

ENTREE

AN UNCOMPROMISING
AND CONFIDENTIAL
TRAVELERS NEWSLETTER
• AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT
HOTELS, RESTAURANTS &
TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD

September-October 2013

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WE ARRIVED AT THE *FOUR SEASONS HOTEL HAMPSHIRE*, AN 18th-century manor house, in the midst of party planning. Six thousand roses from Holland were being delivered and coordinators and consultants from various corners of Europe were busy at work. We watched young lads and lasses practicing the art of petal strewing, as arriving party guests prefer treading on petals to mere wood and stone. Four Seasons Hotel Hampshire is a perfect location for such an occasion, especially when flying privately, as it is located only fifteen minutes from *Farnborough's* private airport. Otherwise, Heathrow is only 45 minutes away. Four Seasons Hotel Hampshire, originally known as *Dogmersfield Park*, is where King Henry VIII first met his future Queen Catherine of Aragon in 1501. Today, transformed after a large fire, the hotel offers respite from the hectic whirl that is the countryside of England during summer. We arrived from a nearby residence, where we had been attending polo, tennis, races, and flower shows, and think this is a perfect oasis for a few nights of bliss, and yet close enough to the fun to continue accepting invitations. Other guests were there to escape London's soaring temperatures. We were correct. The hotel's lovely rooms, gracious baths, and soothing décor enveloped us. Hmm...what to do? Tennis, falconry, clay pigeon shooting, horse riding, and canal boating are just some of the activities



from which to choose. Otherwise, Winchester Cathedral, Windsor Castle, Stonehenge, Jane Austen's House, and Highclere Castle of Downton Abbey fame, are less than one hour away. We chose the spa. Contemporary and elegant, the 27,000 sq ft spa is located in the 18th-century stable block and is as professional, luxurious, and perfect as any we have found in the English countryside thus far. Beyond the spa's many choices of therapies are tranquil relaxation rooms, a gym with private training available, and a very inviting 20-meter conservatory-style pool. After our therapies we meandered through the formal walled garden and discovered a beautiful, lavender-lined walk, which led to croquet, tennis, and special cottages with programs for children of all ages. At the end of the day we suggest tucking into banquette 30, 31, or table 10 by the window for an upscale French-European dinner at *Seasons*. Or, if you are feeling more casual, their *Bistro Brasserie* offers terrace seating. Don't miss trying a cocktail from *Bar 1086*. The bartenders are fun, imaginative, and love talking concoctions. We have memories of sipping on what seemed to be liquid gold only to find out that our cocktail



was, in fact, garnished with 24-carat gold. Another cocktail was topped with honey from the hotel's many hives and was cradled in a hot pepper. Yes, hot! Twenty-two is another divine cocktail and comes with a great story. Ask. The Christmas Festive Season package looks wonderful for families and especially those with small children. There are Christmas Carol Suppers with hourly menus that include: movies, mistletoe manicures, gingerbread workshops, a children's New Year's Eve disco, and even rooms filled with snow. Four Seasons Hampshire has 133 rooms including 22 suites with prices from approximately \$435 to \$6975 for the Royal Suite. For further inquiries www.fourseasons.com/hampshire or telephone +44 (1252) 853 3000.

THE GRANDHOTEL LIENZ IN AUSTRIA IS OFFERING A NEW DETOXING and purifying spa program called "*Symbio Care*" for all overworked individuals consumed with a high-stress life. Sign us up. After just three days, guests are coming away discovering for the first time in ages what it's like to have more energy, to feel lighter and fitter. This is serious stuff designed to really make a difference. And while the regimen is comprehensive, the eight day/seven night package doesn't miss a thing. The first day includes an interview with the on-premises doctor and an examination to determine the body's composition (fat-muscles-water), using traditional Chinese medicine techniques and regeneration acupuncture. Day two includes a colon

cleansing and an ML antioxydaktiv cell protection. On the second and third days, guests experience detoxification homeopathy with Globulis and daily liver cleansing. In addition, each guest receives one Hydro Scrub Massage, Morphose Body Shaper Massage (focusing on any problem areas), one “Grand Slim” holistic body wrap and detox massage, one Lymphatic Drainage massage, one Agyptoswrap (individually designed), one Serail Purification Bath and one Body Building Morphosis. The amazing hotel, in Southern Austria, near Italy and surrounded by The Dolomites Mountains, features 76 suites, an indoor/outdoor swimming pool, a restaurant featuring international and health-oriented menus, and a lobby bar with open fireplace. Landscaped terraces directly on the River Isel allow visitors a magnificent view of the surrounding mountains. Nearby is an amazing mix of activities—two major skiing areas, a 27-hole golf course, river rafting, mountain biking, horseback riding, tennis, walking and climbing, all waiting to be discovered. Included in the package is a daily breakfast buffet with tea, vitality corner and Green Smoothie, gourmet dinner specially prepared by the chef, use of all facilities in the large Wellness, Spa and Fitness Area, including Indoor/Outdoor Relaxation Pool, Sauna Complex, Steam Baths, Sole Bath, Bio Sauna, Finnish Sauna, Solarium and Relaxation areas; complimentary tea and fruit juice in the Spa, bottle of Detox Cucumber Juice daily, sisal brush for daily use, daily fitness program, beach bag with fluffy bathrobe, towels and slippers, complimentary wi-fi, and underground parking. The Symbio Care eight day/seven night package at the Grandhotel Lienz includes accommodation in a roomy Superior Suite North with large bathroom, separate shower and separate toilets at \$2788 per person to October 30, 2013 and \$2460 per person from November 1 to December 15, 2013. Visit www.grandhotel-lienz.com/en. The Grandhotel Lienz won top honors for the third consecutive year at the World Travel Awards Europe Ceremony 2013. The property was voted “Europe’s Leading Wellness Hotel” at a red-carpet ceremony hosted in Antalya Turkey in August.



TWO SMALL *BORDEAUX* NAMES THAT MAKE FOR MARVELOUS DRINKING: *Chateau Lyonnat, 2009 Emotion, St. Emilion* from *Lussac*, 100% Merlot, has a great aging potential but is delicious now, too. www.chateaulyonnat.com. *Chateau Peyredon la Gravette, 2009*, a Cru Bourgeois, from the Haut Medoc, a Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot blend of excellent quality, produced by the *Dupuch* family in very limited quantities but well worth fighting to find.

PURE IMMERSIONS HOSTS 7-DAY INSPIRED, SOUL cleansing, action oriented retreats in the healing and cultural mecca of *Bali* at *Pelangi Estate*, one of our favorite lush and soulful hideaways on the planet. The experience has been thoughtfully created to set the wheels in motion for people desiring to make a change in their life. The objective: reconnecting people to their passions and the pure inspiration of Bali through yoga, nature adventures, prana-rich cuisine, music, world-class Balinese healing, and all amongst beautiful people from around the world. This is not a fluffy kick back experience built around wines, rich food, spa indulgences and lay-by-the pool lolly gagging, but an active retreat with results. Guests practice yoga with motivating teachers every day overlooking a sublime river valley. You will eat amazing and healthy food, meditate and heal, climb volcanoes, tube down rivers, and look for adventure at every turn. This is your chance to enjoy music around a campfire, bring intention to your actions, and take care of yourself in order to better care for others. More than a simple holiday or destination, Pure Immersions Bali, is a way of living—inspired and connected to the pure richness and natural abundance of life. You will leave this experience feeling as though you are on cloud nine—rested, revitalized, and repaired, ready to reenter the world as you know it. *Sasha Lang*, co-founder of Pure Immersions and her inspired Bali team host these self-discovery adventures because it is their passion. And they wish to support yours. Get balanced, find your flow, feel inspired-immersed. Visit www.pelangiestate.com, e-mail info@pureimmersions.com; and check out www.pureimmersions.com for an experience everyone should have at least once in their lifetime. Simply put—it takes the right person with an inquisitive and adventurous nature...age doesn't matter. Two immersions are upcoming—September 8th-14th & October 9th-15th. Then monthly in 2014. Here's a link to their retreat listing with *Seek Retreats* in Venice, California for a full picture of package details, location, lots of photos and pricing: www.seekretreat.com/retreats/pureimmersions.



COLE PORTER WAS THE MUSICAL GENIUS WHO WROTE “MY HEART Belongs to Daddy.” But frankly, ours does, too. *UrbanDaddy*, that is. If you're jonesing for insider info on the hottest nightlife, restaurants and bars in *New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago* and *Las Vegas* head on over to www.urbandaddy.com. You'll find breezily written, witty and wise tidbits on where to shop, eat and extract the best from each city. *Hadley Tomicki*, whose long tenure at ENTREE as Managing Editor has always produced fabulous insights for us, is the new Los Angeles editor.

NORTHERN SPAIN HAS INVADED *NOLITA*. *PLAN B*, A NEW SPANISH restaurant in downtown *New York* from Masala Times' owner *Hemant Phul*, specializes in the cuisine of Basque and Catalan country, tweaking tapas while serving drinks distinctly inspired by Barcelona. A reflection of cosmopolitan Iberia, ENTREE was relieved not to see a single bullfighter or bota bag in sight. A faded wall mural, stone bar, cow hide seats, and split beam tables hardly look out of place beside all the surrounding boutiques. The menu similarly skips the traditions of the carnivorous Catalans and blood-thirsty Basques for dishes that a very varied group can enjoy. In fact, Plan B pulls off the rare trick of pleasing vegetarian contingents with alluring dishes like almond gazpacho, goat cheese croquetas, and spring pea and mushroom paella, while traditionalists offer "oles" to authentic preparations like a squid ink paella with fresh scallops and shrimp, Serrano ham with melon, and spicy shrimp heads. Rarely are things so straight-forward here, where lamb chops arrive with a rabbit demi-glace, a cast-iron pot of *tres leches* gnocchi is topped with firm filets of eel, and morcilla is tinged with Mexican mole. There are also dishes both parties can enjoy; one out of morbid fascination, the other out of intrepid appetite. An exotic end of the menu really gets the table talking, pitting python sausage (it tastes a little like lean beef), bull balls, rabbit meatballs, and duck heart terrine on "The Wild Side" of this bill of fare. Cocktails cleverly include rare Spanish ingredients with superior spirits, as in a drink featuring Basque Txakoli wine with jalapeno-infused tequila. We stuck closer to the Spanish beer and wine list, which includes a 1978 Tempranillo among the many and several floral-forward whites. Despite a misplaced, regrettable name (surely why condoms are available where matches and mints usually are), Plan B scores with an interesting interpretation of Spanish cooking, with plenty of dishes and the execution to lure us back. After all, we were too full to try the cuttlefish mofongo or sea urchin and bacon coca flatbreads with fish roe. *Plan B, 244 Mulberry Street, New York, New York; (212) 775-0111.*

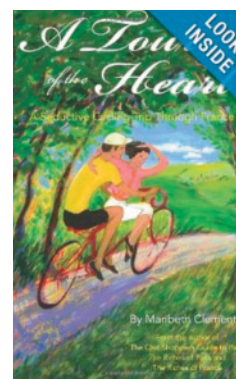
SOME OF THE BEST *CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIRS* WE HAVE EVER TASTED come from *Laetitia* in *Arroyo Grande*. Winemaker *Eric Hickey* uses the coastal terrace terroir, three miles from the ocean, to make very elegant wines, especially their *Tete de Cuvee 2011 Reserve du Domaine*, \$25, aged in barrels for eleven months and full of body, complexity and intensity. Their *Single Vineyard Les Galets ("Stones") Pinot*, \$60, a mid-to full-bodied velvety wine, produced in limited quantities, represents Hickey's innovative spirit and only when the vintages are most promising. *Laetitia's 2010 Single Vineyard La Colline ("Hillside") Pinot Noir*, \$60, symbolizes the ideal of the original plantings on the property. A limited edition and only when excep-

tional vintages are produced, La Colline offers bright cherry notes and true complexity. Visit www.laetitiawine.com. We also urge you to give *Joseph Drouhin's 2012 Laforet* a try. This distinguished family of winemakers is in the midst of a re-launch of two of its signature wines, *Laforet Chardonnay* and *Laforet Pinot Noir*, both much like a perfume, having taken great characteristics from all of the best terroirs in Burgundy. The Bourgogne Chardonnay is fresh and fruity hinting of the Maconnaise together with the elegance of the Cote d'Or. You'll get gentle citrus, honey and vanilla in each bottle. Laforet's 2011 Pinot Noir is a wine full of charm: bright ruby color and a nose rich with aromas of red fruit (raspberry, red currants, wild strawberry). On the palate, the wine is pleasant, fruity and refreshing, with light tannins and great elegance. Visit www.drouhin.com. By the way, Maison Joseph Drouhin has been hosting a series of casual happy hours, many of which with live music, in cities across the country. Both wines are offered for \$5 per glass (which is significantly discounted compared to the usual price of between \$10-15). The idea is to create a casual environment in which new consumers can discover the wine and learn about the style of the famed Burgundy region from which it comes.

INDELIBLE TRAVEL MEMORIES FROM THE LAST TWO MONTHS: DINNER AT *Cheneston's* at *The Milestone Hotel* in *London*, as beautiful a dining room as there is, especially if you can book the private *Oratory* with vaulted ceiling and wood panelling, once the private chapel of this magnificent house. You will not enjoy finer British cuisine, wines and service anywhere. Game dishes like grilled tandoori pheasant coated in yogurt, turmeric and coriander at *Tamarind of Mayfair, Queen Street, London*. The jaw-dropping wall of flowers and plants at *The Rubens at the Palace, London*, a dramatic, fragrant tableau. Flower season at *Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve & Wellness Retreat* (www.bushmanskloof.co.za) in the *Cederberg Mountains, South Africa*. Forming part of the Cape Floral Region, a World Heritage Site that protects one of the richest plant areas in the world, Bushmans Kloof offers the perfect luxurious vantage point from which to explore this natural wonder. Bushmans Kloof is sanctuary to over 755 indigenous plant species, a luxurious ecological oasis of 18,533 acres. A member of *Relais & Châteaux*, guests are assured of an unforgettable, luxury wilderness adventure here—majestic views, staggering rock formations, open plains, invigorating outdoor activities, 16 luxurious rooms and suites, award-winning Cape cuisine and a wellness experience deeply rooted in nature. Visit www.bushmanskloof.co.za. Dinner at *Kate Mantilini* in *Beverly Hills*, a favorite of 90210 regulars who drool over the anything-you-could-ever-want American menu, potent cocktails and folksy service. Snag a booth and let them

bring you oldies but goodies like chicken pot pie, New York steak, fish & chips, meatloaf and mashed potatoes along with modern choices, *9101 Wilshire Blvd.*, (310) 278-3699, *katemantilinirestaurant.com*. *The Bath Butler* at *Cape Town's The Twelve Apostles* indulges guests in a specially prepared bath with exclusive *B Africa products*, in the comfort of their own room or suite. At a time of their choice, the spa's Bath Expert will get to work, transforming the bathroom into a relaxing mini-spa while guests are out, enjoying dinner in *Azure Restaurant* or drinks in *The Leopard Bar*. By the time they return to their room, the bath ceremony will have been magically set up. Bath fans can choose between a *B Africa Milk Bath* and a *B Africa Essential Oils Bath*, with a moisturizing, detoxifying or muscle relaxing effect. B Africa products combine indigenous African plant extracts with natural resources of the sea. They are the signature product of choice in all *Red Carnation Hotel Collection South Africa* spas, inspired by nature and named in honor of the Founder and President of The Red Carnation Hotel Collection, *Bea Tollman*. The Bath Butler will set the scene according to personal preferences with candles, rose petals, relaxing fragrances, heated towels, fluffy bathrobes and cozy slippers. For a romantic occasion guests can order Champagne, strawberries, chocolate, and other aphrodisiacs from room service (at an additional charge). The B Africa Bath Butler service option may also be combined with a private picnic where staff will lay out a special 12 Apostles Picnic hamper at an exclusive picnic site within the fragrant hotel gardens bordering the Table Mountain National Park, before the couple returns to their hotel room and their in-room bath and spa treat. Visit www.12apostleshotel.com

A PERFECT SMALL BOOK FOR FALL READING AND holiday giving: *A TOUR OF THE HEART: A Seductive Cycling Trip Through France* by *Maribeth Clemente*, *Goodreads*, \$15 through www.amazon.com. A captivating love story/memoir set in France and mostly on bicycles that spins the romantic yarn of a proud and sophisticated travel writer who pedals away valiantly with her super cyclist beau in search of harmony and amour. While we all know the road to love is often rocky, these two battle twists and turns while joyously (and sometimes not so joyously) indulging in the art, cuisine, wine and nature of la belle France. Talk about lovers' travails, ups and downs, discoveries around every bend, and persevering on through the bucolic roads of France, this has it all—a touching adventure, beautifully told. Does their love survive? Well, you must read it to find out.



BOOKS ON CD BY *RANDOM HOUSE AUDIO* WE CAN HIGHLY RECOMMEND: *ANIMAL WISE, The Thoughts and Emotions of Our Fellow Creatures* by *Virginia Morell*, a dazzling odyssey in to the fascinating inner world of animals. This books overturns old notions about why animals behave as they do. *THE LIGHT IN THE RUINS*, a breathtaking novel by *Chris Bohjalian* that explores the moral paradox, human frailty and mysterious ways of the heart. *OBSESSED* by *Mika Brzezinski*, a no-holds-barred conversation about combating food obsession peppered with insights from notable people. *DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT GEOGRAPHY* by *Kenneth C. Davis*, everything you need to know about the world but never learned. *A TREACHEROUS PARADISE* by *Henning Mankell*, a deeply moving and vivid novel about a woman who manages to wrench wisdom, empathy, and grace from the most unforgiving circumstances. *HEARTBURN* by *Nora Ephron*, read by *Meryl Streep*, a side-splitting novel about the breakup of the perfect marriage. *NIGHT FILM* by *Marisha Pessl*, a gorgeously written, spellbinding literary thriller crafted with dazzling, inventive style.

CONGRATS TO THE FIVE DIAMOND *PENINSULA BEVERLY HILLS*, NAMED the #1 Large City Hotel in the U.S. in the *Travel + Leisure 2013 World's Best Awards*. A well-deserved honor. We love staying there. Mark your calendar for November 13. That is when The Peninsula hosts the *5th annual STARS of Cabernet*, the flagship wine event produced by *LearnAboutWine*, www.learnaboutwine.com. Join the experience with winemakers, wine trade, sommeliers, and wine lovers who all come together for this signature Cabernet event.

WE ARE ALSO CRAZY ABOUT *THE BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL*. THIS iconic pink palace, a member of the esteemed *Dorchester Collection*, has been quietly restored and brightened, polished and buffed recently ever so subtly. Surrounded by 12 acres of lush gardens and exotic fragrant flowers, there are 208 rooms and suites including 23 one-of-a-kind bungalows. Guests may choose the comfortable elegance of the main building or the beauty of the bungalow gardens. Rooms and suites offer a variety of unique features such as private garden patios, kitchens, fireplaces, and balconies with gorgeous views of the palm-lined avenues of Beverly Hills.



Accommodations within the bungalow gardens offer a taste of the ultimate California lifestyle with lush greenery, winding pathways and separate entrances through charming gates or pathways, up to four bedrooms, spacious living and dining areas, fireplaces and kitchens. The most exclusive bungalows have grand pianos, private garden patios and private plunge pools. Many of the hotel's bungalows have interesting histories as well: Elizabeth Taylor honeymooned with six of her eight husbands there, Marilyn Monroe and Marlene Dietrich, among others, enjoyed them as well. The Beverly Hills Hotel's famed *Polo Lounge* has been a favorite spot for numerous stars and serves breakfast, Sunday brunch, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner in an inviting atmosphere. Poolside dining is available at newly restored *The Cabana Café* while informal meals can be enjoyed at the *Fountain Coffee Room*, complete with a soda fountain and 19 green bar stools. *Bar Nineteen12* overlooks towering palm trees and the cityscape and features chic indoor and outdoor seating, live music on certain nights and a delicious appetizer menu. The Beverly Hills Hotel's beloved pool is steeped in Hollywood history and legendary mystique. It has always been home to starlets and movie icons, as well as the setting for numerous classic films. In June 2013 the hotel debuted its new look after a thoughtful restoration that preserves its Golden Age glamour while providing guests with an enhanced pool experience. Beautiful new cabanas, lounge chairs and tables, towels, umbrellas and an upper sun deck are some of the exciting updates. The Beverly Hills Hotel *Spa by La Prairie* is beautifully appointed with marble bathrooms, and public areas reminiscent of timeless Hollywood glamour. Hair a mess? *Joseph Martin Hair & Beauty* offers guests exclusive services and treatments for hair and beauty needs. This hotel has it all, but it is the sharp and attentive men and women who work there who put the cherry on top of this king of hotels and hotel of kings with the unforgettable banana leaf wallpaper. If you need to ask how much, it's not for you. *9641 Sunset Boulevard, Beverly Hills, (310) 276-2251, www.beverlyhillshotel.com.*

JALEO IN LAS VEGAS IS ON FIRE. LITERALLY. THE RESTAURANT'S HEART beats from a massive wood-fueled blaze raging beneath a massive pan of paella, flames licking, spitting, and whipping the air like the arms of a wounded octopus. This is but one source of high energy ratcheting up in this Sin City outpost of Spanish chef *Jose Andres'* 20-year-old D.C. tapas destination. Scanning the full tables sitting among these blood red and snow white walls, we watch hard-partying weekend pilgrims pour Spanish shandy into their mouths from a shapely glass bottle called a *porron*, rivaling each other for how far one can hold the vessel away from their own heads at straight arm's length without the sun-colored stream collapsing. The couple next to them

snacks on croquetas from a comically big running shoe, waiting for their letter-perfect versions of traditional tapas like tomato-brushed bread, anchovy-stuffed olives, patatas bravas, and gambas ajillo, followed by indulgent offerings like pork ribs from legendary acorn-fed Iberico de Bellota, caviar-coated, slow-cooked eggs, grilled quail, handmade sausage, Iberian cheese plates, and rabbit and chicken paella. Clashed into a corner on the second floor of The Cosmopolitan, this is a restaurant with a missing fourth wall, allowing free optical access to the hotel's insanely attractive party packs as they ascend the escalator in search of more misadventures. Inside Jaleo, it's kinetic and equally attractive. We've experienced plenty of staid (read: empty) eateries overseen by the town's long roster of celebrity chefs (read: who may or not be there), but have rarely seen a Vegas restaurant buzzing like this as we did here on a recent Saturday night. Laughter exploded through the air, glasses clinked and chimed, and heads swiveled in every direction among a handsome crowd, joyous over impeccable versions of authentic tapas and Spanish classics. When we dine out in Vegas, we seek energy, vitality, beautiful people, and excellence. Jaleo aces that test in a town where big names don't always guarantee an equally impressive return. Jaleo, at *The Cosmopolitan, 3708 S Las Vegas Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89158; (702) 698-7000; www.jaleo.com/las-vegas.*

Our Favorite Travel Agent: Vivian Taylor

Reports about the demise of travel agents have been greatly exaggerated. Sure, anyone today can look online for simple travel plans. But for those of you with travel experience who yearn for more exotic locales and complex itineraries, there is nothing like a tried and true travel professional to sort out complicated arrangements and be there when things go wrong. For these reasons we strongly endorse Vivian Taylor who has over 35 years in the biz and can be proud of her reputation to make travel perfect always. Vivian cares and is well traveled. She makes her home in Delaware and Cape Town and enjoys valuable contacts throughout the world. She can make almost anything happen effortlessly and there is not a place on the globe she is not comfortable booking. Her approach is personal and that's just not a word to her. Because of her intimate knowledge, Vivian Taylor has a special knack to create very special opportunities and experiences for her lucky clients. Contact her at (302) 945-7255, (310) 497-2650 or e-mail Vivian@vivantaylor.com.

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