

Image – Chuck
Choi/Courtesy
of the MFA



Big things are happening this month at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, starting with the November 20 opening of a brand-new 125,000-square-foot wing. Designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Foster + Partners, the space will showcase the loftily titled "Art of the Americas" collection, featuring 5,000 pieces from North, South and Central America. Plus, the MFA will finally have a chance to show off some pieces it's had tucked away in its closets, such as Paul Revere's Sons of Liberty Bowl. www.mfa.org

RANCH DRESSING

Set amid more than 6,000 private acres of pristine Montana, the Ranch at Rock Creek is a cowboy's playground-with some of the country's best fly fishing, horseback riding and hiking (there are even a couple of abandoned silver mines). With a four-lane bowling alley, cowhide rugs, a cozy main lodge with rocklined

fireplaces and top-shelf victuals, and a row of canvas tents (each with its own potbelly stove), you'll feel right at home on the range. www.theranchatrockcreek.com

BE COOL

Gaylord Hotels get a slick makeover every year from November to January with their ICE! wonderlands. Four properties-Gaylord National Resort outside Washington, D.C.; Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville; Gaylord Palms Resort in Kissimmee, Florida; and Gaylord Texan Resort in Dallas-cool off with ice slides, statues and nativities. Fear not: The hotels have parkas on hand in case things get too cool. www.gaylordhotels.com

TRIPPING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

Everyone knows the Aurora Borealis is spectacular-so much so, in fact, that Hurtigruten has designed a cruise devoted to spotting those northern lights. The six-, seven-, 11- or 12-day "Hunting the Light" voyage runs this month through March 15 along the west coast of Norway. In addition to aurora-spotting, you'll go dog-sledding and enjoy a Viking feast. You'll also spend time above the Arctic Circle, so have your list ready for Santa, just in case. www.hurtigruten.com

OLD IS THE NEW NEW

Just outside Dallas, the Old American Golf Club was crafted by PGA star Justin Leonard and renowned golf architect Tripp Davis to evoke golf's so-called Golden Age courses, like Shinnecock Hills and Prairie Dunes. Now, if you can just find that old swing. www.thetribute.com

AN AMERICAN TALE

The Smithsonian- affiliated National Museum of American Jewish History opens in Philadelphia on November 14. Just a block from the Liberty Bell, this is the first museum in the world devoted to the history of Jewish people in the U.S., from their arrival in 1654, to Barbra Streisand's turn in Yentl, to the present day. www.nmajh.org

EXCELLENT ADVENTURES

Stretching out on the beach need not involve falling asleep, drink in hand. Ceiba del Mar Beach & Spa Resort on the Riviera Maya has yoga, meditation and Biomeridian Treatment experts to help you stretch out in a more gratifying way. The "Mystical Mayan Adventure" also includes a purifying ritual. That's how you relax on the beach. www.ceibadelmar.com

CARIBBEAN COOL

The Fairmont Royal Pavilion in Barbados had a lot going for it before it went in for extensive renovations: It's situated on 11 acres of lush tropical gardens in a place where the temperature stays between 75 and 90 degrees all year. Now the hotel also boasts 24 spacious suites with private terraces perfect for moonlit dinners. Hire a sitter: The resort is adults only during peak season. www.fairmont.com/royalpavilion

CALENDAR NOVEMBER

4-6 EUREKA SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

A performance by headliner Eliza Gilkyson and the Barefoot Ball will have you whoopin' it up at the Ozark Folk Festival. www.ozarkfolkfestival.com

4-21 BERLIN

The annual Berlin Fairy Tale Days bring you three magical weeks of plays, readings and puppet shows dedicated to the art of storytelling. Families who visit will vacation happily ever after. www.maerchenland-ev.de

5-14 MENDOCINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Wine festivals may be abundant, but the Mendocino Wine & Mushroom Fest is as rare a find as the morels you'll munch on. www.visitmendocino.com

6 CHICAGO

No matter what type of digital camera you tote around, the beginner-level workshop with the Digital Photo Academy will have you snapping expert pics in just one class. www.digitalphotoacademy.com

10-14 HOUSTON

Rub elbows with indie film darling Isabella Rossellini at the Cinema Arts Festival Houston, which is devoted to movies about art. www.cinemartsociety.org

11-14 NEW YORK

Tired of counting calories? Then don't! Instead, indulge in goodies by Callebaut and Jacques Torres at the New York Chocolate Show. www.chocolateshow.com

26- DECEMBER 5 KEY WEST

Bust out your eye patch for a weekend of swashbuckling sailing excursions, singing, dancing and gripping tales of the sea during the Pirates in Paradise festival. www.piratesinparadise.com