

February 2009

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TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT: NOW IS THE TIME TO VISIT *INDIA*. DO NOT fear a trip there, embrace India in all its wonder. Things are safer than ever there. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the city of *Mumbai* and at the beautiful flagship *Taj Mahal Palace & Tower Hotel*, all is calm and visitors report security excellent. Taj has successfully re-opened the *Taj Tower Wing* of the hotel with 275 elegant rooms, six restaurants (*Zodiac Grill, Masala Kraft, Starboard Bar, Souk, Shamiana, Aquarius Lounge*), the pool, *Jiva Spa, Chambers Club* and the *Rendez-Vous Ballroom*. Of course, the magnificent heritage of the *Taj Palace Wing* sustained considerable damage and will require a considerable time of 10-12 months to restore but we urge anyone who has ever dreamed of a trip to India to go now while rates are pleasantly conducive and the welcome is warmer than ever. There is no hotel company quite like Taj with its romantic palace hotels, sleek business properties blanketing the country and its adventurous safari lodges. Under the stewardship of the incomparable *Raymond Bickson* who has expertly guided the Taj hotel empire through thick and thin, we expect Taj to flourish stronger and better than ever. For business or leisure, you cannot be in better hands than the loyal and do-anything-for-you Taj staff. Explore www.tajhotels.com to see the depth of this extraordinary company's presence around the world.

WITH ITS ENTRANCE TUCKED IN A LITTLE SIDE STREET OFF THE elegant main *Helsinki* shopping square, this dream find of a hotel, *Hotel Kämp*, founded in 1887 by restaurateur *Carl Kämp*, embraces you with luxurious charm. The only five-star hotel in *Finland* and part of the *Starwood Luxury Group*, then as now it plays host to politicians, artists and stylish locals as well as a vibrant expat community. The hotel features 179 rooms and the *Mannerheim Suite*, which is considered amongst the grandest in Northern Europe. On this occasion, we opted for a more modest deluxe room. Beyond sumptuous, only pressing business appointments tempted us away. Plump upholstered sofas with proper reading lights and a functional desk in rich cherry wood made work effortless. The soothing palette of warm ochre and pale blue is complemented by high thread count linens, deep feather top mattresses and a sleep menu, which includes a choice of pillows, aromatherapy sprays and essential oils together with sleep masks and ear plugs should you so desire. The bathroom clad in rich grey marble was similarly well equipped. An abundance of towels, robes and slippers, plus ample vanity space and a selection of complimentary high end toiletries from Clarins, Seaderm and Azzaro, which are delivered to your room on request, made for a home away from home. While a large green rubber duck added a humorous note, the deep oversize tub was perfect for a dreamy soak after a long flight. For dinner, we chose the *Kämp Café*, which offers a selection of gracious rooms including a library, a rather glamorous old-fashioned bar as well as the restaurant, which together combine to create an atmosphere reminiscent of old café society. In the restaurant, tall arched windows overlook the bustling activity outside on the square; inside, huge modern paper orb lanterns hang like incandescent moons that light marble pillars and fish frescoes on the ceilings. The menu features excellent fish and crustaceans together with an extensive raw bar and a grand selection of old world wines. We enjoyed a perfectly poached salmon with crayfish in a rich bouillabaisse, and in deference to the sub-zero temperature outside, a heart-warming beef bourguignon paired with a superb cep risotto. Pastry chef *Jarmo Laitinen* created a traditional Viennese table and does a masterful job delivering seduction in every bite; the Manjari Chocolate Raspberry being an essential choice for any chocoholic. For lighter fare, restaurant *Yume* off the hotel lobby offers a traditional sushi menu. Breakfast, which is included, features a selection of meats, smoked fish, dark fragrant rye bread and pastries as well as eggs and cooked meats buffet-style. How we wish Hotel Kämp was closer than Helsinki as it delivers, where so many others fail, the trio of old world charm with of-the-moment amenities and truly gracious service. *Hotel Kämp, Tel. +358 9 576 111 or hotelkamp@hotelkamp.fi. Pohjoisesplanadi 29, 00100 Helsinki, Finland.* Deluxe rooms from \$290.

FOLLOWING HIGHLY ACCLAIMED SEASONS IN 2002 AND 2005, THE spectacular in-the-round production of *Carmen* returns to *London's Royal Albert Hall* for a strictly limited season. There are just 12 performances, between February the 26th and March the 8th. From the first note of the much-loved overture to the final tragic chords, the very essence of Spain is brought to life in this heart-thumping staging of the world's most popular opera. The dusty atmosphere of the town square, the cool night air of the smugglers' mountain hideout and the festivities outside the bullring in Seville are all vividly recreated in this powerful tale of lust, superstition and murder that slowly unravels with fatal consequences. This is one show you won't want to miss-and there's no better way to make the most of the occasion than by staying at *The Milestone Hotel*, an elegantly restored Victorian masterpiece that sits majestically in historic *Kensington*. Recently voted Condé Nast Traveler's Best Hotel in the British Isles in the magazine's Annual Readers' Choice Awards, and only a couple of minutes from Royal Albert Hall, it's perfect for an unforgettable night. The Milestone's special Carmen Experience package includes a welcome glass of Champagne on arrival, one night in the room of your choice, full English breakfast in bed, three course Carmen pre-show themed menu in *Cheneston's* with dessert, coffee, and liqueur upon return, two tickets to Carmen, complimentary VIP transfer to RAH by Bentley limousine. The price of the package depends on choice of room, about \$725 for a Deluxe King, \$925 for a Studio, \$1290 for a Junior Suite and \$1625 for a Master Suite. To book this package, contact the hotel directly at +44 (0) 207 958 7727, U.S. toll free (800) 698-8740 or visit www.milestonehotel.com.

WE WANT YOU TO IMMEDIATELY CHECK OUT www.vintageacademe.com. This is the cleverest idea we have seen since the dry martini was invented, a chic and powerful way to buy and sell your couture clothes online. Not only is founder *Clare Nicholls* beautiful, she is a genius. Go to www.women.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/women/fashion/article5191842.ece to see what the *London Times* had to say about this rather exciting new venture to buy and sell that old, still fashionable Armani or Balenciaga.

ERGO CHEF'S LATEST INNOVATION IS THE *PRO-SERIES 7" SANTOKU* knife. No kitchen is complete without one. A unique design gives professional chefs and home cooks total precision and efficiency. A novel ergonomic handle is angled for a natural feel and the blade is precision tapered with an 18 degree cutting edge, all designed for perfect balance. Ergo Chef's lightweight and patented angle allow for less strain on the wrist and forearm for efficiency. Great for onions, tomatoes, peppers, carrots and other veggies and fruits. Price: \$82; www.ergochef.com.

ICELAND IS MAGICAL, ONE OF THE MOST DYNAMIC UNTOUCHED PLACES ON earth. While gentle creeks and fishing villages harmoniously line the eastern coast, the rest of the island is covered in volatile features—grinding glaciers, gushing geysers, turquoise hot springs, tearing fissures, explosions of lava—so cinematic that they seem like fantasy. It is little wonder that the U.N. in 2007 deemed Iceland—with her mythical landscape, contemporary culture and food, and an impeccably high standard of living—the best country to live in on the whole planet. Forget the fact that the government and economy are reeling and the country is in meltdown. Aren't we all? Live a little, rest like royalty in one of the 88 studio concept rooms of the *SAS 1919 Hotel*. Situated in the heart of *Reykjavik*, this luxury hotel provides guests with immediate access to the city's best restaurants, bars and shops. Housed in the former headquarters of *Eimskip*, the first major shipping line in Iceland, each room in this historic 1919 building boasts a modern Scandinavian décor that gives a spacious, minimalist feeling. There's even an espresso machine on each dresser, just in case you're not quite accustomed to the 10:00 a.m. sunrise. While the staff was most welcoming and efficient, they proved less than helpful when it came to locating an adaptor. During our four-day stay at the SAS 1919 Hotel, the staff failed to locate even one adaptor for us. We have three words for you, fellow travelers: *Tumi Electric Adaptor*. Don't leave home without it. Visit www.1919.reykjavik.radissonsas.com. Icelanders are believed to be the healthiest of people with the world's longest average life span, so obviously there has to be something to their fresh water, fish-filled diet. To sample the best in Icelandic fare, *Rauoa Húsio*, a cozy restaurant positioned on the first floor of a house-turned-folk museum, is a clever idea. ENTREE recommends the lobster tail, a delight so succulent that it will melt in your mouth. Located in *Eyrarbakki*, a small town twenty-minutes south of Reykjavík, Rauoa Húsio, is the best spot from which to see both the *Urridafoss* waterfall and *Thjórsár*, the largest lava stream to have emerged from a single eruption since the end of the last Ice Age. See more at www.bafnarfjorour.com. The overly lit *Kaffi Reykjavik*, on the other hand, appears to have forgotten the elementary principles of fine dining. Located in the heart of Reykjavik, this once highly-buzzed-about restaurant has fallen below the level of mere mediocrity. The staff was apathetic and the service was so poor that even a simple request for clean silverware was not met. Of the entrées we sampled, all were devoid of any flavor and served cold; it was apparent that our food had been placed under a heating lamp for the forty-five minutes we waited. And that large fish buffet in the center of the restaurant—not only does it cheapen the already poor ambiance, but it also gives off the foul smell of putrid *poissons*. We did, however, take away one positive from our experience at the Kaffi Reykjavik: the particularly cool *Ice Bar* hidden in the

back of the restaurant. Before entering the bar, which is kept at -6°C year round, each guest is outfitted in a hideous yet warm parka. The interior fittings—the walls, tables, bar, and glasses—are made of pure ice from the surrounding glaciers. The Ice Bar gives hope to the prospect that the otherwise appalling Kaffi Reykjavik may indeed survive and, if we're lucky, learn how to cook an edible meal. See it all at www.restaurantreykjavik.is. Among the mouthwatering dishes of this Scandinavian-style cuisine is a true Icelandic delicacy, *Hákarl*, rotten shark meat. Iceland's most highly esteemed chefs have perfected this signature dish of the ancient Vikings: After it has been washed, the highly seasoned raw shark meat is buried deep under a mound of volcanic black sand and left for up to six weeks. Once dug up, washed and aired in a drying shack, the meat is ready to be served. By allowing the shark, otherwise poisonous in this area, to fully decay, the acid is removed from the flesh, thus making it somewhat easier to digest. For the intrepid who wish to sample this somewhat unusual dish, ENTREE recommends *Tþrír Frakkar* in *Reykjavik*. While the ambiance and presentation of this nautically-themed restaurant leave much to be desired, it truly does serve some of the best authentic Icelandic food in the country. The steamy *Blue Lagoon*, built on a black lava field, attracts people from all over due to its distinctively high mineral composition and geothermal seawater, particularly known for its healing powers. Slather yourself in silica mud; enjoy a massage under the lagoon waterfall and float in the turquoise geothermal heated water. When you emerge, expect skin baby soft and smooth. We recommend *The Spa's Exclusive Bath and Lounge* with private changing rooms, a first-class lounge, a fireplace and a private indoor lagoon with access to the Blue Lagoon. Go to www.bluelagoon.com. Getting there: most airlines won't offer you so much as a bottle of water. And forget that on-board meal, not that you'll miss it. But with *IcelandAir*, recently selected as one of the "World's Top 25 Airlines" by Condé Nast Traveler, you will feel more like you are flying in a first-class lounge. With as many free bottles of water—and by water we also mean wine—as you can count and deliciously fresh Icelandic food, you will most assuredly enjoy your trip to and fro. Thanks to IcelandAir's short four-hour nonstop flights from Boston and New York to Reykjavik, jet setting has become much more accessible. See www.icelandair.com. Just named one of the "Top 5 Bargain Destinations" by USA Today, Iceland caters to both the luxe and the intrepid traveler. The location of Iceland—positioned between the tectonic plates of the North American and European continents—yields a veritable rainbow of unforgettable sites and experiences. One moment you might be soaking in one of nature's hot springs, and the next you will be climbing a coastal ice cliff. And with those cheap fares and specials that IcelandAir is continuously offering, you have no reason not to try both.

IN SEVILLE, THE CITY OF CARMEN AND VELAZQUEZ, BETWEEN THE MAGIC of the *Royal Alcazar Palace* and a 15th century Gothic cathedral sits one of Europe's best hotels, the *Alfonso XIII*. It was built for the 1929 Sevilla Expo and has always been considered to be one of the gems of Andalucia. It still is. The building is neo-*mudejar*, inspired by Moorish architecture, which was in vogue at the beginning of the 20th century. No less a royal than King Alfonso XIII himself inaugurated the place on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. The prestige of this hotel has never diminished and practically every celebrity from kings to singers has stayed here. Alfonso XIII is museum-like, renowned for its intricate carvings, colorful frescos, crystal chandeliers and majestic arches. It is, in short, a palace that you can easily reside in. The most characteristic part of Hotel Alfonso XIII is its inner patio surrounded by a gallery, the center of the hotel's life, like a worldly cloister with lounges at the side providing intimacy for a cozy chat or cool cocktail. Lush gardens open up to reveal a luminous cerulean pool. Aromatic native florals fill the air. A very modern fitness center takes care of us when we've had too much wine and tapas. And the saffron-tiled, ruby red period *Bar Alfonso* is where we gravitate to for lovely people watching, pastries, cured pork loin, baby shrimp omelettes, Manchego cheese wedges and a glass of Campo de Borja. For us, this is the heart of Andalucia and we would not dream of visiting Sevilla without staying at the Alfonso XIII. Rates are seasonal, but generally a king bed double starts at about \$355 a night, www.luxurycollection.com/alfonsoxiii.

NEW ZEALAND NOW. WITH THE RECENT STRENGTH IN THE U.S. dollar (the NZ dollar has weakened by almost 35% in the last 6 months), bargain airfares have emerged like we have not seen in years; and the top fishing lodges are willing to offer very attractive rates for their fall fishing season (one of the best times to fish in New Zealand). *The Best of New Zealand* has organized various packages that cannot be beat. A seven night jaunt to a *North Island* fishing lodge including seven nights accommodations and meals, six days guided fishing, airline flights from Los Angeles or San Francisco, airport transfers, use of equipment, and all taxes starts at \$3795 including flights. A similar trip to the South Island starts at \$4095. We have traveled to New Zealand with *Mike McClelland* of *The Best of New Zealand* and can truthfully say they are the best. *The Best of New Zealand*, 10544 W. Pico Blvd., West Los Angeles, CA 90064-2320, (800) 528-6129, (310) 202-3900, www.thebestofnewzealand.com.

BEST KNOWN AS THE DRAMATIC HOME OF THE LATE FLAMBOYANT *Gianni Versace*, *Casa Casuarina*, Versace's former *Miami Beach* oceanfront palazzo is today a privately owned, exquisitely preserved 1930's mansion open to the public for tours, special events, and as a unique and romantic hotel with six exotic rooms (starting at a hefty \$1200 nightly) plus a fine restaurant. More ornate dream-folly than grand house, Casuarina is a grandiose rococo Spanish Italian dream of renaissance style mosaics and frescoes, fountains and courtyards, and intricate stone and marble. The stunning inner courtyard leads to a shimmering tiled grotto pool within the property that completes what is perhaps the most breathtaking setting of any restaurant in North America. *Loftin's 1116 Ocean* achieves the rare feat of providing an equally memorable dining experience. Chef *Dale Ray's* emphasis is the freshest, best American seafood with a Mediterranean and regional influence, made with the finest quality ingredients available. For example, Loftin's is one of the few restaurants where we've found Tokyo grade Tuna Steak. The A5 Japanese Kobe Strip Loin with Shallot Sauce was one of the most sublime we've had in years. Chef Ray's menu is enhanced with a variety of other meat cuts, ranging from Prime Filet Mignon with Red Wine Sauce to Prime Veal Chop with Tomatoes and Capers. Served in a traditional a la carte fashion, dishes are paired with exotic salts and condiments. Ray and his team carefully and delicately accent the natural flavors of each dish without being fussy. Portions are generous and artfully plated. The wine list complemented the menu beautifully. Chef Ray, who has worked under culinary greats such as Michel Richard of Washington, DC's Citronelle, Patrick O'Connell of the Inn at Little Washington and famed chef Charlie Trotter, brings a much needed dose of passion, experience and expertise to the South Florida dining scene and to a truly unique and opulent property. *Zarko*, the elegant Macedonian who politely visits tables with a smile, truly knows his wines and is a comforting source of recommendations. Loftin's 1116 Ocean is open for dinner seven nights a week from 7 p.m. to midnight. Visit www.casacasuarina.com or for reservations call (305) 672-6604.

MIX ONE OF AMERICA'S CULINARY MECCAS AND BIRTHPLACE OF JAZZ with the cultural arts and you have the extraordinary gumbo called *New Orleans*. Spice heavily with a billion dollar carnival season beginning on Twelfth Night, January 6 and culminating with Mardi Gras on the Tuesday before Lent and you have the experiential sensation of a lifetime, that some say is "the most fun you can have with your clothes on." Since the first carnival devised to eat, drink and be merry before

Lent in the 1740s, to 1857 when floats were introduced by Mystick Krewe of Comus, Mardi Gras has evolved into 35 parades in New Orleans alone, as well as 100 other Louisiana cities, including over 1000 krewes (or private membership organizations) established solely to sponsor floats and parades. In New Orleans, each Krewe member can pay up to \$4000 in trinkets, totaling up to \$600,000 worth of them thrown each season from floats that can weigh up to ten tons and cost \$20,000 or more to decorate. Every float has riders, including Krewe Kings and Queens, bedecked with mandatory masks and costumes twelve months in the making, that vie for a new definition of spectacular, as proven by viewing over 450,000 historic Mardi Gras outfits and artifacts at *1906 Presbytere*, a Louisiana State museum in the French Quarter. New Orleans's 30,000 hotel rooms fill up fast during Mardi Gras, while some of the world's top restaurants tantalizingly await unsuspecting taste buds. Ours were flabbergasted between the Gulf Shrimp Tchefoncté at the *Palace Café* www.palacecafe.com; the divine lunch at *Muriel's*, www.muriels.com; and our eight course meal by Chef *Tenney Flynn*, starting with Smoked Sizzled Oysters and finishing with flaming Bananas Foster, demonstrated by Chef Flynn himself. With a different wine accompanying each course, *GW Fins* www.gwfins.com was beyond doubt a gastronomical achievement nearing perfection. New Orleans's cuisine is "evolutionary and ever-evolving" as explained to us by famous Chef *John Folse* at his 22-acre, *White Oak Plantation* in *Baton Rouge*, www.jfolse.com, where we were graciously served Queens soup (supposedly Degas' favorite), Crab Cake Rex honoring the Krewe of Rex, known as the King of Carnival, and the famous Mardi Gras King Cake demonstrated and prepared by renowned pastry chef, *David Harris*. New Orleans continues to be one of the world's most uniquely historical and valuable cities with the oldest continually operating trolley system in the country and dozens of top notch museums including: the *Smithsonian*-affiliated, *Ogden Museum of Southern Art* and *NOMA*, surrounded by a 1300-acre park dating back to 1850, the largest, oldest and most visited urban park in the U.S. with 13 outdoor sculpture gardens and the world's largest collection of live oak trees. New Orleans has at least fourteen different festivals throughout the year that, aside from Mardi Gras, are equally exciting. Since Hurricane Katrina, this majestic "Queen of Southern Culture" is courageously fighting back and like the signifying colors of Mardi Gras: purple for justice, green for faith, and gold for power, she is perpetually ready, willing and able to extend everyone who visits, *lagniappe*—a little something extra. Visit www.neworleansinfo.com.

THE *RITZ-CARLTON, MARINA DEL REY*, THE ONLY WATERFRONT AAA *Five Diamond* property in Los Angeles, offers a stylish, convenient setting just miles from *Santa Monica, Venice, Malibu, Beverly Hills, Hollywood* and the *Los Angeles International Airport*. With 304 award-winning rooms and suites, highly acclaimed *Jer-ne* restaurant + bar (we love the 14-foot onyx communal dining table and the Sunday Champagne brunches) and a new luxurious spa, the hotel makes for the perfect hideaway for indulgent travel experiences. Rooms (all with private balconies overlooking the Marina or city) have recently been tastefully remodeled to the tune of \$12 million. \$4 million was spent expanding and upgrading the spa. The staff here are truly ladies and gentlemen who take great pride in their work. For more information and reservations, call toll-free at (800) 241-3333, or directly (310) 823-1700 or access the Ritz-Carlton website at www.ritzcarlton.com.

ABOOK TO BEHOLD: DINING IN NEW YORK CITY: BEST CHEF EDITION, an elegant, hardcover collection of 40 of New York City's most highly-rated restaurants, is a must-have for foodies. Created and designed by acclaimed Dutch photographer *Jan Bartelsman*, this book is a comprehensive fine dining restaurant guide and a work of art that captures New York City's top restaurants and chefs in stunning color photographs. The 256 pages are interspersed with articles by noted food writers from both sides of the Atlantic. They include *Vogue's Jeffrey Steingarten*, 3 Michelin-star *deLibrije* co-owner and author *Thérèse Boer* from the Netherlands, and *Reed Business Publications' Ronald Huiskamp*, among others. Bartelsman's love of food and the restaurants of New York City inspired him to create this limited-edition guide. The book highlights culinary luminaries in their restaurants: *Daniel Boulud, Wiley Dufresne, Eric Ripert* and *Jean-Georges Vongerichten* to name a few. New York City is the greatest place in the world for food lovers and this book represents the culinary leaders that make it a top destination for fine dining. The stylish volume makes an elegant gift and its 5" x 7" format also travels well. Customized covers with business name and logo are available for the corporate gift buyer. Dining in New York City is available on www.amazon.com for \$19.95 and through www.jcwpr.com for bulk and customized orders.

THE GUY YOU MOST WANT TO KNOW IN *LAS VEGAS* AFTER THE DYNAMIC *Steve Wynn* is not Mayor Oscar Goodman, Wayne Newton or super Chef Wolfgang Puck. It is *Johnny Avello*, the soft-spoken and powerful odds maker. Johnny is *Executive Director* of the *Race & Sports Book* at the beautiful *Wynn Las Vegas*. Working from a position of incredible insider knowledge, Johnny formulates the odds on football, baseball, basketball, hockey-you name it-each day. Even though many millions of dollars ride on Johnny's calculations for both house and clientele, he is honest and fair, calm, composed and cool, much like your trusted neighborhood banker. He is the kind of man you'd want to give your daughter away at her wedding if you couldn't. And there is no better place to bet than at the Wynn Sports Book, Johnny's domain. You can often see him there, eager to say hello to his customers and lend a helping hand, explain a specific set of odds or assist with a bet. His staff is also the very best, totally knowledgeable and without an exception, very helpful. The Sports Book setting at Wynn is an elegant and comfortable place to while away a few hours. In addition to producing the best odds for Las Vegas bettors, Johnny has fun by also setting the odds for the Oscars and shows like *Dancing With the Stars*. He is rarely wrong. These odds are for entertainment purposes only, mind you, and are not wagered on. (He has *Slumdog Millionaire* at even odds, by the way). With more than 20 years of experience in the gaming industry, Avello's predictions are derived from a combination of odds-making formulas, researching and reading, and networking with people in the business and community. His television show odds are continually featured on numerous television and radio programs including "Extra," "Good Morning America," and E! Entertainment's "Daily Ten." Mr. Avello is a class act and illustrative of the high caliber of people only Steve Wynn can and does attract in an effort to give his hotel guests the very best experience imaginable.

KEEP IT ALL TOGETHER—YOUR SANITY AND YOUR LUGGAGE—NEXT time you need to navigate through the airport. Juggling several bags can be a hassle as you make your way to the security line. Recently we kept a laptop, carry on bag and camera equipment intact with the *Air-Porter*, a lightweight, portable, and extremely durable strapping system that attaches to your suitcase allowing you to carry bulky items such as car seats, strollers, walkers, skis and even golf clubs through the airport without help. With the items piggy backed on the suitcase using the Air-Porter, your suitcase and accompanying items become virtually weight-free and easy to maneuver. Handy and convenient, the Air-Porter is adjustable to fit any size suitcase and can be left on your bag during flight, www.air-porter.com.

BRUNO JAMAIS ON MANHATTAN'S UPPER EAST SIDE FEELS MUCH LIKE an exclusive private club but it is, in fact, open to all who seek serious, fine cooking, total comfort, a bit of live music, good wines and crisp service, all in a setting of Old World townhouse grandeur. *Bruno Jamais*, the Parisian-born proprietor and genial host, is not a chef. He made his name as the maitre d' at *Daniel*, and after that, at *Alain Ducasse*. There is an indulgent feeling about Bruno Jamais that smacks of a secret being shared by insiders. Look around the room and you will see silver-haired men and their ravishing blonde wives, young Wall Street warriors in suits spending our money with their pretty, dressed up dates. Expect live music on Monday nights and a special *St. Bart's* night on Sundays featuring sexy dancers, a fashion show and famed DJ *Adriano* from St. Bart's. The restaurant also is host to the exclusive U.S. exhibition of famed French artist *Cyrille Margarit*. A late night gourmet menu is served until 3am. Bruno Jamais is also the ideal place to book any kind of private party from 15 to 200, buffet or seated dinner. Perhaps, all of this is why Bruno Jamais is viewed as a sort of special secret by so many discerning people. Have a convivial drink at the buzzing bar or slip into a languorous mood on a banquette, all is right with the world over a hangar steak and frites at Bruno Jamais. *Bruno Jamais, 24 E 81st Street, New York, NY 10029; (212) 396-3444.*

BREEZE IS A DELIGHTFUL RESTAURANT LOCATED IN THE SLEEK *HYATT Regency Century Plaza Hotel* in *Century City*. We were delighted to dine there recently and enjoy flavorful, creative California cooking adroitly served. Intentionally designed to communicate a feeling of movement with its form flowing pattern in the terrazzo floor, and bamboo leaves in glass dangling above the sushi bar, Breeze has spacious windows that open out to a patio where al fresco dining and spectacular views of the hotel's lush gardens are to be appreciated. Breeze's striking green onyx bar is divided in two, with one half a sushi bar headed by master sushi chefs. Steaks are a speciality, so are delicately prepared fish dishes and desserts are richly sublime. The wine list is masterful. On some nights, buy one entrée and get one free. Ask the delightful dining room manager, *Jody*, if that promotion is in effect when you show up. Private dining rooms are also available for private parties and meetings. The hotel itself has everything-a dance club, Starbucks in the lobby, and large comfortable, recently decorated rooms with striking views. The staff is friendly and efficient. We even saw the legendary *Tommy Lasorda* roaming the lobby on our last visit and what's good for Tommy, is good for us. Call (310) 551-3334. Visit www.centuryplaza.hyatt.com.

MANY OF US THINK OF WINE MAKING AS A PROCESS LOVINGLY nudged along in scenic vineyards and antique oak barrels. Sadly, the reality of wine industry's environmental "footprint" is massive. The combined billions of tons of glass, cork, labels, fuel, pesticides, and chemicals add up quickly. Despite knowing this, the industry is notoriously slow to embrace change for fear of losing market share. After 10 years with California's eminent *Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant*, *Matthew Cain* went his own way to create a quality, eco-friendly wine. The result is certified organic *Yellow+Blue* wines, shipped responsibly and packaged in *Tetra Paks* made from cartons that are created using 75% paper from responsibly managed forests. No chemical fertilizers and pesticides are used to create Yellow+Blue wines and while a case of wine in glass weighs 40 pounds and contains nine liters of wine, a case of Yellow+Blue weighs nearly half that and holds 12 liters of wine. This is 95% wine and 5% packaging which uses less fuel to ship, and creates less waste. We tried their 2008 *Torrontes*, a white wine from *Cafayate* in the *Salta* province of *Argentina* and noted peach, cantaloupe, and pineapple with hints of lime, medium body and a long fruit and mineral laden finish. They also have a 2007 *Malbec* from *San Martin* in the *Mendoza* province of *Argentina*. Priced at an easy-on-the-wallet \$11.99. Go to www.ybwines.com for more information.

ENTREE highly recommends the John's Island Real Estate Company, the preeminent broker for one of the world's finest communities, John's Island, in Vero Beach, Florida. If your plans are leaning in that direction, we urge you to consider John's Island. It has no equal for golf, beach, tennis, architectural integrity, and quality lifestyle. For years, Chairman Robert Gibb and his staff have served discriminating buyers, sellers, and renters looking for flawless, knowledgeable, and personal attention. Mr. Gibb's team of dedicated experts specialize only in John's Island and we heartily endorse them. Visit www.johnslandrealestate.com or call (800) 327-3153.

ENTREE has found a terrific travel agent: Nancy Chapin and her company, Vista Travel Associates in Palm Beach Gardens. Nancy and her team have extensive travel experience and true clout in the industry. They can get practically anything done with ease. High end travel is their specialty but Nancy and her company are sensitive to budgets, also. You actually can get a person on the phone when you call Vista and that stands true 24 hours a day. Nancy Chapin and her associates are consummate professionals and totally detail-oriented. They take great pride in the jobs they do, no matter how unique the challenge. You will be sure to be pleased if you work with Vista Travel Associates, (800) 537-5066.

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