

FYI Travel: Divers can try out new stuff at Dominica Dive Fest

by Tom_Roebuck

With a continued focus on the sport of scuba diving and an honor roll of sponsors in place, Dominica will host the 14th Annual Dive Fest July 6-15.

Different from years past, this year the Dominica Dive Fest will incorporate photography workshops, a photo contest and new equipment demonstrations. Dive Training Magazine will host photography workshops with two of their staff photographers and writers, Barry and Ruth Guimbellott. Additionally, they will be the guest judges of the photo contest, sponsored by Dive Training.

DIVING DOMINICA - The reefs below the blue water off Dominica draw divers from all over the world. The island hosts the Caribbean's longest-running diving festival, to be held this year July 6-15. CNS photo.

Oceanic will be showcasing 20 of their new Heads Up Display masks that allow divers to read their dive profile including air pressure on a digital display in the mask. SeaLife/Pioneer will offer a demonstration of their new amphibian digital camera. Those interested will be given an opportunity to test the new camera and will even receive a photo CD of the pictures that they take while trying out the camera.

Located between the French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique in the Eastern Caribbean, the independent nation of Dominica is the largest and most mountainous of the Windward Islands, encompassing an area of nearly 290 square miles.

For more information on Dominica, call 888-645-5637 or visit Dominica's Web site, www.discoverdominica.com.

CRUISING THE CAPE

Ocean Edge Resort and Club on Cape Cod invites families to experience the majestic Massachusetts coast on bicycles. The new Land and Sea Explore Package provides on-property bike rentals so families on two wheels can traverse the state parks and cranberry bogs along the Cape Cod National Seashore.

The 26-mile Cape Cod Rail Trail, which runs through the resort, is the ideal starting point for a family biking tour. The paved trail is atop a former railroad right-of-way with few hills and well-marked automobile crossings. There are plenty of opportunities to get off trail to visit beaches.

The three-night package also includes a whale-watching tour, dinner for a family of four and a choice of accommodations in guest rooms adjacent to the mansion or a one-bedroom villa.

Available May 25 through Sept. 5, the Land & Sea Explore Package starts at \$399 per night. For reservations and additional information, visit www.oceanedge.com or call 800-343-6074 and ask for rate code EXP3.

For more information on the Cape Cod Rail Trail or a trail map, visit www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/southeast/ccrt.htm.

MORE FAMILY FUN

Southern comfort is now available for less as the elegant Charleston Place in South Carolina is offering a Summer Family Getaway at a savings of 55 percent, effective May 28.

The Summer Family Getaway features deluxe accommodations and four complimentary tickets (two adults and two children) to a choice of The South Carolina Aquarium, the IMAX theater, a carriage ride through historic downtown Charleston or a themed walking tour. When families have breakfast or lunch in the Palmetto Cafe, children 12 and under dine free while seated with adults.

The package is valid May 28 to Sept. 7 for Sunday-through-Thursday stays. Rates begin at \$268 per night for deluxe accommodations and \$388 per night for Club Level.

FYI: Charleston Place is located at 205 Meeting St., phone 800-611-5545, Web www.charlestonplace.com.

WHEN THE SNOW MELTS, MOUNTAIN BIKES TAKE OVER

After a one-year hiatus, Northstar-at-Tahoe Resort's mountain bike park, the largest in Northern California, will reopen this summer. It will offer five new trail segments, two new trails, increased lift access with the addition of the Tahoe Zephyr Express, a new jump park, skills-development areas and LiveWire, the resort's first signature trail.

This year, with the addition of the Tahoe Zephyr six-person express chairlift, riders will benefit from the resort's ability to provide more uphill capacity than ever before. Providing access to more than 100 miles of

trails, three chairlifts make it easy for riders to experience the technical downhill and freestyle features.

The LiveWire trail is scheduled to open midsummer, permits pending. It will maintain an average of 6 feet in width, feature a grade ranging between 6 and 9 percent, and will be 1.5 miles long and fully irrigated to prevent dust clouds.

Northstar Resort's mountain bike park is scheduled to open for the summer season on June 29, and will be open daily, weather and conditions permitting, through Sept. 3 and Friday-Sunday until Oct. 7. Daily operating hours will be 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

FYI: Helmets are required for all riders, and can be rented along with bikes and other equipment at the resort. Daily lift tickets are \$39. Season passes will also be available for \$229. For more information, visit NorthstarAtTahoe.com or call the Northstar Resort bike shop at 530-562-2268.

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