

HOLIDAY IN HADES?



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By **Theolonius McTavish**

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— Or, more about life in the nether world from Our Man in Hades —

Who says things never change in Hades?

To remain competitive with "high-performance" earth-bound products and "excellent" customer service ratings in Paradise, the underworld Inferno (affectionately known as "the abyss"), has spruced things up a bit to satisfy the growing demands of well-heeled travellers.

A review of HOT press releases, (those emanating from the "Hades Office of Tourism"), indicates that major continuous improvement initiatives are now underway.

Big changes are taking place following a comprehensive 360-degree, year-long audit of "Devil-May-Care" brand products and co-branded "Hot-To-Trot" service offerings.

Visitors (from Purgatory) and permanent residents (of Pandemonium) will be pleased to learn that the following improvements are being made to make their stay more worry-free and enjoyable.

— The Department of Highways has announced that it plans to provide better signage warning prospective visitors that, "The Road to Hades is paved with good intentions but due to budgetary cutbacks, visitors are asked to fill in any potholes they come across with their own brand of excuses".

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— The Ministry of Justice has indicated that it intends to remedy the lack of peace, order and good government by appointing a Devil's Advocate Support Counsellor for victims of heavenly hopes and delightful dreams who may have slid between the many cracks, nooks or crannies commonly found in Hades.

— The Hades Public Service Commission has announced that it will henceforth abolish inflammatory words like "damnation" from public policy manuals as it has been shown to reduce the productivity of bureaucrats and mandarins alike.

— Pandemonium Hotels & Suites, having read their customer-response cards, are now pleased to launch a "bed of nails" weekend spa special designed to attract a new niche market — the hard-to-please, mud-in-your-eye, pain-in-the-butt clientele.

— Fire & Brimstone Retailers plan to hold monthly "Red Devil Days" in order to meet an overwhelming demand for "Faustian bargains" on crimson-red flame-retardant satin body suits with matching slippers, three-pronged stainless steel pitch forks, "holy" smoke alarms, fragrance-free foam fire extinguishers, not to mention ruby-red plaque-fighting mouthwash.

— Bottomless-Pit Fast-Food Franchises are also proud to announce expanded menu selections including Vixen Vegan Stir-Fry, low-carb Hades "Hot" Dogs, plus low-calorie Pluto-Pepper-Pizzas and Sassy-Soy-Styxes.

— The Ministry of Hot Air has responded positively to negative comments, received from the "Beelzebub & Friends Society", regarding the insipid flavor of the potable water supply and nasal-impairments caused by the fetid air quality. Residents will be relieved to know that the big "Blue Blazes" blast furnaces (owned by the Everlasting Fire & Crispy Roasting Corp.) must reduce noxious gas emissions by 20%, under the terms and conditions of the Hot Air & Hot Aqua (HAHA) Treaty.

— To address the auditory-challenges of lost souls and departed spirits (i.e. valued Freedom-55ers of the lower world), the volume on JINX-98.5FM (Sisyphus Rock & Roll Radio) will be cranked up a notch or two, while glow-in-the-dark ear-plugs and virtual reality hard hats will be issued to youthful yahoo patrons of the Dungeons & Dragons Night Club.

— Satan's Storm Centre has responded to suggestions from wicked witches, testy trolls, and someone called "The Man from UNCLE" who want a simple, color-coordinated 24/7 emergency alert system (which has been reduced to 10 shades of red) and one prominent canary yellow button marked "Panic" (indicating it's definitely time to move to Plan B whatever that is).

Additional suggestions to improve the quality of life in Hades should be addressed to The Head Honcho, Hades Office of Tourism, 112 Hot House Boulevard, HADES.

NOTE: If your letter returns with "address unknown" marked on the envelope, you'll know that you've been spared a wonderland vacation to Perdition (the place of fallen angels). So rejoice ... and as they say in leisure industry lingo, "Have a Nice Day"!

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Theolonius McTavish, is a roving reporter and eccentric travel consultant covering out-of-the-way spots and unusual on-line destinations such as "The Quipping Queen"
<http://www.quippingqueen.blogspot.com>

Holiday Party Planning

By Mrs. Party Gail Leino

Holiday Party Planning by

Mrs. Party

... Gail Leino

Holiday Party Planning

'Tis the season to have a party and invite all your family and friends to celebrate the holidays with you. Have a family day and decorate the entire house with

. Your family will enjoy how festive the home is before and after the holiday

party.

When decorating, make sure you have all the party supplies that you will need before the actual party day. Plan out the food and drinks you will be serving. Make a list of everything you need to purchase to help get you ready. If you are preparing any new dishes or appetizers, try them out in advance on your family and neighbors. You want to have all the quirks of any new recipes worked out before your party. It is a nice idea to give each of your guests

as a token of your appreciation

for them attending your party. Choosing the perfect favors for your party can be a way to cleverly tie in the

with your own individual touch.

Bring a festive holiday party atmosphere to your party with

and lights. For the

music, select a few of your favorite holiday albums to play so you can have some variety. It is fun to gather your guests together to sing old favorites. For the lighting, you can string lights on both the inside and outside of your home. You can also cluster some holiday scented candles together for a dramatic lighting effect.

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Have the smell of holiday cheer in the air. Simmer cinnamon sticks on the stove to provide the holiday scent. These provide a pleasant holiday aroma to your home. Plan some

that will excite and engage all of your guests. You can have fun holiday party

prizes for the winners of the games.

Mrs. Party... Gail Leino is the internet's leading authority on giving the best possible

, using proper

etiquette and manners while also teaching organizational skills and fun facts.

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