

Chick Trips

Now playing: 25 getaways for you and your sisters, your mom, your best friends, or all of the above



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The swank Tribeca Grand hotel in downtown Manhattan has a Sex and the City–themed package that’s a whole lot more comfortable than a pair of Manolos

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July/Aug. issue, Budget Travel magazine - First came chick flicks. Then chick lit took over bookshelves. Get ready for the hot new trend...There was a time when men would travel in packs—on a fishing trip, say—while the women stayed home. Times have changed, and vacations for “just the girls” have become all the rage. We love it—in fact, we can’t wait for the movie....

Move Over, Carrie Bradshaw—There Are New Girls in Town

New York City: The swank Tribeca Grand hotel in downtown Manhattan has a Sex and the City–themed package that’s a whole lot more comfortable than a pair of Manolos—\$578 for a weekend (877/519-6600, www.tribecagrand.com). Included: breakfast in bed, Cosmopolitans in the hip Church Lounge, a packet of herbal tablets to cure your hangover, and a cheat sheet for area hot spots. Shopping’s a good start: On Orchard and Delancey Streets on the Lower East Side, you can score European designer clothes and handbags for cheap. Then head to the free museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (27th St. and Seventh Ave.). This summer, it’s exhibiting rarely seen drawings from historic couture.

Chicago: Crash high society for the weekend at the tasteful Gold Coast Guest House B&B (312/337-0361, www.bbchicago.com, from \$119/night), where you’ll be a five-minute stroll from Oak Street Beach and the city’s stiff-backed shopping spine, the Magnificent Mile. To really posh it up, pack a basket and take the \$5 Metra train to the gates of Ravinia (www.ravinia.org), a century-old outdoor concert pavilion 25 miles north in tony Highland Park. For \$10, you can sit on the lawn and listen to music from the likes of the Chicago Symphony and the Boston Pops.

San Francisco: The one-night Hot Mama package at the three-star Galleria Park Hotel (866/756-3036, www.galleriapark.com, \$149), near Union Square, comes with a bottle of champagne, a disposable camera, and a makeover with a cosmetics expert at Zendo Aveda Salon. In Chinatown, grab a scarlet cheongsam dress from one of the neighborhood's myriad shops for \$25 or so. Later, pop into Yank Sing for dim sum (49 Stevenson St., 415/541-4949) and visit the Asian Art Museum, where you might pick up tips at its summer show "Geisha: Beyond the Painted Smile" (200 Larkin St., 415/581-3500).

Quebec City: The appropriate place for weekend prima donnas to stay in this Francophone town is Le Capitoile de Québec—it has a decor best described as modern glam, with touches like miniature spotlights and red-velvet chaises (800/261-9903, www.lecapitoile.com, from \$135/night). Appropriately, the Capitoile is attached to a cabaret and a theater. Spend the day at the esoteric Musée de la Civilisation (85 rue Dalhousie, 418/643-2158, www.mcq.org). Recent exhibit subjects: blood, sand, and the color blue.



San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau
San Francisco's Chinatown

Las Vegas: Go old school at one of the Strip's vintage hotels: the Stardust, where Wayne Newton sings (866/642-3120, www.stardustlv.com, \$85 per double), or the Flamingo (800/732-2111, <http://www.caesars.com/>, \$99), steps from Bellagio and the Venetian. Clueless about gambling? The current hangout of the stars, the Palms (866/725-6773, www.palms.com), offers free one-hour gaming lessons—including blackjack, craps, and roulette—Monday through Friday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of a Really Good Massage

Whitefield, New Hampshire: The 139-year-old Mountain View Grand Resort and Spa, 150 miles north of Boston, is in the perfect New England village of Whitefield (800/438-3017, www.mountainviewsparesort.com)—but its spa experience is international. Try the Champaca Bali massage with flowers and almond oil (\$145 for 80 minutes) or soak in the Japanese-style cedar Ofuro tub in the resort's observation tower, which overlooks the White Mountains and Vermont's Green Mountains (\$60 for 25 minutes). Quintessentially local, however, is the maple sugar body scrub (\$70 for 25 minutes). Even during peak season—weekends throughout the summer—rates start at \$129 per person double.

Calistoga, California: Drive an hour from San Francisco through the Napa Valley and you'll wind up at Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort, where days of wine tasting are followed with a wallow in earthy goo: volcanic-ash mud mixed with Canadian peat moss (707/942-4102, www.drwilkinson.com). The spa's two-hour signature treatment, the Works (\$99), delivers a mud bath and face mask, a steep in mineral waters, a steam, a blanket wrap, and a half-hour massage. Lodging varies from motel-style rooms that sleep two (from \$109) to kitchen-equipped bungalows that sleep four (from \$119).

Yelapa, Mexico: Looking to disappear? Fly to Puerto Vallarta and hail an hour-long panga-boat ride (\$6) south to Hotel Lagunita on the Bay of Banderas (011-52/322-209-5056, www.hotel-lagunita.com). The beachside spa incorporates traditional Mexican treatments and makes use of local ingredients such as sea salt. Cool your sun-

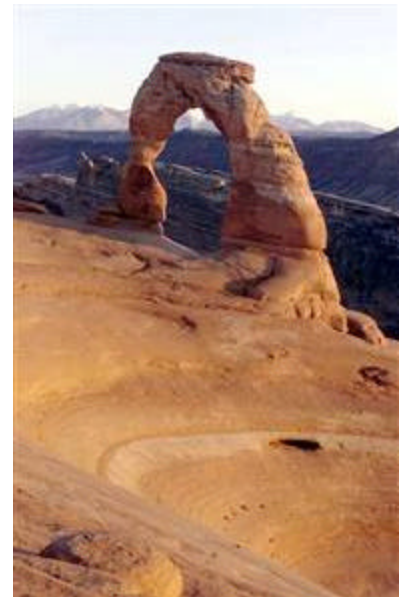
kissed skin with a soothing aloe vera wrap (\$50) or choose from a list of massages starting at \$30 for a half hour. Hike to a nearby waterfall or sip tequila till sunrise at the open-air bar. Colorful, authentic palapas (bungalows) are just \$40 per night.

New York City: Even world-weary spa vets get slack-jawed over the Jade Igloo sauna and sake-infused ponds at Juvenex Spa (646/733-1330, www.juvenexspa.com). Rejuvenation remedies from around the globe are administered 24/7 at this hidden Midtown gem, open to women six days a week (Monday is for the guys). Just \$65 buys four-hour access to the sauna and ponds, a diamond-shaped glass steam room with Chinese herbal infusions, a detox sauna made of yellow clay, and baths saturated with ginseng, seaweed, or tea. The herbal gyno cure (\$55) goes where no U.S. spa has gone before. Lay your head a few blocks away at the sleek Thirty Thirty Hotel; neutral-tone doubles cost \$139 (30 E. 30th St., 800/497-6028, www.thirtythirty-nyc.com).

Ojo Caliente, New Mexico: Stress cases will benefit from the healing waters at the unpretentious Ojo Caliente Spa, one of the nation's oldest health resorts (800/222-9162, www.ojocalientespa.com, from \$90 for two). The emerald springs, a combination of five types of mineral water, bubble through the arid hills and once soothed the muscles of members of the Pueblo tribe. Today, many people drive an hour north from Santa Fe for soaks (\$20 on weekends), the detoxifying milagro relaxation wraps (\$9), and stays at the 1916 mission-style adobe hotel (\$99 double, \$129 for a cottage).

Mother Nature Is a Woman, in Case Anyone Forgot

Moab, Utah: Picture Thelma and Louise, but without Brad Pitt. No fun? Well, you can savor western scenery and have a much happier ending. Stay with three friends in a four-person suite at the Sorrel River Ranch Resort, situated on a green alfalfa field surrounded by a crimson landscape (877/359-2715, www.sorrelriver.com, \$309). From the ranch, one four-hour hike goes through the red-rock formations of Fisher Towers; another threads along a lush creek bed to Morning Glory Bridge, a natural stone arch. If you fly into Salt Lake City, there's a 250-mile road trip involved. Baby-blue 1966 Thunderbird convertibles are in short supply, though, so rent a Ford Mustang for about \$45 a day by finding a deal through BreezeNet (www.breezenet.com). And mind the cliffs.



J. Pat Carter / AP
Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, near Moab, Utah

San Diego: Catch your first wave at La Jolla Shores beach at a weekend clinic offered by Surf Diva, a school for women. Its package consists of a couple of two-hour lessons, plus board, wet suit, and leash rental (858/454-8273, www.surfdiva.com, beginners \$130, intermediate \$95). Stay at the Sea Lodge, a B&B right on the sands where your class will meet (858/459-8271, www.sealodge.com, \$169). Surf Diva also operates a five-night summer "boarding school" that includes lodging, lessons, gear, and all food for \$1,250 per person.

Boerne, Texas: The Guadalupe River Ranch, 85 miles from Austin and 30 miles from San Antonio, is in the heart of Texas Hill Country (800/460-2005, www.guadalupeverranch.com). Half-hour trail rides are \$20; a full hour

is \$10 more. If it's too hot to horse around, kayaks are \$20 and tubes rent for \$10; grab a cold drink and float lazily down the Guadalupe. At night there's a campfire marshmallow roast and a sing-along. A group of four can share a cottage with two queen-size beds and a screened porch for \$174 per night.

Boise, Idaho: So you want an adventure, but you don't want to rough it? Splurge on Mackay Wilderness River Trips in Boise, which has an odyssey for even the girliest of girls: rafting along the Middle Fork of Idaho's Salmon River (800/635-5336, www.mackayriver.com, \$995 for a full three-day weekend). The rapids are gnarly Class IV's and V's, but the buff guides do most of the work while you sit back and revel in the adrenaline rush. When you arrive at camp the tents are up, the down pillows are fluffed, and warm showers await. The guides cook gourmet dishes like paella and prime rib over an open fire.

Vieques, Puerto Rico: Dive into a two-night Golden Heron Ecotours package at the Crow's Nest Inn (787/741-0033, www.crowstneivieques.com, \$217), which is surrounded by hills on Vieques, one of Puerto Rico's loveliest islands. During the day, you'll snorkel and explore in your Jeep (both included). Before dusk, you'll take a kayak trip through the delicate mangroves. And after dark, picnic on the beach and swim in the bioluminescent bay. Vieques is a 30-minute prop-plane trip from San Juan on Vieques Air Link (787/741-3265, \$45 one way, \$85 round trip).

Nags Head, North Carolina: Fly to Norfolk, Va., and drive 80 miles south to Nags Head, home of the hang gliding center at Kitty Hawk Kites, in Jockey's Ridge State Park (877/359-8447, www.kittyhawk.com). The \$189 Taste of Flight deal includes one beginner lesson on the dunes and a 2,000-foot-high tandem flight. Come down off the high at the First Colony Inn, a historic B&B where porch sitting is an art; triple rooms go for \$200 a night and include breakfast and afternoon tea (800/368-9390, www.firstcolonyinn.com).

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, Fun, and Even More Fun

Lahaina, Maui: One upside to partying in Hawaii—as if you needed another one—is that you can recover on the beach the next day. The smart money checks into the Ohana Maui Islander in Lahaina (800/462-6262, www.ohanahotels.com, from \$99). It's steps from the water and close to shops, bars, and restaurants; if you take an airport shuttle (\$37 a person), you won't need a car. Admire the sunset from the bar at Kimo's (845 Front St., 808/661-4811), then find dinner and more ocean views a few doors south at Lahaina Fish Co. (808/661-3472). After that, follow your nose down Front Street for cocktails. Repeat until Monday. And remember, aloha conveniently means hello and good-bye.

Memphis: Elvis Presley's Heartbreak Hotel, across the street from the King's mansion and operated by his estate, sells a Graceland package (from \$151) that allots a one-night stay in a double room and two tickets for the Platinum Tour, including maximum access to the mansion and its museums (877/777-0606, www.elvis.com/epheartbreakhotel). The next day, take the hotel's free shuttle 15 minutes north to Beale Street, where you can plumb the unrivaled jukebox of Memphis greats at a barbecue joint called the Pig (167 Beale St., 901/529-1544) and catch some tunes at B.B. King's Blues Club (143 Beale St., 901/524-5464).

New Orleans: Mardi Gras, the greatest free show on earth, happens in February, but in the Big Easy summer fun comes cheap, too. Book a one-bedroom pad at the Iberville Suites, smack in the French Quarter, one block from riotous Bourbon Street (866/229-4351, www.ibervillesuites.com, from \$139). Bypass the frat-house fray for two live-music clubs on the fringe of the Quarter: Donna's Bar & Grill, where brass bands hoot till dawn (800 N. Rampart St., 504/596-6914), and the jazz-and-blues dive Funky Butt, which serves crawfish po'boys (714 N. Rampart St., 504/558-0872).

Miami Beach: In the heart of South Beach's scene, the Greenview Hotel is impossibly cheap (877/782-3557, www.rubellhotels.com, \$60). The best part: You can use the pool of its more expensive sister hotel, the Albion, to acquire a tan. Hit La Casa de las Guayaberas for those authentic four-pocket Latin shirts (5840 SW 8th St., 305/266-9683). Saturday night, kick it at Cuba Nocturna, a party of urban Afro-Cuban music and dancing (190 NE 46th St., 786/543-6222, www.6gonline.com, \$5). Later, try some of Miami's best Cuban food at Sergio's Restaurant, where most entrées are around \$8 (3252 Coral Way, 305/529-0047).



www.NewOrleansOnline.com
A jazz singer in New Orleans

Self-Improvement Is Not Only for the Imperfect

Lenox, Massachusetts: Yoga has been serious business at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in the Berkshires since 1983 (800/741-7353, www.kripalu.com). But beginners are welcome too. Take all the classes you want for \$135 per night, including food and lodging. The peaceful center caters to the mind, spirit, and body—it offers more than 30 types of bodywork (starting at \$70 per 50 minutes).

Washburn, Missouri: At the nonprofit Wholistic Life Center, located on 900 acres in the Ozarks (417/435-2212, www.wholisticlifecenter.org), you can spend a three-night weekend for \$395 (in a shared double in a historic stone house) or \$475 (your own room). Activities and treatments include meditation and movement classes, and the overall vibe is one of growth and healing—which means lots of juices and family-style vegetarian meals. Massages are extra (\$50 per hour). A full week runs \$850.

Cortes Island, British Columbia: Expand your mind at Hollyhock, a retreat 100 miles north of Vancouver, on a beach nestled against Canadian cedars (800/933-6339, www.hollyhock.bc.ca). Programs include shamanism, global justice, and leadership. Bunk in scenic oceanside doubles with private bath (\$159), dorms (\$79), or tents (\$61); prices are per night and cover meals (gourmet vegetarian and fresh seafood), guided walks with a naturalist, and movement classes.

Hot Springs, North Carolina: Thirty-five miles from Asheville's airport, in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains, Hot Springs Spa and Resort sits beside the French Broad River amid shady laurels (800/462-0933, www.hotspringsspa-nc.com). The spring's powerful mineral water emerges from the hills at 100°F–104°F and is said to aid in the treatment of a host of chronic problems, ranging from indigestion to sciatica. Deluxe cabins for

four come with spring-fed private tubs (\$159); regular cabins (\$45 and up) don't have the tubs, but visitors can use communal pools (from \$20 an hour).

Carmel Valley, California: In the Ventana Wilderness, 27 miles inland from Big Sur, the Soto Zen Buddhist monastery opens its Tassajara Zen Mountain Center each summer to non-monks wanting to leave the business of life behind (831/659-2229, www.sfzc.org/zmcindex.htm). Walk through canyons, join in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony (\$20), or hang out by the pool. Rates include all food (vegetarian) and comfortable but basic lodging (i.e., no electricity); the best values are redwood cabins for \$110 per person double and single-sex dorms for \$99 per person.

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