

HYBRID DRIVERS RECEIVE SPECIAL TREATMENT

Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay guests driving a Hybrid Bio Diesel car will receive a gas card valued at \$50 in addition to the other gifts guests receive when they purchase the Chesapeake Bay Experience package. The Bay Experience package includes overnight accommodations, a s'mores kit, kite, \$25 gas card, 15 percent off at the resort's Orvis Store and a pass to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. A short drive from the resort, the refuge is haven for endangered species, including the American bald eagle and the Delmarva fox squirrel. At the refuge, one of the most important ecological areas in Maryland, travelers will discover hundreds of species of birds, reptiles, plants and mammals, many of which are threatened. For more information, www.ChesapeakeBay.Hyatt.com. — *Jessica Novak*

Hershey sweetens its deal

During July, The Hotel Hershey, home of the whipped cocoa bath, will offer guests their Fill Up On Fun package. The promotion includes deluxe accommodations at the hotel, a complimentary \$50 gas certificate and admission to the Hershey Museum and Hershey Gardens. Prices start at \$348. The package is available to guests staying July 1 and 2, 6 through 9, 13 through 16, 22 and 23 and 27 through 31.

Guests of The Hotel Hershey receive the best prices on Hersheypark tickets, an exclusive Breakfast at the Park, early access to select rides and attractions, complimentary shuttle bus service to Hersheypark, access to the Hershey Golf Collection and other incentives.

An hour and half from Baltimore and two hours from Washington, D.C., Hersheypark is located in Hershey, Pa. For more information, visit www.HersheyPA.com or call 800-437-7439. — *Jessica Novak*



THE ROAD

Get hip to this kindly tip

By **Rafael Alvarez**
Examiner Correspondent

A standard line of the road: "I feel good, I can take it all the way. ..."

Dad might have said that to your mother on a middle-of-the-night summer highway — back seat full of exhausted and cranky knuckleheads — when she wanted to get a room.

In a 1971 film called "Two Lane Blacktop," James Taylor says it at the wheel of a souped-up 1955 Chevy Bel Air. He's not talking to Carly Simon, but to a guy who grew up on the spot in Hawthorne, Calif., visited in this space last week: Dennis Wilson.

Taylor plays "The Driver" and Wilson is billed as "The Mechanic." A teenager named Laurie Bird — who appeared in "Annie Hall," and later jumped to her death from a win-

dow while living with Art Garfunkel — plays an ingenue runaway known as "The Girl."

Monte Hellman directed, the film bombed, and Esquire declared it its Movie of the Year in '71.

The story lurches east on fat tires in a cross-country street race — from Needles, Calif., to Washington, D.C. — in which the loser forfeits his car. The challenger is played by the only actor in the film, the late Warren Oates driving a spanking new "Orbit Orange" Pontiac GTO.

Along the path of old Route 66, we cruise Flagstaff, Santa Fe, and Boswell, Oklahoma, parts of Arkansas and Memphis, Tenn.

Save for Boswell, I've been to all of those places: in a white 1989 Subaru wagon when the kids were in grade school; then in a blue '99 Beetle with THE WHO license plates while selling my books out of the trunk; and

most recently, in a white, 2006 Toyota pickup with a carpeted camper shell on the back, my "See America First" bookmobile.

I won't tell you what happens in "Blacktop" before the hot rods reach the nation's capital. But I will tell you this: In 1959, my folks and my paternal grandparents drove with me from Baltimore to visit relatives in Chicago in Grandpop's pale green 1955 Chevy Bel Air.

In the back seat was not a teenage runaway with a shag haircut and full, sulking lips but an aluminum pot of homemade tomato sauce and meatballs. No roadside cheeseburgers and milkshakes for that crowd.

"We brought good bread and made sandwiches the whole way," remembered Mom. "I changed your diaper right on the back seat."

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Foodies let their taste buds plan the traveling

By **Andrea Farnum**
Examiner Correspondent

When it comes to making vacation plans, Emily Morris has only one objective.

"I want to eat in the best restaurants and find the best locally produced food that a particular destination has to offer," said Morris, a retired schoolteacher from Columbia who has eaten her way through Europe, Southeast Asia and the United States. "I like to let my taste buds do the traveling."

Throughout the United States, a growing number of travelers are basing their travel around food and wine, according to a study conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America. In the past three years, 27 million Americans have made culinary activities a part of their travel plans.

"The study demonstrates that a sizable proportion of the U.S. leisure market does indeed make travel decisions based on a desire for wine and culinary experiences," said Laura Mandala, vice president of research for the Travel Industry Association. "In fact, it confirms that wine and culinary experiences are a driver of destination choices."

For food and wine aficionados, Italy ranks high as a top destination, and tour operators Marcello and Raffael-



On the Net

www.bluone.com
www.tia.org
www.travelchannel.com

In Italy, food carts line the streets in most cities and towns and serve as a major attraction for food tourists. — *Courtesy photo*

la Tori of Bluone Cooking Tours know their audience.

"Participants on our tours are typically well-traveled and desire real local experiences beyond the typical tourist attractions," said Marcello. "They all have a passion for cooking and great-tasting food." Local and hands-on experiences are the hallmark of any good food tour.

"We offer several different experiences depending on the season and on what our guests like to do — truffle hunting, aromatic herb gardening, olive harvests, and, of course, Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and tradition-

al balsamic vinegar of Modena Factory visits," Marcello said. "We take our guests to local artisans and farmers and drive through panoramic unknown countryside roads to show our guests a life they could not discover on their own."

Having tasted her way through more than 32 countries, is there any travel spot that Morris is still hungry for? "I'm a big fan of Travel Channel host Anthony Bourdain and am dying to visit Russia like he did and enjoy some red caviar and vodka. If it's good enough for Tony, it's good enough for me."

A perfect day trip for thrill seekers of all ages

By **Marie Gullard**
Examiner Correspondent

Six Flags is a short drive from "staycation" to "daycation."

With the economy in such dire straits, are you tempted to get real with your children this summer? Then, try the opener below:

"Hey kids, how about a great 'staycation' this summer? We'll romp in the backyard sprinkler, study nature in our vegetable garden, have a cookout, slurp popsicles and catch fireflies in a jar."

If the little ones swallow that, you probably could sell them on a series of rabies shots as well.

Now try this one: "Hey kids, let's go to Six Flags!"

That's more like it!

Just 40 minutes south of Baltimore, Six Flags America in Bowie continues to thrill visitors as the home to eight world-class roller coasters, including "Superman: Ride of Steel" with an incredible 20-story first drop.

"The entertainment value at Six Flags America this season is better than ever," said Chris Haenn, park president. "In addition to our signature thrill rides and family attractions, we have seven brand new shows, a full scale water park [Hurricane Harbor] that is free with admission, a daily parade and more concerts."

Haenn realizes that today's typical families are "feeling a strain

on their wallets," and to ease the pain, guests purchasing tickets online at the park's Web site can buy one regularly priced park admission ticket at \$49.99 and get a second one free. In addition, the park is reducing the price of a kid's ticket (48 inches and under) by \$10, making it \$24.99 online and at the main gate.

A new attraction this season at the water park invites everyone to "skate the wake" at the first-ever Tony Hawk's Halfpipe. This edgy waterslide, named after the superstar skateboarder, offers a new form of watery thrills for both kids and their parents.

"Adding Tony Hawk's Halfpipe takes Hurricane Harbor up a notch on the thrill side while also appealing to families who like to ride together," Haenn said.

Karin Korpowski, public relations manager at Six Flags, points out that in keeping with the theme of family fun, an entire kiddie section features scaled-down rides and games for what she calls "the pint-sized thrill seeker," who will also enjoy the costumed characters roaming about the park. Additionally, she points out that an array of shops, eateries and games will keep the whole family busy between rides and shows.

"We like to call a visit to Six Flags America a 'daycation,'" she added. "[It's] a true vacation in the sense of getting away from it all while creating fond memories with family and friends."

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