

# The Boston Globe

THE VIP LOUNGE

## When she needs a break, she zips down to the Cape for a lobster roll

By Juliet Pennington Globe correspondent, March 31, 2021



Tracey Zhen at Crane Beach in Ipswich.

When she wants to get away and unwind, Tracey Zhen, president of Boston-based Zipcar, looks no further than Cape Cod for what she describes as its relaxed vibe, pristine beaches, and delicious seafood. Zhen, 44, is one of six speakers at an April 7 forum, “Celebrating Art, Science, Service & Commerce: Leadership Sharing Experiences,” being presented by Friends of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway ([ArmenianHeritagePark.org](https://www.ArmenianHeritagePark.org)). Zhen said she is looking forward to the event and sharing advice from her impressive career, which includes executive positions at Expedia and TripAdvisor. “I always advise people to choose people before company when searching for a job,” she said. “In my career, I’ve taken pay cuts to work for people whom I just generally admire, and for me it’s been really rewarding in many ways.” A New York City native, Zhen and her husband, Daniel Wells, a law school student, live in Newton. They are excited to be welcoming a new puppy to their family in the next couple of weeks. We caught up with Zhen to talk about all things travel.

### **Favorite vacation destination?**

I'm a big fan of local destinations. There are so many spots in New England that are accessible, charming and allow you to be active. I'm not planning to venture too far for vacation this year and will head to one of my favorite local destinations: Cape Cod. It's so easy to get to from Boston, especially in a Zipcar for the weekend. It's beautiful all year-round — I love the relaxed vibe, the delicious seafood, and the pristine beaches. My favorite parts of the Cape are Chatham and Provincetown. I love visiting beaches north of Boston, too, like Crane Beach in Ipswich.

### **Favorite food or drink while vacationing?**

If on the Cape, it's lobster rolls with a little butter and pepper. It's so simple but quintessential New England. I love that you can get a great lobster roll off a food truck or in a fine dining restaurant.

### **Where would you like to travel to but haven't?**

I'd love to visit New Zealand, but it's one of those trips where you need time given the distance. I enjoy visiting places where there's natural beauty but also a rich local culture. My husband and I love to take trips where we can go hiking or skiing, and New Zealand has been on our bucket list for some time. I also got the opportunity to meet the prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, and she is someone whom I admire and respect.

### **One item you can't leave home without when traveling?**

I have this travel pouch that's always packed and ready to go with essentials like a phone charger, noise-canceling headphones, my passport and these days, a mask and hand sanitizer.

### **Aisle or window?**

It depends on the trip. For business travel, I prefer the aisle seat because I like to get off the plane as quickly as possible since I'm usually rushing to a meeting. If I'm taking a long-haul flight, I prefer the window seat.

### **Favorite childhood travel memory?**

In elementary school, my mother used to take me to visit family in Asia during summer break. We'd go on monthlong trips visiting family and sightseeing. It was always an adventure for me because the culture was so different from my day-to-day life in NYC, and it was also a way for me to experience my familial roots and connect with family that I didn't see very often.

### **Guilty pleasure when traveling?**

If I have the time, I love stopping in at a local yoga studio for a class. It's a nice way to relax and to squeeze in some exercise after a long flight. I also like to visit friends when

I'm traveling for business. Instead of ordering room service back at the hotel, I try to grab dinner or drinks with old friends at the end of my workday.

**Best travel tip?**

Get TSA Pre-Check. If you are a frequent traveler, it's worth it given all the time you save. Bring noise-canceling headphones — I always keep them with my travel pack. They are great when trying to sleep or get work done on a plane. And if you're traveling to a US city, my biggest tip is a Zipcar membership! Sometimes your most desired destinations may be a ways outside the city center, and with a Zipcar membership, you can conveniently book a vehicle nearby for an affordable way to take a day-trip excursion.

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