

# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



GLOBE STAFF ILLUSTRATION; ADOBE

## CURBING BAD TOURIST BEHAVIOR

By Natalie B. Compton

THE WASHINGTON POST

**N**ext year, the Czech Republic chapel known as the “Church of Bones” will enforce stricter rules to curb a rise in inappropriate and derogatory photographs, Czech news agency CTK reported. According to the Sedlec Ossuary’s parish director, Radka Krejci, tourists have been taking insensitive selfies and manipulating bones to stage more interesting photos, desecrating a holy site that draws hundreds of thousands of tourists annually.

The crackdown is part of a trend that’s likely only to grow at the planet’s main points of interest as people travel internationally more than ever.

“The tour guide told us not to take selfies. Just to have good taste in taking photos,” Eric Chao, who visited the chapel from Taiwan this week, wrote in a message. “So out of respect I did not.”

Chao isn’t much of a selfie person, anyway — his Instagram account is filled with portrait, urban and travel shots. Instead of a selfie, Chao captured Sedlec Ossuary’s most striking details: a Schwarzenberg coat of arms constructed with bones; a chandelier made of bones and

skulls. The restrictions on photos didn’t bother him.

“To be honest, for places like this I think it’s necessary to ban photography to preserve the site by preventing tourists from taking ridiculous pictures,” Chao said, noting that he saw one tourist take a selfie licking one of the chapel’s skulls. “The chapel is a tiny place. If photography is banned, it can also help with the traffic. And photographers can truly enjoy the moment instead of thinking about how to take better photos.”

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, in Poland, is another sensitive site that has to deal with questionable photography. Press officer Pawel Sawicki said he does not endorse taking selfies at the concentration camp, although he warns against making character assumptions about those who post them.

After all, he notes, cultural norms are changing. “We have to be careful not to judge good people,” Sawicki said. “I can see that people use it as their language of expression. For a generation of teenagers, this is the language they use. You can see from the caption that people are showing the memorial was important to them.”

Europe is filled with historic places that forbid photos outright. Three of the more famous are the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City (first because of photography and vid-

eo rights, and later to prevent damage from camera flashes), the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam (with the exception of the entrance hall and a few “selfie walls”) and London’s Westminster Abbey.

“We want you to take in its unique beauty and history without the distractions that widespread photography would bring,” the Westminster Abbey website reads. “We want to retain the sacred and intimate atmosphere of a building which is, above all, a living, working church.”

Like at the Van Gogh Museum, visitors to the abbey are told of a few specific areas for photo-taking, such as the Cloisters, Chapter House, and College Garden. There’s also a photo gallery where visitors can download souvenir pictures for free.

Yet photography bans are just one part of broader efforts to combat unwanted visitor behavior at the world’s biggest tourist attractions. All over Italy, tourists are facing fines for infractions such as stealing sand, jumping into fountains, and picnicking in inappropriate places. And certain destinations, such as Maya Bay in Thailand and Boracay in the Philippines, even have to close periodically to recover from tourist damage.

As overtourism continues, travelers will have to hope that the enforcement of rules and fines is enough to keep Earth’s wonders open.

### HERE

#### SUPER SCIENCE STAYCATION

Parents looking for new staycation ideas may want to consider the Little Scientists Package at Royal Sonesta Boston. Located in Cambridge, just steps away from Boston’s renowned Museum of Science, the riverside hotel’s package includes overnight accommodations for four, complimentary milk and cookies, and four tickets to the museum, where kids can enjoy IMAX films and planetarium shows, and more than 700 interactive permanent exhibits including dinosaurs, butterfly garden, and more. The family fun continues with access to the hotel’s indoor heated pool. Rates from \$229 per night; available year-round. 617-806-4200, [www.sonesta.com/us/massachusetts/cambridge/royal-sonesta-boston/offers](http://www.sonesta.com/us/massachusetts/cambridge/royal-sonesta-boston/offers)

#### HOLIDAY TREE RESORT PACKAGE

The holiday season is fast approaching, a time when thoughts turn to baking cookies, shopping for gifts, and picking out the family Christmas tree. To kick off the festivities, Topnotch resort in Stowe, Vt., is offering the O’ Christmas Tree Package, including luxury overnight accommodations and a wagon ride through a tree farm to find the perfect tree — up to 9 feet tall — that you select and cut on-site. The tree is then professionally wrapped, packaged, and loaded onto your car for a safe trip home. While at the resort, enjoy locally sourced Vermont culinary dining and a roster of relaxing spa treatments. (Not included in package.) Rates start at \$179; available Nov. 29 through Dec. 20. Promo-



CANDY KENNEDY

tion code: TREE. 800-451-8686, [www.topnotchresort.com/](http://www.topnotchresort.com/)

### THERE

#### LUXURY ALIGHTS

##### ON THE JAMAICAN COAST

Relax this winter at S Hotel Jamaica, one of the newest additions to the Small Luxury Hotels of the World’s portfolio. Located in Montego Bay, overlooking Jamaica’s famed Doctor’s Cave beach, the hotel fuses urban chic with Caribbean cool for an authentic taste of the island in its 120 rooms and suites. Relaxing offerings include the Sky Pool (a glass-enclosed pool with swings and cabanas, and rooftop beach vistas), four restaurants with locally inspired cuisine, and Irie Baths and Spa, featuring three subterranean marble plunge pools (hot, warm, and cold) reminiscent of ancient baths. Lest you forget you’re in Jamaica, each accommodation includes a record player with Bob Marley’s “Legend” album and fresh daisies in Red Stripe beer



bottles. Rates from \$238 per night including breakfast. 877-234-7033, [www.slh.com/hotels/s-hotel-jamaica/](http://www.slh.com/hotels/s-hotel-jamaica/)

#### D.C. MONUMENT AND HOTEL DEBUTS

Those heading to Washington D.C. this fall can get a bird’s eye view of the nation’s capital from the top of the Washington Monument. Built to honor George Washington, the 555-foot high marble obelisk has reopened after being closed for renovations since 2016. Timed-tickets are required to ride the elevator to the observation deck. [www.nps.gov/wamo/planyour-visit/fees.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wamo/planyour-visit/fees.htm) Need a place to stay?

Rosewood Washington, D.C., has reopened with a new look in the heart of Georgetown. Guests will find luxury accommodations, dining concepts by Wolfgang Puck, revamped rooftop lounge — CUT Above — and redesigned public spaces, including the lobby and library. In addition, six new and one-of-a-kind townhouse suites will debut later this year. Rates from \$425. 202-617-2400, [www.rosewood-hotels.com/washington-dc](http://www.rosewood-hotels.com/washington-dc)

#### CROSS THE ANDES BY E-BIKE

Think you can’t possibly cross the Andes on a bicycle? Think again. Carter Company is introducing an eight-day electric-bike tour that uses a low pass through the dramatic mountain range, taking riders from Bariloche in the Argentinian foothills to Lake Llanquihue in neighboring Chile. Traveling by bike and boat, this journey features a handful of short, steep climbs — manageable by anyone with an e-bike — that offers breathtaking views of waterfalls and lakes, snow-capped volcanoes, and 4,000-year-old

forests. Riders relax each night in lakeside hotels in remote locations, allowing days off to walk and boat in the vivid landscape. Rates from \$4,999 per person includes e-bike, accommodations, breakfasts, local guides, luggage transfers, and more. +44 (0) 1296-631-671, [www.the-carter-company.com/trip/cycling/the-crossing-of-the-andes/](http://www.the-carter-company.com/trip/cycling/the-crossing-of-the-andes/)



### EVERYWHERE

#### RUGGED LAPTOP CASE

Extreme adventurers can safely bring their laptop on trips with Subtech Sport’s new Drycase. Designed to fit laptops of various sizes, the sleek, semi-hard shock absorbent case’s nano coating protects against heavy rain and snowfall, as well as accidental knocks and bumps. A water-resistant zipper keeps water and humidity out. The slim design adds only 0.2 inches to the thickness of your laptop; weighs only 14 ounces. Free shipping worldwide. \$49. [www.subtechsports.com/product/drycase/](http://www.subtechsports.com/product/drycase/)

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