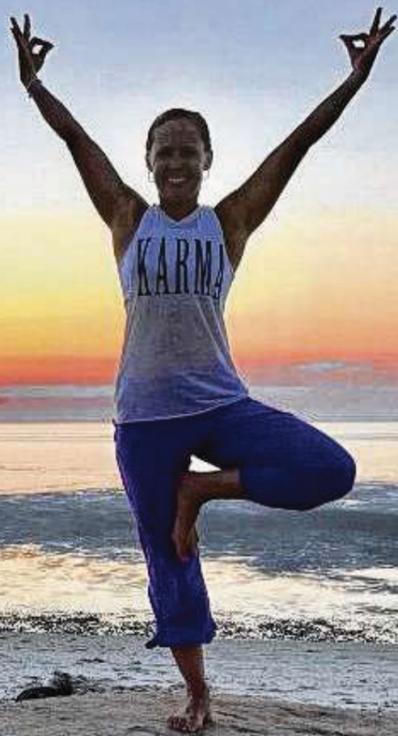


The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

VIP LOUNGE | SARAH GARDNER

When it comes to relaxing, it's all about the Cape and an outdoor shower



For Sarah Gardner, founder of Boston Children's Hospital's annual Yoga Reaches Out fund-raiser, it's all about giving back. When Gardner, 51, had her first child — a son, Will, who is now 19 and a student at Elon University — he arrived 10 weeks early. She credited the care he received at Boston Children's Hospital for saving his life and wanted to find a way to give back. The Boston native, who later lived in Athens, Ga., before returning to the Greater Boston area, turned to her love of yoga to create an event, held at Foxborough's Gillette Stadium field house, called Yoga Reaches Out. The annual fund-raiser, which brought 400 people together in 2010 (its first year) now has more than 1,000 participants and has raised more than \$2 million. Gardner is hoping to have even more participants at this year's event, being held virtually on Oct. 25. "Having this virtual really opens the door to the world," she said. "To have this collective energy with people from all over the world doing good for children in need . . . it's going to be a heartfelt, wonderful day." The annual event is now overseen by Boston Children's Hospital (go to yogareachesout.org for registration and additional information about Yoga Reaches Out). Gardner, a yoga teacher, personal trainer, and founder of dailyjam.net, which offers daily inspirational, lives in Wayland with her husband, Geoff, their children Emma, 17, and Will, and their family dog, Mocha. We caught up with her to talk about all things travel.

Favorite vacation destination?

My favorite place to visit in the whole world is Cape Cod. There is something magical that happens to me when I go over the Sagamore or Bourne bridges. My whole body relaxes and every moment is like an exhilarating exhale.

Favorite food or drink while vacationing?

My number one treat on Cape Cod is the Ice Cream Smuggler in Dennis. I love every flavor, but their peppermint stick hot fudge sundae is to die for!

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

There are so many places that I would like to travel to, but at the top of my list is Africa. I would like to go to Tanzania and Kenya and volunteer and also go on safari.

One item you can't leave home without when traveling?

Probably one of my favorite books: "The Daily Stoic" by Ryan Holiday.

Aisle or window?

As a mom, you always give the window seat to your child, but if I were to choose, I would pick the window seat as long as the trip isn't too long [because] I would drive my neighbors crazy with my small bladder!

Favorite childhood travel memory?

We were the Brady Bunch growing up, so traveling usually meant going to visit a parent, but I do remember all of us taking a vacation to Amelia Island in Florida and it was absolutely beautiful.

Guilty pleasure when traveling?

If I'm on Cape Cod, it's my coffee in the outdoor shower in the morning, and a cocktail in the outdoor shower in the late afternoon after the beach.

Best travel tip?

Always smile, say thank you, and soak up the present moment.

JULIET PENNINGTON

TROUBLESHOOTER

My Orbitz reservation didn't go through — and then it did

By Christopher Elliott
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Q. Before the pandemic, I used the Orbitz app to book a hotel during our vacation at Disneyland Paris. At check-out, I attempted to pay with PayPal. The Orbitz app said it failed.

After reaching out to Orbitz to confirm that I didn't have a reservation, I tried again. It failed again. But later that day, I received an e-mail notification stating that both bookings went through — even though Orbitz said they hadn't.

After contacting Orbitz by phone, e-mail, and Facebook, they're refusing to waive the cancellation fees even though they're at fault. Can you help me get a refund?

JAMES TALBOT,
Valley Park, Mo.

A. If Orbitz said you didn't have a reservation, then you shouldn't have had a reservation. But you did. How can that be?

I've encountered this problem several times.

Online agencies have systems that try to confirm a payment method. When they fail, they just keep trying.

That's what appears to have happened to you. The customer service representative with whom you spoke also saw no reservation at the time, which was true. Until it wasn't.

So what should you do before you initiate another reservation? My advice is to get the denial in writing (by text or e-mail) from the online agency. Don't just ask by phone, because you don't have a record of that conversation. So, if you end up with a duplicate reservation, you're out of luck.

By the way, this isn't a problem for airline reservations made in the US. The Department of Transportation has a 24-hour cancella-

tion rule for most airline tickets. So, if you mistakenly book a double reservation, you can cancel right away and get a full refund.

But there's another reason why your case wasn't so simple. I'll get to that in a minute.

Online agencies often rely on antiquated reservation systems and payment systems that can be glitchy. But someone has to take responsibility for a double-booking like yours, and I don't think it should be you.

Remember, you can always contact an Orbitz executive if you're not getting the help you need. I list the names, numbers, and e-mail addresses of the Orbitz managers (Expedia owns Orbitz) on my consumer advocacy site www.elliott.org.

I contacted Orbitz on your behalf. Its records indicate that you used two different Orbitz accounts with two different e-mails to make a reservation at the hotel. That resulted in duplicate bookings at the same hotel, because the agency couldn't have known that both reservations were for the same person.

It looks like Orbitz already found your second reservation, waived its cancellation penalties, and refunded the duplicate booking. After my inquiry, the company found your second reservation and waived its cancellation penalties, resulting in a full refund.

If you need help with a coronavirus-related refund, please contact me. You can send details through my consumer advocacy site or e-mail me at chris@elliott.org.

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

WELLFLEET DEBUTS

VIRTUAL ALL-STAR SHUCK OFF

The 20th Wellfleet OysterFest may have been canceled due to COVID concerns, but you can still cheer for your favorite shucker this year at the first-ever Virtual All-Star Shuck Off. In the spirit of the Shucking-Show-Must-Go-On, the local nonprofit Wellfleet Promotion and Tasting organization (wellfleetspat.org) will broadcast a two-hour shucking extravaganza with cooking tips from celebrity chef hosts Ming Tsai, Jamie Bissonette, and Elle Simone Scott; music events filmed in scenic Wellfleet locales; two short films about the town's deep history as the heart of America's oyster-growing community; and more. The online gala will culminate with a reimagining of the festival's most popular event — the oyster shucking competition — showcasing 10 legendary shuckers from the past 19 years going head to head for the ultimate crown: Wellfleet's all-time greatest, best of the best, all-star oyster shucker. Mark your calendars for the event, streamed online at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 17, from the Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theater. Free. www.youtube.com/channel/UCNf3W0LpuEkKTrIxL4ekLNQ

CAPE ANN FALL OPEN STUDIOS

Creativity abounds over Columbus Day weekend as the Cape Ann Artists debut their 37th annual Fall Open Studios tour with new COVID-safe parameters. (Oct. 10-11; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.) The 11 participating artists' work, created during the intimacy of quarantine, spans a wide selection of



genres including ceramics, painting, sculpture, fiber arts, jewelry, and more. Simply download a printable map of the self-guided tour, and begin planning your trip in the striking landscapes of Gloucester and Rockport. The map lists each artist's contact info; appointments are encouraged and given priority. Visitors are expected to wear facial coverings, practice social distancing, and use hand sanitizer, which will be available at each studio. Weather permitting, artists will take advantage of their outdoor spaces to offer a waiting area and additional exhibition space. capeannartists.com

THERE

PACIFIC COAST MEXICO NEW-BUILD RESORT

Those looking for a stylish (and warm) winter getaway may want to consider Conrad Punta de Mita, the second Conrad property in Mexico on Riviera Nayarit. This new-build hotel, located 20 miles from Puerto Vallarta's international airport, has just debuted with 324

guest rooms and suites all boasting views of the Pacific Ocean, with suites and villas offering large patios, plunge pools, freestanding soaking tubs, and outdoor showers. Amenities include four restaurant and three bar concepts, three expansive pools, a long stretch of sandy beach, access to the Litibu Golf Course, outdoor fitness lawn for yoga and stretching, and more. In celebration of the resort's opening, travelers booking four nights or more can take advantage of the Hola Conrad Package, which includes luxury round-trip airport transfers, \$100 resort credit, and access to Con-



rad Spa's wet areas. Package rates from \$349. www.conradpuntademitacom

RENOVATED HARBORSIDE HOTEL IN ANNAPOLIS

It's not too late to get out on the water this fall. The Annapolis Waterfront, a member of Marriott International's Autograph Collection, has recently opened after comprehensive multimillion-dollar renovations. The only property on the Annapolis waterfront, the hotel boasts 150 guest rooms in a contemporary-meets-coastal style, including ocean hues of blues, grays, and tans complemented by natural material and furnishings designed to evoke a feeling of a vintage seafaring vessel. The hotel is also home to Pusser's Caribbean Grille, a waterfront favorite regional restaurant and bar. Speaking of vintage vessels, the Sail the Chesapeake package includes an excursion for up to six guests aboard a wooden, 74-foot schooner courtesy of Schooner Woodwind Annapolis Sailing Cruises. The two-hour tour includes views of the Annapolis waterfront, Naval Academy, and a cruise on Chesapeake Bay. Available through October, weather permitting. Party of two from \$329; party of six from \$987. Rooms without package from \$159 week days; \$259 weekends. 888-773-0786, www.annapoliswaterfront.com

EVERYWHERE

PORTAL PLANTS TREES FOR TRAVELERS

We may not be flying much these days, but those concerned

about levels of global CO2 emissions rising when travel resumes may want to check out a new search engine designed to mitigate air travel's adverse impact on the environment. FlyBARBARA, a green travel portal, invests its profit from flight tickets on planting an average of seven trees for every flight ticket sold with no additional cost for the customer. In addition to making air-travel environment-friendly, it also connects popular flight and hotel search engines so that travelers have all their travel-related needs in one place. www.flybarbara.com/home

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM GUIDE

The Center for Responsible Travel, a policy-oriented research organization, is dedicated to increasing the positive global impact of responsible tourism. Its mission to promote responsible policies and practices — so that local communities may thrive and steward their cultural resources and biodiversity — is an ongoing commitment and goal. To share its learnings, CREST has launched the 2020 Impact Tourism Handbook, available in a free, digital format. Not just giving or collecting loose change for charity, impact tourism generates support for local community projects via partnerships with tourism companies and visitors. The handbook delves into innovative ways such work is materializing around the globe with examples and case studies from businesses, NGOs, and destinations including brands like andBeyond, Pack for a Purpose, Six Senses, and World Wildlife Fund. www.responsibletravel.org/whatWeDo/ImpactTourismHandbook.php

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