

TRAVEL

Round-up



TAKE A BATH

Known for its natural hot springs since the days of the Roman Empire, Bath is also a stately city with glorious Georgian architecture, grand avenues, and lush vistas. British Airways customers can purchase packages at a number of hotels and spas in Bath—the five-star Georgian Bath Spa is available for US\$165 a night, per person, double occupancy through March 31. Those wishing to simply day-trip can experience Bath in the grandest style by taking the Venice-Simplon Orient Express roundtrip from London, brunch and supper included, for \$379, also through March 31. For more information call (800) AIRWAYS.

TAKE A SHOWER

At Heathrow's Terminal Four arrivals lounge, British Airways first-class, business, and Concorde customers can freshen up during layovers and have their suits pressed. The shower—an all-round "body jet"—shoots out water at various degrees of power, invigorating you for the day ahead. High-energy customers can also use BA's new mini-gym. (800) AIRWAYS.

QE2

Save 10 percent off your next trip on the *QE2* by booking a minimum of six months in advance. Former guests of Cunard can save an additional 10 to 20 percent off fares in 2000. Generally, transatlantic cruises start at about \$2300. For example, fares for the cruise the week of June 19 through June 25 range from \$2,280 per-person, double occupancy for an inside cabin to \$23,140 for the top-line Grand Suite. All prices include a return flight from London or New York on British Airways. Bargain hunters can save even more—50 percent—by booking a *QE2* Special Value Cabin. These rooms, called “irregular” by the cruise line, are the ones affected by noise, vibration, or poor ventilation. If you’re not satisfied with your cabin, you can upgrade immediately by paying the full difference, subject to availability. (800) 5-CUNARD.



A Winter To Trust

Many of The National Trust’s historic buildings, parks, and gardens close during winter months for conservation and restoration work, but this year a number of properties will stay open from November to March. Some of the houses will offer the chance to view conservators restoring historic furniture, paintings, and porcelain. The National Trust has produced a new leaflet, **Out and About with the National Trust in Winter** detailing over 100 properties that can be visited this winter. To get a copy of the leaflet, write to Out and About with the National Trust in Winter, National Trust, P.O. Box 39 Bromley, Kent BR1 3XL, England. Enclose an international reply coupon.



Blickling, a National Trust property, open to visitors this winter.

THEATRICAL *Battle Royale*

If George IV and his wife Caroline of Brunswick were alive today, they would set new standards for titillating the tabloids. A play, Battle Royale, about their exceptionally tempestuous marriage, premieres December 12 at the National Theatre and stars Zoë Wannamaker and Russell Beale.

The Best Names and Numbers

Martin Miller's **LONDON BLACK BOOK** (City Diaries, £7.95; approximately US\$13), an elegant leather-bound volume small enough for any pocket or purse, concisely lists the names, addresses, and phone numbers (followed by extremely brief descriptions) of London's best hotels, restaurants, boutiques, tailors, and pubs. Reading **BLACK BOOK** is like having a peek into the address book of a very plugged-in Londoner. Available in fine departments stores in London. Call the publisher at (44) 171-243-2200 for mail-order and other information.



PLAYING BY THE RULES

This December the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews will be releasing a new "millennium edition" of The Rules of Golf, which will come into effect on January 1, 2000. The R&A is one of the game's two Rules-making authorities, the other being the United States Golf Association. The book is a result of their four-year collaboration.

Rules isn't expected to be revolutionary, but there is one major change: a prohibition against a partner or caddy standing directly behind the golfer while he makes his stroke. (Theoretically, they can help a golfer to line up the ball with the hole, improving the golfer's performance.) The Rules of Golf will be available at golf clubs throughout the U.K.

American Airlines Frequent-Flier Miles

Members of American Airlines' AAdvantage program can enjoy 500 bonus frequent-flier miles and special privileges such as 1,000 free miles if you stay for two weekend nights at Savoy Group hotels, among them the Connaught and Claridge's. Room guarantees up to 72 hours prior to arrival; an upgrade to a suite at a cost of £50. Information, (800) 63-SAVOY.



THE OPEN:
CLOSED?

The British Open 2000—set for July 20-23 at St. Andrews, Scotland—is one of the world's top sporting events, filling hotel rooms to capacity in the surrounding countryside for at least a hundred miles. Travellers seeking accommodations during the Open are well advised to book their rooms now. The convenient Old Course Hotel, which is located right at St. Andrews, is already sold out, as is the legendary Gleneagles Hotel, which is about an hour's drive away. However, the Sheraton Grand (also about an hour's drive) still has rooms from S272-S326.

Those who'd rather experience the Scottish countryside without the distractions of the Open can stay through April 30 at the Old Course Hotel for S376-S440 or the Gleneagles, for S304-S400. Sheraton Grand room rates for the same period are from S168-S304. For tickets to the Open itself, contact your travel agent. To book any of these hotels, call (877) 9-SCOTLAND.

Famous for its 15 Minutes

Make the whole luggage-hauling experience easier: Heathrow Express, a new 15-minute express-rail service, goes directly from London's Paddington Station to Heathrow Airport. It also has check-in/check-out facilities for 19 airlines right at Paddington Station. Contact the Web site: heathrowexpress.co.uk.

Frosty Guarantee

Situated on Scotland's south-west coast, overlooking the islands of Arran and Ailsa Craig, is the Turnberry Hotel, a golf resort and spa with a unique guarantee in winter: They'll refund a night's accommodation and provide a complimentary dinner if play after 10:30 A.M. is not possible due to snow or frost. Turnberry's Ailsa course was voted the third best in the British Isles by Golf World magazine. (877) 9-SCOTLAND.



OPPOSITE TOP: BOB ROCK; BOTTOM: COURTESY THE SAWDY GROUP THIS PAGE RIGHT: TONY ROBERTS PHOTOGRAPHY (2)

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The Lanesborough

Next door to Buckingham Palace, the Lanesborough rivals its neighbour in luxury (it cost an average of £1 million a room to transform this former Victorian-era hospital into the hotel it is today). The Lanesborough's old-world feel is buttressed by the latest technology: private fax lines, direct phone lines, a business centre—even business cards with your name, hotel room, phone, and fax numbers. Special package: December 11-April 24, double room, at £885 for three nights, with each additional night at £295. (800) 999-1828.



Savoy Property Savings

All the Savoy properties in London—the Berkeley, the Savoy, the Connaught, Claridge's, and Lygon Arms—are offering special rates January 1 through May 8—£215 a night for a double-room and £199 for weekend nights. Call (800) 63-SAVOY for all information.

Four Seasons Hotel London and Canary Wharf

The Four Seasons Hotel London is the archetype for the luxe chain worldwide. Still very much a five-star hotel with a loyal clientele, it now has a sibling property, the Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf. The original hotel is located conveniently in the West End, while the Canary Wharf hotel is approximately 20 minutes by cab from the City.



The real news for Four Seasons devotees: Special weekend rates through March 1 of £255 per room, per night at Four Seasons Hotel London, and £235 per room, per night at Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf. Both deals include VAT, breakfast, and a complimentary bottle of champagne upon arrival.

Standard rates generally range from £305 to £315 for a double room at Four Seasons Hotel London, and at the Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf, £260-£280.

Good Deal

Reductions of more than 50 per cent are available from December 10 to January 31 at Britain's five Inter-Continental and Forum Hotels. The rates begin at £99 per room per night at the George Inter-Continental in Edinburgh, and £119 at the Forum Hotel London. Breakfast for two is included. Reservations, 0181-847-3711

RITZY, WHIRLWIND LONDON



QUICK TRIPS:

British Airways will fly you from New York to London on the Concorde one way, business class the other; with three nights at the Ritz, \$6,879, all inclusive. Departures from Kennedy Airport. (800) AIRWAYS.



ARTFUL GARDENS

Waddesdon Manor, a 45-room chateau built by Baron de Rothschild in the late 1800s to house his art collection, will mark the millennium in its own stylish way: for the next five years, the Manor's ornamental gardens will be redesigned each year by a leading contemporary artist. The first artist to be commissioned will be abstract landscape painter, John Hubbard, whose work will premiere March 1, 2000. 2001's artist will be fashion designer Oscar de la Renta. 0129-665-1226 or www.waddesdon.org.uk



THE MOST DESIRABLE LONDON APARTMENTS THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY

Two- Four Hyde Park Gate has been created for individuals at the top of their chosen profession. Whose itinerary includes temporary residence in London for three months or more. One that will reflect the elegance and status that their position demands.

Located in fashionable Kensington, this classic example of Victorian splendour is designed for living in the grand manner. Just fifteen magnificent, truly capacious two and three bedroom apartments. All impeccably appointed and most with blissful views of Kensington Gardens. From the restrained decor to the exquisite furnishings, everything about the apartments reflects grace and style. For sheer luxury and space, no five star hotel or comparable rented apartment comes even close.

Security is to the high standard enjoyed by high profile people in the public eye and includes a three stage video entryphone system. Porterage is seven days a week. Parking is only a short walk away. Also available are maid and laundry service.

Knightsbridge, Kensington High Street and the West End are close by, The City is in easy reach and Heathrow a mere thirty minute journey. Minimum stay three months. For further information contact us at the address below.



2-4 HYDE PARK GATE

Kensington, London SW7 5EW,
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e-mail: reservations@chevalgroup.com
www.chevalgroup.com



THE CHEVAL GROUP OF SERVICED APARTMENTS

RIGHT ON TRACK

The ROYAL SCOTSMAN, an Edwardian-style luxury train that travels throughout Scotland has been described as a country house on wheels. For the year 2000 it is offering two new short tours. The East Coast Highlands & Lowlands itinerary includes Ballindalloch Castle in the Spey Valley; while the West Coast Southern Highlands makes a stop at Gamis Castle, the childhood home of The Queen Mother. Each two-night tour has an all-inclusive price of \$2,350 per person. For information and reservations call Abercrombie & Kent International, (630)954-2944 or 1-800-323-7308.



London's New Year Sales

The arrival of winter in London means that end-of-the-year and New Year sales are not far off. The biggest sale of them all is the Harrods sale, January 5-22. Other sale dates include Burberry's (beginning December 18, and continuing for about two weeks thereafter), and Liberty (December 27, for about two weeks).

MANOR LIVING AT REDUCED PRICES

Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, the highly regarded restaurant and country hotel, has a special mid-week winter rate through March 31 of £175 (approximately \$297) per night, based on double occupancy. The reduced rate includes dinner at Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons restaurant (ranked first for cuisine in the Zagat 1999 London Restaurant Guide), breakfast, VAT and service charges. For more information 1-800-845-4274.

—Meakin Armstrong

