

PLUS

**Winter Travel** (Take a Break, Don't Go Broke)

**The Short, Happy Life of 3 Billy Elliots**

NOVEMBER 3, 2008

How Couples Talk About **Less Money**

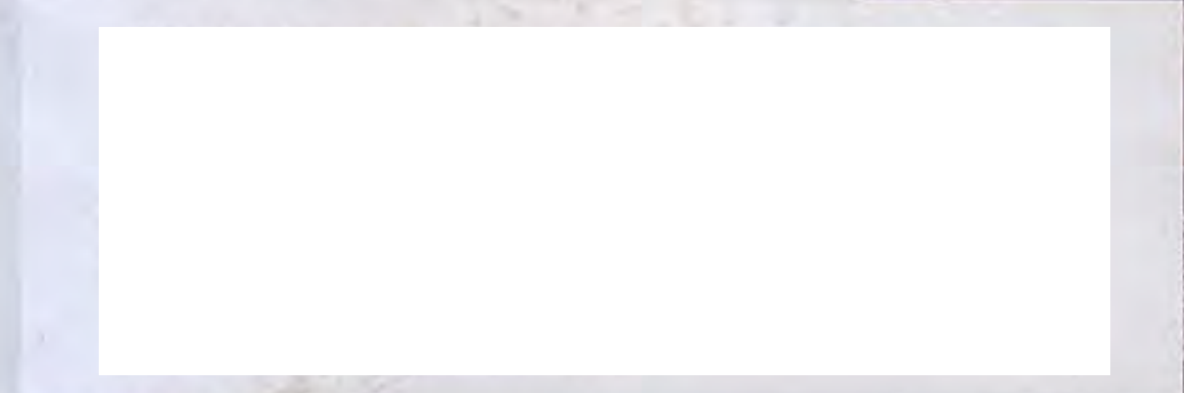
# THE NEW YORKER



**ALSO**  
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New Old  
Wise Man  
**30 Rock's**  
Other  
Star  
**Young  
Republican**  
Look  
Book

# JANUARY 20<sup>th</sup> 2009\*

What an Obama presidency would look like.  
BY JOHN HEILEMANN



\*If current projections hold.



Marley Resort & Spa in Nassau.

**San Sebastián, Puerto Rico**

2 NIGHTS + PICK-YOUR-OWN COFFEE BEANS + OMELETTES =

TOTAL \$298

THE LUSH hillsides surrounding the Hacienda El Jibarito (from \$129; haciendaeljibarito.com) don't just provide a pretty view. They're also the source for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A unique agro-tourism lodge (the name means, roughly, "House of the Hillbilly") two hours west of San Juan, Jibarito lets visitors pick eggs from the on-site chicken farm, then deliver them to the kitchen to be whipped into omelettes. Request one of the freestanding wooden villas, some of which have views of roaming Brahman cows. For \$40, you can tour two nearby coffee plantations, pick your own beans, bring them back to the hacienda to roast, and then bestow them on coffee drinkers back home as holiday gifts.

**Bocas Del Toro, Panama**

4 NIGHTS + BIRDS, BATS, BUTTERFLIES + SEA TRAMPOLINE =

TOTAL \$522

A ONE-HOUR flight from Panama City gets you to Colón, the main island of the idyllic Bocas del Toro archipelago. Check into an air-conditioned balcony room at the Bocas Inn (from \$88; anconexpeditions.com/lodges.html). Through the front desk, hire a guide and hash out a boat tour through the area's 68 islands (\$165 for two)—Isla de los Pájaros is best for birding, Isla Bastimentos for bats and butterflies. Get a taste of Colón's no-holds-barred nightlife by hiring a water taxi (\$5) to go out to Aqua Lounge (bocasaqualounge.com), a hostel-bar where you can sip Panamanian "cholos," *seco* with milk (\$3), and then launch yourself off a floating trampoline.

**Baja California Sur, Mexico**

4 NIGHTS + SEA-LION ENCOUNTERS + DEEP-SEA FISHING =

TOTAL \$391

WITH ITS \$250 greens fees and \$50 lunch entrées, Cabo San Lucas can empty your pockets pretty fast. But just 60 miles north, on the Sea of Cortez, there's lush, rustic Cabo Pulmo. Check into a bungalow or casita at the Cabo Pulmo Beach Resort (from

\$69; cabopulmo.com). Guides from the resort's dive center can take you scuba diving with a colony of sea lions or a school of manta rays in the National Marine Park (\$55) or drop you off for a snorkel at Mermaid Beach. Fish for wahoo or marlin with local fishermen in *pangas* (\$60 to \$100 for four hours), or just order fish tacos at La Palapa (no phone), a short walk from the resort, while the blue-footed boobies swoop above.

**Nassau, Bahamas**

2 NIGHTS + REGGAE ROYALTY + ROASTED BREADFRUIT =

TOTAL \$900

THE MARLEY RESORT & Spa isn't just the only high-end property

on the island actually owned by Caribbeans, it's run by actual Marleys (from \$450 before December 15, \$650 after; marleyresort.com). Opened last July by Bob's daughter (on what was once the family's vacation property), the inn's sixteen massive suites are decorated with elaborately carved wooden headboards, Bahamian and African textiles, and coral stone-tiled baths. Start the day with a breakfast of callaloo and roasted breadfruit on the sea-view terrace; then sunbathe on the slice of sugary beach, or back-float around the waterfall-fed swimming pool (where guess whose music wafts from hidden outdoor speakers). At night, various Marleys have been known to stop by for impromptu jam sessions at the Stir It Up bar.

**Desert Hot Springs, California**

2 NIGHTS + MINERAL BATHS + DELICIOUS COFFEE CAKE =

TOTAL \$390

PALM SPRINGS might draw more sucked-in celebrity stomachs, but Desert Hot Springs, just 25 minutes north, is California's real desert oasis. The Coachella Valley's mineral-rich hot (120 to 180 degrees) and cold springs (fed by snow runoff) are put to use for both soaking and drinking at the minimalist, seven-room Sagewater Spa (from \$195; sagewaterspa.com). After a morning soak, indulge in co-owner Rhoni Epstein's Russian-Jewish-style coffee cake. After dark, take advantage of the valley's new light-pollution ordinances by driving twenty minutes over to Joshua Tree National Park to spy the green-eyed coyotes and jumping cholla cacti.

DEMAND FREEBIES

With occupancy rates in decline, hotels are dangling carrots—spa and dining credits, gas vouchers, discounts if you add an extra night to your stay—to those who ask for them. Stowe Mountain Lodge (stowemountainlodge.com) in Vermont is tossing in a free massage (normally \$85) with each room in November. And in Milford, Pennsylvania, the Hotel Fauchère (hotelfauchere.com) is including dinner for two in its weekend-getaway package, which starts at \$650. Specials aren't always promoted on a hotel's Website, so book over the phone and ask specifically about available perks.



Sagewater Spa in Desert Hot Springs.

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM TOP, COOKIE KINKEAD, COURTESY OF MARLEY RESORT & SPA; COURTESY OF SAGEWATER SPA