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Tell us about WTM 2015?

WTM 2015 will be the best yet. Total participants for the event grew to 51,500 in 2014 and we expect even more to be coming through the doors of ExCeL – London between Monday 2 and Thursday 5 November 2015.

• WTM 2015 will see the WTM Festivals return after a successful debut to celebrate WTM’s 35th event last year
• Furthermore, the Wellness programme – introduced at WTM 2014 – has been expanded to include The Wellness Lounge on the Wednesday and Thursday of the event
• The WTM Bloggers’ Speed Networking will also be expanded following a successful debut last year, and
• A Taste of ILTM at WTM will be expanded for WTM 2015 to include international buyers.

What will the event programme look like at WTM 2015?

There will be more than 100 sessions taking place at WTM this year across a comprehensive range of subjects including Aviation, Hotels, Responsible Tourism and Women in Travel. For the first time there will be a gastronomy programme. The hugely popular WTM Captains of Industry, WTM Ministers’ Summit and World Responsible Tourism Day will also return.

Which exhibitors should we look out for?

World Travel Market always has the biggest brands in the travel industry exhibiting and WTM 2015 will be no exception. Major airlines at the event include Etihad Airways, Kuwait Airways and Thai Airways International. Major hotels chains exhibiting include Rotana and Jumeirah Hotels.

Furthermore, I’m delighted to be able to announce Mexico as WTM’s Premier Partner for 2015 as part of the Year of Mexico in the UK and the UK in Mexico.

Where can buyers and visitors register for WTM 2015?

Visit www.wtmlondon.com/register

World Travel Market, Senior Director, Simon Press previews WTM 2015.

How much business can exhibitors expect to conduct?

WTM 2014 saw more than 1.1 million on-stand meetings facilitate more than £2.5 billion in industry deals. This year we expect even more business will be conducted, thanks to the number of new initiatives I’ve outlined. One of the best ways for exhibitors to meet new buyers and sign deals is to attend WTM’s Speed Networking sessions, which take place on Monday and Thursday mornings.

Discover the world

2 - 5 November 2015 / ExCeL London

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A blossoming food scene sparked by innovative chefs presents fresh new restaurant choices in the Mile High City.

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58 Memorable Museums from Coast to Coast

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ON THE COVER:
For fresh seafood, it’s Stoic & Genuine in Denver’s Union Station. (Photo by June Cochran)

4 August 2015
Come eye-to-eye with the world’s tallest animal at the Cincinnati Zoo’s Giraffe Ridge. (Photo by Michelle Curley)
ON LOCATION

Lance Harrell, Leisure Group Travel’s director of online media, gets a bird’s-eye view of the River Thames from the London Eye observation wheel.

WHAT’S ONLINE?

Cruise columnist Cindy Bertram pens a regular column on LeisureGroupTravel.com covering the cruise industry’s latest and greatest. This month, read about the new Carnival Vista, Royal Caribbean’s Anthem of the Seas and the Norwegian Escape. For more inspiration, download our all-new e-book, How to Plan a Successful Group Cruise. Find these resources by visiting LeisureGroupTravel.com and select Online Exclusives – Cindy’s Inside Cruise Track from the drop-down menu.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

21
Length in feet of the Belle of Louisville’s paddlewheel

400,678
Cream puffs sold at last year’s Wisconsin State Fair

377
Steps from the Statue of Liberty’s feet to her head

42,271
Seating capacity of Great American Ball Park, Cincinnati

12
Distance in miles from Denver to the Rockies’ foothills

800,000
Approximate population of Zagreb, capital of Croatia

630
Height (and width) in feet of St. Louis’ Gateway Arch
6 Travel Mega Trends Affecting Your Business

ONE OF THE BY PRODUCTS of travel and tourism’s growth is the increased importance it plays in business and society. What was once regarded as carriage trade is now widely considered the world’s largest industry.

Substantial investment by sharp minds, combined with technological innovation and fluctuating consumer behavior are influencing how travel is being consumed and marketed today, while affecting how the industry is being shaped for tomorrow. Here are six mega trends, identified in a recent Skift report, that are shaping the travel landscape.

1) Innovations in Hospitality
From top to bottom, every part of hospitality is being turned over, questioned and retooled. We see this as hotels reconfigure lobbies and how customers check in, as well as customer experience inside a hotel room like entertainment and food & beverage offerings. Brands are questioning customer interaction as they examine and rebuild it.

2) Renaissance in Conferences and Events
The traditional methods of learning and networking are no longer effective because everyone is so easily distracted by their digital devices. Even physical meeting setups are being deconstructed based on increasing realization that informal learning and networking are driving as much business as formal meetings.

3) The Rise of the Boutique Destination
The emphasis on local, unique experiences that’s led many consumers to eschew big brands for boutique products is having a similar effect on how people choose vacation destinations. While second-tier destinations once chased the same trends found in big cities, they’re now taking a long look at what they have to offer that’s different.

4) Searching for Better Search Engine Results
Travelers are no longer satisfied with keyword-matched results. They’ve come to expect a higher level of sophistication, and a more, personalized trip planning experience. Travel sites are moving towards a singular search field, keeping simplicity at the core of the trip planning.

5) Travel Brands Become Lifestyle Connoisseurs
Clean sheets and safe flights are considered standard among customers, especially millennials, who seek deeper connections to brands’ values and the lifestyles that they represent. This can be seen broadly across travel sectors with the increased emphasis on design, wholesome food offerings and local cultural integrations.

6) Alternative Travel is a Reality
Travelers are eschewing traditional hotel and sightseeing packages for authentic local experiences thanks to peer-to-peer transactions available on private home rental sites like Airbnb.com, car “borrowing” with Relayrides.com and impromptu dinner parties with locals through Eatwith.com. New tech allows people to make these arrangements with previously unheard of ease.

Ignore trends and become a fad. Evolve and become the next trend.

Happy traveling,

Jeff Gayduk, Publisher
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nless you are specializing in tours for young people, you’ve most likely found that a certain percentage of your trip membership automatically consists of seniors. Or, perhaps you are specializing in trips for the senior market.

Either way, you need to be aware of special needs for seniors, or as they so delicately say in Spanish “La Tercera Edad” – that third age following youth and middle age.

If you’re in that “Third Age” yourself or if you have had seniors as part of the fabric of your many tours, then perhaps you already have a feel for the special needs you need to be aware of in your trip planning. But let’s just review a handful of them to be sure your trips are truly “senior-friendly.”

First of all, before your group ever leaves home, you should have in your possession certain details on each member. These details should include emergency contact, name of doctor and his/her phone number, medication list, and any information you might suddenly have to convey to an ER admitting team as to the tour member’s health. For example, I would be able to quickly advise medical personnel that my husband wears a pacemaker and is taking the blood-thinner Coumadin.

Secondly, is the pacing of your trip appropriate for your clientele? Many seniors can out-walk the rest of us, but a great many need a slower pace with rest stops along the way. And some folks simply can’t handle the endless marble staircases of the world’s great museums, even slowly. Even if the museum management assures you there’s an elevator, maybe only four people can possibly squeeze into it at one time. If there is an elevator, ask the local guide you’ve hired to take everyone to the top floor by elevator and then work your way down one floor at a time.

Many seniors who don’t travel frequently are accustomed to a certain schedule at home and may find it difficult when they are suddenly asked to deviate. They want time after breakfast to go back to their room and use the bathroom. They are not used to lunch at two or dinner at nine. Maybe you need to alert them what to expect and arrange for in-between meal snacks. If you’re going to be staying for a time at a certain hotel (or on a certain riverboat) you might ask the chef if he can accommodate low-salt diets and just let those whose diets can handle salt pass the salt shaker around the table.

I’ve also found that many times we have members in our group who do not hear as well as we’d like. This often translates into their talking to their seat-mate while the guide is talking or just being “tuned out” when the guide gives certain information or instructions. I find it a godsend when the local guides hand out audio headsets to each tour member so that each person can adjust how loud or soft the guide’s voice comes through. I first encountered this on Viking River Cruises; you’ll find this special service only on the more upscale tours and cruises. I also find it helpful to have someone in the group always bring up the rear to be sure everyone gets across the road and stays with the group.

Then there are those who can’t get through a full day of activities without a little nap somewhere along the way. So you might plan a “quiet hour” on the coach after lunch for a little while, followed by some enjoyable music. Remember, these folks won’t be in to Justin Bieber – they’re more likely to relate to Sinatra.

Lastly, be sure to insert FUN into the tour. They don’t just want to see and hear things – they want to ENJOY THEMSELVES. So be sure to take photos and jot down notes to relive at your reunion get-together.

By Marty Sarbey de Souto, CTC

On Tour
8 August 2015 LeisureGroupTravel.com

Special Thoughts For Senior Travelers

Exploring Dublin is fun on senior-friendly tours offered by Road Scholar.

Marty is a Certified Travel Counselor who designs and leads tours. Her travel industry consulting and educational firm is Sarbey Associates (sarbeyassociates.com). Her e-book How to Plan, Operate and Lead Successful Group Trips can be ordered on groupuniversity.com.
in 1975, with the founding of Road Scholar, the Lifelong Learning Movement in America began a new period of growth. The world’s first not-for-profit educational travel organization continues to evolve and develop exciting experiential learning adventures on a wide variety of subjects in 150 countries and 50 states.

Since its founding 40 years ago, society has undergone a significant change in its understanding of aging and of the importance of learning at every stage of life. Lifelong learning has enhanced the lives of millions of older adults and changed perceptions of an entire stage of life. What has also changed are the expectations of today’s educated travelers – who are interested in learning about and immersing themselves in the places they visit.

We’ve conducted extensive research to learn more about what adult lifelong learners want from an educational travel experience. We’ve observed a few emerging trends, including solo female travel, intergenerational and family travel, and travel off-the-beaten path.

With previous generations, it was rare to see a woman traveling solo, whether as a single traveler or in a group. Today, single females travel in significant numbers exploring the world. Many say they want to experience the world but also want the security shared moving stories of having made lifelong friends on a Road Scholar program. These Friendship Stories are wonderfully illustrative of the deep relationships that form when people come together to learn.

Intergenerational and multi-generational or family educational travel is another emerging trend that continues to grow. Intergenerational programs – for grandparents and their grandchildren – give grandparents the opportunity to learn, discover and bond with their grandchildren free of the influence of parents. Grandparents tell us they love these programs as many of them live far away from their grandchildren and only see them a few times a year. In 2014, we offered over 200 unique Intergenerational programs, and continue to add to both the domestic and international adventures we offer for families. Both Intergenerational and family programs give grandparents the opportunity to share their love of lifelong learning with the next generation. Family or multi-generational programs give the entire group the opportunity to bond across generations; they tell us they love having everything taken care of.
and being freed to enjoy their families. We encourage grandparents to review our catalog with their families over the Thanksgiving holiday. That's a perfect time to begin planning for a summer family learning adventure.

Finally, one of the most significant changes I’ve seen over the years is the interest in learning about exotic destinations. Many baby boomers have already experienced dozens of countries before they reach retirement age—a feat their predecessors didn’t accomplish until much later in life. To that end, we’ve added learning adventures in exotic locales to provide an in-depth exploration of a destination or topic from an authentic vantage point. We investigate hidden aspects and behind-the-scenes perspectives of a destination only the most seasoned local experts know about and often explore historic sites that are closed to other visitors.

For example, Road Scholar is proud to be the largest not-for-profit provider of learning adventures in Cuba and was one of the first organizations to be granted a People-to-People license to go into Cuba in 2000. While travel to Cuba has been banned for 50 years, the U.S. government licensed Road Scholar to create intensive learning opportunities there. I’ve explored Cuba twice — first in March of 2013 and again this spring. Thanks to the introduction of free enterprise, there is a change in the way people live and perceive their opportunities. Americans are eager to experience this transformation—we’ve taken more than 7,000 lifelong learners to Cuba since we began offering People-to-People programs.

In 2015, we will be launching two new adventures: the first will coincide with the Pope’s upcoming visit to the island nation in September. We will also add a new Adventures Afloat experience that will be the first of its kind, launching from port in Miami, Florida. Finally, we’ve developed new programs this year in other exotic locales including Myanmar, Ethiopia and Antarctica, to satisfy the most adventurous learners.

One other new program genre that has proven to be extremely popular this year is Living and Learning, which gives individuals the opportunity to learn abroad in a six-week language and cultural immersion program. We offer programs in Florence, Paris, Seville, Berlin, Montreal and Provence.

This year, Road Scholar celebrates 40 years as the world leader in educational travel for adults and is the only educational travel organization created for the enrichment of all individuals dedicated to lifelong learning. As a not-for-profit educational institution, we work hard to offer exceptional value to our participants and we make scholarships and grants available for domestic programs to help offset the cost for those with financial constraints. In addition, we offer charter opportunities for families, friends, affinity groups, churches, educational institutions, sororities and fraternities.

For information on upcoming trips, visit roadscholar.org.
Eat, Drink and Be Merry
Croatian Style

Culinary delights play a big part in Croatia’s tourism boom

We’re trailing our tour guide, a woman of a certain age in purple knickers with spectacles to match, as we tour the history museum. “Old stuff,” she offers by way of explanation. But when we alight on the main square, buzzing with people, her observations become more precise: “Where you meet up here explains who you are: By the statue, the upper crust. Under the clock, the trendy crowd. By the bookstore, the intellectuals.”

She greets a local jazz idol, points out a potent politician, hails a film star, waves to a noted journalist. Here, in Zagreb’s epicenter of everything that matters, it’s all about where you stand and who you know—forget the dusty artifacts of former glory days. The troubling times before Croatia’s independence in 1991 are forgotten in the face of more pressing matters, such as how to dress in this land that tour operators are finding almost sells itself, thanks to an easygoing pace, friendly locals, absent urban stress and crime, affordable venues, and plenty of unforgettable experiences framed by charming vistas sure to top a bucket list. Old World hotels in the city center make walking tours a breeze sans need for mega-buses.

Simply step out the door and you’re close to Zagreb’s “green horseshoe” of voluptuous parkland undulating through the city center, offering people-watching of its sunning citizens all day long. (Does no one ever punch a time clock here?) At the bend of the horseshoe lies the open-air food market, best visited early in the day to inhale sweet strawberries the size of peas, blueberries even smaller, radishes in brides’ bouquets and pyramids of spuds and garlic. Seasoned guides tip off their groups to step indoors here as well to spy on seafood resting atop crystal
beds of ice and baked goods it’s powerless to resist.

Some of that bounty shows up later while strolling nearby restaurant row, where our party grabbed an outdoor table and dined on local treats like duck sauced with oranges and honey; stuffed beef with homemade dumplings; veal scallopini partnered with asparagus flan; and octopus, the kitchen’s pride. For dessert, palatschink— a thin pancake folded over walnuts, with which to sip the local Merlot called Festiga, from the sunny south. Oh, and strukle! It’s the local specialty, like a raviolo big as your hand and stuffed with yummy cheese. As our waiter proclaimed with vigor, “Attention, everyone! The strukle is arriving!”

Next, consider loading your group on a bus heading south to the Adriatic coastal town of Sibenik, whose medieval stone passages hark back to 1066. Four fortresses oversee the harbor with its life-is-easy promenade punctuated by ice cream stands. Behind it rises the iconic cathedral of 1446, guarded by stern stone lions posing for their photo op. We admired a festive wedding party as we lunched in its shadow on squid ink risotto laced with scampi, followed by thin walnut pancakes, all washed down with sips of blood-dark Plavac from the restaurant’s own wine production. Then we followed our leader up an easy rise to the hilltop Monastery of St. Lawrence and its 17th century walled garden offering sublime views of the harbor. As the sun set, we enjoyed an alfresco dinner of a whole sea bass, theatrically de-boned before our eyes, and sided with platters of kale and potatoes. Oh, and platters of prosciutto and grilled veggies. Then, of course, more of those addictive pancakes.

Sunday morning came up sparkling as our tour leader shepherded us aboard a cozy boat to glide through Kornati, a naval national park, and a maritime troll through the most dense archipelago in the Mediterranean—“nautical heaven,” our guide called it—formed (well, here’s my guess anyway) when God pitched handfuls of earth into the gin-clear water. We anchored at an island marina that’s served as a fisherman’s haven since Roman times.

As the day wears on, arrange for your group’s captain to land at Murter, a town known for its gastronomic scene, thanks to the monied yacht owners who harbor here (think Beyonce, Bill Gates). No need for a menu—just a wave to the chef and a bounty of seafood appears: tuna carpaccio, tuna tartare, monkfish pate, hunks of sea bass, all downed with gulps of Bibich, a summer-friendly white wine, followed by dessert, of course: baklava, panna cotta, frozen soufflés.

Today we explore another national park—Krka—patrolling the boardwalk under a green canopy as waterfalls somersault on all sides. It’s like the Everglades, sans bugs and gators. Amid bobbing swans, we board a ferry to Srkada and lunch on take-your-choice platters: all things seafood, or meat, meat in the form of sausages, cutlets and filets, along with that now-familiar duo of kale and potatoes.

Doze on the bus all the way to Trogir, two hours distant, already a settlement in 1000 B.C. “Today,” says our guide Dino, “We are all Croatians. But here, we are also Dalmatians”—which translates to laid-back pleasure-lovers. And Trogir satisfies, honeycombed with marble-paved alleys leading to the main square, where a sculpted Adam and Eve cavort above the door of the Cathedral of 1240. In the former Roman Tribunal across the way, a quartet of singers—tenor to booming bass—entertains our group.

Then we split for Split. Sparkly Split boasts a trio of lures for group tours: beaches lapped by the gentle Adriatic; excursion boats to entrancing islands; and that McMansion anchoring the shoreline where Roman Emperor Diocletian retired in ultra-splendor in 300 A.D. Today, within its walls, a city-within-a-city percolates. Guides help unravel the labyrinth of chambers and his mausoleum, turned later by Christians into a cathedral. But by now, the group is yearning to break loose and shop, shop, shop along the passages disclosing boutiques of every ilk. In order to herd these cats, when time’s up, simply remind them of the farewell dinner planned—ours, at Split’s Le Meridien Lav, offering a pool, casino and a feast of virtually every shellfish that populates the ocean, along with platters of the local lamb. And one last pancake, this time sweetened with marmalade, before our flight.
Since 1963 one of the biggest events during the Kentucky Derby Festival in Louisville has been the Great Steamboat Race, which traditionally featured the Belle of Louisville and Delta Queen until the latter was retired from service in 2008. Today the annual race on the Ohio River continues, pitting the Belle of Louisville against the Belle of Cincinnati.

Recalling that great rivalry, we’ve decided to put a new spin on one-upmanship. Just in the last month the travels of two Leisure Group Travel staff members have taken them to Kentucky, where they cruised the Ohio from different cities. Associate editor Lauren Reiniger was on assignment in the Cincinnati area, seeing the sights with Harry Peck, our regional business development manager. They boarded BB Riverboats’ Belle of Cincinnati in Newport. Managing editor Randy Mink was in Louisville visiting his brother, who just moved there and bought an 1873 house in the Old Louisville neighborhood. He joined family members on a Sunday brunch cruise aboard the Belle of Louisville.

Lauren and Randy want to brag about their respective riverboat experiences. Let the friendly combat begin….

Randy: My boat is more historic than yours. In fact, it’s a National Historic Landmark. The Belle of Louisville, built in 1914 as a freight boat named Idlewild, is the oldest operating steamboat in the world, a treasured relic from America’s great packet boat era. It’s been doing pleasure cruises in the Derby City since 1963; for 14 years before that, as the Avalon, it was a popular excursion boat in Cincinnati. Talk about a boatload of history.

Lauren: I’d say that it’s the story than rather than the history that counts, and BB Riverboats has an amusing one. In 1977, Ben Bernstein purchased Mike Fink Restaurant in Covington, Kentucky from Captain John Beatty. Ben coined the motto, “The Romance of Riverboat Dining” for his new restaurant. He soon found that his motto—plus the fact that the restaurant was a converted steamboat—confused customers into thinking the restaurant was a working steamboat and went out on the river for actual cruises. So, to satisfy his customers and use the best of both worlds, BB Riverboats was formed in 1979 and a staff began booking cruises from the second deck of Mike Fink Restaurant.
Randy: I bet my boat is bigger than yours. It can accommodate up to 650 guests.

Lauren: Might want to check your facts on that, Randy. Belle of Cincinnati has a capacity of 1,000.

Randy: There’s more to see and do on my boat. Besides a full bar and a concession that sells snacks, it has a souvenir shop with everything from a $1 magnet to a 20-minute documentary DVD. And I liked all the historical photos and informational plaques throughout.

Lauren: On the Belle of Cincinnati, each deck has a full bar, dance floor and elevator for fun on every level—literally and figuratively.

Randy: The shoreline of downtown Louisville is second to none. The Belle’s wharf is at Waterfront Park, a grassy, 85-acre gathering place for festivals, concerts, walks, picnics and views of the skyline.

Lauren: I essentially grew up in Newport on the Levee, where we boarded Belle of Cincinnati just under Newport Aquarium, so trust me when I say it’s such a fun and unique place to spend time. Whether you want to view the Ohio River, visit the aquarium, shop, hear live music, catch a movie or just take in the buzzing atmosphere, you can easily do so before and after a cruise with BB.

Randy: On my boat, I find the opposite shore appealing, too. The Indiana side has Jeffersonville, with its many eateries, bars and quaint shops, plus the Howard Steamboat Museum. You can get there from downtown Louisville by walking across the Big 4 Bridge, an old railroad bridge that has become a great recreational amenity since opening last year—a highlight of my Louisville visit.

Lauren: Opposite the Newport shore is my hometown, Cincinnati. I may be biased, but cruisers on BB are indeed privileged to have such a fun city immediately across the river where they can explore museums, grab a drink, shop, dance and enjoy the riverside parks. While you’re on a cruise with BB, you just might get lucky and see Great American Ball Park shoot fireworks from its smokestacks, signaling a home run for the Cincinnati Reds.

Randy: That’s nice, but there’s a lot more to do in Louisville. The Muhammad Ali Center, minor league baseball’s Louisville Slugger Field and Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory are just minutes from the Belle of Louisville’s docks. Then you’ve got the Kentucky Derby Museum next to Churchill Downs, lots of other good museums and some of the best restaurants anywhere—both downtown and in the neighborhoods.

Lauren: No way; Newport on the Levee + Cincinnati = way more to do. At Newport, you’ve got Newport Aquarium, an AMC movie theater, bowling, a dance club, Hofbräuhaus and Dick’s Last Resort. In Cincinnati, just along the river, you’ve got the Reds Hall of Fame and Great American Ball Park, Banks Entertainment District, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Moerlein Lager...
House and Smale Riverfront Park.

**Randy:** The food on the *Belle of Louisville* probably puts the *Belle of Cincinnati* to shame. Sunday brunch in the ballroom (still used for dancing) was everything I hoped it would be. The fried chicken and ham were yummy, the desserts divine.

**Lauren:** I wish you could have seen this impressive margarita that Harry ordered—it was so big that he got to keep the glass and received a thumbs up from the bartender himself. Everyone was eager to get to the buffet where mouth-watering smells wafted through the air, and the picture-perfect cheesecake was a big hit.

**Randy:** Does your boat have a calliope? Notes of nostalgia emanate from the steam-powered calliope on the *Belle of Louisville*, an old-time musical instrument pounding out tunes that can be heard from four miles away. As the calliopist hits a key on the keyboard, steam is forced into one of the 32 whistle cylinders on the roof, causing the metal to vibrate and make the shrill sounds.

**Lauren:** A calliope is one of the most annoying noise machines ever invented. But that doesn’t mean BB doesn’t have nostalgia. BB Riverboats has had the distinction of being awarded the exclusive rights for riverboat cruises in the 1982 World’s Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee, and has also been a key component in all of the Tall Stacks festivals, which have taken place in the Cincinnati area in 1988, 1992, 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2006.

**Randy:** The *Belle of Louisville* also has participated in all the Tall Stacks. I hope they bring back that festival sometime. There’s something uniquely American about those mighty paddlewheelers.

The verdict? While Randy and Lauren may never agree, you can always book your group a cruise with either one and decide for yourself!

For information on the rival paddlewheelers, log on to belleoflouisville.org and bbriverboats.com. LGT
It seems a bit odd that a farmers market is one of the most-visited attractions in the Northwest’s biggest city. But Pike Place Market is no ordinary farmers market. Much more than displays of fresh produce, it’s really the heart of downtown Seattle.

One of the oldest continuously operating such markets in the country, Pike Place dates back to 1907 and over the years has become as much a part of Seattle’s identity as the evergreens, the mountains and the water.

Located on a hill overlooking Elliott Bay and the tourist-friendly waterfront, the historic expanse of stalls, kiosks and storefronts—representing 500 businesses—invites visitors to browse, buy, eat, take pictures, listen to street musicians and just soak in the festive atmosphere.

A multi-level expansion to the western side of the market is scheduled to open in early 2017. Ground was just broken on the $73-million project, which will include a plaza with views of Puget Sound, a pedestrian connection to the waterfront and additional rooftop day stalls for vendors. The plan for Seattle’s new “front porch” has been a dream 40 years in the making.

The Attractions

While food may be the main attraction, there are some great photo ops awaiting visitors to Pike Place Market. Start at the Public Market Center clock sign on the corner of First and Pike. Erected in 1927, it’s one of the oldest neon signs on the West Coast. At the main entrance the public can donate to the market’s charitable foundation by dropping coins into Rachel the Pig, a bronze sculpture that brings in the bacon. Steps away, camera-toting gawkers congregate at the Pike Place Fish Market to wait for “flying fish.” Well, the fish may not have wings, but when someone orders a whole king salmon or another variety, a fishmonger in slick coveralls and rubber boots removes it from the mound of ice and tosses it to the counter attendant, calling out the order in a time-honored ritual.
Another must see is the original Starbucks, or at least it’s called that. The coffee giant actually opened its first store in 1971 a block north but moved to its current location in 1975 when the first building was demolished. The original logos are still on display. And don’t forget the Gum Wall on a sloping cobblestone street called Post Alley. Gobs of gum coat the 54-foot-long wall, with visitors continuing to contribute to its sticky layers.

The Eateries

Foodies find themselves in heaven as they graze their way through the dizzying array of lunch counters, restaurants and bakeries around every twist and turn. Seattleites value fresh local ingredients, appreciate ethnic cuisines and prize the Pacific Northwest's bounty of fruits and vegetables, seafood, and artisan cheeses. And oh, those baked goods!

At Daily Dozen, treat your group to a greasy bag of piping-hot doughnuts. Watch the vintage machine drop the dough into bubbling oil and see the finished product get shaken up in a bag of cinnamon and sugar.

Continuing your trek through the food bazaar, try a beef-and-cheese-filled Russian pastry at Piroshky Piroshky, barbecue pork buns from Mee Sum Pastry, wedges of lemon-curd scone from The Crumpet Shop or creamy mac and cheese from Beecher’s Handmade Cheese, where you can watch the cheese-making process behind glass. Sit-down restaurants include Steelhead Diner for Pacific Northwest seafood with a Southern twang, the French bistro Cafe Campange and Chan Seattle, a Korean fusion place.

The Shops

Around every turn—don’t forget to explore the lower levels Down Under—you’ll find small owner-operated shops that specialize in unique products, from vinyl records and miniature cars to magic tricks and maps. There are antiques and collectibles, new and used books, clothing and kitchen products. At Golden Age Collectables, billed as “America’s Oldest Comic Shop,” you can pick up an Elvis Presley lunch box, Star Trek bobbleheads and current movie memorabilia. Pipe Palace Smoke Shop has lava lamps, tie-dyed shirts and other reminders of the hippie era.

The crafts market changes daily as craftspeople set up and take down their table displays at the beginning and end of each day in the Main and North Arcade. Discover pottery, glass and metal sculpture, jewelry, leather goods and natural herbal products. All Things Lavender has soap, bath oils and candles made from lavender grown in Washington State.

The Tours

Tour companies like Savor Seattle Food Tours, Seattle Bites Food Tours and Seattle Food Tours offer walking tours that go behind the scenes of Pike Place and provide chances to nibble and nosh. Besides lots of samples—they equal a meal—tour members may get to see cooking demonstrations or meet the shopkeepers. Each person gets a listening device that ensures the guide’s narration comes in loud and clear. Some tours focus on the market’s history and public art, often delving into lesser-known passages.
MISSOURI
Tour Guide

ST. LOUIS
Perfect for Groups

MISSOURI HISTORY
Joy in the Past Lane

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
LEISURE
August 2015
GROUP TRAVEL
Blazing MISSOURI’s HISTORICAL TRAILS

Tour groups have a blast communing with the past
For anyone with a hankering for yesteryear, travels in Missouri inevitably stir up a sense of discovery and generate whiffs of nostalgia while spotlighting America’s pioneering spirit. Follow the routes of dreamers who ventured into the unknown when Missouri was the gateway to the West. Visit the homes of famous Missourians like Daniel Boone and Mark Twain, and get “wild about Harry” in President Truman’s hometown. Visions of Lewis & Clark, Tom Sawyer, Mississippi riverboats and the Pony Express add to the colorful mosaic as you crisscross the state.

The shores of the Mississippi River are awash in history, and a natural place to begin is Ste. Genevieve, the oldest town in Missouri. The town’s French character dates from the 1740s when the region was part of a vast territory held by France. Several buildings from the French colonial era, like the 1792 Louis Bolduc House, are open for tours. Located an hour south of St. Louis, the quaint town of 5,400, a National Historic Landmark, abounds with art galleries, gift and antiques shops, and reminders of days gone by.

Just north of Cape Girardeau, Trail of Tears State Park, with its sharp ridges and steep ravines, is where Cherokee Indians crossed the Mississippi on their forced relocation from the southeastern United States to Oklahoma during the harsh winter of 1838-39. The park has a section of the original removal route and a memorial dedicated to the thousands who died on the march. Exhibits in the visitor center interpret this sad chapter in America’s past.

The Mississippi River town of Hannibal, 100 miles north of St. Louis, is all about Mark Twain, who grew up there as Samuel Clemens and went on to become one of America’s foremost storytellers. Groups can tour the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum, which encompasses several Main Street properties related to Hannibal’s famous son and characters from his books. A Mark Twain Riverboat cruise and tour of nearby Mark Twain Cave, immortalized in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, round out a Hannibal visit.

The Missouri River city of St. Charles, a neighbor of St. Louis, attracts tour groups with an extensive historic shopping district offering 70-some specialty shops housed in 19th century brick buildings on tree-lined Main Street. The riverfront Lewis & Clark Boat House, Museum and Nature Center features replicas of boats used in the famous Corps of Discovery expedition, which headed west from St. Charles in 1804. Another stop is Missouri’s First State Capitol, restored to its 1821-26 appearance. West of the
city, the Daniel Boone Home, near Defiance, contains many family belongings of the frontiersman; relocated buildings on the grounds, including a gristmill and schoolhouse, form Boonesville Village.

In the center of the state, groups can do some time at Jefferson City’s Missouri State Penitentiary, which was decommissioned in 2004 after 168 years in operation. It was the largest state penitentiary west of the Mississippi and once the largest prison in the world, with a capacity of 5,000. On two-hour tours, visitors are led by former wardens and prison guards who tell of escape attempts made by inmates, view cells and see the gas chamber where 40 executions took place. Because of hundreds of serious assaults inside the walls, the “Missouri State Pen” was called the “bloodiest 47 acres in America” by Time magazine in 1967. In addition to history tours, the prison offers ghost tours. The Missouri State Capitol, another Jefferson City landmark, houses the Missouri State Museum.

Missouri has much Civil War history to explore. In fact, only two other states (Virginia and Tennessee) saw more fighting. Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield near Springfield showcases the first major battle west of the Mississippi. There is a self-guided auto tour, and the visitor center offers a film and exhibits. Living history programs are presented on weekends in summer.

Hoofbeats of the Pony Express seem
to echo in St. Joseph, a Missouri River city an hour north of Kansas City. A legendary chapter in American history that began on April 3, 1860, the short-lived transcontinental mail service between St. Jo and Sacramento, is enshrined in the Pony Express National Museum, which occupies the stables from which riders left on horseback. The Pony Express office was at the Patee Hotel, now the Patee House Museum. Besides the re-created Pony Express office, you can see vintage autos, fire trucks and train cars, plus a street filled with model shops and offices from the early 1900s. On the Patee House grounds is the Jesse James Home, the scene of the outlaw’s death in 1882 at the hands of a fellow gang member. See the bullet hole in the wall and artifacts from his grave.

In Independence, minutes east of downtown Kansas City, groups can learn about the 33rd president of the United States at the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. An introductory film, photos, artifacts and mini-theater presentations spotlight the Missouri native’s personal life and decisions he faced in the White House. A replica of Truman’s Oval Office has the original “The Buck Stops Here” sign. Independence also is home to the National Frontier Trails Museum, which tells the story of hardy traders, trappers and settlers who headed west from the Independence area, the jumping-off point of the Santa Fe, California and Oregon trails. Get in the spirit on a covered wagon ride.

In southwest Missouri, visit the farm where another famous Missourian was born and raised. The George Washington Carver National Monument, a 240-acre park just outside the village of Diamond, includes the Carver family cemetery, 1881 Carver House and a museum devoted to the scientist who developed hundreds of byproducts from the peanut, sweet potato and other crops. In Marceline, in north central Missouri, the Walt Disney Home Town Museum is located in the restored 1913 Santa Fe Depot, focusing on Disney’s childhood in the town where Disney began to imagine ”Main Street USA” and what would become Disneyland.

Whether your group is looking to connect with famous people, delve into pioneer heritage, relive 20th century history or just absorb a little yesteryear on a shopping foray in a historic setting, a Missouri odyssey promises tour trails ripe for discovery.
Groups are discovering abundant reasons to visit St. Louis.

Regardless of your group’s interests, St. Louis offers the perfect blend of attractions, dining, accommodations and entertainment. There’s more than one good reason to “Meet Me in St. Louis.”
The Arch Turns 50

The nation’s tallest manmade monument observes its 50th anniversary in 2015 and is undergoing a $380-million renovation to celebrate. The Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, better known as the Gateway Arch, will be sporting a new landscaped park over adjacent highways, connecting downtown to the silvery landmark and the Mississippi River. New performance spaces and paths will enhance the green space. Access to the Arch and its tram rides continue through construction.

The Old Courthouse, site of the famous Dred Scott decision, and the Museum of Westward Expansion (now closed for renovation) are both part of the national park and will have new and refurbished exhibits. The latter, located underneath the Arch, will have a new entry.

Meet Me in the Park

Forest Park, larger than New York’s Central Park, was home to the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Informally known as the St. Louis World’s Fair, it had more than 1,500 buildings, some of them still standing.

The Jefferson Memorial building became the Missouri History Museum. A continuing exhibit, The 1904 World’s Fair: Looking Back at Looking Forward, is a must on any visit to St. Louis. Upcoming 2016 exhibits are Little Black Dress: From Mourning to Night and Route 66: A St. Louis Street. Guided exhibition tours, Theatre in the Museum presentations and Private Curator Talks are available for groups. Plan to have lunch at Bixby Restaurant onsite.

The fair’s Palace of Fine Arts stood atop a hill overlooking a large reflective pool and is now the Saint Louis Art Museum. Permanent collections cover virtually every culture and time period. Rotating exhibitions are always on display. Groups can schedule docent-led tours online. The Panorama restaurant and the more casual Cafe are lunch options.

Along with the Saint Louis Science Museum that’s adjacent to Forest Park, the Missouri History Museum and Saint Louis Art Museum are FREE to visitors, as is the Saint Louis Zoo, another Forest Park attraction.

For the ample coach parking area in Forest Park, a permit ($5) must be purchased two weeks in advance. For individuals desiring to move at their own pace, there are two Forest Park Trolley routes.

Showtime in St. Louis

Nighttime is the right time at Grand Center, the heart of the city’s entertainment. Broadway shows and big-name entertainers grace the stage of the historic Fabulous Fox. The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra calls Powell Hall home. Check the show calendars of the Kranzberg Arts Center and Sheldon Concert Hall. Jazz at the Bistro features top jazz and dining in a traditional supper club. Circus Flora brings its one-ring theatrical show to Grand Center every summer. In Forest Park, The Muny, America’s oldest and largest outdoor music theater, presents Broadway-style entertainment from mid-June to mid-August.
Downtown Discoveries

It’s been said there are more working blues musicians in St. Louis than any other city. That’s probably a reason the city will be the home of the National Blues Museum, expected to open in 2016.

A visit to the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and its Inside the Economy Museum offers many interactive exhibits. Yes, you will leave with a bag of money. Shredded, of course.

A City of Neighborhoods

More than a dozen distinct neighborhoods contribute to the St. Louis vibe. We touched on downtown and Grand Center, but that’s just the surface. The Loop on Delmar Boulevard will soon be welcoming back trolleys to its eclectic mix of shopping, dining and entertainment. The Hill residents celebrate their Italian culture with great food. The Missouri Botanical Garden is close-by.

Central West End is quite cosmopolitan with boutiques and outstanding dining options. Fittingly, the World Chess Hall of Fame is here with the world’s largest chess piece adorning its lawn. A visit to St. Louis is only complete with a tour of Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis and its beautiful mosaic art.

Begin planning your visit to group-friendly St. Louis online at explorestlouis.com. Renee Eichelberger at the St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission is ready to help at reichelberger@explorestlouis.com, 314-992-0643.

Intricate mosaics adorn the magnificent Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis.
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Greek Revival era cathedrals. A theater built in Siamese-Byzantine style. And one of North America’s top 20 Japanese gardens. All minutes from the 630-foot-tall landmark, 89-acre zoo and Clydesdale horses also known around the world. Discover more for your group at explorestlouis.com/groups.
If you are not familiar with Missouri wines, be prepared for a delightful treat. Early German and Italian settlers brought their wine-making skills and prospered in their new homeland. Prior to Prohibition, Missouri was second on the list of wine-producing states.

Today, the state’s wine industry is re-defining itself. More than 125 wineries produce a range of varietals that provide something for everyone’s palate. Almost half welcome groups.

In all five Missouri tourism regions, there is a group-friendly winery on your journey. For the adventuresome group that wants to delve into a full-fledged wine experience, there are 10 designated wine trails.

Missouri Wine and Grape Board
The experiences you can expect at Missouri wineries are as unique as the wineries themselves. Live music is often part of their events, while special programs for groups are available.

Wine-and-food pairings are always enjoyable and educational. From gourmet restaurants to BYO picnics, many wineries offer dining options. Vineyard tours share the history and provide insight into Missouri grape growing.

Some wineries offer vineyard experiences for groups, including vineyard tours and grape picking. Grape stomping may be an option—bring a white T-shirt for your Lucy and Ethel experience. A few wineries even offer the opportunity to bottle your own wine at special events. Craft, art and wine classes are often available for groups. Barrel tastings are offered at some wineries, while all provide a tasting room for visitors.

Northeast Region

Augusta is home to the first American Viticulture Area (AVA) designate in the United States. The AVA is distinguished by wine grape-growing features and boundaries determined by the Alcohol Tax and Trade Bureau. Along with the Hermann AVA, the Augusta AVA is now part of the larger designate Ozark Mountain AVA. Sixteen group-friendly wineries are located in the region, with group dining available at seven.

Stone Hill, Adam Puchta, Hermannhof, OakGlenn and Röbller wineries are stops along the Hermann Wine Trail. Stone Hill is the 2014 Governor’s Cup Winner for its 2012 Cross J Vineyard Norton. Augusta and Montelle wineries in the Augusta AVA are part of the Missouri Weinstrasse.
Central Region

A half-dozen wineries in the region welcome groups. Casa De Loco, Westphalia, Canterbury Hill and Les Bourgeois each offer wine-and-food pairings. The 1906 Blacksmith Shop is an intriguing setting for Eichenberg Winery.

Northwest Region

Seven wineries have red-carpet treatment for group visitors, five with dining capabilities. Baltimore Bend, Terre Beau and Arcadian Moon are part of the Kansas City Wine Trail. Belvoir Winery, Jowler Creek, Van Till Farms and Weston Wine Company are stops on the Northwest Missouri Wine Trail. Belvoir offers regularly scheduled Paranormal Investigations and Murder Mystery dinners.

Southeast Region

A dozen places welcome groups, with 10 offering guided tours and six providing a group dining option. Hemman and The Barrens are part of the Mississippi River Hills Wine Trail, while Cave, Charleville, Chaumette and Sand Creek wineries lie along the Route Du Vin. Cave Vineyard features an underground seating area to enjoy a picnic or music during special events. Breweries are onsite at Charleville and St. James wineries.

Southwest Region

Three of the region’s group-friendly wineries—Stone Hill, Mount Pleasant and Lindwedel—are located in Branson. Both Stone Hill and Mount Pleasant feature large tasting and bottling areas. Scenic White Rose Winery features a gourmet Irish breakfast. Along with Lindwedel, 7C’s and OOVVDA wineries are on the Ozark Mountain Wine Trail.

For information on the fun awaiting groups at Missouri’s wineries, visit missouriwine.org.
“And that’s the way it is...”

It’s hard to go anywhere in St. Joseph without seeing a historic attraction that recounts an extraordinary story, including the incredible legend of the Pony Express or the incomparable life of Walter Cronkite. Bring your group to St. Joseph, Missouri and experience our many unique attractions, including the Pony Express National Museum and the Walter Cronkite Memorial at Missouri Western State University.

St. Joseph, Missouri Visitors Bureau
StJoMo.com - 800-785-0360
Christmas cheer brightens group trips to Missouri in November and December.
arge cities and small towns across Missouri ring in the Christmas season with special festivities, from outdoor light displays and glittering stage shows to historic houses decked out for the holidays. Here is a look at some neatly wrapped Missouri celebrations that will get your group in the mood for this splendid season:

In Branson, known for its year-round array of attractions and theater shows, Ozark Mountain Christmas is perhaps “the most wonderful time of the year,” to use the lyrics of the classic song popularized by late crooner Andy Williams, a Branson favorite for many years. From Nov. 1 to Dec. 31, the entertainment mecca transforms into a yuletide wonderland.

Silver Dollar City theme park, aglow with 5 million lights, presents An Old Time Christmas (Nov. 7-Dec. 30), highlighted by musical floats and 33 costumed characters in Rudolph’s Holly Jolly Christmas Light Parade. The “Christmas on Main Street” light & sound show features a five-story, special-effects Christmas tree in Town Square. Jingle Bell Junction, housed in Frisco Barn, has 80 themed trees and lots of shops. Two musical productions — It's a Wonderful Life and A Dickens’ Christmas Carol — round out the offerings. Weather permitting, the park’s rides are open.

At Branson’s Shepherd of the Hills Homestead, groups enjoy the drive-through Trail of Lights, which consists of animated scenes and themed “lands,” from fantasy to religious to patriotic. They can combine the drive with a chuckwagon dinner and an elevator ride up Inspiration Tower for a Santa’s-eye view of the lights. The Branson Area Festival of Lights, located off Shepherd of the Hills Expressway, is another drive-through extravaganza. The non-commercial Adoration Parade in downtown Branson and the waterfront Branson Landing shopping complex takes place the first Sunday in December after the lighting of the enormous Nativity scene atop Mount Branson.

Many of Branson’s music venues take on a holiday theme or devote some production numbers to the season. The Lennon Sisters and Osmond Brothers perform in the Andy Williams Christmas Spectacular at Andy Williams’ Moon River Theatre from early November to early December. Included is a tribute to the beloved singer, known as “Mr. Christmas.” One of Branson’s largest and most lavish yuletide productions, Christmas Wonderland, wows audiences with high-kicking chorus girls. Fans of the Fab Four will want to see the Liverpool Legends in A Beatles Christmas at the Caravelle Theater. For comedy, there’s Russian comedian Yakov Smirnoff, whose show From New Year’s to Christmas runs from Nov. 1 to Dec. 5 in the Yakov Smirnoff Theatre.

Branson also offers plenty of spots where visitors can get a head start on their Christmas shopping. Downtown’s Branson Landing features many national retailers, while locally owned shops a few blocks away (including the iconic Dick’s 5 & 10) offer a Main Street atmosphere. Or let your group loose at Branson’s two outlet malls—Tanger Outlet Centers and The Shoppes at Branson Meadows.

Out-of-town holiday shoppers in Kansas City make a beeline to fashionable Country Club Plaza, a 15-square-block district filled with courtyards, fountains, artwork and romantic Spanish architecture. The Plaza Lights spectacle (late November to mid-January), a 90-year-old tradition and one of the Midwest’s best-known holiday light displays, features thousands of glimmering, jewel-colored bulbs that accentuate every dome, tower and window of the nation’s first suburban shopping district designed for automobile users. Two carriage companies offer horse-drawn tours.

The focal point for merrymakers in downtown Kansas City is Crown Center, a mixed-use complex that is home to the international headquarters of Hallmark Cards, Inc., three levels of shops and the city’s only public ice skating rink. Crown Center’s 100-foot-tall Mayor’s Christmas Tree is higher than those on display at the White House and Rockefeller Center. For a magical presentation of The Nutcracker by the Kansas City Ballet at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, groups should reserve tickets early.

Volunteers at Vaile Mansion in nearby Independence deck the halls of Missouri’s “Christmas Castle” in Victorian style, including 50 to 75 decorated trees. The month-long holiday celebration
showcases the opulent 1881 landmark, which boasts 31 rooms, nine marble fireplaces and painted ceilings. It is considered one of the nation’s best examples of Second Empire architecture. Another Independence showpiece, also festooned with decorations for the holidays, is the 1855 Bingham-Waggoner Estate.

St. Charles’ downtown historic district is the perfect place to get into the holiday spirit. The annual Christmas Traditions festival (Nov. 27-Dec. 24) on Main Street includes Victorian carolers, roast chestnut vendors, horse carriage rides, a fife and drum corps, costumed actors portraying beloved holiday characters and weekend parades led by Santa and Mrs. Claus.

More than 75 shops along the brick sidewalks sell everything from jewelry and designer fashions to books, gifts and antiques. Nearly 200 historic buildings are decorated with more than 10,000 feet of live greenery and 1,000 handmade Christmas bows.

An Old World Christmas is celebrated the first two weekends in December in 19th century Hermann, a storybook town tucked away in the Missouri River Valley, about an hour west of St. Louis. Besides shopping for one-of-a-kind gifts in the many shops and galleries, visitors can find special craft items at the Kristkindl Markt, a German-style market held at Stone Hill Winery (first weekend) and Hermannhof Festhalle. More holiday festivities take place at the Deutschheim State Historic Site, the German heritage site of the Missouri state park system, and Historic Hermann Museum at the German School. The annual St. George Rectory tour sparkles with candles, elaborate decorations, music and dozens of Christmas trees.

Crown Center is a focal point for holiday festivities in downtown Kansas City, Missouri.
MISSOURI LIFE
ON THE MISSISSIPPI
Cities: Hannibal, St. Charles, St. Louis, Ste. Genevieve, Cape Girardeau • 5 Days

Description: Follow the Great River Road and experience life on one of America’s greatest rivers.

Step back in time and explore the Hannibal of Samuel Clemens at the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum properties. Learn about the unsinkable Molly Brown and dine on the Mississippi, riverboat style.

It’s on to St. Charles for a visit to the first Missouri State Capitol and the Lewis & Clark Boathouse and Nature Center.

St. Louis is waiting with stops at the spectacular Cathedral Basilica, the Missouri History Museum and Forest Park. Time in St. Louis is only complete with a visit to the Gateway Arch, the Old Court House, Historic Laclede’s Landing, Missouri Botanical Garden, The City Museum and dinner on the Gateway Riverboat.

St. Genevieve and Cape Girardeau are part of French Colonial Country, the oldest region settled by Europeans west of the Appalachian Mountains. A tour of St. Genevieve’s Felix Valle Historic Site is a must. The murals of Cape Girardeau and the Cape River Heritage Museum have a thousand tales to tell.

CENTRAL MISSOURI SAMPLER
Cities: Columbia, Jefferson City, Fulton, Hermann • 3 Days

Description: Experience some of Missouri’s best gems. This tour combines history and local favorites for three unforgettable days.

Begin at the Historic Francis Quadrangle on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia. Tour the school’s Museum of Art & Archaeology and Museum of Anthropology. A must-see is the Historic Missouri Theatre, a pre-Depression Era building renovated and restored in 2008 to its 1928 glory.

It’s on to Jefferson City and the Missouri State Penitentiary. Before closing in 2004, it was the oldest continually operating prison west of the Mississippi River. Its tour is one of only five penitentiary tours in the U.S. The Missouri State Capitol tour features exhibits of historical significance.

An afternoon day trip to Fulton includes the National Churchill Memorial and Library and the Auto World Museum.

The next morning depart for Hermann, reminiscent of Germany’s Rhine Valley. Enjoy the many specialty shops and lunch and tasting at Stone Hill Winery.

GENTLEMEN OF GENIUS
Cities: Hannibal, Marceline, St. Joseph • 3 Days

Description: An adventure following Highway 36 and highlighting Mark Twain, the Pony Express, Walt Disney and Jesse James.

Your adventure along the Missouri Highway 36 corridor begins in Hannibal with a greeting from none other than Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher. Explore the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum properties and Mark Twain’s Cave. There’s time for shopping, a live Mark Twain performance and an evening dinner cruise aboard the Mark Twain Riverboat.

Arrive in Marceline and visit the Walt Disney Hometown Museum. An afternoon visit to the Uptown Theatre and free time downtown is in order.

In St. Joseph tour the Pony Express Headquarters at the Patee House Museum and the Pony Express Stables. A stop at the Mount Mora Cemetery, a resting place for many prominent citizens, precedes a visit to the Jesse James House Museum, where Jesse’s story ended.

MISSOURI HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
Cities: Branson, Carthage, Joplin, Kansas City, Independence • 5 Days

Description: Warm up the holiday season with this tour of Southern and Western Missouri.

Branson welcomes your arrival with an evening of Christmas song and dance. The next morning after breakfast there’s a morning show, shopping and Silver Dollar City’s Old Time Christmas. Complete your evening in Branson with a show and the Branson Area Festival of Lights.

Travel to Carthage, arriving at the Precious Moments Park for a tour of the Chapel and visit to the Visitors Center.

It’s on to Joplin and a visit to the Candy Shop before dinner and an overnight stay.

After breakfast depart for Kansas City, the “City of Fountains.” Tour the Arabia Steamboat Museum followed by a visit to the Hallmark Visitors Center. Enjoy dinner and free time at the Crown Center featuring the Mayor’s Christmas Tree. After breakfast day trip to Historic Independence for unique gift shops and holiday attractions. Celebrate a “Queen Victoria Christmas” at the Vaile Mansion. Returning to Kansas City you’ll be awed by the 80 miles of lights at the Country Club Plaza.

For details on these and others, visit online at industry.visitmo.com/grouptours/groupitineraries.aspx.
Missouri State Fair
Sedalia, Aug. 11-21, 2016
Get in touch with rural Missouri lifestyles with livestock events, truck and tractor pulls, and farm-fresh foods. Also enjoy carnival rides, rodeos, sprint car action, music and comedy shows, and appearances by the Budweiser Clydesdales. Concert headliners this year include John Michael Montgomery, Alabama and Def Leppard. [mostatefair.com]

Birthplace of Route 66 Festival
Springfield, Aug. 12-14, 2016
Hometown pride is on display at this downtown festival observing Springfield’s status as the place where the “Mother Road” was named. Enjoy a classic car and motorcycle show, parade, food and crafts vendors, concerts and a drive-in movie. Check out the businesses along Route 66. [route66festivalsgl.com]

Trails West!
Organized by the Allied Arts Council of St. Joseph, Northwest Missouri’s largest event features fine art, folk art and crafts from across the Midwest, plus roaming performers and historical re-enactors. Musical entertainment takes place on three stages in downtown’s Civic Center Park. Acts this year include the Charlie Daniels Band. [trailswest.org]

Santa-Call-Gon Days Festival
Independence, Labor Day weekend
This annual free event on Independence Square celebrates Independence as the starting point of the three main trails in America’s westward expansion—the Santa Fe, California and Oregon trails. Highlights include more than 500 vendor booths, a carnival midway, an authentic trappers’ encampment and three entertainment stages. Main Stage headliners have included the Dixie Chicks, Kenny Chesney, Marty Stuart and Sawyer Brown. [santacaligon.com]

Kansas City Irish Fest • Labor Day weekend
More than 30 Celtic rock and traditional Irish bands take to seven stages at one of the nation’s top three Irish festivals. Held in downtown’s Crown Center Square, the event also features the funniest Irish comedians, Irish import vendors, and whiskey and beer tastings. Watch hurling, see a hilarious Irish play, or learn a ceilidh dance or Irish Gaelic phrases at the Culture Stage. [kcirishfest.com]

Branson Veterans Homecoming • Nov. 5-11
Veterans and active duty military are honored all year at Branson shows and attractions, but from Nov. 5-11 the town salutes America’s brave men and women with the largest homecoming celebration in the nation. At more than 40 special events leading up to the Veterans Day parade in historic downtown Branson, thousands of veterans, active duty personnel and their families are welcomed. It’s a touching time to be in the Ozarks. [explorebranson/veterans]

Dogwood-Azalea Festival
Charleston, April 14-17, 2016
With mature dogwood trees forming canopies over the streets and azaleas at peak bloom, step-on guides lead bus groups on the six-mile Dogwood-Azalea Trail. On the nighttime candlelight tour, glowing white luminarias line sidewalks and residents cast spotlights on dogwoods and azaleas. The festival also features home tours, an arts and crafts bazaar, ice cream social, piano concerts, a parade and demonstrations of pioneer skills. [charlestonmo.org/festival]

Old Time Music, Ozark Heritage Festival
West Plains, June 17-18, 2016
Folk life traditions of the Ozark Highlands take center stage, with jig dancing and mule jumping competitions, a Dutch oven cook-off, quilt show and plenty of fiddling. Living history interpreters demonstrate butter churning, spinning, weaving, and candle, broom and pottery making. Learn how to make biscuits, cornbread and squirrel pot pie at the What’s Cookin’? stage. Catch the old-fashioned melodrama in the historic Avenue Theatre. [oldtimemusic.org]

National Tom Sawyer Days
Hannibal, July 2-4, 2016
Experience the Mississippi River town of Hannibal through the eyes of its most famous son, author Mark Twain. Festivities include frog jumping and fence painting contests, a carnival, mud volleyball tournament and live entertainment. A Tom and Becky contest, pet show, talent show, arts and crafts, and Fourth of July fireworks round out the event. [hannibaljaycees.org]
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DONE MARINATING

DENVER TAKES IT TO THE TABLE

By Vanessa Day

After years of being seen as a meat-and-potatoes kind of town, Denver has started taking the culinary scene by storm. As more people flock to the Front Range, top chefs are opening innovative restaurant concepts to satisfy the sophisticated palates of this booming city. Groups traveling to Denver can savor the newest flavors, as well as some of the time-honored classics.

Spinach ricotta gnudi, razor clam ceviche, oak-grilled bone marrow. They sound like plates you would find on menus at gourmet restaurants in New York City, Chicago or San Francisco. But these menu items are not from any of those destinations...they are from Denver. It’s surprising, I know, and I grew up here. As a native, I’ve always been a fan of Denver’s food—chile relleno, buffalo burgers and our namesake omelette. It wasn’t until I lived in a true foodie town that I realized my fair city had been lacking.

After 10 years of being away, I have returned to Denver to find a completely different culinary scene. There has been an explosion in recent years of high-end, eclectic eateries sprinkled throughout downtown, the Highlands neighborhood, the emerging River North area and other areas. Now, instead of reverting to the same restaurant every Friday night, I find myself struggling to pick a place to go.

Around 40 restaurants opened in the Denver area in one month during the summer of 2014, a number unheard of in these parts, and the scene doesn’t seem to be slowing down. Sales at the state’s eateries have been going strong, especially as more transplants...
move in looking for places to dine. While the people of Colorado and many top chefs are certainly noticing the change, the news hasn’t quite gotten out to the rest of the country. People still don’t see Denver as a food-centric town, but maybe they should.

**TOP CHEFS AND FOODIE AWARDS GALORE**

As Denver’s population ballooned over the last few years, chefs from across the country started to realize this was not only an untapped market, but a chance for them to truly stand out amid a very competitive crowd. If your travel group visits Denver, they will notice some prominent names from the culinary world have set up shop here. James Beard Award winner and Top Chef Masters star Jen Jasinski opened a restaurant called *Stoic and Genuine* in the recently renovated Union Station. The fine-dining seafood restaurant serves up imaginative twists on classic dishes, including shrimp cocktail, chowder, tuna tartare and fried oysters.

*Guard & Grace*, founded by chef Troy Guard, is a modern steakhouse with an emphasis on wood-fired dishes. The restaurant offers a wide variety of small plates, perfect for the whole group to share, a fresh raw bar and inviting dining rooms and large lounges that provide guests with a wonderful place to dine.

For tour groups looking for a variety of food in one location, *The Source* is the place to be. Voted as one of America’s best food halls by *Travel + Leisure*, The Source is located in the River North (RiNo) neighborhood, which was recently named as a top-rated food neighborhood. It comprises nationally recognized *Acorn*, a contemporary American-style restaurant led by chef/owner Steven Redzikowski; *Comida*, a full-service, sit-down Mexican eatery that is an extension of the Comida Taco Truck; *Babette’s Artisan Bread; Boxcar Coffee Roasters* and *Daughters Butcher Shoppe*.

Even the longstanding restaurants in Denver are creating new dishes and working hard to keep up with the slew of fresh establishments popping up. *Panzano*, located in the Hotel Monaco, has been a top Italian restaurant in the city for years. The AAA Four Diamond- and Zagat-rated restaurant focuses on local, seasonal and organic ingredients, including some top-notch lamb that landed chef Elise Wiggins a nod from the James Beard Foundation for her braised lamb croquette. Groups visiting Denver can reserve the beautiful Wine Cellar or the Toscana Room for their own private dinner.

### DELIGHTS FROM OVERSEAS

Denver has always had a large Hispanic population, and its Mexican food is certainly worth writing home about. In the last few years, more international eateries have moved in, from Vietnamese and Japanese to Spanish and German. And I’ll bet most people were unaware that Denver has a booming Ethiopian community, with restaurants serving up specialties such as beef sambusa, doro wot (spicy chicken stewed in berbere sauce) and gored gored (chopped lean beef with spiced Ethiopian butter and hot chilies).

One of the top new restaurants in Denver is *Lena*, a tapas-style establishment on South Broadway that encourages sharing and communal dining. The restaurant offers a vast selection of grilled meats, seafood and vegetables, as well as tacos, fresh baked empanadas and other traditional dishes from South and Central America, Spain and Mexico. Groups can reserve the private dining room for an intimate dinner apart from the crowds, or mingle in the upstairs terrace overlooking the bar area.

Denver is also getting in on the ramen craze. Opened in the summer of 2014, *Tokio* is one of the latest Japanese restaurants to enter the scene. Sushi is available on the menu, but the specialty here is noodles. Try the vegetarian “ramen air,” so named because it is lighter than standard meaty ramen, yet still very rich and creamy with flavors of pumpkin, sweet potato and miso. A number of other spots are also serving up gourmet noodle dishes, such as *Sakura House* in downtown Denver and *Sushi Den*, located along Old South Pearl Street.

Marijuana Tourism Flourishes in Colorado

With the advent of legal marijuana sales in Colorado last year, Denver-area tour operators say the cannabis tour business is thriving. Attracting a diverse clientele of out-of-state and international tourists, these companies say their customers are interested both in buying the substance and learning about Colorado’s $700-million marijuana industry. Denver boasts the first cannabis-branded hotel, and there’s even a cannabis camp for tourists. For details on the phenomenon, see Vanessa Day’s article, an Online Exclusive, at http://tinyurl.com/owsc2q5
THE CLASSICS

As a native, I grew up dining at some of Denver’s oldest and most beloved establishments. While they may not be considered as modern or inventive as the new places setting up shop, they have managed to hold strong with traditional menus, friendly service and the occasional dish that pushes the epicurean boundary.

Barolo Grill, opened in 1992, is an award-winning restaurant serving authentic northern Italian cuisine, and is known for its spectacular wine cellar. When it opened in the 1960s, Sam’s No. 3 was a diner with only 19 stools and grill in the front window. Today, it is has three locations and the locals absolutely love it.

Most people have heard of Rocky Mountain oysters, and the place to get them is The Buckhorn Exchange. Built in the late 19th century, this restaurant specializes in meat of every kind, from elk and bison to rattlesnake and alligator tail. And if the food options don’t impress you, the elaborate taxidermy on the walls certainly will. Another Denver tradition is The Fort, established back in 1963 in an adobe castle located near Red Rocks. If you’re looking for buffalo, look no further. The staples here are buffalo, elk and quail, and they serve over 80,000 buffalo entrees every year.

Denver’s culinary transformation has welcomed the new while embracing the old. The menus are becoming more chic, adventurous and high end, attracting foodies from across the country. It is clear that my beloved childhood home is climbing the gastronomic ladder, and industry experts are turning their heads to the Mile High City. LGT
Cincinnati And Its Environs Put The OHIO
Okay, I may be somewhat biased—seeing as I grew up in Cincinnati and all—but hear me out. Southwest Ohio should be at the top of your list for destinations to visit. Before you dismiss me as subjective, what if I told you the majority of the itinerary from my recent trip to the Buckeye State consisted of things I had never before experienced? It was actually quite embarrassing; all of that had been right under my nose for 19 years before I left for college. But now I have the honor of telling you about the best-kept secrets this region has to offer.

Cincinnati serves as the hub of the hub-and-spoke destination that is Southwest Ohio. It’s a group favorite with a variety of things to do. If you’re looking for some riverside relaxation, The Banks dining and entertainment district is where you want to be. Here you’ll find Smale Riverfront Park featuring a view of the Ohio River, fountains, gardens, event lawns, a labyrinth, playgrounds, group-friendly restaurants and Carol Ann’s Carousel, which features characters that each tell a part of Cincinnati’s story. A banquet hall, located in the carousel building, can host a group meeting before or after a ride.

No matter the season, groups can get their fill of sports entertainment at either of the Banks’ bookends—cheer on baseball’s first professional franchise, the Reds, at Great American Ball Park in spring/summer, or yell “Who-Dey” at a Bengals’ NFL game at Paul Brown Stadium in fall/winter. A group winner is a Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame and Museum tour, followed by a bite to eat at adjacent Moerlein Lager House, a microbrewery that embodies Cincinnati’s history.

Located in the center of The Banks is a Cincinnati must-see: National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. At the award-winning museum, interact with exhibits that emphasize the era of the Underground Railroad—such as an authentic, more than 170-year-old slave pen—and modern-day slavery. In fact, this is the only museum in the world with a permanent exhibit on contemporary slavery.

While it’s not technically Cincinnati, Newport on the Levee is located directly across the river and often paired with Cincinnati-based group itineraries. The multi-level, retail-entertainment center is where you’ll find quirky shops, an AMC movie theater, bowling, a comedy club, group-friendly restaurants like the genuinely German Hofbräuhaus, an assortment of river tours and Newport Aquarium—home of Shark Bridge, the only suspension bridge in North America where guests can walk inches above nearly two dozen sharks. For fun on the water (shark-free), cruise with BB Riverboats on a brunch, lunch, dinner, sightseeing or specialty cruise. On your Ohio River voyage you just might witness fireworks exploding from Great American Ball Park’s iconic smokestacks, signaling a home run for the Reds.

Travel back via the Purple People Bridge, a pedestrian bridge that connects Newport, Kentucky to Cincinnati, or the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge, which was the prototype for the Brooklyn Bridge. Back in Cincy, head less than a mile north of the river to Fountain Square, an idyllic, central meeting spot for any group where you’ll find live music, a myriad of events, shops and hotels. Next to Fountain Square awaits another group favorite, Contemporary Arts Center (CAC). One of the first contemporary art institutions in the nation, CAC is a non-collecting museum that focuses on “the art of the last five minutes,” including paintings, sculptures, photography, architecture, performance art, new media and the works of
now-famous artists early in their careers—does the name Andy Warhol ring a bell?

If a meal at a National Historic Landmark sounds like a special dining experience, head to nearby Grille at Palm Court at The Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, where the chefs are challenged to create top-notch culinary delights and you’re surrounded by French Art Deco. You’ll find one of the finest small art museums in America just east of Fountain Square. Taft Museum of Art, a National Historic Landmark built in 1820, is home to an extensive art collection that includes European and American master paintings and Chinese porcelains.

Signs appear everywhere in everyday life, but what do you really know about them? On a tour of one of Cincinnati’s hidden gems, American Sign Museum, learn about the history of signage, how signs have been made over time and how various designs each serve a purpose. When the tour is over, check out the working neon shop or host a reception in the event space.

A Queen City treasure is Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, one of the last great train stations built and a Cincinnati icon. After you catch your breath from admiring the largest half-dome in the Western Hemisphere in Union Terminal’s entrance, tour any of the three museums: Cincinnati History Museum, Duke Energy Children’s Museum and Museum of Natural History and Science; see what’s playing at OMNIMAX® Theater; or explore Cincinnati History Library and Archives.

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden is the second oldest zoo in the United States (it opened in 1875, 14 months after Philadelphia Zoo), but can claim fame to the oldest zoo building in the nation with its Reptile House. One of the top zoos in the nation, it’s known for its breeding programs—it was the first to successfully breed California sea lions. If you can visit in May, you won’t want to miss the popular, month-long event Zoo Babies.

One of the greatest characteristics of Southwest Ohio is its mixed bag of big-city happenings and countryside leisure. Just outside of Cincinnati, groups can spend a day getting in touch with Mother Nature, ancestral roots, and their inner artists and taste buds.

YMCA Camp Kern in Oregonia is staffed to assist your group’s needs, whether you’re looking for space to rent, a completely programmed retreat or something in the middle. Some of my personal favorite memories from Camp Kern include the giant swing, rock climbing, fossil hunting and Ozone Zipline Adventures. Half a mile down the road is Morgan’s Outdoor Adventures, which puts a fun and educational spin on canoeing, kayaking, rafting tours and camping. Continue another mile to Fort Ancient, a National Historic Landmark, where you’ll explore the 800-year-old Fort Ancient Village and experience the heritage of village residents. Afterward, browse the SunWatch Store for authentic Native American rugs, pottery, jewelry, flutes and dreamcatchers.

In Lebanon, groups love going to Golden Lamb Restaurant & Inn, Ohio’s oldest hotel established in 1803. Eighteen rooms feature antique furnishings—the unique part is they are each named and decorated after a famous guest of the inn, such as John Quincy Adams, Ronald Reagan, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Charles Dickens and George W. Bush. Enjoy a delicious meal in the restaurant’s banquet or dining rooms, then wet your whistle at Black Horse Tavern. In the adjacent village of Waynesville, the antique capital of the Midwest, groups tour Museum at the Friends Home. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and housed in the 1905 Friends Boarding Home, which looks nearly identical to its glory days when retired Quakers and single school teachers lived there, the museum’s rooms each highlight an aspect of early Quaker life.

Farm life is a key player in Ohio’s history—and it’s not just cornfields and cows. Visitors from all over the country come to the top-class horse shows at Roberts Arena in Wilmington. At Horsefeathers Farm in Clarksville, groups enjoy picnics and tours of the grounds, with the highlight being the Parma Wallabies (sponsored by the Cincinnati Zoo). In fact, my grade school principal’s family owns this farm, and they would show the wallabies for educational programs—so trust me when I say these furry fellows are worth the visit. While you’re in Clarksville, you have to stop at Bonnybrook Farms. Take a breath of fresh air in beautiful farm country, savor farm-fresh cooking and enjoy one-of-a-kind activities such as Chuck Wagon Dinner Rides and Lantern Light Wagon Rides.
How do you throw an authentic festa italiana?

From exploring charming neighborhoods to sampling old-country flavors, wines and more, Columbus is full of unforgettable hands-on experiences perfect for groups of all sizes. Start planning your Columbus visit today at experiencecolumbus.com/tours or call 800-354-2657.
Art is no stranger to Ohio and can be found in all styles and crafts. Art meets nature at Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum in Hamilton. Your group can take a guided tour of over 300 acres, including its indoor Ancient Sculpture Museum housing Greek, Roman, Etruscan and Egyptian pieces. Groups love informative tours and behind-the-scenes demonstrations at Middletown’s BeauVerre Riordan, the oldest continually operating stained glass studio in the nation, established in 1838. Guests from more than 37 countries come to West Chester Township to marvel at Entertainment Junction, home of the world’s largest indoor model train display. Take a guided tour to see the remarkable inner workings of the complex.

Let’s talk food and wine. Sit back, dine and enjoy the show at La Comedia Dinner Theatre in Springboro. It is one of the nation’s largest professional dinner theaters with Broadway-style productions and mouth-watering meals, including customized dishes to represent the “flavor” of the current production. At Valley Vineyards in Morrow, you’ll find nationally award-winning, estate-grown table and dessert wines from Ohio River Valley Appellation vineyards.

After a little liquid luck, try your chances at Lebanon’s Miami Valley Gaming, featuring 1,600 video lottery terminals, a racing simulcast simulator and Miami Valley Raceway, a 5/8-mile harness racetrack with an indoor grandstand accommodating more than 1,000. On-site dining is available at Cin City Sea & Steak, Acres Seasonal Buffet and Trifecta—three fast-casual eateries in one.

To answer the remaining big questions any tour planner has… Accessibility? Check; Southwest Ohio is a massive crossroads for Midwest travel. Accommodations? Take your pick, whether you want to stay in a grand hotel, scenic campground or historic inn. Activities? As you can see, there’s something for all interests, ages and group sizes in this region. Affordability? Combine Cincinnati and its spokes and you have all the flair of a big city with the prices of a small country town. Now I have one final question for you—what’s holding you back from planning a group trip to Cincinnati and the surrounding area? LGT
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Wisconsin Bratwurst stars at Milwaukee Brat House. Above: A Racine kringle in the shape of Wisconsin.

Doing Milwaukee, German-style

Served at fairs, festivals, bars and restaurants, bratwurst is ubiquitous in Wisconsin. For a little trip back in time, venture to Milwaukee’s Old World Third Street, home of the most famous German restaurant in America and a nationally known sausage shop right across the street. Another landmark on Third: Milwaukee Brat House.

At Mader’s, a Milwaukee institution for more than 100 years, you’ll dine amid a $3-million collection of art, suits of medieval armor and antiques dating back to the 14th century. Try the Bavarian Platter—a medley of bratwurst, knackwurst and weisswurst, with Kassler rippchen (smoked pork loin) and potato dumpling. Other favorites include wiener schnitzel, sauerbraten and beef goulash. At Milwaukee Brat House, you can pile your brat with sauerkraut and sautéed onions, blue cheese and bacon, giardiniera and buffalo sauce, and other tasty combinations. The brat stuffed with sharp cheddar and jalapeno and topped with sauerkraut is served on a German pretzel roll. Groups can rent the outdoor beer garden.

Usinger’s sausage shop, founded by a German immigrant in 1880 and now run by the fourth generation, is worth a visit for its old-time atmosphere. The company makes more than 70 varieties of European-style sausage, many of which you’ll find in stores and restaurants throughout Milwaukee and Wisconsin. (madersrestaurant.com, milwaukeebrathouse.com, usinger.com)
Crazy for Cranberries
Wisconsin is America’s largest producer of cranberries, and harvest time from late September to early October is ideal for touring Central Wisconsin’s flooded cranberry marshes, vast crimson lakes where workers shovel the berries onto an elevator belt that conveys them to waiting trucks. But anytime is a good time to enjoy the tart red berry at Warrens’ Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center and its ice cream parlor. Besides cranberry relish and cranberry sauce, visitors will discover cranberry pies, cranberry cream puffs and cranberry sorbet, not to mention ice cream flavors like Cranberry Truffle and Cranberry Cheesecake.

The Cranberry Festival in Warrens is the largest such fest in the world, welcoming over 100,000 visitors to cranberry country. At Eagle River’s Cranberry Fest, try the cranberry bratwurst and have a slice of the World’s Largest Cranberry Cheesecake.

Dinner and a Show
While it might be the blockbuster Broadway musical on stage that first gets your attention, the dining experience at The Fireside Dinner Theatre in Fort Atkinson will draw just as much applause from your group. Under the direction of Chef Michael Scott, the team in the kitchen presents a variety of menus, including the Thursday Evening Signature Buffet and an elaborate Sunday Brunch. Some of the most popular items are Chicken and Ribs, Steak and Shrimp, the Signature Salad and Sweet Potato Souffle. The in-house bakery offers fresh breads, muffins, Danish pastries and a featured cupcake that changes for every show.

The Fireside is owned by the Klopcic family, who were awarded the distinction of “America’s Best Restaurant Family” by Jones Dairy Farm and the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in 2006. Chef Scott, who trained at the prestigious CIA, spent 15 years working alongside his long-time predecessor, David Wolfram, before taking the helm in 2009. (firesidetheatre.com)

Cheese Fondue: Swiss Bliss
New Glarus is “America’s Little Switzerland,” and what better way to savor its Swiss heritage than dunking crusty bread cubes into a bubbly pot of cheese fondue. The young Swiss chef at the New Glarus Hotel Restaurant can do a fondue demo and then have the group taste it as an appetizer. It’s an interactive dining experience that brings people together. Also on the menu is raclette, a classic Swiss dish made with mild raclette cheese melted over boiled potatoes and garnished with red onion, pickles, tomato and capers.

Wisconsin and cheese go together; in fact, the state produces more than 600 varieties of cheese and dairy products—more than any other. Swiss settlers brought their traditions, including cheese-making skills, to the rolling hills of southern Wisconsin’s Green County in the mid-19th century, and the county once reigned as the Swiss Cheese Capital of the United States. New Glarus Hotel Restaurant, housed in a former hotel built in 1853, offers Swiss entertainment, including yodeling and alphorn playing. Main courses include wienschnitzel, sauerbraten, and other Swiss and German favorites. Shops in town feature Swiss imports, and don’t miss the Swiss-style bakery and meat market. (newglarushotel.com)

Cream Puffs: Fair Favorite
Last year the Wisconsin State Fair sold a record-breaking 400,678 cream puffs. Officially known as the Original Cream Puff, the decadent pastry has been a fair staple since 1925, when Wisconsin’s farmers and bakers came up with a way to showcase the wheat and dairy industries. Each year it takes 15,000 gallons of cream, 350 pounds of unsalted butter and nearly 250,000 large eggs to satisfy the cravings of cream puff lovers. The puffs sell at an average rate of 47 per minute during the fair. In 2011 Chief Master Baker Dave “Puff Daddy” Schmidt of the Wisconsin Bakers Association and his team set the Guinness World Record for World’s Largest Cream Puff with a 125-pound masterpiece that stood 7½ feet tall.

The 11-day fair, held every August in the Milwaukee suburb of West Allis, also dispenses other taste treats, including deep-fried cheese curds and corn on the cob dripping with butter. On-a-stick items range from beer-battered bratwurst and bacon-wrapped pork belly to alligator sausage and a 12-inch corn dog. New this year are the peanut butter bacon burger and deep-fried maple bacon cookie dough. (wisstatefair.com)

Racine: America’s Kringle Capital
Sold at bakeries, grocery stores and gas stations in Racine and other places in southeastern Wisconsin, the large, oval-shaped pastry called kringle has gained a worldwide following, thanks to a brisk mail-order business. Based on a recipe brought over by immigrants from Denmark in the 19th century, kringle is 32 layers of buttery dough filled with fruits or nuts and baked until golden brown. Almond, pecan and raspberry are among the favorite flavors; other varieties include cherry, apple, strawberry and cream cheese. President Obama took home three kringles among the favorite flavors; other varieties include wienschnitzel, sauerbraten, and other Swiss and German favorites. Shops in town feature Swiss imports, and don’t miss the Swiss-style bakery and meat market. (firesidetheatre.com)
the dough to produce a delicate, flaky texture. It takes three days to make a kringle from start to finish. Drizzled with icing, the average kringle (22-24 ounces, 10 inches wide by 14 inches long) serves 12 two-inch slices. The mini-oval (14 ounces) is sold in many grocery stores. Schedule a tour at one of these Racine County bakeries: Bendtsen’s, Larsen’s, Lehmann’s, O&H and Racine Danish Kringle. (realracine.com/all-about-kringle)

Door County Fish Boils

Many restaurants in Door County offer the fish boil. A tradition started by Scandinavian immigrants in the 1800s, the now festive event began as an economical way to feed hordes of lumberjacks and fishermen, then became popular with social and church gatherings at beaches and parks.

When the huge kettle full of salted water is boiling over a bonfire, the boil master adds a basket of baby red potatoes and onions. Then, the mild whitefish steaks, fresh from Lake Michigan, are lowered in. At just the right moment, the boil master tosses kerosene into the fire, creating a blaze causing the water to boil over, dramatically carrying off the fish oil that has collected on top and leaving the fish perfectly done, steaming hot and ready to serve. The fish, potatoes and onions are served with a drizzling of Wisconsin butter. Top off the meal with a slice of Door County cherry pie. (doorcounty.com/experience/fishboils) LGT

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EXPLORING Northeast Arkansas

Ozark culture, underground splendor and connections to famous people highlight journeys through a region ripe for discovery.

By Dave Bodle

Happily for tour planners, many of the best experiences awaiting groups in the northeast corner of Arkansas are conveniently located off I-55 and I-40. For a more leisurely style, two National Scenic Byways traverse the area—the Great River Road parallels the Mississippi River and Crowley’s Ridge Parkway follows the length of a special landform. U.S. Hwy 63 cuts diagonally through the region with its own vistas and historical landmarks. Regardless of the route, there’s plenty to fill a multi-day itinerary.

Tours of Blanchard Springs Caverns, 15 miles from Mountain View, spotlight dazzling formations flanking the passageways.
Ozark Folk Center State Park

The park is located on 640 acres just north of Mountain View, in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains. English and Scots-Irish pioneers from the Southern Appalachians arrived in the early 1800s, followed by Irish and German immigrants through the mid-1800s. It was from these early settlers that the Ozark people’s way of life emerged.

Dedicated to sharing their heritage, the park offers visitors a variety of fun, educational and entertaining experiences. The Ozark Center Crafts Village has more than 20 artisans demonstrating traditional skills, from basket weaving and broom making to doll making and wood turning. The center’s herb gardens are among the most varied in the nation.

Music was very important to the Ozark people and that tradition continues today at the center, with fiddle and banjo the favorite instruments. Concerts are offered from late April to late September.

Modern cabins feature two queen-size beds, wireless internet, television and everything else you’d expect. Most cabins offer a wooded view off the sliding-glass-door porch. The on-site Skillet Restaurant serves Southern country cooking.

Blanchard Springs Caverns

A 30-minute drive from Ozark Folk Center State Park, Blanchard Springs is often called the “Living Cave,” as the dazzling underground formations are forever growing and changing. Tours with different complexity levels are led by a Forest Service guide. The “Dripstone Tour” has 50 step stones, while there are nearly 700 steps on the “Discovery Trail.” For the adventuresome, the “Discovery in the Dark Headlamp Tour” is an option, while the physically fit may opt for the four-hour “Wild Cave Tour.”

Village Creek State Park

Located just off I-40 west of Memphis, Village Creek is another outstanding offering of the Arkansas state park system. Its mission is to share the unusual geology and topography of Crowley’s Ridge. The rolling terrain is quite different from the adjoining, comparatively flat Delta region.

Outdoor adventure takes center stage at Village Creek. Five hiking trails wind through the hardwood forest. Guided hikes are available with a park interpreter. Horse trails are open throughout the year. Two lakes offer water sports and provide pedal boats and fishing boats. The seasonal beauty and changing terrain offer a golfer’s challenge on the 27-hole Andy Dye signature The Ridges at Village Creek golf course.

Of historical significance is a preserved part of the Trail of Tears. Village Creek was part of the route from Memphis to Little Rock that removed the Muscogee from southwest Georgia and southeast Alabama.

Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum and Education Center

In Piggott, in the far northeast corner of Arkansas, is the family home of Pauline Pfeiffer, the second wife of Ernest Hemingway. She was the daughter of Paul and Mary Pfeiffer, prominent citizens and landowners in the area. The barn behind the home was con-

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verted to a studio during the 1930s, providing Hemingway a peaceful setting for his writing when visiting Piggott. Portions of *Farewell to Arms* and a few notable short stories were written in the studio. The focus at these renovated properties is on literature and world events of the period, including the development of Northeast Arkansas during the Depression.

**Dyess Colony Museum and Johnny Cash Boyhood Home**

During the Depression a number of resettlement communities were established to give families down on their luck an opportunity to recover. Dyess was the largest community in Arkansas. In 1934, 16,000 acres were purchased by the federal government and in just seven months the Works Progress Administration (WPA) built a town center, 500 farmsteads consisting of 20 acres, a house and outbuildings. Among the recruited “colonists” were Ray and Carrie Cash and young J. R. Cash (better known today as Johnny), who relocated to Dyess from Kingsland and lived there from 1935-1953. The Johnny Cash Boyhood Home at Dyess has been reconstructed with direction from the Cash family. Reconstruction of the barn, smokehouse, chicken coop and outhouse are planned for the home site.

The Dyess Colony Museum is located in the WPA’s administration building and provides an excellent interpretation of the times and these projects. The master plan for this heritage tourism site includes reconstruction of a second home adjacent to the Cash home site, development of a walking trail and signage for other locations in the community. **LGT**
Group tours in Arkansas can start in a microbrewery and end in a real diamond mine (where you can keep what you find). Or maybe go from canoeing to a presidential library. Or from a paddlewheel cruise to Arkansas’s tallest Native American mounds. The adventures just never stop here. FIND OUT MORE BY VISITING ArkansasGroupTravel.com OR CALLING 1-800-872-1259.

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On your visit to the Clinton Center enjoy Forty Two, our full service restaurant, and shop at the Clinton Museum Store.
Sometimes the best place to base yourself for a visit to New York City is... New Jersey? The towns along the Hudson River opposite Manhattan’s West Side are home to thousands of commuters, so you know staying there is convenient. You'll get skyline views you can't appreciate from the city streets, and the towns have their own attractions, too. Of course, it's also a plus that New Jersey accommodations are somewhat cheaper than equivalent hotels in Manhattan.

Fort Lee

Fort Lee is near the George Washington Bridge, across from the northern tip of New York. The natural beauty of the area can be appreciated from Palisades Interstate Park, set on cliffs above the river. A section of the park, Fort Lee Historic Park, is a Revolutionary War site that was part of the defense system for New York City. There’s a reconstructed blockhouse, gun batteries, and soldiers’ quarters. If you’re more interested in natural history than American history, you can start two Palisades Interstate Park hikes from the Visitor Center. The Long Path is an easy to moderate hike at the top of the cliffs. The Shore Trail heads down towards the river, where there’s an easy to moderate hike along the water past picnic areas and a historic house.

Hoboken

Near the southern end of Manhattan, Hoboken is known as the “Mile Square City,” and it packs a lot of charm into its compact area. A riverfront park offers terrific views of lower Manhattan. Lively Washington Street is part of a historic district of 19th century buildings and lamp posts. The street is lined with shops and restaurants, including Carlo’s Bake Shop, home of TV’s “Cake Boss,” across from City Hall. The Hoboken Historical Museum offers two self-guided walking tours. One leads you past many of the town’s historic buildings; a second celebrates Frank Sinatra, a hometown boy who made good, and passes places where Frank lived and sang before he became a star.

Jersey City

The views are even better from Liberty State Park in Jersey City, where they take in the Statue of Liberty as well as the lower Manhattan skyline. You’re only a few thousand feet from the statue here, and it looks close enough to walk to. You can’t, of course; but you can take the National Park Service’s ferry to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. The lines here are much shorter than taking the ferry from New York City. Guests who don’t want to visit the statue can stroll along the park’s miles of waterfront promenade or wander through the salt marsh natural area. For those with kids, the park has a playground, and the Liberty Science Center is a fun and educational experience.

Getting to Manhattan

Of course, you’ll want to actually get into New York City, not just stare at it across the river. Transportation is easy from all three of these New Jersey towns.

From Fort Lee, you can drive or even walk across the George Washington Bridge to Washington Heights.

From Hoboken and Jersey City, the drive to Manhattan takes either the Lincoln or Holland tunnels. There are commuter ferries as well, and the PATH train is a gentle introduction to subway-like mass transit.

You may want to choose your travel route based on where you intend to sightsee in Manhattan. Some transportation options stop in lower Manhattan, easy for exploring the Financial District and the 9/11 Memorial; some stop on 14th Street, easy for exploring the Village; and some stop at 34th Street, with easy access to the Empire State Building and midtown.
My Bucket List

#34. WALK ON WATER

CHECKING OFF YOUR LIST IN ATLANTIC CITY!

✓ #15. Ghost Hunting In The Lighthouse
✓ #28. Dinner At An English Pub
✓ #07. Ride An Elephant On The Beach
✓ #55. Meet A Legend On The Boardwalk
✓ #19. Live Like An Emperor

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When you think of museums, what comes to mind? Long hallways? Glass cases? Ancient artifacts we glance at for a moment before moving on to the next display? While this might be an accurate description of some institutes, top-tier museums are much more than buildings full of objects and facts. The best museums are portals to other worlds. They take us thousands of feet below the surface of the earth and millions of miles into outer space. They guide us across continents, back through centuries and into the future. They let us see our own reflection in the eyes of people who have long since passed, and they help us to better understand the roots from which humanity has grown.

Museums are timeless attractions that capture visitors’ attention regardless of age and background, and this makes them perfectly suited to accommodate groups. The following 19 museums will enhance any travel itinerary.

**Milwaukee Art Museum**

As home to 30,000 works of art, Milwaukee Art Museum has Warhol prints, Athenian urns and everything in between. Browse one of the largest collections of Georgia O’Keeffe paintings, or attend MAM After Dark to enjoy music, food and after-hours access to the galleries. Be sure to see the current feature exhibition, Van Gogh to Pollock: Modern Rebels, and discover the men and women who redefined art for generations to come. (mam.org)

**The Field Museum**

The Field Museum is one of the largest natural history museums in the world and is home to the largest, best preserved and most complete Tyrannosaurus Rex ever found, Sue. Its 3D Theater brings life to prehistoric animals right before your eyes. Mummies: Images of the Afterlife, The Machine Inside: Biomechanics, Nature Unleashed: Inside Natural Disasters and Mammoths and Mastodons: Titans of the Ice Age are a few other popular permanent exhibits. (fieldmuseum.org)
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Salem, Massachusetts

The House of the Seven Gables

Discover The House of the Seven Gables. Built in 1668, this National Historic Landmark holds much early American history. Professional guides welcome guests year round for an informative tour that explores Salem’s maritime history, architecture, the famous hidden staircase and the literary legacy of Nathaniel Hawthorne, author of classics like The House of the Seven Gables and The Scarlet Letter. Adding to the site’s historical assets are the three-season Colonial Revival gardens and museum store. (7gables.org)

New Behind-the-Scenes Tour

Did you know that The Field Museum houses nearly 23 million specimens and artifacts? Less than 1% of those are on display to the public! The remaining 99% are stored in vast halls, vaults, and lockers tucked in many areas behind the scenes.

Imagine being surrounded by 50-foot shelves filled with objects such as the world's oldest wheel and cuneiform tablets from one of the earliest true civilizations in Mesopotamia.

Speak with Field Museum Department of Anthropology collections managers and conservators on a 45-60 minute tour as they go about their daily tasks preserving, conserving, and managing these precious objects.

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Discovered The House of the Seven Gables. Built in 1668, this National Historic Landmark holds much early American history. Professional guides welcome guests year round for an informative tour that explores Salem’s maritime history, architecture, the famous hidden staircase and the literary legacy of Nathaniel Hawthorne, author of classics like The House of the Seven Gables and The Scarlet Letter. Adding to the site’s historical assets are the three-season Colonial Revival gardens and museum store. (7gables.org)
**Pony Express National Museum**  
Artifacts and interactive exhibits track the history of the Pony Express, the famous mail service between St. Joseph and Sacramento that began and ended in 1860. In the former stables where riders left on horseback, view scenes ranging from founders Russell, Majors and Waddell starting the Pony Express to an Old West blacksmith to Pony Express’ first journey. Fans of this short-lived experiment or Wild West history will love this museum. ([ponyexpress.org](http://ponyexpress.org))

**Mashantucket Pequot Museum**  
Mashantucket Pequot Museum tells the story of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and brings their culture to life. Visitors can view the museum’s multi-sensory dioramas and exhibits while immersing themselves in the natural history and culture of the Eastern Woodland tribes. With its 185-foot tower and a building that embraces the treeline, this museum is in harmony with nature and provides fantastic views of the scenic landscape and swamp that surround it. ([pequotmuseum.org](http://pequotmuseum.org))

**The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza**  
The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza, located in what was formerly the infamous Texas School Book Depository, tells the story of John F. Kennedy’s life, death and legacy. This museum uses its wide array of historical artifacts to depict the social and political atmosphere surrounding Kennedy’s death. With its significantly sized collection of JFK memorabilia, The Sixth Floor Museum vows to make sure everyone can learn about JFK’s assassination and all its historical implications. ([jfk.org](http://jfk.org))

**Clinton Presidential Center**  
The Clinton Foundation’s center tells the inside story behind the Clinton presidency. Visitors can follow Bill Clinton both before and during his time as president. From the campaign trail to the Oval Office, follow his footsteps through the center’s various exhibits, which provide insight into the past with up-close photography, video clips and actual memos. Take a group tour through the permanent exhibits, which include a freestanding timeline that puts the Clinton Administration into historical perspective. ([clintonfoundation.org](http://clintonfoundation.org))

**The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art**  
Founded in 1942, this museum features art from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The crowning jewel of this museum is its collection of works by Louis Comfort Tiffany, known for his stained-glass art. Visitors love viewing his Tiffany Chapel interior from the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, as well as the exhibition showcasing objects from Laurelton Hall, his Long Island estate. Galleries are updated regularly to allow visitors to see more of the permanent collection. ([morsemuseum.org](http://morsemuseum.org))
A Must-See Native American Museum

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**Smithsonian Institution**

The world-class Smithsonian Institution museums are a must-see in Washington, D.C. From the National Air and Space Museum to the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian museums showcase priceless artifacts and admission is free of charge. Tour groups love the educational films in the IMAX theaters and Einstein Planetarium. The National Museum of Natural History’s Live Butterfly Pavilion is a great activity for groups. Dining packages and food vouchers are available in the museum’s restaurants and food courts. ([si.edu/groupsales](http://si.edu/groupsales))

**Chicago History Museum**

This world-class museum showcases and interprets the dynamic past of Chicago and the U.S. through many exciting and interactive exhibits. Take a glimpse at the up and coming metropolis our 16th president once inhabited at Lincoln’s Chicago, a temporary exhibit (through Jan. 31, 2016). Or use your five senses to explore Chicago, hear the Great Chicago Fire, ride a high-wheel bicycle or catch a fly ball at Sensing Chicago, a permanent exhibit. ([chicagohistory.org](http://chicagohistory.org))

**Madame Tussauds Washington D.C.**

Madame Tussauds Washington D.C. is the only place where you can see, touch and take photos with some of your favorite celebrities, historical figures, and all 44 U.S. presidents under one roof. Find activists in the Civil Rights Room, celebrities in the Glamour Room, athletes in the Sports Zone and TV anchors in the Media Room. You can experience history firsthand with interactive exhibits. Learn how to make wax figures and create your own wax hand to take home. ([madametussauds.com/washington](http://madametussauds.com/washington))

**The Mob Museum**

The Mob Museum reveals an insider’s look at the events and characters of the continuing battle between the Mob and law enforcement through engaging, multi-sensory exhibits and intimate insights from those on the front lines. Hear stories of shadow enforcements and daring outlaws. Located in downtown Las Vegas and steps from Fremont Street, The Mob Museum offers a provocative, contemporary look at this fascinating topic through hundreds of artifacts and exhibits focused on immersive storytelling. ([themobmuseum.org](http://themobmuseum.org))

**The Rosson House Museum at Heritage Square**

The Rosson House Museum at Heritage Square is a fully restored 1895 Queen Anne Victorian home that thrives today as a museum. Visitors receive a glimpse of what it was like to live in Phoenix over 100 years ago. Travel back in time with a guided tour of the house to see all the living areas and hear real stories of the residents who lived there along with the area’s history. ([heritagesquarephx.org](http://heritagesquarephx.org))
The Jewish Museum

The Jewish Museum has been exploring the intersection of art and Jewish culture since 1904. On four floors of galleries, groups can tour temporary exhibitions focused on early modern to contemporary fine art—which draw on the museum’s permanent collection as well as loans from top private collections—or Culture and Continuity: The Jewish Journey, which tells the 4,000-year history of the Jewish people through outstanding examples of fine art, ceremonial art, antiquities and more. (thejewishmuseum.org)
Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum

Nashville’s Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum chronicles the rich history of country music and allows you to come face-to-face with the stars who put country on the map. Get to know legendary singers like Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson through pictures, videos and personal effects, or take advantage of group packages that include opportunities like recording in Nashville’s oldest studio or sitting down for a Q&A with Johnny Cash’s only child. (countrymusichalloffame.org)

Harry S. Truman Library & Museum

Follow Truman’s journey from his inauguration to the Korean War at the Harry S. Truman Library & Museum. Using iconic artifacts, the museum sheds light on what it was like to preside over a country that was embroiled in wars and desperately seeking a light at the end of the tunnel. The current feature exhibit, Till We Meet Again, runs through January 2016 and focuses on the events of 1945, one of the most tumultuous years the nation ever faced. (trumanlibrary.org)
**Denver Art Museum**

Denver Art Museum, one of the largest museums between Chicago and the West Coast, is a unique building that resembles the jagged peaks of the nearby Rocky Mountains. Ten permanent collections provide cultural insight on African, American Indian, Asian and European art. The groundbreaking exhibit *Wyeth: Andrew and Jamie in the Studio* (Nov. 9, 2015 to Feb. 7, 2016) will showcase pen and ink, graphite, chalk, watercolor, dry brush, tempera, oil and mixed media pieces. ([denverartmuseum.org](http://denverartmuseum.org))

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**National Corvette Museum**

See over 70 Corvettes in periodic settings, mint classics and one-of-a-kind prototypes. Visit the Corvette-swallowing sinkhole exhibit, then sit in a new Stingray Convertible. Displays and special exhibits continually rotate so no two visits are the same. Grab a souvenir from the Corvette Store, grab a bite in the café and race over to the Motorsports Park to spectate or take a hot lap in a ‘Vette. Ask about group packages and dining options. ([corvettemuseum.org](http://corvettemuseum.org))

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**Bowling Green, Kentucky**

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**Jewish Museum**

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- **Becoming Jewish: Warhol’s Liz and Marilyn**
- **Isaac Mizrahi: An Unruly History**

Installation view of the exhibition *Helena Rubinstein: Beauty Is Power.* © The Jewish Museum, NY. Photo by: David Heald.
recent press trip served as a reminder of basic dos and don’ts regarding familiarization tours, or FAMs. Simply stated, it’s not a particularly good idea to mix journalists and tour operators. I’m quite sure they all get along just fine, but they do have different agendas.

Writers on a press trip are looking for story ideas. Tour operators on a FAM are concerned with itinerary building. Sounds simple, but the two are actually quite dissimilar. Even when the story idea and itinerary sound the same, they’re different.

Culinary is a case in point. There’s a ton of foodies that have taken to blogging and writing their likes and dislikes about food and everything associated with eating. On the other side are tour operators and groups where the destination’s culinary offerings can make or break a travel decision. So, where’s the difference?

The writer is concerned primarily with the food, service and ambiance. The tour operator needs to know all that and more. Is the restaurant group-friendly with ample seating and restrooms? Is the venue accessible? How many paid qualify for group pricing? You get the point. Often restaurants that are perfect for travel writers to feature for the FIT segment simply don’t fit the group market.

You can see where I’m going with this. Here’s another example. Including a low-level, half-mile hike to see the glorious waterfall in a wooded setting may be perfect for a journalist writing in a family publication. However, if that hike is up a steep incline on a rocky path, a better outdoor activity for a group may be in order. A walk on a paved pathway along the lake at a state park with those new Nikes might be perfect.

Granted there are similarities between what travel writers and tour operators need. A destination’s attractions may be perfect for every market segment. Select area accommodations work for couples, families and groups. Even where similarities exist, adjust your time at a venue accordingly to the needs of writers and tour operators. A journalist may very well require some additional interview time with a particularly good docent at an attraction. On the other hand, a tour operator may be much more inquisitive about room types and bedding at a given hotel.

Both FAMs and press trips have a place in just about every destination’s marketing plan. Here are a few things to remember when planning for either event:

- **Accommodations:** Treat press trips and tour operator FAMs like you would a group. Have room assignments and keys ready upon arrival. Baggage handling for journalists is not necessary, but a nice touch. Remember that when providing baggage-handling service, you’ll have a few minutes with the group to speak about your property.

- **Restaurants:** Use your group menu for tour operator FAMs. Samplings from the full menu are fine for press trips, but make sure what you’re offering is on the menu. Remember to allow extra time for photos. Journalists will photograph anything, including scrambled eggs, grits and sausage patties at breakfast.

- **Attractions:** Journalists and tour operators have pretty much the same interest in attractions. You may want to add a little extra time for interviews and photos for a press trip.

- **Retail and Services:** Like attractions, there’s similar interest for travel writers and tour operators in retail. If specialty shops are included, allow interview and photography time for your writers.

If I can leave you with just one thought regarding press trips and tour operator FAMs, it’s the importance of having the business owner or senior management available to thank the group for visiting. The gesture is appreciated and displays commitment.

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☐ Galt House, Louisville, KY  ☐ Smithsonian, Washington D.C.
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☐ Holmes County CVB, OH  ☐ Sta. Genevieve Tourism, MO
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