

LETTERS



PAUL MORSE For The Times

MEMORIES of New Orleans are fine to take home, but flight mates may not care to smell your sandwich.

Please don't share that

Regarding Letters, March 5: I have traveled to New Orleans many times, and I love po'boys as much as anyone.

However, I would ask readers to consider the assumption by the letter writer who brought the sandwich onto the plane that all passengers were appreciative of his food.

The stench of convenience food being brought on and consumed in the close quarters of an airplane cabin is considered insensitive at best, if not rude, by many air travelers. It's right up there with talking too loudly, body odor and fully reclining one's seat-back into the face of the passenger behind.

JOHN MACDONALD
Laguna Niguel

Airport locator

Regarding Letters, March 5: I always find it amusing the things that bother folks.
Most airport websites

have a link to its location to help those unfamiliar with that particular airport. Names or three-digit identifiers seldom lead you to a location.

Our local airport (John Wayne/Orange County/Santa Ana) could be one of the hardest to locate using its official designation of John Wayne.

Still, we honor a man who was an important resident for many years.

PAUL BROWN
Santa Ana

Flee the fees

Regarding "Resort Fees Hiked at 10 Las Vegas Hotels" by Jay Jones, Feb. 26: My wife and I used to visit Vegas four or so times a year. With the new, insulting "resort" and parking fees, no more.

Soon it will be, "Oh, you wanted a *key* for your room? That'll be a \$10 key fee! And you want to use the bathroom? \$5-per-flush fee."

It's not so much about the money as it is the cynicism.

AMBROSE BRUCE
TERRENCE
Marina del Rey

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MORE FOR YOUR MONEY

Saving isn't the only Upside

By TERRY GARDNER

Leisure travelers, doesn't it seem as though business travelers get all the perks? Take the new travel website Upside, which rewards you for saving money by giving you gift cards.

The site is supposed to be for road warriors, but leisure travelers may be able to benefit too.

Here's how it works: You tell Upside (which is still in beta) where you want to go and what kind of hotel you want. It finds the top six flights and hotels for a traveler's dates and destination.

It tells you what the flight and hotel would have cost you. But the final, discounted price isn't broken down. You don't know how much of the package price is airfare and how much is accommodations.

"Airlines and hotels are willing to sell for less, but don't want to advertise it," said Jay Walker, chairman and chief executive of Upside.

"Playing your own travel agent is hard to do, so we've come along to take about 90% of the time out of the process and show you a way to save money," added Walker, who founded "name your own price" site Priceline. "Buy a trip ... in less than five minutes."

Plus, you get gift cards from a variety of merchants for your booking. They are designed to reward you, the working stiff, for saving your company money.

You can save money and/or increase the value of the gift card by departing earlier, adding a connection or staying at an equally good hotel a few blocks from the meet-



Uber

UBER is among retailers participating in gift card program.

ing. Walker said gift cards usually are \$100 to \$200.

The cards are available from 50 retailers, including Amazon, Whole Foods, Target, eBay, Airbnb and Uber. Upside gift cards can be split among retailers.

Although Walker created Upside for small and medium-size businesses without their own travel agents, he thinks it's also a fit for "bleisure" travelers — business travelers who spend a bit of time relaxing on their own dime.

The company also has a small, dedicated "Additional Traveler team" to help Upsiders add additional people to a package. (However, adding travelers does not earn extra gift cards.)

Upside offers 24-hour customer service by phone, text or chat. Although the \$35 fee for the service is currently waived, Walker expects to begin charging as soon as the second half of this year.

Through March 31, Upside is offering a promo code that gives trav-

elers a minimum \$150 gift card, regardless of trip cost. Enter UPSIDE150 in the promo code box.

(Walker recommends following @UpsideTravel on Facebook and Twitter to learn about future promo codes.)

I tried it for an upcoming trip. Although I often research trips on my smartphone, I rarely finalize bookings on it. But Upside was so easy to use on my phone that I would have booked my trip on it too if the website hadn't gotten stuck.

Remember, Upside is still in beta, so an occasional glitch may happen.

I wound up buying my package on my computer. Using the promo code, I booked round-trip flights from LAX to Las Vegas with a one-night stay at an upscale hotel. The package cost: \$207.75, including taxes.

I paid about \$20 less and earned a \$153 gift card by choosing that particular hotel instead of one closer to the convention center, where I needed to be.

Some caveats: The policies of the airline, hotel and Upside are in force if you need to cancel. Travelers can book either flights that carry a penalty for a change or that are fully refundable.

Also, Upside didn't always give me the lowest hotel price. For instance, the starting price for one night at a Vegas hotel I wanted showed up as about \$18 more than the lodging's website offered.

Upside still has some bugs to work out, but it could help you save money. Just don't tell our business friends.

travel@latimes.com

THE SADDLE UP FOR THE CANADIAN ROCKIES DEAL

Here's a chance to go deep into the back country of one of Canada's most beautiful national parks this summer — and save money too.

The deal: Trail Riders of the Canadian Rockies organizes horseback tours into Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta. The weak Canadian dollar drives the savings on these trips. These all-inclusive tours begin in Calgary, Alberta. A six-day ride costs about \$2,076 and will take place July 24-29 and Aug. 14-19; five days \$1,870, Aug. 8-12; and four days \$1,664, July 17-20 and July 31-Aug. 3. Rides may be added.

Info: (844) 560-5522, www.trailridevacations.com

— MARY FORGIONE

MORE DEALS ONLINE

Find bargains on hotels, airfares and packages on the daily deal blog at latimes.com/travelblog.



JUDY FLEETHAM

RIDING HORSEBACK in Waterton Lakes, Canada.

YOUR SCENE

EDITOR'S CHOICE



SUN AND SNOW IN COLORADO

Mitch Francis and his stepson, Peter Grossman, went to Vail, Colo., in January for four days. They were skiing as the sun was shining, but it was a nippy 10 degrees, the Studio City resident said. The trees full of snow against the blue sky were "a magnificent sight," Francis said, so he took a photo with his Samsung S7 Edge.

— DENISE FLOREZ

TO SUBMIT A PHOTO

Send unaltered original files to yourscene-travel@latimes.com or post them at latimes.com/yourscene. Photographers agree that The Times may reproduce photos in any format.

WEB BUZZ

Find boutique hotels at the right price

Here's a travel website that helps you move from hostels to boutique hotels without breaking the bank.

Name: DorisandDicky.com

What it does: It offers a collection of 500-plus independent hotels packed with charm in cities across Europe and around the globe. Most properties have 20 rooms or fewer and a price tag of about \$125 a night. Many properties cost less; a few are more, but in those cases it's aiming for value.

What's hot: It had me at "best affordable boutique hotel spa breaks in Europe," with rooms from \$52 to \$115 a night. There are valuable travel tips hidden within articles in the Blog/News section. "Top 5 cheap weekend boutique city breaks in Europe" led me to more generous on-the-ground travel information than a destination summary usually de-

livers. Its tips enticed me with an arts and crafts market in Seville, Spain, and a supper club in Lisbon. Doris & Dicky claims to be on the lookout for new hotels, so keep your finger near the refresh button on "New hotels and recently reviewed properties," found on the home page. It aims to find something a little extra special in accommodations, be it spectacular views, a beachfront location, colorful character or cultural highlights.

What's not: I might be dreaming, but with all the design elements these boutique hotel rooms have, I'd like an accompanying shopping feature on this site where I could purchase pillows, art and more.

— JEN LEO

CALIFORNIA BUCKET LIST

Monterey Bay Aquarium

Why: It's the state's foremost aquarium.

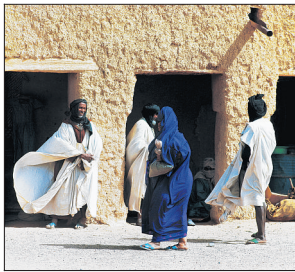
What: From its opening in 1984, the Monterey Bay Aquarium became the state's go-to aquarium, with tanks that allow water from the bay to flow freely through. Give your family several hours here among the sharks, otters, penguins, tuna and seabirds — more than 40,000 plants and animals, many of which get extra-frisky at feeding time.

Info: Monterey Bay Aquarium, 886 Cannery Row, Monterey; www.montereybayaquarium.org. \$49.95 for adults; \$29.95 for kids 3-12.

— CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS

In 2017 Travel has created a California bucket list. We'll feature one experience each Sunday. To see the full list of items, go to latimes.com/cabuckellist.

GEO QUIZ



De Agostini / Getty Images

The town of Atar is an oasis on a caravan trail in what coastal country that borders Mali?

☐ Mauritania

☐ Morocco

☐ Senegal

Answer below. Source: National Geography Bee

Mauritania

AIRFARES

ATLANTA		
LAX	\$315	American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, United
SNA	339	American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, United
BUR	362	American, Delta, Southwest, United
ONT	305	American, Delta, Southwest, United

CHICAGO		
LAX	\$290	American, Frontier, United, Virgin America
SNA	292	American, United
BUR	307	American, United
LGB	303	American, Delta
ONT	372	American, Delta, United

DENVER		
LAX	\$256	American, Frontier, Southwest, United, Virgin America
SNA	308	Frontier, Southwest, United
BUR	290	American, Southwest, United
ONT	261	Delta, Southwest, United

HONOLULU		
LAX	\$600	American, Delta, Hawaiian, United, Virgin America
SNA	826	United
BUR	814	United
ONT	816	United

LAS VEGAS		
LAX	\$86	American, Southwest, United, Virgin America
SNA	120	American, Southwest, United
BUR	120	American, Southwest, United
LGB	108	American, JetBlue
ONT	120	American, United

NEW YORK-NEWARK, N.J.		
LAX	\$321	American, Delta, United, Virgin America
SNA	375	American, Delta, Southwest, United
BUR	345	American, Southwest, United
LGB	355	American, Delta, JetBlue
ONT	365	American, Southwest, United

PHOENIX		
LAX	\$124	American, Delta, Southwest, United
SNA	158	American, Southwest
BUR	144	American, Southwest
LGB	116	American, Delta
ONT	116	Southwest, American

SAN FRANCISCO		
LAX	\$116	American, Delta, United, Virgin America
SNA	128	American, United, Southwest
BUR	112	American, United
LGB	112	American, Delta, JetBlue
ONT	138	American, Southwest, United

SEATTLE		
LAX	\$178	Alaska, Delta, Virgin America
SNA	251	Alaska, United
BUR	198	Alaska, United
LGB	188	JetBlue, Southwest
ONT	188	Alaska, United

WASHINGTON, D.C.		
LAX	\$336	American, Delta, JetBlue, United, Virgin America
SNA	397	American, Delta, United
BUR	406	American, United
LGB	371	American, Delta, JetBlue
ONT	396	American, Delta, Southwest, United



GENE J. PUSKAR Associated Press

DOWNTOWN Pittsburgh as seen from Mt. Washington.

PITTSBURGH FOR \$268

You have a sporting chance at a good fare to Pittsburgh with this round trip from LAX for \$268, including all taxes and fees. You must buy your ticket by Thursday. The fare, subject to availability, is for travel Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays through June 14 and again Aug. 22-Sept. 27. You must buy your ticket 21 days in advance. Info: Southwest, (800) 435-9792, www.southwest.com.

Source: Airfarewatchdog.com

INTERNATIONAL		
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND*		
LAX	\$1,096-\$1,489	Air New Zealand, Air Pacific, Air Tahiti Nui, American, Fiji, Hawaiian, Qantas, Virgin Australia
CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO		
LAX	\$285	Alaska, Aeromexico, American, Delta, United, Virgin America
LONDON*		
LAX	\$696-\$945	American, Air N.Z., British, Delta, KLM, Lufthansa, Norwegian, United, Virgin Atlantic
PARIS*		
LAX	\$668-\$903	Aer Lingus, Air France, Air Tahiti Nui, Am'can, British, Delta, KLM, Lufthansa, Norwegian, Swiss, United
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA*		
LAX	\$1,149-\$1,541	Air N.Z., American, Delta, Fiji, Korean, Qantas, United, Virgin Australia
TOKYO*		
LAX	\$856-\$1,301	All Nippon, American, Delta, JAL, Korean, Malaysian, Singapore, United
VANCOUVER, CANADA		
LAX	\$274	Air Canada, Alaska, Delta, United, WestJet

Restricted round-trip airfares as researched on Thursday, the day before the Travel section goes to press. Fares change daily, and availability is not assured. Fares, which may involve a change of planes, are for airlines serving Los Angeles International (LAX), Orange County/John Wayne (SNA), Burbank/Bob Hope (BUR), L.A. Ontario (ONT) and Long Beach (LGB). Domestic fares and international airfares include taxes and fees.

*These international fares vary because of differing fuel surcharges on different airlines. Sources: Sabre reservation system, airlines and Web