TRAVEL SPRING GUIDE

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Sunday, April 4, 2021

READY TO TAKE A VACATION AGAIN?

21 Destinations around Georgia to restart your travel plans
PAGE 2

LET’S DRIVE!
5 Southern states that can offer a great roadtrip experience. PAGE 8

BACK IN THE SKY
Get ready to take off again with these direct-flight destinations. PAGE 12

FIND YOUR BEACH
How do you unwind? We have a place that fits your needs! PAGE 17

THERE’S ROOM TO CATCH UP HERE.

We get it, sometimes you just want to get away from it all and discover something new. Treat yourself to some well-earned time away with a trip to Spartanburg, SC. Explore the charming downtown and footer family-fun flavors, and experience a place you feel like you’ve known your whole life.

When you’re ready to eat, just know there’s room for you in Spartanburg.
ravel bucket lists, by their nature, are arbitrary in number and subjective in content. That’s part of the fun, comparing differences and likenesses. With that in mind, here are 21 special places and annual events to consider for your travels through Georgia beyond metro Atlanta, with an eye toward springtime outdoor-based attractions and cultural activities during these extraordinary times.

BY BLAKE GUTHRIE
FOR THE AJC

COLUMBUS

Columbus is a river town on the state’s western border with hints of antebellum and modern adventures to discover.Courtesy of Visit Columbus

Springer Opera House

2 Columbus’ 186-year-old Springer Opera House stopped perfomances when the pandemic hit last spring, but this year’s gearing up to be a newly configured, socially distanced musical performance season. “Springer: In the Time of the Cotton Patch Gospel” kicked off the Spiral Outdoor Theatre Festival in March with musical interpretations, mostly antebellum, planned throughout the season. Two new hotels — the Thankfully Downtown and Hotel Indigo Columbus at Riverfront Place — are within walking distance. Other attractions include the 22-mile Chattahoochee Riverwalk, overlooking the world’s longest urban whitewater rafting course. (Springer Opera House, 501 10th St., Columbus. 706-327-3388, springoperahouse.org)

Serene 18 Paddle Trail

3 Explore the wondrous waterways of Columbus County’s new paddling trail that employs Clark Hill Lake, the state’s fourth largest reservoir, and the Little River to combine both stillwater and whitewater paddling experience. The 22-mile round trip will take you through several waterfalls, bucolic backwater creeks, and a host of critters in their natural habitat. (Contact Columbus County Visitor Center, 3300 Browns to Locust Road, Maritime. 800-315-0197, visitcolumbiaga.com/serene18-paddle-trail)

BUCKET LIST GEORGIA DESTINATIONS FOR 21

Alpine Helen

1 Fifty-two years ago the town of Helen reimagined itself as a Bavarian village called Alpine Helen to draw its first tourists to the North Georgia mountain town. The plan worked. Over the last half-century, the town has become an iconic tourist spot in the state. To warm weather travelers, Alpine Helen is synonymous with a leisurely, relaxed pace with its pastures, meadows, and mountain creeks flowing through the heart of the village. A minor attraction in the Georgia Mountain Country, an Alpine cavern where visitors can tour their own speleothem art, is also a must-see. (Alpine Helen/White County Visitor Center, 720 Buckram Street, Helen. 800-416-8127. helen.org)

The North Georgia mountain town of Helen was rechristened Alpine Helen in the 1960s to draw tourists to the North Georgia mountain town. (Photo: Courtesy of Helen Chamber of Commerce)

Amicalola Falls

4 Pictures never do Amicalola Falls justice. It’s impossible to capture all 724 feet of cascading water — Georgia’s highest waterfall — in one shot. Even in person, you are not yet to visit two different observation points at the top and bottom of the falls to see it all. A steep 604-step stairway runs alongside the falls providing even better views of those willing to make the climb. The 3-mile access trail leading to the lower observation platform is ADA accessible. (Amicalola Falls State Park, 360, 48 Amicalola Falls Road, Dixie, 706-384-5000, amicalolafallsbridge.com)

Pictures never do Amicalola Falls justice. It’s impossible to capture all 724 feet of cascading water — Georgia’s highest waterfall — in one shot. (Photo: Courtesy of Amicalola Falls State Park)

Andalusia Farm

5 In Millidgeville off a 140-acre timeframe lined with car dealerships, chain hotels, and big box stores, author Flannery O’Connor’s countryside home, Andalusia Farm, stands as gloriously stuck in time, untouched by neary development. O’Connor called Andalusia Farm home during her most fertile creative period between 1915 and her death in 1964. She penned many of her literary masterpieces here, most notably her Pulitzer Prize winning novel “A Good Man is Hard to Find” and “Wise Blood.” The farm is a state historic site and offers tours of the structures that make her masterful sordid tales, minus sugar hits. ($7, 26228, Columbus St., Millidgeville, 478-445-8722, gene.nic/theoths

Blue Ridge Scenic Railway

6 Spring is a great time to ride the Blue Ridge Scenic Railway with its stops at limited-capacity rail cars on a trip that leaves the pastoral path of the north and flowing Toccoa River to the Ironmonument site line. The 4.5-hour round trip includes a two-hour tour over to and down in the same area. McCaysville, Georgia, is the starting and ending point that straddles the state line. 345, 242 Depot St., Blue Ridge. 843-505-8274, blue ridge)

The Blue Ridge Scenic Railway departs on the train depot as in a classic photo. (Photo: Courtesy of Blue Ridge Scenic Railway)

Jimmy Carter sites

7 Visit sites associated with the 39th president of the United States, starting at Plains High School, which serves as the welcome center. Highlights include the Plains Depot, which served as Carter’s presidential campaign headquarters in 1970, and the Jimmy Carter Bicentennial Farm in Archery, which are two years old. The farm is a fun stop in 1869 Georgia. 500 W. Plains, Plains. 229-834-4004, jimmycarter.org)
**Driftwood Beach**

A stretch of sand scavenged with driftwood trees and limits makes this pristine beach one of Georgia’s more unusual and photogenic spots. Trails come to this unspoilt retreat at the northeastern end of Jekyll Island to gawk and stroll among the ancient weathered tree trunks and gnarled branches that look like works of environmental art. The best time to visit is at low tide when the beach is wide enough to walk. Even at high tide, it’s a rare sight to see all that driftwood sticking out above the water. (Open entry to Jekyll Island; free parking at beach access points on North Beach Drive, Jekyll Island; intonation Gate 1: 9085 Dewing Magnolia Causeway. 912-635-3106, jekyllisland.com)

**Barnesly Resort**

Visitors to this North Georgia countryside retreat on 1,200 acres come for outdoor recreation and luxurious accommodations set in an English manor-style lodge. The resort has upped its culinary program of late, an effort overseen by executive chef Nicolás Laso, who has put his refined French touches on classic, locally sourced Southern fare at the River House, the resort’s fine-dining restaurant. You’ll also want to visit the gift shop of the former Victorian mansion that reopened March 12. Laso also oversees offerings at the newly renovated W. Woodard Hall and the open-air Four Canoes on the lakefront. While you’re there, check out the rest of the circa-1860s mansion house and restore its enameled paneling. (Located 2201 and opp. 901 Barnesly Gardens Road, Adairsville. 877-753-2447, barneslyresort.com)

**Little White House**

Franklin D. Roosevelt led the nation through the Great Depression and WWII while spending a lot of time at his personal retreat at Warm Springs where he went to treat his polio condition in the natural hot springs. The main house he built of Georgia pine came to be known as “The Little White House.” It’s where the 32nd president died in 1945. Now a state park, you’ll want to look in as it did on the day FDR passed. The Heritage Press Museum where polo staff arts meant on the drawing paper is currently closed due to renovation and expected to reopen later this year. ($2, 404 Little White House Blvd, Warm Springs. 30163-5801, gastateparks.org. LittleWhiteHouse)

**Okefenokee Swamp**

Stephen C. Foster State Park serves as an entry point into the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, one of the largest wetlands in the world. Paddle the wilderness canoes trails of the swamp by day and keep your eyes peeled for alligators, snakes, turtles, owls and ospreys. But keep your eyes peeled to the sky at night. The state park, one of Georgia’s more remote spots, has been certified as a gold-tier International Dark Sky Park, so expect sublime stargazing opportunities on clear nights. ($3, 17650 US 17, range 2,863.624, gastateparks.org/stephenfoster)

**Providence Canyon**

Known as “Georgia’s Little Grand Canyon,” Providence Canyon was formed due to poor farming practices by settlers in the 1800s. Over time the erosion caused by human activity turned into one of the state’s more eye-cathing natural attractions. The canyon walls sport layers of orange, red, pinkish-purple and whitewashed sediment capped by a verdant forest. Providence Canyon State Park has trails leading from the trailheads at the base of the canyon. ($3, 3550 Canyon Road, Lumpkin. 229-836-6302, gastateparks.org/ProvidenceCanyon)

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**A New Adventure Every Day!**

There’s no better place to explore the great outdoors than in White County. With over 20 area waterfalls, 6 wineries, 2 State Parks, Georgia’s Newest Historic Site and much, much more.
Callaway Resort and Gardens

Each spring, Callaway Resort and Gardens bursts with color. More than 20,000 azaleas play a starring role in this dazzling floral blockbuster between early March and late April. Seven-hundred different varieties of the brightly hued plant grow throughout the 2,000-acre grounds. Drivers travel through the Callaway Brothers Azalea Bowl, the Overlook Azalea Garden and the God’s Eye Butterfly Garden. Scenically showcases abound at the resort, including biking, golf, tennis, a zip-line course and water sports on small lakes (850/315-1700, 17001 U.S. 1, Seffner, 664-912-5000, callawaygarden.com)

International Cherry Blossom Festival

The radiant arrival of spring was celebrated among the pink and white blossoms of Mackin’s 250,000 Yoshino cherry trees at the International Cherry Blossom Festival on March 29-30.

The city’s signature annual event returned after being sidelined by the pandemic last spring. General admission and annual Cherry Blossom Park All events and activities took place outside with safety protocols in place. Festivities included music, amusement rides and food vendors. The March 29 parade was broadcasted this year. (813) 614-4400; cherryblossom.com)

Georgia Mountain Fair

Now in its 70th year, the Georgia Mountain Fair (Aug. 12-22) is a celebration of Southern Appalachian culture that includes a center stage, an art and crafts village, and country and pop music concerts. Situated in the heart of the Little River Valley, featuring a log cabin, smokehouse, one room schoolhouse, barn and cotton picker. This is also a live demonstration area for visitors to see how the cotton is grown from the seed to the final product. (706) 852-3174; georgiamountainfair.com)

Brasstown Bald

A two-hour drive north of Atlanta, Brasstown Bald is Georgia’s highest point, at 4,774 feet. Park visitors can hike the trail below the summit and walk the story and pathed half-mile trail to the top. Tunnels and views make the summit, a national historic site, is accessible by snow vehicle in the winter. (706) 892-3195; brasstownbaldga.com)

Spring Hammock Preserve supplies serene scenery

Spring Hammock Preserve offers trails for hiking, birding and nature walks. The preserve is located at 5000 Spring Hammock Preserve Road, just off Florida State Road 129, in Seminole County.

By Patrick Connally

ORLANDO, FLA. — Seminole County’s Spring Hammock Preserve can’t lose its suburbanWinter Springs and Lake Mary, but it’s possible for visitors to feel far removed from civilization when tra- versing the land’s flood plain forests and limehick hammock. The 1,500-acre preserve is home to some of Florida’s oldest and largest cypress trees, as well as rare species such as the swamp pitcher plant and the gopher tortoise.

At the trialhead, visitors can find sev- eral covered picnic areas with picnic tables and an Environmental Studies Center designed for Seminole County students.

A tangle of trails wind through the preserve, including the Spring Hammock Trail, which leads to a spring-shaped lake. It’s also possible to reach the preserve by boat or on a shuttle from the preserve. The most common route for hikers is the 2.2-mile Upper Trail, which is possible to spot great blue herons, pile- wed woodpeckers, cardinals, squirrels, fox and other wildlife. Alligators, bob- cats and wild pigs may also be present in the area. Look out for special web arches along the way, as arches often stretch their sticky silk across the trail. A number of birdhouses used to take hikers to different sections of trail, but many of them are now boarded up or in need of repair. Still, it’s possible to see some ancient cypress trees while wading along the flood plain hammock.

John Cook, who leads into Lake Josep. When heading back toward the trailhead, a drive along the Florida Trail one can see the information board and the cross hammock Trail and provides new views of Soldiers Creek while walking beneath towering oak trees and next to a saw palmetto.

Across the path, Soldiers Creek Park offers recreation and a fun, short moun- tain bike trail in an easily accessible location.

On weekdays, the trails are quiet and serene, though it’s still possible to hear the faint noise of traffic in the distance. On Sat., May 1, 2022, despite the fact, Spring Hammock Preserve should serve as a beauti- ful spot for a morning walk or evening runing, tucked away from the tri- ble urban life.

IF YOU GO

Spring Hammock Preserve, 2145 Upper Trail in Longwood, Florida, 407- 645-2211. Open sunrise to sunset daily. seminolecountyfl.gov

AMENITIES:
- Covered pavilions, picnic tables, restrooms
- Environmental Studies Center, parking, trash cans, wheelchair accessibility

ACTIVITIES:
- Birding, biking, hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing

WHAT TO BRING:
- Pack a camera to capture the natural scenery available in the preserve, hiking boots are also recommended in case of muddy areas. Flats will allow helpful addition during warm and humid days.

WHAT NOT TO BRING:
- Alcohol for teenagers are prohibited on Seminole County natural lands. Hunting, swimming, camping, lamping with plants and wildlife, fire and motorized vehicles are also not allowed.

PETS:
Local pet owners are welcome to enjoy the natural space at Spring Hammock Preserve.

PRO TIPS:
- Bring a switchbacking escape or turn into an all-day adventure, especially when combining vistas to other nearby green spaces. Pack a picnic or spend time outdoors by visiting Golden Crown Park next door or nearby Big Pine Park with a gypsy firth to the thousands of years old.

FLORIDA OUTDOOR ADVENTURES
Head for the trails.

Shop the bargains.

Ride the water slides.

When you’re ready to visit, the Smoky Mountains are ready to welcome you.

Explore all the vacation options this spring in Sevierville, Tennessee.

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TODAY’S EXPLAINER

FLEETING

You have no need to know before you fly

A hundred years ago when you took your last flight — or was it just a year that seemed longer? — flying was different. Now that we’ve endured isolation, more than 80% of us say we want to go somewhere in the next six months, a new survey shows. If you’re going by plane, you’ll need to forget some of what you’ve known about air travel and deal with several new rules, regulations and requirements. Here, fliers is what to expect for your next vacation as you navigate Air Travel 2.0, the COVID-19 edition.

You’ll have company at 35,000 feet

To no one’s surprise, load factors — that is, how full planes are — dropped to 50% in the first 2 months of 2020, down from about 80% in 2019, Bureau of Transportation Statistics data show. That means on a 12-seat 737, you would have had about 12 seats filled in 2019 and about 8 in 2020.

“Great!” you say. “Social distancing. Empty middle seats. I get to stretch my legs.”

Dream on. Most airlines no longer keep the middle seat empty. Delta will retain the center seat empty on certain flights of April 1-July 19 and all in smaller airports, while other carriers coast to coast, if they slow the burn, they have cut routes and capacity to increase load factors. The equation is simple: more people, more dough.

Put it all together and you get the possibility of head-injury by seatmate or our hope to sit the road, according to a Longwoods International survey released Feb. 5.

This survey of older sentiment, its 58s in the COVID-19 era, showed that 24% of respondents plan to fly in the next 6 months, up 11% in mid-January.

The car trip is still king, said Ane’ey, president and chief revenue officer of Longwoods.

“Delta CEO will return at a pace that would now be considered on the pace of minimum,

24% means that will forbid a return to a density “I am not in an email,” he said in an email.

When you should buy tickets

It’s a confusing time, with prices and availability changing from one minute to the next. Most major carriers are offering various types of deals and discounts, and some are even waiving fees for changes and cancellations. It’s best to check with your preferred carrier for specific details.

Airports (along with train stations, buses, and rental cars) are fully� occupied.

Passengers can expect to face longer lines at the airport’s main terminal, with increased security checks and other safety measures. It’s important to arrive early and be prepared for unexpected delays.

Insurance abroad sometimes is not available

Insurance policies vary by country, and some countries do not offer international travel insurance. It’s important to check with your insurance provider to ensure that you have coverage that includes COVID-19.

Lailana Hamon, Los Angeles Times,

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

2 Influencing witness counts each year vary

Most of the 1,000,000 viewers attending a summer camp at Camp Hill Nameer Center in Southwark County, R.I., paraded out onto the lawn in a show of support for the camp. Were we at all aware of how many of the campers would survive the pandemic to see another summer at Camp Hill, or that the camp would still be there when they returned? We had no idea.

City seeks robust amicus

With the help of the city’s attorney, a new lawsuit challenging the city’s COVID-19 regulations has been filed in federal court.

10 More Details

March 30, 2021

Cold, dry weather continues

As temperatures dropped below freezing, the region experienced a sharp drop in humidity, leading to a high risk of frostbite.

Coverdale/ADC

By Christopher Boone

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

W7
ROAD TRIPS IN 5 STATES

Venture out for a change of scenery while staying in the South.

BY BLAKE GUTHRIE FOR THE AJC

If you’re itching to travel but still uncomfortable flying during the pandemic, take a long weekend road trip close to home. To spark your wanderlust, here are five suggestions for themed itineraries in neighboring states. All you have to do is gas up and go.

ALABAMA CULINARY COAST

You don’t have to go all the way to New Orleans to experience the Crescent City’s phenomenal cuisine. Its influences can be found in the culinary milieu in the twin cities of Alabama’s Gulf Coast — Gulf Shores and Orange Beach. Road tripping, gumbos and gumbo-maxims are ubiquitous.

Another prominent item is Royal Red, a large species of lobster raining daytime found in the deepest waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Start your day at Gulf Shores at The Lodge at Gulf State Park ($10 and up, 205-938-6260, fullgategolfstatepark.com). This eco-conscious beachside hotel stands alone with no development except for the Gulf State Park Pier just 1.50 feet into the Gulf of Mexico. After exploring the beach and downtown Ocean Boulevard and other fresh catches of the day at King Pin’s ($5 and up, 251-948-5464, kingpinmessestoastarrestaurant.com), in the morning, enjoy a New Orleans-style breakfast: brunch of Eggs Codorn (pounded eggs served on a crescent roll bread and rose pork) and beignets at The Ruby Slipper Café ($10 and up, 251-224-5680, rubyslipperbiscuitgrill.com).

Afterward, employ Gulf State Park and the Hugh S. Brantyny Backcountry Trail for foot or bike through a maritime forest and Secondary dune system. For dinner, Creole’s Restaurant on 8th Street (205-227-2587, creolesrestaurantal.com) is an off-the-beaten-path spot specializing in banana leaf-wrapped seafood.

In Orange Beach, find a fishing charter at one of the many marinas in town and if you catch anything worth eating, take it to Tio’s Seafood Shack ($10 and up, 251-359-0599, www.dreamofoaksbooking.com) where they’ll cook your catch for you. In the evening, enjoy contemporary coastal cuisine and exceptional sunset views on the

FLORIDA: FUN ON THE WATER

Water sports fan needn’t fear farther than the Florida Panhandle to get their fix in any number of ways. The front of this road trip is lunar Highway 30A, designated a National scenic Byway last month, with a trek to Mexico Beach, which is back on its feet after being nearly tripped off the map by Hurricane Michael in 2018.

En route to the coast, make an inland stop at Ponce de Leon Springs State Park ($4 per vehicle, 2680 Ponce de Leon Springs Road, Ponce de Leon, Florida, 850-836-4261, www.floridastateparks.org) to swim in the crystal-clear blue springs. On the coast, stay the night in a cabin in the piney woods next to Western Lake, a coastal dune lake like at Grayton Beach State Park ($15 per night, 327 Main Park Road, Grayton Beach, 850-267-8000, www.floridastateparks.org/greytonbeach). The park’s coastal dunes are home to rare dunes peeking (aka), white sand beaches backed by an extensive dune system. Explore the dune lake by stand-up paddleboarding or kayak. available for rent through The Rental Shop 30A ($70 a day, 850-205-0001, www.the-rentalshop30a.com).

Travel 75 miles south along the coast to Port St. Joe and book a cottage at The Port Inn and Cottages ($145 and up, 507 Monument Ave., 850-229-7282, www.chunkenchicks.com). Some of the best fishing along this stretch of the Gulf Coast is at Mexico Beach next door, where artificial reefs team with game fish. KC Sport Fishing ($55, 1013 Canal Parkway, 850-533-0884, www.kcsportfishing.com) provides a variety of long and short range fishing and sightseeing expeditions, including a lunch run to Apalachicola.

Disney unveils first details for its 50th anniversary

By Dawne Breit

ORLANDO, Fla. — Walt Disney World has announced the first details for its 50th anniversary celebration, which will span months and include lighting enhancements across all four of its theme parks, including Cinderella Castle at Magic Kingdom.


Expect the castle’s makeover to include more gold details throughout, a new fire work display that shifted its color scheme to deep blues and light pink last year. The Cinderella Castle Fireworks Spectacular (“It’s a Small World” firework show), which debuts this fall, will be included as part of the “Celebration.”

Disney announced the new changes in a keynote address at the D23 Expo. The theme park company will use the 50th anniversary to showcase the new castle transformed into a giant pink cake.

Disney’s Social Media Team, including Kingdom’s Tree of Life and the Hollywood Tower Hotel at Disney’s Hollywood Studios will be incorporated into the celebration as well. During Disney World’s celebration, the Hollywood Tower Hotel’s lighting will evoke “the golden age of imagination and adventure,” Disney says.

Buy one park ticket for $74 and you will be able to come to life with a magical lantern glow, complete in prize prize, that we call the lantern of magic,” said Dana Carlson, associate broadcast producer with Disney Live Entertainment.

Disney rendering shows the Hollywood Studios building, theme of Tower of Terror, outlined in bright lighting. The Tree of Life will be home to “magical treas” Disney said. An artist’s concept shows multiple lights that will be lit in the tree’s branches and leaves.

The Epcot light package will remain after the 50th anniversary, said Carlson. Meanwhile, Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse will don new costumes for the occasion. The look is described as modern toned with pops of gold and embroidered impressions of Cinderella Castle backed

Disney will also unveil a limited edition of the Disney 50th anniversary “It’s a Small World” at the Disneyland Resort. The package will also be available at the Disney Store and online.

“Disney will also的内容 the Walt Disney World world of magic and action,” Disney said.

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TENNESSEE: MAKE MUSIC TRACKS

For a tuned-in trip through Tennessee, head straight up 2-1/4 from the state line town and Nashville. But be prepared to make some stops along the way. At home north of Chattanooga is The Caverns (205) and up, 357 Charlie Roberts Road, Pelham, 331-501-9724, www.thecaverns.com, famous for holding concerts below ground inside a cave. Newly opened is an outdoor venue with socially distanced, held-style seating, called The Caverns Above Grand Amphitheater, with acts such as Margo Price, St. Paul and the Broken Bones and the McCoury Band scheduled to perform. Take the exit to The Smoke House Lodge and Cabins (866-330-9617, www.pigeonforge.com). On Friday and Saturday nights the Smoke House hosts the Music in the Mountains series featuring established and up-and-coming Nashville talent. The National Park Service visitor center is 100 miles to Puckett’s of Leiper’s Fork (615-380-5830, www.puckettsofire.com), a down-home dining experience.

The grocery store founded in 1933 is a restaurant and a music venue where you never know what you’ll see on the live open mic nights. Being close to Nashville, it’s common for celebrity musicians and hit singer-songwriters to grace the small stage for a song or two after dinner. Stay in a nearby Airbnb camp with a special porch at The Quirky Cabin (570-789-7412), 15 minutes to The Caverns. Grand Ole Opry (578-270-7777, www.938.com) is 20 miles, allowingef tickets to its historic weekly radio shows. Stay next door at the Gaylord Opryland Resort ($187 and up, 615-864-6000, www.maanrit.com), an atrium-enclosed city unto itself with manmade rivers and waterfalls outside your room. The Ryman Auditorium ($35-55, 615-242-2000, ryman.com) has reopened its doors for sold-out guided daytime tours ($25-35). Nearby is the brand new National Museum of African American Music (824-05, 610-441-3724, museumnma.com), dedicated to preserving the rich history of African American music, created, influenced and inspired by African Americans.

PLANNING YOUR NEXT GETAWAY

Travel and the art of anticipation

Stephanie Rosenbaum

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For many of us, canceling vacations has become all too familiar. But as people begin to get vaccinated against COVID-19, we may see a return to travel. Even before the pandemic, it seemed a little less like a pipe dream. Generally, it’s a worthwhile trip when vacations are widely available (and even then we need to continue certain practices to stop the spread of the strain). However, just thinking about a future getaway can yield surprising benefits.

Anticipation is such a valuable source of pleasure,” said Elizabeth Dunn, a professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia who has studied anticipation and happiness. I first spoke with Dunn more than a decade ago when I wrote about spending and happiness on the hosts of the Great Recession. Recently, I called her again to talk about travel and the art of anticipation or the light of the pure

Practical tips from social science on how to cultivate anticipation, what type of trips to take if you want to maximize happiness post-pandemic, why now may be an excellent time to plan, and how discussing your future adventure can help others who are feeling isolated.

The happiness reset: You don’t have to go far

We’re all 50 years old again after months locked at home, we likely experience what Dunn refers to as a “happiness reset” — the result of which is that even money, less crowded hotel rooms, and basic safety can seem extraordinary. “You can do something pretty simple like book a hotel room online,” she said. “That is fundamentally good news for the legions of travelers whose incomes have been impacted by the pandemic.”

The theory behind why a more leisurely trip may be a better choice is because at some point, you just fist up to vacation and anticipate.

“People travel more, the less likely they are to save each trip,” wrote Dunn and Michael Norton, the Harvard M. Bradley Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School and a member of Harvard’s Behavioral Insights Group, in “Happy Money: The Science of Spending.” Dunn was involved with studies that investigated the notion that “an abundance of desirable life experiences may undermine people’s ability to save pleasurable experiences.” In the resulting paper, published in Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin (2017), Dunn and her fellow authors concluded that people who save for travel or just feeling like one — may undermine their future to come even to enjoyable but unremarkable destinations.

So, in a norm, our current travel forecast may end up encompassing our wonder of exploring.

“Anticipation of a happy trip reset, begin with a simpler trip — a beach gazingly close to home, a cross-country road trip, a fishing expedition with friends. No need for an extravagant getaway on the other side of the world. Even small trips may not lead to novel after the pandemic.”

The happiness reset won’t last long,

“Dunn said: “We’re up to our expectations again. To begin with as well take advantage of this month.”

How to cultivate anticipation

Ideally, you want to book a vaca

tion far enough in advance that you have time beforehand to gather details about the destination, to build excitement and positive expectations. This is no trip for a trip to a state park as it is too likely. Since you don’t know what will happen on a hike, an escape to distress coastal cities or an Italian getaway, you can use the time based to lakes, to immerse in the Mediterranean Sea, sea and food. It’s through the cultivation of anticipation that the pleasure of a vacation can extend beyond the trip itself. This practice means to actively anticipate a vacation to see how many different images of the places you plan to see, read about history, and do any tools you can and more ways to cultivate anticipation. For travel here — you must see on a potent source of pleasure.”

So, you need to time to cultivate anticipation. But not too much time. The problem with this is that in the future, researchers have found, we that we almost think of our future selves as other people. Dunn, for example, said she essentially thinks of her older, retired self as a different person. And it’s difficult to get excited about a distant, distant future. But she said, planning a trip with a “reason- able length of time” still feels like you’re the one who will be taking it.

Waves lapsing: Sand between your toes. Warm coastal breezes. Steam rising off a plate of fresh shrimp.

When you’re ready, come experience the sights, sounds and scents of the Alabama Gulf Coast. We’ve missed you.

GulfShores.com | 877-341-2400
Golf courses in the Tidewater State provide a wide variety of scenery, terrain and challenging play. Begin in the mountains, then head to the Sandhills region in the central part of the state to tee off at a legendary golf resort.

South Carolina: Couples Getaway

For a couples weekend close to home, head to the update region of South Carolina in the Appalachian foothills and trace the Cherokee Tramway scenic route (5–11), where you can explore fruit orchards, wine vineyards, state parks and mountains.

Spring travel guide

For a couples weekend close to home, head to the update region of South Carolina in the Appalachian foothills and trace the Cherokee Tramway scenic route (5–11), where you can explore fruit orchards, wine vineyards, state parks and mountains.

PRACTICAL TRAVEL

What to consider before you travel again after long stay at home

by Natalie S. Compton Washington, D.C.

At a particularly brutal winter in 2021, many travel enthusiasts were looking forward to spring travel. But if you’re planning a trip, here are a few things to consider.

1. Vacations: For 2021, most travelers will be able to travel as long as they can manage to do so. But even if you’re able to travel, it’s important to check with your destination to find out what travel restrictions are in place.

2. Transportation: If you’re planning a road trip, make sure you have all your necessary documents and that your vehicle is in good working order.

3. Health: Check with your doctor to see if you need to get any vaccinations before you travel.

4. Insurance: Make sure you have the right type of insurance to cover any potential medical expenses.

5. Weather: Check the weather forecast before you leave and be prepared for any unexpected weather conditions.

6. Budget: Make sure you have enough money to cover your travel expenses.

7. Tourism: Check with the tourism office in your destination to find out what events are happening and what attractions are open.

8. Security: Be aware of any potential security risks and take precautions to protect yourself.

9. Environment: Check with local organizations to see if there are any environmental concerns in your destination.

10. Social distancing: Be aware of any local social distancing guidelines and follow them accordingly.

11. Technology: Make sure you have the right type of technology to stay connected while you’re on the go.

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A different kind of early-bird special for seniors

For the first time in line for vaccines, older travelers now lead wave in travel bookings.

Deborahatan

When the coronavirus hit, Jim and Cheryl Drayer, 65 and 72, canceled all their planned travel and moved to their home in Dallas.

But the Drayers both received the second dose of their COVID-19 vaccinations. And this month, armed with their new antibodies, they are heading to Mazatlán along with other vacationers.

Across the United States, older people have been among the first in line to receive COVID-19 vaccinations. And among hotels, cruise lines and tour operators, the data is clear: Older travelers are leading a wave in new travel bookings. Americans over 65, who have had priority access to inoculatons, are now nearly vaccinated and ready to travel—often while their children and grandchildren continue to travel or don’t even have access to vaccines.

“We’ve been willing to comply with masking and social distancing, and we basically lived inside of our bubble here in Dallas,” Jim Drayer said. “We haven’t been more than a few miles away from home in a year. So we’re anxious to get out now and do things a little more safely.”

At the Friendly Hotel in Austin, Texas, a 3-star luxury hotel housed in what was once a seed factory for the Hilltop Estate, reservations made with the hotel’s AMP promotional rate for Horizon Hospitality, a Honolulu-based company with hotels, had a higher conversion rate of bookings, crested nearly 60% in January.

The Drayers, who have gone on trips in Africa and Russia, and on cruise and train tours, are planning an upcoming trip to Mazatlán, Mexico, for a 10-night stay at the Azul Zihuatanejo.

“The sense of safety is partly because travel, with its mandatory quarantine and contact tracing, has managed the pandemic well,” he said.

Couples from across the country have canceled trips due to the pandemic, with flights postponed or canceled. Those who were able to travel have had to follow strict health guidelines.

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TRAVEL

SPRING GUIDE

5 DESTINATIONS OF FLIGHT AWAY

Living in Atlanta comes with a lot of perks. One of them is Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, which makes it easy to fly anywhere in the world from here. Thanks to more than 200 regularly scheduled direct flights, the busiest airport in the country is a gateway to wherever you want to go. Here are five destinations you can visit on a nonstop flight from Atlanta in 6½ hours or less. As always, call ahead to confirm hours of operation and safety protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1 Maine is famous for its picturesque lighthouses, but none is more picturesque than the Portland Head Light (www.portlandheadlight.com). Dating back to 1791, it’s also the oldest one in the state. There’s a museum and gift shop in the lighthousekeeper’s quarters open daily in the summer and weekends only the rest of the year. Surrounding the lighthouse is 50 acre Fort Williams Park, which features coastal hiking trails, picnic tables and a garden.

For a unique overnight stay, The Press Hotel (413 Exchange St., www.presshotelmaine.com) is a hotel that’s also a book store. Guests can check out books and read them at the hotel.

The Old Port district is everything you could ever want in a New England port town: cobblestone streets, 19th-century brick buildings and historic wharves on the harbor. It’s also home to some of the city’s best restaurants and bars. Highlights include Duckfat Fries Shack (55 Howard St., www.duckfatusa.com, 207-501-2070), duckfat trough (3 cme), a convivial, casual place offering wraps, pizzas, craft sodas, duck fat middles and Belgian fries served with an aioli of dipping sauce. There’s also a small but select choice of microbrews. And although it’s currently closed while it revamps its menu and space, Portland Hunt & Alpine Club (50 Lake St., 75 Market St., 207-774-4734, lyman@portlandalpines.com) responds this spring. Named one of the best cocktail bars in America in 2019 by Thrillist and a two-time James Beard award semifinalist for Outstanding Bar Program, this is the place to enjoy fresh, creative cocktails by some of the best mixologists around.

Portland, Maine

FLIGHT: 2½ HOURS

Portland Head Light is the oldest lighthouse in Maine, while Old Port is home to cobblestone streets, 19th-century brick buildings and some of Portland’s best bars and restaurants.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PORTLAND HEAD LIGHT AND GLORIA VAN ATTEM - ENTER THE USA

STORY BY SUZANNE VAN ATTEM - ILLUSTRATION BY GLORIA ARTEAGA - FOR THE AJC
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FLIGHT: 3½ HOURS

Despite a series of natural disasters and economic struggles in recent years, Puerto Rico’s tourism industry is on the upswing, and San Juan, Old San Juan, and the Arecibo Observatory are just three of its many attractions. A prime example is the brand-new, 18-story hotel in the heart of Old San Juan, SpringHill Suites by Marriott San Juan Condado. It’s just a short walk from the beach and the cruise ship terminal. The hotel features modern rooms with balconies, and amenities include a rooftop pool, fitness center, and complimentary breakfast. The hotel is located in a vibrant neighborhood, providing easy access to the island’s top attractions.

Circa Resort & Casino, Las Vegas: Las Vegas has been a top tourist destination for years, with its bright lights, world-class hotels, and incredible dining options. Circa Resort & Casino is the city’s newest and most ambitious project, offering a unique and modern experience. The hotel features 777 guest suites, each with a private balcony and stunning views of the city. Guests can also enjoy the hotel’s rooftop pool, fitness center, and variety of dining options.

Las Vegas, Nevada

San Francisco, California

FLIGHT: 4½ HOURS

Nestled in the beautiful Napa Valley, just a short drive from downtown San Francisco, the Napa Valley Inn is the perfect getaway for foodies and wine enthusiasts. The inn offers a variety of guest rooms, each with a private balcony and views of the surrounding vineyards. The hotel features a outdoor pool, spa, and a restaurant serving fresh, locally-sourced cuisine.

San Juan, Puerto Rico

As opposed to seashore resorts in the U.S., San Juan is a mountain city. Ocean Park is where the city’s beach is located.

San Juan, Puerto Rico

FLIGHT: 5½ HOURS

After you’ve hit all the usual tourist sights, seek out some of the city’s quirkier attractions. Musa Maracaichi (510 S. 39th St., 787-234-0255) is a market that sells local crafts, spices, and other souvenirs. It’s located near the Old San Juan Historic District and is open daily from 8:30 am to 7:30 pm.

San Juan, Puerto Rico

At Musa Maracaichi, you can also find local crafts, spices, and other souvenirs.
Fear of public transit’s virus risks spurred boom.

Diane Grunewald

As with all bicycles during the pandemic, e-bikes have been riding the wave. And thanks to a surge in orders, e-bike sales in the United States have soared. "E-bike riders have been seen on sidewalks, streets, and trails," says Michael Egan, a local bicycle industry analyst at NBD, adding that e-bikes "now have a new and growing group of riders." The pandemic has accelerated the growth of e-bike sales, with some e-bike manufacturers reporting a 100% increase in sales compared to the previous year.

E-bikes have become popular among consumers looking to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their health. They are also a safe and affordable way to commute during a pandemic, as they are unaffected by traffic jams and can be used as an alternative to public transportation.

However, there are concerns about the environmental impact of e-bikes, as they require electricity to function. In addition, the batteries used in e-bikes can contain hazardous materials that need to be disposed of properly.

Bike enthusiasts are using e-bikes to explore new areas and to enjoy the outdoors. They are also using them to commute to work, run errands, and run errands.

E-bikes have become a popular choice for commuting during the pandemic, as they are a safe and healthy way to travel. They are also an affordable and environmentally friendly way to reduce carbon emissions.

Further, fasterner, mainstream

E-bikes are seen as a "go-to" last-mile solution for many urban dwellers. They are a popular choice for commuting, running errands, and exploring new areas.

E-bikes are also a popular choice for exercise, as they provide a lower-impact alternative to traditional workouts.

In conclusion, e-bikes are becoming a popular choice for urban dwellers, offering a healthy and environmentally friendly way to travel and exercise.
all cleared in records probe

By J. Scott Trubey

Georgia AG leaves open possibility that individuals could be prosecuted if evidence supports it.

The Attorney General has no intention of changing the city of Atlanta with the addition of violent

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Family fun

The quaint, easiest-to-reach beach from A-land—ahem, a plus when traveling with kids—is **Tybee Island** (40 miles southeast of A-land). Stay at The Georgian Inn ($85 and up, 132 Bluff Ave., 912-886-4942, destinationbeachproperties.com; our preferred choice for families), featuring suites and studios near the Tybee Pier and East Beach, a pool for the kids, and plenty of room for tweens and adults to share a space and enjoy the island. Within walking distance is The Breakfast Club (ES and up, 100 Summer Ave., 912-786-7061, thebreakfastclubtybee.com), a legendary, no-fills diner serving hearty breakfast and lunch items that will hold you all day long. The Tybee Island Light Station ($5 and up, 30 Mobile Drive, 912-786-5801, tybeelighthouses.org) at the north end of the island provides a view of a lighthouse from the top of its 145-foot tower. If you want to avoid crowded sands, North Beach across from the lighthouse is a good option, as is South Beach where there's a lighthouse pantry (912-786-5801) and a gift shop where you can find everything from water bottles to hats. A fun place to take kids who want to enjoy the water is Tybee Island Volunteer Center, 902 E 21st St., 912-786-5444, tybeevolunteers.com.

Romantic getaway

Ocean View balcony at The Sanctuary at Kiawah Island.

Home of the 2023 PGA Championship, **Kiawah Island, South Carolina** (300 miles southeast of A-land) is renowned for its golf. But it also makes an ideal romantic beach destination—a couple looking to purify themselves and rekindle the romantic, unconfined might by the sea. The Sanctuary at Kiawah Island Golf Resort ($345 and up, 5100 Sanctuary Beach Dr., 843-696-2100, sanctuaryresort.com) offers the Kiawah Spa Romance Package, a couple-oriented coastal escape that includes rose petal turn-down service, a couple massage at the spa, dinner at The Ocean Room, and breakfast each morning, among other romantic perks. For couples who like getting together, the Hot and Here Package includes many of the same items plus rounds of pool. Stop by The Market at Town Center (1400 Sea Forest Drive, 843-768-2775) to pick up provisions for a picnic on the beach.

**Pick a great destination to match your vacation style**

The weather is warming up and beach season is upon us. Whether your ideal seaside getaway involves kids and dogs or romance and natural beauty, there's a beach for you. Here are eight suggestions for sandy strands in the Southeast sure to suit everyone.
**WILD AT HEART**

**Natural beauty abounds on Hunting Island, South Carolina, 232 miles southwest of Atlanta.** Hunting Island State Park (556 entrance r., 0.1 mi Sea Island Parkway; 843-888-2850; southcarolinaparks.com/hunting-island) features nearly five miles of pristine beach, a maritime forest, a salt marsh, and 3,000 acres of salt marsh and 10 miles of trails. Climb the stairs of the historic lighthouse for a panoramic view of the coast from the 150-foot elevated platform. Original artifacts, including a British flag, a cannon, and a ship’s log from the 1800s, are displayed in the gift shop at the campground ($30 and up) at the north end of the island. The closest restaurant is Johnson Creek Tavern ($5 and up), 1 mi Sea Island Parkway. Hunting Island is also the very embarkation point to nearby St. Phillips Island, the Lowcountry’s private retreat of Ted Turner, now under state park control.

**LAP OF LUXURY**

Stylish Alys Beach, Florida, (100 miles south of Atlanta) is a community, Sedona-inspired master planned community along the Panhandle’s scenic regency. Alys. Everything about Alys (pronounced Alan’s) is locally rooted, from the exquisite palm tree lawn dining experience at Caliza Restaurant ($32 and up), 3 Notebuck Rd., 850-262-8000, alysbeach.com (online restaurant) to the designer brands and high-end beachwear at Alys Shoppe (50 Park West Lane, 850-262-3910, alysshoppe.com). There aren’t any tourists in the village, the beach and town are: quiet, left alone by us, the village is a canvas for artists from around the globe each spring during the Digital Graffiti Festival. Paint on the shell, or in the historic Alys Beach Restaurant, to create your own unique art work on canvas or shell. There is an eclectic and unique art vibe in the village. The art is for sale, many artists have studios on art ord and the sides of buildings around town. It’s a pre-stopping spot anywhere and will be a drive through event that is expected to continue for the next spring due to the pandemic. (Alys Beach Guest Services, 9011FL 30A E., 850-262-5555, alysbeach.com)

**PARTY HEARTY**

This one-rate shuttle tix is a huge annual package party companion on the beach at the Flora-Dara Lounge to see who can toss a flag furthest across the state line. (The Fair at 401 S. Florida. B. 00-217-3892, breit-lenfess.com/cone/beach/cone.html) (parties with social distancing)

**PEACE AND QUIET**

Sunset Beach, North Carolina, (386 miles east of Atlanta) is like a berry on the sea with an uncounted bluish tree of commerce and redevelopment — no resorts, no chains, no high rises, no amusement parks — only beach houses, a fishing pier and place like the Sunset Inn ($200 and up), 300 North Beach Rd., 910-855-2661, docseniors.com. Slow your roll as you drive to the stunning Sunset Village, a remote position in the dunes containing a quiet beach, off the beaten path, which is near the miller’s house in the Sunset Village. The beach is a remote beach where the waves crash on the sand all day and the sand is well-tended by the locals. The Sunflower Inn, Sunset Village, NC 28473 (828-277-5700, sunflowerinn.com)

**SUNSET ISLAND COASTAL RESERVE:** (days open: 877-525-6786, usgs.gov) 12.5 miles of undeveloped beach, so inclusion is easy to find. Walk a mile south from the pier to a mansion (or fishing retreat) on the east side of the beach called the Sheddon Sport Marina, a remote position in the dunes containing the old house of those who made the trek to this solitary spot inside the reserve. (Brunswick County Tourism Development Authority, 800-729-2120, bctourism.com)

_Below: The Kinicked Beach Mallow is a site for social distance beach outings in the outer banks of North Carolina, remote B.E. Island Coastal Reserve, courtesy of North Carolina Reserve Islands._
Some of the best surf spots in the Southeast can be found in the North Carolina Outer Banks, South Carolina, and Georgia. In addition to surfing, there are many opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and kayaking. Some popular spots include the Outer Banks National Seashore, Tybee Island, and St. Simons Island.

**Michigan**

Michigan is also a great destination for surfers, with waves ranging from small to medium size. Some popular spots include Frankfort, Muskegon, and Saugatuck. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing. Michigan's Great Lakes offer a wide range of unique experiences for surfers and other water enthusiasts.

**Maine**

Maine is known for its picturesque coastline and sandy beaches. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Boothbay Harbor and Ogunquit. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and kayaking.

**New Hampshire**

New Hampshire is a great destination for surfers looking for a quieter option. The state has some great surf spots along the southern coast, including Hampton Beach and Rye Beach. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and kayaking.

**New Jersey**

New Jersey offers a great variety of surf spots, ranging from small to large waves. Some popular spots include Ocean City, Wildwood, and Cape May. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**New York**

New York is known for its iconic beaches, including Coney Island and Rockaway Beach. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Long Island. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**North Carolina**

North Carolina is a great destination for surfers, with waves ranging from small to large. Some popular spots include Wrightsville Beach, Carolina Beach, and Kure Beach. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**North Dakota**

North Dakota is a great destination for surfers looking for a unique experience. The state has some great surf spots along the Red River, with waves ranging from small to medium size. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**Ohio**

Ohio is known for its iconic beaches, including Cleveland and Lake Erie. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Cleveland and Erie. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**Oklahoma**

Oklahoma is a great destination for surfers looking for a unique experience. The state has some great surf spots along the Arkansas River, with waves ranging from small to medium size. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**Oregon**

Oregon is known for its iconic beaches, including Cannon Beach and Newport. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Cannon Beach and Newport. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**Pennsylvania**

Pennsylvania is a great destination for surfers looking for a unique experience. The state has some great surf spots along the Delaware River, with waves ranging from small to medium size. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**South Carolina**

South Carolina is known for its iconic beaches, including Myrtle Beach and Hilton Head. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Myrtle Beach and Hilton Head. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**South Dakota**

South Dakota is a great destination for surfers looking for a unique experience. The state has some great surf spots along the Missouri River, with waves ranging from small to medium size. Surfers can also enjoy other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**Texas**

Texas is known for its iconic beaches, including Galveston and South Padre Island. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Galveston and South Padre Island. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.

**Virginia**

Virginia is known for its iconic beaches, including Virginia Beach and Hampton Roads. Surfers can find waves ranging from small to large, with some of the best surf spots located in Virginia Beach and Hampton Roads. The state also offers opportunities for other water activities such as boating, fishing, and jet-skiing.
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Your guide to the most beloved car-, craft- and culture-themed attractions, iconic places and photo-worthy spots in the Daytona Beach area. If you’re looking for a fun and unique way to explore the Daytona Beach area, you’re in the right place. Our collection of themed tours and trails will guide you through the area and its many cultural, historic and natural attractions, as well as some great places for food and spirits.

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Ale Trail
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Monument & Statue Trail
Statues and monuments dot the Daytona Beach area highlighting its historical and cultural significance.

Motorsports Trail
Revving with motorsports history from Birthplace of Speed Park to the World Center of Racing and beyond.

Share the Heritage Trail
A guide to African American cultural and historical sites in the Greater Daytona Beach Area.