

BEST DEALS: LAST-MINUTE SUMMER GETAWAYS

TRAVEL + LEISURE

JULY 2008

SPECIAL
PULLOUT
SECTION
**T+L CITY
GUIDES**

50 FABULOUS U.S. TRAVEL IDEAS

TIPS +
TRIPS
FOR
EVERY
STATE



50

REASONS TO LOVE THE U.S.A. NOW

NEVADA →

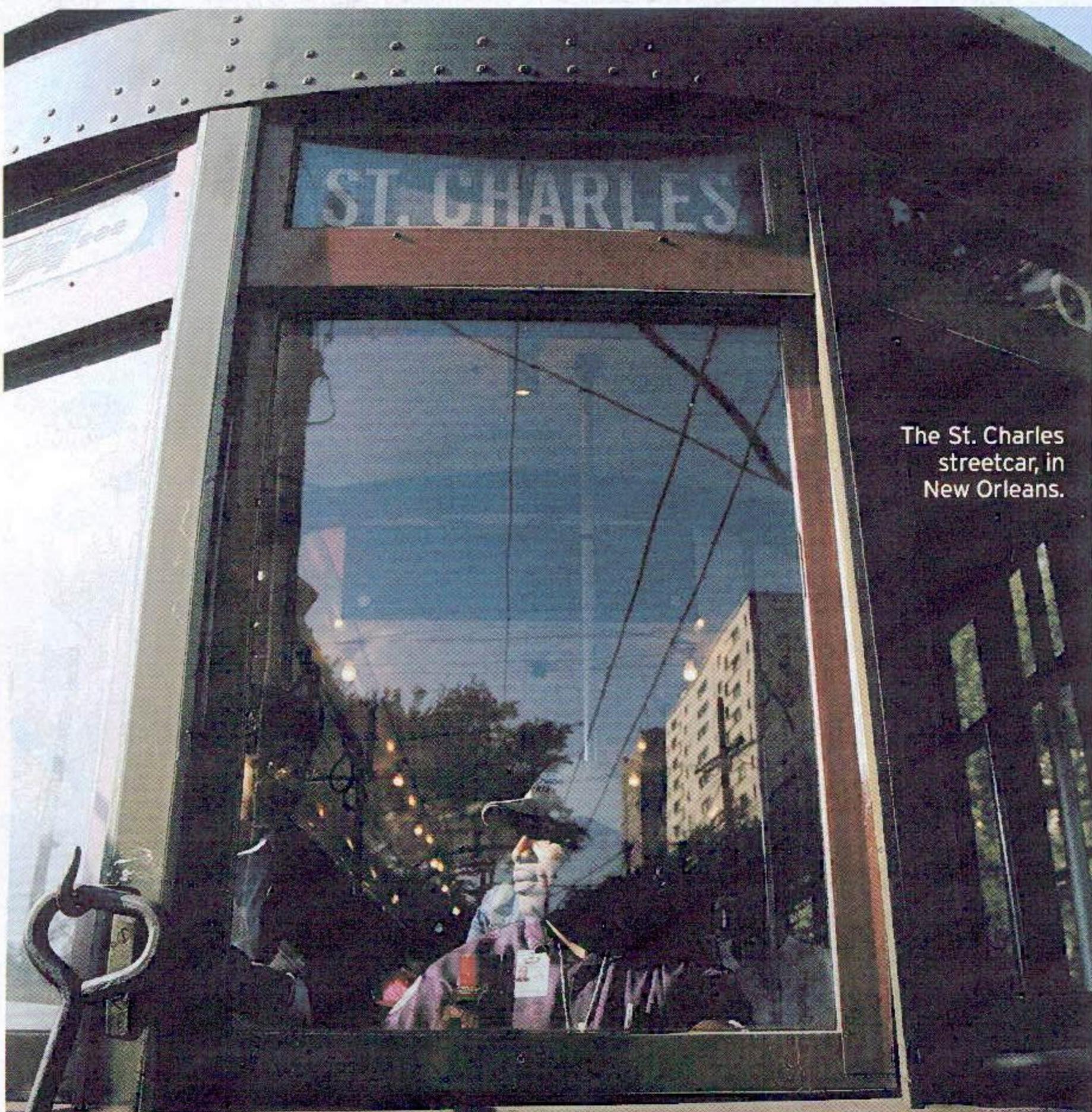
Bette Midler's new
Las Vegas extravaganza
at Caesars Palace.
See page 34 for more.

The latest Las Vegas spectacle. Homemade ice cream in a small Southern town. The start of rodeo season... It's July, and what better time to explore the country—whether rediscovering a classic spot or encountering something fabulous and brand-new? On the following pages you'll find our highly opinionated state-by-state guide, with tips and ideas to inspire your next trip. From Alaska to Maine, summer in America has never been more fun. Here are 50 reasons to pack your bags and go.



33 NORTH CAROLINA

Because Greensboro is going green. The 147-room Proximity Hotel (704 Green Valley Rd.; 800/379-8200; proximityhotel.com; doubles from \$249) is one of the first hotels to aim for LEED Platinum status, the highest rating in sustainable design and construction from the U.S. Green Building Council. The structure, which uses about 45 percent less energy and 33 percent less water than comparable properties, has solar panels, heat-deflecting plants on the roof, and a regenerative-drive elevator.



35 LOUISIANA

Because New Orleans is getting back on track. Take the historic St. Charles streetcar: it came to a standstill after Hurricane Katrina, but the trolley is once again winding over 13.2 miles, from the edge of the French Quarter, through the Garden District, and on to the Riverbend—as it has for more than 150 years. It is, as residents say, the “Streetcar Named Inspire.”

34 GEORGIA

Because rap and roti make a very Hotlanta. “Honestly, I didn’t plan on doing it,” says rap musician Chris “Ludacris” Bridges of his decision to create Straits (793 Juniper St.; 404/877-1283; dinner for two \$80) with chef Chris Yeo, in Atlanta’s Midtown neighborhood. “But I was blown away by Chris’s use of spices—plus, what better way to be hands-on in your hometown than bringing something it’s never seen before.” The menu is a mix of Asian-influenced small plates, with a nod to Singaporean dishes, such as *roti prata* with minced beef, and seafood in a coconut curry. Ludacris’s favorite dish? The “Kung Pao lollipops” in a red-jalapeño sauce.



Chris Yeo (left) and Chris “Ludacris” Bridges.