

JOURNALS

Remembering The Past, Celebrating The Future

By TANAR LEWIN

WHEN Bob Sherman was growing up in Philadelphia, he still, he counted on much older people's empty embraces. "My father's father was the patriarch of the family, and he pretty much dictated how we got together," said Mr. Sherman, now 57 and living in Clifton, N.J. "There were 10 cousins, and we spent enough time together that we were very close. But I had lunch with them as we grew up and meet our respective wives."

And yet, two months after Mr. Sherman was born of the late Mrs. Sherman (Susan Sherman) — a fine of first and second cousins, great-nieces of their children and nieces — he appeared to the family family head, in fact, and more affectionately by them.

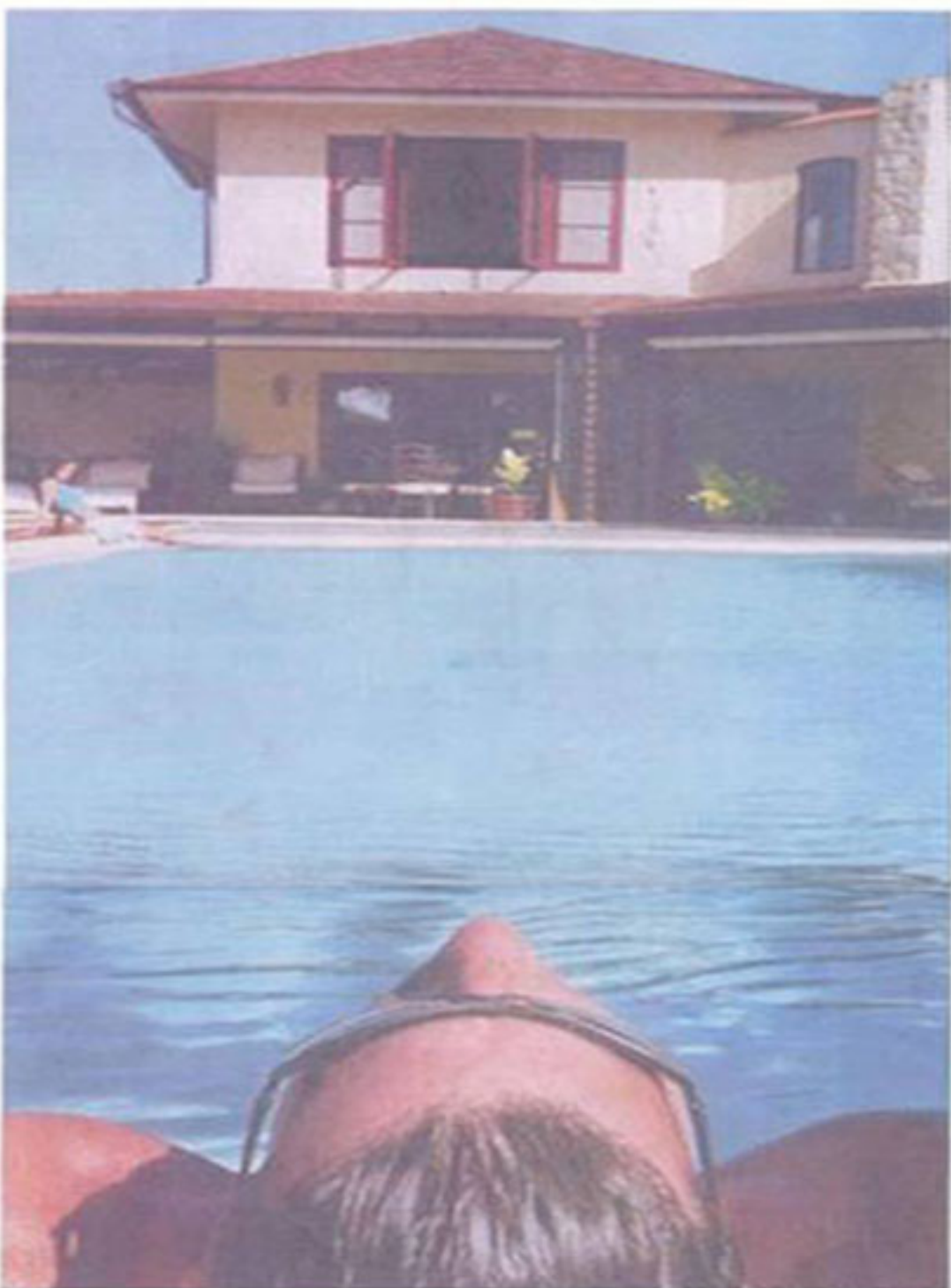
"There were people there I hadn't seen in 40 years, but as soon as I saw them, I recognized them," he said. "The most moving moment for me was when one of my elderly aunts, one from Philadelphia and one from Phoenix, saw each other for the first time in years. I think they didn't know if they would ever see each other again, so it was very, very touching. Since the reunion, I've had lots of e-mails, thanking me, and lots of the women in the family say they want to hold another reunion soon."

Across the nation, at state parks, family farms, modest lodges and fancy resorts, hundreds of families are gathering for reunions of various kinds. While there are no industry statistics on how many families have reunited each year, there are plenty of indicators that such events are proliferating, and becoming an

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In July, the Sherman family, including Karlene Sherman, gathered near Clifton, N.J., where a Greek grandfather worked in a factory.



Despite recent family, power failures and political unrest in neighboring Haiti, some Americans looking for a peaceful home for the Caribbean are buying property in the Dominican Republic, particularly in gated communities like Sea Horse Beach, shown.

ENTERTAINMENT

RIVALRY

A Racing Tradition



Through a 19-year-old tradition, the grand prize of the Kentucky Derby is a check for \$2 million. The tradition is a long one, and it's one that's been passed down from generation to generation. The tradition is a long one, and it's one that's been passed down from generation to generation.

Whether Tom Wilton with his racing tips at Saratoga Race Course

IN THE MARKET

Shoppers with dollars, \$120,000 to \$7.2 million

FRIVING

Taking the back roads to Bard College's Father Cullen, right.



IN PURSUIT OF FABULOUSNESS

By KAREN BIRNBAUM

ONE MAY DAY a Dominican man in a public grill is to be practicing on the interior of a hotel known for its view of the ocean. The man, Juan, is a Dominican man in a public grill is to be practicing on the interior of a hotel known for its view of the ocean. The man, Juan, is a Dominican man in a public grill is to be practicing on the interior of a hotel known for its view of the ocean.



A well-needed course at Casa de Campo.

Southern Creek Resort's new clubhouse will come later. The Dominican Republic is a beautiful country, and it's one that's been passed down from generation to generation. The Dominican Republic is a beautiful country, and it's one that's been passed down from generation to generation.

"There's so much building going on," said Amalia Vicens, a fashion editor at Town & Country magazine, who was born and raised in the Dominican Republic. "Every time I go home, I see a new building. The whole scene is crazy, full of people — construction, business, everywhere."

Mr. Sherman is increasing, too. In 1985, the Dominican Republic was the fastest growing Caribbean destination for American tourists, which has led to higher air fares from New York City, up from \$100 in 1985 to \$200 in 1989. The Dominican Republic is the first Caribbean island destination, offering daily flights for \$100.

Three years ago, Wilton's grandmother visited the sprawling

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HAVENS; In Pursuit of Fabulousness

By KAREN ROBINOVITZ Published: August 13, 2014

ONE sure way a destination can raise its public profile is by piggybacking on the reputation of a better-known spot that may, in the eyes of trend seekers, be losing some of its heat.

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Well, say hello to the Dominican Republic, "the new St. Bart's." Tourism is booming in the Dominican Republic, and so is construction of second homes for people from northerly climes.

Three years ago, Mikhail Baryshnikov visited the sprawling Southern Greek Revival beachside vacation home of his good friend, the Dominican-born designer Oscar de la Renta.

As Mr. de la Renta tells the story, Mr. Baryshnikov fell in love with the place, put his house in St. Bart's on the market and built one in the Dominican Republic.

"There's so much building going on," said Amelia Vicini, a fashion editor at Town & Country magazine, who was born and raised in the Dominican Republic.

Air service is increasing, too. In 2003, the Dominican Republic was the fastest growing Caribbean destination for American Airlines, which now has 10 flights a day there from Kennedy Airport, up from seven in 2001.

The Dominican Republic, south of Cuba and the Bahamas, is a direct three-and-a-half-hour flight from New York. "It's so close," said Margarita Waxman, who lives in SoHo.

But the big attraction is the combination of classic Caribbean assets -- "the people are beautiful, the ocean is beautiful, the weather is beautiful," Mr. Iglesias said by telephone from the Dominican Republic -- and surprisingly favorable prices.

When a 20-unit condominium building by the beach in Cabarete, on the north coast, went on the market in March, prices started at \$50,000 for a small one-bedroom, said Peter Wirten, a broker with Josefina Coverts & Associates in Cabarete.

The advantage is the same higher in the market. "It's so much cheaper than St. Bart's, but no less lush and tropical," said Erika Dunn, a co-founder of D2 Publicity, a lifestyle and fashion public relations firm in New York.

A St. Bart's real estate agent, Alain Mora of CMI Real Estate, said that the two places aren't even comparable.

"You can be a king in the Dominican for very little money," Mr. Mora said. "You need much more than that in St. Bart's."

Until a few years ago, the Dominican Republic had a reputation as second-rate, and affluent shoppers for second homes largely stayed away. Then, in the early 90's, developers, most notably the Cuban-American sugar magnates Alfonso and José Fanjul, began attracting attention with luxurious gated communities on the water.

THE resort, which has attracted celebrities like Elizabeth Taylor and Sean Combs, though neither owns property there, has a private yacht club, shops and restaurants, a hospital and three golf courses, with a fourth on the way.

Lisa Kirkman, general manager of Sea Horse Ranch, said that home sales there had gone up 50 percent in the last year and that prices had risen more than 250 percent in a decade.

At Punta Cana, where Mr. Iglesias said that developers expect to add 300 homes and a third golf course in the next five years, the 35 homes now under construction start at \$310,000, for a three-bedroom villa away from the water and rise to several million dollars for oceanfront properties.

So far, at least, the Dominican Republic is also avoiding some pitfalls of places adopted by the jet set. "There's a quaintness about it," Ms. Waxman said. "It has all the beauty of St. Bart's, only more bohemian."

Rolando Gonzalez-Bunster, a 55-year-old business developer from Argentina whose primary residence is in Greenwich, Conn., said that it was easier to have a house in the Dominican Republic than in St. Bart's. "It is more accessible and easier to get staff," he said.

The Dominican Republic's half-discovered quality may not last much longer. "Everyone is always looking for the next place, and it is definitely the D. R.," said Shawn Prez, national director of promotions at Bad Boy Entertainment.

The Dominican Republic, he said, is "still sort of untapped."

Photos: GETTING HOTTER -- Gated communities catering to foreign second-home buyers are popping up along the coasts of the Dominican Republic. Sea Horse Ranch, right and below left, is a 250-acre development where building lots can cost several million dollars. Casa de Campo, middle and right below, has three Pete Dye golf courses and 1,800 homes; it is building more at \$400,000 to \$10 million each, bargains compared with prices elsewhere in the Caribbean. (Photographs by Richard Patterson for The New York Times)(pg. F6); WATER -- Despite recent floods, power failures and political unrest in neighboring Haiti, some Americans looking for a second home in the Caribbean are buying property in the Dominican Republic, particularly in gated communities like Sea Horse Ranch, above.; GOLF -- A well-tended course at Casa de Campo. (Photographs by Richard Patterson for The New York Times)(pg. F1) Map of the Caribbean highlighting the Dominican Republic. (pg. F6)

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