

News & Notes From Around the World



THIS MONTH

A Portuguese term, *saudades*, can be roughly translated as a recurring sense of longing, homesickness, and nostalgia. Many Portuguese consider it the defining characteristic of their nation, and it finds its most eloquent expression in the poignant vocals of *fado*—a traditional musical form still widespread in Portugal.

When Portugal works its way under your skin, it's easy to understand why *saudades* is so common. Portugal is a clear-cut case of "once bitten, forever smitten," and the laments of generations of travelers separated from its wonders are a natural reaction worthy of song.

The clean scent of eucalyptus groves in the high forests of the interior gives way to the sea-tang of wave-scrubbed Atlantic beaches along its mighty ocean coastline. Medieval villages perch atop steep escarpments, and deep rivers snake through vineyards and rustling woodland. Portugal's a magical place.

The fact that it's Western Europe's most affordable destination is a happy bonus, too. Read more on page 20.



An emblem of wild merriment, King Puck stands proud in Killorglin.

All Hail King Puck in Ireland

Puck Fair in southwest Ireland features three days of carnival merriment and the grand coronation of King Puck—a goat. Come rain or shine, the sleepy village of Killorglin awakens in late summer as one of its own gets the royal treatment. Last year's rendition saw a deluge of showers, but that didn't dampen the spirits of this beloved festival.

Situated on the banks of the River Laune and along the fabled Ring of Kerry, Killorglin began hosting the pageant in 1613 following a charter granted by King James I of England. Puck Fair, or *Aonach an Phoic* in Gaelic (meaning "Fair of the He-Goat") also draws inspiration from the pre-Christian, pagan festival of Lughnasa that consecrates the beginning of harvest sea-

son with a goat symbolizing fertility. Another version of the story, albeit an apocryphal one, immortalizes the heroic beast for alerting local citizens about an invasion led by Oliver Cromwell and his army of "Roundheads."

Regardless of the exact origins, a local mountain goat is captured three weeks before the start of the yearly celebration and brought into Killorglin. He's then crowned and placed on a 50-foot platform in the town center, where the four-legged liege watches over his loyal subjects, who honor him with a feast and entertainment below. Over the years, animal rights activists have expressed concern over the welfare of the goat. Fair organizers insist that the animal is checked regularly by independent veterinarians, using strict protocols before returning him to the wild.—*Christopher Warner*

Learn more about Ireland at IntLiving.com/Eire

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NOTES FROM IL CORRESPONDENTS



Suzan Haskins

Healthcare costs in some of the most popular overseas retirement destinations can be one-fifth the cost of similar treatments and procedures in the U.S. Dr. Jesus Sanchez is my go-to dentist in Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico. He's thorough, gentle, uses state-of-the-art technology, and speaks perfect English. You can contact him at YucatanDental.com.

Jason Holland

On Highway 307, north of Tulum, Mexico, watch for the "Jashita Hotel" sign. Turn down the dirt road toward the beach, then turn right and go until it ends. You're on Soliman Bay, a graceful arc of white sand lined with palm trees. Snorkel in the clear waters; lounge in a hammock; or enjoy a cold drink and lobster from Chamico's, a local institution.



LEASE A RENAULT

If you're planning a trip to Europe this year, Renault's Eurodrive product may be an attractive alternative to standard car rental. The program allows non-Europeans to lease a new car from their range, at any one of 29 delivery and drop-off locations within Europe.

Vehicles are fully insured, come with unlimited mileage, and can be returned to a different drop-off point at no extra charge. For stays over, say, 60 days, it's a more affordable option than traditional rental.