

Boston Sunday Globe

FEBRUARY 4, 2018

M4 Travel

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The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

HERE

RACE IN THE US TOBOGGAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Watch racers sled down a 400-foot-long icy toboggan chute and slide across frozen Hosmer Pond during the 2018 US National Toboggan Championships in Camden, Maine. Or take part in the fun. The event, part of Camden's Winterfest, takes place Feb. 9-11 at the Camden Snow Bowl, the only US ski mountain with views of the Atlantic Ocean. Registered participants can take free practice runs Friday (\$5 per person, per hour for non-registered participants). Then watch or take part in two-, three-, or four-person runs on Saturday. Don't miss the costume contest parade and live music by Planet Pan at noon, and the Chili Challenge at Sea Dog Brewing in downtown Camden, 5-8 p.m., also on Saturday. Final runs and the awards ceremony take place Sunday. Limited onsite parking costs \$10, or park in downtown Camden and take a \$2 round-trip shuttle from the village green. 207-236-3438, www.camden-snowbowl.com.

ROMANCE YOUR SWEETHEART IN RHODE ISLAND

Little says "I love you" more than a weekend getaway and a new Mercedes-Benz. Shower your valentine with love and a chance to enjoy the Over-the-Top Ocean View package at Watch Hill's Ocean House resort. The special package, valid through February, includes a two-night stay in the Penthouse Suite (picture fabulous Atlantic views), romantic dinner for two



at the new onsite seafood restaurant Coast, daily in-room breakfast with mimosas for two, a vintage nautical starfish diamond necklace, and a 2018 Mercedes-Benz AMG C 43 4MATIC sedan. Rates start at \$94,500 (the car, alone, is valued at \$65,000); book at least seven days in advance. 401-584-7014, www.oceanhouseri.com.

THERE

EXPLORE IRELAND ON TWO WHEELS Take a new 12-day bike trip along Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way during which you'll discover tucked-away beaches, visit charming villages, and wend along cliffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The 400-mile tour, run by Wilderness Ireland, begins at Mizen Head on Ireland's southernmost point, crosses the rugged peninsulas and mountain passes of counties Cork and Kerry, and then passes through the remote Black Valley (the last place in Ireland to get electricity — in 1976) before island-hopping around the Aran Islands. Cyclists continue along Connemara's rocky shoreline, visit two of Ireland's three glacial fjords, bike

through the Bluestack Mountains of Donegal, and end up at Malin Head on Ireland's northernmost point. Rate: \$3,900 per person, includes 11 night's accommodations, most meals, ride support, luggage transfers, and entrance fees. Departures: July 28 and Aug. 18. www.wildernessireland.com

SAN FRANCISCO SALUTES THE ROCK Learn about daily life at Alcatraz, one of America's most infamous federal prisons, through new exhibits and talks by a former inmate and former prison guard. "Alcatraz: Life on the Rock" runs through June 28 at Parc 55 San Francisco as part of the 55th anniversary celebration of the prison's closing. It includes prison artifacts, LIFE Magazine images, and educational videos. "Alcatraz: The Last Day" runs Feb. 21 to June 28 at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square hotel, and includes a replica jail cell and an escape route display. The Hilton's free speaker series features a talk by former inmate Bill Baker on Feb. 28; former guard Jim Albright, who was the last man standing on Alcatraz Prison, on March 21 (part of a 55th anniversary party); historian John Martini, who talks about "200 years on The Rock — Alca-

traz! The Whole Shocking Story," on April 26; and former resident Jolene Babyak on May 24. 415-771-1400 (Hilton), 415-392-8000 (Parc 55), www.alcatrazcruises.com.

EVERYWHERE

KEEP A VIRTUAL LEASH ON YOUR PET

Help find your missing pet using Pawscout, a Bluetooth-enabled tag that attaches to your dog or cat's collar and can assist in tracking your furry friend. Attach the waterproof device using the small metal ring or one of three different-size rubber mounts (rubber mounts are tricky to attach but lay flush against the collar so work better for cats and smaller dogs).



Above: A Bluetooth-enabled Pawscout tag

Right: D.A.D. 2 self-defense pepper spray device

Download the Pawscout app, register, add pertinent info — your pet's name, photo, breed, and any medical issues — and sync with your smartphone.

Use the app to track your pet (the tag displays real-time on a map), keep a log of dog walks, and record medical information. Set up a "virtual leash" and you'll receive a notification if your pet wanders beyond your set boundaries. If your pet goes missing, the app alerts other Pawscout users in the area and notifies you if your pet comes within 300 feet of one of those people. The tag's replaceable battery lasts approximately six months. www.pawscout.com.

PROTECTION WHILE TRAVELING

Throw the D.A.D. 2 in your purse or pocket — or grip it in your hand — and use it to defend yourself in case of an attack. The easy-to-use device, made by Tigerlight, contains a military-strength pepper spray that can project up to 10 feet to help fend off an attacker. What really sets it apart: The device has built-in Bluetooth and GPS technology. Sync the device with the D.A.D. app on your smartphone and it sends a Crowd Alert to anyone else with the app if you trigger the device, therefore letting people know you're in danger. It can also transmit text and e-mail alerts to your D.A.D. contacts, including those who don't have the app. The device has a helpful rubber hand strap for a secure grip, a built-in ultra-bright flashlight, and a replaceable AA battery. Best of all: It comes with a practice cartridge. www.tigerlight.net.

KARI BODNARCHUK