

AN ALL-AMERICAN SUMMER

# DEPARTURES

July / August 2015



**DALLAS** Now • Getting Car-Crazy in **PALM SPRINGS**

**SMITHTONS** vs. the **JERSEY SHORE**

**REN** • Apple Pie from **JACKSON POLLOCK**

• An Exclusive First Look at D.C.'s **WATERGATE HOTEL**

**PLUS** Small-town reports from **Beaufort, South Carolina**, and **Monroeville, Alabama**

# LIVING THE RIGHT LIFE

RICHARD DAVID STORY



## A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE PLACES

For the last five years, **DEPARTURES** has devoted its entire July/August issue to An All-American Summer. And every time we put together this particular issue, I am asked the inevitable: Where do you like to travel, eat, luxuriate? Herewith, a few notes of my own favorites, brand-new or old favorites, that still—and always will—matter.

① **My most favorite grand hotel for a summer weekend?** Tough, but I'd say it's a tie. **Wheatleigh** (*wheatleigh.com*), an old robber baron's estate in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts (a few hours from Boston or New York) that was turned, some 15 years ago, into possibly the most beautiful country hotel in America by its owners Lin and Susan Simon and architects Calvin Tsao and Zack McKown. I also love the 1911 Tuscan-style glamour of **Glenmere Mansion** (*pictured; glenmeremansion.com*), in Chester, New York, which, without traffic, can be reached in about an hour from New York City. And unlike most grand country places, owners Alan Stenberg and Dan DeSimone made sure that when they renovated to the tune of \$30 million, the original swimming pool was returned to its former glory.

② **For years I searched for a proper dude ranch, and then the Ranch at Rock Creek** (*theranchatrockcreek.com*) opened in 2010—6,600 acres of fly-fishing, horseback riding, and skeet-shooting outside Butte, Montana.

③ **The most promising new hotel** is actually an old one on East 63rd Street in Manhattan. Alas, **the Lowell** (*lowellhotel.com*), a small boutique beauty has languished without buzz or proper word of mouth. Now that general manager Heiko Kuenstle, formerly of the Pierre, is in place, I am expecting great things for this perfectly located hotel.

④ **The most surprising airline experience:** Business class on **American Airlines A321T** (*800-433-7300; aa.com*), from Los Angeles to New York City, is an overall class act.

⑤ **When it comes to that over-used and inexact word resort, two perfectly fit my own definition.** In the American Southwest in the area known as the Four Corners, the **Amangiri's** (*pictured; amanresorts.com*) futurist architecture and spectacular setting among high plateaus, deep canyons, and raw desert scapes make it unlike any other place.

Switching geography, there's no better beachfront property—and what a beachfront—on the Eastern Seaboard that even comes close to **the Ocean House** (*oceanhouse1.com*), in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, thanks to the most incredible rehabilitation of a once grand-old favorite by one Charles Royce five years back.

⑥ **Best recent airport experience:** Shrimp étouffée at **Pappadeaux Seafood Kitchen** (*pappadeaux.com*) just outside gate E9 of Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

⑦ **And one final note:** When it opened in Oklahoma City, Ronald Reagan was president and Thunder star Kevin Durant was in diapers. And the **Metro Wine Bar & Bistro** (*metrowinebar.com*) is still my absolute favorite restaurant in this finally up-and-coming Sun Belt metropolis that also happens to be—for reasons of full disclosure—where I was born and raised. ♦



①



②



③



④



⑤



⑥



⑦

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: LARA SHRIFFMAN; GLENMERE MANSION; RANCH AT ROCK CREEK; THE LOWELL; AMERICAN AIRLINES;