

## Luxury in an Economic Downturn



DURING THE CURRENT RECESSION, the atrocious fates suffered by luxury goods businesses have been amply documented. The once indispensable handbag, necklace or watch is now perceived to symbolize an

era of folly that we have all now resolutely undertaken to abjure. Nor has the luxury travel business been exempt. These days, to recommend a hotel or resort costing \$1,000 a night is to risk the arrival of hate mail.

Of course, the people who chiefly pay the price for this sudden outbreak of rectitude are the ordinary folk — the chefs, the waiters, the gardeners — who suddenly find themselves out of a job. In fact, if your financial resources permit, there has never been a better moment to take the trip of a lifetime. In some instances, prices have declined by 20 or 30 percent. And if you do decide to sign up for that tour of Asia, or an African safari, you will actually be helping to safeguard the livelihoods of people with children to raise.

However, if the world's hotel managers are deserving of sympathy, spare a thought for the executives of the private jet industry. For them, the infamous arrival in Washington of the Detroit Big Three comprehensively redefined the notion of a bad day at the office. In an instant, private jets became not just a symbol of unjustified indulgence, but *the* symbol. Which, of course, is extremely unfair. I recently paid a visit to the NetJets (Marquis Jet) servicing facility in Columbus, Ohio — from where its 800 or so aircraft are controlled with military precision — and was reminded what a truly remarkable company it is. For a full account of my day there and a description of how I flew a Gulfstream G200 around Manhattan and landed safely at LaGuardia (by flight simulator, you will be relieved to hear), see *Hideaway Report Online* at [www.andrewharper.com](http://www.andrewharper.com)

For leisure travelers, a private jet card can be a wonderful way to treat children and grandchildren to a Mexican or Caribbean vacation. And if the plane is full to its seven- or eight-seat capacity, the cost is less than one might suppose. The alliance between Andrew Harper and Marquis Jet allows members to purchase as little as 12.5 hours of flight time for an introductory price of \$66,450. And as I can personally attest, if you once enjoy the experience of taking off 15 minutes after arriving at the airport, it is very hard to resume the weary trudge through security at JFK. To find out more, call the dedicated Harper member number (866) 538-1300, or visit [www.MarquisJet.com/Harper](http://www.MarquisJet.com/Harper). I think you will find that it is an exceptional program and one that, recession or no recession, merits your serious consideration.