

SUMMER STARTS NOW! 5 GREAT U.S. TRIP IDEAS

# TRAVEL + LEISURE

APRIL 2008

**SAN FRANCISCO**

**IRELAND**

**BARCELONA**

**NANTUCKET**

**BEIJING**

**ENGLAND**



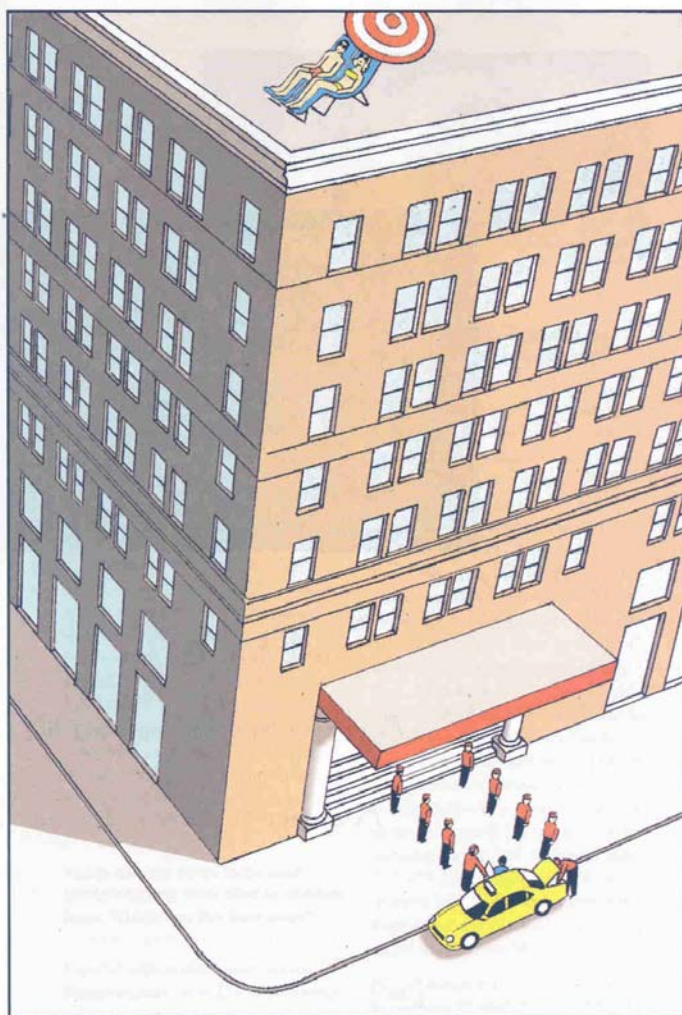
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## TRAVEL SECRETS

AIRLINE AND HOTEL TIPS,  
AVOIDING ONLINE BOOKING AND  
SECURITY NIGHTMARES,  
HOW TO SCORE RESERVATIONS,  
BETTER SEATS, DEALS, AND MORE...

**Summer starts here.**  
 Haven't booked your vacation? T+L offers tips, tools, and five great U.S. trip ideas to get you on your way.

BEACH GETAWAY 37  
 ALL-AMERICAN ROAD TRIP 37  
 MOUNTAIN RETREAT 38  
 NORTHERN CRUISE 38



**1 SUMMER IN THE CITY** From Memorial Day to Labor Day, when residents head for the beach, most big cities empty out, enabling you to score tables at top-notch restaurants, snag choice theater tickets, and take advantage of free cultural offerings. Many hotel rooms are also deeply discounted through the end of August. Plan now, while deals are still available.

**DESTINATION: NEW YORK, NEW YORK**

■ **Get Cultured** City Web sites have become surprisingly comprehensive resources. New York's ([nycvisit.com](http://nycvisit.com)), for example, has inside tips from famous locals, maps, and schedules for open-air movies, concerts in the park, and theatrical performances. (A list of sites for other cities can be found at [usa.gov](http://usa.gov), in the Travel and Recreation section.) »

■ **Find a Room** Take advantage of lower weekend hotel rates. A room at the Benjamin in midtown starts at \$503 on June 10 (a Tuesday) but goes down to \$386 on June 14 (a Saturday). On [Farecast.com](http://farecast.com), you can use the hotel search function to get advice on whether the quoted rate is a good deal for more than 5,000 properties in 30 U.S. cities. The site bases its recommendations on historic pricing data.

■ **Land a Coveted Table** Reserve now for summer: business manager Veda Nishikawa of New York's sushi temple **Masa** (*Time Warner Center, 10 Columbus Circle; 212/823-9800; dinner for two \$800*) recommends calling at least one month in advance. For more tips, see "26 Travel Secrets," page 163. Check [nycvisit.com](http://nycvisit.com) for the dates of this summer's Restaurant Week, when top restaurants offer affordable prix fixe menus.

■ **Follow the Leader** Looking for the perfect guide? The excellent **magazine usa.com** (actually, the English-language offshoot of a company that publishes German-language guides to America) covers 11 cities in the United States and will lead you to reputable operators in New York. At **Big Onion Walking Tours** (*212/439-1090; [bigonion.com](http://bigonion.com); \$15 for adults*), for example, doctoral candidates will show you often overlooked treasures, from the artisanal markets of the Lower East Side to the clubs of historic Harlem. —BREE SPOSATO