

THE **E**thnic Traveler newsletter

The Cultural, Entertainment and Travel Newsletter for People of Color vol. 1, no. 2 • September 2003

Our Second Issue

Welcome to *The Ethnic Traveler*, the e-newsletter dedicated to the travel interests and lives of people of color. Although this is our second issue, we are so proud of the response to the newsletter and the positive talk going around about minority-interest travel. We plan to continue bringing you information that quenches your thirst for travel news and issues relevant to your travel needs.

This newsletter is only successful with wonderful readers like you. Please feel free to send us your comments and suggestions about the topics in this newsletter. We appreciate any suggestions you may have to improve *The Ethnic Traveler Newsletter*. Since we believe in sharing opinions and information, letters will appear in future issues of *The Ethnic Traveler Newsletter*.

If you wish to submit articles or prose at no cost to the newsletter for publishing, please feel free to do so. Articles submitted for publishing are welcomed and edited for content and language. Credit will always be given to the authors.

The Ethnic Traveler Newsletter is produced by Orb Communications as a service to ethnic travelers. Orb Communications brings this information to readers as an informational source only. If you do not wish to receive The Ethnic Traveler Newsletter, please contact us at subscribe@orbcommunications.net.

Orb Communications.
PO Box 5716,
Takoma Park, MD 20913.
301.920.0423(p)/301.920.0298(f).
www.orbcommunications.net.
info@orbcommunications.net.

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Paris' African American Women

by Monique Y. Wells

Paris, France — Few people realize that France has long been a multiracial society, largely due to its African, Caribbean and Asian colonial past. But other European, North and South American countries also contribute to the French “melting pot”, and African Americans have played a significant role in its development since the 18th century.

African Americans have come to Paris for numerous reasons, but music and art are the major themes that continue to attract them to the City of Light decade after decade, generation after generation. African Americans James Reese Europe, who introduced France to jazz, and Henry Ossawa Tanner, award-winning painter, were pioneers in these fields. The best among African American poets, novelists, journalists and playwrights have made Paris their home—Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, William Gardner Smith and Victor Séjour are but a few of them. The culinary field has also been well represented by African Americans, from Thomas Jefferson's slave James Hemings to Cordon Bleu graduate Percy Taylor, who currently operates a catering business, restaurant and tea room in the village-like quarter of Auteuil.

Unfortunately, though perhaps not surprisingly, there is comparatively little information on Paris's African-American women. Many know the story of Sally Hemings, and have heard of the contention that Thomas Jefferson fathered one of her children in Paris. And Josephine

Baker's name is practically synonymous with Paris; her unprecedented propulsion to stardom was due to the enthusiastic reception that she received from a French audience one fateful October evening in 1925. But there are a host of other women who have lived and worked in Paris; they have tackled and succeeded in every field of activity that men have.

The most well-known of these women are undoubtedly the performers. Josephine Baker's contemporary, the older and more seasoned Bricktop, enjoyed a lifelong career as a nightclub owner and singer because of her initial success performing in the area of Paris known as “Black Montmartre”. Adelaide Hall rivaled Baker for a short period of time when she swept into town to perform in the Blackbirds of 1928 revue, taking Paris by storm. Closely following this success she opened her own club, called The Big Apple, in Black Montmartre. Valaida Snow, Hazel Scott, Maya Angelou, Eartha Kitt and others lived and performed in Paris as well.

In the artistic arena, master sculptor Meta Vaux Warwick Fuller arrived in 1899. She enjoyed the friendship and tutelage of Henry O. Tanner, and had the honor of working under Rodin, who praised her talent and promoted her as an artist. Gwendolyn Bennett, Augusta Savage, Nancy Elizabeth Prophet and Laura Wheeling Waring all came to Paris roughly 20 years after Fuller arrived. Lois Mailou Jones was perhaps the most successful woman of her generation, traveling to Paris for the first time in 1937 and making continual pilgrimages there for decades afterward. She was followed by the brilliant sculptor Barbara

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Chase Riboud, who lived in Paris for many years but has since made Rome her home.

Women writers have also traveled to Paris for inspiration. Gwendolyn Bennett (poet/short story writer as well as artist) and Jessie Faucet were among those who visited Paris during the Harlem Renaissance and enjoyed the relatively racism-free environment while practicing their craft. Faith Berry considered her experiences in Paris in 1964 as a turning point in her career. The plots of author-artist Barbara Chase Riboud's historical novels *Sally Hemings* and *Hottentot Venus* both unfold in Paris.

Women played a major role on the culinary scene as well. Inez Cavanagh served up cornbread and blues at *Chez Inez* in the Latin Quarter from 1949 to 1952. Alvetia "Buttercup" Edwards, companion of jazz great Bud Powell, had a restaurant in Montparnasse during the 1960s. Alberta Wright, owner of *Jezebel's* in Manhattan, operated a restaurant of the same name in Paris from 1990 to 1994. And Sharon Morgan, an advertising executive from Chicago, ran a pan-African soul food restaurant called *Bojangles* from 2001 to 2003.

On the music scene, Joan Minor, Ferricia Fatia and Sylvia Howard are the artists to seek out if you seek the sultry notes of female jazz singers. Tony Award-

winner Dee Dee Bridgewater (*The Wiz*) has performed on the French stage for years, and still packs the house. Barbara Hendricks and Jessye Norman rule the classical arena. And Liz McComb and Manda Djinn are the gospel divas of Paris.

Up and coming artist Annice Ashley paints in her spare time. She has exhibited for three consecutive years at the art exposition sponsored by the University of Paris that showcases the talent of university employees from all fields.

Contemporary author Janet McDonald is enjoying great success in the aftermath of the publication of her autobiographical *Project Girl* and her young adult novels *Spellbound* and *Chill Wind*. Manda Djinn successfully brought a full scale production of her musical play, *Gospel Truth*, to the stage in 2003. Djinn wrote the dialogue and the lyrics for the play, and directed and starred in it as well.

Cordon Bleu graduate and pastry chef Klancy Miller develops and tests recipes for this prestigious institution. And Cordon Bleu-trained Shirley Monastier has launched a private cooking school and dinner service in a Paris suburb.

Patricia Laplante-Collins upholds the tradition of the Paris salon with weekly gatherings called *Paris Connections*. Each meeting involves a presentation by an artist, a writer or other creative

entrepreneur. Laplante-Collins occasionally sponsors African American Literary Soirées at a local anglophone bookstore as well. SISTERS, an Association of African Americans Women in France, is a non-profit organization that provides a network for African American women in Paris. Its members are women in business, science, government, translation, graphic arts and fashion.

Paris continues to be not only a popular overseas tourist destination, but also one for African Americans women who seek a new life in another culture. Its contemporary African Americans community continues to thrive, with women from all walks of life, a wide variety of professions, and an even wider variety of interests playing an integral role in its evolution.

*Monique Y. Wells is the co-owner of Discover Paris!—Personalized Itineraries for Independent Travelers, an African American-owned business. For more information, please visit her web site at www.discoverparis.net or contact her at info@discoverparis.net. Wells is also the author of *Food for the Soul—A Texas Expatriate Nurtures Her Culinary Roots in Paris* (www.parisfoodforthesoul.com) and co-author of *Paris Reflections: Walks Through African Americans Paris* (McDonald & Woodward Publishing, 2002; co-author: Christiann Anderson)*

A Spa in Paradise

By Ann-Marie Adams

Tucked away in a garden sprinkled with orchids on each side of a peach-colored cobblestone walkway is the Royal Plantation Ultra Spa, a part of the Royal Plantation Golf Resort hotel. Towering iron gates seclude the resort, which stretches one-half mile into the bustling square of Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

Inside the resort, the Royal Plantation Ultra Spa offers a multitude of different treatments including massage, facial, manicure, pedicure, skin care and body treatments. I tried two of them, the collagen facial and the Swedish massage.

I stepped out of the hot, humid air and into the spa's air-conditioned reception area and was immediately transported into serenity. I checked in. My therapist, Ernestine, instructed me to go to the locker area to change, take a shower and then sit in the sauna. A white, plush cotton robe and slippers awaited me in the locker room. Inside, the scent of

lemongrass, the motif for the Ultra Spa, filled my nostrils. The aromatherapy of the lemon grass was instantly therapeutic and calming. After 15 minutes, I exited the sauna, and Ernestine helped me as I slipped into my robe. She then escorted me to an intimate massage treatment room also perfumed with lemongrass.

My first treatment was a collagen facial. This is usually reserved for dry, older and wrinkled skin, but my therapist recommended it to soothe and replenish all the moisture that was sucked out of my 30-something skin from the plane and the sun. Ernestine explained that the treatment is excellent for all skin types.

The spa uses Pevonia products exclusively. Pevonia is a botanical skin care line that is noncomedogenic and contains no mineral oils or fillers. Over the next 30 minutes, Ernestine treated me to a cleansing, exfoliating, and a hydrating facial. She then added a silky-textured, creamy mask that left my face feeling soft and looking brighter. I especially liked the skin-lightening gel she applied on my skin

Continued on page 3

after she did a few extractions. Usually, these extractions tend to leave dark spots on skins of color. Not this time. It healed nicely as there were no signs of scarring.

My next treatment was the Swedish massage. For the 60-minute massage, Ernestine used gentle, rhythmic strokes that loosened my joints and lulled me into a deep state of relaxation. The Swedish massage helps relaxes muscles, relieves pain and increase circulation. The Swedish massage was fitting for me because I wanted a deep kneading in my back and shoulders to churn them into melted butter When it was

finished, I went back to the changing room and sipped a cup of peppermint tea.

At the Ultra Spa, you can spend the whole day, or drop in on your lunch hour break, or from a sun-soaked day at the beach. You don't have to book rooms at the all-inclusive hotel, a link in the Sands Resort chain, to use its exquisite, five-star spa.

Ann-Marie Adams is a freelance writer and editor based in Connecticut.

Latin American Heritage Month Celebrations

September is Hispanic Heritage Month. Since 1988, the US has recognized Latin citizens with a month of celebrations. Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (Mexico also achieved independence on September 16, and Chile on September 18). This year, recognition continues with events celebrating the rich history, culture and achievements of Latin Americans in the US. Here are a few listings. Be sure to check page 4 for more details of events surrounding Hispanic Heritage Month.

LA Zoo Latino Heritage Celebration

Los Angeles Zoo
Los Angeles, CA
September 1, 2003
www.lazoo.org

Latin American Heritage Celebration

Angeles Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
September 5, 2003
213.623.4352, ext 327

Salvadoran Parade and Festival

El Pueblo Historic Monument
Los Angeles, CA
September 7, 2003
www.cofesal.com

Mexican Independence Celebration

El Pueblo Historic Monument
Los Angeles, CA
September 12, 2003
www.cityofla.org/elp/olvera.html

Washington, DC Hispanic Heritage Month

Smithsonian Institute
Washington, DC.
September 15th-October 15, 2003.
www.latino.si.edu

Latin American Heritage Celebration

Various locations
Los Angeles, CA
Mid-September to Mid-October, 2003
www.latinoslacity.org

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Annual Gala

MCI Center
Washington, DC
September 24th, 2003.
chci.org/events/2003/gala2003

Latin Fever Ball: A Night in Old Havana

Atlanta, GA
October 25, 2003
404.638.1815.



2003 Calendar of Events • Calendar of Events 2003

EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

West Indian Day Parade

Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY
Labor Day Weekend
www.wiadca.com/events.htm
The country's most popular celebration of Caribbean pride and culture expressed in cultural floats representing a variety of Caribbean nations, music, dancing and an all around jumping good time. If you like Trinidad and Tobago's carnival, you will love this as well. Festival commences rain or shine.

Toronto International Film Festival

Toronto, Canada
September 4-12, 2003
www.e.bell.ca/filmfest
The Toronto International Film Festival is in its 28th year and is regarded as the second most important film festival in the world, second only to Cannes. The 2002 Festival featured 344 films from 50 countries, with 194 films making their international or North American premiere. Don't miss this festival.

An Evening of Contemporary Mexican Ballet

Taller Coreográfico de la UNAM
Museum of Latin American Art
Long Beach, CA
September 5-6, 2003
RSVP 562.437-1689
A unique evening of contemporary ballet with soloists from Mexico City's prestigious taller coreografico de la unam. The program will include Huapango and Danzon among other ballets.

African World Festival

Detroit, Michigan
September 5-7, 2003
www.maah-detroit.org
African World Festival, Detroit's largest ethnic festival, is held on Detroit's Riverfront at the Philip Hart Plaza. Attractions include the Taste of Africa Pavilion, entertainment lineup, strolling plaza performances, African Family Village and the Diaspora Marketplace.

Annual Black Family Reunion
National Mall
Washington, DC
September 6-7, 2003
www.ncnw.org/blackfamilyreunion.htm
The 18th Annual Black Family Reunion celebrates the African American family during two days of food, entertainment, health screenings, and much more. Free to the public.

Black Filmmaker Magazine International Film Festival

London, UK
September 5-18, 2003
blackfilmmakermag.com
The festival is a 10-day celebration of black world cinema drawing together established international filmmakers, popular film stars, writers, directors, industry executives, emerging artists and new audiences from the UK and around the world.

Urbanworld Film Festival

New York, NY
September 17-21, 2003
http://uwff.com
The five-day festival includes feature, documentary and short film screenings, as well as panel discussions, a live staged reading and the celebrated Actor's Spotlight.

Past festival features have included box office and award-winning hits: Rush Hour 2, O, The Original Kings of Comedy, The Best Man, Soul Food, Hoodlum, HBO Films' Introducing Dorothy Dandridge, How Stella Got Her Groove Back, Why Do Fools Fall in Love, Blue Streak, and more.

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institute
Washington, DC. September 15th-October 15, 2003
www.latino.si.edu
The Smithsonian honors Latin America by hosting a series of events surrounding the theme of Hispanic Heritage Month. Past celebrations of Hispanic pride at the Smithsonian featured a festiva musical showcasing Latin jazz, a Colombian art exhibit, food from several different Latin American countries, animal demonstrations and cultural dance performances in a carnival-esque setting.

Monterey Jazz Festival

Oakland, California
September 19-21, 2003
www.montereyjazzfestival.org
The 46 annual festival features smooth and classic jazz through both new and established performers including Nnena Freelon, the Herbie Hancock Quartet and the Crusaders featuring Randy Crawford.

World Music Festival

September 17-21, 2003
www.ci.chi.il.us/WorldMusic
The 5th annual festival showcases both traditional and contemporary music from many of the world's diverse cultures. Festival events include

a mix of free and ticketed concerts, live radio broadcasts and educational workshops presented in museums, parks, cultural centers, theaters, clubs and other venues throughout Chicago.

Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

Kenendy Center
Washington, DC
September 21, 2003
www.kennedycenter.org
Comprised of 15 of today's finest jazz soloists and ensemble players, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, led by Wynton Marsalis, features a vast selection of music including Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Thelonious Monk.

Ottmar Liebert

El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Center
El Paso Texas
September 23, 2003
800.351.6024.
Famed flamenco guitarist performing one night only during Hispanic Heritage Month.

Yo Yo Ma and the Assads

Kennedy Center
Washington, DC
September 23, 2003
www.kennedycenter.org
An evening of Latin American Music with cellist, Yo Yo Ma, celebrating the wonderful music of Brazil with some of Rio's leading musicians. Prepare for sambas and bossa novas, classicas and cords.

Congressional Black Caucus Weekend (CBC)

DC Convention Center
Washington, DC
September 24-27, 2003
cbcfinc.org
Annual conference of the Congressional Black Caucus



focused on legislative issues for African Americans. The weekend is also packed with independent social parties throughout the downtown Washington area.

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Annual Gala

MCI Center
Washington, DC
September 24th, 2003
chci.org/events/2003/gala2003
The annual Gala of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus is in its 26th year. The Gala, which began in 1977 as a small dinner, has grown over the years to become the most prestigious event commemorating Hispanic Heritage Month. With more than 2,000 guests in attendance, the Gala is one of the largest Latino events in the nation's capitol. This event is renowned for bringing together people of varied ethnic, professional, and geographical backgrounds to achieve a common goal: help Hispanic youth realize their dreams. Actor Mario Lopez will host the event preceded by entertainment and issues conference in Washington, DC.

OCTOBER

Latin Beat Films@El Museo del Barrio

Two New Films from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico
New York, NY
October 4, 2003

**RED PASSPORT/
PASAPORTE ROJO**
Albert Xavier,
Dominican Republic
October 4, 2003 at 3pm
The film tells the story of Fabio Reyes, a former counterfeit artist who after serving 10 years of a 25 year sentence wants nothing more than to rekindle his relationship with his long-lost daughter and live peacefully. But life isn't that fair and demons never die. As Fabio embarks on a roller-coaster ride of deception, lies, suspense and murder, nothing turns out to be as it seems. The film captures the truisms of a Dominican culture by shooting actual members of the community as extras and its players in authentic locations throughout NYC.

BAZOOKA
Mario Diaz, Puerto Rico
October 4, 2003 at 5pm
Arguably the best junior featherweight the world has

ever seen, Wilfredo Gomez was not simply a boxing hero in his native Puerto Rico, he was a cause célèbre. His charisma and boyish good looks made him the fodder of sports pages and gossip columns alike. He fought hard and lived fast. After his retirement, Wilfredo was diagnosed with a progressive neurological disorder. This gripping story documents the meteoric rise and sobering fall of a man whose fiercest battles were fought outside the ring.

Bermuda Jazz Festival

Bermuda
Date: October 8-12, 2003
www.bermudajazzfestival.com
Super weekend full of the world's best Jazz and R&B performing artists.

Sekou Sundiata

Kennedy Center
Washington, DC
October 25, 2003
www.kennedycenter.org
Harlem-born African American poet, Sekoy Sundiata performs *Blessing the Boats* depicting his battle with kidney disease and recovery with blues, funk and jazz infused into his poetry

NOVEMBER

Sweet Honey in the Rock

Watner Theater
Washington, DC
November 7, 2003
www.warnertheatre.com
Spiritual folk gospel group, Sweet Honey in the Rock, return to DC for their 30th anniversary show. You don't want to miss this one.

Herbie Hancock Quartet

Warner Theater
Washington, DC
November 8, 2003
www.warnertheatre.com
Legendary jazz artist, Herbie Hancock, graces Washington, DC with his infectious rhythms and melodies.

Current Exhibitions

Sankofa: Contemporary Culture and Ancestral Memory

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum, Hartford, CT.
Titles and dates are subject to change. 860. 278-2670
Through January 4, 2004
Sankofa defines the connection to African ancestral roots for African American. This exhibition explores and prominence of African aes-

thetics among many artists of the Black diaspora. Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Ed Johnetta Miller, Carolyn Mazloomi, Howardena Pindell, Alma Thomas, Lorna Simpson, and Carrie Mae Weems are among the contemporary artists whose works are juxtaposed with 19th- and early 20th-century photography, cultural ephemera, paintings and decorative art objects.

The Fabric of Moroccan Life

National Museum of African Art
Washington, DC
Through September 21, 2003
www.si.edu
Some of the finest and most important weavings

Mosaic International: Myths and Legends of the World

Old Port
Montreal, Canada
888.868.9999
Running through
October 6, 2003
A fabulous exhibition of plant and floral sculptures on display in Montreal's Old Port. Soome sculptures tower at 30 feet high and are animalistic and humanistic in form.

Of the People: the African American Experience

Museum of African American History
Detroit, Michigan
Ongoing Exhibition
www.maah-detroit.org
The Museum of African American History presents the largest exhibition on African American people ever created in this nation in our core exhibition gallery, which covers 16,000 square feet of space. Borrowing widely from some of the nation's leading archival collections as well as our own, our core exhibition reflects a 400-year survey of Black legacy and heritage.

Travel Deals

American Airlines

- New York to Chicago: \$198 round trip.
- Boston to Toronto: \$136 rount trip.

Continental Airlines

New York to Santa Domingo, DR:
\$199 round trip.

Jet Blue Airlines

- Buffalo/Rochester/NYC to New Orleans: \$79 each way. Purchase ticket by January 7, 2004.
- Travel between Atlanta and Oakland for \$99 each way. Purchase ticket by January 7, 2004.

•Orlando to Las Vegas \$59 each way. Purchase ticket by January 7, 2004.

Virgin Airlines

- Rio de Janeiro all-inclusive vacation packages starting at \$599 per person based on double occupancy.
- Round trip available airfare;
- 05 nights hotel accommodations;
- Breakfast daily;
- Hotel taxes and service charges; and
- Round trip private car transfers from airport to hotel. Visit Virgin at www.virgin-vacations.com. Book by December 4th.

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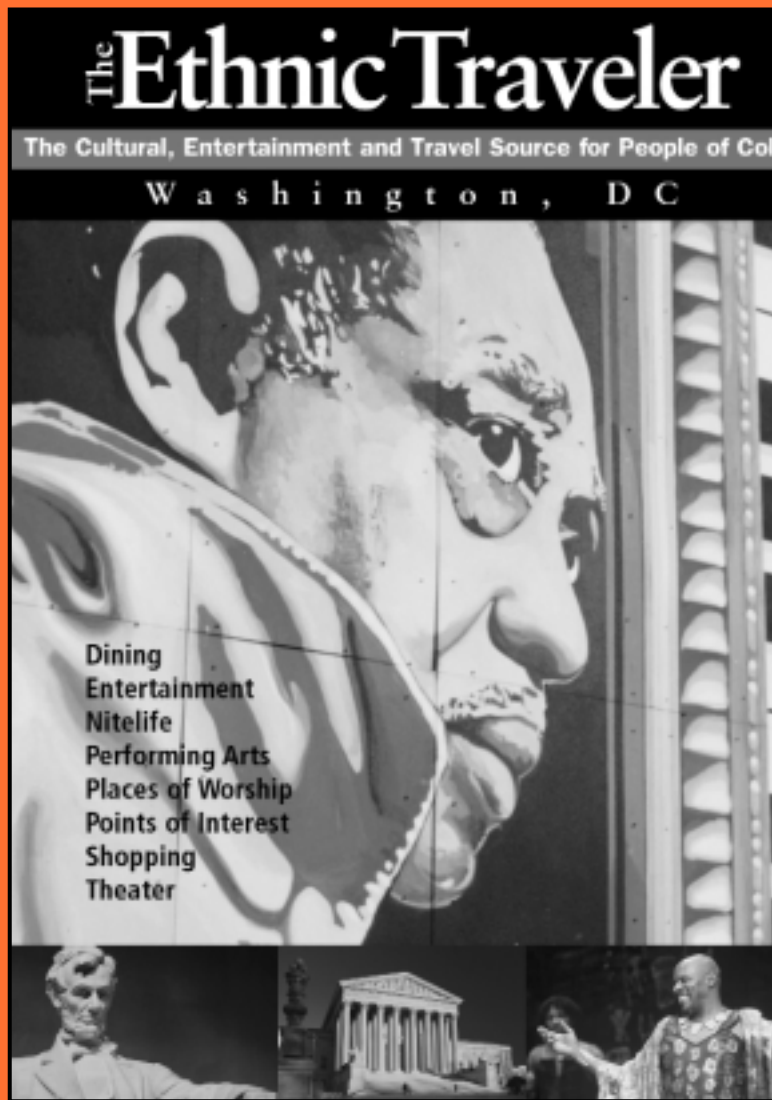
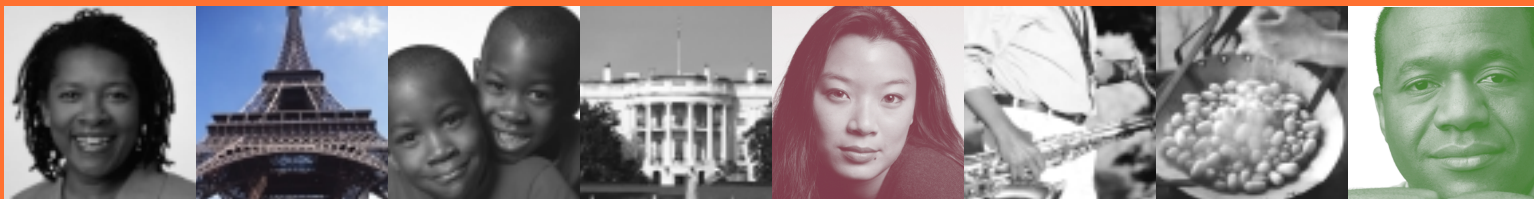
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Multicultural Tourism Development Alliance (MTDA, Inc.)
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The Only Travel Guide You Need!

As one of the most comprehensive minority-interest travel guide of its kind, The Ethnic Traveler caters to the dynamic tastes of people of color by providing culturally-based leisure and tourism information. What makes this guide series so unique is the wealth of information on entertainment, personal care services, spiritual institutions and historical points of interest relevant to people of color.

Order your copy of the Washington, DC edition of The Ethnic Traveler for African Americans and explore the beauty of the African American experience in Washington, DC. Purchase your copy of The Ethnic Traveler for African, Asian and/or Latin American travelers at a bookstore near you or by calling Orb Communications at 301.920.0423.