

Casting your 'Net

If you're planning a tennis vacation, travel the World Wide Web first. by Chris Nicholson

THERE are more travel resources on the Internet than you may realize, and almost all of them can help you plan your next tennis vacation.

Destinations

Many U.S. tennis resorts have sites on the Web, some of which allow you to make your reservations online. Although there's no Internet clearing house for tennis resorts, individual sites are easy to find—try a search engine, such as yahoo.com or google.com, and search for "tennis+resorts." Remember, though, that a resort's Web site basically is an advertisement. And wherever you go on the Web to get information, you should always call the resort to make sure that info is current.

Also, check sites that provide links to various tennis resorts' Web pages: www.tennisresortsonline.com features a database of resorts with critical reviews by past visitors and travel writer Roger Cox; www.travelbase.com/activities/tennis offers peripheral information on more than 1,000 resorts; and www.resortsource.com provides news about deals at resorts and a database searchable by the number of courts, room sizes and other amenities (resorts pay to be on this site, though, so don't expect a comprehensive list).

Ads for cottage and condo rentals

are also readily accessible through the Internet: Check *Tennis* magazine's classified ads at www.tennis.com; search for rental agencies on a yellow pages site—such as www.smartpages.com or athand.com; or join a tennis newsgroup, through which you can find people who rent properties in vacation hot spots.

If you're staying away from resorts and clinics, you may be distancing yourself from potential tennis partners, too. Sign up with The Tennis Matchmaker (located at www.ultranet.com/~tennis), a database of more than 10,000 tennis players who are willing to let you

call them for a match while in their area. Also, check tennisonline.com to find public and private courts in the area.

Transportation

As for actually getting where you're going, many Internet travel agencies—such as expedia.com and travelocity.com—offer services such as free price comparisons for airlines, car rentals and hotels, along with the ability to make secure online reservations. Check the airlines' Web pages, too. United Airlines' site, for instance, allows you to book flights, request upgrades, review your frequent-flier account and learn about new promotions. Also, some car rental companies offer discounts to customers booking online.

Once you're at your destination, you may need help navigating the local roads. Visit www.randmcnally.com or mapquest.com, which can generate door-to-door-directions between almost any two points in the country.

Wherever you're going for a tennis vacation, you can save time and money by playing the 'Net first. 🎾

TOURNAMENT TOURS

Fans looking for an all-inclusive getaway can visit Steve Furgal's International Tennis Tours, official travel partner of the USTA, at tours4tennis.com to learn about vacation packages to Grand Slam events and other pro tournaments. Packages include hotel accommodations, meals and event tickets.

