

# Los Angeles Times

Dear Travel Writer:

Welcome to the cornerstone of what we do.

What follows is the most important information contained in these several pages. The Los Angeles Times values honesty, fairness and truth. We understand the difficulties of the profession, but we also know that our reputation—and yours—rests on ensuring that our readers receive the best information possible.

These guidelines are from our own code of ethics, constructed over many months and with much care.

## **The Los Angeles Times Ethics Guidelines for Freelance Writers**

***The work of freelance journalists appears in our paper and on our website alongside staff-produced photos, articles and graphics. Freelancers must therefore approach their work without conflicts and must adhere to the same standards of professionalism that The Times requires of its own staff. It is the responsibility of assigning editors to inquire about a freelancer's potential conflicts of interest before making an assignment.***

***Conflict-of-interest provisions may apply differently to contributors to the Op-Ed pages. They are expected to bring institutional and personal perspectives to their work. They are not expected to avoid conflicts, but they are expected to disclose them.***

More information about our expectations follows. If you have any questions, please call me or e-mail me.

Thank you again for your interest in and articles submitted to the Los Angeles Times.

Sincerely,

Catharine M. Hamm  
Travel editor

**Guidelines for submitting manuscripts to the Los Angeles Times Travel section:**

With the increasing power of the Internet, it *is* a small world after all. We are awash in information: guidebooks, blogs, chat rooms, travel websites, maps etc.

The Travel section is looking for bold, original travel features that tell a great story and are strong character-driven or first-person narratives--the more experiential the better. Stories should be sophisticated, compelling, complete and written with flair. They should evoke a strong sense of place (sounds, colors, smells, tastes), time (when did you go?), expertise and personal perspective, and they should be written with a precise story angle in mind. We are not looking for everything you need to know about Shanghai; we are looking for the city from the vantage of its architecture or its fine arts. Find a salient angle in your story, be selective with your descriptions and historical facts and spin a tale that tells of a unique experience that can be replicated. We want stories that will make readers get out of their chairs and go -- or at least enjoy the ride from their armchairs. We also want destination stories that reflect travel trends, stories that put us out ahead of the curve. Destinations will vary according to our needs, but stories should have a compelling reason to be told, an “of-the-moment” quality that make them relevant rather just an “I went to Italy and did this, then I did this.”

In these stories, we require an equal emphasis—in length and in scope—on the Guidebooks sidebar that accompanies each destination feature. This nuts and bolts information is as important to readers as the ride you take them on. Be creative and be detailed about attractions, hotels, restaurants etc.

Above all, be honest. Not every trip goes well. We know that not all hotels are great and that meals are sometimes lousy. We know that tour guides aren't equally well-versed and that weather can be bad. And, more important, our readers know it too because they are travelers. So if something unpleasant happens, that's part of the story, although this isn't supposed to be carpfest either.

**Freelancers must approach their work and travel arrangements without conflicts and must adhere to the same standards of professionalism that The Times requires of its staff. The Travel section will not consider pieces written about trips that have been subsidized in any way (even if part of a trip was not comped). We may ask for receipts.**

**Completed stories are considered on speculation only. Stories must be based on trips taken within the previous two years. To be considered, the story may not have run elsewhere or be pending publication elsewhere.**

**For a response or the return of slides, photos or discs, a self-addressed, stamped envelope is mandatory.**

Length is 1,300 words for destination stories. Guidebooks (see below) are about 500 to 700 words.

We prefer stories submitted by e-mail. We will reply to queries but must see a manuscript first, then revised to our specifications, before acceptance.

Photos are not a prerequisite for publication, but their presence and quality can weigh in a decision to buy an article. We prefer good-quality digital photos to color slides or color prints (see attached for photo requirements). Do not send originals. Do not send digital photos to an editor's personal e-mail because they will crash our e-mail system. Send instead to [travel.photo@latimes.com](mailto:travel.photo@latimes.com). If you wish a response or the return of slides, photographs or discs, a self-addressed, stamped envelope with adequate postage is mandatory.

We pay \$350 to \$800 on publication for first North American rights, depending on content, quality and where the story is played. We also pay extra for any photos we use, usually \$75 to \$250 per image. Photos MUST have detailed captions and credits, preferably on a separate sheet.

Send manuscripts to: by e-mail, [Travel@latimes.com](mailto:Travel@latimes.com); by snail mail: Submissions Desk, Travel, Los Angeles Times, 202 W. First St., Los Angeles, CA 90012. Include a daytime telephone number and e-mail address. If you would like a response, a self-addressed, stamped envelope is mandatory.

Because of the number of manuscripts we receive, we cannot guarantee a response time. We cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited material.

Thank you for your interest in the Los Angeles Times Travel section.

## GUIDEBOOK REQUIREMENTS

All guidebooks must have the following components:

- **The Best Way:** Tell the reader the best way to get there. (“Fly into Los Angeles and drive to Ventura, about 60 miles north..”) We will supply airfare information, but you must supply specialized information, such as train or bus fares and automobile routes.
- **Attractions:** What are the top things to see or do? What might you miss unless you’re an insider? These can include museums, parks, hikes, festivals, sightseeing tours, shopping etc. Think broadly about what you would recommend—not just what a travel guide would say. Make sure you include addresses, phone numbers, websites, hours, and admission prices.
- **Where to stay:** Names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, Internet addresses and current prices for recommended lodgings (based on a room for two). If you stay in only one place, it’s important to check out other accommodations that you might recommend. We need at least three hotels.
- **Where to eat:** Restaurant information should also include addresses, phones and Internet addresses (useful mostly if they have menu information) and a range of prices for entrees, low to high. We need at least three restaurants.
- **To learn more:** The guidebook should include names, addresses and phone numbers for sources of more information on the destination and any other specifics (tour operators etc.) appropriate to the story.

SAMPLE GUIDEBOOKS (This happens to be Brattleboro, Vt.)

**The best way:** The nearest major airport is Bradley International Field near Hartford, Conn., about 90 minutes’ drive south. There are daily connecting flights (stop, change of plane) from LAX on American, Continental, Delta, Northwest, TWA, United and USAir. Restricted round-trip fares begin at \$560.

Car rentals from most major agencies are available at the airport. It’s a 90-minute drive north on Interstate 91 to Brattleboro, at Vermont Exit 2 just past the Massachusetts state line.

Amtrak trains stop at Brattleboro once daily northbound, at 3:15 a.m., and one southbound, at 12:15 p.m., on their route between Washington, D.C., and Montreal.

**Where to stay:** Latchis Hotel, 50 Main St., Brattleboro, VT 05301; (802) 254-6300 or (800) 555-5555, fax (802) 555-5556, [www.latchishotel.com](http://www.latchishotel.com). The newly renovated hotel offers rooms and suites in an Art Deco atmosphere. Doubles begin at \$125.

Naulakha, 425 E. Lansing Drive, Brattleboro, VT 05031; (802) 555-5555 or (800) 555-5556, fax (802) 555-5557, [www.naulakha.com](http://www.naulakha.com). This is the former Rudyard Kipling home, and rooms can be rented for a week. Rates for a double begin at \$225.

The Kellington, 350 E. Marian St., Brattleboro, VT 05031; (802) 555-5555 or (800) 555-5555, fax (802) 555-5557, [www.thekellington.com](http://www.thekellington.com). This is a 15-room hotel set in a Queen Anne home. Each room has a fireplace; breakfast is included. Doubles begin at \$150.

The Next One Goes Here, 350 E. Main St., Brattleboro, VT 05031; (802) 555-5555 or (800) 555-5555, fax (802) 555-5557, [www.thekellington.com](http://www.thekellington.com). This is a 15-room hotel set in a Queen Anne home. Each room has a fireplace; breakfast is included. Doubles begin at \$150.

The Next One Goes Here, 350 E. Main St., Brattleboro, VT 05031; (802) 555-5555 or (800) 555-5555, fax (802) 555-5557, [www.thekellington.com](http://www.thekellington.com). This is a 15-room hotel set in a Queen Anne home. Each room has a fireplace; breakfast is included. Doubles begin at \$150.

For a handbook describing all Landmark Trust properties including Naulakha, contact Landmark Trust, 28 Birge St., Brattleboro, VT 05301; (802) 555-5555 or (800) 848-3747, fax (802) 555-5556, [www.landmarktrust.com](http://www.landmarktrust.com). The handbook costs \$18.50.

The Brattleboro area abounds with inns and bed and breakfasts, and a strip of inexpensive motels follows U.S. 5 north of town. For information, call (802) 555-5555, fax (802) 555-5555 or [www.wheretostay.com](http://www.wheretostay.com).

### **Where to eat:**

The Common Ground, 25 Elliot St.; (802) 257-0855, [www.commonground.com](http://www.commonground.com). This is Brattleboro's unique vegetarian restaurant. Entrees run about \$13-\$17.

Peter Havens, 32 Elliot St., (802) 257-3333, [www.peterhavens.com](http://www.peterhavens.com). It features Continental cuisine, with the accent on seafood. Entrees run about \$30-\$45.

In the Latchis Hotel are the Latchis Grill, (802) 254-4747, [www.latchisgrille.com](http://www.latchisgrille.com), serving International cuisine (entrees \$25-\$45), and the Windham Brewery (same phone), a small-scale brewery serving ales, porters, lagers and specialty brews.

The Next One Goes Here, 32 Elliot St., (802) 257-3333, [www.peterhavens.com](http://www.peterhavens.com). It features Continental cuisine, with the accent on seafood. Entrees run about \$30-\$45.

The Next One Goes Here, 32 Elliot St., (802) 257-3333, [www.peterhavens.com](http://www.peterhavens.com). It features Continental cuisine, with the accent on seafood. Entrees run about \$30-\$45.

### **What to see:**

The Briley Historic Mansion, 345 S. Main St., Brattleboro, VT 09321; (802) 444-1212, [www.brileymansion.com](http://www.brileymansion.com). Beautifully restored Victorian with an immense collection of invalid sippers (said to be the best in the country). Admission \$15. Open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily.

Jane's Toy Box, 234 S. Main St., Brattleboro, VT 04544; (802) 444-4444, [www.janestoybox.com](http://www.janestoybox.com). The premiere collection of antique toys, dating to the 1750s, in the United States. If you've never seen the original Quaxmaster pull-along duck (circa 1803) or the Crying Cora baby doll (1863), this is the place. Admission \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$6 for children 6-12. Younger than 6 admitted free. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

Brattleboro Medical Museum & Curiosities, 2333 S. Main St., Brattleboro, VT 04544; (802) 444-4444, [www.brattleboromedicalmuseum.com](http://www.brattleboromedicalmuseum.com). Full of the tools of the trade, many of which date to the Middle Ages and brought to this country with the first settlers. Admission \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$6 for children 6-12. Younger than 6 admitted free. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

Brattleboro County Museum, 445 S. Main St., Brattleboro, VT 04544; (802) 444-4444, [www.brattleboromuseum.com](http://www.brattleboromuseum.com). Traces the history from early English settlers to the current wave of artists who now populate the county. Admission \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$6 for children 6-12. Younger than 6 admitted free. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

Whoopsie Daisy Animal Farm, 444 S. Main St., Brattleboro VT 04544; (802) 444-4444, [www.whoopsiedaisyfarm.com](http://www.whoopsiedaisyfarm.com). A petting farm for kids that also allows them to milk goats and cows, then shows how cheese is made. Admission \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$6 for children 6-12. Younger than 6 admitted free. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

**To learn more:**

The Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce, 180 Main St., Box B, Brattleboro VT 05301; (802) 254-4565, fax (802) 254-4565, [www.brattleboro.com](http://www.brattleboro.com).

—Your Name Here

Here's an example of an international guidebook. Note the category for telephones. This also contains information on getting around and organized tours, which should be used if these are an issue for the traveler. If you're doing a story on Valencia, Spain, for example, you probably don't need a "getting around" category. If you're uncertain, check with an editor or include it.

**The best way:**

From LAX, Qantas has connecting service (several changes of planes) to Perth. Restricted round-trip fares begin at \$2,236.95.

**Telephones:**

To call the numbers below from the U.S., dial 011 (the international dialing code), 61 (country code for Australia), 8 (the area code) and the local number.

**Getting around:**

Independent travel requires a sturdy four-wheel-drive vehicle, plenty of camping gear and some outback experience. Four-wheel-drives can be rented from:

Hertz, 40 Frederick St., Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-1428, fax 9193-5452, [www.hertz.com](http://www.hertz.com), from \$99 per day.

Britz Rentals, 10 Livingstone St., Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-2647, fax 9192-2648, [www.britz.com](http://www.britz.com), from \$85 per day with unlimited mileage.

**Organized tours:**

Kimberley Dreams, P.O. Box 37070, Winnellie, Northern Territory 0821; 8942-0971, fax 8942-0974, [www.kimberleys.com.au](http://www.kimberleys.com.au), has nine- to 13-day tours that depart from Broome or Darwin. Special-interest and educational tours ranging from aboriginal culture and art to scenic beauty. All-inclusive camping tours start at \$113 per person, per day; homestead stays, \$170.

Wilderness 4WD Adventures, P.O. Box 2071, Palmerston, Northern Territory 0831; 8941-2161, fax 8942-3377, [www.wildernessadventures.com.au](http://www.wildernessadventures.com.au), runs all-inclusive nine-day tours from \$761 per person.

Kimberley Wilderness Adventures, P.O. Box 2046, Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-5741, fax 9192-5761, [www.kimberleywilderness.com.au](http://www.kimberleywilderness.com.au). All-inclusive eight-day Gibb River Road camping tour costs \$1,238 per person, double.

### **Where to stay:**

Campsites are all along the Gibb River Road. Those with facilities, such as Bell Gorge and Wandjina Gorge, charge about \$5 per person. Others, such as Galvan Gorge and Mitchell Falls, are free but undeveloped.

Mt. Hart Wilderness Lodge, P.O. Box 653, Derby, Western Australia 6728; 9191-4645, fax 9191-7836, [www.mthart.com.au](http://www.mthart.com.au). Rate of \$85 per person, double, includes dinner and breakfast.

Beverly Springs Station, P.O. Box 691, Derby, Western Australia 6728; 9191-4646, fax 9191-7878. Rate \$71 per person, with dinner and breakfast; children younger than 10 free. Camping \$5.65.

El Questro Homestead, P.O. Box 909, Kununurra, Western Australia 6743; 9169-1777, fax 9169-1383, [www.elquestro.com.au](http://www.elquestro.com.au). This million-acre cattle station, set in some of the Kimberley's most beautiful scenery, has tent cabins from \$75 per room to \$480 (including meals) per person for a suite. The less wealthy can camp for \$7 per person.

Sleep it Simple, P.O. Box 2046, Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-5741, fax 9192-5761, [www.sleepitsimple.com.au](http://www.sleepitsimple.com.au). All-inclusive eight-day stay costs \$1,145 per person, based on double occupancy.

### **Where to eat:**

The Kimberly Common Ground, 25 Elliot St.; Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-5741, [www.commonground.com](http://www.commonground.com). This is Kimberly's unique vegetarian restaurant. Entrees run about \$13-\$17.

Peter Havens, 32 Elliot St., Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-5741, [www.peterhavens.com](http://www.peterhavens.com). It features Continental cuisine, with the accent on seafood. Entrees run about \$30-\$45.

The Next One Goes Here, 32 Elliot St., 32 Elliot St., Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-5741, [www.peterhavens.com](http://www.peterhavens.com). It features Continental cuisine, with the accent on seafood. Entrees run about \$30-\$45.

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### **What to see:**

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Broome Museum, 445 S. Main St., Broome, Western Australia 6725; 9192-5741, [www.broommuseum.com](http://www.broommuseum.com). Traces the history from early English settlers to the current wave of artists who now populate the county. Admission \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$6 for children 6-12. Younger than 6 admitted free. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

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### **To learn more:**

Australian Tourist Commission, 2049 Century Park East, Suite 1920, Los Angeles, CA 90067; (800) 369-6863, fax (661) 775-4448, [www.australia.com](http://www.australia.com).

--Your Name Here



## Standing features and destinations

The Travel section seeks stories with a special focus on regional destinations that resonate with Southern California readers: Hawaii, California, Nevada and Mexico, stories as diverse and entertaining as the region itself. Maybe it's a short about a spa or an in-depth exploration of a destination. We want to recommend, with equal authority, quick urban getaways and remote treks into the wilderness. Your story may focus on a three-day weekend trip to British Columbia in Canada, for example, or it may be thematic, such as fly-fishing for beginners in the Sierra or five great day hikes outside Las Vegas. We particularly value information about new lodgings, attractions, dining or emerging neighborhoods. The section is equally committed to mining great destinations worldwide that have a timely reason to be featured.

Payments for other rotating features are below.

**Page 3:** This feature may be a destination or a trend, a story whose angle will be "sliced thin" and deftly written. Maybe it's the seven best places to get hot chocolate in Paris or five new spas that will open in New Mexico, or it's the proliferation of upscale hostels in Asia. Think broadly but narrow the topic. It can even be a humorous chart-style analysis of travel packages, hotel amenities or anything else that lends itself to side-by-side comparison. Need at least four subjects. 800 words. Fee: \$500.

**Need to Know:** Short briefs that aren't newsy but are trendy. What are the hottest sunglasses in the south of France this year? What's the newest resort to offer extreme skiing packages? What's the latest carry-on must-have? 150 words. \$75

**Las Vegas:** This story should dazzle and speak with authority. Whether it's the hottest place to play blackjack or the best hotel pools to break in to, each column should be written almost from an insider perspective. We're not looking for broad stories that cover well-trod turf; we want smart updates on Sin City—with attitude. 800 words. \$500.

**Getting paid:** Payment will be submitted automatically; you generally do not need to send an invoice. Photos are not paid out of the editorial department, and the photo procedure does require an invoice (see below).

## PHOTO GUIDELINES

From Richard Derk, Los Angeles Times Photo Editor/Photographer:

**Specs:** You want at least a 5 mg capability; 6-8 is better, for most publications.

**JPEG or TIFF?** JPEG quality should be high and baseline (“standard”) or TIFF option. Submit images via CD, DVD or e-mail. If you e-mail the images, please send them to [travel.photo@latimes.com](mailto:travel.photo@latimes.com). Size images at least 6x9 inches (8 x 10 or larger preferred) again, in size at 200 dpi or higher. CDs and DVDs will not be returned. While as desirable negatives or slides can be used, and while all care will be exercised, we will not be responsible for loss or damage to such.

**How to shoot:** You need to shoot digital as you would slides. Exposure is critical. Fill the frame with your visual information. The more you have to crop, especially with digital, the less quality you will have. Send a variety of images. Horizontals and vertical, scenes, scenes with PEOPLE, close ups of details.

**What not to do:** You may not alter the image. Period. No subtracting trees, no adding sky. If you couldn't do it in the darkroom, don't do it with Photoshop.

**Submitting photos:** Complete captions and credit information with your e-mail and phone contact for questions are required. **DO NOT SUBMIT CAPTION-LESS work.** If you are not fluent in PhotoShop, you can submit a word document with captions. Who, what where, when, why and how are the questions to answer. The basic info along with some feeling about the place, the mood of the place etc. can help sell or place your image. Please include your name and phone number. Your images are eligible for use on LATIMES.COM. Print Section published images will be used at no additional cost. Website only images will be paid at \$50 per image with no time limit on web use. Any future print use would receive additional payment.

Your images will not be sold or distributed to any other parties. Submission of your images to the Los Angeles Times will indicate your agreement to all terms listed.

Space Rates are: all in US dollars

Dominant cover image - \$350

Other cover use - \$100

Inside use: 1 column - \$25

2 column - \$75

3 column - \$175

Larger than 3 columns - \$250

**Transmitting photos:** DSL or Cable modem will allow you to send files over the Internet. Anything else is too slow. It will lose the signal and send incomplete images.

**Where:** Do not send to an editor's individual mailbox. You can send to travel@latimes.com or travel.photo@latimes.com.

**Payment:** Please e-mail me after the photographs run so I can give you an invoice amount.

**Questions?** Feel free to call or e-mail as desired. Richard Derk, 800-528-4637, Ext. 77907.

Richard Derk  
Travel Photo Editor/Los Angeles Times  
202 W. First St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
213.237.7907

## CAPTION GUIDELINES

Captions, or cutlines, should add content/context to the photograph, not repeat what's evident from looking at it.

But don't project feelings onto people or creatures. If the person says how he or she feels and it's worthy, use this as a quote. Conduct a short interview with your subjects. The more information you have to use, the better the caption will be.

Avoid clichés. What would never run in a story should not be written in a cutline. If you take your work seriously, don't write a silly cutline or corny catch-phrase.

If something seems unusual, or not quite right in the setting, try to get more information—example: a bandage on an elderly man's head.

Photo credit must be included, even with handout photos. If there is no photographer, then provide the source of the photo (publisher, company that provided the photograph etc.). Photos may be used in print or on the web.

## CAPTION WRITING: The 5 W's

### First sentence:

1. DATELINE (IN ALL CAPS): CITY, STATE - DATE: (Example: BURBANK, CA - OCTOBER 18, 2008)
2. Describe the picture in the present tense using an "action" verb that best describes what the person is doing.

Examples: gestures, speaks to, waves to, walks, walks with, accompanies, arrives, arrives with, smiles for the camera, poses for photographers, brandishes and so on. Avoid using non-action verbs such as "is seen."

3. Structure the first sentence in this order: Who, what, when and where.

### WHO:

The subject: Always use full names and titles the first time you refer to someone; if you name him or her again in the second sentence, you do not have to repeat the full title. (Use "unidentified" and NOT "anonymous" to describe someone you haven't identified.)

### WHAT:

The action taking place (the verb and the objects of its actions)

### WHEN:

The date the picture was made. Do not use the day of the week. Example: October 18, 2003

### WHERE:

The place, city and state (or city and country if outside the U.S.)

### Second Sentence:

1. This is the "WHY" sentence.
2. This sentence gives context to the picture and may explain why it is important.
3. Sometimes it's just the latest news about the subject with no relation to the image itself.

Sample Captions:

LOS ANGELES, CA - JULY 16, 2008: Martha Stewart stands outside Federal Court after her sentencing hearing July 16, 2008 in Los Angeles. Stewart was sentenced to five months in federal prison, two years probation and \$30, 000 in fines. (John Smith/Los Angeles Times)

LOS ANGELES, CA - JULY 21, 2008: Los Angeles Police Officer Nazik Halburian, right, receives a report on a stolen car from John Smith July 21, 2008 in Los Angeles. The city controller last month recommended that more than 400 desk jobs now assigned to sworn LAPD officers be performed by cheaper civilian clerks. (John Smith/Los Angeles Times)

SANDY, UT - APRIL 19, 2008: Alexis Witt holds her son Noah, right, and daughter Hannah at home in Sandy, UT on April 19, 2008. Witt's husband, Army Staff Sgt. Dean Witt, died after receiving questionable medical care at a military hospital. (John Smith/Los Angeles Times)

AND FINALLY...

Check names and titles with subjects and mark with a CQ, which means "correct as quoted."

Do not guess on a name or any other fact. If possible, check with the subject and be careful. Name errors are among the most common.

Make each caption specific to that image.

-Use spell check.