

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER



DAVID PAUL MORRIS/BLOOMBERG

Hertz demands \$658 one year after rear-end crash with rental

By Christopher Elliott
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Q. I rented a car from Hertz more than a year ago. Another motorist rear-ended my rental. I was slightly hurt, and the rental sustained minor damage to the bumper.

I followed all the rules during the claims process. The other driver's insurance paid a \$2,000 claim to Hertz. A Hertz representative told me the claim was closed.

I got a call almost 10 months after the accident from Hertz telling me that I still owe them \$658 for loss of use, underpayment by the other driver's insurance, and a processing fee. Hertz claims it called me "many times." But it was the first time I had heard from the company.

I can't file another claim with my insurance because I'm past the 60-day limit. I thought it was a scam because it was so long after the accident, and it just didn't seem realistic. Hertz has now sent my case to collections.

What can I do? I've sent e-mails to customer relations, and I used your reference guide to e-mail corporate members of Hertz. But I keep getting the run-around. Hertz now refuses to speak to me, only referring me to the outside collection agency. I would appreciate any assistance in this matter.

MICHAEL EDGAR,
Vancouver, Wash.

A. Hertz should have closed your claim when it said it did. The fees it's charging for loss of use and processing are controversial. Some might even call them junk fees. Loss of use covers the hypothetical revenue the car rental company would get if the vehicle wasn't in the repair shop. Many insurance adjusters won't cover this fee. Chances are, the other driver's insurance wouldn't cover it — leaving you with the bill.

Hertz should have closed your claim when it said it did.

The administrative fee is also problematic. It's essentially asking you to cover the car rental company's other costs associated with repairing the vehicle, such as employee salaries and other overhead expenses. Again, I'm betting the other driver's insurance refused to pay this junk fee.

If an employee tells you that you're good to go, you should be good to go. But it's best to get this decision in writing. That's particularly true when you're dealing with a car rental damage claim.

I see you tried to use the list of executive contacts for Hertz found on my consumer advocacy site at www.elliott.org/company-contacts/hertz/. Someone should have responded quickly and fixed this for you.

I contacted Hertz on your behalf. It dropped the claim against you.

Christopher Elliott is the chief advocacy officer of Elliott Advocacy, a nonprofit organization that helps consumers resolve their problems. Elliott's latest book is "How to Be the World's Smartest Traveler" (National Geographic). Contact him at elliott.org/help or chris@elliott.org.

THE VIP LOUNGE

Tom Paxton

on keeping your cool, the Arizona desert, and all the guilty pleasures

Folk singer-songwriter Tom Paxton has performed in Massachusetts and throughout New England "hundreds of times" over the years, but he said it never gets old. "I love coming to play in the area and love coming to Passim. It's a beautiful little room, it's always full, and everyone's always happy to be there." The 85-year-old musician, who is touring with The DonJuans — Nashville-based musicians Don Henry and Jon Vezner — will perform at Club Passim on Nov. 5 and at The Music Hall in Portsmouth, N.H., on Nov. 6. "I really look at us as a trio rather than me and two sidemen," Paxton said in a recent phone interview. "They are both Grammy-winning songwriters and wonderful musicians. They're these really dreadful people who can play anything. I'm still struggling with the guitar 60 years on." Paxton, who has two daughters and three grandsons, said that those attending the concert can expect to hear some old favorites — including his hit "Last Thing on My Mind," which has been covered by everyone from Willie Nelson to Peter, Paul and Mary — as well as new material. "I'm not one of these people who ostentatiously refuse to play the old stuff," he said. We caught up with Paxton, who lives in Alexandria, Va., to talk about all things travel.

Favorite vacation destination? Colorado. I have friends there, there's a lot to do, and it's stunningly beautiful. When I go there, I go to Carbondale in central Colorado, where my girlfriend Peggy DeVilbiss lives. We go to Aspen to the music tents and a theater there. There's a vaudeville place in Glenwood Springs that I never fail to go to. It's very enjoyable.

Favorite food or drink while vacationing? Steak and scotch.

Where would you like to travel to but haven't? Italy. I'm just too damned busy with touring. I had like three days in total in Rome — and then did a couple of shows up in the North — back in '95. Although I didn't get to see much, I fell in love with Rome. We've been watching Stanley Tucci's "Searching for Italy" on CNN and it makes me so eager to go.

One item you can't leave home without when traveling? My iPad. It's my lifeblood. I've got everything there [and] it keeps me in touch with everybody. Most of my travel is performing travel, so I also always take my Martin guitar.

Aisle or window? Window, so I don't have people climbing over me.

Favorite childhood travel memory? We lived in Chicago, but when I was 10, we spent the winter before my dad died in Arizona. He was sick and we went there to help him get his health back. We stayed

on a dude ranch for three months and while I had to go to school, of course, we rode horses every single day. I got pretty good at it and would [compete] in these kids' rodeos. I won a solid bronze horse by doing a "stake race," where you weave in and out of stakes. I fell in love with the desert, and still love the desert in Arizona.

Guilty pleasure when traveling? All my pleasures are guilty.

Best travel tip? Keep your cool because it does no good to yell at someone who didn't do whatever it is you're mad about. You are never directly addressing the person who caused your problem in the first place. You're yelling at the wrong person.

JULIET PENNINGTON



Tom Paxton



HERE

C'MON BABY LIGHT MY FIRE

Get cozy in one of the fireplace suites at The Newbury, one of the rare hotels in Boston offering real wood-burning fireplaces in some rooms. Located on the corner of Arlington and Newbury streets, overlooking the scenic Public Gardens, the hotel ups its luxury quotient with the complimentary services of a Fireplace Butler. Choose from a menu of wood varieties including quick burning and warming Birch, long burning and fragrant Cherry, lightly scented Oak, and the sweet New England Maple. The Fireplace Butler will lay and light the fire, meaning all you need to do is sit back and enjoy the warmth. To complement the experience, a special menu of sweet and savory bites and boozy beverages can be enjoyed fireside. Additionally, crackling fireplaces can be found in the hotel's Street Bar (offering classic cocktails and New England-inspired culinary menu), and The Library. For swoon-worthy Northern Italian food with sweeping city views, head to rooftop restaurant Contessa, open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Fireplace suites from \$1,200. 617-536-5700, www.thenewburyboston.com/stay#suites

CRAFT AND COMMUNITY IN VERMONT

Meet Vermont's most prominent makers — glass blowers, potters, jewelers, woodworkers, painters, even artisan cheese and wine makers — at the 44th Annual Putney Craft Tour. Happening in Vermont over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, the oldest continuing craft tour in the country invites all art and fine craft collectors (and holiday shoppers!) to view the work of 20 participating artists whose studios are nestled among the hills and valleys in and around Putney. Start at Putney Mountain Winery where you will find an exhibition of all the artisans' work as well as tour maps to all studios. Tour brochure also available to download online. Nov. 25-27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. www.putneycrafts.com

THERE

RESORT DEBUTS, SWIMMINGLY

Here's a fun twist to traditional hotel experiences: The Harbor Club St. Lucia, Curio Collection by Hilton is adding swim-up pool guest rooms to its roster of 115 rooms and suites. Located in the bustling town of Rodney Bay, on the north side of this Caribbean island, the lifestyle hotel's ground floor swim-up accommodations each fea-

ture a private patio, choice of king or double beds, and tropical beach décor in soothing blue hues. Additionally, guests can expect turndown service, mini refrigerator, espresso machine, robe and slippers, beach towels, TV with interactive entertainment platform, and more. Choose among five unique eateries for casual and fine dining. Although the island has eliminated pre-testing protocols for international visitors, all arriving passengers must still download, print, and complete a health screening form for arrival into Saint Lucia. www.stlucia.org/covid-19. Hotel rates in November for swim-up rooms from \$272. Other rooms from \$184. 758-731-2900, www.theharborclub.com

ART DECO REVIVAL IN OSLO

Stay in decadent style at the recently launched Sommerro hotel, set within a restored 1930s Art Deco landmark — the city's original electric company headquarters — in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Oslo. The building, and its newly designed extension, features 231 rooms and luxury suites, 56 residences, four restaurants, three bars, a sprawling wellness space with fully-equipped gym, 100-seat gilded theater, meeting and event rooms, and the city's first year-round, rooftop pool, sauna, and terrace. A member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts' Legend Collection, Sommerro is a two-minute walk to the local train station, providing easy access to Oslo Airport, and close to some of the city's top attractions such as the Oslo Opera House and the art museum, Munch. Doubles from \$250, includes breakfast. www.sommerrohouse.com/en

EVERYWHERE

SUPER-INSULATED MUG FOR HAPPY CAMPERS

It could be argued that the most important element of a successful fall or winter camping trip is a mug that keeps your beverages piping hot on chilly days. With that in mind, Hydro Flask's coffee mug with press-in lid may soon be your

favorite camping accessory. The newest model color, Bark, features a unique cork-board-like, soft-touch exterior feel, making it cozy to hold and sip. The closable lid slides shut to tame splashes and trap heat; double wall vacuum insulation protects temperature for hours. BPA-free and phthalate-free; made with durable 18/8 pro-grade stainless steel construction. Available in 6-, 12-, and 24-ounce sizes in eight colors. \$23-\$33. www.hydroflask.com/12-oz-coffee-mug?color=bark



LIGHTWEIGHT WOOL WEAR FOR MEN

Stay warm (and look fabulous) on the trails with the new Merino collection offered this fall by Walter Sky, a limited collection of everywhere apparel for men. The company's grab-and-go zip hoodie, the WS-MH01, combines superfine merino wool with a high-performance nylon filament carrier to create an ultra-lightweight and durable fabric that offers 35 percent more thermal retention to retain warmth. The fabric is also fast-drying and provides more elasticity and strength than conventional ring-spun merino. Available in six sizes and three colors, gray, black, and navy. \$225. Merino T-shirts, sun hoodies, and socks are also available. \$23-\$95. <https://walter-sky.com/collections/merino>

NECEE REGIS

