

## WorldBrowZING! – the bulletin

The WorldBrowser community's  
official bi-monthly update  
[www.worldbrowser.com](http://www.worldbrowser.com)

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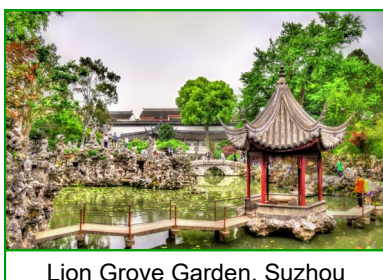


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- ♦ Travel Columnist Sharon King Hogue on SUZHOU, CHINA
- ♦ USING WORLDBROWSER TO BANISH MONEY-LOSING APOLOGIES.
- ♦ YOU MAY HAVE MISSED IT...

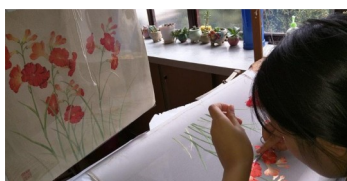
Once clients have visited China's top three cities, Shanghai/Beijing/Xi'an, there are great opportunities to steer them to the country's myriad outlying destinations, and Suzhou is a good place to start. Sixty miles from Shanghai, conveniently accessible by bus and high speed train, the city's gardens, canals, crafts, and culture satisfy a range of travel tastes.

Most notable are its iconic gardens, 19 are open to the public; the Lingering Park Garden and Humble Administrator's Garden are on UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites. Beyond plantings, their craggy rocks and pavilions create museum-like landscapes encapsulating Oriental scenes, views, and vistas. The Lion Grove Garden, at I.M. Pei's family home, lies near the extraordinary Suzhou Museum which the renowned architect designed so his hometown could display extraordinary ceramics, costumes, calligraphy amidst settings that blend indoors and out.



Lion Grove Garden, Suzhou

Craft seekers will appreciate local silk and embroideries. From trays of silk worms munching mulberry leaves to factory workers spinning and weaving, exhibits at the No.1 Silk Factory illustrate the silk refining process. Master



Suzhou Embroidery Research Institute

embroiderers at the Suzhou Embroidery Research Institute create fabric pictures so intricate that two totally different images can be portrayed on the front and back side of one piece of cloth.

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WorldBrowZING! Is published bi-monthly to keep WorldBrowser's users current on new content, system upgrades, ideas for system optimization, and provide articles on general and relevant interest associated with the site. Users' comments, suggestion, and content is sought and welcomed.

### WORLDBROWSER MEANS NEVER HAVING TO SAY YOU'RE SORRY...

...or "let me do some research and get back to you"  
...or lose sales you should be closing.

There's no telling how many times a day responses like these are heard in travel agencies, *globally* — with sales and commissions *lost* — simply because their users have never been *fully and properly* equipped for conducting business to meet their full potential.

If there is one almost obvious question that's never been answered — it's never even been *asked* — is 'if an airline reservationist has full access to her company's and partner carriers' flight schedules to be able to book and sell a ticket either for an easy or more involved itinerary — even on her first day on the job — why must a front line agent be left only with money-losing responses to customer inquiries when information isn't immediately accessible?

WorldBrowser is the industry award-winning website that addresses this question head-on for the first time, filling a void that's never been allowed to exist for *way* too long. It is the first resource to view the world as a giant department store of travel opportunities — sights, activities, adventures, experiences — all of which together constitute the true **inventory** of the travel professional. It's an inventory... it is what WorldBrowser's slogan calls it: *A Universe of Travel Ideas!*

Like retailers of any kind, travel agencies must have a *handle* on this inventory, a grasp of its depth, breadth, and variety, and where to locate at the point of inquiry anything that might interest an existing or prospective new customer. More than ever, the image of an agent whose on top of her/his game is one that's imperative to cultivate. WorldBrowser is created to support it, it's FREE and exclusive to the trade.

Investigate WorldBrowser today on its website [www.worldbrowser.com](http://www.worldbrowser.com). View the short introductory videos, and complete the excellent tutorial at Travel Agent Academy [www.travelagentacademy.com](http://www.travelagentacademy.com) to earn 2 continuing education credits from The Travel Institute. Your time is valuable; make WorldBrowser be the most important investment of time, and addition to your arsenal of selling tools, you've ever made!

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**Sharon King Hogue**, an original contributing editor for *Conde Nast Traveler*, is a contributing writer for *Global Traveler* magazine, [www.LuxuryWeb.com](http://www.LuxuryWeb.com), and, with this issue, joins *WorldBrowZing*. An editor-at-large of the *Cottages and Gardens* magazines, she also writes for [www.eflyer.com](http://www.eflyer.com) and the *New York Social Diary*.



## SUZHOU continued...

Strollers, cyclists, and joggers can exercise on trails along the Grand Canal waterways or rent paddle-boats in Panmen Scenic Area Park with its high arched bridge and Ruiguang pagoda, while adventurous clients can try a spin on one of the world's tallest Ferris wheels. Bustling pedestrian Pinjianlu Street's storefront shops offer bags, necklaces, scarves, figurines, lanterns and other souvenirs to take home. Culture seekers can enjoy colorful opera performances and floor shows with performers wearing vivid masks, wigs, and costumes recite jokes and folk tales to music.



Hotels surrounding picturesque Golden Chicken Lake provide luxurious ultra-modern accommodations with fitness facilities, pools, spas. Crab and other local delicacies are served in restaurants lining a causeway that crosses the lake offering waterside views of an historic city that should be a most for visitors.

## YOU MAY HAVE MISSED IT continued...

### TRULY OFF THE BEATEN TRACK — DEFINITELY FOR YOUR ADVENTURE SEEKERS...

#### Bamboo Train of Battambang, Cambodia

Located in the outskirts of town, the **bamboo train, or nori, is essentially a bamboo flatbed on wheels**, which is powered by a small motorcycle or tractor engine. The rail line stretches all the way down to the capital of Phnom Penh, but the tracks lie in complete abandon and disrepair, meaning the bamboo ride only runs **7 kilometers in length to a nearby village** and back.



#### Museum of Counterfeit Goods, Bangkok, Thailand

One of the most unusual and fascinating displays in Bangkok is at the Museum of Counterfeit Goods located at Tilleke & Gibbins law firm. Here you can learn more about the problems the country is facing when tackling forgery, and even learn how to spot a fake yourself. Sadly, Thailand is well known for the problems it has with counterfeit goods; you only have to walk along Silom Road to find fake DVDs, Khao San for imitation Ray-Bans or Nana for bogus pharmaceuticals. A trip here can change your opinion about the damage that counterfeit goods can inflict. [www.bangkok.com/magazine/counterfeit-museum.htm](http://www.bangkok.com/magazine/counterfeit-museum.htm)

## YOU MAY HAVE MISSED IT...

This is a new feature of WorldBrowZING. While there will always be more things than one can possibly absorb at any given time, keeping our eye on the consumer press often turns up attractive options that may have passed under the radar of your busy travel professional's eyes. We'll include a selection of these, both near and far, in every issue.

This issue's selections are places featured in recent issues of THE WEEK.

#### Totoco Eco-Lodge (\$), Isla de Ometepe, Nicaragua (Feb 24). **Get there before the crowds do.**

*With lush jungles, nearly empty beaches, and mansion-filled colonial towns, the Central American nation is primed to be discovered by foreign travelers looking for an alternative to pricier Costa Rica next door.* The Eco-Lodge is near the summit of the island's inactive volcano. ([totoco.com.ni](http://totoco.com.ni)) Lodges starting at \$99.



#### The Silo (\$\$\$). Cape Town, South Africa (Feb 24)

A former grain tower, and once the country's tallest building, converted into a 28-room boutique property on the Victoria and Albert Waterfront...atop a major new museum for contemporary art! The rooms have 18-foot windows. Worth a stop at the champagne bar with its glass swimming pool and fantastic views. Rooms begin at USD\$872.



**Alaska Flying Safari.** Although Alaska contains the largest protected wilderness on earth, most adventurers never get past overcrowded Denali or, at best, McCarthy. The Wrangell Mountains are notoriously dangerous and difficult to navigate on foot, even in summer. But, with the Claus family's celebrated gift for landing gently in wild places, you can touch this wilderness. Get the full story at



[www.ultimathulelodge.com/alaska-wilderness-adventures/flightseeing](http://www.ultimathulelodge.com/alaska-wilderness-adventures/flightseeing)



#### Hawaii: North shore of Kauai

Called Hawaii's 'last bastion of undiscovered authenticity' by Meredith Bryan in Conde Nast Traveler. No national chain stores or buildings taller than a coconut tree (by law in Kauai). Great for surfing, hiking, beaches, and a ginger margarita on the terrace of Princeville's grand St. Regis. Complete information at North Shore's website. [www.kauai.com/north-shore](http://www.kauai.com/north-shore)

