

LEADER'S EDGE

OCTOBER 2010

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LEADER'S
EDGE



Focus on New Orleans

The Big Meaty

Chowing down on a buckboard bacon melt, where cured, peppery pig, a dash of bitter collards, and a slab of gooey Swiss live in perfect harmony between buttery, grilled bread slices, one could be forgiven for forgetting they are in New Orleans. With all due respect to the muffuletta (a sort of Italian Dagwood), shrimp, oysters and crab dominate most menus in the Big Easy. But with restaurants like chef Donald Link's Cochon Butcher—a bona fide butcher shop meets urban eatery and home of said bacon melt—New Orleans restaurants are serving up a lot more than the holy trinity of seafood. Welcome to The Big Meaty.

According to *Leader's Edge* food

editor and Louisiana native Tom Head, they always have. "New Orleans's rich heritage of meat cookery dates from its earliest history. The 1813 building that today houses Café du Monde was originally the Halle des Boucheries, the Butchers' Market. New Orleans cooks embraced charcuterie from France, sausages and pork from the German settlers, veal from the Italians, game from Native Americans, and beef from the plains of Southwest Louisiana. The roast beef po' boy itself is adequate testimony to the importance of meat in New Orleans cookery," Tom says.

LODGING

[JEWEL OF THE SOUTH] Windsor Court Hotel has long been the

pampered place to stay. Old World ambience and warm yet professional service abound. Afternoon tea in the lobby's European Le Salon is a must as is a tour of the world-class art collection sprinkled throughout. Suites and junior suites, tasteful and roomy with antiques and chintzy fabrics, predominate, the ones on the club level providing access to savory spreads and sweeping views of the mighty Mississippi. An overstuffed leather club chair in the Polo Lounge is the perfect perch for a cocktail and a little jazz piano. There's also a super nice rooftop pool with adjoining fitness center. In 2011, a major fluffing of the rooms and common areas will solidify Windsor Court's reputation as a jewel of the South. 300 GRAVIER STREET, 888.596.0955, WWW.WINDSORCOURTHOTEL.COM

[URBAN OASIS] W New Orleans—French Quarter artfully infuses its quintessential New Orleans setting with the brand's telltale decor—modern furnishings in a neutral palette with splashes of vibrant color. The lovely Italianate courtyard with a pool and cabanas for lounging and cocktail making makes it hard to leave; although, FQ action is a short stroll away. Ninety-eight rooms, some with balconies, some with desks, vary due to the nature of the historic building, but all have iPod docking stations, flat screen TVs and trendy mini-bars. Choose one of the four

DINING GUIDE

BUSINESS LUNCH

[THE BEST OF THE NEW]

Domenica, a great addition to New Orleans dining cooked up by chefs John Besh and Alon Shaya, serves home-style Italian food in a sophisticated setting replete with contemporary

Venetian glass light fixtures. Your meal can be as simple as a wood oven pizza and a salad of organic greens or as elaborate as a spread that includes house-smoked salumi served on a cedar plank and a bowl of pasta Stracci with oxtail ragu and fried chicken livers, particularly delicious. The wine list is almost exclusively Italian, divided by regions and surprisingly affordable. Lunch and dinner daily, **THE ROOSEVELT**, 123 BARONNE ST., 504.648.6020, WWW.DOMENICARESTAURANT.COM

[FRENCH QUARTER TREASURE]

Bayona, in the 20 years since opening in 1990, has become almost as much a New

Orleans institution as Antoine's or Galatoire's. Chef Susan Spicer's cooking depends on fresh local products, but she is inspired rather than limited by culinary traditions. For starters, it's hard to resist the smoked quail salad. Main courses vary seasonally, but the rabbit roulade and the superb pork chop with duck-fat cabbage are usually present. Comfortable atmosphere, magical outdoor seating, polished service. **LUNCH WED.-SAT., DINNER MON.-SAT.**, 430 RUE DAUPHINE, 504.525.4455, WWW.BAYONA.COM

BUSINESS DINNER

[ELEGANCE WITHOUT PRE-TENSION] The Grill Room at

the Windsor Court Hotel unites the elegance of great hotel dining with the imagination of a small chef-owned restaurant. The poached egg appetizer combines the humble egg with bacon, endive and croutons in a way that elevates the simple dish to haute cuisine. Main courses include Niman Ranch pork tenderloin and a superb, grilled, dry-aged, prime New York strip. The wine list, with over 600 bottles meticulously chosen by esteemed sommelier Sara Kavanaugh, is one of the best in the city. **BREAKFAST DAILY, LUNCH MON.-FRI., BRUNCH SAT.-SUN., DINNER DAILY, WINDSOR COURT HOTEL**, 300 GRAVIER ST., 504.522.1994, WWW.GRILLROOMNEWORLEANS.COM



Domenica

CALENDAR

Festivals Acadiens et Créoles
Lafayette, LA
October 8-10

Audubon Zoo Swamp Fest
New Orleans, LA
November 6-7

oversized rooms in the carriage house, the bottom two with private Jacuzzis on bricked patios, the upper two with balconies overlooking the pool scene. 316 CHARTRES ST., NEW ORLEANS, 504.581.1200, WWW.WHOTEL-SENEWORLEANS.COM

[UNDER-THE-RADAR ELEGANCE] **Soniat House** is the elegant home of choice for celebrities, rock stars and captains of industry who appreciate the under-the-radar location and classic French Quarter surroundings. Thirty rooms and suites are divided between two historic townhouses across the street from each other, both with brick courtyards overflowing with tropical vegetation. All are individually decorated with quality antiques and grand flourishes like floor-to-ceiling drapes in rich fabrics. Varying in size, some have beamed ceilings or wrought iron balconies. A delicious breakfast that includes homemade biscuits is the only meal served. 1133 CHARTRES ST., NEW ORLEANS, 800.544.8808, WWW.SONIATHOUSE.COM

[MODERN SENSIBILITIES, TRADITIONAL CHARM] **Stella**, chef Scott Boswell's sophisticated French Quarter restaurant is more global modern than Louisiana traditional. His product is impeccably sourced, and ingredients are combined with a flawless cross-cultural sensibility. Duck Five Ways, Chinese in inspiration, or beef tenderloin paired with Asian vegetables seem very much at home here. Service is among the best in New Orleans, friendly, knowledgeable and always accommodating. DINNER DAILY, 1032 CHARTRES ST., 504.587.0091, WWW.RESTAURANTSTELLA.COM



conies, predominate, while 127 suites provide exclusive dining at the Grills restaurants and concierge and butler service in the top categories.

And on the dining and entertainment fronts? British tea is still served in the Queen's Room, as are fish and chips at The Golden Lion Pub. But in a new first, guests in AA category staterooms can dine in the Britannia Club at the time of their choosing in art deco splendor with sea views. Other flashes to the past polished for the present? A games deck with paddle tennis, croquet and bowls under a canopy, as well as an aft outdoor space on Deck 9 for British country house-style garden parties. Oh, and the spa is referred to as The Royal Spa. Enough said. 800.728.6273, WWW.CUNARD.COM

Family Fun Made Simple The most challenging part of a family vacation? Probably planning one. Getting everyone to agree on where to go can be daunting. Kids want plenty to do that interests their easily bored selves. Parents want plenty for their easily bored kids to do, as well as an alluring destination. Unexpectedly, The Leading Hotels of the World seems to have come up with a novel solution with their "Leading Families" directory that lists over 130 hotels throughout the world that cater to families.

Looking for a city getaway? Check into the Hôtel Plaza Athénée in New York, where children get kid-sized Frette robes and milk and cookies at turn down. Seeking resort fun? Hotel Royal, on a 42-acre park overlooking Lake Geneva at foot of French Alps in Evian, has organized and supervised activities from dance classes to mountain biking at their "Kid's Resort." Perhaps somewhere more tropical? In Panama, the swish Bristol Buenaventura's eco- and cultural tours offered at their Kid's Club are enough to make you wish you were a kid again. 800.745.8883, WWW.LHW.COM



Fact-Finding Mission As actor Harrison Ford said in his role as the captivating professor of archeology/action hero in "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade," "Archeology is the search for fact...not truth. If it's truth you're looking for, Dr. Tyree's philosophy class is right down the hall." If the truth is you're searching for fact, a hands-on archeological dig at Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in southwestern Colorado, one of the densest concentrations of well preserved archaeological sites in the world, might just be the place to begin digging.

Crow Canyon's weeklong, hands-on educational programs allow wannabes to work side by side with their staff archeologists, unearthing relics from the ancestral Pueblo Indians who inhabited the canyons and mesas of the Mesa Verde region more than 700 years ago. Learn basic excavation techniques and how to identify artifacts, as well as how to wash and catalog your finds in the lab. A few nights during the week, days in the field are followed by lectures about the Anasazi culture and research findings.

Programs, developed with guidance from Crow Canyon's Native American Advisory Group, strive to provide an authentic experience, and include meals and comfortable accommodations. 800.422.8975, WWW.CROWCANYON.ORG

Smash the champagne bottle! In October, the Queen Elizabeth 3 sailed out of Hampton, England, on its maiden voyage, making it the sixth Cunard Queen in the company's 170 years of sailing and marking a new era in cruising. The second-largest ship in the fleet's history, Cunard has upped the ante on modern luxuries.

There is a wealth of shiny brass, sparkling chandeliers, gleaming marble, polished teak and Cunard memorabilia. A handcrafted marquetry panel depicting the original Queen Elizabeth soars up two and half decks of the interior space of the Grand Lobby's circular staircase. Outside staterooms, most with bal-



Making Tracks
CARRIE WILLIAMSON
GLOBAL LEISURE TRAVEL



LUXURY

FAMILY

ADVENTURE



SANTA FE

[MOUNTAIN SOPHISTICATION] The Compound had for many years the reputation of being the most beautiful and the stuffiest restaurant in Santa Fe—jacket and tie required for gentlemen, white gloves for waiters. The Alexander Girard design is still beautiful, but with the exception of the high culinary standards, things have loosened up under the ownership of chef Mark Kiffen. Kiffen's menu combines native corn and chilies with foods introduced by the Spaniards, including wheat and beef. Whatever else you order, don't miss the corn pudding. **LUNCH MON.–SAT., DINNER DAILY, 653 CANYON RD., 505.982.4353, WWW.COMPOUNDRESTAURANT.COM**

LONDON

[WHERE IT'S HAPPENING] Bistrot Bruno Loubet has recently taken over the dining room at the trendy Zetter Hotel, located in London's Clerkenwell neighborhood. Loubet's pristine modern bistro cooking has brought new life to a listless restaurant. Main dishes include dazzlers such as guinea fowl boudin with peas, ham and barley. For dessert, there's a chocolate tartlet with caramel and salted butter ice cream. The wine list is well priced and includes selections by the carafe. **ZETTER HOTEL, 86-88 CLERKENWELL RD., EC1, +44.020.7324.4455, WWW.THEZETTER.COM**



MEXICO CITY

[UNSURPASSED SERVICE] Biko, in the residential Polanco section of Mexico City, divides its Basque-inspired menu into traditional dishes and modern interpretations. Both are equally well cooked and beautifully presented. The ribeye with baby corn and pig's ears has become a classic. A platoon of waiters stands ready to serve the business and power broker clientele. The wine list includes Mexican wines seldom found in the U.S. **LUNCH AND DINNER MON.–SAT., 407 PRESIDENT MASARYK, POLANCO, +52.55.5282.2064, WWW.BIKO.COM.MX**

DISCERNING TRAVELER

En Route Smythson's has been producing exquisite travel goods since opening their first shop on London's fashionable Bond Street in 1887. Beginning with their original Monitor Bag, the quintessential Dopp kit of its day, this purveyor of personalized stationery and luxury leather goods has stayed abreast of trends in travel. Travel cushions at the advent of motoring. The "En Route" writing pad designed "for use in a Steamboat, Railway or Aeroplane" back in the romantic age of hand-written letters from abroad. Latest jet-setting indulgence? Smythson's travel backgammon set. The Nubuck leather lining and dark brown Mara leather cover roll up and fasten with a press-stud on a leather tuck, chips ensconced in a zipped pocket. \$530. 15½" x 10" open, 15½" x 1 1/8" closed. **WWW.SMYTHSON.COM**



Handy Dandy sometimes rules the day. And so it is with the Casauri Triple Zip Pouch from Artful Wears, one of this company's many playful travel products. In fun colors and patterns like palm green and sun stripes, these 9" x 5½" water resistant nylon and polyester pouches have zippered front and back pockets making them a terrific catch-all for the small items—cables, ear plugs, head phones—travelers carry along these days. \$26. **ARTFULWEARS.COM**

BRIEFCASE

Saúde! **American Airlines** begins non-stop flights from JFK to Rio de Janeiro mid-November, the only airline with daily nonstop service from New York. >> Island Bound? **Miami International Airport** reopened 16 renovated gates in the North Terminal, the Latin American and Caribbean hub for American Airlines. >> Yea! **Philadelphia International Airport** now offers free Wi-Fi. >> Double yea! High-speed Internet is now complimentary for **Hilton HHonors** Gold and Diamond members at all 10 brands. >> Wave of the future? **Sofitel** hotels in Paris, London, Munich and Brussels are offering iPads at check-in loaded with "The Kiosk" app that features top dailies and magazines, including the pay-for *Wall Street Journal*.

FAST TRACKS

McLaren MP4-12C: From Scratch to 1,000 in No Time



It's official. With the opening of 35 dealerships in 2010, including eight in North America, McLaren Automotive is diving into the deep end of the supercar market with its first modern production car, the MP4-12C.

Starting from scratch, McLaren engineers have "put convention to one side and innovated, from the ground up. Every switch, dial and component is bespoke." And as expected from McLaren, the second-oldest and one of the most successful Formula 1 racing teams in history, the MP4-12C has racecar elements, the engineers using tools and techniques from the Formula 1 design team.

Light but strong carbon fiber is used anywhere and everywhere possible, including the chassis, so it weighs in at 3,000 pounds, considerably less than the Ferrari 458 and Lamborghini Gallardo, its main competitors. The turbo charged 3.8-liter, mid-mounted V8 powers out 600 horsepower and 443 lb.-ft. of torque, reportedly hitting 60 mph in under three seconds when using the seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox launch feature. One thousand cars go on sale in spring 2011 with an estimated price tag of \$250,000. **WWW.MCLARENAUTOMOTIVE.COM**