

Word Of Mouth

Edited by Lisa Scott travel@ukmetro.co.uk

The week in numbers: More than 52 per cent of parents plan to take their children out of school to take advantage of cheaper holiday prices, according to a survey of 1,000 families

Set sail for Rhode Island



Head 41° North for serious sailing elegance

If Howards' Way somehow slipped into your subconscious and left you with a deep love of deck shoes, then Newport, Rhode Island, will be a dream come true. The sailing capital of the world, sitting snugly on the east coast of the US between Boston and New York, it's the perfect spot to snag that yachting millionaire.

However, despite its beautiful breezes and cool boating crowd, until recently it lacked a seriously stylish spot to sleep. But the arrival of Forty 1° North, a luxury hotel in a prime waterfront location, plans to change all that.

'Newport had a need for a high-end boutique property,' says George Moore, one of the hotel's owners. 'It was a huge undertaking,' he admits of the 28-

Our weekly page looks at launches around the world, from accommodation to tours to hotel bars. This week: A hotel for the yacht crowd in Rhode Island, Dalston beds in and cooking dinner in Phuket

room hotel, which in a previous incarnation was a ramshackle local seafood joint. 'We took down the old building on the site and put up a brand new one, which took three years to design and build.'

For Moore, the magic is in the seascapes. 'All but a handful of the rooms have views of the water and that is what I really love - I find it very peaceful,' he says.

Indoors, diners can sample the formal restaurant, The Grill, as well as Christie's, a more casual, Asian-inspired eating spot. Both

restaurants aim to make their mark on the area with adventurous, cosmopolitan cuisine.

And as summer swings into view, the hotel's enormous outside deck will come into its own, with space for 700 guests to eat, drink and dance the night away.

Conveniently, those millionaires can drop anchor right alongside - the hotel's moorings can handle boats up to 250ft (76m) long.

Jane Mul Kerrins

Rooms from £250 per night.
Tel: (+1) 401 846 8018.
www.41north.com

Also check out...

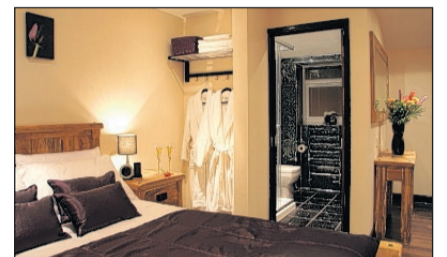
Boutique chic in east London

How can you tell if an up-and-coming area has finally arrived? The opening of a boutique hotel is a good indicator. East London has had cool clubs and bars in abundance for a while but now there's somewhere to rest your head afterwards - on Egyptian cotton pillowcases. The compact but chic Avo hotel (pictured right) offers visitors an alternative to city centre stays, a few minutes' walk from Dalston Junction station. The walls all feature work by local artists and the rooms have everything a hipster could want: iPod docks, steam-free mirrors and Elemis preening products.

Rooms from £79. Tel: 020 3490 5061.
www.avohotel.com

Catch, cook and dine in Phuket

For all those aspiring MasterChef contestants, The Sarojin, a luxury resort in



Khao Lak, on the Thai island of Phuket, has launched a 'Catch, Cook and Dine' package. Guests can learn how to fish like a local, then visit farms and markets for the other ingredients required to rustle up a gourmet feast. Finally, the resort's executive chef will guide guests through the traditional Thai cooking process - you'll never settle for a takeaway again. Six-night packages from £1,310 for two people, including accommodation and some meals. Tel: (+66) 764 279 004.
www.sarojin.com

Travel Doctor

Do you have a travel dilemma? Email travel@ukmetro.co.uk

Q I get bored quite easily on holiday and like a bit of a challenge. I'd love to take some flying lessons as part of a trip this summer. Is there anywhere that I could visit abroad and safely give it a go? Also, what preparations would I need to make in advance?

Tony, 45, Sheffield

A To try your hand at flying with a well-developed and trustworthy school, I would suggest Fiji. For your PPL (private pilot's licence), you will need to complete a few theoretical exams first but when you're there you'll be flying over clear South Pacific waters and beautiful volcanic island scenery.

The course can run from three weeks to three months, depending on the level of licence you want. Either way, it is a great amount of time to spend in this beautiful place. The dry season (May to October) is the perfect time to visit.

Tom Marchant, co-founder, Black Tomato (www.blacktomato.co.uk)



Q I am on a budget and have heard about sites such as www.couchsurfing.org that pair you up with people in other cities who have a spare bed or sofa. It sounds great but how reputable are they?

Yasmin, 24, London

A Sites like the ones you mention, and others such as www.airbnb.com, are a reliable way of finding free or cheap digs that will cost considerably less than a hotel. They're certainly a better idea than going through listings sites such as Craigslist, as both property owners and those keen on staying have a detailed profile which, crucially, includes references. This means you can see the experiences of others who have stayed there and get in touch to ask as many questions as you like. There's a piece on this topic at <http://bit.ly/eCNy1W> that's well worth a read.

Tom Hall, Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com)



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Offer T&Cs: £759 per adult, £459 per child and £125 per infant. Price is based on 10 Nights at 4* Centara Kata Resort Phuket for 2 adults sharing a room with 1 child and 1 infant. Based on travel between 03 and 30 June 2011. Multiple other dates and offers available.