run away from home:

11 FABULOUS FINDS
Elephant Village offers luxuriously appointed apartments with red beds, luxurious linens, deep slipper tubs, and roomy showers. The two- and three-bedroom units even have iPod docks, gas fireplaces, and elegant living rooms. The staff is served daily in the main lobby down the road, but the killer scenery for guests traveling with kids is that White Elephant Village has a large pool located steps from Main Street—ideal for parents seeking quick, sponge-bathing dips without a ladder to the surf-wet beach. Of course, the beach is also an option—and the hotel’s complimentary bus will take you there (along with boogie boards, towels, beach chairs, fishing rods, etc., all provided free of charge by the hotel).

In town, there is the Nantucket Historical Association’s fabulous Whaling Museum (www.nha.org), with exhibits and lectures geared for all ages (though you might want to skip the Whaling Dinner presentations: its highlight is a nighttime decoding of nautical signals). It offers an educational Children’s Discovery Room with games, crafts, and activities geared to explore the island’s history. Look for summer times and special kid-focused events, too. Admission to the Whaling Museum also buys admission to the Jethro Coffin House (the island’s oldest), plus the Old Mill, Old Grist, Greater Light, and Five Hole Cliff House.

Near the historic center of town, Children’s Beach offers the dual amenities of a playground and a harbor-bathing beach that’s sheltered from surf by a barrier island. For parents with energetic children, this can be a lifeline near the crowded sidewalks of town—a visit to Aunt Leela’s Fudge (www.auntleelas.com) on Main Street is a must do. This sugary wonderland makes some of the best fudge in New England—don’t miss the traditional penuche, all-brown-sugar, butter, vanilla.

Both Seaside Seafood (www.seasideseafood.com) and Cisco Brewery (www.ciscobrewery.com) make ideal restaurants for families with kids, but a trip to Nantucket doesn’t feel complete without a meal taken at the Brotherhood of Thieves (www.brotherhoodofthieves.com). This ancient, subterranean tavern fonts rapped from the pages of Moby-Dick—happily, the truth bears out, no, not its classic American fare. Also—to give the kiddies a sense of the Nantucket that was—drop into Congdon’s Pharmacy. This old-school drugstore has a lunch counter with spinning stools and a wormy custom counter and has seen generations of Nantucket children chew on grizzly chocolate sandwich-wiches and sharp ice cream sodas. It’s ideal for kids, and abit of old-time Americana—a holdover from Nantucket’s increasingly glibly shopping strip.

On the forty-fifth anniversary, to the mainland, introduce your littlest Nantucket’s popular tradition: throw a penny overboard as you pass Brant Point Lighthouse to ensure a safe return to the island.

—Julia Stanton

Canyon Ranch
Lenox, Massachusetts

As the temperature in Westchester once again climbed into the nineties, my daughter Kristina and I headed north to the Berkshires for a mother-daughter getaway at Canyon Ranch. I had a week of yoga and spa treatments in mind: she wanted intense bodywork. Luckily, with Canyon Ranch’s impressive 24-page resort brochure, I was able to plan the week we both could get out of what we wanted.

The approach alone is impressive, up a winding drive bordered by gardens and fountains. The moment the hotel came into view, got a big grin on her face that lasted throughout the weekend. We were welcomed to the “spa ranch” with an inviting suite of classes, lectures, and activities, followed by a tour of the spa and outdoor pools, gym, spa studio, and spa with two saunas, steam room, and relaxation rooms. I knew this was going to be extra special...but I wasn’t prepared for the moment when we arrived at the spa. Magic happened. After a week of intense bodywork, she was totally revitalized. I didn’t think I could be more thrilled, then I got a call from the spa manager, offering to surprise her with a massage. I thought it was time to try some spoiling, and I was
determined to make the most of it. She was
totally attuned to the spa ranch in my daughter, an import.