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Mystery writers to speak at Nick Linn author series

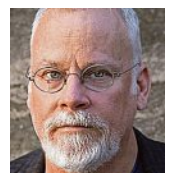
Special to the Daily News Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News

Michael Connelly, author of the immensely popular novels about LAPD Detective Harry Bosch, is one of four best-selling mystery writers who headline this winter's Nick Linn Lecture Series.

A few seats are still available for these four exclusive events — which include lunch, a lecture and a book signing — at the Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in North Naples, beginning on Jan. 12 and wrapping up on March 23. (See the info box for ticket details.)

This year's lineup, devoted exclusively to mystery authors, pays tribute to founder Nick Linn's original vision when the Friends of the Library of Collier County series was created more than 20 years ago:

- **Taylor Adams**, author of such edgy thrillers as "Her Last Breath" and "No Exit," on Monday, Jan. 12
- **Brian Freeman**, who has written dozens of psychological thrillers and also continues the iconic Jason Bourne series, including the latest, "The Bourne Escape," on Monday, Feb. 23
- **Michael Koryta**, prize-winning author of "Those Who Wish Me Dead" and, under his pen name Scott Carson, "Departure 37" and "Lost Man's Lane," on Monday, March 9
- **Michael Connelly**, whose 42 novels have sold 89 million copies worldwide, on Monday, March 23. The prolific Connelly has just published "The Proving Ground," featuring Mickey Haller, the Lincoln Lawyer, and also launched a new series set on Catalina Island with the back-to-back novels "Nightshade" and "Ironwood."



Connelly

Adams

Freeman

Lecture series raises money for Collier libraries

These events are part of the fundraising efforts of the nonprofit Friends group, which donates hundreds of thousands of dollars to the 10 branches of the Collier County Public Library system.

The donations support, among other things, the Children's Summer Reading Program, the genealogy research databases, the Mail-a-Book program and the acquisition of e-books.

This year the chefs at the Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort have curated a unique lineup of lunch menus for the Nick Linn Series, including elevated entrees and astonishing desserts that are truly "eye candy."

What to know

What: Author lectures and luncheons that raise funds for the Collier County Public Library system

Where: The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, 2600 Tiburon Drive, North Naples

When: Luncheons begin at noon. The author takes the stage at 1 p.m. Book signings begin at 1:50 p.m. after a Q&A session with the audience.

Tickets: Go to https://collier-friends.org/events/nick-linn-series/ for information about the multiple levels of tickets. Or contact Marlene Haywood, Operations and Events Manager, at mhaywood@collier-friends.org or 239-262-8135.

Join the Friends: Friends memberships begin at $50/year and also provide access and discounts to other programs. To become a Friends member, go to https://collier-friends.org/membership/ or contact Marlene Haywood at mhaywood@collier-friends.org or 239-262-8135.

Travel: Discover some new places in 2026

Christopher Elliott
Special to USA TODAY

Somewhere between the unexpectedly comfortable economy class seat on a discount Korean airline flight and the silence of an early morning in Christchurch's Riccarton neighborhood, it hit me: The revenge travel crowds have finally dispersed. Travel is seemingly back to normal.

I thought 2025 might be a good year for travel, but I was wrong. Actually, it was a *great* year.

Airfares in Asia plummeted (that $220 flight from Seoul to Frankfurt on T'way Air was real). The crushing weight of the tourist crowds finally lifted a little, making my neighborhood in New Zealand's South Island feel almost abandoned on a late-summer day.

For 2026, the question isn't just where to go, but what to rediscover. Here are six places I want to visit again:

Athens

The sun bouncing off the Acropolis marble is blinding, but the heat in Athens is shifting. The city is steering visitors away from the Parthenon slopes and toward the graffiti-splashed streets of neighborhoods like Koukaki and Kypseli.

There, the term "creative renaissance" is more than a brochure slogan. You see street art and experience a food scene that has moved beyond moussaka.

Tip: Stay outside the center. I rented a roomy apartment from Blueground in the suburb of Agia Paraskevi. Riding the Athens Metro into town, surrounded by locals rather than tour groups, I felt like a part of the neighborhood rather than just a spectator.

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Tourists take pictures of the Acropolis in Athens. AREN ELLIOTT