

THE CONCIERGE

GEO QUIZ

The Detroit River serves as part of the boundary between Michigan and which Canadian province?

- Quebec
 Ontario
 Nova Scotia

Answer below. Source: National Geographic Bee

TIPSHEET

Smart picks for brainy grad trips

BY CHRIS ERSKINE

Looking to humble your know-it-all graduate? Or just reward the grad with an interesting trip? Here are four memorable places to take your kids to open their minds, no matter the occasion:

Smithsonian Air and Space Museum

This free Washington museum, in the heart of the Smithsonian complex, will have your space nerd over the moon. The museum tracks all manner of human flight and features a vast collection of related artifacts. Exhibits include the Apollo 11 Command Module Columbia and a lunar rock you're allowed to touch. The museum also houses the Albert Einstein Planetarium and an observatory with telescopes open to the public so they can gaze across the cosmos.

Info: airandspace.si.edu

Berlin Museum of Medical History

Take your Doogie Howser on a trip into medicine's fascinating past. The museum's permanent exhibit, "On the Trace of Life," covers 300 years of medical procedures. The tour includes dissection rooms and specimen collections. Body images and models help tour participants to understand diagnostic procedures. They'll also learn how criminologists and pathologists inspect and navigate a crime scene.

Info: bmm-charite.de

Living Computers: Museum + Labs

"Come in. Geek out," the website urges. If you can't do that here, you're probably not geek material. The Seattle museum, often referred to as LCM+L, specializes in computers and technology. Visitors can use the vintage computers. Newer technologies explore direct-touch, virtual reality and self-driving cars.

Info: livingcomputers.org

Mind Games

No group can mess with your mind like Mensa. Each year, Mensa members and guests gather to judge the year's new board games in a 40-hour marathon. What's at stake? The Mensa Seal, which means one of the world's most-exclusive clubs has deemed it worthy of your time. Next year's event is April 12-14 in Wadsworth, Ohio, about 37 miles southwest of Cleveland.

Info: mensamindgames.com

GEO QUIZ ANSWER:

Ontario



Eco Barge Clean Seas Inc.

VOLUNTOURISM opportunities include removing shore debris with Australia's Eco Barge Clean Seas.

MONEY MATTERS

Happy wallet and planet

By **TERRY GARDNER** >>> Environmentalists preach the concept of reduce, reuse and recycle. ¶ In response, my inner voice always seems to plead, "Come on! I need new clothes!" (or shoes or a bag or on and on). ¶ But, hey, inner materialist, consider: For travelers, protecting the planet can mean spending less. Say "saving dough," and suddenly I'm all about saving the planet. ¶ These tips will help you be kinder to nature and your wallet.

Reduce and reuse

Carry a reusable water bottle (preferably one that is free of bisphenol A, or BPA, an industrial chemical) and a SteriPen or similar water purifier for places where the water is suspect.

Think of the loot you'll save by not dropping a dollar or more every time you need H₂O.

Reuse or restore clothes, luggage and other gear. "My old backpack is now 35 years old and my hiking boots are more than 20 years old — I've resoled them three times," said environmentalist T.A. Barron. "My hat is over 20 years old. They are like old friends and have been with me in Patagonia, Alaska, Colorado, New Zealand, in the Arctic," added Barron, author of the 12-volume "Merlin Saga."

Shop thrift shops and garage sales. You often can find backpacks, sleeping bags and other gear, said Arno Delpont, marketing manager for Acacia Africa, a tour operator. "Being more frugal from the outset means you'll have more cash to splurge on those once-in-a-lifetime experiences," Delpont said in an email.

Minimize your impact

Pack light. Weight is the enemy of fuel efficiency. By taking less, you reduce your environmental impact and avoid baggage fees.

Stay in a hostel (and no, this isn't a tip just for millennials). Hostels are inexpensive and tend to have lower

environmental impact than accommodations that have such frills as in-room TVs, Silke Kerwick, public affairs manager at YHA Australia, said in an email.

Carpool with friends met at your hostel or Airbnb. Travelers often have the same itinerary, said Katie MacDonald of Greentown Labs, which helps develop green technology. When you "share a car or bus or van with others," you contribute fewer carbon emissions, she said, noting that she has carpooled in Patagonia, Central America and Europe.

Take a bus to your destination. "Bus travel is hands-down the most sustainable way to travel, particularly in terms of passenger miles per gallon," said Pierre Gourdain, Los Angeles manager of FlixBus, which recently launched in the U.S. "We have the potential to take 56 cars off American roadways with every trip we take — without an equivalent or greater increase in carbon footprint, like a plane or train would."

You'll save money too. FlixBus fares start as low as \$2.99 one way to such destinations as Las Vegas and Phoenix.

Use public transit. It's eco-friendly and will probably wind up being cheaper than taking Uber or Lyft or renting a car.

Ride a bike. Many urban areas have bikes to rent through city programs (including Metro bikes in Los Angeles). They're inexpensive, leave little

carbon footprint and offer exercise.

Voluntourism

Volunteer in destinations. There are several volunteer options on Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Shelly Winkel of Tourism and Events Queensland said in an email.

Volunteering with Eco Barge Clean Seas Inc., for instance, gives travelers "a hands-on conservation experience," she said. They spend a day "picking up marine debris on the beaches and coastlines of the spectacular Whitsunday Islands, going to locations that most tourists can't get to."

You can find volunteer opportunities by applying through such organizations as Projects Abroad and International Volunteer HQ.

Volunteer Forever recently released its Best Overseas Volunteer Options for 2018 and 2019. Similarly, GoOverSeas.com offers ideas on study abroad and volunteer projects and organizations.

One benefit of such programs is not so much environmental as mental, and that's gratitude, Barron said.

"It's deeply important to take a moment, wherever I go, to feel deep gratitude for that place and its natural wonders," Barron said, "and to truly open myself up to the beauty and inspiration of that place and the gift of being there."

That doesn't cost a penny, and it can make the world a better place.

travel@latimes.com

DEAL OF THE WEEK

40% off midweek at Arizona resort

Kimpton Amara Resort and Spa in Sedona, Ariz., offers a 40% discount off its high-season prices for travelers who visit midweek this summer.

The deal: The Escape the Heat offer starts at \$259 a night for stays Mondays-Thursdays, plus a nightly \$29 resort fee. The fee includes use of the fitness center, steam and relaxation room at the spa. Extras include free yoga, lawn games and mountain bikes. The offer is good through Sept. 13.

Info: (877) 488-1908, www.amararesort.com

— MARY FORGIONE



Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants

KIMPTON AMARA Resort and Spa in Sedona, Ariz., has a deal for midweek vacationers that starts at \$259 a night (plus \$29 resort fee).

TOURS & CRUISES

ARIZONA

Bicycle among the red rocks

Ride through the striking landscape of the Skull Valley in Prescott, Ariz., hike in Sedona's Red Rock State Park and kayak on the Verde River on a new six-day northern Arizona tour created by Sojourn Bicycling & Active Vacations. The fall and spring itineraries begin in Prescott, with bikers traveling through the chaparral, piñon, juniper and ponderosa forests to the 54-mile Skull Valley Loop, then along the Red Rock Scenic Byway into Sedona and up to Mormon Lake near Flagstaff.

Dates: Oct. 7-12, 14-19 and May 12-17, 19-24, Oct. 6-11 and 13-18, 2019

Price: From \$3,145 per person, double occupancy. Includes accommodations, most meals, bike and van support. Tandem and e-bikes at additional cost. Airfare not included.

Info: Sojourn Bicycling & Active Vacations, (800) 730-4771, gosojourn.com

— ROSEMARY MCCLURE

SINGAPORE

Soul of the city

Explore the spiritual side of Singapore on a quick stop-over excursion offered by Remote Lands. Highlights include visits to some of the city-state's significant religious sites, including the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Sri Mariamman, the oldest Hindu temple in Singapore. Participants will also visit Chijmes Hall, a restored Gothic Revival chapel built in 1855, the Sultan Mosque and the Armenian Church, completed in 1835 and the oldest Christian church in Singapore.

Dates: Custom departure dates

Price: From \$3,000 per person, double occupancy, for two nights and three days. Includes accommodations, breakfasts, car and driver and English-speaking guide. International airfare not included.

Info: Remote Lands, (646) 979-0702, lat.ms/spiritualsingapore

— ANNE HARNAGEL

ATLANTIC COAST

Fall cruise

Add diversity to your life this fall on a Windstar Cruise that sails the Eastern Seaboard and visits large cities, coastal towns and the waters of the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic. The 11-day Autumn Latitudes of the Eastern Seaboard cruise departs New York City for a visit to Newport, R.I., known for its mansions and marinas. The Star Pride, which holds 212 passengers, then heads south to Baltimore; Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia, one of the largest naval bases in the world; and to Bimini, the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Dates: Oct. 23-Nov. 3

Price: From \$2,299 per person, double occupancy. Includes accommodations, meals and activities. Airfare not included.

Info: Windstar Cruises, (855) 477-0211, lat.ms/autumnlatitudescruise

— ROSEMARY MCCLURE

AIRFARES

	ATLANTA	CHICAGO	DENVER	HONOLULU	LAS VEGAS	NEW YORK/NEWARK, N.J.	PHOENIX	SAN FRANCISCO	SEATTLE	WASHINGTON, D.C.
LAX	\$360	\$308	\$206	\$615	\$80	\$336	\$110	\$88	\$158	\$394
SNA	388	320	220	645	116	426	172	98	172	396
BUR	388	328	228	685	116	465	172	113	187	408
LGB	378	336	240	647	74	368	168	95	176	394
ONT	369	384	198	685	180	473	190	131	188	418

INT'L	AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND*	CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO	LONDON*	PARIS*	SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA*	TOKYO*	VANCOUVER, CANADA
LAX	\$1,207-\$1,439	\$275	\$884-\$1,267	\$881-\$1,242	\$1,136-\$1,389	\$985-\$1,316	\$274

Restricted round-trip airfares are researched on Thursday, the day before the Travel section goes to press. Fares change daily, and availability is not assured. Fares, which may involve a change of planes, are for airlines serving Los Angeles International (LAX), Orange County/John Wayne (SNA), Hollywood Burbank (BUR), Long Beach (LGB) and Ontario (ONT). Domestic fares and international airfares include taxes and fees. *These international fares vary because of differing fuel surcharges on different airlines. Sources: Sabre reservation system, airlines and Web.

\$178 TO SANTA ROSA, CALIF.

Fare: \$178 round trip, including all taxes and fees, from LAX to Santa Rosa, Calif., on Alaska.

Restrictions: Subject to availability. You must buy your ticket by June 18. It is for travel Sept. 12-Oct. 31.

Info: (800) 252-7522, alaskaair.com

Source: airfarewatchdog.com