

# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

## Iliza Shlesinger on her Emerson days, those irresistible cans of Pringles in hotel rooms, and her upcoming gig at Yarmouth Drive-In

**C**omedian, actress, and author Iliza Shlesinger likes everything about Tokyo. “The culture is just so complex and fascinating,” she says. The Dallas native, who lives in Los Angeles with her husband, chef Noah Galuten, and their rescue dog, Tian Fu (a “sweet girl” who “loves carrots,” Shlesinger says), is an Emerson College alum. She has an affinity for Boston, where she has played numerous shows over the years at venues including the Wilbur Theatre and where “Spenser Confidential” (a popular Netflix film in which she costarred with Mark Wahlberg) was filmed. When asked if she recalls any memorable moments from her days at Emerson, Shlesinger deadpanned: “If anyone at 37 fully remembers college, you didn’t do it right.” Shlesinger is keeping busy during the pandemic. In addition to launching an at-home cooking show called “Don’t Panic Pantry” with her husband, she has a new podcast called “Ask Liza Anything,” and was a guest host on “Jimmy Kimmel Live” earlier this month. She also has several standup specials on Netflix. On July 31, Shlesinger will perform at the kickoff of a new “Drive-On” concert series at the old Yarmouth Drive-In on Cape Cod, which has reopened as an outdoor entertainment venue after being shuttered for 30 years. “I’ve never done a drive-in show. I’ve done military shows in the middle of the ocean, I’ve done shows in the middle of a desert in Iraq, but I’ve never done a drive-in movie theater,” she said, adding that she is “looking forward to bringing entertainment and a little relief” to people and to “connecting with my fans.” For more information about the show, visit [yarmouthdrivein.com](http://yarmouthdrivein.com). We caught up with Shlesinger to talk about all things travel.

### Favorite vacation destination?

I don’t take vacations really. Before corona I would have said I love being home, but now . . . I would love to just go to Whole Foods and not have to wear a hazmat suit. I do love Tokyo though — vacationing in a big city can be exhausting, but I’m not great at relaxing anyway and their culture is just so complex and fascinating.



### Favorite food or drink while vacationing?

Anything local; whatever your specialty food is, I want to try it. I also love coffee and I always support local coffee shops when I travel. If you’re going to a Starbucks in Thailand, you’re kind of missing the point. Same to you, guy who eats at a Hard Rock Cafe in Spain.

### Where would you like to travel to but haven’t?

I’ve always wanted to see the Northern Lights in Iceland. I’m strangely drawn to Nordic cultures and it just seems like a magical place.

### One item you can’t leave home without when traveling?

My Bose noise-canceling ear buds! They have been an absolute travel essential my whole career. Crying baby? Noisy hotel room? I drown it all out. I love them and I tell everyone about them all the time and they never go on sale and Bose has never acknowledged my love for their product. Oh . . . and I always bring a toothbrush, but that goes without saying, I hope.

### Aisle or window?

I don’t have long legs, so an aisle is wasted on me and just means more people bothering me. I love a window because I

get to lean against the window and I control the shutter. Oh the power!

### Favorite childhood travel memory?

When I was little, my brother and I would spend the summers in Connecticut with my dad and stepmom. It was less about the travel and more about our dad not caring about us eating junk food and my brother and I getting to have a summer of Jell-O pudding snacks and Fruit by the Foot — a huge deal in the ’90s.

### Guilty pleasure when traveling?

I always eat the mini Pringles in the mini bar. Like, before I even set my bag down, I hunt them down and eat them. I can’t help it. It’s a compulsion that probably stems from when I was first touring and stuck at hotels with nothing but a vending machine. They call to me . . . \$8 for a can of 10 chips? Deal.

### Best travel tip?

Talk to people. Don’t bury your head in your phone. People are proud of where they’re from and love to give insider info. The more open you are to talking, the more friends you make and the richer your experience. That being said, if you’re a woman traveling alone . . . be careful who you talk to!

JULIET PENNINGTON

### TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT

## Priceline changed my flight. Can it do that?

**Q.** I have a problem with a Priceline flight schedule change. My upcoming flight on American Airlines from Madrid to Boston originally had stopovers in Washington and New York. My flight itinerary was changed without my approval, eliminating the stopovers.

I contacted Priceline.com about this issue. I asked it to either change back the itinerary to add the stopovers or adjust the price. I had paid extra for the stopovers. Priceline escalated the case but yesterday they told me that they had followed the procedures correctly. If I want to change the flight, I would have to pay even more. Can you help me?

RUBEN NIETO,  
Washington, D.C.

**A.** I’m sorry about your flight schedule change. Priceline, your online travel agency, should have contacted you with at least two options: a new flight of your airline’s choosing or a full refund of your ticket.

It looks as if Priceline tried to call you, but you were out of the country. So the agency made a choice for you — a more direct routing from Madrid to Boston. I think the agent handling your change thought he was doing you a favor by getting you to Boston faster. But you had booked the stopovers intentionally because you had meetings in Washington and New York.

You could have appealed this to one of the Priceline customer service contacts I list on my consumer advocacy site, [elliott.org](http://elliott.org). You could have also appealed this to American Airlines. After all, the airline initiated the change, which forced Priceline to rebook you.

Further complicating

your case: It looks like your trip was built using a combination of airlines. During the rebooking, three of your legs were canceled. What a headache!

Nothing is more frustrating than a company that says you’ve exhausted all of your appeals. You

**Under the Fair Credit Billing Act you have the right to file a chargeback and receive a full refund.**

were far from that. If Priceline and American hadn’t helped you, then you could have filed a dispute with your credit card. Two booked a flight with two stopovers and didn’t get it. Under the Fair Credit Billing Act you have the right to file a chargeback and receive a full refund for your ticket. America Airlines and Priceline weren’t delivering what you purchased.

I contacted Priceline on your behalf, and it investigated your ticket change. “Our agent made an error in changing the ticket from multideestination to round trip,” a spokesman told me. “We have reached out to the customer with a solution.”

Priceline offered to pay for the additional flights required to duplicate your original itinerary.

*Christopher Elliott is the chief advocacy officer of Elliott Advocacy, a nonprofit organization that helps consumers resolve their problems. Contact him at [elliott.org/help](http://elliott.org/help) or [chris@elliott.org](mailto:chris@elliott.org).*

## HERE

### OUTDOOR CULINARY PROGRAMS AND FAIRY HOUSES

Looking for fun, creative, and tasty summer experiences? Highfield Hall & Gardens in Falmouth has announced two culinary programs, the locally sourced “Farm to Table” series and “Sizzlin’ Summer Fare” with global flavors. Keeping each participant’s health in mind, every class will meet outdoors on the lawn or on the porch, with plenty of space for socially-distant learning. Surrounded by the property’s flowers, fresh herb gardens, and beautiful views, participants will explore the best in grilling techniques and recipes (every Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., through Sept. 2; \$60-\$70). While you’re there, don’t miss the outdoor summer exhibition, “Your Utopia: Lessons From the Fairies,” featuring fairy house creations — made by artists, families, and children — nestled along paths, nooks, and crannies on the property (through Sept. 30; 508-495-1878, [highfieldhallandgardens.org/](http://highfieldhallandgardens.org/)).

### SUMMER SAVINGS IN THE BERKSHIRES

Take advantage of low prices in the bucolic Berkshires this summer with the 30 percent discounts offered at the Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge. Welcoming guests back to its iconic front porch — with relaxing rocking chairs — the inn is serving al fresco breakfast, lunch, and dinner at The Courtyard, as well as seasonal cocktails and drafts from local craft breweries like Berkshires Brewing Company. The main dining room is now also open for



meals. Getting out in nature is easy, as the inn is surrounded by forests with hundreds of walking paths, foot trails, and steep climbs suitable for hiking or biking. Rates from \$150 per night with the 30 percent discount. 413-298-5545, [www.redlioninn.com/get-away-deals](http://www.redlioninn.com/get-away-deals). If you’ve got a hankering for some tasty takeout, it’s a short hop to Truc Orient Express in West Stockbridge, a 42-year-old, family-run restaurant serving authentic Vietnamese foods available for curbside pickup Thursday through Sunday. 413-232-4204, [www.facebook.com/Truc-Restaurant/](http://www.facebook.com/Truc-Restaurant/)

### OLD-SCHOOL SEAFOOD IN THE SUNSHINE

Get out of town on a lobster-centric road trip to the Lobster Trap in Bourne, located just 2 miles from the Bourne Bridge rotary, on Shore Road overlooking the Back River. Guests can enjoy summer breezes on the patio while gorging on popular items such as traditional lobster rolls, steamed whole lobsters (with potato salad and corn), and lobster Reubens, grilled on marble rye

with sauerkraut and Swiss cheese. Not a lobster fan? The menu offers a variety of local seafood sourced straight from fishing boats including crabs, quahogs, mussels, steamers, fish, and more. (There are also burgers and barbecue ribs for carnivores.) Online ordering for pickup and take-home also available. 508-759-7600, [www.lobster-trap.net/](http://www.lobster-trap.net/)

### MUSIC-THEMED GETAWAY

Those looking for a not-too-far-away getaway can take a music-themed trip to the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York. The recently reopened Museum at Bethel Woods, the historic site

of 1969’s Woodstock festival, is once again welcoming visitors to experience its immersive multimedia exhibits that take you on a journey through the cultural transformations of the decade with artifacts, films, music, and more. (No more than 25 percent occupancy allowed to ensure social distancing; [www.bethelwoodscenter.org/museum](http://www.bethelwoodscenter.org/museum).) It’s a 90-minute drive north to stay at The Roxbury at Stratton Falls, a whimsical hotel offering fully-immersive stays in rooms such as “Tony’s Dancefloor,” a nod to the disco era, and “The Partridge Nest,” inspired by the artist Mondrian and the Partridge Family bus. Or sing your way along the yellow brick road for a stay in The Wizard’s Emeralds, an over-the-top Oz-themed room. Rates from \$139 a night. 607-326-7200, [theroxbury-experience.com](http://theroxbury-experience.com)

## THERE

### VIKING ADDS 2023 MISSISSIPPI CRUISES

Plan ahead for sailing along the mighty Mississippi with Viking. The company’s first custom vessel, Viking Mississippi, makes its debut in August 2022, though with many of its first voyages sold out, Viking has made additional 2023 sailings available for booking now. Four eight- to 15-day cruises — America’s Great River, America’s Heart-

land, Heart of the Delta, and Southern Celebration — are scheduled for ports of call in seven US states: Louisiana (Baton Rouge, Darrow, New Orleans, and St. Francisville); Mississippi (Natchez and Vicksburg); Tennessee (Memphis); Missouri (Hannibal, St. Louis); Iowa (Burlington, Dubuque, and Davenport); Wisconsin (La Crosse); and Minnesota (Red Wing, St. Paul). The new state-of-the-art Viking Mississippi will host 386 guests in 193 all outside staterooms. Inaugural pricing starts at \$3,699 per person, with discounted airfare from \$199 per person. 800-304-9616, [www.vikingrivercruises.com/ships/mississippi/viking-mississippi.html](http://www.vikingrivercruises.com/ships/mississippi/viking-mississippi.html)

## EVERYWHERE

### SANITIZER SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

Whether journeying across country or to the supermarket, hand sanitizer is a needed travel accessory that is often hard to find. Founded as a solution to unethical hoarding, price gouging, and product shortage, Sanitizer.com is a US-based subscription service that helps keep your hands and devices germ-free with high-quality, multipurpose sanitizer sprays. Created in strict accordance with WHO’s guidelines, the 80 percent-alcohol-based formula can disinfect hands as well as sanitize high-touch surfaces. Simply sign up for a monthly subscription, and choose either one sanitizer for \$6.99 or three for \$20 to be delivered to your door monthly. The 2-ounce bottles are ideal when you’re on the go and washing hands isn’t possible. [www.sanitizer.com](http://www.sanitizer.com)

NECEE REGIS

