

The Miami Herald

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Travel briefs

Airports

Which airports
are tech-friendly?

If you're bringing your laptop or your cell phone to the airport, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport is tech-friendly, according to PCWorld magazine, which surveyed the country's 40 busiest airports. Fort Lauderdale was named No. 11 in the "techiest" airports list. Miami ranked 28th.

Factors included the number of electrical outlets, USB ports, charging stations and the speed of Wi-Fi and cellular service. Fort Lauderdale, which came in third for Wi-Fi and first for cellphone coverage, has free Wi-Fi; Miami does not.

First-place winner was the Dallas/Fort Worth International. The worst U.S. airport for techies, according to PCWorld's rankings, is Denver.

Bahamas

Ferry starts Fort Lauderdale to Freeport service

The much-delayed Bahamas Express ferry began operating last week, making almost-daily round trips between Fort Lauderdale and Freeport, Grand Bahama Island.

The catamaran ferry can carry up to 463 passengers and expects to make the trip in 2 ½ hours each way, although early trips were taking closer to three hours — a little more than half the time that its predecessor, Discovery Cruises, required.

The ferry, operated by Baleària Group of Spain, is scheduled to depart Port Everglades at 10 each morning except Wednesday and leave Freeport at 7:30 p.m. Fares start at \$49 each way for a one-day trip. Information: www.ferryexpress.com.

Online

Expedia's cruising

Expedia is expanding its reach on the high seas, and rivers, too. The online travel agency will now take reservations on Azamara Club Cruises, Crystal Cruises, Oceania Cruises, Paul Gauguin Cruises, Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Seabourn Cruise Line, Silversea Cruises and Windstar Cruises. That inventory covers 28 ships.

Expedia's river cruise bookings are with Avalon Waterways, Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection and Viking River Cruises. Travelers can choose from 55 ships.

Italy

Cinque Terre recovering

After devastating floods in October, the towns of Italy's Cinque Terre expect to reopen for tours around Easter. Classic Journeys will be the first tour company off the mark, offering its popular Tuscany and the Cinque Terre Cultural Walking Tour in April. More info: www.classicjourneys.com.

The Netherlands

Dutch delaying

tourist pot ban

The Dutch government says it is delaying plans to ban tourists from buying marijuana until at least May. The Cabinet introduced a "weed pass" system only open to legal residents of the Netherlands. Some cities support the plan, hoping it will solve problems caused by German and Belgians who drive across the border just to buy the drug.

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wire services

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