



Encounter

The Louvre

Death and rebellion

Two marble sculptures, each nearly seven feet tall, loom in the Louvre. In this age of instant gratification and replication, are these Michelangelo masterpieces — one “The Rebellious Slave,” the other “The Dying Slave” — still moving to their viewers? Sit before them for one hour, then another.

The slaves’ thick-muscled bodies are frozen forms, one twisted, the other relaxed, as their so-obvious strength has been stilled. More mystery, though, comes from their eyes. For one slave, his eyes are open, yet seem hollow. For the other, his eyes are closed. What then, of the soul of each?

The time-worn tensions, carved six centuries ago, still resonate in 2008.

TOM HAINES

Globe-trotting

NOTES FROM OUR BLOG

Small-screen smut?

You knew this was coming. Bloomberg News is reporting that flight attendants at American are asking the carrier to put filters on its in-flight Web service to block porn and other inappropriate sites after fielding complaints from some passengers.

Union leaders at American say they have met with management on the problem but haven’t made a formal request yet. On Aug. 20, American launched a trial of inflight Wi-Fi on 25 daily flights between JFK and LA or San Francisco, and between New York and Miami. The charge for the service is \$12.95. Currently JetBlue provides limited access on one plane. Southwest and Delta plan to offer service by late 2008 and 2009, respectively.

PAUL MAKISHIMA

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Gearing up

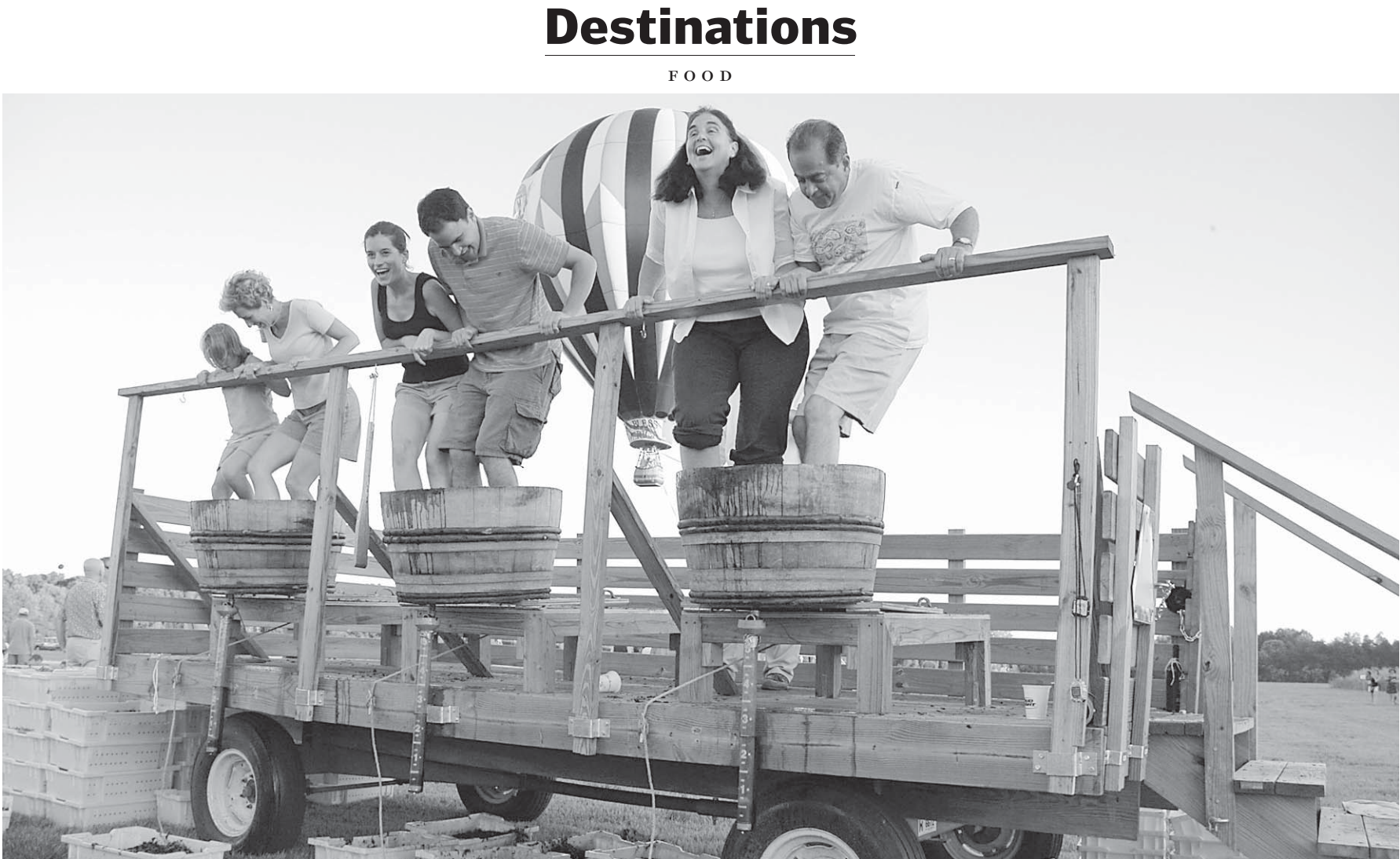


Stay on the ball

Even if your beachside rental doesn’t have a television or you’re offline on your vacation, you can still track the Red Sox while you’re away. Baseball ScoreCast, made by Ambient Devices in Cambridge, broadcasts live, inning-by-inning scores for every Major League Baseball team and provides upcoming schedule information and team standings, including win-loss record, games behind, and winning-losing streaks, from spring training through the World Series.

ScoreCast, which requires 4 AA batteries and stands 5 inches high by 8½ inches wide by 1 inch deep, receives data by way of Ambient’s wireless InfoCast Network. Ambient says its signal reaches more than 90 percent of US households. It’s available for \$129.99 from ambientdevices.com or by calling 866-311-1999.

KARI J. BODNARCHUK



Grape stomping, hot air balloon rides, tastings, food, and music are on the menu during Virginia Wine Month. More than 130 wineries are taking part.

With lifted glass and purple feet

OCTOBER VIRGINIA
Virginia Wine Month, 20th Anniversary: More than 130 wineries in this state will be offering tastings and other celebratory events this month. Try Virginia’s famous Norton grape at Chrysalis Vineyard’s Norton Wine and Bluegrass Festival Oct. 4–5 and hear local bluegrass music. Admission is \$20. On Oct. 18–19, hot air balloons will float over the historic Long Branch plantation in Millwood, where 17 wineries will offer tastes. Children’s activities, live music, and other festivities will also be part of the Hot Air Balloon and Wine Festival. Admission is \$10. Throughout October, the Tides Inn in Irvington is offering a two-night Women Wild About Wine package deal that includes tours of six wineries, special accommodations along scenic Chesapeake Bay, and spa services such as manicures and pedicures. Cost of the package is \$335; tidesinn.com. The Boar’s Head Inn in Charlottesville is offering a package that provides unlimited access to the wineries and vineyards along the Monticello Wine Trail, a three-course dinner for two, daily breakfast, and two bottles of wine. Cost is \$571 for a double room with a two-night minimum stay; boarsheadinn.com. virginia.org/wine.

OCT. 17–19 EDGARTOWN
Martha’s Vineyard Food & Wine Festival: Stay close to home and enjoy this second annual event. It celebrates the sea, the farm, and the vine with celebrity guests, representatives from international wineries, and island farms and seafood. Some of the events include barbecuing with Andy Husbands of Tremont 647 and Sister Sorel in Boston, and Dante deMagistris of Dante in Cambridge; a discussion of chocolate and dessert wines by chocolate specialist Lee Napoli, and a dinner at a private home with Peter Davis of Henrietta’s Table in Cambridge. Events range from free to \$500. seafarmvine.org.

OCT. 18–19 HALF MOON BAY, CALIF.
Half Moon Bay Art & Pumpkin Festival: Get geared up for Halloween at a festival celebrating all things pumpkin. Carvers will sculpt a pumpkin weighing more than 1,000 pounds; homestyle pumpkin treats will be served; and a pumpkin parade will march along Main Street. There will be daily pancake breakfasts, pumpkin-eating contests, and pumpkin weigh-ins. Admission is free. 650-726-9652, miramarevents.com.

OCT. 16–18 CALGARY, ALBERTA
Rocky Mountain Wine & Food Festival: Selec-

tions of wine, scotch, port, beer, spirits, and liqueurs will be quaffed at 170 exhibitor booths at this festival in the Calgary Grand Tasting Hall. Area restaurants will offer small plates of their specialties, and cheese seminars given by the Dairy Farmers of Canada will explain Canadian cheeses, offer tastings, and explain how to pair wines with cheeses. *Tickets \$15–\$25, rockymountainwine.com.*

PLAN AHEAD DEC. 7–28 CHARLESTON, S.C.
Chocolate Seductions Tours: It’s a dream for chocoholics. Participants on these small tours will sample decadent chocolate desserts as they visit three Charleston restaurants. Along the way, guests will learn about the city’s history and significance in the culinary world. Pastry chefs from the restaurants Charleston Grill in the Charleston Place Hotel, Cypress, and McCrady’s will give demonstrations on how to use chocolate. Cost is \$60 each. 843-723-3366, charleston.com.

ALISON ARNETT

Events are sometimes canceled, rescheduled, or sold out; call or check online to confirm. Alison Arnett can be reached at alacarte59@aol.com.

Where they went

PORTUGAL

WHO: Diane and John Charest, both 56, of Fitchburg; Pam Treet, 45, of Fryeburg, Maine; and Carmina Provost, 58, and Stan Cheika, 54, both of Chicopee. (The women are sisters.)

WHERE: Portugal

WHEN: One week in April

WHY: “For years my sisters and I have wanted to visit Portugal, particularly the small town where our dad grew up,” said Diane Charest.

OPEN ARMS: Jose Valentine is from Caldas da Rainha, an hour north of Lisbon. At 16, he moved to Chicopee, where he still lives. He turns 85 this week. “My father founded the Portuguese American Club in Chicopee,” Charest said. “We called him the Portuguese godfather because everybody who moved there from Portugal would go to him for advice. He still goes to the club to watch soccer.”

TOWN TOUR: The sisters stayed in downtown Lisbon, at the Hotel Mundial, and took day trips. Lena and Jose “Joe” Ribeiro, friends of their father who had lived in Chicopee but retired to Caldas da Rainha, gave them a tour of the town of 13,500. “It really was like a time warp,” Charest said. “I almost expected to see a horse and buggy go down the street. Joe took us to my father’s old house. That was very emotional for me. We also went to my great-grandmother’s grave. She would visit us every summer. All the graves have pictures on them, and when I saw it I remembered her.”

MEDIEVAL MASTERPIECE: Their father’s hometown is



Diane and John Charest near the 16th-century castle in Obidos.

the church and shrines and did the walk of the stations.” Lisbon reminded her of New Orleans, with its balconies of wrought iron. “I was amazed at how the whole country was tiled,” she said. “Every night we ate outside — always fish — and we took the funicular to the Port Wine Institute.” The only downside, she said, was the number of beggars and homeless people. “That surprised me.”

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES: The daughters gathered with Dad after the trip to view photos. “We did a slide show on TV so we could all see them and my dad kept telling us about everything in his town, saying, ‘Oh, that’s this, this is that.’ He loved seeing his house.”

 **SEE WHERE THEY ALL WENT**
For more photos and to share yours, visit boston.com/travel/wheretheywent. Send your suggestions within two weeks of your return to diane@bydianedaniel.com.

Rave

A fresh catch in Vieques

VIEQUES, Puerto Rico — Since the Navy stopped its bombing exercises on this island five years ago, more tourists are visiting and word is out about Vieques’s spectacular beaches. Several new restaurants, most of them pricey and requiring reservations, have opened to meet the demand. If you are looking to discover a gem, avoid the places everyone is talking about, which is how we happened upon Topacio, a Caribbean seafood restaurant hidden behind the main square of Isabel Segunda and serving up tasty local fare at great prices.

Members of the Cruz-Hernandez family chip in to make the 2-year-old restaurant a success. Chef Ivia relies on her sister Brendy to run the front of the house, while their mother and brother catch the fish that is the focus of most of their signature dishes. Imagine lobster and conch cooked in spicy Creole sauces, although the menu also includes steak, pork, and pasta. Plates come with a salad and rice and beans, fried plantains, or mofongo, mashed fried plantains redolent of garlic and flavored with bacon.

The food is delicious, the decor casual yet chic, and the bill for two, including drinks and dessert, was \$50. And there was no wait for a table, even at dinnertime.

Topacio, Route 200, Pueblo Nuevo, 787-741-1179.

MARIE C. FRANKLIN



JEFFREY DEL TORO FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Don’t try this at home — or on the road, for that matter

By Peter Mandel
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

In the starry universe of tell-all books, the travel industry is at the heart of the spin. As if on cue, a freelance magazine writer and a contributor to a famous series of guidebooks have come out with fast-selling paperbacks that aim to pull back the curtain on dirty secrets, outright lies, and plain old sloppiness in travel journalism and in the broader airline, hotel, and restaurant industries.

In “Do Travel Writers Go to Hell?” Thomas Kohnstamm has tales to tell, especially for readers who believe that Lonely Planet guides are “the gospel truth.” For the rest of us sometimes-skeptical, sometimes-satisfied guide users, it’s worth knowing that Kohnstamm was so short of cash and time that he ended up faking

Do Travel Writers Go to Hell?: A Swashbuckling Tale of High Adventures, Questionable Ethics, and Professional Hedonism

By Thomas B. Kohnstamm
Three Rivers/Crown, 288 pp., \$13.95.

chunks of the Brazil book that he was supposed to be bringing up to date.

The problem isn’t with Kohnstamm’s behind-the-scenes revelations on guidebook research. It’s with this epically self-absorbed narrator. He’s constantly checking his mug in the mirror after a night of hitting on women who tremble when he saunters up to the bar. “I could only hope to be like a Chatwin, Hemingway, or Kerouac,” Kohnstamm writes early in the book. Unless I’m mistaken, the guy is updating listings for hostels, pizza joints, and beachfront discos.

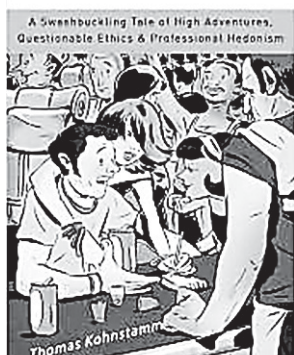
Reading “Smile When You’re Lying” by

Smile When You’re Lying: Confessions of a Rogue Travel Writer

By Chuck Thompson
Henry Holt, 336 pp., \$15.

Thompson is in Thailand, in Colombia, he’s back in some bar in Alaska, he’s off again into the Philippine jungle. You’d be impressed if it weren’t for a nagging suspicion that Thompson’s scattershot stories are, at least in part, a handy way for him to recycle articles he had in his drawer. But if some of his memoir is less-than-jaw-crackingly fresh, at least he gets well past Kohnstamm’s high-school beer-swilling achievements (most of which he could have pulled off at home).

Do Travel Writers Go to Hell?



In the end, both books are worth checking out for jostled glimpses of slapdash journalists on the road and the not-always-glossy guidebooks and magazines they feed.

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