

# SundayTravel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

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PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER/GLOBE STAFF

## Desperately seeking solace

CHRISTOPHER MUTHER



ALBANY, N.H. — It wasn't ideal, but somehow, it strangely was. Here was a travel writer whose current geographical boundaries seemed to be collapsing by the day, accompanied by his niece, who was recently laid off from her job at a museum. We were trekking through ankle-deep mud while surrounded by thirsty mosquitoes.

As we hiked, we talked about going to the bathroom in the wild, as one does while walking through the mud in search of a remote covered bridge in the White Mountains during a pandemic.

"When I need to go, I just squat and hope an insect doesn't bite me," said my niece and all-around nature gal Jennifer. She camps in a tiny tent, climbs cliffs, and does other crazy things that essentially scare the bejesus out of me. Meanwhile, my definition of roughing it is staying in hotels where the thread count of the sheets is below 800 and there's no turndown service.

I planned a trip that suited both our tastes, in one of the few states where we could stay based on quarantining restrictions thanks to COVID-19. By the time you read this I'm sure those restrictions will have changed. We were at a glampground, staying in a tent that was more like a cabin. There was a full bathroom, a partial kitchen, and two bedrooms, one with a queen bed, the other with a bunk bed.

Camping was a strategic move. I'm a travel writer

How a pandemic helped me slow down and appreciate the lakes, snakes, and even the mosquitoes, roughing it in N.H.



with frayed nerves who was apprehensive about traveling again after more than three months of hiding while the world went to hell in a Hermès handbag. Baby steps. I needed baby steps to get my travel groove back. I wasn't keen on being around crowds, getting on a plane, or taking a long, adventurous road trip. In other words, all the things I loved doing just a few months ago.

I wanted to find a place that would alleviate anxiety rather than produce it.

Enter the glampground. Our tent was at Huttopia White Mountains, which is located about 2½ hours from Boston. Its website promised "little French touches," as the concept was developed in France before being exported to New Hampshire and Maine. I couldn't really spot those touches, partially because we kept to our campsite, and partially because I'm currently not much for community activities. Huttopia has a heated pool, volleyball, and bocce, but I didn't seek out the yoga, live music, or magic shows. I was more than fine to skip it. My current idea of community is an occasional Zoom meeting or viewing endless hours of "Match Game '76" with my cat.

That left Jennifer and me in our own little world. During our first day at Huttopia, we went swimming in the pond at the campground. (I'm done saying glampground.) The last time I swam in a pond, Culture Club was singing about chameleons and Roger Moore was playing James Bond. While I bobbed around in the slightly murky water I tried to remember why pond swimming had dropped out of my life. Oh, right, I

ABOVE: The pond at Huttopia White Mountains in Albany, N.H.

LEFT: The writer and his niece at the campfire at their site.

WHITE MOUNTAINS, Page N14

## in the White Mountains



### Three Maine teens start concierge service so tourists can quarantine

Three 17-year-old friends in Maine wanted to start a business to help the community during the pandemic so they did what any teenagers would do, they heeded advice from a musician.

Of course, at 17, you wouldn't expect that musician to be Tom Hamilton of Aerosmith.

"I read an interview in which he had detailed how the band would brainstorm," said Aidan Stark-Chessa. "They brought all the ideas they had, good or bad, to see what they liked. So that's what we decided we would do."

After a couple weeks of nightly brainstorming sessions, Procure Maine was born, a concierge service run by three rising seniors from the Portland area.

"We then started calling people we knew who are active in the local economy and we started putting our business together," said Stark-Chessa. "We designed a website, a flier, and a phone pitch. In total it took us approximately two weeks between having the idea and getting our first customer."

Procure Maine can certainly bring dinner

MAINE, Page N13

### How to camp

By Diane Bair and Pamela Wright  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS

Time to air out that old sleeping bag! Camping is *everything* this summer — it's inexpensive, it happens outdoors, and it's all about social distancing. It's basically you+family+woods. The recent North American Camping Report from KOA (Kampgrounds of America Inc.) revealed that 32 percent of people who have not camped before expressed a desire to try it this year. Across the board, 46 percent of the travelers surveyed by KOA consider camping to be the safest type of travel. Medical experts cited by NPR, CNN, and the Wall Street Journal, among others, have deemed camping a lower-risk summer activity if you do it mindfully.

"There is a natural ability to social distance in campgrounds, with ample space between

campsites, plus RVs and cabins that are self-contained units," says Toby O'Rourke, president and CEO of KOA. Guests bring their own possessions and prepare their own food. We'd suggest bringing your own soap, disinfectants, paper towels and toilet paper, too; the less stuff you touch, anywhere, the better. Contactless check-in also boosts the safety factor, says Caleb Hartung, CEO of Campspot (www.campspot.com), an online booking portal for RV parks, family campgrounds, and glamping resorts.

Bathhouses are a key consideration for tent campers, so campground owners are taking extra precautions to keep them clean and sanitized, O'Rourke says. Still, these shared spaces can get crowded, so keep that mask on, and wait until the restroom is empty before using it if you can.

CAMPING, Page N14

### Inside

TRAVEL ALERT

#### CAREFREE ROAD TRIPS? NOT IF YOU ARE BLACK

Many say that heading out requires much more extensive planning.

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# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



THE VIP LOUNGE | JAMES MONTGOMERY

## For this blues musician, documentaries are a major detour from touring

**C**elebrated blues musician James Montgomery is itching to get back on the road, but is using this hiatus from touring to work on two documentaries, one about his late brother, Jeff, a pioneer in LGBTQ advocacy, the other about blues harmonica player, singer, songwriter, and bandleader James Henry Cotton (information on both may be found at [www.jamesmontgomery.com](http://www.jamesmontgomery.com)). “Not being able to play live has affected every musician I know tremendously,” he said. “I usually do 100 shows a year, and I miss it. I miss the chance to connect with fellow musicians and with the audience.” Montgomery, who leads the New England-based James Montgomery Band, has toured with some of the music industry’s biggest names, including Johnny Winter and the Allman Brothers. Born and raised in Grosse Pointe, Mich., he lives in Newport, R.I., with his cat, Mr. Pip. We caught up with Montgomery, 71, to talk about all things travel.

### Favorite vacation destination?

Italy’s Amalfi Coast. It’s perhaps the most beautiful and enchanting place I have ever been to. My traveling companion at the time — who had been everywhere from Belize, to Hong Kong, to Machu Picchu, and other spectacular places — said, as we enjoyed a glass of wine midway between Salerno and Sorrento, “I’ve seen a lot of beautiful places but this blows them away.” Capri is a brief hydroplane boat ride away and is also spectacular. Remember the motto on the Isle of Capri is the same as the motto of Nantucket: “Why spend less?” The people throughout the whole Amalfi Coast are very welcoming and friendly, and the wine each village produces — available only by carafe in each town — is fantastic. The food they bring out from the

kitchens served family style is always a wonderful culinary masterpiece.

### Favorite food or drink while vacationing?

I always like to sample the red wine indigenous to the area in which I am traveling in hopes of discovering something new and experiencing something that the local people take pride in presenting as the wine of their area. I feel the same way about food. Think Anthony Bourdain ...

### Where would you like to travel to but haven’t?

I would love to travel to India. I am connected to that country on various spiritual levels and would visit certain specific places when I go. I haven’t been because of my schedule as a working musician — although COVID has put a stop to that. I couldn’t find the time to take the lengthy journey to go there and back and also, it would take a certain amount of planning.

### One item you can’t leave home without when traveling?

[In “Cat’s Cradle,”] Kurt Vonnegut called traveling “dancing lessons from God.” That’s how I’ve always felt about it, so there is no specific item I can think of that I can’t leave home without. Take what the universe gives you. I have one medium-size roller that is always filled with my day-to-day needs when traveling, so I never have to pack essentials: Just throw in what I need for that specific trip and the rest is already there. Well, maybe one essential: the current New York Times crossword puzzle for the plane ride, or even for shorter trips; [doing them] helps me fall asleep after a show.

### Aisle or window?

Definitely window. I love seeing each city

you fly into and trying to put the landscape together from above: guessing how the lights, highways, rivers, etc., relate to the city I am flying into or out of — even if it is one of my two “home” airports. I love flying over my house and seeing its relationship to the rest of the world. But mainly, with the window seat you have that slight ability to lean your head back ever so slightly and get some sleep!

### Favorite childhood travel memory?

Way too many childhood travel memories. My father was an executive at Chrysler Corporation, but his hobby was gourmet cooking. Family vacations were centered around going ... around the world to eat at specific restaurants including Maxim’s and LaTour d’Argent in Paris. In the words of Joan Rivers, “Can we talk?”

### Guilty pleasure when traveling?

Depends. Am I alone or with a companion?

### Best travel tip?

Referring to Vonnegut’s quote ... treat [travel] that way. Always get off the beaten path. As Antoine de Saint-Exupery wrote in his book “The Little Prince”: “Straight ahead of him, no one goes very far.” Experience as much as possible — and as safely as possible in today’s world — the culture and beauty and the historical reference to where you are. Understand that where you are standing is a place on this planet that is connected to the whole world and open yourself up to living and being that connectivity that helps you to see yourself as part of humanity and ultimately leads you to a better understanding of mankind.

JULIET PENNINGTON

### TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

## Can Overseas Adventure Travel change its mind about giving him a refund?

By Christopher Elliot  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

**Q.** My wife and I were scheduled to go on an Overseas Adventure Travel cruise to the Dalmatian Coast and Greece this spring. OAT canceled the trip because of the coronavirus. It offered to either rebook another tour and receive \$500 per person or receive a full refund.

We chose a refund. Two weeks later, an OAT representative called and said they “changed their mind.” No refunds would be available. We could either rebook or get a voucher.

Although I have sent many e-mails and have had three subsequent phone calls, OAT will not give us a refund. We are hoping that you can help us get our \$30,000 back.

JOHN GARDNER,  
Lakewood, Wash.

## Once you put an offer in writing, you have to honor it.

**A.** I’m sorry that Overseas Adventure Travel canceled your cruise. I think you and your wife would have had a great adventure in Italy, Croatia, and Greece. OAT did the right thing by canceling your cruise. It wasn’t safe to travel.

But your case has absolutely nothing to do with coronavirus. OAT sent you not one, but two e-mails offering a refund. You accepted the refund. Case closed.

You can’t revise an offer like that. Once you put it in writing, you have to honor it.

Now, that’s not to say I’m unsympathetic to OAT’s position. Like other travel companies, it’s facing an apocalyptic event. The cruise industry is particularly hard-hit by all the COVID-19 cancellations. I can understand why it would prefer to offer you a voucher.

But a deal’s a deal. You could have appealed your case to someone higher up at Overseas Adventure Travel. I list the names, numbers and e-mail addresses of the executives at Grand Circle Travel, which owns OAT, on my consumer advocacy site, [elliott.org](http://elliott.org). A brief, polite e-mail to one of them would have probably shaken a refund loose.

And if that didn’t work? I might have contacted your credit card company. OAT’s e-mail offering a refund would have made your credit-card dispute an easy win. Alternatively, you could have filed a case in small claims court, although you would have had to limit your claim to \$5,000.

I contacted Overseas Adventure Travel on your behalf. It refunded the \$30,000, as promised.

*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](mailto:chris@elliott.org).*

## HERE

### A NEW PLACE TO RIDE IN BOSTON

East Boston welcomes a new indoor spin studio this month. AXL Cycle Studio, which has offered live-stream spin and strength classes through its website since May, plans to open its 1,700-square-foot fitness studio in Maverick Square. AXL will offer daily spin classes for small groups, with contactless check-in, regular deep cleanings, and other safety protocols in place. Or take advantage of AXL LIVE, the studio’s livestream programming — take a class live or reserve it in your AXL library and watch it later. AXL LIVE offers spin classes daily and off-the-bike strength classes several days a week. The cycle studio will provide free Shimano shoe rentals to those who attend classes in person (although you’re encouraged to bring your own shoes). Online classes: \$8 per class or \$45 per month unlimited; in-person classes: three classes for \$30 or \$99 per month unlimited for new riders. 617-874-8249, [www.axlboston.com](http://www.axlboston.com).

### SEE ART EXHIBITS IN PERSON — AT LAST

Eight exhibits opened at Vermont’s Brattleboro Museum & Art Center on March 14 and then closed for three months the very next day. Grab your mask and head to the museum where you can see those exhibits now until Oct. 12. The museum has two exhibits on homelessness, featuring larger-than-life portraits of people experiencing homelessness in New York City, and a multimedia project by Brattleboro-artist Liz LaVorgna; an exhibit by National Geographic documentary



photographer Alison Wright that showcases women from around the world; and an installation by Roger Clark Miller, cofounder of the art-punk band Mission of Burma, featuring video, sound, and modified vinyl records. Visitors must wear face masks and abide by social-distancing requirements. Walk-ins are welcome; or reserve a time online to avoid a potential wait (40 visitors max). Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is on a “pay-as-you-wish” basis. 802-257-0124, [www.brattleboromuseum.org](http://www.brattleboromuseum.org).

## THERE

### TIME FOR AN EPIC BIKE ADVENTURE

Pedal by glacial lakes, through enormous canyons, and within eyeshot of towering peaks on a six-day camping and cycling adventure in Grand Teton and Yellowstone national parks. The tour, run by Las Vegas-based Escape Adventures, suits travelers of all fitness levels and families (kids welcome as long as they can cover the miles). Pedal 14–59 miles a day on a human-powered bicycle or e-bike. Highlights include cycling over Geneva Pass and Teton Pass; pedaling by bubbling mud pots and burping fumaroles; visiting

the world’s largest rhythmic spring; biking through Star Valley and Snake River Gorge; and keeping an eye out for bears, bison, and bighorn sheep along the way. Tours run through September 2020, starting at \$1,695 per person, which includes use of carbon fiber Specialized bikes with disc brakes and GPS, camping gear, meals, guides, and more. 800-596-2953, [www.escapeadventures.com](http://www.escapeadventures.com).

### MONTANA’S FIRST KIMPTON HOTEL

Heading to Montana’s “big sky country” this summer? Consider staying at the new Kimpton Armory Hotel Bozeman, a 122-room property that opens this month and offers travelers easy access to the region’s wilderness areas (including Yellowstone) and wide-open spaces. The hotel, located in the



historic National Guard Armory building in downtown Bozeman, also has 12 suites and offers guests complimentary yoga mats, bicycles, access to a fitness room and, later this summer, access to a rooftop pool during their stay. The hotel will offer three dining options: Fieldings, named after the local architect who designed the armory building, offers breakfast, dinner, and in-room dining; Tune Up, offers hearty bar snacks and a library of whiskey; and Sky Shed, a rooftop bar with light bites and mountain views. The hotel follows Kimpton’s Clean Promise initiative, ensuring guestrooms are thoroughly disinfected between stays, encouraging physical distancing, and providing guests with gloves and masks. Special opening rate: \$307, includes a travel tote with house-made road-trip snacks. 855-546-7866, [www.armoryhotelbozeman.com](http://www.armoryhotelbozeman.com).

## EVERYWHERE

### FEND OFF GERMS WITH THIS TRAVEL KIT

Whether you’re heading to the store, to the airport, or out on a road trip, consider bringing a Germ Genie. Henry Hurovitz, a 16-year-old from southern Florida, created this travel kit long before the novel coronavirus hit, after a travel mishap when he fell asleep on his airplane tray table and woke up with a rash. This rugged travel pouch comes with a variety of TSA-compliant products that help travelers fend off

germs on public transportation, at hotels, while pumping gas, and in other travel scenarios. The Germ Genie Travel Package comes with 15 airplane tray table covers, an airplane headrest cover, two pairs of non-latex gloves, hand sanitizer, two face masks, and a package of 10 disinfecting wipes (\$24.99). The deluxe version includes all of the above, plus a basic First Aid kit, 10 disposable toilet seat covers, a pair of shoe covers, and one (\$39.99) or two (\$44.99) KN95 masks. [www.germgenie.com](http://www.germgenie.com).



### A DRESS FOR ANY ADVENTURE

Grab brunch at an outdoor café, hop on your cruiser bike for a spin around town, or do cartwheels along the beach on a picture-perfect day.

Title Nine’s Dream Dress works for all these activities — and more. The versatile dress, made of a wrinkle-resistant buttery fabric (90 percent polyester, 10 percent spandex), is stylish enough to kick around town and tough enough to handle more sporty adventures. The breathable dress comes with the company’s clever SwiftSnap feature, a secret hem snap that lets you fasten the dress together between your legs so you can bike, run, or do those cartwheels without flashing too much skin. It also comes with a zippered pocket and in two colors: black with “celestial dots” and a blue and orange “mosaic.” \$89. [www.titlenine.com](http://www.titlenine.com).

KARI BODNARCHUK

## CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

# Trump gets his wall, but it's not the one he asked for

By Christopher Muther

GLOBE STAFF

We have a president who isn't shy about touting his accomplishments, no matter how insignificant or misbegotten. So why has Donald Trump been so silent on his latest and greatest victory. He has fulfilled one of the most important promises of his 2016 campaign, and there's been nary a whisper about it from the Oval Office. Not even talk of a military parade.

One of the most popular chants at Trump rallies during his 2016 campaign was "Build that wall!" That rallying cry referred to the construction of a multibillion dollar wall on the border of the United States and Mexico. The wall isn't finished, nor is Mexico paying for it. But Trump's other wall, the one that he has successfully and unintentionally built, doesn't come with a price tag. It comes with a death toll.

America's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been a scattershot model of how not to handle a crisis, and as a result, the European Union is putting the breaks on leisure travelers from the United States. According to The New York Times, the EU has compiled a list of 15 safe countries whose citizens will be allowed to enter the continent beginning July 1. The United States, along with Russia, Brazil, and India, did not make the cut.

Here is Trump's new wall, only it's invisible and it's now surrounding and restricting *us*. It's protecting others



EMILIO MORENATTI/ASSOCIATED PRESS/FILE

**A waiter serves customers in Tarragona, Spain, in early May. The European Union announced Tuesday that it will reopen its borders to travelers from 14 countries, and the United States is not included.**

from us. As coronavirus numbers in the United States surge and spike, will any country be interested in hosting US tourists this summer? Perhaps US travelers will be treated the way that Chinese and Asian travelers were treated here during the early days of the pandemic. Trump seems to be longing to bring those racist incidents back into vogue by insidiously calling coronavirus the Kung Flu. Could it be that people will stop eating at McDonald's around the world, the way that Americans avoided eating in China-

towns across the country?

Canada and the United States mutually agreed to close its border months ago — yet another wall — but Canada definitely got the better end of the deal. Instead of 130,000 COVID deaths, they've had 8,600.

The European tourism industry is reeling, but instead of rushing to open, it's looking at safety over money. This is what a proper response to a pandemic looks like. By strictly locking down much of the continent when hospitals were full and mortuaries

could no longer keep up, European countries were able to contain the virus much more effectively than the United States was.

Meanwhile in America, protesters were arming themselves and complaining to lawmakers that their freedom was being violated when they were asked to stay home to prevent the spread of the virus and keep hospitals from becoming overwhelmed. This behavior was encouraged by the president. Suddenly the "we're in this together" slogans felt hollow. Many states opened too early, social distancing measures were lax, and Trump appeared to be more focused on ratings than delivering strong, serious leadership. There has been no national response and, as a result, COVID wildfires are now racing through the South and West.

This is where Trump's wall becomes even more complicated, because it also intricately snakes throughout the 50 states. When consortiums of governors, or individual governors, start restricting visitors from other states, we're putting up more walls. Rhode Island was the most aggressive about this by stopping cars with out-of-state plates at its borders. It's domestic xenophobia, and it's rapidly becoming the norm.

But even before COVID-19 arrived, the United States was looking less appealing to foreign vacationers. In 2019, more than a dozen counties posted warnings about traveling here, primar-

ily because of mass shootings. Japan warned residents that the United States is a "gun society" and Uruguay's Ministry of Foreign Affairs cited "indiscriminate possession of firearms by the population" as a reason to be cautious.

The tourism industry, which was already losing millions before COVID-19, referred to the past three years as the Trump Slump. Inbound tourism was slipping, with many attributing the phenomenon to gun violence, and the general sense that tourists felt unwelcome here after the travel bans that the president hastily put into place within weeks of taking office.

Now the tables have turned. We're the ones being banned and the EU is protecting itself from caravans of US tourists this summer. It shouldn't come as a surprise. COVID aside, Trump has threatened to pull funding from the World Health Organization and NATO. International cooperation is not a strong suit of this administration.

So here we sit. Behind these new, expanding and unwelcome walls. And strangely, all I can hear are the words of another Republican president who once said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" It's phrase that needs to be adapted to the 21st century. "Mr. Trump, tear down this wall!"

*Christopher Muther can be reached at christopher.muther@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter @Chris\_Muther.*

## 2020 is summer of the road trip. Unless you're Black.

By Tariro Mzezewa

NEW YORK TIMES

If there's one thing the people behind car and RV companies, state tourism boards, national and state parks, and hotels agree on right now, it's that the summer of 2020 will be the summer of the road trip.

With the country reopening, travel industry experts say people are planning short trips to destinations relatively close to home. By driving they can control the number of people they interact with, how many stops they make on the way, and whether to take a detour or not — all things they can't control on a plane.

"I've always loved the freedom of the road trip," one hotel owner said in an e-mail in April. "It feels familiar, nostalgic and very American. Now, more than ever, when we are allowed to travel again, we expect to see families, friends and couples jumping into their cars and hitting the open road."

For many Black travelers, however, the road trip has long conjured fear, not freedom. Victor Hugo Green published the first version of his now-famous "Green Book" in 1936; it listed towns, motels, restaurants, and homes where Black drivers were welcome and would be safe. At the time, state and local laws enforced racial segregation, primarily in the South, a racial caste system known as Jim Crow that was legally undone by the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s. The "Green Book" was updated and published through the 1960s and inspired the 2018 film of the same name that won an Oscar but was widely criticized for making a white character's emotional journey its focus.

And while white travelers might convince themselves that the dangers the "Green Book" addressed have faded — places where there is a high likelihood of being stopped by the police or being harassed by fellow travelers, or where it could be fatal to be seen after sundown — for many Black travelers these dangers remain all too vivid.

Following the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of the police, and Ahmaud Arbery at the hands of the police, and coming on the heels of the coronavirus and its heavy toll — both in terms of health and employment — on the Black community, some Black travelers worry that they will face even more discrimination on the road this summer.

"Travel is supposed to be a reprieve from all the hard things we are usually dealing with, but it often doesn't feel that way for us," said Damon Lawrence, a cofounder of Homage Hospitality Group, a hotel company that draws inspiration for its properties



JANIE OSBORNE/NEW YORK TIMES/FILE

from Black history and caters particularly to Black travelers. "Having to constantly be on high alert adds extra anxiety, and it's always hard, but right now, it's an exhausting task to even leave the house, let alone go on a road trip."

Lawrence said that he always shares his location with friends and family on his phone so that someone can check in and know where he is.

"If something goes wrong, I need someone to know where I am or where I've been," he said.

### A lot of planning and no detours

Nisha Parker, a special-education teacher in Bakersfield, Calif., loves to drive and doesn't want to allow fear about what could go wrong to stop her. She also wants her two children to see America's landscapes, she said. So this summer her family will drive across the country from their hometown to New York.

But Parker, 32, said that she can't imagine just being able to pack up and go without a plan, like some white families might be able to do.

So for the last several months, she has been meticulously planning their journey. She knows which towns her family will stop in, which they'll drive straight through, and which they'll avoid entirely. She also knows which stretches of the road her children won't be allowed to drink juice or water on, to avoid bathroom breaks in towns where the family could encounter racism or violence based on their race.

"We try not to stop in places that are desolate, and we try to only stop in cities for gas," she said. "If we have to stop for gas in a rural area, we use a debit card so we don't have to go into the gas station store. If we are going to stay somewhere overnight, we look at the demographics to make sure we aren't going to a place where we would be the only Black people or where we would be targeted, especially at night."

Parker grew up road tripping with family between New York and North Carolina, and her parents took similar precautions. She and her husband have also considered getting a dashboard camera so that if they are stopped by police and things turn deadly there is some record of it.

In a way, Facebook groups for Black travelers and group chats have become the 21st-century version of the "Green Book." People talk about where they've been and follow in each other's footsteps, sharing where they were treated well and where they felt uncomfortable or unsafe. Many stay in the same hotels, eat at the same restaurants, or skip the same towns.

Monica Jackson, a medical biller for a hospital network in Texas, said that she loves to drive but as a rule will not go on a trip that requires driving for more than six

**For many Black travelers, the road trip has long conjured fear, not freedom.**

hours so that she doesn't have to consider spending the night in a town where she could be targeted for being Black.

### Deadly police stops

Jackson, 42, said that she feels anxious when she passes through areas — including Texas's Williamson and Denton counties — where she's had unnerving interactions with white police officers.

"I always feel worried on the road in some counties because I've been stopped for no reason," she said. "I always pray and say, 'OK, Lord please protect me. I don't want to end up in jail for no reason.' It's always in the back of my mind that I could be the next Sandra Bland."

Bland was a vocal civil rights activist who was found hanged in a Texas jail cell in July 2015 after she was arrested during a traffic stop.

Brian Oliver, founder of BMore See More, a nonprofit that works with Black male students and encourages them to travel, said that he used to be worried about driving in the Deep South, but videos of Black men being killed by the police or targeted by white Americans have shown him that racist violence can occur anywhere.

"There used to be a sense of some places being less safe for Black people, but from seeing the news lately, I don't think there's any place that's guaranteed to be safe for us," he said.

Lawrence of Homage Hospitality said that a desire to make Black travelers feel welcome and able to relax without worrying that someone might call the police on them simply for checking in was one of the main reasons he created his company.

### The right to be on the road

Jeff Jenkins, a travel blogger who runs Chubby Diaries, a travel company for plus-size people, said that his anxiety about being targeted by the police ran so deep that it affected his choice of car. The recent killings of Black men by the police have only added to his anxiety.

"I go for soccer-mom cars because they seem to be less intimidating to the police," he said.

Jenkins, 34, is planning on driving from Austin, Texas, to visit several national parks this summer, he said, adding that in recent weeks he has become "an RV savant."

"These . . . parks, these roads are meant for me as well," Jenkins said. "They are not meant to just be shared with one ethnicity. I have pride that this is my country, and I have every right to bask in the wonders of America, like any white American."

## Teens make Maine a vacationland again

### ► MAINE

*Continued from Page N11*

and grab groceries, but also, if you're visiting from out-of-state and forget a necessity for your trip, the boys encourage folks to consider them your personal shopper. Since tourists must either provide a negative COVID-19 test taken within the last 72 hours or self-quarantine for 14 days when arriving in Maine, the friends figure they'll help flatten the curve, so-to-speak, by running errands for vacationers and locals alike.

The goods are promised within 24 hours, but delivery is quite often same-day. Because of their age, the young entrepreneurs cannot purchase or deliver alcohol, but the friends anticipated this and used their business savvy to hire an independent contract who is older than 21. The company also adds a 30 percent gratuity to each order.

While teenagers are stereotyped to be of the texting generation, cofounder Seamus Woodruff, says Procure Maine prefers to connect with a phone call to ensure they are delivering first-rate service while making sure the order is "exactly what the customer wants."

"Two of the things we value most as a company are delivering superior quality goods to our customers, as well as supporting the community that has done so much for us our entire lives," says Woodruff.

To this end, Procure Maine partners with Black Point Seafood and Milkweed Farm when a customer's shopping list calls for such items.

"It has been incredible how many people go out of their way to help us succeed," said cofounder Owen Stefanakos. "Nearly everyone we talk to has someone to get us in contact with or shares advice about our business."

The three friends, who met in elementary school, aren't new to the gig economy. In fact, Woodruff has helped on his family's farm for as long as he can remember, developing a strong work ethic that later helped him land him jobs busing tables and working for a baker. Stark-Chessa has a similar story, washing dishes at a pizza joint before quickly getting promoted to chef. And Stefanakos was a shoe salesman his sophomore year, out-earning his older colleagues on commissions.

When Stark-Chessa turns 18 this fall, the friends plan on using their hard-earned summer cash for another joint business-venture: Buying an investment property that the three plan to rent out to pay the mortgage.

The idea to get into real estate came during quarantine, when the teens turned to books about business and investment. But behind every great idea is a greater support system.

"All of our parents have been incredibly supportive," said Stefanakos. "My mom has given us advice on design and marketing, and my dad, an entrepreneur himself, has helped guide us through all the different pitfalls of business. We are learning every day, and their advice has been essential to our success."

Although the boys are passionate entrepreneurs, eager to hone their business approach, they are also looking forward to interacting with others, especially after COVID-19 has taken away so many social opportunities during the past several months.

"We all love to connect with people," said Stark-Chessa. "If this gives us the opportunity to meet people, then that is a huge plus for us."

*To learn more about Procure Maine or to request their services, visit procuremaine.com or call 207-295-3507.*



**Aidan Stark-Chessa grabs takeout for a Procure Maine customer.**

# Amid pandemic, rediscovering life's beauty

## ► WHITE MOUNTAINS

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tipped over in a canoe once in junior high and lost my apple green nylon and velcro wallet.

That night we did traditional camping things, such as make turkey burgers, try to start a fire with some suspiciously inexpensive wood we bought at a roadside stand, and burn Jiffy Pop. The campground was maybe half full and never felt suffocating. With no one around I could doff my face mask. It was one of the few times I had been outside with a naked face since the CDC suggested that Americans begin wearing masks.

We sat staring into the fire, happily brought together by the worst of circumstances. If my travel wings had not been clipped and my niece hadn't been laid off, I'm 99 percent certain we wouldn't have been catching up on life, laughing, and burning Jiffy Pop at a campground in the White Mountains. I refuse to say "This moment was made possible by COVID-19," but it kind of was. Still, I refuse to say it.

The category of tent we rented at Huttopia, called the Trappeur, was equipped with nearly everything we needed. There was a kitchen (the cooktop was propane and located outside), an indoor dining area, a small deck with a pair of butterfly chairs, and a picnic table. If you're a large person, you may have difficulty trying to move in the very tight shower, but otherwise it was comfortable. Linens and towels were provided, but I'd stop short of calling it glamorous because the toiletries were criminally generic, and there was no conditioner for my hair! What kind of an operation was this? I took a breath and reminded myself that I was here for an escape, and not to walk about with silky hair smelling of bergamot and pomegranate.

Given that my nature-loving, potty-squatting niece was familiar with the area I let her plan our itinerary for the following day. She suggested we start at Diana's Baths, a series of small waterfalls that are located near the campground. It appeared that everyone else in North Conway had the same idea. The lot was full, with a line of cars circling like vultures hungry for an empty space. If the cars couldn't maintain social distance, what hope would the rest of us have?

Next please.

Her second suggestion was Echo Lake State Park. But when we arrived, entry was reservation only with capacity capped at 50 percent. Before we left the parking lot I made a reservation on my phone for the following day.

Feeling emboldened with my unconditioned hair, lack of bergamot



PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



scent, and mosquito-ravaged ankles, I decided to start calling the shots. We set a course for the Kancamagus Highway. It's 34 miles of gorgeousness that stretches east to west through the White Mountains. More importantly, it's filled with beautiful trails that are relatively easy to tackle and well-maintained. Most of them run along rivers where there are places for swimming. Just ignore the occasional snake, and you'll do fine.

COVID be damned, we had the kind of glorious, carefree day that I hadn't experienced in months. It was filled with scenic overlooks, bare feet dangling in toe-numbing snowmelt streams, and yet more mosquitoes. I'm fairly certain the mosquitoes of the White Mountains are resistant to any kind of repellent. In fact, I think they're drawn to the scent it, much the way that faye travel writers are drawn to the scent of bergamot and pome-

granate.

We began at the Lower Falls Scenic Area on the Kancamagus Highway, where there were plenty of people swimming and hiking, but there was enough space to remain six (or more) feet apart. Despite the hefty mosquitoes, it was a treat to be in nature and oblivious to whatever terrible news was happening outside of the White Mountains. From there we went to the Lincoln Woods Trail and ambled

**Clockwise (from above left): A Trappeur tent at Huttopia White Mountains in Albany, N.H.; the popular Franconia Falls Trail in Lincoln, N.H.**

across the suspension bridge and then through pine trees and alongside the river. When was the last time any of us actually ambled without dread?

The following day we showed up for our reservation at Echo Lake, which was quiet except for children splashing and playing in the water. Having proven our hiking mettle the day before, we took a longer hike up Cathedral Ledge, which is about six miles total, with a bit of elevation. When we reached the end, my niece went straight for the lake, which was crystal clear and filled with tiny tadpoles at the edge.

I dutifully found a picnic table, pulled out my phone, and started catching up on e-mail. My niece urged me to come into the water a few times. I begged her off, needing to respond to work requests and questions. But when I looked up and saw Jennifer swimming as a family of ducks glided past her, I realized my priorities were misplaced. There would be no lasting memories from catching up on work e-mails.

I put the phone away, put on my bathing suit, and, like the nearby ducks, I swam with my family in the tranquil lake.

*Huttopia, 57 Pine Knoll Road, Albany, N.H. 603-447-3131. Prices for basic tents start at \$175.*

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## For social distancing, camping is a natural

### ► CAMPING

Continued from Page N11

So, you've whittled some S'mores sticks and re-familiarized yourself with ghost stories (and the lyrics to "Kumbaya.") What else can you do to make sure your 2020 camping trip is memorable for all of the right reasons? Here's what the experts say.

#### Choose your style

"A rustic tent site in a dark sky region with no Internet access may be your cup of tea, or perhaps a canvas glamping tent with a kitchenette and a queen bed on a lake is more your style. There's no one right way to camp," says Hartung. Choose the type of lodging that suits you best.

If this is your first time camping, avoid remote wilderness areas and consider a cabin, says Dan Yates, founder of Pitchup.com, (www.pitchup.com) the world's largest outdoor accommodation booking platform. Some private campgrounds, including KOA properties, offer basic cabins for rent. Commercial campgrounds (as opposed to parks and wilderness areas) are a good choice for Nervous Nellies because they are staffed with folks who can help answer questions. They also operate camp stores stocked with necessities, in case you forget something.

"The camping community is incredibly welcoming and friendly, so never hesitate to ask for help," if you need assistance with your RV, tent set-up, or even your campfire, O'Rourke says. (From six-plus feet away, and wearing a mask, of course.)

#### Book ahead

It's fun to be spontaneous, but that won't work this summer. "With capacity reduced and a surge of interest in camping, book ahead," Yates says. Plus, state parks and commercial campgrounds opened later than ever this year, so the camping season is compressed. Online booking is the way

to go; you can find out what campgrounds and campsites are available on your preferred dates in an instant, plus scan for amenities and even cleaning protocols on sites like Pitchup.com.

#### Camp close to home

Some states are still urging out-of-state visitors to quarantine upon arrival, a good reason to stick to your home state. And there's this: if the weather punks out and you want to want to bail on your campout, you'll be happy you didn't make a long drive! If you're a never-ever camper, you'll be surprised at the number of state park campgrounds and camping resorts in our neck of the woods, even close to the city. For example, Hingham's Wompatuck State Park (www.mass.gov) is just 19 miles from Boston but it's a gorgeous, 3,526-acre green space, with woodlands, streams, and a reservoir. More than 250 campsites are available in a section of the park that's set back from the day-use area.

#### Give your gear a trial run

Shake out the sleeping bags (or spider them, as our kids would say) and test the zippers, inflate air mattresses to confirm they work, and try setting up your tent if you have the space. This will help you avoid potential embarrassment later, says Dan Yates. On one of his trips, "it took three times longer than expected to get to our camping site, and it was pitch dark when we got there," he recounts. "We put up a six-person tent right out of the package, car headlights blazing, as the other campers watched with increasing annoyance. This is not an experience I want to repeat!" Also, a trial run will let you know if anything major is missing, like tent stakes or poles, always a possibility if you've borrowed your gear.

#### Get the kids involved



CAMPSPOT



ERIN SWANN

**Camping comes in many forms from pitching a tent in the wild to glamping with all the comforts of home. One universal staple all campers enjoy? S'mores.**

Camping with small fry? Download a campground map and give them a say in picking the campsites, choosing a hiking trail, or figuring out what would be fun to cook on the campfire. The more involved they are at the outset, the more invested they'll be in the trip. With kids, we'd definitely choose a camping area with things to do, like

swimming, biking, and hiking trails. Just steer clear of contact sports with other campers.

#### Give yourself some space

Set up your campsite as far away as possible from nearby occupied sites. It will boost your comfort level, and — COVID-19 notwithstanding — who wants to hear a stranger snore all night?

#### Packing basics (plus a few extras that will make all the difference)

Tent? Check. Sleeping bags and pads: check. Lantern: check. Insect repellent: Check. Food and drinks

packed in a cooler with ice: Check. A couple of pots and pans, dishes, and cutlery: Check. Biodegradable detergent, a dishcloth, and towel: Check. Water bottles for all: Check. Marshmallow roasting sticks: But of course.

Experienced campers bring along a few other things to make life easier in the woods, like headlamps (much easier to keep track of than flashlights), and waterproof matches (everybody forgets the matches). A small rug or mat for the vestibule is handy; you'll leave your shoes on this so you don't track debris into your tent or tear its fabric. And "don't underestimate the necessity of a tarp between the ground and your tent, along with your tent's rain cover, to keep moisture from building up inside your tent," says KOA's O'Rourke. Tents typically come with a separate rain fly that needs to be attached to the tent. (If you don't do this, you'll be tempting the rain gods. Trust us on this.) Also, "an extra tarp and rope can be used as a sunshade for areas where you'll be cooking, eating, or relaxing," O'Rourke adds. Extra clothing is also a dandy idea, just in case it gets colder or wetter than expected — this is New England, after all. Of course, you'll want to pack hand sanitizer and a disinfectant for wiping down picnic tables, faucets, and the like. Don't pack firewood (so you don't transport critters); buy it at the campground, a nearby store, or from a local roadside vendor.

#### Think about stretching the season

With the resurgence in camping and a shortened season, snagging a campsite may be difficult this summer. If you get shut out, consider pushing your trip into autumn. The weather in much of the region is still lovely then, and most campgrounds stay open into October. Yeah, you may have to bundle up a bit more after dark, but there's nothing like a toasty fire on a chilly night.

*Diane Bair and Pamela Wright are coauthors of Frommer's "The Unofficial Guide to the Best RV & Tent Campgrounds: The Northeast." They can be reached at bairwright@gmail.com.*