

Destinations

FOOD



In Eugene, chef John Sundstrom prepares one of the delicacies that has put the Oregon Truffle Festival on the wild fungi map.

JOHN R. HIGBY

JAN. 28-30
EUGENE, Ore.
Oregon Truffle Festival: A word of warning: according to French epicure J.A. Brillat-Savarin, even just pronouncing the word truffle “awakens erotic and gourmand ideas both in the sex dressed in petticoats and in the bearded portion of humanity.” So there is no telling what might happen at this celebration of Oregon’s wild truffles. Organizers claim local truffles rival those found in Europe, and foragers zealously guard the location of their best hunting grounds. Events include a gala dinner, truffle dog training seminar, and cooking class. Too racy? Start with the Oregon Truffle Marketplace for truffle and wine tastings, cooking demonstrations, and sales of local foods. Various locations; Truffle Marketplace \$15, \$20 with wine tasting; other events begin at \$100, packages available. 503-296-5929, www.oregontrufflefestival.com

JAN. 14-30
NIAGARA PENINSULA, Ontario
Niagara Ice Wine Festival: Niagara lies just west of Buffalo, so you can guess what winter is like. But Mother Nature compensates for the cold by making ice wine possible. Ontario is the biggest producer of ice wine in Canada, which must be made from grapes picked at temperatures lower than 18 degrees. The vineyards and villages of the Niagara Peninsula celebrate the chill with a variety of events, mostly on weekends. The Discovery Pass is good for wine and food samplings at six wineries (from 30 participants). Prefer not to drink and drive? An Ice Wine Village sets up in downtown Niagara-on-the-Lake on Jan. 22-23, with wineries and restaurants paired up in small tents to offer tastings. Region-wide; Discovery Pass \$30, Ice Wine Village free, fees for food and drink. www.wineriesofniagaraonthelake.com, www.icewinefestival.com

JAN. 13-16
GRAND CAYMAN ISLAND, British Overseas Territory
Cayman Cookout: Nothing beats walking barefoot in the sand while eating gourmet food and sipping wine. That’s why the opening event of this love affair with food is held on Seven Mile Beach. Hosted by Food & Wine magazine and held primarily at the Ritz-Carlton Grand Cayman, the workshops, lecture-dem-

onstrations, gala dinners, seminars, and wine tastings have a celebrity roster on hand, including Eric Ripert (who doubles as guest host, since his restaurant Blue is at the Ritz-Carlton), the always-opinionated Anthony Bourdain, Spanish food guru José Andrés, and Top Chef Masters whiz Susur Lee. As your mother said, wait an hour before swimming. Island-wide; events begin at \$105, packages available. www.caymanislands.ky/cookout

JAN. 29
SANTA FE
The Souper Bowl XVII: What’s better on a cold day than a bowl of hot soup for a good cause? More than 20 restaurants in the Santa Fe area offer their best bowls and guests vote for their favorite cream soup, savory soup, seafood soup, vegetarian soup — and best soup overall. Proceeds benefit the Food Depot, which provides nearly 4 million meals annually to people in need in northern New Mexico. Santa Fe Community Convention Center, 201 West Marcy St., advance tickets adults \$25, ages 6-12 \$10, at the door \$30/\$10. 505-471-1633, www.thefooddepot.org

PLAN AHEAD
FEB. 11-13
DELRAY BEACH, Fla.
Delray Beach Garlic Fest: This celebration of the stinking rose is filled with cooking demonstrations, garlic-eating opportunities, a lively competition among chefs, and steady musical entertainment. It’s a swell time to go to the beach, just a half hour north of Fort Lauderdale. Downtown, \$10 per day, fees for food and drink. 561-279-0907, www.dbgarlicfest.com

PATRICIA HARRIS AND DAVID LYON

Events are sometimes canceled, rescheduled, or sold out; check online. Patricia Harris and David Lyon can be reached at harris.lyon@verizon.net. Read their food and travel blog at www.hungrytravelers.com.

Currents

This old ship: new reef and dive site

Strap on your diving gear and get ready to explore the USS Kittiwake, a decommissioned submarine rescue vessel that will be sunk in the waters off Grand Cayman Island this month. At the dive site off Seven Mile Beach, snorkelers can visit the bridge of the 251-foot-long ship and look down through the smokestack and open hatches, all expected to lie about 15 feet below the surface. Divers can explore the ship’s five decks and all of its compartments , including the engine room. The Caribbean Sea submersion project marks the first time that a US Maritime Administration ship has been donated to a foreign country for the creation of an artificial reef. 345-949-8522, www.kittiwakecayman.com

China’s treasures in sight
Ninety objects belonging to China’s 18th-century Qianlong Emperor are on display at Salem’s Peabody Essex Museum until Jan. 9, in the exhibit “The Emperor’s Private Paradise: Treasures From the Forbidden City.” The paintings, wall coverings, furniture, architectural elements, cloisonné and more come from Qianlong Garden, the emperor’s private retreat in a hidden part of Beijing’s imperial complex, and none has ever been on public display. The Mandarin Oriental, Boston is offering a special Forbidden City Treasures package that includes one night’s accommodations, round-trip transportation for two to the museum by private sedan, two admission tickets, a private guided tour,



TIM MULLANE

The USS Kittiwake will be sunk in the waters off Grand Cayman Island.

entry to the Yin Yu Tang House (a 200-year-old Chinese house reassembled on the museum grounds), and daily American breakfast for two at the hotel’s restaurant, Asana. Rates start at \$765. 617-535-8880, www.mandarinoriental.com
KARI BODNARCHUK

Video eyewear with virtual screens

Plug your portable device into Vuzix’s Wrap 310XL video eyewear. Then watch 2-D and 3-D movies on a virtual screen that creates the effect of viewing a 55-inch display from about 9 feet away. This eyewear contains two high-resolution LCD screens that display standard and widescreen formats. It comes with noise-isolating earphones that effectively block out airplane and other background sounds (or use your own speakers or earphones). It takes a little fiddling to get the adjustable nosepiece to fit comfortably, but tweaking the picture’s contrast, color saturation, and brightness settings is a cinch. This video eyewear works with



VUZIX

Apple media players, digital cameras, camcorders, cellphones with video out connectors, and portable video game systems. Two AA batteries last up to six hours. The Wrap 310XLs are available for \$249.99 from Vuzix (585-359-5900; www.vuzix.com) or \$199 from amazon.com.
KARI BODNARCHUK

The line starts here for centuries of royals-watchers

By Julie Flavell

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

LONDON — The date has barely been set, but US tourists are already forecast to boost the British economy as they cross the Atlantic for the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton next April.

Our infatuation with Britain’s royalty is no secret. Supposedly we Americans, living in the vortex of a super democracy, yearn for the certainties of crowned heads and ivied ruins. While Britain’s tourist authority tries to turn a profit with the online Royal Engagement Trail — said to be aimed at US visitors — more thoughtful observers complain their country is being used as “a period drama theme park” by Americans who do not know the real Britain.

But if you are hankering for a glimpse of the royal wedding, rest assured that it has nothing to do with the Disney-fication of Britain. Royal-watching is an American tradition that dates for centuries, to the days when Ben Franklin was at the Court of St. James, trying to catch sight of George III’s little heir. Franklin felt only admiration upon seeing the “lovely” 9-year-old Prince of Wales, who would one day be notorious as the first British king to try to divorce a popular wife and marry a mistress.

It seems strange to hear Franklin talk of his joy at seeing the royals close up, because he was in London on a mission to defend Colonial rights. Just a few years later he would be signing the Declaration of Independence. But then so would John Hancock, who, in London in 1761, wanted to see the coronation of George III. He expected it to be “the grandest thing I shall ever meet with.”

The fact was that seeing royalty was a thrill that was not on offer in the Colonies, and the dispute over rights and liberties had nothing to do with it. Boston Son of Liberty William Palfrey, who was in London on business while his countrymen were shedding their blood at the

If you go . . .



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Battles of Lexington and Concord, went out of his way to see the royals as often as possible. He was in luck when he spotted the royal family at Drury Lane Theatre. The little Princess Amelia waded to the audience, and Queen Charlotte glittered with diamonds on her head, throat, and bodice, “said to be worth 15,000 pounds,” wrote the awestruck Yankee. When Palfrey saw the king and queen again outside Green Park, he waved loyally and got a nod of the royal head from his majesty.

Palfrey did his royals-watching around the royal parks and palaces of Westminster.

They are still there today, as elegant as ever. St. James’s Park and Green Park are oases of greenery adjacent to St. James’s Palace and Buckingham Palace, where, in the 18th century, stood George

The Royal Engagement Trail begins at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, where the couple met. It moves to London for their twenty-something years, when she worked at the Kew branch of a popular boutique and they clubbed in Kensington, then visits the St. James’s Palace environs, and ends on the Welsh island where they will live. www.media.visitbritain.com/Visit-Britain-Royal-Engagement-Trail For St. James’s Park, Green Park, and Kew Gardens go to www.royalpalaces.org.uk. For the historic royal palaces, go to www.hrp.org.uk. St. James’s Palace is not open to the public, but you can attend Sunday service at one of the historic chapels royal, the Queen’s Chapel, next to St. James’s Palace. For service times, go to the royal residences at www.royal.gov.uk.

III’s Buckingham House.

But for the more resourceful there were other opportunities. Henry Marchant, a red-hot patriot from Rhode Island, went to the King’s Lodge at Kew Gardens hoping to catch a glimpse of the royals through the windows. He could see nothing through the curtains, but he had another idea. One Sunday he paid five shillings to be admitted to the service at the Chapel Royal, St. James’s Palace — where services are still held today — and was finally rewarded with a sight of their majesties at worship.

The fascination did not pale even if one was in London on a secret mission. Bostonian Josiah Quincy crossed the Atlantic as an unofficial spokesman for the Continental Congress in 1774, in a last-ditch effort to avert war. His peace mission failed, and he ended up gathering

military intelligence. And in January 1775 he could not resist going to court on the queen’s birthday. She was charming, and the whole affair was “splendid and magnificent beyond anything I had ever before seen.” He forgot about the revolution for the evening, as he experienced something he would never see at home.

For Americans today, royalty is as exotic as ever. The Colonial royals-watchers were forebears of the pilgrims who will travel the Royal Engagement Trail hoping for a glimpse of Wills and Kate. If you do plan to go to London for the royal wedding on April 29, you will see the

royal parks at their springtime best, when they surround the palaces with a garland of green.

Julie Flavell, author of “When London Was Capital of America,” can be reached at julie.flavell4@gmail.com.



TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS

Prince William and Kate Middleton will marry at Westminster Abbey.