

# traveling tips

**L**abor Day should be a day off, but superintendents know hackers will try to get in their last swipes before the clubs get parked in the garage.

If you're lucky, though, the holiday means you are that much closer to some well-deserved R&R. We at *Golfdom* aren't trained travel agents, but we do know a good getaway — and a great price — when we see one. So as you look forward to vacation, here are some intriguing Web sites that may help you find travel bliss.

If you are planning to stay at a hotel, your best bet is to start clicking hyperlinks. While Priceline.com didn't do so well with groceries and mortgages, it is still one of the best sites for booking last-minute airline travel and excellent for locating hotel rooms. The catch, of course, is that you bid what you want to pay — and if they match, you have to buy. The site sends you an e-mail to let you know whether your bid has been accepted, usually in about an hour. Bid low at first, and then gradually increase your bid until you get a match. Hotel rooms that normally go for between \$125 and \$150 per night can often be snagged for around \$50.

Two other sites offer solid information and often good deals. First, Travelocity.com allows you to customize arrival and departure times for airline flights and then gives you a comparative listing of fares. It also features a

## USE THE WEB TO CHOOSE THE PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES THAT WILL CARRY YOU AWAY ON VACATION **BY MARK LUCE**



wonderful Last Minute Deal section. In addition, Travelocity.com offers a service that will e-mail low fares to you, so you don't have to spend all afternoon on the computer watching for them.

The other impressive travel site is Planetrider.com, which gathers easily navigable links from travel-related Web sites, allowing you to hone in on what type of vacation you want.

With gasoline prices back to more normal, driving may be an option. The America Byways program ([www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)) will help you plan a backroads tour filled with scenery, historic locales and culture. If you are looking for something off the beaten

path, proceed immediately to the site and order your free map. I personally like the Pacific Coast Scenic Byway on the coast of Washington and Oregon, and the New York Seaway Trail in upstate New York. Renting a convertible will enhance either of these drives.

Let's not forget about train travel. There is a splash of nostalgia connected with the click-clack of the rails, but there are also natural wonders you simply can't see any other way. The Montana Rockies Rail Tour ([montanarailtours.com](http://montanarailtours.com)) is regarded as one of the most breathtaking rides in America, taking you from Spokane, Wash., to Livingston, Mont., in vintage cars with large windows. You only travel during the day, so you won't miss the scenery.

If luxury beckons, try one of the several journeys of the American Oriental Express ([americanorientalexpress.com](http://americanorientalexpress.com)). It isn't cheap, but you'll be treated like royalty. Its October trip is an eight-day, seven-night tour of the National Parks of the American West.

So make those travel plans now. You have earned a vacation again this year.

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