

SundayTravel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE JULY 16, 2023 | BOSTONGLOBE.COM/TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER/GLOBE STAFF

The Casco Bay islands are minutes from Portland, but they have a personality all their own

Vacationers to Peaks Island in Casco Bay can pick their freshly caught lobster directly out of the tank at Forest City Seafood.



CHRISTOPHER MUTHER



The sun attempts to burn through the fog at Chebeague Island Inn, located off the coast of Portland.



Nancy 3. Hoffman, founder of the Umbrella Cover Museum on Peaks Island, Maine, explains her collection to visitors.

The quiet streets on Peaks Island, Maine, allow the poultry a chance to stroll the sidewalks.

Island life in Maine

CASCO BAY, Maine — The omnipresent fog didn't bring me down. It made my experience on the Casco Bay islands more authentic. I was here to explore the cluster of islands just minutes from downtown Portland. Even when the fog grew thicker than coagulated clam chowder, I forced a smile while straining to see through the mist and gloom.

Maine, the way fog should be.

But my smile melted away when the torrential rains began. On my first day here, I kayaked from Portland to Fort Gorges, an imposing Civil War-era granite citadel perched on Hog Island Ledge in the middle of the bay. The fort, which was constructed during the Civil War but never saw battle, is on the National Register of Historic

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Some travel traditions are quickly and quietly fading away

By Jon Marcus
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Alden Gordon still has the letters he wrote home on the thin pages of pre-stamped aerograms at the start of his seven decades of traveling.

"You can go back and read them and they add up to a journal," he said.

But the US Postal Service stopped printing aerograms in 2006; the Royal Mail, in 2012. They're among many travel traditions that have quietly succumbed to the unremitting march of progress, all in just the last few decades.

And that, said the Trinity College history professor, is indisputably a loss.

"I don't think the collected e-mails of today are going to be the same kind of artifact," Gordon said wryly.

Technology and changing



ANDREY KUZMIN/ADOBE

Postcards were a phenomenon when they were introduced in the late 19th century. By 1913, there were 900 million being sent just within the United States, at a time when the population was still under 100 million.

tastes have also speeded the demise of picture postcards, paper maps, traveler's checks, phrasebooks, and other once commonplace objects long associated

with life-changing journeys. Some have become collectors' items and the stuff of museums.

And while, without them,

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Lisa Loeb on Boston's cannolis, her bad reaction to bug bites, and needing sleep

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FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE

Rooftop yoga, rodeo fun, and travel tips for nondrinkers

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The people have spoken: Manchester-Boston Regional voted top domestic airport

By Christopher Muther
GLOBE STAFF

The behemoth list of the world's best from Travel + Leisure magazine arrived this week, and New England made a strong showing in several categories, but perhaps none more surprising than "Readers' 10 favorite domestic airports." Travel + Leisure describes these airports as "less-crowded alternatives to major airports."

We've always taken issue with the name Manchester-Boston (Boston is 50 miles from Manchester!), but readers of the posh travel glossy were less concerned with the name and more pleased with the experiences they've had breezing through se-

curity. They named it their favorite domestic airport in the country. Manchester-Boston, which serves 1.7 million passengers a year, was praised for its staff, which readers found to be friendly and knowledgeable. American Airlines, Avelo, Southwest, Spirit, and United Airlines fly out from Manchester-Boston.

Not far behind on the list of top domestic airports was T.F. Green in Providence. It was ranked number six. T.F. Greene regularly shows up on the list of best airports in Condé Nast Traveler as well. Upstart airline Breeze Airways has helped give T.F. Green access to several secondary airports around the country, in addition to a new route to Los Angeles. Airlines they've had breezing through se-

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Mapping the demise of objects tied to journeys

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travel may have become a little simpler, it's also gotten less exotic, said Benjamin Weiss, Leonard A. Lauder senior curator of visual culture at the Museum of Fine Arts, who oversees the MFA's collection of 130,000 picture postcards.

"There's something very magical about this physical object wending its way from someplace very far away and landing in your mail slot," said Weiss, coauthor of "The Postcard Age." "It almost underscores that the world is a very, very big place."

Postcards were a phenomenon when they were introduced in the late 19th century. By 1913, there were 900 million being sent just within the United States, at a time when the population was still under 100 million.

"There are tales of postmen whose backs were thrown out by the giant stacks of postcards they were carting around," Weiss said.

People bought postcards to keep for themselves and paste into albums, too, which encouraged manufacturers to issue sets of them. "It was like collecting baseball cards or stamps. You wanted to have all of the cathedrals or all of the kings. There was such a deep market for postcards, they could put almost anything on them and find a market."

The practice of mailing home a picture postcard withstood the advent of long-distance calling and the portable camera. But it couldn't survive the rise of e-cards and e-mail in the 1990s and social media in the 2000s.

The US Postal Service processed 413 million stamped postcards last year, including picture postcards. That was down from 2.7 billion in 2000. One of the biggest postcard manufacturers, the British company J Salmon, shut down in 2018. And the Post Card Distributors Association of North America changed its name in 2008 to the Souvenir Wholesale Distributors Association and stopped holding its annual trade show in 2020.

"There will always be that desire for the piece of paper ephemera" as a keepsake from a trip, Weiss said. "But the idea of the postcard as a piece of communication rather than an object of memory — that's definitely over."

So, largely, is the era of the paper map, which has been so overtaken by GPS that one in seven millennials say they've never used one.

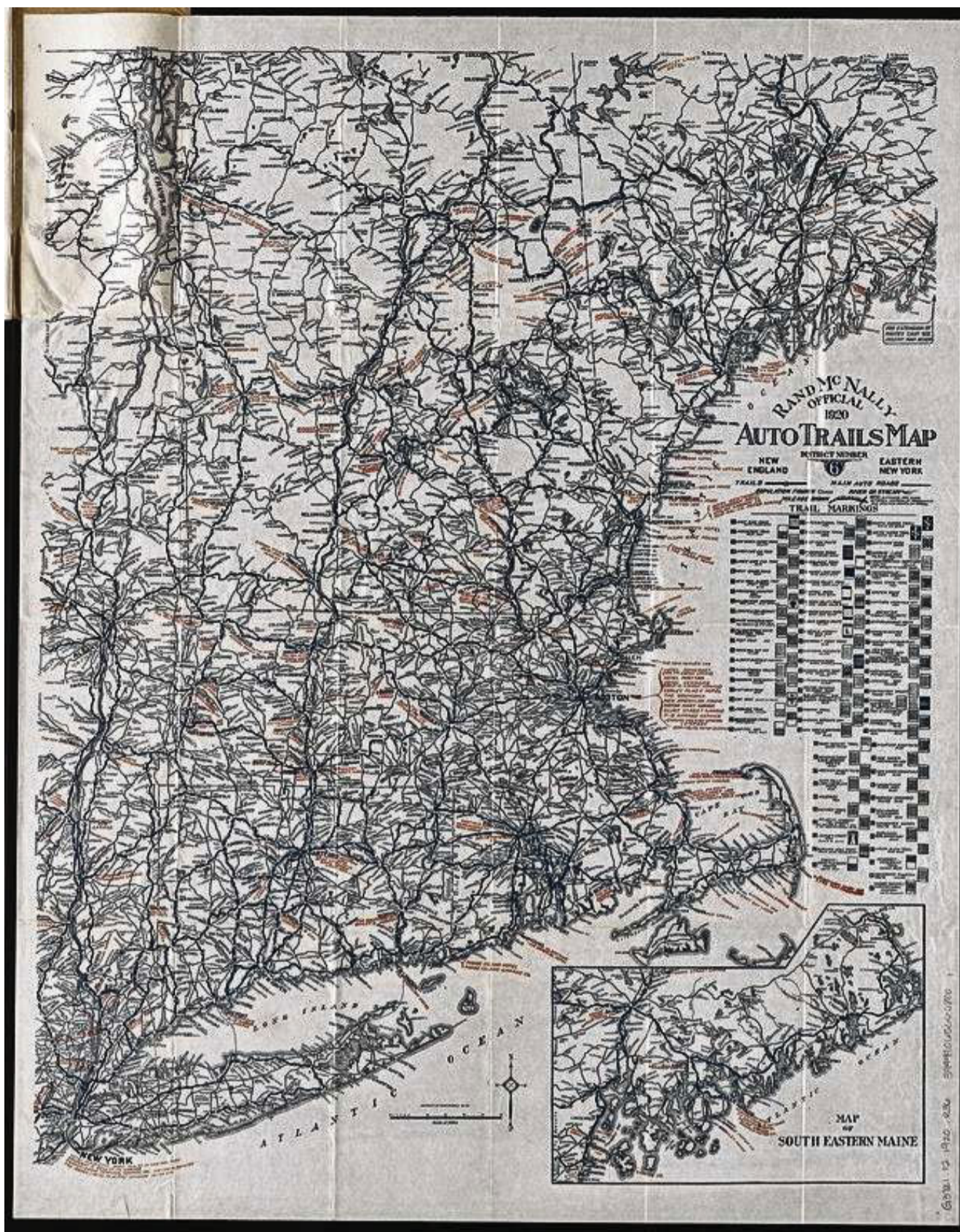
They lose out by seldom looking up from their screens to get their bearings, as they'd have to do with paper maps, said Garrett Dash Nelson, president and head curator of the Boston Public Library's Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center.

Wandering the wrong way and having random encounters can make a trip, said Nelson. "The experience [with maps] is about getting lost and then finding yourself again."

Staring at a paper map can also invite locals to stop and help, he said. "It positions you as someone who is not familiar with the space and trying to figure out how to get around."

In a surprising way, what's old with maps is new again. The first maps, used mostly on ships, were like GPS, showing only narrowly defined routes. "They were point-to-point navigations for sailors," Nelson said. "Sail from this port to this port and then around this island."

When cheap printing intersected with an explosion of middle-class travel starting in the 19th century, paper



Above: a Rand McNally official 1920 auto trails map.
Below: a Falcon Guide focused on Colorado hiking.

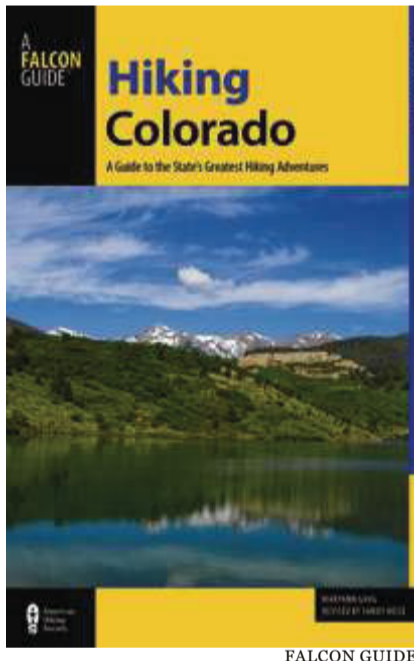
maps came into widespread use, often produced by hotels, railroads, and other businesses that catered to tourists.

Modern road maps followed the ascendance of the car, which could go almost anywhere. So maps got bigger, culminating in the iconic Rand McNally Road Atlas. Then came AAA TripTiks, familiar to generations of kids whose parents took them on road trips, with routes highlighted on narrow pages bound in plastic rings.

TripTiks stopped being produced in 2017, replaced by digital versions, though AAA still prints paper versions on request.

"There was some pushback when we made that transition," said Chuck Nardozza, managing director of travel sales for AAA Northeast. "There's definitely nostalgia." Even now, when he asks applicants for jobs what they know about AAA, he said, "outside of road service, TripTiks are the next most popular answer."

Time moves on, however, and technology makes travel more accessible than it was in the heyday of these



things, said Vanessa Schwartz, a professor of history at the University of Southern California and author of the new book "Jet Age Aesthetic: The Glamour of Media in Motion."

"There's no way I would have been able to go to Japan and not be guided around if there weren't cellphones, because I couldn't read the paper maps" in Japanese for instance, Schwartz said. "The real question is: Is the activity gone or just transformed?"

She likens the debate to the one between Phileas Fogg and sidekick Passepartout in Jules Verne's "Around the World in Eighty Days": Fogg wants to go fast; Passepartout wants to slow down, see the sights, and meet the natives.

Other travel traditions are still clinging to life. Although it's way down from the peak of \$10 billion, a surprising \$1.7 billion a year in traveler's checks continue to be sold, even though many businesses and even banks no longer take them.

Other things that may have seemed imperiled actually survive and even thrive.

Travel guidebooks have had their peaks and valleys, but sales rebounded last year by 40 percent, the analytics firm the NPD Group reports. Travel agents have rebranded themselves as "travel advisers," but the experience of pandemic cancellations and the continued unreliability of travel has given them a boost; 81 percent report an increase in sales this year, according to the USTA (formerly the American Society of Travel Agents).

Rand McNally even just came out with a printed collector's edition of that road atlas in time for its 100th anniversary next year, although the publisher has also added features that are only available online, and has branched out into the digital mapping business.

Postcards, however, have become an object for collectors. And that hobby — it's called "deltiology" — shows signs of falling off.

"The story you can tell with postcards is basically the whole story of the 20th century."

BENJAMIN WEISS, *Leonard A. Lauder senior curator of visual culture at the Museum of Fine Arts*

A search for postcards on eBay returns 7.6 million results, but among those are entire lots being liquidated by their aging owners. The annual Card-O-Rama postcard show, this year on Sept. 23 at Memorial Hall in Melrose, has seen the number of dealers and attendance steadily decline, said Arthur Bennett of the parent Bay State Postcard Collectors Club.

There's still demand, said Bennett, a collector himself who specializes in postcards of baseball stadiums; he just sold a batch of historic postcards of Melrose to a former resident who moved to California, for example. But "it's dying out."

There is growing interest in the picture postcard from new audiences, often as a work of art or for its historical relevance. Most of the postcards at the MFA, given by cosmetics billionaire Leonard Lauder, are "postally unused," meaning they were never mailed but instead collected for their images. Antique postcards depicting national parks are being used to study environmental change.

"The story you can tell with postcards is basically the whole story of the 20th century," Weiss said.

More conventional postcards have been making their way to the Spellman Museum of Stamps and Postal History in Weston, where the widows, widowers, and children of collectors sometimes bring them. They will often pull some collection items out to keep, as much for the messages as for the pictures, said Joseph Mullin, who appraises them for the museum.

"I really am somewhat of a therapist," quipped Mullin, "because these cards are telling the story of the collector. And that will never really disappear."

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Making connections on lists of top airports, airlines

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flying out of T.F. Green include American, Breeze, Delta Air Lines, JetBlue, Southwest Airlines, and United.

TRAVEL + LEISURE'S LIST OF THE TOP 10 DOMESTIC AIRPORTS OF 2023

- 1. Manchester-Boston Regional Airport.** Reader Score: 85.31 (out of 100).
- 2. Indianapolis International Airport.** Reader Score: 81.10.
- 3. Tampa International Airport.** Reader Score: 80.08.
- 4. Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.** Reader Score: 79.93.
- 5. Portland (Ore.) International Airport.** Reader Score: 79.44.
- 6. T.F. Green Airport.** Reader Score: 78.80.
- 7. Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport.** Reader Score: 78.47.
- 8. Palm Beach International Airport.** Reader Score: 76.15.
- 9. Salt Lake City International Airport.** Reader Score: 76.14.
- 10. Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport (Mississippi).** Reader Score: 75.88.

Either Manchester-Boston or T.F. Greene might be a good alternative this summer as the Summer Tunnel closure, and ensuing traffic, have made getting to Logan more challenging. Speaking of Logan, the airport missed the list of the top 10 international airports, but that's not surprising given that it was up against stiff competition from ac-



Breeze Airways ranks fourth on Travel + Leisure's list of top domestic airlines.

claimed airports in Singapore, Dubai, and Tokyo. There were some changes on the magazine's list of the top 10 domestic airlines. Breeze, which came in strong at number two last year, dropped to four. Hawaiian Airlines retained the top spot with Alaska Airlines and Delta rounding out the top three. Readers choose their favorites based on the criteria of cabin comfort, in-flight service, customer service, and value.

TRAVEL + LEISURE'S LIST OF THE TOP 10 DOMESTIC AIRLINES OF 2023

- 1. Hawaiian Airlines.** Reader Score: 81.63 (out of 100).
- 2. Alaska Airlines.** Reader Score: 77.25.
- 3. Delta Air Lines.** Reader Score: 76.87.
- 4. Breeze Airways.** Reader Score: 75.94.
- 5. JetBlue Airways.** Reader Score: 75.80.



The library at the Newbury Boston, the survey's No. 1 Boston hotel.

- 6. Southwest Airlines.** Reader Score: 73.76.
 - 7. United Airlines.** Reader Score: 68.97.
 - 8. American Airlines.** Reader Score: 66.56.
 - 9. Sun Country Airlines.** Reader Score: 66.51.
 - 10. Allegiant.** Reader Score: 64.54.
- By now you may be wondering "Where's Boston in all of these rankings?" Fear not, friends. Boston was voted number 14 on the list of the 15 best cities in the United States. Charleston, S.C., was once again voted the top city in the country. Boston was bested on the list by Santa Fe (!), and San Antonio (!!). So take these rankings with an extraordinarily large grain of salt. The Newbury Boston was voted number two on the list of the best city hotels in the country — just below the Peninsula in Chicago.

Travel + Leisure readers showed love to several New England resorts. Quisisana Resort in Lovell, Maine, was ranked the fourth-best resort in the country. Also on the list at number 10 was the

Wauwinet on Nantucket, the Candleberry Inn in Brewster was 11, and perennial favorite the Pickering House Inn in Wolfeboro, N.H., was 12.

Finally, let's end close to home with the magazine's top 10 hotels in Boston. Readers scored these hotels on rooms, location, service, food, and value. There were no surprises on this list, which is full of old favorites such as XV Beacon, the Four Season One Dalton, the Boston Harbor Hotel, and the Langham Boston.

TRAVEL + LEISURE'S LIST OF THE TOP 10 BOSTON HOTELS OF 2023

- 1. The Newbury Boston.** Reader Score: 97.71 (out of 100)
- 2. Four Seasons Hotel One Dalton Street Boston.** Reader Score: 94.17
- 3. XV Beacon.** Reader Score: 93.04
- 4. Four Seasons Hotel Boston.** Reader Score: 89.61
- 5. Mandarin Oriental, Boston.** Reader Score: 89.60
- 6. The Langham, Boston.** Reader Score: 89.50
- 7. Hotel Commonwealth.** Reader Score: 89.44
- 8. Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport.** Reader Score: 89.07
- 9. Liberty Hotel.** Reader Score: 88.51
- 10. Boston Harbor Hotel at Rowes Wharf.** Reader Score: 88.08

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