

Autumn Getaways

By Judi Rothenberg

From the spectacular foliage of Central Park to museum openings and Broadway shows, New York City's mix of outdoor activities and culture is ideal for a mini-vacation. Have a bit more

time? Make an easy out-of-town escape from Port Liberty in Bayonne. Sail up the coast to Canada to enjoy autumn's splendor or extend your summer with a visit to Bermuda or the Caribbean.



Central Park



Primary room of Hotel Belleclaire's Family Suite



Hotel Belleclaire Meida Lounge



Museum of Natural History

Photo: © AMNH Y.D. Finnin

Family Fun on the West Side

The Upper West Side makes a perfect base camp for families. Whether you're taking in a Broadway show, a concert at Lincoln Center, enjoying a day in Central Park or museum hopping, there's plenty to keep active families busy.

Catch an Imax movie at The American Museum of Natural History and then visit the museum's Butterfly Conservatory (opens October 12) to mingle with up to 500 tropical butterflies.

Stay within walking distance at the Hotel Belleclaire, which offers a package with admission to the museum. Spread out in the hotel's Family Suite (sleeps 6) and is equipped with a microwave and DVD player. Tweens can spend downtime in the Belleclaire's Media lounge where three 27-inch Apple computers and two arcade stations with more than 10,000 games are available. Kid-friendly eateries abound, try the famous popovers with scrumptious strawberry butter at the Pop-Over Café, make-your-own-pizza at Uno or tea at Alice's Teacup.



The Cornelia Spa at The Surrey

Photo: Tom McWilliam

Girlfriends Go East

A little art, a bit of shopping, some pampering and fine dining and you've got the makings of great girlfriend getaway. The Surrey Hotel, on East 76th Street, puts it all at your fingertips. After a day of shopping at nearby designer boutiques and reviewing the newest exhibits at the Whitney, participate in the ultimate female bonding ritual, a spa visit. Cornelia Spa, on the 2nd floor of the Surrey, will get your feet Loubouton worthy with the Champagne Shimmer Pedicure. The treatment starts with a healing warm footbath of herbal tea extracts, sea salt, peppermint and arnica flowers and is accompanied by a cranberry and pomegranate super food smoothie. When you're ready for dinner, you won't have to go far for a stellar meal. Café Boulud, one of New York's most celebrated restaurants, is on the premises.

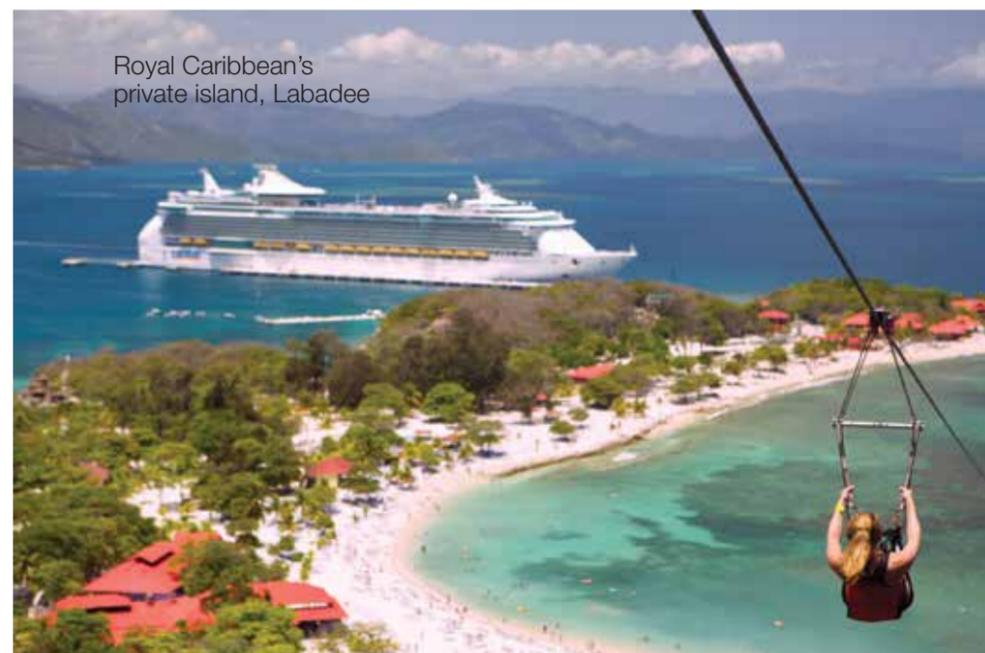
Romance on the Seas

Lingering dinners, swanky lounges, sun-kissed strolls on the beach and horse-drawn carriage rides create the perfect backdrop to rekindle your romance. Set sail for warm weather to Bermuda, the Caribbean or New England and Canada from Port Liberty, conveniently located in Bayonne. Two ships make their home there, Royal Caribbean's Explorer of the Seas and Celebrity's Summit.

Highlights on the Summit include a Broadway style cabaret developed in partnership with legendary Studio 54, a tech lounge offering classes, MAC stations and Apple products for sale and an over-the-top martini bar. At Crush, your artisanal cocktail will be prepared by mixologists with great showmanship and served to you on the iced topped bar. Book AquaClass for spa perks and access to Blu, a specialty restaurant with a menu of "clean cuisine."



Martini bar aboard Celebrity Summit



Royal Caribbean's private island, Labadee

While Explorer of the Seas does not have the latest enhancements of Royal Caribbean's newest ships, it still has a bevy of entertainment and activities. From its famous rock-climbing wall to its ice skating rink and 15,000 square foot gym, active couples will have plenty to do on days at sea. After a workout, head to the adults-only solarium pool to relax. Stroll the Royal Promenade and stop at the pub for a beer or the café for a snack and cappuccino. Most southern itineraries include a stop at Labadee, Royal Caribbeans private Island. Sporting adventures like zip lining and kayaking are available as are staffed luxury cabanas. For a truly romantic vacation, arrange a wedding or vow renewal in the ship's Skylight Chapel.