

The New York Times

Tour and Festival News: Northern Lights and Miami Yoga



The Northern Lights. Credit GreatValueVacations

CELEBRATING THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Console yourself over winter's impending darkness with the spectacle of the Northern Lights, best viewed during those long nights. [Off the Map Travel](#), which specializes in Northern Lights tours, will introduce the new Aurora Festival in Bjorkliden, Sweden, Jan. 15 to 17. The inaugural fest in Swedish Lapland, well above the Arctic Circle, will feature scientists, astronauts and other experts speaking on the celestial phenomenon, space weather and photographing the Northern Lights. In addition to talks, the festival will explore the traditional Sami culture of Lapland, and their myths and legends concerning the Northern Lights, at a remote village. Rates for the three-day affair start at £899 per person.

In Iceland, the tour operator [Great Value Vacations](#) is offering a five-night winter trip that offers touring by day and Northern Lights hunting by night. Offered in

January and February, the trip is based in the capital of Reykjavik and offers two full free days as well as a day trip to the sights of the Golden Circle tourist route that includes geysers, waterfalls and the Thingvellir National Park. One evening is set aside for scoping out the [Aurora Borealis](#) and if travelers are skunked, they are allowed to join another tour on any other evening free of charge. Rates start at \$899 per person traveling from New York, and includes airfare. Rates are slightly higher from other gateways, including Boston, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

Travelers in Norway can download the new [Norway Lights](#) app from Visit Norway that offers Northern Lights forecasts, facts, maps, photo tips and recommendations on optimal viewing based on the weather.

ASPEN PRE-SKI DEALS

If [Aspen](#) is already in your winter plans, consider booking lift tickets, group lessons and equipment rental now to save 10 percent. The advance booking sale runs until Nov. 5 and is good for post-holiday ski trips of two or more days from Jan. 3 through April 3 at all four of Aspen Skiing Company's ski areas: Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands, Buttermilk and Snowmass. Off-season skiers planning trips from Nov. 26 to Dec. 18 and April 4 to 17 can save 25 percent on tickets purchased at least seven days in advance. Single-day passes are excluded from the sale and cost \$139 per adult either in advance or on site.

DIGITAL DETOX IN MOROCCO

The retreat meets the festival in a new event this November in Morocco's Sahara known as [Restival](#). Running Nov. 14 to 20, the gathering will champion disconnecting from the Internet in a remote desert locale with no Wi-Fi for miles. Led by spiritual guides, the program will offer workshops in art, writing and music and activities including dance, [yoga](#), meditation and sandboarding. Evenings around the campfire promise astronomy, traditional Touareg music and storytelling by the BBC journalist Richard Hamilton, author of "The Last Storytellers."

In an email, the organizer, Caroline Jones, who has long produced events in Britain, called Restival an "anti-festival," and, "a place where you can kick back, rest, meet new people and rediscover your creativity."

It takes about nine hours overland from Marrakesh in an off-road vehicle to reach the off-the-grid but deluxe [Camp Adounia](#), site of Restival, ensuring both physical and virtual remove. Prices start at \$2,300 per person, double occupancy, all inclusive. Ms. Jones plans future Restivals in Britain in May 2016, the United States in July and Morocco again next November.

SURVEYING ARCHITECTURE IN CHICAGO

The inaugural [Chicago Architectural Biennial](#) begins Saturday, Oct. 3, with participation by more than 100 architects and architectural firms worldwide. Billed as North America's largest international survey of contemporary architecture, the program "seeks to generate thinking about architecture and its implications for our times," according to its website. Event programming spans museum exhibitions including a show devoted to the architect David Adjaye at the Art Institute of Chicago; lectures by [Pritzker](#)-Prize-winning architects Jacques Herzog and Thom Mayne; architecture tours of Frank Lloyd Wright's SC Johnson campus in Racine, Wis.; site-specific performances such as "We Know How to Order," in which a drill team will perform at the Federal Plaza designed by Mies van der Rohe and more. The biennial runs through Jan. 3, 2016.

OUTDOOR YOGA IN MIAMI

In Miami, a new monthly party will begin with an open-air yoga class followed by a concert, food and drink in the high-end, shop-centric Miami Design District. [YogArt](#) is set to launch Oct. 28 in the sculpture-filled Palm Court, including a concert from an 11-piece brass ensemble with the New World Symphony, rosé wine and light fare. Future events are planned for the fourth Wednesday of each month, through July 2016. Tickets cost \$35.

FALCONRY IN VERMONT

Donning talon-proof protective gloves, guests of the [Woodstock Inn & Resort](#) in Woodstock, Vt., can now handle a trained falcon. In partnership with New England Falconry, the resort is offering falconry sessions that include an introduction to the ancient sport of flying raptors, followed by the opportunity to fly and handle a Harris hawk. Forty-five-minute sessions held in a historic barn cost \$95 for participants and \$30 for spectators. In October, packages including a room, and falconry and breakfast for two, start at \$473 per night.