



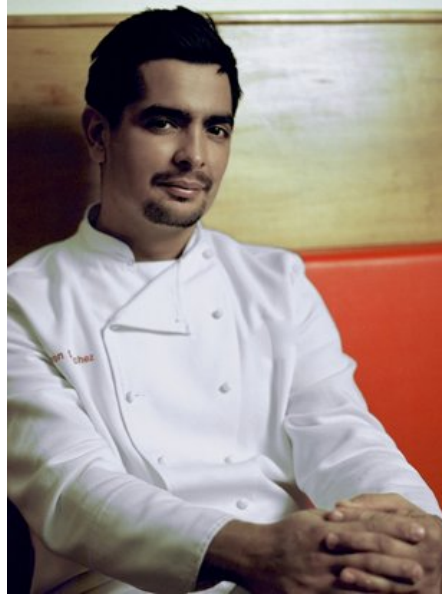
Compass

Five Miles Up with ... Aaron Sanchez

By [Bekah Wright](#)
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Food Network junkies are already aware of Aaron Sanchez's culinary style via the two television series he co-stars in, "Chopped" and "Heat Seekers." They've also gotten to see him hit the road on FOX Utilisima's travel-food show, "MOTOCHEFS." Then there are Sanchez's renowned restaurants: Mestizo in Leawood, Kan.; Tacombi Tacqueria in [New York City](#) and Crossroads at House of Blues nationwide. So might one find ingredients for new dishes in his carry-on? Well, maybe, if crickets, worms and rattlesnake tails count.



(Photo: Shorefire Media)

What's something you never fail to pack in your suitcase?

My omamori — my Gohonzon Buddhist mandala that I chant to.

Carry-on or check-in?

Always carry-on, just in case I can catch an early flight or something comes up last minute.

Window or aisle?

Aisle.

Do you bring food with you on plane?

Usually dried fruit. Dried mango is my favorite.

What's your idea of the perfect vacation?

A beach with my son, where we can get lots of sleep, walk around and visit museums. A place that's not too hot, with great wine and even better food.

Tell us about a vacation you've taken that's come close to perfection.

I went to the Yucatan in [Mexico](#) with my uncle where we ate, drank and met some awesome Mexican chefs. We also relaxed a lot and went swimming in my favorite cenote.

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What's the worst vacation you've taken?

When I was younger I went to Italy. The entire time, mosquitoes attacked me, and the air-conditioning unit broke at the beginning of the trip. Not fun at all.

Where's your favorite destination for practicing your profession?

I love [New Orleans](#). It's a great food city, the people are awesome and everyone knows how to have a good time. Also, one of my best friends, Chef John Besh, is there, so when I visit, we get to work together and collaborate on meals.

What's the most unusual souvenir you've ever brought back?

Crickets and worms. And once I brought liquor from Mexico that had a rattlesnake tail in it.

Ever try a food that you wished you hadn't?

I had durian, found in Southeast Asia. It's a stinky fruit with a bad funk and weird texture. Won't be trying that again.

Favorite resort you've ever stayed in?

I love the Mandarin Oriental, [Miami](#) — great service and away from the craziness of South Beach. It's a great place to relax and unwind.

Favorite restaurant you've discovered while traveling?

Pangea in Monterrey, Mexico; Chef Guillermo González is awesome.

Biggest regret you've had while on vacation.

I was hunting in Alabama with a group of friends and ended up being left out in the rain for a really long time. It wasn't the highlight of the trip.

The one thing you're willing to splurge on above all else?

Great trips and vacations.

Three artists on your travel playlist?

Amos Lee, Lenny Kravitz and Draco Rosa.

Where would you take someone visiting your hometown for the first time?

I'd take them to Chopes Bar & Cafe to eat gorditas in my hometown of [El Paso, Texas](#).

You only get one more trip in your lifetime. Where will it be?

Europe — I'd spend a month eating my way through each country.

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Muslims are called to prayer five times each day and no matter where, they turn toward Mecca, kneel and pray. In cities throughout the world the Adhan (call to worship) can be heard coming from loudspeakers at local mosques. Few mosques anywhere, however, are


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Dec. 6, 1897: London first licenses motorized taxis

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Michael Mina to Spearhead Restaurant in New 49ers Stadium

It's no surprise that Michael Mina will be spearheading the state-of-the-art restaurant within the new 49ers stadium coming in August 2014.

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Late-night cravings that cause you to reach for a snack in the hotel minibar can be real money traps.

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Ziplining takes winery tours to new heights

Wine lovers who also happen to be adrenaline junkies are being courted in an emerging trend with ziplining tours that soar above vineyard canopies. There is a disclaimer, however: don't drink and zip.

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Saudi Arabia now open to foreigners

Saudi Arabia launched a new tourist visa program this week that allows foreigners to visit the kingdom's tourist and historical sites. Announced out of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities earlier this year,

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Hotel prices rise in Prague and Vienna before Christmas

The daily rate for a standard double room saw a decline in October and it has continued to drop in most of the 16 major European cities analyzed

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Japan agency offers travel for your teddy bear

Then Japan has just the thing for you -- a travel agency that takes stuffed toys on package tours and even provides the holiday snaps to prove it. The more adventurous bear might like to see some of the grand temples

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