

Inspired music, menus, mixology

► **NEW YORK**
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they had “24 hours, boys” to get to Japan and back in the band’s “In and Out of Love” video.

In Le Pescadeux, he is a born host.

“When I was growing up, all the neighborhood kids would come to our place; Mom was the best cook in town,” he says, and it seems that he was taking notes.

Not only do you want to settle into a banquet at his restaurant and admire the Maggie Mailer paintings on the wall, you want Perelmutter to come over and tell you stories during your meal. You get the feeling that he’s whispered a sweet nothing or two in the ear of many a damsel, but with just a little coaxing, he’s got some good tales to tell. He may be a schmoozer, but he seems a sincere one. Along with a great brunch for just \$14, part of the reason you want to go — or go back — is because he’s there.

Across the river, I walk into Fort Defiance, a new bar that’s a subway, bus, and world away from Manhattan in Brooklyn’s Red Hook neighborhood.

WHAM, WHAM, WHAM!!! Behind the bar, St. John Frizell, the owner, clubs a cloth bag of ice with a large wooden mallet to make a drink called the prescription julep, an 1857 recipe that blends cognac and rye whiskey, which are poured into a metal shaker cup and topped with a sprig of mint and a cherry. If it sounds a bit froufrou — like there should be a little umbrella shading the ice — instead, it looks perfect, almost serious, like something to pay attention to while you drink it.

“The key to bartending is making sure everybody’s having a good time,” says Frizell. “You can’t talk to everybody all the time, but you want everyone to be enjoying themselves.”

That’s a tall bill for a bar and its rookie owner. Looking around, the bar isn’t filled with clients looking to get muddled, but people — single guys, couples at the bar, and families at tables — having a drink, tasting chef Sam Filloramo’s creations —



The southern tip of Manhattan shimmers from Brooklyn Heights.

think world’s best bar snacks, like a pair of deviled eggs or a muffuletta sandwich — while enjoying each others’ company.

It’s a far cry from Frizell’s previous job in sales and advertising for a publishing company, which he refers to as a “piranha tank.” He looks so at home at the bar, it’s hard to imagine him fighting the other fish.

Frizell drew inspiration for Fort Defiance from the obscure drinks legend Charles H. Baker Jr., whose 1939 “The Gentleman’s Companion” is broken into two volumes: “Exotic Cookery” and “Exotic Drink,” the latter with the subtitle: “Around the World With Jigger, Beaker & Flask.”

“He’s got this breathless, faux-Victorian style, a sort of armchair traveler prose that’s long on color and short on details,” says Frizell, who is piecing together a Baker biography. “Yet he hung out with Hemingway, Robert Frost, and Waring . . . the blender guy.”

I flip to the front of the second volume and there’s Baker in a photo, decked out like the captain of the Love Boat lounging with a big tropical drink, flanked by two women in hula skirts.

“That’s his wife and daughter,” says Frizell, chuckling. “Only about one in four recipes in there works . . . but they’re always fun.”

Frizell leaves Baker’s frivolity at the door and instead draws on his curiosity for historic drinks like the julep and reverence for what Frizell calls “the proper drink, done properly.”

It’s turned him into a drinks purist — not the kind who has spent 15 years brewing growlers of beer in his basement, but one who triple-filters the bar’s water, uses a specialized Kold-Draft ice machine, installs a custom seltzer system, and stands over the espresso machine watching each pour so he can pull the cup at just the right moment.

Before I meet a different kind of aficionado later that night, I see him play bluegrass at Red Hook’s Jalopy, a micro bar-cafe-concert hall and music school with a Mini Cooper (license plate: GOTBANJO) parked out front. Onstage, guitarist Rick Snell and his band, the Five Deadly Venoms, are framed vaudeville-style by strings of red and white lights and he holds his guitar high against his chest in a

way that seems to allow him to coax emotion from it.

First question: Bluegrass in Brooklyn?

“It’s held up as a pure source,” he says. “The people who come are looking for that.”

Snell, 32, points out the 1960s Greenwich Village folk revival where people went to cafes to see the likes of Bob Dylan play and would even head south to see the music at the source.

“It boiled over in New York; it was rural music reaching the rest of the world,” says Snell. “Now, there’s a DIY ethic to bluegrass, almost like a punk rock ethic, that Gen Xers and an even younger generation can identify with.”

Snell has a deadpan style and a reserve that makes you wonder what he’s doing in New York, but as he talks, some of what sounds faraway turns out to be coming from within. “I love this city. To the core. I wouldn’t want to leave,” he says. “Maybe I’ll strike it rich and have a house here and somewhere else, but I’ll always have a house here.”

After the show, I head out to the promenade near the Brook-

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How to get there

BoltBus
877-265-8287
www.boltbus.com

If there’s a better, more convenient option than the \$10 advance-purchase one-way on Bolt Bus (which includes leather seats, free Wi-Fi, and a wall outlet), it would be free teleportation.

Where to stay

The Mave

62 Madison Ave.
646-237-2004

www.themavehotel.com
NYC hotels tend to eat up your budget in a heartbeat, so you might as well stay someplace cool. Rates at this brand-new boutique hotel start at \$299 on weekends (\$249 weekdays) and specials are on the website.

Where to eat

Le Pescadeux

90 Thompson St.
212-966-0021

Brunch is a steal at \$14. Go classy and classic with a smoked trout and Dijon crème omelet or go crazy with a JYD, or Junk Yard Dog: eggs sunny side up, Pennsylvania scrapple, broccoli rabe, and country bread. Dinner is pricier; count on \$60 per person.

Where to drink

Fort Defiance

365 Van Brunt St., Brooklyn
347-453-6672

www.fortdefiancebrooklyn.com
There’s the hint of a nautical theme owing to this bar’s namesake, a Red Hook fort that protected the city in the Battle of Brooklyn. From the kitchen, chef Sam Filloramo serves incredible muffuletta sandwiches along with tasty olives and deviled eggs so good, I want to go back to see what Filloramo will be making when his stove and oven arrive.

The main reason for coming? “The proper drink, done properly,” as owner St. John Frizell puts it, for \$8 or \$10 a blissful pop.

What to do

Statue Cruises

877-523-9849

www.statuecruises.com
Lady Liberty’s crown reopened on July 4. Tours leave from Battery Park in Manhattan and Liberty State Park in New Jersey. Adult tickets with crown access \$12, children \$5; reserve in advance.

Jalopy

315 Columbia St., Brooklyn
718-395-3214

www.jalopy.biz
Catch bluegrass and other great local music — shows around \$10 — in the fantastic, low-key Red Hook neighborhood.

lyn apartment and see the Statue of Liberty across the water. She is far away, unmistakable dots: the crown and, out at an angle, the flame. Even at this distance, her iconic status kicks in and she’s out there alone at night, holding our hearts, hope, and history.

“Her position is the first and last icon of freedom,” says Barry Moreno, Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island historian. Yet from the Sept. 11 attacks until this past July 4, the small lookout inside the statue’s crown was closed.

“After 9/11, they said the statue was a fire hazard,” he says, “but then, that was resolved” . . . but the crown did not reopen.

“It was considered an impossibility to close the monument,” Moreno says, although there were a few exceptions like the

1916 “Black Tom” wharf explosion and the 1984-86 centennial restoration. “The story was, from the week it was unveiled in 1886, it was never closed.”

Looking up at the statue, with the city off to her side, it feels good to know that the crown is open again and there’s a months-long waiting list to go up top.

On my last evening in town, with a thousand things to see and do, I opt for the views from the apartment, watching the sun go down behind the city.

Together, the places I’ve seen define only bits of New York, but they are big parts of the reason I’ll come back.

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Not surviving, but thriving, with baby

By **Christopher Klein**
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

As we boarded our flight to Ireland for a long-anticipated and badly needed vacation, a single thought raced through my mind: “What have I gotten us into?”

My wife and I were setting off on a trans-Atlantic flight with our 12-month-old son in tow, not bound by any family obligation, but completely of our own free will. Sure, the irresistible lure of international travel and chronic sleep deprivation might have impaired our decision-making, but our passports had been gathering dust for a couple of years and we were eager to resume our globe-trotting ways.

Taking our son abroad for the first time sounded like a fun — albeit challenging — adventure. But as soon as I set foot on the jetway, I was hit with overwhelming trepidation at how our energetic traveling companion would handle the confinement of the long flight, the time change, and unfamiliar surroundings thousands of miles from home. Luckily, our boy proved to be a regular jet-setter, and we found that international travel with an infant or toddler can be rewarding if approached with a recalibrated mindset, some advance planning, and plenty of Cheerios.

It’s important for parents traveling with really young ones to realize that they can’t stick to their usual itineraries, says Cynthia Harriman, author of “Take Your Kids to Europe.” “Get your expectations in check, and understand that you just can’t do the same things as before,” she says.

As we planned our Irish excursion, we realized that our usual m.o. of bouncing from city to city and stuffing in as much sightseeing and night life as we could was out the window. Instead, we opted for a totally different experience, spending a slow-paced week in a small village and taking leisurely day trips instead of dashing around madly as if we were on “The Amazing Race.”

“With younger kids, don’t try to do seven countries in eight days but really hook into the local culture,” Harriman says. “Rent a cottage or do a home exchange and concentrate on everyday life.”

We rented a spacious townhouse that allowed us to spread out, cook our own meals, do laundry, and let our little guy have his own room for sleeping, which allowed us all to maintain some semblance of a normal routine. Plus, our budding Magellan, who was crawling all over the place, had plenty of uncharted waters to explore.

We quickly fell in love with our Irish village and soaked up all it had to offer. We walked to town each day to pick up breakfast from the bakery. We shopped the aisles of the lone supermarket and ogled the local cheeses and chocolate desserts at the outdoor market. We went to Mass at the village church and thumbed through the First Communion photos in the local newspaper. Although we couldn’t stay out late, we managed to have some pints of Guinness in a few of the village pubs while our companion downed a bottle of milk.

We got to see the town wake

the sleep out of its eyes and tuck itself in at night. While the attractions of our quiet hamlet couldn’t compare with the hustle and bustle of Dublin, we appreciated the opportunity to absorb everything it had to offer.

Ireland turned out to be ideal for our international foray with our son. The flight time from Boston to the Emerald Isle is on par with West Coast destinations, and there are no language or cultural barriers to overcome. Plus, Ireland practically mandates flexibility, since the weather is as temperamental as a 1-year-old.

We not only had to adjust our itinerary, but we also had to allot more time for packing. It’s amazing that someone so small requires so much gear, and the older baby gets, the more you have to haul. Along with our umbrella stroller, we also brought our car seat. One of our most useful pieces of gear was a baby backpack that allowed us to hike through the countryside, although I felt like a royal elephant carrying around the king in his howdah.

We brought enough food and diapers just to get us settled and bought the rest in Ireland. The jars of hearty shepherd’s pie and creamy rice pudding were a bit foreign to our son’s American palate, but the European version of Cheerios was just as much of a hit as it is back home and a godsend when Mr. Fussy started to get bored on our road trips.

Shelly Rivoli, author of “Travels with Baby” and a mom who has changed diapers on four continents, says parents can also use a delivery service such as Babies Travel Lite to ship baby food, for-

mula, and other supplies to their destination. “It’s a good option if your baby has allergies or sensitivities, or you’re just not sure what you’ll find at a more remote or underdeveloped destination.”

Harriman also recommends packing a baby food mill. “That way kids can eat what you eat, and you know it’s always fresh,” she says.

Even if you rent a home with a kitchen, part of the fun of traveling is eating out. Although fine restaurants were obviously out of the question, we found the village pubs perfectly suited for young eaters (and al fresco dining works well, too).

Most of the pubs had high chairs, which Harriman says is common for Northern Europe. Just don’t expect that to be the case everywhere.

“In Southern Europe, you won’t necessarily find high chairs, but that’s just because they see babies as integrated into daily life,” Harriman says. “Go out in Italy, and instead you may find five people will hold baby while you eat.” At places without high chairs, we used our versatile cloth Totseat, which slips over the back of nearly any kind of chair and has a pouch in front to keep baby snug and tight.

Even though we didn’t have to order any food for our son, dining out still proved to be a more expensive proposition because our guilt compelled us to leave higher tips to compensate for the mess of food left underneath his chair.

Our one regret from the trip was that we hadn’t gone sooner. Like most new parents, our first few months after the birth were



CHRISTOPHER KLEIN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

The author’s 1-year-old son on his maiden trans-Atlantic trip, to Kenmare, County Kerry, in the southwest of Ireland.

filled with thoughts of survival, not traipsing around Europe. However, Rivoli points out that traveling can be easier with an infant than a mobile toddler: “There is a good window for most parents between three and six months when they’ve had a chance to recuperate from the birth and adjust to the new routine, and while the baby still sleeps many times throughout the day and is content to spend a lot of time in the car seat, stroller, or child carrier,” she says. “There is no need to mess with baby food yet, and if you’re breastfeeding, things will be dramatically sim-

plified compared with the months ahead.”

Although our son won’t recall the trip, he blessed us with memories we’ll treasure forever: the thwack of the stamp on his fresh passport, his bright smile as we hiked among the sheep and waterfalls, his giddy laughter while scaling our townhouse staircase, and a pair of innocent brown eyes peering over a pub table. And he opened our eyes to an entirely different — and rewarding — travel experience.

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