

FYI Travel: Enjoy a free night in the Bahamas this spring

by Amy Winter

Spring forward to the Bahamas for a relaxing five-day vacation at a reduced price. The Old Bahama Bay Resort and Yacht Harbour has a "Spring Fourth Night Free" package during this spring season. Guests traveling until April 30 have the opportunity to reserve three nights for the typical rate and receive the fourth night free.

The Grand Bahama Island resort offers waterfront suites along a private beach. Guests can relax by the swimming pool, on the beach or in the massage pavilion. For those who are more active, fishing, diving, snorkeling and boating excursions are available.

When staying at the resort, guests are welcome to use kayaks, snorkels and skindiving masks, sailboats, the fitness center and bicycles with no extra charges. After a day of sunshine at the beach, guests can enjoy the resort's restaurants: the Straw Bar, the more casual Bonefish Folley's Bar and Grille, and fine dining at Aqua.

OLD BAHAMA - Located on Grand Bahama Island, The Old Bahama Bay Resort and Yacht Harbour offers waterfront suites along a private beach. CNS Photo.

BAHAMA GETAWAY - The Old Bahama Bay Resort and Yacht Harbour offers a great escape. Guests can enjoy the swimming pool, the private beach or a massage. CNS Photo.

This package must be purchased by March 31 in order to receive the free night. It also requires that families or couples spend at least five days and four nights. Rates start at \$330 per night, depending on whether guests choose an ocean-view suite, an oceanfront suite or a two-bedroom suite.

FYI: Visit the Old Bahama Bay Web site at www.oldbahamabay.com or call 800-572-5711 for more details.

GET YOUR 'BONUS BUCKS'

"Bonus Bucks" are up for grabs once again. The offer is extended to guests staying at these Marriott-associated hotels: Courtyard, Residence Inn, Springhill Suites and TownePlace Suites. Found across the United States, these hotels are giving away \$50 "bonus buck" coupons. Guests can use these coupons for a future stay of two nights as long as they purchase certain packages through April 16.

Travelers staying at Courtyard hotels will receive "bonus bucks" if they buy the Stay for Breakfast package. Guests can wake up to a buffet breakfast after a one-night stay. It is available Thursday through Sunday, and a Friday or Saturday night stay is required.

The Courtyard hotels participating in the \$50 "bonus bucks" giveaway are located in 16 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin. Rates are \$79 to \$209 a night. Visit Courtyard's Web site at www.cybonusbucks.com.

Guests who want to grab coupons from the other three Marriotbrand hotels must book a weekend stay in one of these 10 states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio and Tennessee. Room costs are from \$64 to \$159 per night.

FYI: Visit www.weekendbonusbucks.com for more information or to make your reservations.

EXPERIENCE IRELAND ON YOUR OWN

Are you tired of organized group tours? Do you want to experience Ireland on your own? Now is your chance. Travelers can independently explore Ireland, while having planned hotel accommodations with CIE Tours International. Now through Nov. 28, pre-booked, self-drive vacations are available.

Travelers take to the open road and experience Ireland's beauty; they have the freedom to sightsee and venture into the green lands. After a day of exploring, travelers can sleep well in a pre-booked hotel room.

Guests may choose from three sets of travel schedules with two hotel categories in order to make traveling less chaotic. CIE gives travelers more time to enjoy the cities by providing at least two night stays in most stops. The bronze group offers three and four star accommodations, while the gold group consists of four and five star hotels.

The three land-only packages differ in price and number of days:

1) The Emerald Sampler consists of an 8-day, six-night trip starting at \$598.

2) The Emerald Escape offers a 10-day, eight-night journey from \$796.

3) The Emerald Dream extends a 15-day, 13-night trip starting at \$1,298.

All packages include use of a rental car with theft protection, insurance and unlimited miles; free ride to the Shannon or Dublin airports; pre-booked rooms at first rate hotels; an Irish breakfast each day; a map of Ireland; and a discount booklet on Irish attractions.

FYI: For more information visit the agency's Web site at www.cietours.com.

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