

{ RACING }

A Grand Return

This season has been a vintage year for Formula 1 racing fans, especially with the return of the **UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX** after a five-year hiatus. Indianapolis previously played host to the sport, but now Austin, Texas, is taking over, complete with a new facility built specifically for the race.

The Circuit of the Americas track promises terrific racing, with several sections inspired by legendary circuits like Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium and Silverstone in England. And, while there isn't an American Formula 1 driver racing at the moment, Sergio Perez's promising performance at Sauber no doubt will draw many of his fans from his Mexican homeland to see him race. Thousands more from around the

world will travel to see the likes of McLaren's Lewis Hamilton, Ferrari's Fernando Alonso and Red Bull Racing's Sebastian Vettel do battle.

Austin hosts the penultimate round of the world championship Nov. 16-18 before the teams fly to Brazil for the Prix's grand finale Nov. 23-25.

São Paulo's Interlagos circuit is notable for the great drivers who have won there, including hometown hero Ayrton Senna. This year, his nephew Bruno Senna will race for Ayrton's last team, Williams. With the title chase so close this year, it's likely to go down to the wire, which means the crowd at Interlagos could get to see the crowning of a new world champion. www.formula1.com — ADAM HAY-NICHOLLS



AUSTIN, TEXAS

SANDESTIN, FLA.



{ GOLF }

The Sky's the Limit

Combine world-class golf courses with boutique accommodations, and you've got the ideal getaway for active travelers, which is exactly what the **SANDESTIN GOLF AND BEACH RESORT**, on Florida's Emerald Coast, had in mind when it recently unveiled its new property, LeCiel hotel, a freshly renovated retreat overlooking Choctawhatchee Bay. True to its name — French for "the sky" — LeCiel welcomes guests into a soothing setting with rooms and suites that are awash in serene colors, furnished with lush linens and located mere steps from sugar-sand beaches and a luxury spa. Thanks to more than \$2 million in upgrades, the hotel is the latest star at a resort already famed for its four championship golf courses, the most exclusive of which is Burnt Pine Golf Club, a bayside layout designed by acclaimed architect Rees Jones. Starting this month, special stay-and-play packages (\$160 per person) come with tee times at Burnt Pine and Raven golf clubs and lodging at either LeCiel or one of three other hotels at the resort. Mention *American Way* to receive free golf-club rentals during your stay. www.hotelciel.com — JOSH SENS

{ CULTURE }

Center Stage

Tucked away in hundreds of small Iowa towns are pre-1920s opera houses constructed by the state's early settlers. While most of the venues are a short drive from major cities such as Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Sioux City and Waterloo, Iowa musician Sam Knutson says people often overlook these historic buildings.

"When these were built, anyone could see live entertainment," he explains. "There are fewer now, but they are just as viable. Today, anybody within an evening's drive by car can see a show, and the theaters themselves are worth the experience."

Knutson founded **THE IOWA OPERA HOUSE PROJECT** to bring music back to these

history-rich structures. With top Iowa folk performers, he stages shows that attract new audiences and raise money for restorations. More than a dozen theaters have participated this year, and several more are signed on for upcoming shows.

"The opera houses are ornate. The sound is incredible," Knutson says. "It's the kind of live music experience you can't have anywhere else."

The Iowa Opera House Project next travels to Cresco (Nov. 2), Corning (Dec. 8) and Pella (Jan. 12, 2013), followed by spring concerts in Albia, Ainsworth, Toledo, Iowa City and other communities.

www.theiowaoperahouseproject.org — RENEE BRINCKS

IOWA

