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Going Places, Near & Far...

Trips For Dads, Dudes & Duffers

Range from "Mancations" to "Family Guy", Fantasy to Legacy

By Karen Rubin

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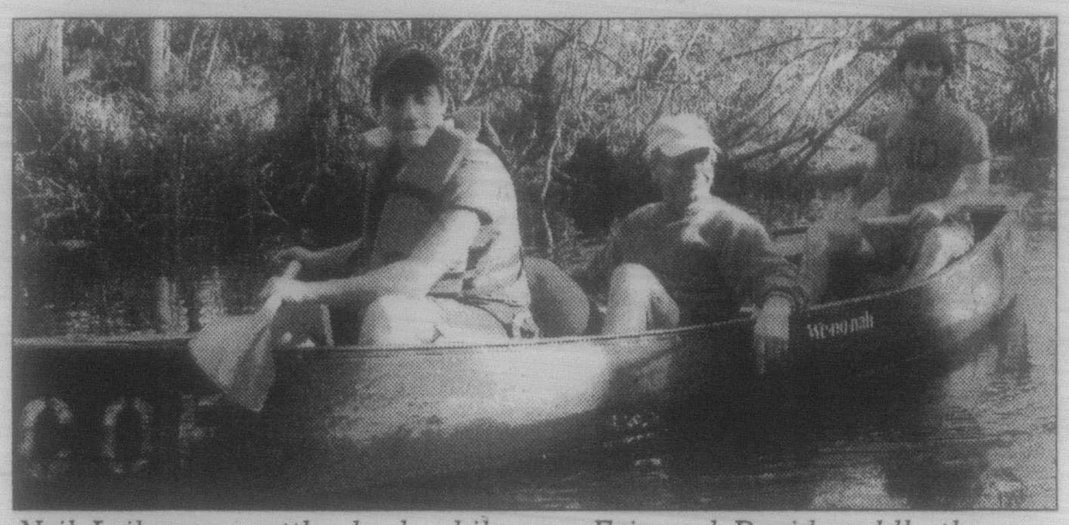
It may seem sexist to focus on golf, fishing, biking, baseball and such in a column offering suggestions for travel experiences that Dads might enjoy. But there is method to the madness: Moms and kids enjoy these things too, and that makes for a memorable experience for the entire family to share. Isn't that what Fathers Day (and Mothers Day) is all about?

But just as Moms sometimes want to indulge in a personal journey or may want to bond with their closest friends, you can treat Dad to a "mancation."



Neil Leiberman settles back while sons Eric and David paddle the canoe down the Loxahatchee River, Florida (photo by Karen Rubin).

INDULGE IN FANTASY

How about ***Fantasy Baseball Camp*** with four hall-of-famers? The **Baseball Hall of Fame** in Cooperstown, NY, is offering only its third such event, the penultimate of Fantasy Baseball camps. 48 lucky players (women can join) will form a league of their own for this five-night/six-day program with Hall of Famers George Brett, Fergie Jenkins, Phil Niekro, Ozzie Smith, getting first-hand instruction and playing games on historic Doubleday Field in Cooperstown, walking the same ground as nearly every great in baseball history. "This is the penultimate of Fantasy Baseball Camps," says Brad Horn, communications director of the Hall of Fame. "You can go to a fantasy camp in Florida and play during spring training, but this is the only one of its kind in Cooperstown, where you can be involved with Hall of Famers. It's the ultimate experience." It's also the chance to recover lost youth (players are usually over 40), even if you haven't picked up a glove since high school. "No special skills are required, just a love of baseball. The games are secondary."

As part of the $8,495 package, offered this year Oct. 5 - 10, you get both home and road uniforms that are "hall-of-fame authentic." Let sore muscles recover during a day golfing on the Leatherstocking course. There is also a private behind-the-scenes tour of the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum, a private candlelight dinner (some players bring spouses) in the Hall of Fame Gallery, and five nights accommodations at the luxurious, historic The Otesaga Hotel, on the shores of beautiful Lake Otsego. The event is timed to coincide with the beginning of post-season games, so after dinner, sit back and watch the games. A few spots remain; for info and to sign up, visit www.baseballhalloffame.org; or call 607-547-0327.

Not up for playing ball? Another fantasy can be indulged: seeing the induction of this year's Hall of Famers, Cal Ripken, Jr. and Tony Gwynn, over ***Induction Weekend***, July 27-29. Actually, you only have to be in Cooperstown, since seeing the Induction Ceremony is free (no tickets required). What's special is that as many as 50 of the 63 living Hall of Famers are expected to attend to welcome the inductees. There is programming all weekend long that provides the ultimate baseball experience. To witness the actual ceremony - the crowning achievement in the lives of these individuals - just bring a cooler and sit on the hill and watch the speeches. Packaged vacations are available through Sports and Travel Tours, which includes accommodations (Quality Inn Albany Airport or Best Western Sovereign Albany), a reception, admission to National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Friends of Hall of Fame Membership, General Admission Seating at the Induction Ceremonies at Clark Sports Center on Sunday, July 29; round-trip event transfers; breakfast (www.Sportstravelandtours.com).

There is much for families to enjoy together in **Cooperstown,** including lake activities, Farmer's Museum, the Soccer Hall of Fame (about 30 miles away), Brewery Ommegang, Glimmerglass Opera (for area information, Cooperstown Chamber of Commerce, 607-547-9983; info on lodging, attractions, packages and bookings at www.Cooperstownchamber.org).

Consider this golf fantasy: you are sitting and having breakfast and who should walk in, but **Arnold Palmer**, himself. The **Bay Hill Club & Lodge** is Arnold Palmer's winter home - he has been known to eat with guests. He bought it in the 1960s, selected the furniture. It 70 rooms, each different. Located 20 minutes from Orlando, it offers three golf courses, a spa, tennis, and the famous **Arnold Palmer Golf Academy** which offers programs for all ages and levels of play to learn the fundamentals of golf according to Arnold Palmer's philosophy of the game. (888-422-9445, www.bayhill.com or www.apga.com).

Don't just visit the **World Golf Hall of Fame**, stay and play there. The Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village is the "Official Resort of the World Golf Hall of Fame," offering 300 luxurious guest rooms and suites. Located literally next to the Hall of Fame, the resort offers spectacular views overlooking the Village's lake and golf courses. Guests are able to enjoy World Golf Village's two championship golf courses, the World Golf Hall of Fame's 18-hole putting course, a golf simulator, pool, hot tub, 24-hour health club, Little Legends child activity program, Cypress Pointe Restaurant & Lounge and full-service concierge. Guests also have privileges at the private oceanfront Serenata Beach Club. At WGV, you can play on two 18-hole championship golf courses with special ties to the World Golf Hall of Fame: The King & Bear, named respectively for its Hall of Fame member co-designers Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus, the first-and-only course design collaboration between these two golf legends; the second course, Slammer & Squire, was designed by Bobby Weed with consultants Sam Snead and Gene Sarazen, both Hall of Fame members. Improve your game at the **PGA TOUR Golf Academy** featuring state-of-the-art learning center with all-weather hitting bays that sit in the shadow of the World Golf Hall of Fame. Enjoy a meal at Murray Bros. Caddyshack, a restaurant owned by actor-comedian Bill Murray and his five brothers. The World Village of Golf has other fun features: a 300-seat IMAX(r) Theater, a half-mile Walk of Champions, an 18-hole natural grass putting course on the Walk of Champions. The resort is near historic **St. Augustine,** with a multitude of attractions to delight families (be sure to visit Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, and for more info, www.Getaway4Florida.com). For World Golf Village info or reservations, call 800-WGV-GOLF or visit www.wgv.com.

MANCATIONS

Mancations - vacations "just for the guys" are becoming popular

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Trips For Dads, Dudes & Duffers

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across the nation.

Guys can test out their courage when they plunge into **SeaWorld, Orlando's** most daring animal interaction program, ***Sharks Deep Dive***. Located at the Shark Encounter attraction, this awe-inspiring, up close underwater experience immerses guests into the fascinating realm of these perfect predators. The cage traverses through a 125-foot-long underwater habitat teeming with an array of more than 50 sharks (800-406-2244, www.seaworld.com).

Dads can get a hands-on opportunity to train and care for a variety of unique animals with the ***Trainer for a Day*** program at **Discovery Cove**, Orlando, where participants work side-by-side with Discovery Cove animal experts. They get the chance to interact with dolphins, birds, anteaters, sharks, stingrays and tropical fish - how cool is that! (877-4-DISCOVERY. www.discoverycove.com)

At **Offshore Sailing School,** Fort Myers, a new kind of "mancation" has emerged. Designed to get adrenaline pumping, these hands-on, high-energy sailing vacations are a welcome departure from yesterday's cigar-rolling, whiskey-sampling getaways for men. Programs include the Learn to Sail package, which starts at $125 per person, and the Live Aboard Cruising package, which starts at $1795 navigation programs (800-221-4326, www.offshoresailing.com.

The **Harbor Beach Marriott Resort & Spa** offers a "Fishing Mancation" for a group of six that includes ocean view accommodations and an offshore deep-sea fishing expedition on a private charter boat complete with captain, crew and lunch. Catch the biggest fish possible - because it's dinner: the resort's renowned 3030 Ocean restaurant will prepare the catch pan-roasted, grilled or roasted. And no fishing vacation is complete without a visit to the nearby IGFA Fishing Museum and Hall of Fame, to which complimentary transportation is provided. The package also includes a daily all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet and a bucket of beers at the Cascades Beach Bar. The Mancation is priced from $725 per person(800-628-4462, www.marriottharborbeach.com

FisherMEN: Heralded as one of the world's premier saltwater sportfishing destinations, the **Florida Keys & Key West** offers sensational year-round fishing opportunities. Ideal geographical location, beautiful weather, spectacular scenery and flourishing fisheries combine for exceptional fishing. The close proximity of the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and Florida Bay provide anglers with the opportunity to fish more than one body of water within the same day of fishing to capitalize on the wide variety of fisheries. It is not uncommon for captains out of Key West to fish the Gulf of Mexico in the morning and the Atlantic Ocean in the afternoon. Further up the island chain, anglers can fish for sailfish and dolphin offshore during the day and bonefish or tarpon inshore during the late afternoon and early evening. The region also is home to the world's best fishing captains and guides, who practice their trade 365 days a year. Offshore, inshore, backcountry and flats charters are available throughout the island chain with skippers who know how to catch fish regardless of the conditions. For information on fishing in the Keys, call 888-FISH-KEYS (888-347-4539); for lodging information, 800-FLA-KEYS, or visit www.fla-keys.com.

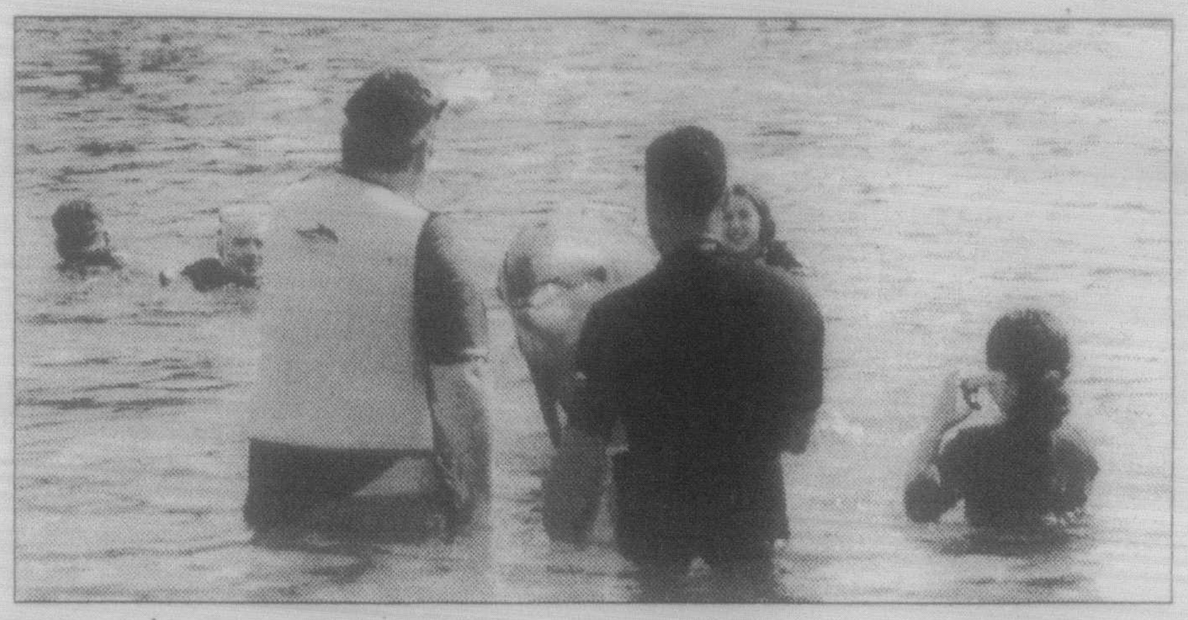
HEY DUDE

The Roaring Brook Ranch and Tennis Resort, located on Route 9N in the picturesque and eminently popular town of Lake George, offers excellent riding if you're up to it, you can gallop through wooded trails, over streams, as well as wonderful resort amenities including tennis courts, swimming pools, sauna, fitness room, family-oriented evening entertainment (Roaring Brook Ranch and Tennis Resort, Lake George, NY 12845, 518-668-5767; in NY 800-88-BROOK, www.roaring-brookranch.com, mail@roaring-brookranch.com).

Ridin' Hy Ranch Resort, Warrensburg, which is open year round, is a charming ranch which is also comfortable, informal and friendly, set on Sherman Lake where there is also (in season) water skiing (at additional cost), rowboats, paddle boats and speed boating, scenic cruises on a pontoon boat, fishing for northern pike, bass, and trout on Sherman Lake, Burnt Pond and Schroon River. There is horseback riding on trails through 800 acres of wilderness; pony rides for youngsters; free riding instructions for beginners and intermediate riders in the corral, plus hay rides and children's activity programs.There is golf nearby at the Sagamore Resort's championship Donald Ross course six miles away, plus six other courses. There is a guest mini-rodeo each week, plus a professional rodeo weekly. (Ridin' Hy, Sherman Lake, Warrensburg, NY 12885, 518-494-2742, www.ridinhy.com, ridinhy@hughes.net).

Definitely check out the **rodeos** (part of the Adirondack Championship Rodeo Circuit): Painted Pony rodeo operates July 4th weekend through Labor Day, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., rain or shine. A Texas-style barbecue dinner is served before the rodeo in the Long Horn Saloon; country western music follows (rodeo tickets are adults $8, kids $6). For information, 518-696-2421.

These ranches provide a wonderful advantage: The Adirondacks. The region is spectacular offering fantastic attractions and activities: nearby white water river rafting on the Sacandaga River is tame enough for young children but rafting to rival the West can be had on the Hudson River Gorge and Moose River (check Hudson River Rafting Company, 518-251-3215, 800-888-RAFT, or Adirondack River Outfitters, 800-525-RAFT. Also, there is the fantastic ***Great Escape themepark*** (biggest in New York State); and, on the bank of Lake George, historic ***Ft. William Henry*** (the site for James Fenimore Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans") where there are reenactments by costumed interpreters, plus steamboat and paddlewheel cruises on Lake George. (Contact the Warren County Tourism Dept, 518-761-6366, 800-365-1050, www.visit-lakegeorge.com).



Dads can get a hands-on opportunity to train and care for a variety of unique animals with the Trainer for a Day program at Discovery Cove, Orlando. How cool is that! (photo by Karen Rubin).

For families with younger kids, **Rocking Horse Ranch** in the Catskills, only 2 1/2 hour drive, is ideal. Lots of activities, amenities, plus horseback riding. Rocking Horse Ranch, 600 Rte. 44-55, Highland, NY 12528, tel. 914-691-2927, 800-647-2624; www.rhranch.com, sales@rhranch.com).

Want something more exotic? Check out the ranches of Colorado. Estes Park affords the added advantage of close proximity to Rocky Mountain National Park, and all the hiking, biking you would dream of. **Colorado Dude Ranch Association**, www.coloradoranch.com, is a one-stop shopping source.

MOUNTAIN MEN

For over 19 years, **Adirondack Mountain & Stream Guide Service** has been providing a four-season guide service in the Adirondack Park, a six million acre playground. The company specializes in back-country outings - big game hunting, trout fishing, bass fishing, guided canoe trips, hiking. 518-251-3762, www.adirondack-

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Trips For Dads

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mountainandstream.com.

Glen Oaks Inn, Intervale, New Hampshire, is organizing ***Moose Tours*** in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, including a 3-hour journey along the Androscoggin River and into the 13-mile woods area (starting at $270). A unique experience is ***Letterboxinn in the White Mountains***, that adds the excitement of a treasure hunt to a hike. Glen Oaks Inn, Inn at Jackson and Notchland Inn have formed the White Mountains Syndicate and have letterboxes hidden in 10 secret locations around the Mount Washington Valley. Easy, medium and difficult hikes, as well as the final ultimate destination will lead you to points awarded towards gift certificates for use at all three inns. Both packages start at $270 (877-854-6535, www.glenoaksinn.com).

The Inn at Jim Thorpe is organizing a 25-mile bike trip through the spectacular Lehigh River Gorge, rated one of the 50 best rides in the country. The package includes two nights accommodations at the charming inn, bike and shuttle, continental breakfast, one dinner for two (from $159, 800-329-2599, www.innjt.com).

FAMILY GUY

Smugglers' Notch, in Vermont's Green Mountains is offering a **Father's Day Celebration** through June 21 featuring special bonuses: for stays of five nights or longer, dads and granddads receive a f$100 sport shop gift certificate and a Cabot Creamery arrival gift. In addition, they can maintain their hero status by treating their entire family to a Vermont-style dinner and a breakfast buffet. Their littlest, six weeks to three years old, are welcomed at TREASURES nursery (a $72/day value). Smugglers' Notch Resort offers a complete Mountain Village with convenient restaurants, lounges, entertainment, sport shop, 12 tennis courts, a driving range, Courtside Pool, Mountainside Pool, Rum Runners' Hideaway reservoir, Notchville Park, five playgrounds, woodland miniature golf course and disc golf course, a full service conference and banquet center, in a self-contained resort community of all-suite lodgings. **Waters** - Smugglers' has four water playgrounds with eight pools and four waterslides; **Rum Runners' Hideaway** is 10-acres of natural water, Fidget Ladder, Aqua Jump, fishing, canoe and paddleboat rentals, picnic pavilion and changing room, with spectacular mountain views; **Notchville Park** is a family playground amidst towering maples with Raven's Roost Climbing Tower, 3 terraced pools with nearly 5000 square feet of water area, Peregrine's Picnic Pavilion, sand volleyball court, croquet, tumbling brook, frog pond, and bathhouse. Notchville also features the Twister, a 140' body flume waterslide. **Mountains** - Morse,

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Sterling, and Madonna Mountains in the Green Mountain chain rise to a 3610' elevation from the Village. Historic Smugglers' Notch pass is an interesting drive; the Long Trail, a hiking path through the entire length of Vermont, crosses Madonna for easy access. **The Village Pond** and **Sterling Pond** provide great trout fishing, and the **Lamoille River & Lake Champlain** (the "Sixth Great Lake") are nearby 800-419-4615, www.smuggs.com

The Woodstock Inn & Resort, in picturesque Woodstock, Vt., offers the perfect active vacation for guys traveling with their families. Recreation options include hiking the nearby Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park, fly-fishing in pristine streams scattered around the area, biking the winding Vermont country roads (over hills and under the region's famous covered bridges) and paddling. Of special interest is the orienteering program created exclusively for the Woodstock Inn by a former Navy Seal - a unique way to bond with the family! Golf is a significant draw to the property, as the 18-hole course, designed by Robert Trent Jones, Sr., is the setting for some of the best playing in New England. The 40,000 square foot Health & Fitness Center (open year-round) has an indoor pool, outdoor pool, sauna, tennis (including fun "aerobic tennis" classes), squash and racquetball courts, with massages (even for men!) available by appointment (800-448-7900, www.woodstockinn.com).

Loon Mountain, New Hampshire, is nestled in one of the most scenic mountain areas of New England, best viewed by a ride up the four-person Gondola Skyride to the summit, where you can explore the captivating natural glacial caves, hike the nature trail, climb the observation tower, and play in a playground. The Adventure Center at the base offers bike rentals, bike tours and climbing walls. One of the most scenic bike rides anywhere is the 9-mile paved path through the Franconia Notch (there is shuttle service to Echo Lake in Franconia Notch if you don't want to do both ways). The hiking is also spectacular (www.loonmtn.com or 800-229-LOON).

A family hike (photo by Karen Rubin).

Sebasco Harbor Resort, a 575-acre waterfront resort in Midcoast Maine (approx. 1 hour from Portland), offers Dads many ways to get a few hours to himself and also have fun with the family on Father's Day and all summer long. Classic "Dad activities" of golf and salt-water fishing and kayak fishing are just a few of the options at Sebasco. Kayaking is offered (and taught) at Sebasco Harbor Resort; tours are offered weekends (and daily in the midsummer.) Family fun includes canoeing on Wat-Tah Lake (free), lawn games, swimming in the salt water pool (the largest in Maine). At night the resort has a classic old-time rec hall, the Quarter Deck, that has an automated four-lane bowling alley. On site activities/amenities include golf (family golf offered at 4 p.m. Tuesdays/Thursdays), family campfire sing-along, pirate adventure, lobstering cruise, parent/child introduction to kayak and guided kayak excursions. Also tennis, bike rentals, 2 restaurants (waterfront) and a patio cafÈ; free wifi. Accommodations include a Main Lodge with traditional inn-style rooms, individual cottages (1 to 10 rooms), guest rooms in a waterfront Lighthouse and new luxury accommodations. It is close to Popham Beach and the resort offers a complimentary beach shuttle (800-225-3819, www.sebasco.com).

LEGACY

What to give granddad? How about a legacy? Give the priceless experience of taking the grandkids on a trip of a lifetime. **Grandtravel,** a division of Academic Travel Abroad, has a host of itineraries that explore cultural interests or can even provide a discovery of the family's heritage in faraway native lands. Regardless of where you go, though, the time together lets you share your past. "At Grandtravel, we believe that in addition to the many material things you've saved, equally important are those life experiences that formed you and translated into life lessons you wish to transmit to your grandchildren," says Helena Koenig, the founder (www.grandtrvl.com, 800-247-7651).

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