

Friday, March 16, 2007



HealthyDiningFinder.com: Seek out restaurants and nutrition info, or sign up for free e-newsletters.

Travel

Healthy Dining Finder may satisfy your hunger

If your travel diet leans toward fast-food burgers and hubcap-size cinnamon buns, you've got a new ally in the battle of the bulge.

Just-launched HealthyDiningFinder.com lets diners search for healthy menu options nationwide by ZIP code, address or restaurant.

The site, staffed by dietitians and other nutrition experts and funded in part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, lists menu items that measure up in such areas as calories (no more than 750 for an entree), fat (a maximum of 25 grams per meal) and deep-fried items (they're banned in anything other than "very small" amounts). About 30,000 restaurant locations are listed, representing nearly 250 chains and a handful of independents.

— Laura Bly

At home

Two heads are better than one



Kohler Co.
From Kohler: A bathroom renovation incorporated two Cimarrons.

First came his-and-hers towels, then his-and-hers sinks. Now, enter the twin toilets.

Kings and queens of suburban castles are installing two thrones in their ever-expanding master bathrooms, separated by a partition or tucked into individual closets. The trend makes sense "when you think about our time-crunched schedules in the morning," particularly when those schedules overlap, says Lynn Schrage, retail marketing manager at The Kohler Store in Chicago. (She recently worked with a pair of doctors who included his-and-hers heads in their bathroom renovation.)

In the world of extreme restrooms, coupled commodes are joining company with twin-headed shower stalls and double master bathrooms.

But even within these lavish lavatories, "the toilet is kind of the ultimate in luxury because it takes up a pretty large footprint," Schrage says, about 3-by-5½ feet.

— Olivia Barker

Travel

More luxe on the hotel landscape

Two noteworthy upgrades on the luxury hotel scene:

► West Virginia's historic Greenbrier resort, which has been closed since early January, will reopen April 2 after a \$50 million renovation.

New marble bathrooms with soaking tubs and walk-in showers have been added to 63 rooms at the White Sulphur Springs resort. All of The Greenbrier's 721 rooms and suites have been updated with new bedding, linens and plasma-screen TVs.

Coming this summer: a new restaurant called Hemisphere, with chef Michael Voltaggio, previously executive chef at Charlie Palmer's Dry Creek Kitchen in San Francisco.

► The first East Coast outpost of California's famed Golden Door spa opened last week at the Naples Grande Resort & Club in Naples, Fla.

Among the treatments: a \$575 six-hour "escape" package that includes a massage by two therapists, facial, manicure, pedicure and blow dry.

— Kitty Bean Yancey

Best bargain wines

Pears pair nicely with puns

Several days a week USA TODAY's Jerry Shriver recommends a wine that costs \$15 or less in his Cheers! blog at cheers.usatoday.com. Here's a highlight from this week's selections:

2006 Cono Sur Chardonnay. Casablanca Valley, Chile, about \$10. Oy, now the Chileans are using puns in their wine titles (conosur.com). You won't groan, however, when you taste the refreshing banana/pear/citrus flavors and the zesty acidity. Even though I sense that the juice has been manipulated, the pleasurable effect is more than I expect from a \$10 Chard.

For more wine picks, visit cheers.usatoday.com.



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Destinations
Diversions

Aspen four-seat sofa from Conran.com

Lighter hues blend with a 'Color Splash'

New HGTV design star David Bromstad offers advice, 4D; Q&A, 7E

St. Pat's Day in the USA

10 great places to celebrate, 3D

Atlanta St. Patrick's Day Foundation

green shirt, green tie,
green socks: \$58

(heart of green: priceless)



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Art galleries spring forward

Corcoran's 'Modernism' features Balla's futurist suit, 6-7D

Ottavia and Rostta Missoni Collection/ARS/ISAE

Get an earful of the off beat

Pick a topic — any topic — and you'll find a popular podcast

By Maria Puente
USA TODAY

The surprise about podcasting isn't that millions are listening — the surprise is that millions are listening to some fairly arcane stuff.

To wit: Lectures on Byzantine emperors. Video seminars on the *Mona Lisa*. Archaeological treatises on prehistoric America. Multi-continental conversations about Napoleon. Recitations of Shakespeare. Five-minute drills on grammar.

In the rapidly expanding parallel media universe of podcasting — downloadable audio (and sometimes video) shows posted on the Internet — this largely entertainment-dominated format has been embraced by the techno-chic. But now some previously obscure academics, educators and amateur enthusiasts — who once had only each other with whom to share their specialized passions — are becoming improbable podstars, complete with national media attention and swelling fan bases.

Cover story

"In the digital world, there's an audience for even the most obscure thing," says Charles Hodgson, a Canadian writer whose podcast, *Podictionary*, examines the history and origins of one English word five days a week. Don't laugh: His podcast has been downloaded 2.3 million times in less than two years. In a medium in which shows are lucky to attract a few thousand regular listeners, it's a hit.

"It's really short, only a few minutes a day, so it's easy to listen to, and it's fascinating to hear the history of words," says John Mayson, 37, an Austin engineer who has been captivated by *Podictionary* since he got his iPod 18 months ago. He even dreams about it. "Name the topic, no matter how arcane or bizarre, and you'll find a podcast on it."

It's a comforting reminder that not everybody is

Please see COVER STORY next page ►

Partner your vacation with a dance class

That TV competition steps up the interest

By Kitty Bean Yancey
USA TODAY

Dancing With the Stars has vacationers waltzing off to learn to rumba and tango.

The hit ABC show, back with a new cast of celebrity competitors Monday (8 p.m. ET/PT), has had "an incredible effect on our business," says Byron Siegal, founder of the Ballroom Vermont summer dance camp for adults.

Registration increases every time the show airs, and "we're expecting it to go nuts in the next few weeks," he says.

The first of two sessions at the Killington Grand Resort Hotel is sold out, Siegal says. The Aug. 5-10 camp is still open. Cost: \$2,549 a couple, \$1,599 single, including lessons, lodging, breakfasts and dinners. Information: 800-242-8785; ballroomdancecamp.com.



By Tim Dillon, USA TODAY

Ballroom Vermont: Tony DiBona and Audrey Jean strut their stuff at camp.

Some other choices for vacationers hoping to hone or learn ballroom skills:

► **Let's Dance Vacations.** Dance movies and TV dance shows have "really pumped people up," says company president Elly Engberg. Ballroom aficionados board cruise ships for nightly dance parties that promise at least one dance host or hostess for every three participants and instruction. Options include a July 18-24 trans-Atlantic crossing on the Queen Mary 2 from \$2,350 a person, double; \$3,450, single. Details: 800-591-1868; letsdancevacations.com

► **Stardust Dance Productions.** Singles and couples eat, drink and dance during getaways that include 60-plus workshops, dance sessions, shows and meals. "Since the spotlight has been on ballroom dancing, (business) has been phenomenal," Stardust president Len Moss says. A March 23-25 session at Kutscher's Country Club in the foothills of New York's Catskill Mountains is sold out. A June 15-17 weekend there, from \$235, triple, is available. 800-537-2797;

stardustdance.com

► **Mastery Camps.** Big-name professionals teach at these camps, some of which require previous dance experience. Next up: Dance Camp Los Angeles May 2-7 at the Hilton Los Angeles Airport. Cost: \$1,199 single; \$899 a person, double, includes lodging, instruction and competition. Other Mastery camps are fine for beginners. 800-851-2813; masterycamps.com

► **Dance weekends at Purity Spring Resort** in New Hampshire's White Mountains. There's some instruction, social dancing, lodging, meals. Cost: from \$197 a person, double, plus tax. Next ones: April 20-22 and May 25-28. 800-373-3754; purityspring.com

► **Mohonk Mountain House Ballroom Dance Weekends** in New Paltz, N.Y. Instructors teach tango, waltz and more, and there's a Saturday dinner dance. Next session: Nov. 30-Dec. 2. Cost: from about \$1,200 a couple, including dancing, lodging, meals, service and taxes. 800-772-6646, mohonk.com