

TRAVEL NOTEBOOK

New rides let you coast into summer

Getting geared up for summer amusement parks? Here are a few of this year's new attractions:

◆ **Maverick**, Cedar Point's 17th roller coaster, makes its debut May 12 at the Sandusky, Ohio, park. The 4,455-foot-long coaster starts with a 105-foot hill, then drops at a 95-degree angle — yes, 95 — and finishes with eight "airtime"-filled hills, three inversions and a second launch through a dark tunnel at 70 mph. Info: (419) 627-2350 or www.cedarpoint.com.

◆ **Kings Island**, north of Cincinnati, will unleash its 14th roller coaster, Firehawk, on Memorial Day weekend. The flying coaster propels riders 115 feet in the air and through five inversions at speeds of more than 50 mph. Info: (800) 288-0808 or www.pki.com.

◆ **Deluge**, a four-person raft ride with big drops and climbs, opens May 26 at Six Flags Splashwater Kingdom in Louisville. The raft is propelled by a new technology that uses water, magnets and gravity. Info: (800) 727-3267 or www.sixflags.com/parks/kentuckykingdom.

◆ **Holiday World & Splashin' Safari** in Santa

Claus, Ind., unveils the Bakuli water attraction May 14. Bakuli takes a four-person raft from seven stories high, through a curving steep tunnel before it swirls through a huge bowl and drops into one last tunnel. Info: (877) 463-2645 or www.holidayworld.com.

Tuscany for 12

For \$150 a night, you can enjoy a villa in Tuscany — you and 11 other guests, that is. The "Beat the Heat and Busy Crowds of Summer" package at the Villa la Torre in Chianti accommodates 12 guests between April 14 and May 19. Total cost: \$12,600 per week.

The package includes a welcome dinner with two bottles of estate wine, daily cleaning, a daily continental breakfast, a private tour of the owner's wine estate, the services of Homebase Abroad's concierge, and up to six complimentary half-liters of the owner's olive oil.

Villa la Torre is within 50 minutes of Cortona, Siena and Lucca. Call (781) 545-5112, or log on to www.homebaseabroad.com for booking information.

All Center honored

The Muhammad Ali Center in Louisville was honored by Pathfinders Travel magazine in its January/February 2007 issue as the "best place to see a museum that touches the heart and soul."

The \$75 million Muhammad Ali Center is a cultural and educational center that traces Ali's life through an interactive trip from his boxing career to his global humanitarianism. It was ranked with Cincinnati's Freedom Center, Baltimore's Great Blacks in Wax Museum and Nelson Mandela's Museum in South Africa.

For more information about the Muhammad Ali Center and other Louisville attractions visit www.gotolouisville.com.

Smarter Travel

From iPods to Game Boys to cell phones, electronic gadgets need to be charged to remain useful on the road. The Power Station Traveller can charge up to three small portable devices simultaneously. There's no clutter associated with charger cords because a hidden power strip secures the devices with sliding dividers and keeps the cords tucked inside. Available in black and gray for \$19.95 at www.cableorganizer.com.

— *Zach Dunkin, The Star*

