

ARTHUR FROMMER'S

WIN A TRIP TO
ITALY!

Budget Travel

Vacations for Real People

October 2008

**EXTRA
MILE
AWARDS**

8 Innovators Who
Make Travel
Better



2008 Extra Mile Awards

OUR ANNUAL LOOK AT COMPANIES GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY TO MAKE TRAVEL EASIER AND MORE AFFORDABLE DURING AN ESPECIALLY TRYING TIME FOR TRIP-GOERS.

Keeping You a Step Ahead

In our humble opinion, vacation should never be a dirty word. But with oil prices soaring, getting away today is a lot harder to do. That's why we're especially thrilled to present this year's Extra Mile Award winners, whose innovations have made travel easier or more affordable at a trying time. As a token of our respect, we offer them one cool snow globe—they offer you happier travels.

HOTELS.COM: Launching a hotel reward program that actually pays off—and is easy to use

Hotel loyalty programs are sometimes not worth the hassle. You may need years to rack up the points required to earn a free room, and when you try to redeem them, many of the most popular dates are off-limits. In July, Hotels.com introduced a blissfully straightforward reward program, designed like a punch card: After booking 10 nights at hotels with a price-match guarantee (there are more than 35,000 of them), you get a night for free. And there are no blackout dates. "The key to the whole program is that it's easy to use and the free rooms are attainable," says Scott Booker, the company's chief hotel expert and guest advocate. "We know that every traveler has different needs and that every trip is different. People are no longer limited to a single brand's properties in any given place." To underscore that point, Hotels.com does not restrict you to a handful of options when it comes to claiming your free stay—as long as you spent at least \$40 a night on each booking, you can choose any hotel from the price-match-guarantee pool that costs up to \$400 a night. What could be more satisfying than scoring a night at a Bali resort after a few stays at a motel in Buffalo? —Brooke Kosofsky Glassberg



ROAD TRIP: LEAF-PEEPERS' GUIDE TO NEW ENGLAND