

The PassPorter Way: Philosophies and Practices

by Jennifer and Dave Marx, PassPorter Guidebooks Authors

PassPorter guidebooks are **independently published** by a family-owned and family-run small business. As journalists, we strive to present accurate information with a fair and balanced viewpoint. Our books are "unofficial," meaning we can call it as we see it.

We travel as our readers do. Although we enlist the help of local experts who live and breathe our destinations, we fly or drive long distances from our home base in Michigan, and stay in the hotels, giving us a perspective that no "local" can possess. We make all our own reservations and arrangements, sometimes with the help of a travel agent, but mostly we "shop direct." We pay our own way, so we're always looking for the best deal. We buy our own admission, pay for all our excursions, tours, and add-ons. We make our reservations through normal channels -- no VIP treatment, no media discounts or freebies. We need to know that our experience will be like yours and hasn't been enhanced for the sake of a better review. While we may be invited to visit a hotel, restaurant, or attraction as members of the media, we do not use those visits to evaluate matters like quality of service or level of amenities offered, as regular guests may not receive quite the same treatment.

PassPorter guidebooks are truly a community effort. Through our PassPorter.com web site, message board community, PassPorter News weekly e-newsletter, and many face-to-face encounters, we interact with you, our readers, year-round. Whether or not we join a particular discussion, we're always watching the message boards to see what's important to you, and we're thinking of how we can better address those issues in our books. You contribute in so many ways! These pages are filled with your tips and photos, and your suggestions and questions over the years have led to improvements large and small. Your reports on our message board make you our field researchers, witnessing and experiencing far more than we could ever manage on our own. Dozens of you, as Peer Reviewers, pore over each manuscript, and each manages to uncover items to be updated, clarified, or fixed that nobody else has managed to find. Few publishers, in any field, subject their manuscripts to this level of scrutiny. Unlike many travel books, which, once printed, are set aside until it's time to produce the next edition, we're immersed in our topic 365 days a year, following the news and rumors, and keeping in constant touch with you.

All of this makes PassPorter a uniquely interactive guidebook.

Together, we've created what we like to think of as "book 2.0" and we're proud to be innovators of a new generation of guidebooks that encourage collaboration. Here are some of the special interactive features in this edition:

PassPorter Photos: We truly believe that a picture tells a thousand words, so this edition is enhanced with more than 500 full-color photos! The majority of these photos were contributed by our amazing readers, as we feel a wider range of perspective makes a better guidebook. The photos that appear at the top of pages are "Photo Slices," because they give you just a slice of Disney -- they are intended to convey a general look, a feeling, or an idea. All of the photos were hand-picked from our vast personal collection and the online PassPorter Photo Archive. Want a closer look? If the *i* symbol and 4- to 5-digit code appears with the photo, go to <http://www.passporter.com/i> and look it up!

PassPorter Articles: You just can't fit everything in a guidebook, so when we have more to tell you, we lead you to one of our feature articles and/or photo collections on our web site. Just look in the lower right margin for the *i* icon accompanied by a keyword, visit <http://www.passporter.com/i> and enter the keyword (type it exactly as it appears). Note that multiple article keywords are separated by the | symbol.

About The Authors: [Jennifer and Dave Marx](#) are the founders of PassPorter Travel Press/MediaMarx, Inc. and the authors of dozens of bestselling books. They live in Ann Arbor, Michigan and frequently travel within the U.S. and abroad.

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