

Sightsee in Your Own Town

VISITORS AND RESIDENTS alike now have a new attraction in which to experience Sarasota's multi-layered past. Discover Sarasota Tours, which offers four different daily and nightly sightseeing tours aboard an air-conditioned trolley opened near downtown in October.

In addition to the City Sightseeing Tours, Happy Hour Sightseeing Tours, Circus Tours and the Ghost Tour of Sarasota, Discover Sarasota Tours also offers special monthly tours. These tours include: Public Art of Sarasota, Psychic Sundays and The Amish Experience. New specialty tours will be added in each month.

All tours depart from the DST Trolley Depot located in a 1930s cottage near downtown with a vintage gift shop. The 90-minute tours are led by trained tour guides most of whom have acting or entertainment backgrounds. Early

daytime tours run at 10 AM, afternoon tours begin at 1 PM, happy hour tours begin at 5 PM and the ghost tour runs at 7:30 PM. Nighttime tours include complimentary beer or wine in the trolley cottage tiki bar.

Tammy Hauser, founder and CEO of Discover Sarasota Tours, says, "When I moved here from Minneapolis, I could not believe there were no city sightseeing tours, given the number of tourists who visit us. So, I put my love of theater, entertainment, tours, and Sarasota all together to come up with this business. There are so many niche areas to explore with our tours. The response has been really positive," she says.

Tour tickets and information can be found at discoversarasotatours.com. For information call 941-260-9818.



Discover Sarasota Tours offers City Sightseeing Tours, Happy Hour Sightseeing Tours, Circus Tours and the Ghost Tour of Sarasota. They also offer special monthly tours including: Public Art of Sarasota, Psychic Sundays and The Amish Experience. New specialty tours will be added in each month.

A Look at the new Sarasota Modern Hotel

THE SARASOTA MODERN - A Tribute Portfolio Hotel, part of Marriott International, Inc. - opened in late 2018. Situated in the heart of the Rosemary District, this 89-room luxury boutique hotel offers captivating architecture paired with minimalist design.

Inspired by European design and 1940s modernism in South Florida, the hotel blends indoor and outdoor living with two aqua pools, a hot tub and private cabanas. The hotel features unconventional entertaining spaces, 10,000 square feet of meeting space, spa services and dining at Rudolph's, a curated restaurant offering local cuisine.

Dressed with white walls, natural wood detailing, floor-to-ceiling windows, private outdoor clawfoot tubs, all surrounded by lush greenery, The Sarasota Modern offers an oasis of utopian living. For more information on The Sarasota Modern, visit www.thesarasotamodern.com or call 941-906-1290.



sotamodern.com or call 941-906-1290. The Sarasota Modern is located at 1290 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota.



The 5th Annual Punta Gorda Short Film Festival

THE CHARLOTTE HARBOR OFFICE OF FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA AND ASBURY SHORTS/USA present the 5th Annual Punta Gorda Short Film Festival (PGSFF). This event hosted by The Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce (PGCC) returns to the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center on March 6 at 7 p.m.

Four years ago the Punta Gorda Short Film Festival was born and has continually sold out every year since. "We are humbled and so thrilled Charlotte County has embraced this event. If the laughter and non-stop applause are any indication, these shows are a smash hit and Florida Weekly agrees as it voted the PGSFF "Best Night at the Movies in 2017," stated, Nanette Leonard Executive Producer.

"Our show combines award-winning films from past years with new international festival honorees, creating a rare opportunity for audiences to see world-class shorts on a real cinema screen rather than YouTube, computers or smart phones. Academy Award nominated director Jason Reitman (JUNO, Up in the Air, Thank You for Smoking, Young Adult) calls Asbury Shorts: "The best short film show I've ever seen." The

fast-paced, highly entertaining showcase features the best in short film comedy, drama and outstanding animation.

Highlights from the 5th Annual Punta Gorda Short Film Festival include:

- **"Alternative Math"** a comedy (USA). From Dallas based director David Maddox, winner of three "Best of Show" domestic film festival awards. A dedicated public grammar school teacher has a tough time with new attitudes in education and her stubbornness to defend her subjects leads to a riot and a national debate.

- **"Pickle"** a documentary (USA). Director Amy Nicholson's documentary "Pickle" examines the complicated relationships humans have with their pets in a film of unexpected warmth and mirth.

The Punta Gorda Short Film Festival is recommended for ages 16 and "way way above" (Some of the films are subtitled.) Tickets are \$20 and \$25 at the door (general admission). For information, call 908-618-1776. To purchase tickets, go to <https://pgsffix.bpt.me>. Tickets can also be purchased at the Punta Gorda Chamber at 252 W Marion Ave, Punta Gorda.



Wild Women Expeditions takes immersive travel to another level with new-for-2019 itineraries of 10 and 15 days that delve into the Berber culture of the women of Morocco.

Some 30 percent of Moroccans speak Berber; the national language is Arabic. The Berber culture originated along the Nile, spreading into today's North Africa that includes Morocco. Morocco is known for being one of the most progressive states in the Middle East and North because of its support for women's rights. Despite these advancements, women's education in Morocco still lags behind and over 80% of women are illiterate.

Berber women of Morocco will help to

unravel their story and culture on women-only trips across Morocco, enroute sharing such secrets as how to maneuver the labyrinth of a medina (old city), find their way into the wilderness of the Rif mountain range and learn the art of making tagine.

By casting Moroccan women as, among others, drivers and guides for these trips, Jennifer Haddow hopes that both guests and locals will be empowered. She is the owner of Wild Women Expeditions that pioneered worldwide women-only travel.

She notes that Berber women in Morocco, as are women in many other cultures, are too often cast as the memory keepers. "As travelers we love when they share their traditions in colorful ways. But this sharing can be a double-edged sword for women who may be left out of leadership opportunities in the tourism industry," said Haddow. "On our Morocco tour we put the stories of women in the spotlight while empowering them with opportunities to benefit from tourism and play a leading role."

Wild Women Expeditions tours in Moroc-

co will work with a female Berber entrepreneur who owns the transportation company for these tours and who hires female drivers and will engage Berber Moroccan women as tour leaders are hiring female guides. You'll visit women's cooperatives where locally made items are sold.

Women will also enjoy conversing over a women-hosted dinner in Casablanca through Al Hidn, an association that empowers illiterate widow women in rebuilding their lives through educational programs as well as providing them with financial and educational support to keep their kids in school.

Wild Women Expeditions uses accommodations that reflect the company's commitment to women's empowerment, such as the Kasbah Toubkhal that co-founded the Education for All program for girls' education (an additional 5% of the revenue from a group stay here is donated to this local project)

Women travelers will stay overnight at an eco lodge owned by a local woman and part of an ecotourism initiative focused on empowering local women in the Rif: www.gitetalassemthane.com/en/qui-sommes-nous/

The 10-day itinerary, Medina to Mountains

of Northern Morocco, begins with a welcome dinner at Rick's Café (from the movie Casablanca). The days that follow blend mosques, medinas, handicraft workshops, horseback riding and hiking in the Rif Mountains, a hammam (spa) and a world-famous botanical garden. The \$3,495 rate includes accommodation for nine nights, all meals, private vehicle, driver, English-speaking guide and local guides and airport transfers.

The 15-day program, Mosaic of Wild Morocco, focuses on Morocco's beauty from the dunes of the Sahara to the Atlas Mountains and on to the beaches of the Atlantic. Trekking by camel, dining with nomads, sleeping under a canopy of stars in Sahara luxury dune camp, draping the body with flowers of henna, chattering with Barbary macaque and indulging in a hammam are just a few of the experiences. The nearly all-inclusive rate of \$3,995 includes guided horseback riding, cycling and trekking, plus in-home meals with Berber families and cooking demonstrations.

For details, trip dates, availability and reservations for these new trips in Morocco, visit wildwomenexpeditions.com.

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First Time Rafting? Advice for Novice River Runners

Taking on a new challenge is exhilarating and sometimes a wee bit frightening. This is when advice from the experts comes in handy. Western River Expeditions has been putting people and rafts on rivers since 1961. Over this nearly 60-year span of time they have probably seen just about everything guests and nature can deliver. Through this experience, the company has compiled a list of nine sage tips for the novice when it comes to rafting.

• **Pack like a minimalist.** You really won't need a third pair of pants or additional sneakers. That extra hoodie? That fifth t-shirt? A second high-powered lens for that camera? Leave all this stuff at home.

• **Unplug.** People always seem to over pack by bringing unneeded electronics. The canyon is a dead zone so your cell phone won't work. That iTunes collection and those Bluetooth headphones only drown out the cool sounds of nature. Without that digital distraction you can have a real conversation. Turn off your lantern and you can see satellites and the Milky Way. Bring and use your camera. But be sure to bring a waterproof case or bag. You will want to also bring spare batteries and memory cards.

• **Plan to journal along the way.** The isolated surroundings of a whitewater rafting trip provide the best place to clear your mind and reconnect with thoughts and emotions that usually are buried and untapped in the bustle and noise of the "civilized" world. Try to take a few moments in the evening to jot down the location of your camp, what impressed you during the day, and what emotions and feelings you had.

• **Ditch the expensive duds.** So you



thought about placing that online order for that high-tech shirt that repels dirt, water and mosquitos and still smells sweet on day six? Forget it. You already own what you probably need. Do you know what guides wear? Thrift store dress shirts with long sleeves and a collar to protect against the hot sun. Most likely they are cotton so they stay wet and cool most of the day. After they wear out on a side canyon hike in the Grand Canyon, or mud-stained and red in Cataract Canyon – you can just toss them in the trash and shop for more.

• **You don't need a tent.** Of course, one is provided, but if it doesn't call for rain, don't even unpack it. Why everyone wants to sleep in a tent is something guides will never understand. A stuffy tent in the Utah and Arizona desert can be downright stifling. You will actually sleep happier under the stars. The night sky is breathtaking. Trees and thick vegetation in camp will provide all the privacy walls you'll need for changing.

• **Accept the fact that you may lose anything you bring.** Use this simple guide: if you can't lose something in camp or in the river without falling into a fit of depression, just don't bring it with you.

Sure, losing a camera or pair of sunglasses can be expensive, it's the heirloom jewelry or other irreplaceable items that need to be left at home.

• **Listen to your guide.** If your guide tells you to drink water all day and wear sunscreen, do both. The first symptoms of dehydration include dizziness, a headache and irritability. The happiest campers are

those who did not get over-baked and sun-burned in the first 20 minutes. Be sure to put on sunscreen every day. Also, if guides say not to dive off that rock ledge into the river -- DON'T.

• **Most of all, relax.** It's why you decided to put your faith in the hands of a professional outfitter and a crew of seasoned guides for your vacation. They know how to best pull off an extraordinary experience with plentiful, delicious food, expert navigation of the rapids, topnotch equipment and ample time allotted to kickback and enjoy the unforgettable scenery.

For a copy of Western River Expeditions' 2019 catalog, visit www.westernriver.com.

Frida Kahlo at the Brooklyn Museum



FRIDA KAHLO: APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEIVING marks the first exhibition in the United States to present Kahlo's personal objects from the Casa Azul (Blue House), the artist's lifelong home in Mexico City. The exhibition is a rare opportunity to explore Kahlo's creative vision and self-crafted identity through a presentation of her clothing and other personal items, paintings and drawings by the artist, photographs, film, and documentation, as well as related objects from the Museum's collection. The exhibit open February 8.

Kahlo's unique and immediately

recognizable style was an integral part of her identity. Kahlo came to define herself through her ethnicity, disability, and politics, all of which were at the heart of her work. Frida Kahlo: Appearances Can Be Deceiving will display a collection of her clothing and other personal possessions, which were rediscovered and inventoried in 2004 after being locked away since Kahlo's death, in 1954.

They are displayed alongside important paintings, drawings, and photographs from the celebrated Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art, as well as related historical film and ephemera. To highlight the collecting interests of Kahlo and her husband, muralist Diego Rivera, works from our extensive holdings of Mesoamerican art are also included.

Kahlo's personal artifacts—which range from noteworthy examples of Kahlo's Tehuana clothing, contemporary and pre-Colonial jewelry, and some of the many hand-painted corsets and prosthetics used by the artist during her lifetime—had been stored in the Casa Azul (Blue House), the longtime Mexico City home of Kahlo and Rivera, who had stipulated that their possessions not be disclosed until 15 years after Rivera's death. The objects shed new light on how Kahlo crafted her appearance and shaped her personal and public identity to reflect her cultural heritage and political beliefs, while also addressing and incorporating her physical disabilities.

More info at brooklynmuseum.org.

Frontier Airlines Launches Non-Stops from SRQ to Cleveland, Philly and Atlanta



Frontier Airlines has begun service from Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport with non-stop flights to Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, Philadelphia International Airport and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Connections will be available to select cities across Frontier's network. Go FlyFrontier.com.

Frontier offers the ability to customize travel. For example, you can purchase options a la carte or in one low-priced bundle called the WORKSsm. This bundle includes refundability, a carry-on bag, a checked bag, the best available seat, waived change fees and priority boarding.

Summary of Initial Service:

• **Sarasota To/From Cleveland.** Depart SRQ: 4:35 p.m. Arrive CLE: 7:04 p.m.; Depart CLE: 12:59 p.m. Arrive SRQ: 3:24 p.m. Aircraft: Airbus A320 Family. Frequency: Monday, Friday. Offered seasonally.

• **Sarasota To/From Philadelphia.** Depart SRQ: 8:30 p.m. Arrive PHL: 11:05 p.m.; Depart PHL: 4:47 p.m. Arrive SRQ: 7:48 p.m. Aircraft: Airbus A320 Family. Frequency: Monday, Friday. Offered seasonally.

• **Sarasota (SRQ) to/from Atlanta (ATL)** Depart SRQ: 11 a.m. Arrive ATL: 12:40 p.m.; Depart ATL: 8 a.m. Arrive SRQ: 9:30 a.m. Aircraft: Airbus A320 Family. Frequency: Monday, Wednesday, Friday. Offered seasonally.

There is no fee for reservation changes made 90 days or more from the travel date. If you need to make a change between 89 and 14 days from departure the fee is \$49. Changes made 13 days or less from travel cost \$99. When making a change, customers also pay any increase in fare that applies.

Frontier flies one of the youngest fleets in the industry, with 80 jet aircraft from the Airbus A320 Family with nearly 200 new planes on order. More info at FlyFrontier.com.

TripZorro.com Offers Flights Price Predictor airfare tool

Once upon a time, the Bing search engine provided future airline ticket prices. It saved travelers money and worked well. But by 2014, the feature was gone. Now, start-up TripZorro.com is stepping in to offer a predictive airfare site.

With TripZorro's Flights Price Predictor, travelers can search for the least-expensive flight anytime, for up to a calendar year in advance. They can open a low fare calendar separately or integrated in a flight search tab. And they can book the flight immediately, locking in the price.

Determining when to buy an airline ticket has always been something of an

art and has puzzled fliers. It's easy to see why: As prices fluctuate, it's tough to know when to buy or delay booking to secure the cheapest tickets.

That's what makes the Flights Price Predictor a great tool for travel planning: it harnesses technology to do the job. The clean user interface makes the process of searching for a good deal simple and quick.

TripZorro finds users the lowest prices and doesn't charge any commissions or extra fees from customers. They work with many partner companies and offer a wide variety of destinations, promotions and discounts. Visit tripzorro.com.