



In Transit

Highlights from *In Transit*, a blog on travel news, deals and tips, written by the editors and reporters of the Travel section, at nytimes.com/intransit.



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On the Web

FRUGAL TRAVELER BLOG Matt Gross, the Frugal Traveler, seeks out cheaper sporting events in New York City, including a handball tournament in Coney Island. nytimes.com/frugaltraveler

GLOBESPOTTERS BLOG Local correspondents report on dive bars in London and chic restaurants in Berlin. nytimes.com/globespotters

INTEREST GUIDE: KAYAKING AND CANOEING Follow our writers and photographers as they canoe Nebraska's Niobrara River, glide along Florida's forgotten coast and paddle through history in the Dordogne, France.

TRAVEL GUIDES: MEXICO Plan a trip with our Travel Guides to Acapulco (above), Mexico City and Cancún. Read articles and get readers' tips on Acapulco's return to glamour, "36 Hours in Mexico City" and the chic side of Cancún.

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More Free Miles. But What Are They Worth?

Though it's getting harder and harder to redeem frequent-flier miles, a chance to rack up double miles at no extra cost is almost irresistible.

"Yes," you think, as you review your mileage statement and recall the times you were told that no reward seats were available on the flight you wanted. "One day I will be able to snag that business class ticket to Sydney!"

Delta and Northwest, which recently merged, are offering double miles on all flights through the end of the year for holders of the Delta American Express card. (Registration required at www.deltaamexcard.com/DoubleMiles/Enrollment.aspx.) You must sign up before Sept. 30 to qualify, but the bonus applies to any ticket bought this year for travel from July 1 to Dec. 31.

Meanwhile, American Airlines AAdvantage members who live in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut will earn double miles on any trip taken from July 29 to Dec. 31 on all American, American Eagle or American Connection flights. Registration is also required (www.aa.com/offers). **STUART EMMRICH**

Travel Deals: New Rooms At Hard Rock Las Vegas

A 490-room tower opened last month at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. And like other hotels near the Las Vegas Strip, which are struggling to fill its glut of empty rooms, rates at the new Paradise Tower are a bargain.

The rooms, which have a tattoo theme with dark curtains and white linens that the hotel describes as "rock 'n' roll decadence," start at \$79 a night on weekdays this month.

Rates go up significantly on weekends, starting at \$269 a night. Rooms at the older Casino Tower are roughly the same, with rates this month starting at \$69 midweek, and \$259 on weekends.

Additionally, the hotel has a Summer Special, which offers 30 percent off for stays of three nights or more.

How do the two rooms differ? Not by much. Rooms in the 17-story Paradise Tower are bigger by about 16 square feet and have floor-to-ceiling windows. Rooms in the Casino Tower have French doors that open to a view of the Sunrise Mountains. But this being Vegas, the money is on the newer.

To reserve a room in either tower, call (800) 473-7625 or book online at www.hardrockhotel.com. **ALLISON BUSACCA**

Ducasse Goes Tropical On Once-Scrappy Vieques

Yautia, guava and yuca aren't ingredients you'd expect to see on a menu from Alain Ducasse, the Michelin-starred chef from France. But those are some of the tropical items that might appear on the menu at his latest venture, Mix on the Beach, above, a restaurant incorporating Caribbean and Mediterranean influences at the W Retreat and Spa, Vieques, which is scheduled to open in January.

The W, formerly a Wyndham, further raises the luxury quotient on Vieques, a once scrappy island off the coast of Puerto Rico that was used as a bombing range by the United States until 2003. In the few years since, Vieques has emerged as a fast-growing destination for Americans seeking a less-touristed Caribbean beach.

Similarly, Mr. Ducasse's culinary empire seems to know no limits: his chain of 20 restaurants now extends from Paris to Osaka, Japan, where he opened Le Comptoir de Benoit, a French bistro with an Asian twist, last fall.

At Vieques, Mr. Ducasse is working with the restaurant's executive chef, Dagan Lynn, to create menus for the main restaurant, as well as a lounge, cafe and poolside tapas bar. **DAN SALTZSTEIN**