

Today's Travel News

# Where to Next!

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• Wednesday, January 12, 2005 •

## Busting the Barrier to Good Sound on Airplanes

There are lots of annoying things about flying - long security lines, poor (or no) food, cramped seats, indifferently read cabin announcements, bumpy air, cell phone chatter on the ground - all things over which passengers have no control.

But one thing we can control is the audio quality of the in-flight entertainment. No longer are you required to use the spunky little headphones offered (and sometimes sold) by the airlines (which they'll let you keep for the next flight). You can bring your own headsets or earbuds from home, or - and this is our recommendation - you can use special noise reduction headsets that block out distracting cabin and jet engine sounds while passing quality audio right to your eardrums.

You've probably seen them advertised by Bose, Sony and other manufacturers. They do a nice job - and cost up to \$300.

We found a really fine alternative for \$69 on Amazon.com (where they got a five-star rating). They're called NoiseBusters and they do just that. Like the more expensive models, they have tiny microphones that pick up the background noise, feed it to some special circuitry that creates a mirror image of the noise and effectively cancels it out. What you hear is very nearly like sitting in a quiet room listening to your own stereo. They even have circuitry

## • accommodations

For couples seeking the ultimate indulgence this Valentine's Day, **The Garden City Hotel** invites you to say, "I Love you" with an overnight package and enter-to-win an anniversary celebration!

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To celebrate Valentine's Day, the **Marquis Los Cabos Beach, Golf, Spa and Casitas Resort** in Los Cabos, Mexico, is offering a special romantic rendezvous for couples during the month of February. Guests staying at the resort for a minimum of two nights will receive special Valentine's Day amenities from February 4th - February 21st, 2005.

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**Sonesta Hotels** in Miami - SONESTA BEACH RESORT KEY BISCAYNE, SONESTA HOTEL & SUITES COCONUT GROVE and TRUMP INTERNATIONAL SONESTA BEACH RESORT in Sunny Isles Beach - offer a new WINTER ESCAPE PLAN that includes special rates and \$50 shopping credit at Bloomingdale's in Miami.

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## • transportation

The **Telluride/Montrose Regional Air Organization** (TMRAO) worked with Continental Airlines to secure nonstop flights between Los Angeles (LAX) and Montrose (MTJ) for the 2005-2006 ski season. The nonstop flight on Continental began on Dec. 16, 2004 and due to the new flight's low bookings, the Feb. 28 - April 3, 2005 schedule will be reduced from daily service to 4 days a week, Thursday-Sunday.

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## • briefly

**Chinatown New York City's** Lunar New Year celebrations feature festivals, parades, dragons and authentic New Year's Chinese feasts. Travelers can experience all of it first-hand with special hotel rates from the Holiday Inn Downtown, the Clarion Solita Soho Hotel and the Windsor Hotel.

that compensates for distortions created by wearing flat speakers in a cupped earpiece. Airplane movies never sounded so good - now if only all seats had monitors in the backrests...



*A "thumbs up" for the NoiseBusters.*

We found the NoiseBusters are nice for commuting in noisy subways, mowing lawns or working out on boring gym equipment, too.

One reviewer on Amazon.com said he/she tried Bose (\$299) and NoiseBuster (\$69) on a flight and "couldn't tell the difference." But added he/she could tell the difference between \$70 and \$300!

While most noise reduction headphones claim a 10db cancellation, NoiseBuster claims 18db. (OK, one manufacturer claims 20db, but retails at \$275 - can you tell the difference between \$70 and \$275? Our NoiseBuster headphones fold up neatly, fit in a nice faux leather pouch and includes a battery and double-prong adapters for airline use.

For more info, check out [www.protechcommunications.com](http://www.protechcommunications.com) or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (type noisebuster in the "Search" box).

*- Rich Steck & Judi Janofsky*

Future moms will feel right at home with the **Millennium Hotel, Minneapolis'** Mom-to-be Package, which includes overnight classic room accommodations; a keepsake terry cloth bathrobe; slippers; a welcome basket; Haagen-Dazs ice cream for two; complimentary shuttle service to Nicollet Mall; and an all American breakfast for two. A specialty martini will also be served to the dad-to-be. The Mom-to-be Package is priced at \$149 per night and is valid through December 30, 2005.

**The Greater Fort Lauderdale** Convention & Visitors Bureau (GFLCVB) is in the midst of a worldwide marketing blitz to broaden the appeal of the Greater Fort Lauderdale brand.

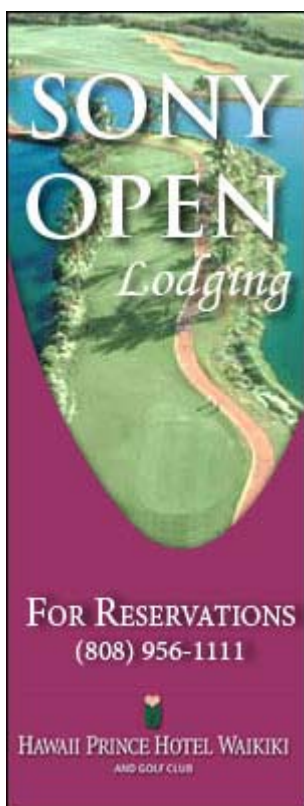
As Valentine's Day approaches, **BedandBreakfast.com** editors share the inside secrets about the best undiscovered inns for celebrating romance. While a Valentine's getaway to any B&B is a treat, the inns on this list promise special memories enhanced by quality amenities, distinctive décor, and superior hospitality. Many have dramatic mountain or water views, while others offer luxury at an amazingly affordable price.

Showing a continued shift by many corporations to a new breed of corporate travel agency, **Travelocity Business** announces it is providing all travel management services and traveler support for Aetna's employee travel. With more than 5,000 travelers and approximately \$40 million spent annually in travel, Aetna's is one of the largest travel programs to date to exclusively use a full-service, online travel agency.

**Panama City Beach** in the Florida Panhandle is ready and anxious to ring in the New Year. Its beautiful, sugar-white-sand beaches and emerald-green waters made famous by the Travel Channel, Southern Living Magazine and Dr. Beach came through an unusually active 2004 hurricane season with flying colors, thanks to a previously completed \$25-million beach nourishment program that protected beachfront properties and beach from damage and major erosion.

Delta Connection is making a New Year's resolution of shorter lines and speedy check-in for **Delta Air Lines** customers in communities across the United States. In 2005, Delta Connection will expand the installation of self-service kiosks and Delta Direct® phone banks across its route system, allowing customers to check in for flights, select or change seat assignments, check baggage, change flights, print receipts and itineraries or speak directly with a Delta reservations agent – all with shorter lines and greater control of travel experience.

**Best Western International** announced its ongoing commitment to support emergency relief to victims of the Indian



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Ocean earthquake and tsunamis. As part of its "Best Western for a Better World" initiative, the company has pledged \$1 million, with an immediate donation of \$100,000 distributed to Habitat for Humanity International and another global charity to be named in the coming weeks.

**Alaska Airlines** announced plans to adjust its schedule between Nome, Kotzebue and Anchorage, Alaska for the spring/summer 2005 season.

**Boomtown Casino and Hotel Reno's** Can Can Theater will rope in cool country tunes with free performances of the Midnight Riders from 7 p.m. to midnight Tuesday, February 1 to Sunday, February 6.

**Xanterra Parks & Resorts**, operator of lodges, restaurants, gift shops and activities in Yellowstone National Park, will again offer its "Early Bird Specials" at four lodging facilities within the park when it opens for the 2005 summer season.

Travel and Leisure Golf Magazine name **The Wilderness at Fortune Bay** to the 2004 Top 10 New Public/Resort Courses as well as the 30 Best New Courses of 2004.

**Virgin Vacations** announced the extension of their "Buy one, get one FREE!" sale." The offer is now valid through January 31, 2005. Travelers who book any package from the "Best Deals on Virgin Atlantic" product line can take advantage of a two-for-one offer on theatre tickets, sightseeing tours, transportation, and dining options while in London.

*Please note that contact information at the bottom of each release is usually for media requests. Check carefully for a Web site or other information if you are wanting to book travel.*

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Produced by Judi Janofsky, Rich Steck and the Golf Press Association