

FYI Travel: In Berlin, a dinosaur gets new digs

by Tom_Roebuck

After undergoing a \$23 million renovation project, Berlin's Museum of Natural History will reopen five newly designed and reconstructed exhibit halls on July 13, including the Dinosaur Hall. The exhibit's focal point will be the spectacular brachiosaurus brancai, the world's tallest mounted dinosaur skeleton.

BACK HOME - The brachiosaurus brancai has returned to Berlin's Museum of Natural History after an extensive renovation on the Dinosaur Hall. It is the tallest mounted dinosaur skeleton in the world. CNS photo. **STILL SMILING** - The head of the brachiosaurus brancai comes out of storage, soon to be the finishing touch on the Dinosaur Hall's main attraction. CNS photo. The brachiosaurus lived about 150 millions years ago, and was discovered by a German expedition between 1909 and 1913, in what is now Tanzania. The 43-foot-tall, 76-foot-long skeleton was first displayed at the museum in 1937. After the extensive renovations, the reptile's bones are now being presented in accordance to the latest scientific findings. The newly designed exhibition features a total of seven dinosaurs "running" as a group through the museum's large Light Hall.

Adjoining exhibition halls feature a scientific Jurassic Park, focusing on the habitat and behavior of the pre-historic reptiles. An original fossil of the ancient bird archaeopteryx will also for the first time be on display in a specially designed exhibit space.

Berlin's Museum of Natural History was inaugurated in 1889 by Emperor Wilhelm II. The brachiosaurus was demounted and stored in the building's vaults in 1943, just in time to save it from World War II bombings, which shortly after destroyed the reptile hall. Reconstruction of the Light Hall and the dinosaur skeleton were first completed in 1952.

FYI: The Museum of Natural History is part of Berlin's Humboldt University. Visit www.naturkundemuseum-berlin.de. Admission is \$4.75 for adults, \$2.70 for children.

CATCH THE GAME AND STAY IN STYLE

The Hyatt Regency McCormick Place in downtown Chicago has baseball fans in mind with its Game Day Getaway package through Sept. 30. Guests will receive accommodations for two in one of the hotel's guest rooms, complimentary self-parking and free drop-off shuttle service to U.S. Cellular Field and to the Red Line train to Wrigley Field. Rates are from \$159.

FYI: For reservations, call 312-567-1234, and ask for the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place Game Day Getaway package.

HAVE A CAB WAITING

1-800-Cab-Ride is the first and only national cab company offering reserved, all-inclusive-priced taxi service from pre-qualified taxi companies in more than 2,300 cities nationwide. All 1-800-Cab-Ride rides are fixed priced and include meter, toll, tip, airport fees, gas surcharges, taxes and extras.

1-800-Cab-Ride.com was founded by Jason Diaz, a New York taxi driver and founder of TaxiPass, the leading secure cashless taxi payment system in the U.S., and Cab Watch, the largest cabdriver safety organization in the world.

FYI: For more information, call 800-CAB-RIDE, or visit www.800cabride.com.

ALASKA ADVENTURES

The incomparable and varied experiences of Alaska are front and center in several special leisure packages

offered by the Millennium Alaskan Hotel. Among the highlights: glacier viewing by cruise-tour; flight-seeing over Mount McKinley; close up encounters with bears; and a deluxe fishing expedition.

Glacier viewing: Few attractions in Alaska are more impressive than its fantastic glaciers. The Millennium Alaskan's Glacier Viewing package features a two-night stay at the hotel plus a Prince William Sound Glacier Cruise by high-speed catamaran equipped with comfortable upholstered booths, large picture windows, saloon, snack bar and gift shop. The cruise, covering 135 miles and more than 26 glaciers, is an ideal opportunity for wildlife observation, including sea otters, seals, porpoises, sea lions and whales. The package is priced at \$459 per person, excluding tax.

Mount McKinley: As North America's tallest mountain, Mount McKinley is one of nature's most wondrous creations. The centerpiece of the Millennium Alaskan's McKinley package is a three-hour flight-seeing trip to the mountain, with flyovers of glaciers, climbers' base camps and a spectacular view of the summit. On the return, passengers fly over areas rich in Alaskan wildlife such as bear, moose, swans, eagles and land on a remote mountain lake. Including a two-night stay at the Millennium, the package is priced at \$559 per person.

Bear viewing: The Millennium Alaskan's Bear Viewing package includes a two-night stay at the hotel plus a day of bear viewing starting with departure by float plane from Lake Hood. In addition to breathtaking views of mountains and glaciers, the plane touches down at Brooks Falls to watch the giant bears frolic and feed on migrating salmon. A picnic lunch for humans is provided. On the return, there is a flyover of scenic Cook Inlet where Dahl sheep scamper the mountainsides and Beluga whales can be spotted in the water. Rates for the package are priced at \$899 per person.

Deluxe fishing: Taking advantage of Alaska's world-famous reputation for fishing, the Millennium Alaskan's Deluxe Fishing package features a two-night stay at the hotel and a full day of salmon or trout fishing with a professional guide, including fishing gear and a picnic lunch. Including travel by floatplane from Lake Hood, the package is priced from \$679 per person. Package does not include fishing license.

FYI: All packages are available May 15 through Sept. 16. All rates are based on double occupancy and room tax is not included. For bookings, visit www.millenniumhotels.com or call 800-544-0553.

Copley News Service.

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