemera sellers.

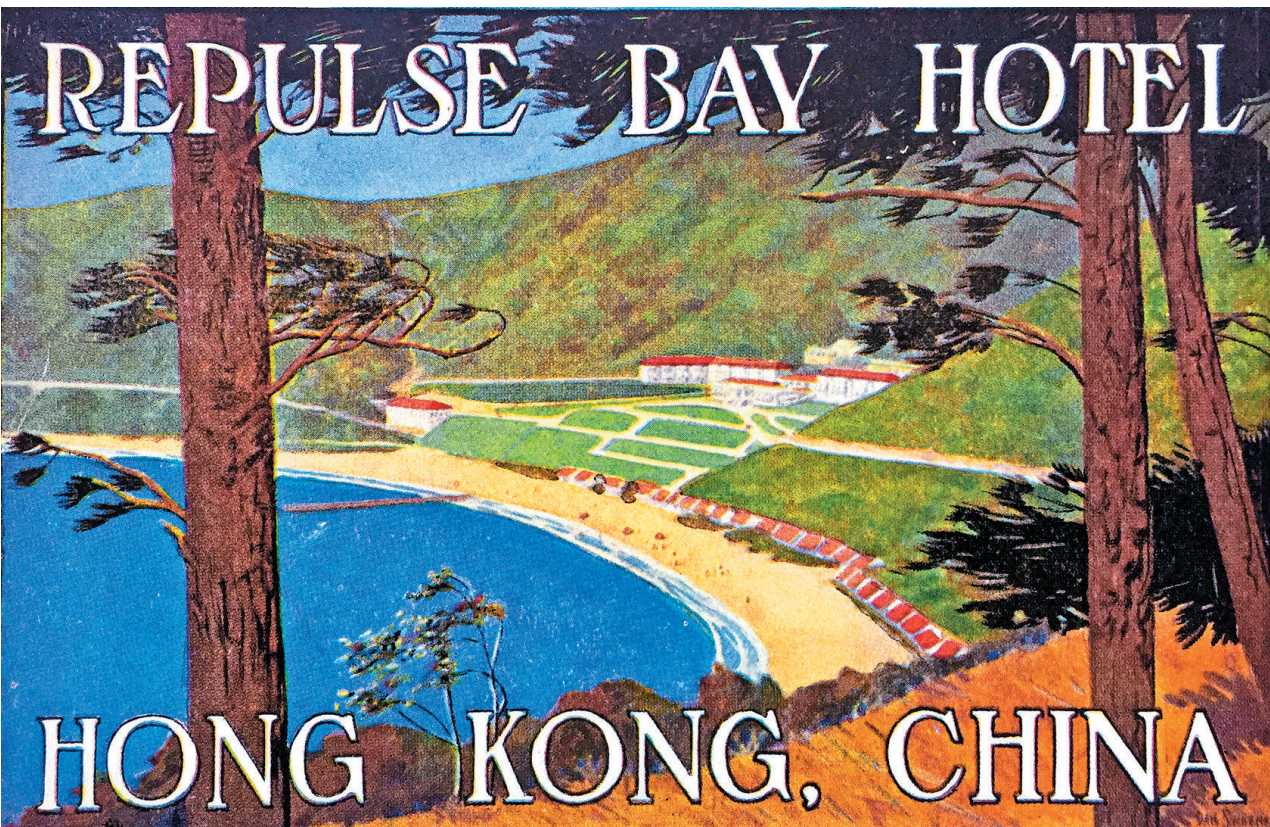
“I spend a lot of time looking through old vintage items,” Davies said. “I was looking at a lot of vintage travel posters, and started discovering and seeing luggage labels interspersed with them. I didn’t really understand what was going on, so I started researching them a little.”

What he found was they were once a staple at posh hotels. “The suitcases back in the 1920s and 1930s were quite rigid affairs made of leather, often with a wooden spine holding it together,” Davies said. “It was quite tough, and it would be easy for a label to be slapped onto them. Then along comes . . . nylon, and suitcases changed and became softer. I think one of the reasons that these things went away was it was much harder to stick a sticker onto these nylon, softer, cheaper, suitcases.”

They may not be found on suitcases any longer, but they can be found on sites such as AbeBooks and eBay.

“It’s very affordable,” he said. “You could pick one up for \$10 to \$30 dollars, which is much cheaper than a poster. So if you gathered a collection, say, of 10 or 12, you could create a display that rivals a travel poster, but for much, much less.”

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HERE

CELEBRATE CARIBBEAN CULTURE

Chill out to reggae music, view a parade as it winds through Cambridge, and watch your kids try stilt walking at one of New England’s largest outdoor multicultural festivals. Cambridge Carnival International, which started 25 years ago as a small street fair at University Park, takes place Sept. 10 at Kendall and Central squares. The festival includes a 1.3-mile grand costume parade, which starts at 12:30 p.m. at River Street and Blackstone Street in Central Square and follows Massachusetts Avenue and Main Street to Kendall Square. The parade features steel bands and a costume competition. Kids 14 and younger can get their face painted, try stilt walking, or work on arts and crafts activities. 617-492-2518, www.cambridgecarnival.org.

INDULGE AT A LOCAL FOOD FESTIVAL

Head to the Rose Kennedy Greenway on Sept. 17 for an event that is considered New England’s largest farmers’ market. The Boston Local Food Festival features local dairy, meat, produce, and freshly cooked meals made with food grown in New England. More than 100 vendors will join this year’s festival, which starts at noon by Milk Street on the greenways and focuses on the principles of local, green, and fair. The event includes lively chef demos, a New England village, a family fun zone, a seafood throw-down competition, and diverse performances. 617-395-0250, www.bostonlocalfoodfestival.com.

TWO UNIVERSITIES TAKE ON BEACH POLO

Don’t miss the first-ever beach polo match between Harvard and Yale universities on Sept. 10 in Watch Hill, R.I. The Ocean Beach Polo Classic starts

at noon. The two universities have been sports rivals since 1875, but playing on sand will add a new twist. RSVP-only tickets for Ocean House guests who book the exclusive Beach Polo Classic package, which includes two tickets to the match, one breakfast for two, and accommodations for \$1,060. 844-367-7710, www.oceanhouseri.com.

THERE

CHECK OUT FORT LAUDERDALE’S LATEST HOTEL

Start planning now to stay in the new Conrad Fort Lauderdale Beach, a luxury hotel in south Florida that opens its doors this month. The 290 all-suite oceanfront resort sits on Fort Lauderdale’s North Beach, which offers easy access to the ocean, parks, restaurants, and family-friendly museums. It sports a nautical-themed décor, full galley kitchens in each

suite, four eateries including a bakery, a craft mixology program, a spa and fitness center, and a pool with a large deck overlooking the ocean. The hotel participates in Hilton Honors, the hotel loyalty reward program that has no blackout dates, and offers members free Internet during their stay, digital check-in, and other perks. Rates start at \$379. 954-414-5100, www.conradfortlauderdale.com.

FREE FLIGHTS TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Travel with Lindblad Expeditions to the Galapagos Islands and get free flights from Miami to the archipelago. The cruise company, which celebrates the 50th anniversary of Lars-Eric Lindblad’s first international tourist expedition to the islands, will offer free round-trip flights for nearly every Galapagos departure through Dec. 16, and select departures through May 2018 onboard the Nation-

al Geographic Islander or National Geographic Endeavour II. The two small-boat cruise ships run 10- to 17-day trips. The company has just launched a new kids program, called the National Geographic Global Explorers Program, that allows kids to develop what National Geographic Education deems the attitudes, skills, and knowledge of an explorer. Rates start at \$6,960 per person, based on double occupancy. 800-397-3348, www.expeditions.com.

EVERYWHERE

MONITOR YOUR HEALTH WITH A HEADSET

Rather than carry multiple devices while traveling, use Alupro’s new clip&talk health device to make hands-free calls and track your health stats. This small and lightweight device serves as a Bluetooth headset with a tiny optical sensor that measures vital symptoms

from your ear. Use the device like a hands-free earpiece to answer and make calls, and as a health monitor for detecting biometrics such as your heart rate, breathing rate, VO2, calories burned, steps, distance, and more (blood pressure and oxygen will be available with future firmware updates). When not in use, attach the clip&talk to your shirt, purse, or bag so it’s handy. Charge it by USB with no cables — it has a built-in USB connector so it attaches directly to your computer or a wall plug. The free Android and iOS app lets you track and store biometric data in one place. \$249.99. 646-300-9323, www.clipandtalk.com.

KARI BODNARCHUK

