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TRAVEL

Cruise and Hotel News: Tracing a Viking Route in Iceland

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In Transit

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A MYANMAR HOTEL LAUNCHES A CRUISE

Hotel expansions occur daily, but rarely do hotels replicate themselves in the form of a cruise ship as the colonial-era Strand Hotel in Myanmar plans to do. In December, the 1901-built Yangon landmark will launch its own floating version on the Irrawaddy River. The **Strand Cruise** will hold 54 passengers and mimic the mother hotel with butler service, afternoon tea and cultural performances, as well as a swimming pool, library, wine bar and wellness center with a gym, nail salon and spa services. Three- and four-night cruises will operate between Bagan and Mandalay, and the itineraries promise exclusive access to Ava, an ancient imperial capital, after the day-trippers have departed, with an overnight mooring, and a private dinner set on a seasonal river sandbank. Three-night cruises start at \$1,782 per person, double occupancy, including excursions.

CRUISING A VIKING ROUTE

In 2016, Abercrombie & Kent plans to offer an itinerary that follows the route charted in 982 by Erik Thorvaldsson, a.k.a. Erik the Red, in a Norse-themed two-nation vacation. The 12-day **Iceland & Greenland: In the**

Wake of the Vikings trip begins in Reykjavik and sets out westward for the Westman Islands, known for their colonies of Atlantic puffin. Crossing the Denmark Strait, the 199-passenger Le Boreal then spends several days tracing the southern coast of Greenland, launching Zodiacs for more intimate explorations of fjords, glaciers, icebergs and the Arctic tundra. Erik the Red purportedly named the icy island Greenland to attract winter-weary settlers, and the trip visits Norse settlements including the ruins of Hvalsey and those around Narsaq. The trip departs Aug. 16, 2016, and fares start at \$10,495 per person, a \$1,500 savings offered through Dec. 31. The company is also waving the single supplement for bookings before Dec. 31.

A NEW LODGE NEAR YOSEMITE

When it opens next summer, Rush Creek Lodge just outside Yosemite National Park says it will be the first new resort in the region in 25 years. On 20 acres less than a mile from the park's Highway 120 west entrance, the lodge will open June 15, 2016, with on-site diversions including a swimming pool, a bar beside the hot tub, restaurant and general store as well as a recreational department offering guided excursions in the park. Designed with families in mind, the property's 143 rooms, suites and villas sleep between four and six people each and offer private decks, sitting areas and refrigerators. Rates start at \$215, and the resort is offering a \$100 resort credit for 2016 stays booked before the end of this year.

COUPLES SEASON IN HAWAII

With the kids back in school, one Hawaiian luxury resort has added adult-targeting incentives to travel to Maui. The 380-room Four Seasons Resort Maui has named September, October and November "couples season." During this period, the resort, which does not charge a resort fee, also offers free classes in cooking and mixology, as well as free yoga, stand-up paddleboard yoga and fitness classes. Year-round, its tennis courts are fee-free as are introductory scuba lessons, the use of snorkeling gear, outrigger canoes and some poolside cabanas. Rooms from \$499.

AT BAJA RESORT, GUEST CHEFS TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT

Todos Santos, a surfer's town about an hour north of Cabo San Lucas on Mexico's Pacific Coast, is not the easiest destination to reach. Yet one resort there, Rancho Pescadero, has managed to attract a series of top American chefs for its newly expanded Guest Chef Weekends. The weekends involve cooking demonstrations, chef's dinners and wine and tequila tastings and take place over four dates this winter and spring. The chef Renee Erickson, owner of Seattle hits including the Walrus and the Carpenter, will appear Nov. 12 to 15. March 24 to 27, 2016, Jessica Koslow of Sqirl in Los Angeles will guest star, followed by Thomas McNaughton and Ryan Pollnow of Ne Timeas restaurants in San Francisco, April 21 to 24, and Greg Denton and Gabrielle Quiñónez Denton of Ox Restaurant in Portland, Ore., on May 26 to 29. Access to the culinary events cost \$250 per person, and the hotel will offer 15 percent off room rates starting at \$249 per night for attendees. The resort also offers à la carte pricing for each culinary event, ranging from \$20 to \$100, to guests.

A NEW BOUTIQUE HOTEL IN GUADALAJARA

Mexico-based Grupo Habita, the developer of stylish boutique hotels, has just opened its latest, Casa Fayette, in Guadalajara. Its 37 modernist rooms are spread between a 1940s-vintage house and a new high-rise next door in the trendy Lafayette neighborhood. Amenities include a pool, terrace bar, restaurant and rooftop spa. The résumé of the hotel's chef Trevor La Presle includes stints under the chefs Daniel Boulud and Mario Batali. Rooms start at \$220.