

# TRAVEL



## Puerto Rico Style

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Some refurbishments, large and small, has business booming for incentive travel in this hot destination



## Yesterday and Today

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Three *Incentive* writers take a fresh look at two of Mexico's classic destinations: Cancun and Los Cabos

# TRAVEL News

## The All-Consuming Presidential Race

By Nancy Lazarus

**T**hough Washington, D.C. already held its presidential primary, the capital's hotel, restaurant and bar scene will still be dominated by the election for the next year. Hotels have been gearing up in preparation for the January 2009 inaugural celebration, while selected hotel restaurants and bars are highlighting red, white and blue menu items during the voting season.

In advance of the new president's arrival, a number of new luxury, suite and boutique lodgings are opening, well-known historic and landmark hotels are undergoing extensive renovations, and many properties are going green. The results will include



enhanced amenities and expanded space for meetings and incentives.

The countdown is also being reflected in special food and beverage offerings at hotels. The Madison, a Loews Hotel, provides a power brokers breakfast at its Palette Restaurant that includes a "Bipartisan Platter" While a full selection of items is available, the pancake flavors are the deciding factor. They can be ordered with a side of "blue state" blue-

berries or "red state" strawberries, according to one's political taste.

The JW Marriott's 1331 Lounge features Bi-Partisan Tuesdays now through the general election. The "Bi-Partisan Bites" include left wings, right wings and undecided sliders. On Super Tuesday the lounge's customers named the red, white and blue libations to match the electoral map. They include the Left of the Isle with blue curaçao, Grand Old Potable with pomegranate liqueur and On the Fence with crème de cacao and amaretto.

Kimpton Hotels' Topaz Hotel is offering the "Topaz Votes '08 Campaign" cocktail menu, pictured at left, that allows patrons to cast their votes by selecting one of its politically themed drinks. Democrats opt for the Double-Down Donkey with blue curaçao, while Republicans' drink of choice is an All-In Elephant with amaretto and grenadine. For those without strong party ties, alternatives include the Independent Player with Stolich vodka or The Undecided, including a mini-flight of all three campaign cocktails.

Both hotel bars are keeping track of sales of each cocktail and will reveal the winners in early November. The results so far have fluctuated, reflecting the up-and-down pattern of the Democratic and Republican primary contests nationwide. At the 1331 Lounge, sales to date are too close to call. At the Topaz Bar, Democrats (46%) are currently beating Republicans (30%), but since so many drinkers and voters are Undecided (23%), a lot can change between now and November 4.