From Kitty Hawk to Canada, Sifnos to Spain

▶ TREATS
Continued from Page M1

Cyclades, under a burnished August sun, or in equally luminous September, when Europeans go home and prices plummet. Sifnos and its people are warm, grounded in their own social structure, and unspoiled by tourism. When the arriving hordes vaporize onto the many beaches, Sifnos is bathed in countryside quiet and lovingly preserved white villages, including the medieval walled Kastro. Dozens of stone-paved hiking trails lead you in the footfall of ancestral Sifnians and their mules from town to town, among small farms and olive groves. People here still make pottery in workshops at the water's edge, and they are passionate about simple, savory food prepared with the ingredients of the earth and sea. After visiting Panagia Chrissopigi, an ancient monastery, order lamb and other traditional Sifnian dishes at taverna Lebesis, or almost anywhere. Don't waste an extra minute on the slow ferry; hop a fast catamaran in Athens, enjoy the view with an espresso, and get to Sifnos in under three hours. A list on the Aegean Thesaurus website offers a starting point for lodgings. From over $300 a night for a modernist suite to under $80 a night for a simple, clean room, they're all good. *thesaurus.gr/sifnos*

PATRICIA BORNS

SUMMER SPLURGES
There's a sunny place for everyone to celebrate the season at www.boston.com/travel.

AN OLYMPIAN WORLD

If you watched the Vancouver Winter Olympics in February, you have seen the striking alpine terrain of Whistler and Blackcomb. The same mountains are just as alluring in the summer as a cool respite from the heat. Take advantage of the 3-kilometer PEAK 2 PEAK gondola (the longest unsupported gondola line in the world) to pop back and forth between summits for strolling in alpine forest, hiking to a glacier, enjoying tea at an alpine hut, or sipping British Columbia wines on a mountain patio. Because new trails were cut for the Winter Games, there are now 19 hiking trails (easy to expert) covering more than 35 miles. *www.whistlerblackcomb.com, Adult one-day passes start at $38*

DAVID LYON

WING IT EN ESPAÑA

California's Mission San Juan Capistrano may have its swallows, but the 17th-century Baroque San Miguel church in Alfaro, Spain, is stork central in Europe. More than 400 nests of white storks cover the towers and roofs of the church. Ornithologists say it is the world's largest single concentration of the birds. The young begin to fledge across the summer, and parents and chicks alike take to the air late in the afternoon, giving the small city an animated majesty. Happily, Alfaro is on the southern edge of the famed La Rioja wine district, where you can break from bird-watching to visit wineries and feast on distinctive northern Spanish cuisine. *www.alfaro.es, www.lariojaturismo.com*

PATRICIA HARRIS

OFF-SHORE INVESTMENT

The adventure starts when Captain Frank pipes you aboard. An old sailing tradition that predates the US Navy, the blowing of the bosun's pipe is the start of an overnight adventure between Baltimore and the historic town of Rock Hall on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The trip is the brainchild of Frank McKee, a certified master captain. Sailing with McKee is like spending the day with a friend, if your friend owns a boat, tells great stories, and offers sailing instruction and a crash course on navigation. Or just sit back, sip champagne, munch crab cakes, and enjoy the view during the four-hour sail. At Rock Hall, a room at the Inn at Osprey Point awaits. Tool around town on bikes, dine at the inn's seafood-centric restaurant, and relax at the pool. The next day by noon, you'll be heading back to Baltimore, hopefully with the wind at your sails. *McKee Nautical sailing getaways through October. From $697 for two, including parking, sailing, one night at Inn at Osprey Point or Great Oak Manor, two lunches and breakfast. 717-848-5818, www.mckeenautical.com*

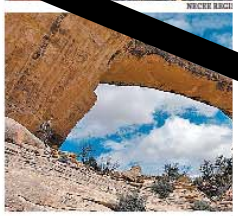
BETH D'ADDONO

CAPS OFF TO CYPRUS

Summer after summer, we New Englanders are on the lookout for that rare day to cap the season: It's got gentle, lulling waves, an aqua sky, a white-hot disc of sun. This is the year to stop waiting. Follow the Brits and go straight to where warmth and swimmable seas are never in doubt: Cyprus. The Mediterranean island and European Union nation is a haven of beaches and village life. August is a special time because hamlets all over the island host annual festivals centered around favorite Greek gods and local specialties. Festival villages include Lanela, Lofou, Monagri, Alona, Pervolia, and Lefkara, among many others. The Agros village festival is a scented affair. Held Aug. 15-16, it celebrates the rosewater, rose liqueur, rose perfumes, and rose candles fashioned from locally grown petals that have made the town famous. The Dionysia festival in the winemaking village of Stroumbi, Aug. 21-23, a three hectic days of wine sampling, tastings of "palouze" (a jelly made from fresh grape juice), and traditional dancing. The revelry reaches its crescendo on the last night with the naming of the town's chief Dionysia and Miss Grape. *www.visitcyprus.com*

PETER MANDEL

NECEE REGIS



The Wonder Wheel at Coney Island has thrill
everyone in the group. Remote Natural Bridg
Monument in Utah is a natural place to starg

HOT DOG! IT'S FREE!

Who doesn't love Coney Island? With amusement park rides like the Wonder Wheel and the Cyclone, Nathan's hot dogs, and the fabled oceanside boardwalk, it's a perfect place to spend a summer day. Then there is the Siren Music Festival July 17. Now in its 10th year, this all-day event features New York's finest renowned and emerging bands performing on two outdoor stages along the boardwalk. This year's scheduled performers include Matt and Kim, Ted Leo and the Pharmacists, The Pains of Being Pure at Heart, Surfer Blood, and Harlem. Best of all? It's free. Pack your sunscreen, some water, and — depending on your age — earplugs. *Noon-8, rain or shine, siren.villagevoice.com/2010*

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RUFFLE YOUR FEATHERS

Every spring up to 250,00 nomadic seabirds flock to the basalt cliffs and se
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Elvis Cruise f
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Hear personal stories by Larry Geller, Presley's Elvis's stylist, and by Diane McBain and Warren Berlinger, who appeared with Elvis in "Spinout." Historians Roy Turner and Jim Palmer will screen their documentary, "Homecoming: Tupelo Welcomes Elvis Home," and members of Cirque du Soleil's creative team will show video clips and share stories about the Viva ELVIS production at Aria Resort & Casino in Las Vegas. Prices start at $599. *877-749-8462, www.theelviscruise.co*

WILL BYINGTON/FILE 2009

Elvis tribute artist Victor Trevino Jr. croons for adoring fans on a Carnival cruise.

Canada rail children's fare

Purchase an economy-class adult, 60-plus, youth, or student ticket (at supersaver fare) on VIA Rail Canada for travel June 24-Sept. 10, and you can bring up to five children ages 2 to 11 for just $10 each. The deal is valid on any route on Canada's national passenger line. VIA Rail also offers kids' menus on long-distance routes, cardboard train cutouts and activity books on most journeys, and games, activities, and video screenings in the Skyline car every morning on the route between Toronto and Vancouver. On the overnight Ocean service between Montreal and Halifax, a learning coordinator presents mini lectures on the Maritime region. Tickets must be purchased at least three days before departure. *888-842-7245, www.viarail.ca/en/fares/deals/kids-10*

Find a US spa on the go

Download SpaFinder's free app to your iPhone and you can locate spas, learn about treatment deals, and book a reservation while you travel. It includes 5,000 spas around the world and provides an overview, a treatment menu, and customer reviews on each one. The application uses your iPhone's GPS feature to locate a nearby spa, and it provides a real-time map and directions from your location. You can book appointments at more than 1,000 US spas, including Element Day Spa in Charlestown, Melt on Newbury Street, and South-West Day Spa in Brookline. *www.spafinder.com/iphone*

KARI BODNARCHUK

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