

Tourjeté

TOURJETÉ DESTINATIONS

Food, Wine and Now... Exclusive Journeys by Jet

By Karen Amster-Young

Eric Weiss, director of marketing and sales for the Wolffer Estate Winery in Sagaponack, travels throughout the United States as an ambassador for the winery. He also consults with hotels, restaurants and corporations for Service Arts Inc., his consulting company, and has just launched his latest endeavor, Tourjeté. A new twist in luxury travel, Tourjeté offers specialized weekends aboard a private jet to exquisite destinations along the Eastern Seaboard.

"I've created various themed weekends that are completely customized for the traveler, depending on their interests," explains Weiss. "There are yachting, food and wine, golfing, antiquing weekends and many more."

Last month Tourjeté completed its maiden voyage choosing The Ultimate Mansions of New England Weekend, out of

twelve themed journeys offered by the company. Six guests were whisked through New England's skies aboard The Comet, a sleek Learjet. As part of the package, Weiss offers special leather-bound travel journals to the clients of Tourjeté. "I use special ink that a calligrapher uses to write the itinerary for the trip and present it to each guest upon arrival." In coming up with Tourjeté, he explains, "I get to meet new people who love to explore, create new themes, and partner with great properties who want to contribute to enriching the experience of a Tourjeté guest." Weiss is quick to point out that Tourjeté is designed not only for personal travel, but also for business entertaining, sales incentive trips, wedding parties, family gatherings or romantic excursions. "The concept is really versatile and that is what I love about it."

When asked what is next for Tourjeté, he shares with me

that he is already creating themes and destinations on the West Coast, Europe, South Africa, Mexico and Asia. "It's hard to stop thinking when there is such a wide world to journey," he says.

Tourjeté is actually a word from the world of ballet and is defined as "a slide step into a leap and turn executed simultaneously for 360 degrees." Weiss told me that his wife is the one who came up with the name. "The word means to turn and spin. It means movement. I love the word. Not only because it has its origins in the French language, but because my company, Tourjeté, is all about discovery and movement."

Eric Weiss was born with a connection to France that even he has a hard time explaining. "I can't really say where my love for France and all things French comes from," he says. "It has been with me since I was a boy." He laughs that perhaps that he was born in France during one of his "other lifetimes." This passion has been a major influence personally and professionally.

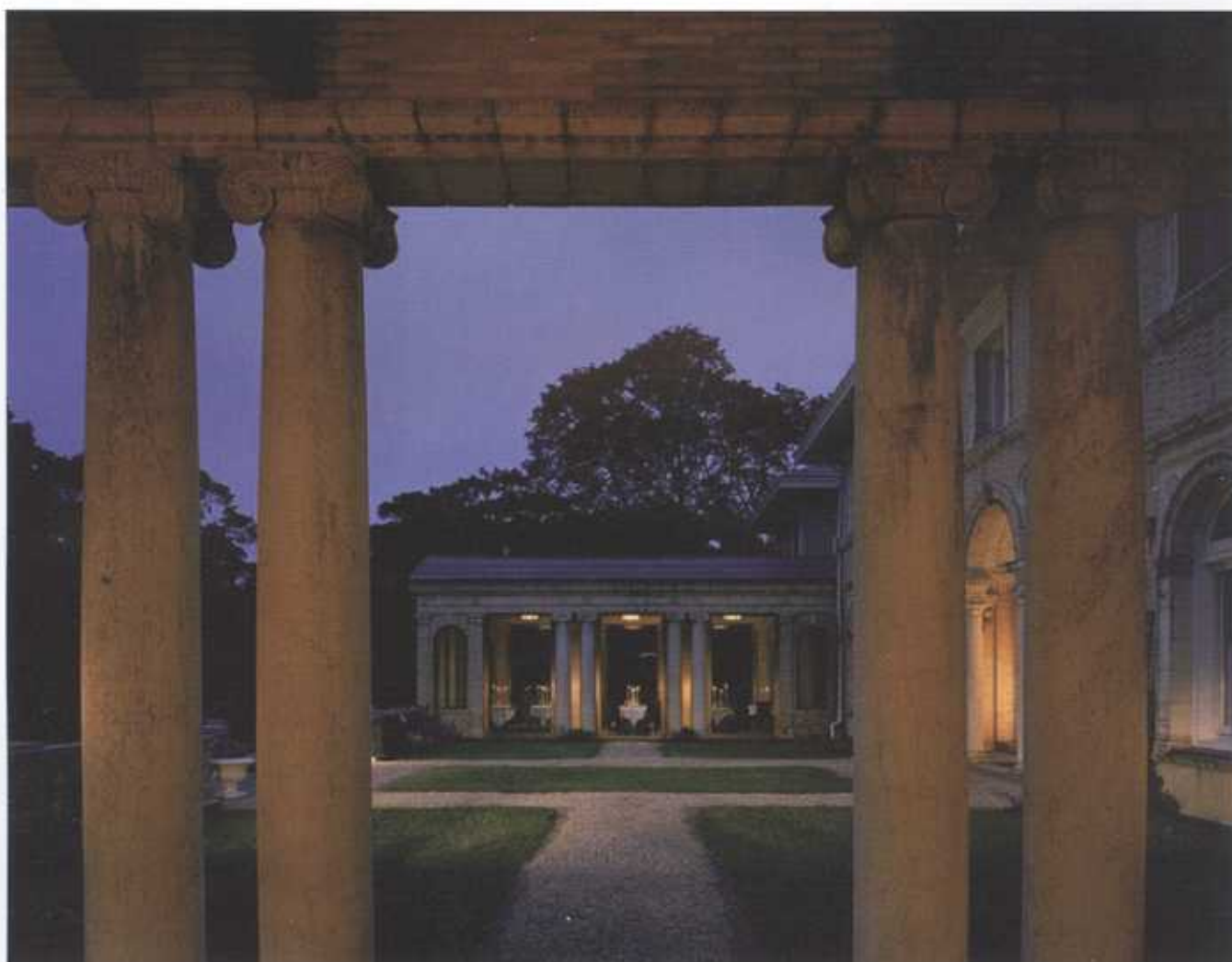
A lifelong interest in food, wine, and everything that entails, started for Weiss at 17, when he apprenticed aboard the S.S. United States in the kitchen and the dining room. His resume is a smorgasbord of experience. He has worked with the top culinary and wine experts and institutions in



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the world. One of his earliest ventures, at 24, was founding Safaris International, a company that brought children from France to the United States to learn about travel, language and culture.

Despite his seemingly diverse experiences though, there are a number of constants that have stayed with him throughout his career: attention to detail, service and customization.



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TRAVEL

"Good service is a lost art," he laments. Weiss' consulting company has conducted numerous seminars worldwide focusing on service in the hospitality industry because he wants to share this passion with others. He has been featured on national television programs and in major newspapers for his expertise in food, wine, service and hospitality.

Tourjeté is not only his newest business venture, but a vehicle to showcase his love for the lost art of service. After being approached by industry veterans, he is currently considering starting a school dedicated to the art of service.

Currently, Weiss is trying to sell his much beloved 17th century farm in France that he and his wife, Misty, have owned and cherished for 10 years. "It hurts to have to sell it," he says. "It's a part of me. Unfortunately, it has been robbed numerous times."

He manages to find time to garden, swim, cross-country ski and sing, as well as spend time with Misty, and his daughter Julia, "she is one of the most charismatic people I ever met. People are drawn to her everywhere she goes. She is a born voyager."

■HJM

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