

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

David Josef was supposed to be in Italy right now, but he's making masks instead

Waltham-based fashion designer extraordinaire David Josef has always incorporated philanthropy into his work, but the COVID-19 pandemic has led him to take that segment of his business to a new level through his creation of unique, often sequin-embellished face masks. The Providence native has swapped out wedding dresses and ball gowns for face coverings he donates to hospitals, nursing homes, and first responders. He also sells masks to customers, who he said can't get enough of his Ruth Badler Ginsberg design, or his seemingly innocent floral pattern that, upon closer inspection, has verbiage warning people (in very direct language) to keep their distance. "I remember the day everything came to a halt: March 15. In one day I received 25 texts/e-mails from clients saying their events had been canceled," said Josef, 62. "I didn't see things going in this direction, but this is [where we are], and we're having a blast making the masks. Let's face it, they are *the* must-have fashion accessory." Josef creates the masks with his husband, Daniel Forrester ("It's a real team effort," he maintained), with whom he lives in Waltham. We caught up with Josef (near right, with Forrester) to talk about all things travel.

Favorite vacation destination?

Being a moon child and a big queen, I have different places in the world that I love (depending on my mood). When I need to stop, relax, and rejuvenate, it's Nantucket. When it's going to be a lovely two-week vacation, my favorite place is Paris. But New York City gives me everything I need. I can hibernate in a hotel room, fabric shop, and see all of my friends and their Broadway shows. New York is simply the greatest city in the world.

Favorite food or drink while vacationing?

This is a loaded question. Currently, I am weighing in at an even ton, so eating and drinking is something I thoroughly enjoy — anywhere. From the hot dog stand in New York City to the most fabulous five-course meal in Paris . . . I'm happy eating and drinking anywhere in the world.

Where would you like to travel to but haven't?

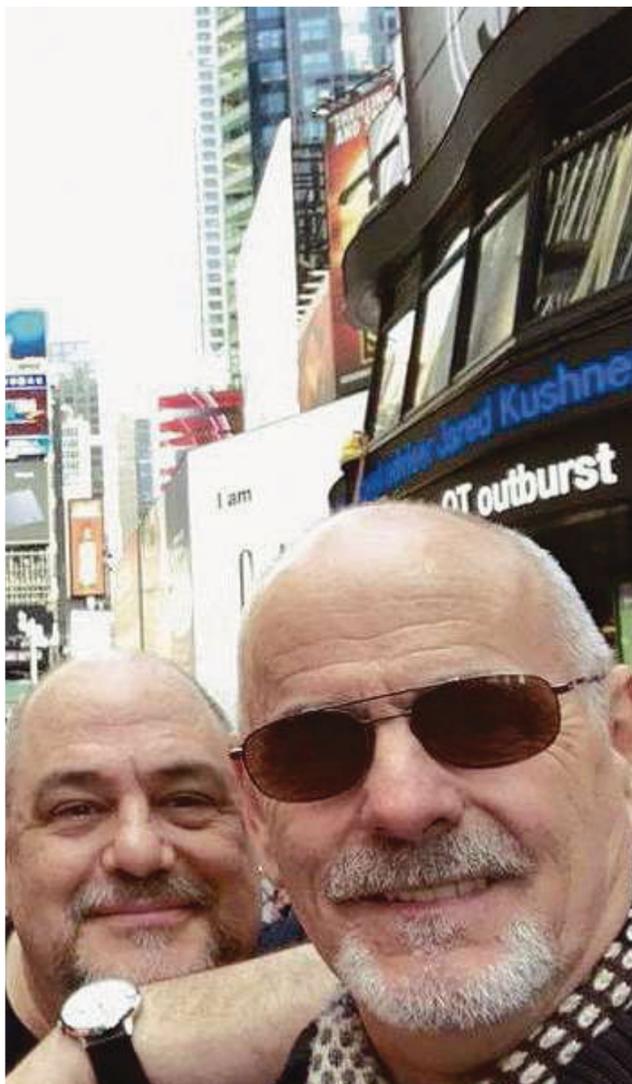
I am embarrassed to say that I am full-blooded Italian, but I've still not yet traveled to Italy. In fact, we were supposed to be in Italy right now, in this moment. But the pandemic rules and, instead, we are home, making and shipping thousands of masks.

One item you can't leave home without?

I can't leave my husband, Danny, home when I travel. Other than that, I'm a very, very light packer. No matter where we're going, I am a light packer. However, my husband travels like Elizabeth Taylor . . . with steamer trunks if we're going to New York City overnight.

Aisle or window?

Always aisle. In the very early days of my career, when I was about 19 years old, I would have to fly to New York City for fabrics,



meetings, etc., regarding my designs. That was back in the day of the Delta shuttle. I was a very nervous flyer [and] found that looking out the window was soothing. Now, or shall I say before the pandemic, I would be on planes once a month going here and there and everywhere for my work. It's amazing how our bodies become used to any situation. Now I sleep through every takeoff.

Favorite childhood travel memory?

It's kind of funny how life comes full circle. When I was about 12 years old, before my parents divorced, my mother, father, me, and my two brothers took a trip to New York City. I remember it like it was yesterday. We stayed at the City Square Hotel on Sixth Avenue and a rock 'n' roll band, the Buckinghams, were staying on the same floor as us. I got a taste of what it was like to be famous by watching these guys navigate the endless crowds that were waiting for them on [our floor] and in the lobby of the hotel. It was cool.

Guilty pleasure when traveling?

I am a very strange traveler. I am not [someone who is] gung ho, let's get out of the plane and go shopping or sightseeing. My guilty pleasure when traveling is as follows: Check into the hotel and go to bed! I'm a real jerk with hotels, too. I like all the upgrades and the amenities, as anyone would. I like to relax in my hotel for the first day and a half to get my bearings, get my footing, and then I will venture out to sightsee, or do whatever it is that needs to be done.

Best travel tip?

Danny and I have rediscovered Amtrak and train travel. It's truly glorious and incredibly relaxing.

JULIET PENNINGTON

TROUBLESHOOTER

Hawaiian Airlines canceled my flight but it won't give me a refund. Why not?

By Christopher Elliott
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Q. Hawaiian Airlines canceled my flight from San Jose, Calif., to Honolulu in June. The airline rebooked me on another flight to a different airport at a different time. I spoke with an agent, who confirmed the change, but said the airline could not refund my money. Instead, Hawaiian Airlines offered a travel credit I could use until 2022. I declined the change and requested a refund.

Doesn't the Department of Transportation require a refund if a flight is canceled? If so, can you help me get my \$268 back?

DOREEN SHEW,
El Cerrito, Calif.

A. Yes, the Department of Transportation (DOT) requires that airlines refund a ticket when they cancel the flight. The Hawaiian Airlines agents you spoke to were flat wrong.

This is a common problem in the airline industry. Airlines know the DOT rules, and they know the rules are clear. If they cancel a flight, they have to refund the tickets within a week. For you, the refund made sense on another level: Hawaii had a mandatory 14-day quarantine, which made a vacation impractical. Even if there weren't a DOT, Hawaiian should have considered a refund.

You kept a terrific paper trail and detailed phone logs after Hawaiian canceled your flight. If I didn't know any better, I would say your airline is intentionally misreading the DOT

rules for ticket refunds. Agent after agent repeated the same line: "We can't refund your ticket, but we'll give you a credit."

I understand why airlines want to keep your money at a time like this. But rules are rules. And you know that if the tables were turned and you were asking for an exception to the rules, most airlines wouldn't hesitate to say "no." They can't have it both ways.

I publish the names, numbers, and e-mail addresses of Hawaiian's executives on my consumer advoca-

Doesn't the DOT require a refund if a flight is canceled?

cacy site, Elliott.org. A brief, polite e-mail to one of them might have helped your case.

But this is a case where Hawaiian wasn't following federal rules, so I recommended that you contact the DOT and fill out its complaint form. You did. The DOT agreed with my assessment and contacted Hawaiian Airlines on your behalf. The airline agreed to refund your \$268 immediately.

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 or chris@elliott.org.

HERE

WATERFRONT HOTEL DEBUTS IN NEWPORT, R.I.

Those looking for a nautical-chic oasis in the middle of Newport's bustling waterfront may want to check out the newly opened Brenton Hotel. The 57 rooms and suites feature floor-to-ceiling windows with sweeping harbor and city views, and interior finishes designed to evoke the feeling of a well-appointed yacht. Exclusive perks and amenities include the hotel's private 36-foot Hinckley Picnic Boat (for private escapes and sunset sails); complimentary private bike tours of iconic city sites; pet-friendly accommodations at no additional fee, and pet concierge services beginning at \$25 per hour; Peloton bikes delivered to individual guest rooms (two-hour minimum for \$50 per hour); waterfront dining venue with shared plates and craft cocktails; rooftop lounge with leisure games of corn hole, foosball, and ping-pong; "hospitality pantry" with Del's frozen lemonade and more on every floor; on-site parking with three electric vehicle charging stations; and more. A partnership with Newport National Golf Club offers guests advanced access to preferred tee times. Rates from \$299 per night, midweek. 401-849-3100, brentonhotel.com

FAMILY ART ACTIVITIES IN THE BERKSHIRES

Bring the kids to Williamstown for family-friendly activities at the Clark Art Institute where the 140-acre grounds are open 24/7 for hikes, picnics, outdoor art installations, and more. Families are welcome to visit



the Clark's indoor galleries, including the recently opened exhibit "Lin May Saeed: Arrival of the Animals," featuring more than 20 mixed-media works with a focus on the relationship between humans and animals (through Oct. 25). Children under the age of 18 will receive free admission as well as complimentary drawing pads, pencils, and scavenger hunt activity packets for aspiring young artists. 413-458-2303, www.clarkart.edu/Visit/Families

INN OFFERS FREE MUSEUM TICKETS

Looking for a stylish place to stay while touring museums in the Berkshires? The recently reopened Porches Inn at Mass MoCA has a new offer for arts lovers. The aptly-named Art Escape package includes accommodations; choice of two tickets to Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art or The Clark Art Institute; and a nightly amenity fee (normally charged in addition to the room rate) that includes a grab-and-go continental breakfast box, WiFi, park-

ing, and heated outdoor pool. In addition, enjoy breakfast alfresco at the hotel's green space with outdoor picnic tables or eat on the front porch. The catch? Guests must book by Aug. 31 for travel through Dec. 31. Rates from \$200. 413-664-0400, www.porches.com/berkshires-hotel-specials

THERE

ROSEWOOD PLANS ST. BARTHS DEBUT

If you're ready to stop daydreaming and start planning a Caribbean vaca-



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST; NICOLAS KRUPP, BASEL; CLARK ART INSTITUTE

tion in 2021, check out the springtime debut of Rosewood Le Guanahani St. Barth. Closed since 2017 due to the effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, the property is scheduled to reopen following a property-wide rebuild and extensive restoration of all 66 guest rooms, suites, and villas, many with new private pools. Located on 18 secluded acres on a private peninsula overlooking two pristine beaches, Marigot Bay and Grand Cul-de-Sac, the full-service resort's updated amenities will include beachfront dining, new pool, Rosewood Explorers children's club, fitness center, tennis court, Sense, a Rosewood spa, and dedicated event spaces. The resort is the Rosewood Hotels & Resorts brand's third property in the Caribbean and first in the French West Indies. Opening rates have yet to be determined. 800-216-3774, www.rosewoodhotels.com/en/le-guanahani

SPORTS MUSEUM OPENS IN COLORADO

The Olympics in Tokyo have been delayed but you enjoy the next best thing at the newly opened US Olympic & Paralympic Museum & Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs. Team USA athletes are the center of the story in interactive and immersive exhibits that detail the history, culture, and aspirations of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, from Ancient Olympia to the Modern Games. A universal and inclusive design — including wheelchair accessibili-

ty, open captions, and American Sign Language content, assistive listening devices, and more — aims to maximize accessibility for all guests. Visitors can feel what it's like to walk with members of Team USA in a 360-degree immersive digital re-creation of the opening ceremonies; an athlete training gallery allows visitors to try six interactive sports including 30-meter dash, alpine skiing, archery, goalball, skeleton, and sled hockey. 719-497-1234, usopm.org

EVERYWHERE

INSECT REPELLENT FOR CLOTHING AND GEAR

Mosquitoes, ticks, chiggers, and biting flies can ruin the most idyllic day at the beach or camping trip. In addition

to its line of skin repellents, US-based Sawyer has released a new Permethrin bug spray for fabric. Simply apply to clothing or gear such as tents and sleeping bags with a slow sweeping motion. The odorless repellent bonds to fabric fibers and lasts for up to six weeks or six washings. The synthetic version of pyrethrum (a natural insecticide derived from the chrysanthemum flower), Permethrin is a non-toxic product that can also be used on dogs to help control fleas and lice for 35 days and against ticks for six weeks. sawyer.com/products/permethrin-insect-repellent-treatment.
NECEE REGIS

