

# TravelBITS



## CLOSE-TO-HOME CRUISING

 With the rise in popularity of river cruises in America, the cruise industry has stepped up to meet the demand. The French America Line launched its Luxe *Louisiane* in October, and American Queen Steamboat Company introduced its second paddle-wheeler in August. American Cruise Lines debuted a third paddle-wheeler, the *America*, on the Mississippi last year and plans to add on a fourth European-style riverboat in fall 2018.

SOURCE: CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER

## MOUNTS IN MONGOLIA

 National Geographic is offering a unique trip through Mongolia. Immerse yourself in the culture and landscape of Mongolian nomads with a 4-day trek on horseback to Mandal Mountain and enjoy the regional Naadam festival which features archery, wrestling and horse racing throughout midsummer; [nationalgeographicexpeditions.com](http://nationalgeographicexpeditions.com).

SOURCE: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

## THE 10 BEST ZOOS IN THE U.S.

 From tropical birds to polar bears these zoos have it all.

1. San Diego Zoo, San Diego, CA
2. Indianapolis Zoo, Indianapolis, IN
3. Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle, WA
4. St. Louis Zoo, St. Louis, MO
5. Bronx Zoo, New York, NY
6. Living Desert Zoo, Palm Desert, CA
7. Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Columbus, OH
8. Alaska Zoo, Anchorage, Alaska
9. Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, Omaha, NE
10. Brookfield Zoo, Brookfield, IL

SOURCE: CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER



## Underwater Express

Eurostar, the high-speed train service linking London with destinations in France and Belgium, has announced an onboard virtual reality experience. When the train enters the tunnel underneath the English Channel, travelers can wear headsets and watch as the roof of the virtual train transforms into a glass ceiling, revealing an underwater world of sea creatures, sunken treasures and mysterious seascapes; [eurostar.com](http://eurostar.com).

SOURCE: SPRINGWISE



## COUNTRY ELEGANCE

 Amee Farm is a B&B that sits on 40 acres in the small town of Pittsfield, VT. Visitors can enjoy hiking and horseback riding trails, traditional wood-accented décor and a wrap-around porch with excellent mountain views; [ameefarm.com](http://ameefarm.com).

SOURCE: TRAVEL CHANNEL

## JUST SAY IT

 Planning a trip can be stressful but technological advances are constantly making it easier. Kayak recently made booking a hotel room with just your voice possible through Amazon's Alexa, and Avis will soon offer voice-powered car reservations through Alexa as well. SOURCE: THE NEW YORK TIMES

## BLUE LAGOON

 The Blue Lagoon is already a top tourist attraction in Iceland but, beginning this fall, visitors can stay on-site at the new Moss Hotel. The hotel will give its guests exclusive access to the geothermal spring's expanding facilities as well as its new Moss Restaurant and spa, Lava Cove; [retreat.bluelagoon.com](http://retreat.bluelagoon.com). SOURCE: FODOR'S



## Health Nuts

Eating healthy while traveling can be difficult, but the Tasteful App makes it a bit easier. Users can search for restaurants and their menus using various filter preferences including vegetarian, vegan, paleo, low carb and gluten-free.

SOURCE: TASTEFULAPP.COM

### AUTO CHECK-IN

 Looking up reservation numbers and checking-in to a flight can be a hassle, but AirlineCheckins.com has created a solution. The free site allows automated check-in for over 100 airlines worldwide. Simply register on the site and whenever you book a flight the site will automatically check-in for you when the airline's online check-in window opens; airlinecheckins.com.

SOURCE: THE NEW YORK TIMES



### SUSTAINABLE SHOPPING

 London has opened the world's first "smart street." The pilot program opened in June with the debut of Bird Street that will remain open until the end of this year. The street includes air purifying technology and electricity generated from pedestrian traffic. Pop-up retailers with cutting-edge fashion and alfresco dining options make this retail experience of the future the place to be.

SOURCE: SPRINGWISE NEWSLETTER

### MANHATTAN DISTILLING

 OUR/Vodka, a unit of Pernod Ricard, is planning to open Manhattan's first distillery in October on 26th Street in Chelsea. The distillery will produce a wheat-based vodka and source 75% of its ingredients from local New York state farms; ourvodka.com.

SOURCE: TRAVEL + LEISURE

### AIR AND LAND

 Grand Canyon Scenic Airlines is now offering an 11-hour tour to see the sights of northern Arizona. The tour takes guests from Las Vegas to Boulder City, NV and on to Antelope Canyon and Horseshoe Bend. For now, the tour is only offered to groups willing to charter an entire plane. Visitors can rent a nine-passenger Cessna Caravan for \$3,500 which includes guided tours from the air and on the ground, plus a picnic lunch; scenic.com.

SOURCE: LA TIMES

### COCKTAIL HEATMAP

 If you're looking for the hottest place to grab a drink, check out the Cocktail Heatmap. Available in most major cities, Cocktail Heatmap provides a detailed list of the best drinking dens and restaurant bars of the moment.

SOURCE: EATER.COM

### 20,000 ACRES OF FRUIT

 Get ready, fruit fiends! This year the National Apple Harvest Festival will take place on October 7-8 and 14-15 in Biglerville, PA. The festival includes live music, antique cars, music, a petting zoo and much, much more (including apples).

SOURCE: APPLEHARVEST.COM

### TIME TO CHILL

 If a quiet, nearly deserted (except for the 160 people who call the island home year-round) island with no cars sounds like your cup of tea, you'll have to check out Bald Head Island, NC. Its gulfstream waters are still warm through October, and for those who would rather stay dry, the world-class golf course, the conservatory's bird walks and Old Baldy lighthouse round out a relaxing getaway.

SOURCE: TRAVEL CHANNEL



### SWEET WILLY

 For an eccentric prairie getaway look no further than the "largest beagle in the world," affectionately referred to by the locals as "sweet willy." The Dog Bark Park Inn in Cottonwood, ID is designed to look like a nine-meter-high beagle, and with endearing dog-themed décor throughout, this two-bedroom Bed and Breakfast is sure to be a hit; dogbarkpark.com.

SOURCE: CNN

### ALIVE WITH HISTORY

 Autumn in New England is hard to beat, so why not head to Massachusetts and check out the fall foliage and historical homes. Old Sturbridge Village is a living history museum set on more than 200 acres of historical landscape. The centerpiece of the museum is a recreated rural New England town of the 1830s encompassing a center village, mills area, countryside and more than 40 structures including restored buildings brought from across New England as well as some authentic reconstructions.

SOURCE: OSV.ORG