

The Long Weekend

From the calm of the beach to the buzz of the big city, these quick getaways promise to rejuvenate and re-energize the soul

By Neala Schwartzberg

When crunched for R&R time, minimal planning and maximum relaxation is the goal. "A resort or grand hotel allows people to do just that," says Sue McCarthy of the syndicated radio show, *Travel Planners Radio*. "They'll take care of activities, spa treatments, dining and, more importantly, serve as a comfortable home base for exploration."

Knowing that you've got everything "back at the hotel," means you have no itinerary to follow and no worries about changing plans to do as much or as little as you want. So whether you like mountain hikes, the beach or viewing Broadway's latest, these destinations pledge to make your quick escape feel like a true vacation.

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Where luxury and art coexist amid rugged nature

Santa Fe is an art-lover's paradise, packed with world-renowned galleries and artists. To enjoy it, check into **Bishop's Lodge Ranch Resort & Spa** (1297 Bishop's Lodge Rd, 800-419-0492), a 450-acre rustic luxury resort nestled into the mountains above the town. Start your day with a horseback or mountain-bike ride up the resort's trails to the top of a ridgeline for a view across the Rio Grande Valley to Jimenez Mountains. Then visit the lodge's ShaNah Spa to release those



Lobby at Bishop's Lodge Ranch Resort & Spa in Santa Fe, New Mexico

kinked up muscles with a three-hour massage and facial treatment. For dinner, grab a table on the Sunset Terrace attached to the Lodge's Las Fuentes restaurant and watch the sunset reveal the intense colors and landscape that has drawn artists to the area for decades.

FIELD TRIP: Refreshed, stimulate your mind with a short trip down the road to visit **Charlie Miner's Tesuque Glassworks** (1510 Bishop's Lodge Rd, 505-988-2165) which provides daily glass-blowing demonstrations and a gallery. Next door, the **Shidoni Foundry** (1508 Bishop's Lodge Rd, 505-988-8001) is open to visitors who can watch the complicated alchemy that goes into casting bronze. The restaurants and galleries of downtown Santa Fe lie five minutes south, and a stroll up and down the galleries on **Canyon Road**

is a must; the narrow street and adobe buildings have remained unchanged in this 400-year-old capitol.

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

Find urban pleasures along the water

This Pacific Coast beach town mixes recreation and history—the National Trust for Historic Preservation even named it one of a Dozen Distinctive Destinations last year. Soak up that heritage with a stay at the **Four Seasons Biltmore** (1260 Channel Dr, 805-969-2261) with its Spanish Colonial architecture and frontage on the soft sands of Butterfly Beach. In addition to the giant Moreton Bay fig tree, which dominates the grounds, botanists planted 44 rare specimens from around the world including rare kentia palms. Spend your days on the beach or poolside at the restored Coral

Casino Beach and Cabana Club next door to the Biltmore.

FIELD TRIP: Arm yourself with a walking tour map from **Santa Barbara Car Free** and head downtown. The tour showcases the eclectic architectural style that defines the city, a mix of Spanish, Moorish, Portuguese and American Indian. Shop and dine at **La Arcada** (1114 State St, 805-966-6634) and enjoy the art: The arcade is famous for its collection, including life-like sculptures by J. Seward Johnson and the interactive musical *Mozart Trio* by Bonifatius Stirnberg. No need to drive over the coastal mountains to the Santa Ynez Valley for a wine tour, **The Urban Wine Trail** leads to seven tasting rooms located downtown, all featuring the best of Santa Barbara County's vineyards.



The garden view at Boulder's St. Julien Hotel.

BOULDER, COLORADO

Tea and sophistication

Located in downtown Boulder, the **St. Julien Hotel & Spa** (900 Walnut St, 877-303-0900) puts the town, and its famous Pearl Street Mall, outside your door and views of the distinctive Flatiron Mountains outside your window. Inside the contemporary hotel there's a two-lane infinity pool,

massive fitness center and the spa with its signature treatments that incorporate indigenous Colorado plants for a wholly unique experience. Saturdays mean afternoon tea at **Jill's**, the hotel's award-winning restaurant, with six-time Grammy Award-winning pianist Ralph Sharon providing the musical backdrop.

FIELD TRIP: The St. Julien isn't the only teahouse in town. **Celestial Seasonings** (4600 Sleepytime Dr, 303-530-5300) makes its home in Boulder and offers free tours and tastings daily. The building housing the **Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse** (1770 13th St, 303-442-4993) literally came from Dushanbe, Tajikistan in central Asia, where 40 artisans hand-carved and hand-painted the ceilings, tables, stools, columns and exterior ceramic panels. Bring your camera. Not into tea? Then **take a hike**. The mountains above town are covered in well-marked, city-maintained trails that start blocks away from the St. Julien. Or, head into the Rockies with a drive along the Peak-to-Peak Highway—average altitude over 9,000 feet—to Estes Park, the eastern entrance to **Rocky Mountain National Park**.

NEW YORK CITY

A different kind of apple

New York City's **Kimberly Hotel** (145 E 50th St, 800-683-0400) between Lexington and 3rd offers guests a relatively quiet escape from the Midtown bustle of the main avenues. This spring and summer the hotel has a perk that's worth the trip to New York alone. Guests can enjoy a complimentary three-hour cruise on the Hudson River aboard a 75-foot private yacht. Twenty dollars buys you a plate to the buffet served onboard.

FIELD TRIP: You're not in Manhattan to stay in your hotel room, right? The famous shops along Madison Avenue

and 5th Avenue are three blocks away. A quick cab ride delivers you to Central Park. While there, head to Columbus Circle to the **Museum of Arts & Design** (2 Columbus Cir, 212-299-7777), fondly known as MAD. This summer artists



Sweet dreams: New York's Kimberly Hotel

have transformed organic materials into intricately crafted installations and sculptures. Then head downtown to West 20th and 10th Avenue and the northern end of **High Line Park**. Built in the 1930s to elevate the trains above the city streets, the converted railway serves as one of New York's most unusual green spaces and art exhibits. Media junkies can head to **The Paley Center for the Media** in Midtown (25 W 52nd St, 212-621-6800) and access its library of 150,000 programs covering almost 100 years of television and radio history. ■

Neala Schwartzberg knows the power of a good weekend away. A short trip to Albuquerque led her to leave the East Coast and move there soon after. She's the founder of www.offbeattravel.com.