

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

HOTELS AIM TO GET KIDS TO SLEEP

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Hotels have always been in the business of promoting a good night's sleep, but some are now targeting their youngest guests with a slew of slumber-inducing programs. Not a bad idea: Parents know nothing can ruin a family vacation faster than a sleep-deprived child.

Chances are you won't find many grumpy kids at the **Jumby Bay**, a Rosewood Resort located on a private island in the Caribbean. (268-462-6000, www.rosewoodhotels.com/en/jumby-bay-antigua). Parents can arrange to have a surprise visit from children's book author Melinda Fletcher, who penned "The Dancing Pyjamas." Fletcher arrives bearing cookies and milk, as well as a turn-down gift, like a stuffed animal or small bathrobe. After reading her bedtime story, and signing a copy of her book for the kids, she tucks them in and wishes them good night.

The **Rosewood San Miguel de Allende** (888-767-3966, rosewoodhotels.com/en/san-miguel-de-allende) offers a child-specific massage, designed to induce sleep. "Parents tend to fill their kids' schedules with lots of activities," says spa director Paulina Mercader. "We started thinking about how we could channel and calm all that energy." The Cocoon Massage begins with a soothing lavender patch, followed by a gentle pressure scalp, leg, and foot massage.

Weary young guests at the **Four Seasons Hotel Chicago** (312-280-8800, fourseasons.com/chicago/) are wooed with bedtime milk and cookies and comfy kids' robes. If your little ones want their own sleeping space, the bedtime butler will bring up a pop-up tent. The **Lorien Hotel & Spa** in Alexandria, Va., (877-956-7436, www.lorienhotelandspa.com) has kid-friendly sleep programs that also include cookies and milk, teddy bears, and sleeping bags. Lorien even provides telescopes so you can wish upon a star with your little ones before they nod off to dreamland.

Are your kids missing their pets while traveling? **Kimpton Hotels** (800-546-7866, www.kimptonhotels.com) offers "Guppy Love" at many of their locations. Kids get to "borrow" a goldfish to keep them company during their stay (pic. Best part: The staff will do the care and feeding, so no worries).

Getting a good night's sleep in an unfamiliar place, even in the most accommodating hotel, can be a challenge. The folks at **Exclusive Resorts** (844-541-2714, exclusiveresorts.com), a premier global collection of luxury villas, work with parents to provide favorite linens, nightlights, stuffed animals, snacks, smells, even familiar ambient noise to integrate into the bedrooms. In some cases, they will even move the furniture in order to create a more familiar room layout. "Before every vacation we take with Exclusive Resorts, we ship a box containing our boys' favorite things from home, such as their sheets, nightlights, sound machine, and stuffed animals, and our concierge does an amazing job setting these up in the boys' bedroom," says Holly Cao, mother of 3-year-old twin boys. After all, there's no place like home.

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HERE

BALLET MEETS FARMING IN VERMONT

Pack your ballet slippers and muck boots and head to Vermont in August for six performances by Burlington-based dance company Farm to Ballet (Aug. 1-23). Produced and choreographed by Chatch Pregger, a former professional dancer turned teacher, the 75-minute program — performed by 18 dancers — weaves together the timeless arts of farming and ballet as a way to highlight the importance of farms and the people who grow our food. In addition, some events combine music, dance, and food as fund-raisers to assist farmers. The program will be staged throughout the state at agriculturally relevant sites in Dorset (Marble House Project); Shelburne (Shelburne Farms); Charlotte (Philo Ridge Farm); Poultney (Green Mountain College); Barnard (Feast & Field Market); and Essex Junction (Von Gal Farm). Performance times and ticket prices vary per venue. www.farmtoballet.org



JESSIE KING

CRUISES TO CONNECTICUT, NEW YORK LIGHTHOUSES

Lighthouse aficionados won't want to miss the new two-hour Lighthouse Cruise offered by Cross Sound Ferry aboard SeaJet, a high-speed catamaran that zips alongside eight lighthouses and historical sites on Connecticut's Thames River, Long Island Sound, and Gardiners Bay off the Sound (Wednesdays and weekends through Sept. 9; Saturday only through Oct. 10.) Local experts narrate the history of each site, beginning with the New London Harbor Light, the oldest lighthouse in Connecticut, south to New York's Plum Island Lighthouse, site of the first battle between British and Colonial troops in the American Revolution. Other tour highlights include the New London Ledge Lighthouse (above);

Fort Trumbull and Fort Griswold; General Dynamics' Electric Boat Division (where the first nuclear-powered submarine was built); and the ruins of a fort used for US Navy torpedo target practice in World War II. The vessel departs from the New London Ferry docks, and features two air-conditioned decks, and a spacious outdoor deck for alfresco viewing. Adults \$28; children ages 2-11 \$14; under 2 free. 860-443-5281, www.longislandferry.com/Common/Help.aspx?page=lighthousecruise

THERE

GET PERSONAL IN CUBA

Travel to Cuba aboard a two or three-masted schooner on AdventureSmith Explorations' eight-day Cuba People to People Cruise. Launching in December (thru April 2016), the recently refurbished 49-passenger sailing vessels Panorama and Panorama II will visit Havana, Maria LaGorda, Cayo Largo, Trinidad, and Cienfuegos. Most sailing will occur at night, allowing guests to use ships as floating hotels. Discover the island and meet its people on escorted daytime tours that will focus on arts, music, culture, sports, nature, and authentic interactions with the local community. Fare includes shipboard accommodations, meals, flight arrival and departure transfers, tours, and shore excursions, multilingual expedition staff, and licenses and permits to travel in Cuba. The program begins and ends in Miami with a round-trip charter flight to Havana (\$599). Port taxes, visa, and other items not included are detailed on website. Per person, double cabin rate from \$4,899. 877-620-2875, www.adventuresmithexplorations.com/cuba-people-to-people-cruise

CONVENIENT CRUISE AND AIR PACKAGES

Worry about coordinating your flight and cruise plans? The river cruise line CroisiEurope has teamed up with Delta Airlines to offer combined cruise and international airfare packages. Travelers can now make all their reservations in one place by booking their river cruise, flights, and airport-to-ship transfers through CroisiEu-

rope's North American call center. Available on select round-trip, six- to eight-day cruise itineraries to the cities of Paris, Vienna, Venice, Porto (Portugal), and Amsterdam. Flights and transfers in partnership with Delta Airlines (including KLM, Air France, and Alitalia) are available from Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New York (JFK and Newark), and Washington. 800-768-7232, www.croisierivercruises.com/river-cruise-and-air-packages-now-available

EVERYWHERE

TRAVEL WITH A PURPOSE

Tired of the same old vacation? Those who aspire to give something back may want to check out the volunteer options offered by Global Vision International. A leader in voluntourism, GVI is active in more than a dozen countries, offering 150 different programs that center around a few core subjects including wildlife and marine conservation, working with underprivileged children, dive-master training (pictured above), education, sports, construction and more. On the website, volunteer opportunities can be selected by program type, focus, region, and duration. And you can select programs specific to age groups. 888-653-6028, www.gviusa.com

STYLISH IPAD COVER WITH MUSIC SPEAKER

SoundCover, a newly launched product by Onanoff, offers exactly what its name promises. The two-in-one device protects your iPad Air and iPad Air 2 from scratches while doubling as a speaker that amplifies volume by up to 400 percent. The ultrathin folio speaker — with two built-in flat panels — is designed for maximum portability and travel. To sync with your iPad, simply open the back of the SoundCover. The device also can wirelessly stream audio from Bluetooth devices up to 33 feet away while producing a 360-degree audio field. A built-in microphone is perfect for conference calls when working on the road. Available in silver grey, gold, and black. \$199. www.onanoff.com

NECEE REGIS

OH, WHAT THEY DID WITH THAT NYC DORM

"This was a dorm?" We were incredulous when we learned that this charmingly cool Greenwich Village boutique hotel once housed two dorms for The New School. No Eau de Budweiser here, and, happily, no scum-encrusted shower curtains or lumpy twin mattresses, either. Two years ago, the 18-story dorms were totally gutted and the building reimaged as The Jade Hotel, a 113-room property with glamorous Art Deco touches, tin ceilings, and sparkling bathrooms designed with white and black subway tiles. One possible nod to its collegiate past: working black rotary telephones sit on bedside tables.

With its marquee entrance and leaded glass, the building looks like it's been here forever. The neighborhood borders Union Square, the West Village, and Chelsea, and (even more important, if you're an aficionado), Murray's Bagels is right around the corner.



ARI BURLING

Amenities include free Wi-Fi, bath products from C. O. Bigelow, and 24-hour room service from the hotel's restaurant, Grape & Vine. Discounted parking at a nearby garage is available. Turn-down treats

(raspberry cake truffles from Bee's Knees Baking Co.) are a step above the usual chocolate disk. Floors 17 and 18 offer penthouse rooms with soaking tubs and small balconies with views of the city.

There's usually a good promotional deal going on at The Jade. Right now (through July), they've got the HeArt of NYC package, which includes two tickets to the new Whitney Museum of Art and a copy of the best-selling book, "Humans of New York" by Brandon Stanton. The package starts at \$385 per night. Room rates start at \$445 (summer-fall) and \$275 in low season (generally, winter-late spring).

THE JADE HOTEL 52 West 13th St., between Avenue of the Americas and Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 212-375-1300, www.thejadenyc.com

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