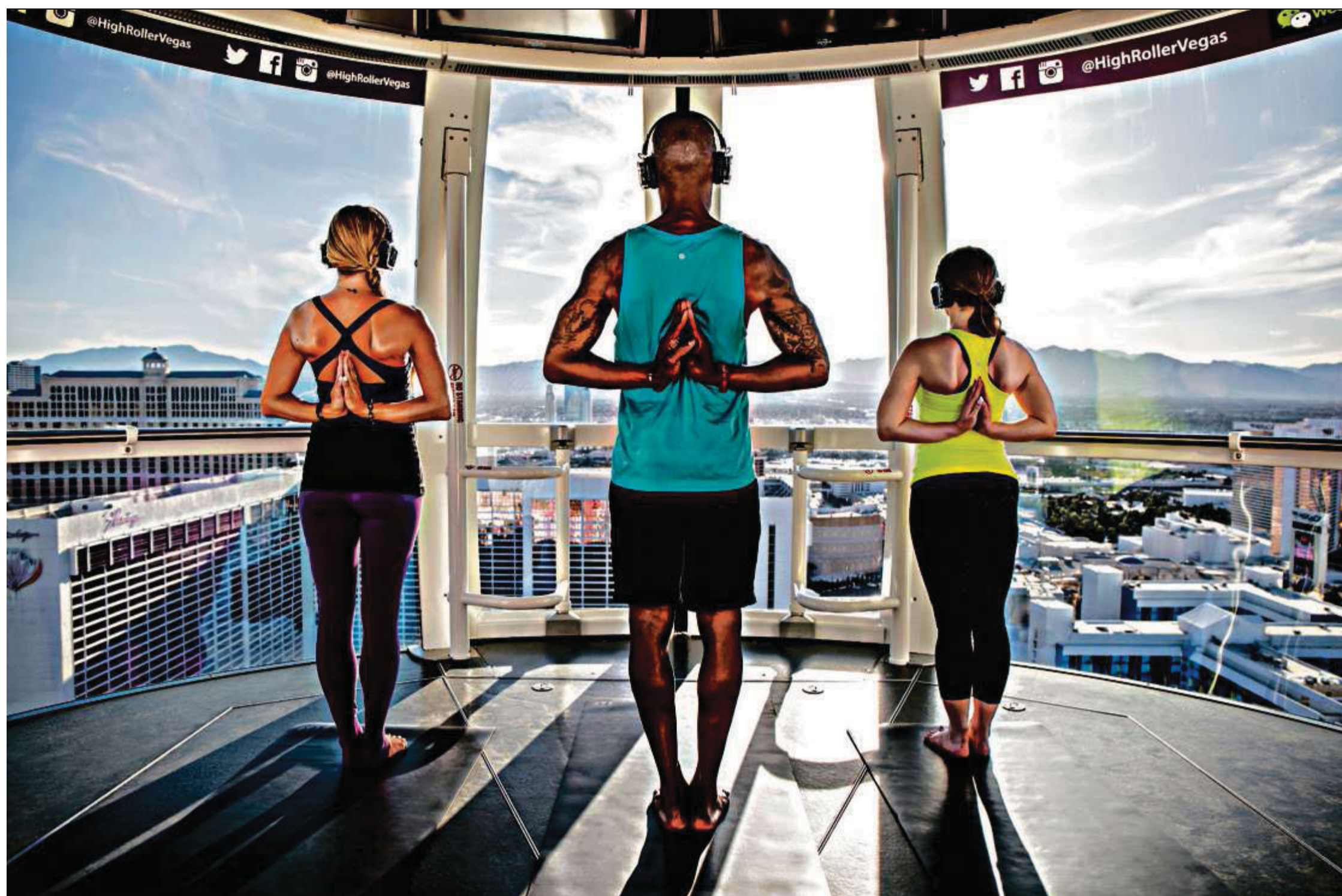


The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



RELAX, YOU'RE IN LAS VEGAS

BY JULIET PENNINGTON | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

For many people, being suspended 550 feet off the ground in a glass-enclosed pod would produce a state of panic, but for me it brought on a state of zen. Of course, the soothing music being piped into my headset and gentle voice guiding me into a variety of yoga positions inside the world's tallest Ferris wheel, the High Roller, helped.

Welcome to Las Vegas, where anything — and everything — is possible, including relaxing. On a recent visit, I indulged in a variety of activities that left me feeling calm. My instructor for the observation wheel yoga class kept my mind focused and my body somewhat pliable. The hour-long classes cost \$75 per person for up to six people in a pod. Visit www.caesars.com/linq/high-roller.

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Here are some other pacifying pursuits in Vegas: At the Mirage Hotel's Siegfried & Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat, a yoga studio with panoramic windows underneath the dolphin pools allows yogis of all ability levels to get their Om on while watching these beautiful mammals glide through the water. The one-hour class costs \$50 per person. Visit www.mirage.com.

Maverick Helicopters and Silent Savasana offer visitors a "heliyoga" experience that includes a private helicopter flight to the top of Valley of Fire State Park. Once there, guests take a 75-minute yoga class in the beautiful setting. The 2½-hour experience costs \$3,499 for six people. Visit www.maverickhelicopter.com.

Check out the Congfu Tea Service at Cha Garden in the fairly new Lucky Dragon hotel. Home to the city's only tea sommelier, Cha Garden is an indoor-outdoor tea garden that offers a 45-minute tea service. Prices range from \$12 to \$58 for a pot of tea, which serves two people. Visit www.luckydragonlv.com.

An hour of yoga inside a High Roller Ferris wheel pod costs \$75.

Take in a private gondola ride — complete with a singing gondolier — down the "Grand Canal" in the Venetian Hotel. The Old World-style gondolas float beneath bridges and balconies, alongside cafes and shops, making

passengers forget they're in a hotel on the Las Vegas Strip. Rides, which last about 15 minutes, are also offered outside the Venetian Hotel. A shared gondola that seats four costs \$29 per person, and a private gondola for two is \$116. www.venetian.com.

HERE

TWO LILAC CELEBRATIONS

When the sweet smell of lilacs fills the air, two locations in New England dedicate an entire day to celebrating these lush flowering trees. An annual event since 1908, Lilac Sunday at the Arnold Arboretum offers tours of the lilacs and family activities on the arboretum's 281 acres in Jamaica Plain (May 13, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Picnicking is allowed on this one special date. Because of parking restrictions in the area, visitors are encouraged to take public transportation (www.arboretum.harvard.edu/news-events/lilac-sunday/). The lilacs bloom a little later in Portsmouth, N.H., where the Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion hosts its popular Lilac Festival (May 26, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.). The mansion was originally the home of Royal Governor Benning Wentworth, who is credited with introducing lilacs to America as early as 1750. Visitors will enjoy a free guided tour of the mansion — a National Historic Landmark — as well as a nature walk on the Little Harbor Trail, scavenger hunt for kids and an opportunity to purchase a lilac sapling to take home (wentworthcoolidge.org).

LILLY PULITZER COTTAGE DEBUTS

Summer is coming and the White Elephant Hotel is ready for the season with a newly designed cottage that reflects the coastal charm of Nantucket. Working in collaboration with the Lilly Pulitzer Design Team, the one-bedroom Lilly Pulitzer Cottage debuts with new furniture and wallpaper in a nautical blue and white color scheme



with touches of gold. Woven baskets, hand-shelled mirrors, original framed artwork by a Lilly print artist, and a variety of ceramic trays and candles are all splashed with signature Lilly prints. Cottage guests will receive their own Lilly Pulitzer Beach Tote in a limited-edition Nantucket print. The comfortable living space includes a full-size pullout sofa. Rates from \$350 per night. 800-445-6574, www.lillypulitzer.com/resort365/white-elephant/3038.

THERE

CANADIAN CULINARY AND CRAFT TOUR

How can anyone resist a tour named Looms, Lambs and Lobsters? Especially when the tour is offered on the verdant green Prince Edward Island. This culinary knitting adventure combines Scottish and Acadian cultures with the island's farming and fishing communities. Travelers will head straight to Knit Pickers studio for a knitting lesson on an old-style knitting loom led by Margaret McEachern, an internationally recognized knitter and

weaver. Next, participants visit Ferme Isle Saint-Jean, a sheep farm that crafts local wool and award-winning cheese, to learn about the sheep and taste its cheese, milk, and yogurt. The day ends at The Yellow House in North Rustico, where classically trained French chefs will serve a signature lobster dish. \$55 per person. Available May 19 through the end of September. www.knitpickerspei.com/store/p76/Looms%2C_Lambs_and_Lobsters.html



LUXURY BALLET AND OPERA CRUISES SET SAIL

Not all cruises involve dancing the Macarena. Silversea, an ultra-luxury cruise line, has announced a new collection of ballet- and opera-themed sailings for 2018 and 2019. Designed to blend culture and travel, the sailings will feature opera shows performed by the world-renowned Accademia Teatro alla Scala and classic ballet performances by soloists from such legendary companies as the State Academic Bolshoi Theater of Russia. Along with lectures and discussions, guests will have the chance to mingle with the artists at a signature cocktail party. Opera voyages begin Sept. 28; rates from \$3,240. 888-978-4070, www.silversea.com/opera-cruises.html. Ballet voyages begin Aug. 19; rates from \$6,800, www.silversea.com/ballet-cruises.html.

EVERYWHERE

PASSPORT FEE INCREASE

As of April 2, the execution fee for a US passport changed from \$25 to \$35. The increase applies to applicants using the DS-11 form, including first-time applicants over age 16; children under age 16; and applicants who re-apply after reporting their previous passport lost or stolen. (This fee is in addition to the application fee.) Those planning interna-

tional summer sojourns should plan ahead. According to the US Department of State, passport demand is highest from February through August. It is recommend you apply for a passport at least 10 weeks prior to international travel. If traveling in less than six weeks, expedited applications are encouraged; within two weeks, there are 27 agencies where you can apply for urgent passports. Appointments can be made online at Passport.Appointment.travel.state.gov. For general forms, fees, and processing times, visit travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html.

TRAVEL SKIN CARE FOR MEN

Travel can be tough on skin, leaving one wan and tired looking. With a plethora of products on the market for women, men are often left with few options to refresh and renew. Now Lab Series a skin care company for men, is promoting its Future Rescue Repair Serum, a high-performance, concentrated, daily anti-aging treatment that is the perfect travel companion for dehydrated, thirsty skin. The ultra-potent serum creates a barrier to help protect and repair dry skin while defending against pollution and combating aging. At 1.7 ounces, it easily passes through TSA screenings in a carry-on bag — in case you need a midflight treatment. \$62. www.labseries.com/product/14985/37062/repair/future-rescue-repair-serum NECEE REGIS

