

Destinations

NIGHT LIFE

Miami to Minehead, playing your song

MARCH 28
MIAMI
Be Yourself Pool Party! Legendary DJ Danny Tenaglia takes his progressive house music poolside, spinning an outdoor party as part of Miami's massive Winter Music Conference. There are dozens of parties all week (find more information at www.wmcon.com), but Tenaglia's annual pool bash is a stand-out. The Grammy-nominated DJ has remixed tracks for everyone from Madonna to Depeche Mode, and his party is a hedonistic celebration at the posh Shelborne Beach Resort. If your dance card is already full for March 28, the New York club Pacha is sponsoring a series of Miami pool parties with other legendary DJs such as Jonathan Peters (March 26) and Bob Sinclair (March 27). Tickets for the Tenaglia bash are \$30 in advance — and don't forget the sun-screen. *1801 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, www.pachanyc.com/miami2010/*

MARCH 26-28
KNOXVILLE, Tenn.
Big Ears Festival: The idea was to create a hassle-free festival where music lovers could enjoy bands in small venues without having to shove (hello, South by Southwest) or camp outside in the mud (this means you, Bonnaroo). As a result, Big Ears, which debuted last year to rave reviews, features a more subdued lineup of artists — with the exception of An-

drew W.K., of course. Other acts this year include Vampire Weekend, Dirty Projectors, Sufjan Stevens, Joanna Newsom, and the National. Individual tickets are available, as well as a limited number of festival passes for \$250. *www.bigearsfestival.com*

APRIL 21-MAY 2
NEW YORK
Tribeca Film Festival: The Robert Dinero-founded celluloid celebration flexes its muscle this year by premiering "Shrek Forever After," the (promised) final installment of the saga of the green ogre. For those seeking less family-friendly fare, the festival is also debuting the Edward Burns film "Nice Guy Johnny" and the Ian Dury biopic "Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll." Tickets are \$16 for evening and weekend screenings, \$8 for daytime and late night showings. A full festival schedule goes online tomorrow. *www.tribecafilm.com/festival, 866-941-3378*

MAY 7-9
MINEHEAD, England
All Tomorrow's Parties, Curated by Matt Groening: "The Simpsons" creator plays concert promoter by hand-picking some of his favorite bands to perform at a weekend-long festival at Butlins Minehead Resort. So who did Groening choose for his dream concert? Acts include Iggy and the Stooges, Spiri-



BENNETT SELL-KLINE FOR PACHANYC.COM

The action happens poolside at DJ Danny Tenaglia's party in Miami.

tualized performing its album "Ladies and Gentlemen We are Floating in Space," Liars, Coco Rosie, She & Him, and Built to Spill. Tickets for the shows (including accommodations at the resort) start at \$515 and go to \$1,900. *www.atpfestival.com*

Jimi Hendrix and Bob Dylan. Nearly 10 years ago, the island in the English Channel got back in the business of hosting festivals. This year's show includes sets by Jay-Z, Pink, and The Strokes. For those missing the good old days, Sir Paul McCartney headlines the final day. Tickets (camping included) are \$225. *www.isleofwightfestival.com*

CHRISTOPHER MUTHER

Events are sometimes canceled, rescheduled, or sold out; call or check online. Christopher Muther can be reached at muther@globe.com.

Canyon or mesa, lands also serve the Navajo as museums

► ARIZONA
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It's one thing to tour these sprawling lands, but to appreciate them requires an understanding of the area's culture, heritage, and history, and recognition of the relationship between life and land. The Navajo Interactive Museum in Tuba City provides this.

"Our culture is like Buddhism," says the museum's Donovan Hanley. "Everything has a life, a purpose." Museum exhibits explain everything from the creation story to contemporary life, a culture as colorful as the Painted Desert's sands. Like other young Navajos, Hanley struggles to balance modern aspirations with reverence for traditional ways, to embrace the future while honoring the past.

In Page, on the shores of Lake Powell, Mylo Begay works for his uncle Chief Tsosie's Antelope Slot Canyon Tours. Begay's passion and gift for photography enrich his tours of this twisted groove, carved by wind, sand, and water. Light dances magically off the canyon's curves and striations. Begay helps me create images, adjusting technical settings and advising on angles.

Then, when the other groups have passed through, he trades modern ways for traditional ones. He demonstrates the canyon's sound effects by playing a traditional flute, first in an open area, then by curling up in a shallow cavern. The first music is beautiful, but the second is haunting and gives me shivers.

On the edge of the Navajo lands in communities like Page trading posts are plentiful. Here Navajo belief in community-owned property abuts capitalism. At the Blair Trading Post, Elijah Blair holds forth in the upstairs museum, which displays family treasures rich in blankets, jewelry, and pots collected over the decades.

"Since the Navajo don't own property, they had no collateral, and when they needed money, there was no other way for them to get it than to pawn or trade something," Blair explains. "We bought everything they produced and found a market for it: live-stock, wool, piñon nuts, potatoes, corn." In more recent years, the emphasis has shifted from trade to pawn.

It's in informal exchanges with store clerks, gallery work-



HILARY NANGLE FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Sandstone formations rise out of the floor of Monument Valley.

ers, waitresses, even folks at neighboring tables that I pick up useful tidbits, from the traditional Navajo greeting, roughly "ya'ah'tee," to learning that the Navajo call themselves the Diné, "the people."

It's also how I learn about Shonto, which means "sunshine springs." It's an appropriate name for an oasis of cottonwoods

that draws life from a creek. This is home to the Shonto Trading Post, a combination general store, grill, and gallery selling traded goods: woven blankets, silver and beaded jewelry, baskets, and pottery.

"All the crafts are locally made," trader Al Grieve says. "This is one of the few areas where people still card and spin their own wools, and one of the few that also produces pottery and baskets." The selection isn't huge, but I find a woven mat and a piece of folk art that makes me smile.

Grieve explains that the Shonto held onto traditional ways longer than many other Navajos because they hid out in the canyon, avoiding the Long Walk, the death march in 1863, when the Navajo were forced to leave their lands and walk to Fort Defiance.

I hear similar stories from my guide in Canyon de Chelly National Monument, a 130-square-mile labyrinth comprising two canyons, gorges, and offshoots. Anyone can drive along the rim, but accessing its red rock depths and the fertile valley floor below requires a native guide and a truck that can navigate the deep ruts and sand waves.

It's a rough ride but the rewards far outweigh the discomfort. People have lived here since 350 AD, and more than 2,700 archeological sites remain, including cliff dwellings and petroglyphs. I marvel at the tales of how the ancient peoples carved out such intricate villages high on narrow canyon shelves; how they built shelters that took advantage of the sun and canyon walls for summer cooling and winter warmth; how they farmed the canyon floor, and sealed the cliffs carrying water and food.

Despite its size, Canyon de Chelly is an intimate experience. Not so Monument Valley, roughly three hours northwest. Perhaps no place on the Navajo Reservation is more recognized than this tribal park, thanks in great part to John Wayne westerns.

Throughout the valley, sandstone formations rise from out of the high desert floor, but the most striking ones are in the tribal park. Navajo guide Harold Simpson, whose family is one of about 14 living within its boundaries, helps me appreciate the landscape as well as the life here.

"This used to be my sandbox," he says, as we stop near the Praying Hands formation. "My parents were very traditional, they hardly knew English; my stepfather is a medicine man." Simpson's grandparents taught him traditional ways. "For elderly Navajo, Monument Valley is so sacred they call it the Talking Rocks," he says. The land is littered with pottery shards, but to bring one home, he says, is to bring home a spirit or ghost. "You don't want no bad mojo."

His tour turns off the public roads and includes stops for singing, flute playing, drumming, and dancing by his brother Richard that is a real treat. Our group gets better acquainted as Richard teaches us a few steps while Harold sings and drums.

We stop at the Sun's Eye, a magnificent cavern formation with a hole in its roof. Simpson again drums, this time belting out a song he wrote about the Navajo Code Talkers, who communicated Allied secrets during World War II. His voice reverberates off the walls of the cavernous formation. There's an exhibit dedicated to these heroes at the Burger King in nearby Kayenta.

The sun is setting as we arrive back at the Monument Valley Visitors Center. When pushed, Simpson talks a bit about The View Hotel, which opened adjacent to the center a few years ago and delivers on its name. Economic development is a sensitive topic, he says. It illustrates the clash between the elders, who see the land as sacred; the younger generation, who want more opportunities and have grown up with TVs, computers, and cell-phones; and those, like Simpson, who try to balance between two worlds.

"For me, for my business, I believe economic development is very important. My guides have families to feed," Simpson says. But he acknowledges that commercialism and capitalism rub against the bedrock of his traditional ways. "We wrestle with that," he says.

From my hotel room, I look out over the valley floor, watching formations fade into darkness. A procession of vehicle headlights straggles back toward warmth, comfort, and lights. One lone set of lights bumps along in the other direction. I know it's Simpson returning to his hogan, a traditional dwelling made of logs and mud on the valley floor.

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Currents

Connecting travelers on a budget

The Pod Hotel in New York has launched a feature on its community blog that lets guests connect with each other in advance of their stay, so they can share a ride to or from the area's airports. The Ride With Me program gives hotel-bound guests the ability to search for — or post a note to find — other guests who will be arriving at an airport around the same time and are interested in carpooling to Manhattan by taxi. Guests can become members of the hotel's blog as soon as they book their accommodations. The site also links people in three other categories: Drink With Me, Eat With Me, and Shop With Me. Rates for this 347-room, budget boutique property run \$89 to \$179. *212-355-0300, www.thepodhotel.com*

New at the Smithsonian

On Wednesday the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in Washington will open an exhibition hall dedicated to the discovery and understanding of human origins. "What Does It Mean to Be Human?" the hall's premiere exhibit, draws information acquired by Smithsonian scientists and research teams worldwide. It highlights milestones in human evolution over the past 6 million years, and features more than 285 human fossils and artifacts, at least 75 skulls, and an original Neanderthal skeleton. *202-633-1000, humanorigins.si.edu*

KARI BODNARCHUK

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A promotional image for Universal Orlando Resort. It features a film strip with characters from Shrek (Donkey and Shrek), Spider-Man, and Harry Potter (Harry Potter holding his wand). The Universal Orlando Resort logo is at the bottom left, and the Harry Potter logo is at the bottom right. Text at the bottom says "TO BE REVEALED IN SPRING 2010".

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