

BEST DEALS: LAST-MINUTE SUMMER GETAWAYS

TRAVEL + LEISURE

JULY 2008

SPECIAL
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SECTION
T+L CITY
GUIDES

50 FABULOUS U.S. TRAVEL IDEAS

TIPS+
TRIPS
FOR
EVERY
STATE



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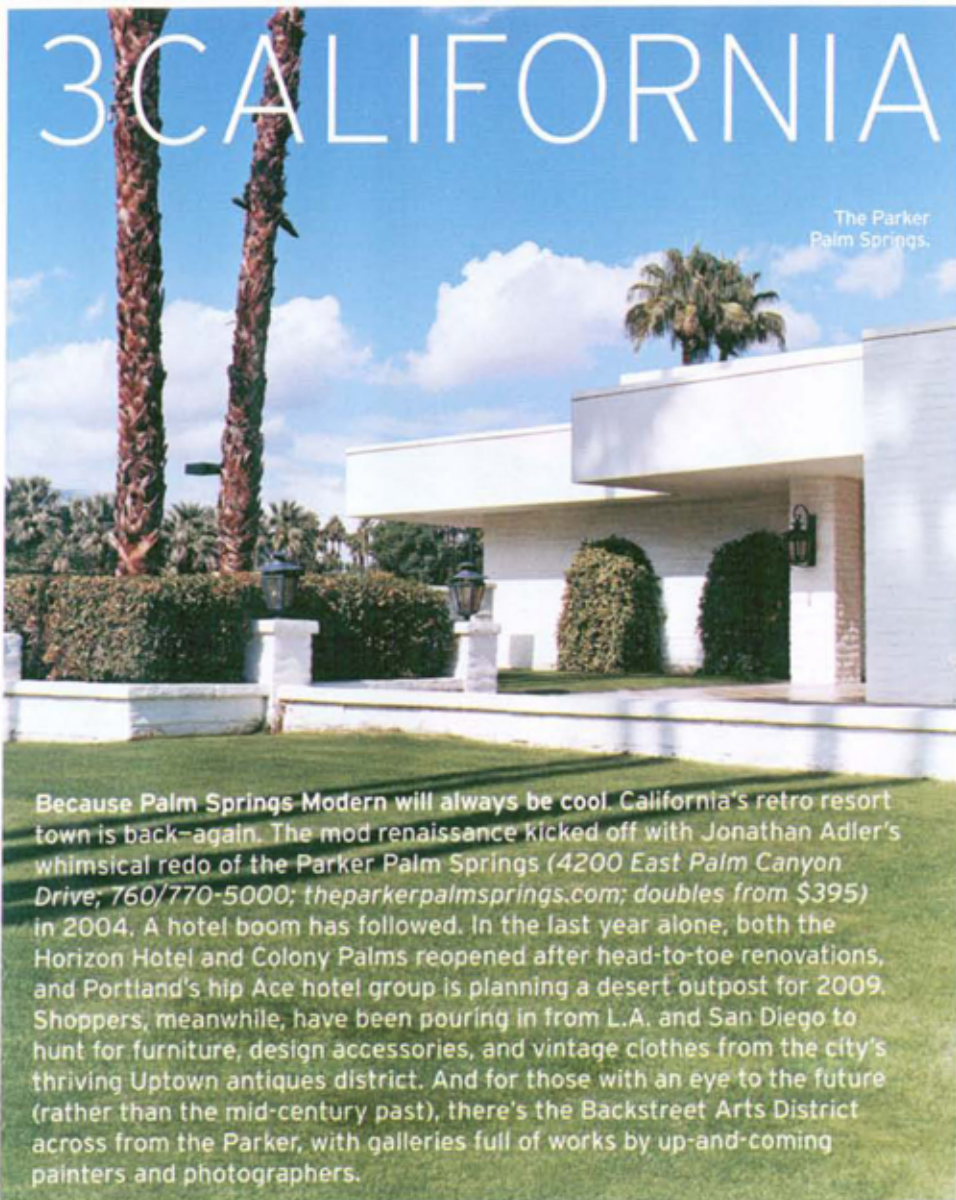
Cruising Tracy Arm, in Alaska.

1 ALASKA

Because our largest state still has secrets to reveal.

And the best way to explore its remote spots and hidden inlets is on a small ship, such as American Safari's new 36-passenger *Safari Explorer* (888/862-8881; amsafari.com; eight-day itineraries from \$4,395 per person, double). The ship docks in some familiar ports (Glacier Bay National Park), but it also ventures to Elfin Cove, a native Alaskan village, and Petersburg, a small fishing town that serves as a jumping-off point for backcountry hikes.

3 CALIFORNIA



The Parker Palm Springs.

Because Palm Springs Modern will always be cool. California's retro resort town is back—again. The mod renaissance kicked off with Jonathan Adler's whimsical redo of the Parker Palm Springs (4200 East Palm Canyon Drive, 760/770-5000; theparkerpalmsprings.com; doubles from \$395) in 2004. A hotel boom has followed. In the last year alone, both the Horizon Hotel and Colony Palms reopened after head-to-toe renovations, and Portland's hip Ace hotel group is planning a desert outpost for 2009. Shoppers, meanwhile, have been pouring in from L.A. and San Diego to hunt for furniture, design accessories, and vintage clothes from the city's thriving Uptown antiques district. And for those with an eye to the future (rather than the mid-century past), there's the Backstreet Arts District across from the Parker, with galleries full of works by up-and-coming painters and photographers.

2 HAWAII

Because beach resorts are more fun when they're casual.

Until recently, the buttoned-up European look of the Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua (808/669-6200; ritzcarlton.com; doubles from \$499) was strangely out of touch with its tropical surroundings. Now, after a \$180 million renovation, the hotel has lost the chintzy curtains, faux Renaissance artwork, and yes, the fireplace in the library. The 446 guest rooms are breezy yet refined: kukui tree-patterned area rugs cover dark Brazilian ironwood floors, and wrought-iron lanais look out on the island landscape. As they say in Hawaii, *Na mea maikai*—it's all good.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF AMERICAN SAFARI CRUISES; COURTESY OF AMERICAN SAFARI CRUISES; PHOTOFEST; PHOTOFEST