

# travelbulletin

February 10 2017 | ISSUE NO 2,001 | [travelbulletin.co.uk](http://travelbulletin.co.uk)

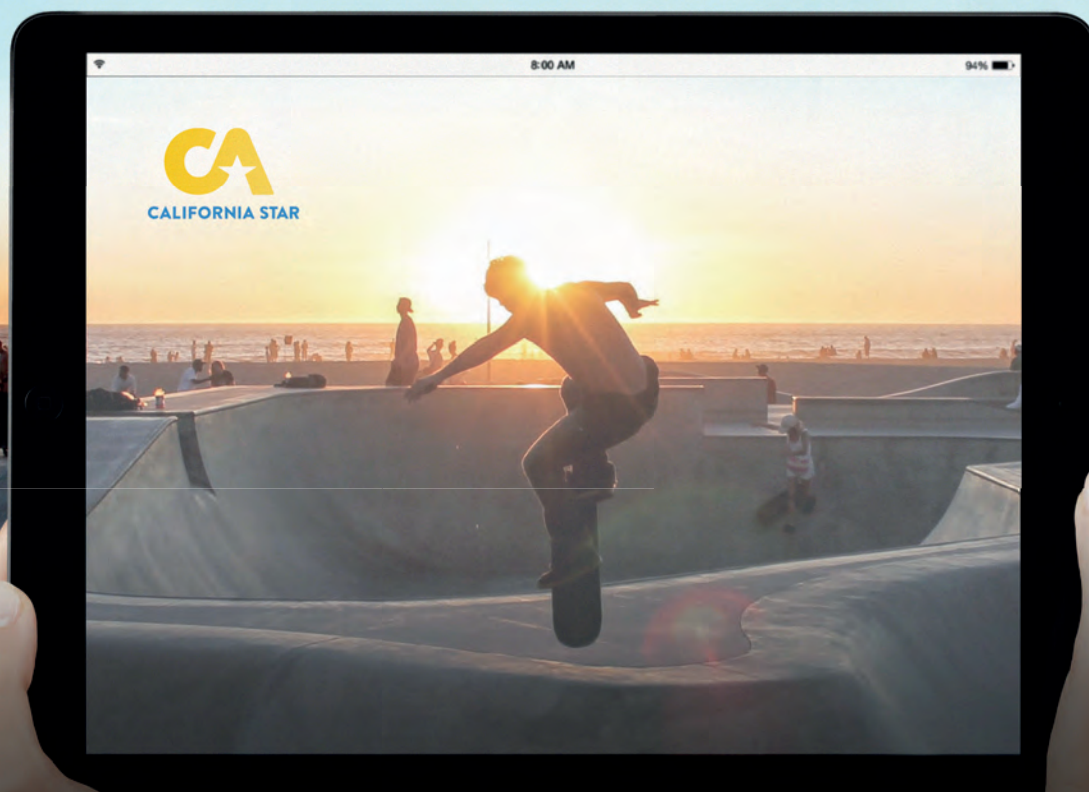
Giving agents the edge



PRESENTS

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Giving agents the edge

## Far East

Boost in Singapore  
visitors fuelled by  
cruise stopovers



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# travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

Invites you to attend a

## Weddings & Honeymoons

agent networking evening

Travel Bulletin is delighted to invite agents to come and join us at one of these informative, fun events and learn more about the accommodation and resort options available for tailor-made wedding and honeymoon packages. Soak up the luxurious ambience as you discover some of the most romantic destinations on offer to meet your customers needs.

These evenings will involve a combination of networking and presentations, delicious food and drinks, exciting entertainment along with a free-prize draw with a number of fabulous prizes to be won.

Monday  
20<sup>th</sup> February  
The Park Regis,  
Birmingham

Tuesday  
21<sup>st</sup> February  
The Mercure Hotel,  
Norwich

Registration: 18:00 hours

Networking & Presentations: 18:30 hours

Buffet, Entertainment & Prizes: 20:00 hours

Carriages: 21:30 hours

To confirm your place at one of these amazing events, email the names and job titles of up to 5 staff members by Monday 13th February 2017 to: **oliver.barton@travelbulletin.co.uk** or telephone:

**020 7834 6661**

For more information.



### SPONSORS



### BIRMINGHAM



### NORWICH



These events are by invitation only and will be booked on a first come first served basis.





## Pedal power...

ONYX HOSPITALITY Group recently hosted a trade fam trip to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The trip visited Colombo and included stays at the two OZO hotels in Sri Lanka – OZO Colombo Sri Lanka and OZO Kandy Sri Lanka, as well as a site inspection of Amari Galle Sri Lanka, Amari's latest development in the region which is scheduled to open this year. Following the Sri Lanka adventure, the trip then headed to the Maldives to experience Amari Havodda Maldives. The resort opened a year ago and is the first Amari in the Maldives. Pictured taking in the sights by bike are, from the left: Chavonne Farley, Dial A Flight; Katie Johnson, Trailfinders; Gihan Malalasekera, Sri Lankan Airlines; Gemma Sturge, Gold Medal; the group's bike guide; Kinza Manship, Travel Counsellors; Chamika De Silva, ONYX Hospitality Group; Sarah Swinscoe, Trailfinders; Nigel Benison, Travel Counsellors; journalist Andrew Doherty; Paul Hickman, Trailfinders; and June Delaney, ONYX Hospitality Group.

## Riviera Travel reports boom in Solo 50+ travellers going long-haul

RIVIERA TRAVEL has reported a rise in the number of customers going it alone on holiday and importantly, travelling long-haul.

The most popular destinations include Botswana, New Zealand and Japan and, interestingly, more female than male customers are going solo (71% compared to 29%).

In October last year, the business launched a new range of escorted tours specifically designed for solo travellers with no additional single supplement.

The company's marketing director, Ben Hitchcock, said: "Going on an escorted tour holiday with a small group of likeminded solo travellers gives people the confidence to explore the world, particularly long-haul destinations, and try new things while feeling safe and comfortable. It's a product which lends itself well to agency selling, with

agents being able to give reassurance to their clients, especially if it's their first time embarking on a solo voyage to faraway lands."

Each customer who books a solo tour is met at their regional airport and accommodated in a double room to themselves throughout their holiday. As with all the company's tours and cruises, prices are transparent, with a fully inclusive price, plus a range of regional airports and train stations available to ensure maximum convenience.

Solo tours are available for Bruges, Berlin, Dresden, Meissen and Colditz, Rouen, Honfleur and Highlights of Normandy, Classical Spain, Classical Italy, Sri Lanka, India and Shimla, plus South Africa.

For more information visit [agents.rivieratravel.co.uk/escorted-tours](http://agents.rivieratravel.co.uk/escorted-tours)

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Singapore predicts increase in demand for pre- and post-cruise stopovers

## Hampton by Hilton encourages 'Seekenders' to explore the UK

RESEARCH CARRIED out by Hampton by Hilton has revealed that Brits are baffled when it comes to identifying some of the UK's most spectacular holiday hotspots.

In a photo challenge created by the company, 76% of Brits mistook top British beauty spots for exotic, overseas destinations including Greece, Cyprus, Japan, France, New Zealand and California.

The company's research also points to a boost in demand for Brits to take a holiday at home, with almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents planning to take as many or more UK holidays this year than they have done previously.

The hotel brand's vice president of Focused Service Brands EMEA, Tal Shefer, said: "With more than half of Brits (52%) planning to take a break in the UK in 2017, we're proud to enable travellers to discover new destinations on their doorstep in a way that's affordable.

"We have 18 Hampton by Hilton properties in the UK and a further 16 in the pipeline, spanning some of Britain's most spectacular locations, including Bournemouth, Glasgow and York. There has never been a better time for 'Seekenders' - to explore incredible UK destinations, whilst enjoying our dedicated Hamptonality service."

For further information see [hampton.com](http://hampton.com)

## Jason Bradbury announced as Advantage conference keynote speaker

JASON BRADBURY, presenter of the television programme 'The Gadget Show', has been announced as the second keynote speaker at the 2017 Advantage Conference.

Best known as the host of The Gadget Show, Jason will address the event, taking place between May 12 and 15 at Club Med Opio en Provence in the south of France.

The consortium's managing director, Julia Lo Bue-Said, said: "With a conference programme that places a high emphasis on harnessing the power of emerging technology, Jason is an ideal choice as a conference speaker and his involvement will extend into moderating the main plenary sessions too."

Bradbury will offer a whirlwind tour of the history of technology, how we got to



where we are, how the pace of change is increasing and where we might be in years to come.

As well as being a student of all things tech, Jason also builds things, from hoverboards to robots to mind-reading devices and frequently illustrates his

presentations with them, surprising audiences and making them think.

For conference news see [advantageconference.co.uk](http://advantageconference.co.uk) or contact the events team at [events@advantagetravelpartnership.com](mailto:events@advantagetravelpartnership.com) or on 020-7324 3945.



**DAWN'S DAY...Dawn Wilson from Imp Travel in Lincoln won £50 in Love2Shop vouchers after winning TIPTO's online competition. Pictured presenting the prize is the group's member, Mike Bowers from Shearings.**

## Spabreaks.com survey reveals renewed interest in staycations this year

WITH BREXIT looming and the value of the pound at a low, an increasing number of Brits are remaining in the UK and prioritising relaxation during their time off, according to spa booking agency, Spabreaks.com

The company reports a 40% increase in UK spa breaks of two nights or more over the past year - a trend which peaked over the Christmas and January period, when 30% of all the company's enquiries were for 'spacation' bookings of two nights or more.

Abi Wright, the company's founder, said: "With the cost of overseas holidays increasing and a daily bombardment of difficult news stories, it comes as no surprise that UK consumers are looking for an escape closer to home. Traditionally, Brits have preferred just to spend the day at a spa or do a quick overnight, but our relationship with spa is definitely evolving. Rather than looking for a 'quick fix' of pampering, people are aiming for a greater sense of relaxation and wellbeing, which is easier to achieve on a longer break."





## YOTEL to open in London's Clerkenwell

YOTEL HAS announced plans to open its third property in the UK in late 2018 with a 212-cabin hotel in Central London's Clerkenwell.

The compact but luxury cabins will include a signature space saving adjustable SmartBed, monsoon rain shower and techno-wall features, including mood lighting and entertainment options, with smart TVs.

Additional facilities include a gym, bar, independently operated dining outlet and the company's Club Lounge concept, which offers flexible meeting and co-working spaces that will be designed in keeping with the surrounding area. All cabins and communal areas of the hotel will be served by fast and free Wi-Fi connectivity.

The brand's CEO, Hubert Viriot, said: "We are more than ready to bring the YOTEL city-centre concept home. Since the opening of our flagship in New York, we have been looking for the right opportunity and we finally found it in Clerkenwell. The mixed-use project, developed by Medina Investments, complements the YOTEL brand perfectly. It's dynamic, creative and forward-thinking and backed by a developer with acumen and vision."

The hotel will benefit from the impending arrival of Crossrail to Farringdon Station, set to complete in 2018 and forecasted to be one of the most popular stations on the new line.

**FINAL DESTINATION...**Star Alliance member carrier, Air India, has successfully moved all its operations at Heathrow's Airport from Terminal 4 to Terminal 2, the home of Star Alliance. The national airline of India operates up to eight daily flights in and out of Heathrow with either Boeing 777 or Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft and has been serving London for nearly 70 years. At present it offers two daily flights to Delhi, one daily flight to Mumbai, four weekly flights to Ahmedabad and three weekly flights to Newark (New York). Customers travelling in either First or Business Class or holding Star Alliance Gold status can make use of any of the four lounges in Terminal 2 operated by fellow Star Alliance member airlines Air Canada, Lufthansa, Singapore Airlines and United. Pictured marking the occasion are, from the left: Simon Scoggins, Star Alliance; Pankaj Kumar and S.S. Uberoi, Air India; and Christian Draeger, Star Alliance.

## Viking Ocean Cruises to roll out 13 new itineraries by 2019

VIKING OCEAN Cruises has announced 13 new itineraries that will roll out in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

By 2019, the cruise line aims to be the largest small ship ocean cruise line, with six 930-passenger ocean ships that offer opportunities for exploration in Alaska, Australia, Asia and the Caribbean.

The company's chair, Torstein Hagen, said: "Viking will mark major milestones in 2017; we celebrate our 20th anniversary and we will welcome two new Longships on the rivers in Europe. We will also double our ocean fleet to four sister ships by the end of the year.

"Our destination-focused ocean itineraries are built on the same successful principles as our river itineraries – we offer our guests more time in port, enriching cultural experiences and the best-designed ships at sea. Starting later this year, our guests will have even more choices to explore around the world in 'the Viking way.'"

The line's new ocean itineraries will provide behind-the-scenes insights and opportunities in each port of call and, with new sailings embarking in Miami, Mumbai, Bangkok, Beijing, Bali, Sydney, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Vancouver, guests can choose base itineraries ranging from eight to 23 days, with additional combination cruise options.

As an example of itineraries, an 11-day Alaska & the Inside Passage voyage, which travels from Vancouver to Seward or the reverse on Viking Spirit between May and August 2019, starts from £3,744 per person.

Guests will sail into the wilds of the 'Great Frontier', immersing themselves in a world of Tlingit heritage, exploring charming seaside towns and pristine glacier-lined bays and cruising the narrow channels of the famed Inside Passage. The price includes accommodation in a veranda stateroom and two nights' hotel stay in Vancouver.

For details call 0800-298 9700 or see [vikingcruises.co.uk](http://vikingcruises.co.uk)

## Group savings from Air Transat with return fares from £406

AIR TRANSAT has released a range of special fares providing significant savings to groups of more than ten travellers, with return fares starting from £406 per person.

The offer applies to direct flights from Gatwick, Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham to Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver, between May and October.

Flights must be booked by February 28 and exclude taxes, fees and charges, which range from £306 to £343 per person return.

All fares include a 23kg allowance for hold luggage, 10kg cabin bag, meals and soft drinks on board, plus a range of in-flight entertainment.

For details e-mail [groupsuk@transat.com](mailto:groupsuk@transat.com) or visit [airtransat.com](http://airtransat.com)

# Universal Orlando Resort™



## Loews Sapphire Falls Resort at Universal Orlando™ ●●●●●

7 nights room only from

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On-site hotel guests receive Early Park Admission\* to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ and Universal's Volcano Bay™ – opening early summer 2017 (valid theme park admission required)

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water theme park**

**Prices from:**  
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\*Valid theme park admission required. Early Park Admission begins one (1) hour prior to regular scheduled park opening to either Universal Studios Florida™ or Universal's Islands of Adventure™ as determined by Universal Orlando, and Universal's Volcano Bay™ (opening 25 May 2017). Valid at select attractions at each park. Attractions are subject to substitutions without notice. Additional restrictions may apply. \*The Universal Orlando™ 3 Park Explorer Ticket entitles one (1) guest admission to Universal Studios Florida™, Universal's Islands of Adventure™, Universal's Volcano Bay™ water theme park, and select live entertainment venues of Universal CityWalk™ ("CityWalk") on all days during a fourteen (14) consecutive calendar day period which includes the first day any portion of the ticket is used. To receive the full fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days of admission, the ticket must be used by the first use date printed on the ticket. The ticket will expire in full on the expiration date printed on ticket. Unused days shall be forfeited. Ticket valid for arrivals from 25 May 2017. Specifically excludes admission to separately ticketed concerts and special events at either of the parks or within any of the CityWalk venues. Some CityWalk venues require ages 21 or older for admission with valid Photo ID. Does not include admission to AMC@ Universal Cineplex 20 with IMAX®, the Blue Man Group show or Hollywood Driveln Golf™. Additional restrictions apply and benefits are subject to change without notice. ^When you book with Gold Medal, 1 x \$150 Universal Orlando™ Gift Card will be given to all qualifying bookings. A qualifying booking must consist of a minimum of 7 nights' accommodation at a Universal Orlando Resort™ hotel and a Universal Orlando™ 2-Park Explorer Ticket or 3-Park Explorer Ticket. A qualifying booking must be made between 01.02.17 and 28.02.17 and depart from 1.03.17 - 31.12.17 only. A Universal Orlando™ Gift Card can only be used in the parks and is not exchangeable for cash. Unless required by law, a Gift Card is not redeemable for cash, cannot be returned or refunded, and will not be replaced if lost, stolen or destroyed. The gift card will arrive within 2 weeks of the booking. For full gift card Terms & Conditions please visit: [www.universalorlando.com/GiftCards.aspx](http://www.universalorlando.com/GiftCards.aspx). Holiday price is per person based on two adults sharing. Valid for departures specified. Prices include return economy flights from specified airport with specified airline, pre-payable taxes and accommodation. Subject to availability. Offers correct at time of going to press and are subject to change, book by dates apply. Holidays operated by Gold Medal Travel PLC, ATOL protected 2916, ABTA V6805.

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**GOLDMEDAL**





## Santa's Lapland adds extra availability from Stansted with four days from £2,879

SANTA'S LAPLAND is adding a new flight from Stansted to visit Santa this Christmas. It departs on December 9 and takes guests on a four-day/three-night adventure from £2,879 per person for a family of three.

This includes flights, transfers, accommodation in a type A room at the Saariselkä Inn on half-board, thermal clothing and a range of activities including a snowmobile search for Santa's log cabin home, private meeting with Santa, husky sled ride, reindeer sleigh ride, visiting the elves and Igloo Fantasia, plus snow and ice fun activities.

For more information or to book call 01483-791915 or visit [santaslapland.com](http://santaslapland.com)

## A Mother's Day cruise on the Thames from £50 with Bateaux London

ON MARCH 26, Thames restaurant cruise company Bateaux London (Embankment Pier, Victoria Embankment), is celebrating Mothering Sunday with a special lunchtime cruise.

Guests will be served a three-course meal, prepared and cooked on board while taking in views of iconic city landmarks, such as the Houses of Parliament, Tower Bridge and St Paul's Cathedral, during a two-and-a-half hour river cruise.

Lunch offers a choice of ham hock terrine with piccalilli or whipped goat's cheese with beetroot, both served with toasted focaccia bread, followed by either pork and sage stuffed chicken breast or roasted salmon fillet.

A dessert of red velvet brownie with

cheesecake cream and passion fruit curd will follow, with Fairtrade tea or coffee rounding off the meal.

Both Bateaux London's vessels – Harmony and Symphony – will host the Mother's Day cruise, with Harmony departing at 12:15 and Symphony departing at 13:00.

The cruises costs from £50 per person – £65 for a window seat – and includes drinks, with child rates of £34 for those aged between three and 12.

For further information or to book call 020-7695 1800, email [reservations@bateauxlondon.com](mailto:reservations@bateauxlondon.com) or visit [bateauxlondon.com](http://bateauxlondon.com)



**ANDBEYOND IS offering new Private Jet Expeditions covering Africa's most iconic destinations. With capacity for up to just 12 guests, the exclusive expeditions are available to book by the seat on set departure dates or exclusively. Journeys are split between spacious private jets (Embraer 145 and Pilatus PC12) for the international legs and a combination of turbo-prop fixed wing aircrafts and helicopters for more remote bush destinations. As an example, a 15-day Southern Africa and Beyond tour takes guests through South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia. Scheduled departures are in May and June and the tour is available for a maximum of six guests at a cost of £52,294 per person. See [andbeyond.com](http://andbeyond.com) for details.**

## NEWS BITES

- TRAVEL FOCUSED PR, marketing and representation consultancy, Lotus, has set up Lotus LATAM to meet the growth of the Latin American tourism markets which have seen an uplift in recent years spurred on by new direct flights to destinations such as Chile, Costa Rica and Peru and a development of the tourism infrastructure in countries including Colombia and Belize.
- THE TRAVEL Network Group has acquired Pudsey-based Hanson Travel for an undisclosed sum.
- TRUMAN'S, EAST London's iconic brewery, has launched Brick Lane Brews, a new café-bar concept, at London City Airport. The new venture sees the brewery expand its offering to serve an East End London menu from morning to night. The outlet is located in the airport's departures area, as part of a £19million transformation. Details at [bricklanebrews.co.uk](http://bricklanebrews.co.uk)
- SNCF HAS launched TGVmax, the first unlimited travel pass for travellers aged 16-27. With the pass, young adults can explore every corner of France in complete freedom, with unlimited travel on all TGV and Intercités trains requiring reservations - to any destination, on any day.
- BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT has given support to charity, Birmingham Trees for Life (BTFL), by funding tree planting to help enhance the environment in the local area.
- UNIWORLD BOUTIQUE River Cruise Collection has announced that actress, author and producer, Dame Joan Collins, will be the Godmother of the S.S. Joie de Vivre, its newest Super Ship and the first of its kind to sail the Seine River. The vessel's christening

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## New 11-day India tour from Cox & Kings celebrates Indian independence

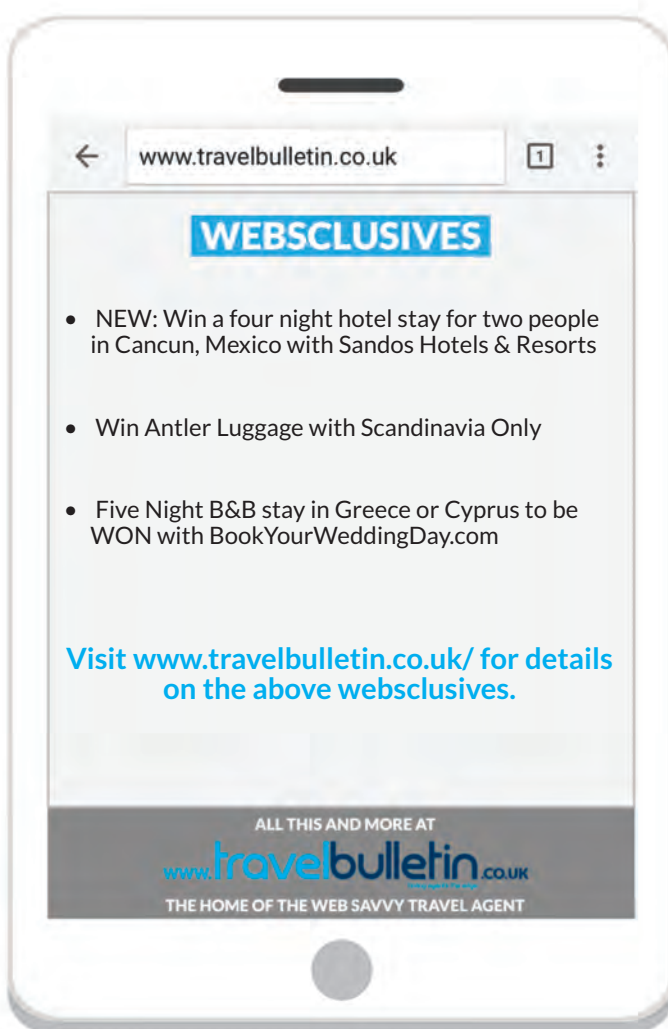
TO CELEBRATE the 70th anniversary of Indian independence and the nationwide cinema release of Viceroy's House on March 3, Cox & Kings has introduced a new private tour following in the footsteps of the last viceroy to India, Lord Mountbatten.

Priced from £2,425 per person including breakfast accommodation, transfers and flights, In the Viceroy's Footsteps is an 11-day, nine-night private tour that visits some of the historic sites associated with British rule, which ended in 1947 with the partition of India as well as some of the film locations that feature in Viceroy's House.

Guests can explore the viceroy's house, now the President's Palace, where Nehru, Jinnah and Gandhi converged to determine the future of an independent India. They can also discover India's colonial-era history in Delhi, before heading to Jodhpur to see some of the main filming locations.

The operator's India product manager, Sue Livsey, said: "I am delighted to be working alongside the Viceroy's House team. This is a fantastic film explaining the complex history of India's partition and independence and this new tour will bring even greater understanding of this story, visiting the places at its heart."

For more information see [coxandkings.co.uk](http://coxandkings.co.uk) or call 020-7873 5000.





## BOOKING INCENTIVES

- Travel 2 is giving agents the chance to win one of ten £100 shopping vouchers with its latest campaign, 'Escape Completely Indian Ocean'. The operator has teamed up with Emirates, Intercontinental Mauritius, Radisson Mauritius, Lily Beach Maldives, Atmosphere Kanifushi Maldives, Sun Resorts Mauritius, Outrigger Mauritius, Avani Seychelles and Le Meridien Mauritius to promote the Indian Ocean as the ultimate idyllic holiday destination. For the chance to win, agents must make a qualifying booking to the Indian Ocean before March 31 including flights with Emirates and a minimum three nights' ground arrangements. Meanwhile, following the launch of its standalone brochure dedicated to cruise and stay which includes European and worldwide fly, stay and cruise packages with a choice from 25 ocean, river and expedition cruise lines, agents have the chance to win a Cruise Plus holiday worth £3,000 when they make a qualifying Cruise Plus booking before March 31. Details at [travel2.com](http://travel2.com)
- Agents making a booking for Walt Disney World Resort in Florida this month with Attraction World can claim a different Disney prize for every booking made by emailing the booking reference through to [disney@attractionworld.com](mailto:disney@attractionworld.com). Agents making two bookings will qualify to enter the company's Golden Circle where there's a bigger prize of seven nights' stay for two at Walt Disney World Resort up for grabs. To enter, answer five questions on Walt Disney World at [attractionworld.com](http://attractionworld.com)
- Paradise Beach Nevis on the Caribbean island of Nevis is offering agents the chance earn one free night's stay for every booking of four nights or more they make to the resort. The incentive is accumulative so agents are rewarded with a free night for each booking registered, with no limit on the number of nights that can be earned. The promotion is valid from now until May 31 and for travel up to November 30 this year.

## AGENT TRAINING

VISIT ORLANDO'S upcoming travel agent training roadshow will now visit ten cities across the UK for the first time, with the new addition of Dublin. The roadshows, in association with Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment and Universal Orlando Resort, will commence on March 6 in Manchester and conclude on March 30 in Dublin. Agents are encouraged to register by February 27 at [visitorlandoevent.cvent.com/roadshow17](http://visitorlandoevent.cvent.com/roadshow17)

## FANCY A FAM?

CONTIKI HAS announced a new ROCK Around The World fam trip for music festival agents, heading to Porto from June 3-13. The trip will include three days at NOS Primavera Sound, the Portuguese counterpart to the San Miguel Primavera Sound open-air festival, which has taken place in Barcelona since 2001. Drawing from the line-up of its older sibling, NOS Primavera Porto is a more intimate, stripped back affair. The 11-day trip will also take in the cities of Barcelona, San Sebastian, Burgos, Porto, Salamanca and Madrid. For details see [contiki.com/agents](http://contiki.com/agents) or for the chance to earn a place on the fam email [laura.brown@contiki.co.uk](mailto:laura.brown@contiki.co.uk) to register. The incentive closes on March 31 and winners will be announced the week commencing April 10.

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## New Eurowings service to Vienna takes off from Birmingham next month

BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT and Eurowings are set to launch a new service to Vienna from March 26.

The six times weekly operation to Austria's capital city is in addition to the carrier's current programme to Dusseldorf and Hamburg, and all services are planned with an A320 aircraft configured to 180 seats.

William Pearson, the airport's aviation director, said: "Eurowings is an important partner of Birmingham Airport as it already serves two routes to Dusseldorf and Hamburg which are hugely important to the Midlands Engine and the region's leisure market.

"We're therefore very pleased that the airline will be launching a new route from Birmingham to Vienna this summer and I'm sure that it will be welcomed by customers looking for somewhere exciting to explore for leisure, as well as offering a convenient schedule for passengers travelling on business."

For more information visit [birminghamairport.co.uk](http://birminghamairport.co.uk)

## New California programme from The Turquoise Holiday Company

WITH ITS first foray into North America, long-haul holiday specialist The Turquoise Holiday Company has launched a new collection of luxury holidays to California.

Selected by the company as one of its 'hot' new destinations for 2017, California has provided inspiration for some of its most contemporary self-drive holidays, family adventures and honeymoons.

As with all its destinations, the company has hand-picked an eclectic choice of boutique and unusual properties and experiences, where visitors can look forward to the ultimate road trip through

deserts, beaches, mountains, wine country and cities, all enhanced by a mix of accommodation and excursions.

Suzy Higgs, California & South Pacific product manager for the operator, has put together the programme following an extensive recce of the state with marketing director Lizzie Heeley.

Higgs said: "As specialists in the South Pacific and New Zealand, we've honed our expertise in the west coast gateways of San Francisco and Los Angeles as stopovers en route to the Southern Hemisphere, so it's only natural that we should develop a dedicated

California programme. In conjunction with the team at Visit California and a selection of brilliant partners throughout California we have created holidays that incorporate the state's unique laid back culture and natural beauty with a focus on the swathe of luxury properties and experiences on offer across the Golden State."

As an example, a two-week road trip through California costs from £2,590 per person, while a family of four can plan a two-week holiday from £6,500, both including flights.

For more information or to book visit [turquoiseholidays.co.uk/california](http://turquoiseholidays.co.uk/california) or call 01494-678400.



**A-ROSA has introduced a selection of four-, five and seven-night itineraries on the Seine for this year, available from March 26 to December 22. A seven-night 'Seine Experience Normandy' cruise departing on May 27, calling at Paris, Rouen, Caudebec-en-Caux, Les Andaley, Vernon and finishing in Paris costs from £1,399 per person, based on two sharing. This includes seven nights' stay in an outside cabin; breakfast, lunch, dinner and all drinks onboard; flights from Heathrow; transfers and taxes, plus a VIP home pick-up service (within 50 miles). For details call 0800-440 2797 or see [cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk](http://cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk)**

## bmi regional boosts baggage allowance & adds pre-booked seat option

BMI REGIONAL has launched an amended baggage and seating policy, which aims to make travelling with the airline simpler. All customers flying with the airline will continue to receive a standard free baggage allowance and this has now been increased to 23kg at no additional cost.

Clients will also have the option to pre-book their preferred seat via the customer contact centre or online up to 48 hours in advance for a fee of £8 for a standard seat or £15 for an exit row seat.

The carrier is also making it easier for passengers to take extra luggage, introducing an online option to pre-book additional luggage and sporting equipment. Extra bags of up to 23kg can now be pre-booked online for £40 each way, while sporting equipment can be pre-booked online for £45 each way.

Jochen Schnadt, the airline's chief commercial officer, said: "These changes are all part of our strategy to enhance and simplify our product offering. With our focus on quality and convenience of service and carefully listening to our customers, we believe that our new baggage and seating policy will give customers greater flexibility, greater choice and make travelling with us even easier."

For more information visit [bmiregional.com](http://bmiregional.com) or call 0330-333 7998.



# Su Doku

Win a £50 M&S voucher in the [travelbulletin](#) Su Doku prize puzzle

Number: 006

**A** →

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 |   |   |   | 3 |   |   | 2 |   |
| 7 |   | 4 |   |   | 5 |   | 1 | 3 |
| 5 | 3 |   | 4 |   | 8 |   | 9 | 6 |
| 9 |   | 3 | 8 |   |   |   |   | 7 |
|   |   |   | 6 |   | 2 |   |   |   |
| 4 |   |   |   |   | 9 | 1 |   | 8 |
| 2 | 4 |   | 5 |   | 3 |   | 8 | 1 |
| 6 | 1 |   | 2 |   |   | 5 |   | 4 |
|   | 8 |   |   | 6 |   |   |   | 2 |

**B** →

**C** →

**D** →

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3 x 3 squares contains the digits 1-9.

Once you have completed the puzzle, simply identify the numbers that relate to the letters, A, B, C and D then e-mail the solution, with your name, company name, and full postal address plus phone and ABTA number if applicable to:

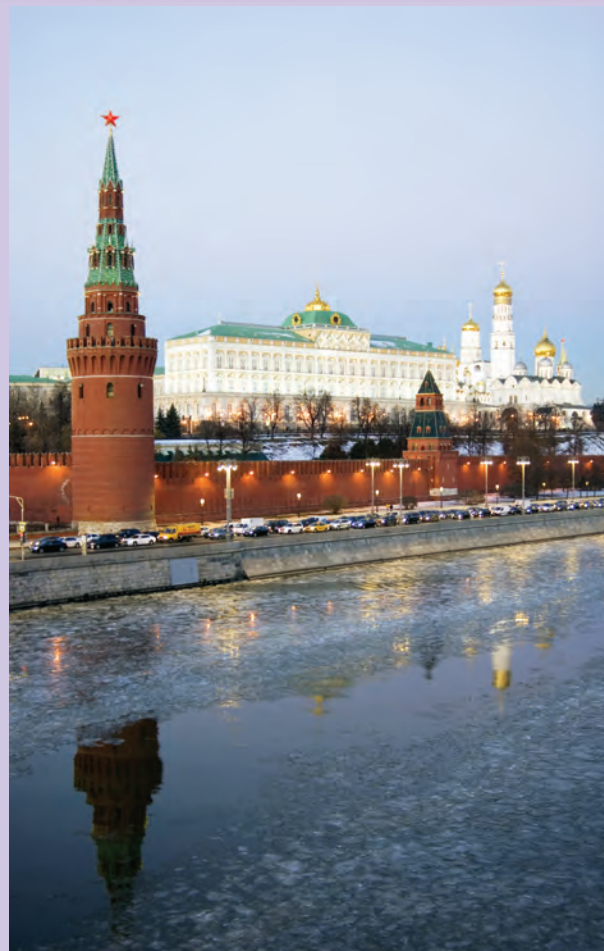
[competition@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:competition@travelbulletin.co.uk)

Closing date for entries is Thursday, February 17th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

**The winner for 27th January is David Sneddon, Ian Dickson  
Travel in Edinburgh.**

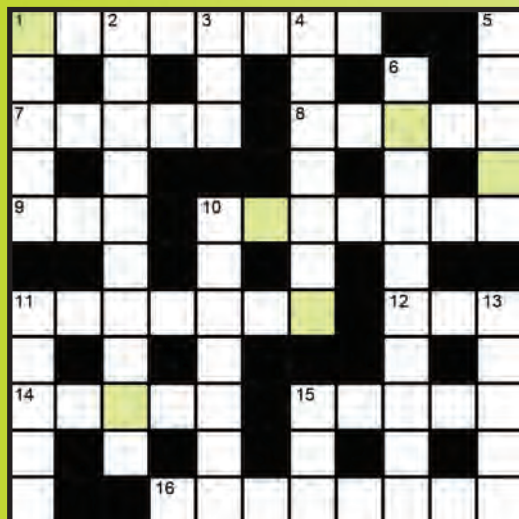
**January 27 Solution: A=5 B=4 C=7 D=3**

# Where Am I?



This 'fortress within the city' includes five palaces, four cathedrals, an enclosing wall with towers and, together with Red Square, is included on the UNESCO List. As well as a popular site for sightseeing, the complex serves as the official residence of the President of this country's Federation.

# Crossword



Fill in the crossword to reveal the mystery location highlighted by the green squares.

## Across

- Audley Travel offers safari holidays to this country (8)
- David, soon to appear on the Music Giants Special Stamp series (5)
- A statue of this princess is planned for Kensington Palace Gardens (5)
- BBC magazine and chat programme, The \_\_\_ Show (3)
- Welsh city (7)
- South American country (7)
- Portuguese airline (3)
- The Grand Union \_\_\_ stretches from London to Birmingham (5)
- West African country (5)
- Slumdog actor, now appearing in Lion at a cinema near you (3,5)

## Down

- Tom Hardy stars in this BBC historical drama (5)
- Country where you can take a scenic Lord of the Rings tour (3,7)
- Arrecife airport code (3)
- Midwestern US state (7)
- Capital of Cape Verde (5)
- Separates Tasmania from the Australian mainland (4,6)
- The Giralda Tower is a famous landmark in this Spanish city (7)
- The \_\_\_ is a picturesque area behind the riverside colleges of Cambridge (5)
- The Arizona Memorial is located in this Hawaiian Harbor (5)
- High street fashion store (3)

For the solution to the Crossword and Where Am I?  
Please see page 20

# Industry Insight by...



## Could this be the year of the family? asks Andy Stark, MD of The Global Travel Group

THERE ARE a few quintessential moments in your life when you become more aware of your advancing age: choosing where to go out based on the likelihood of getting a seat, finding out your boss is younger than you and mistaking teenage slang for another language.

This year I'll be adding Harry Potter to the list.

When I first heard that this summer marks 20 years since everyone's favourite boy wizard burst onto our bookshelves I assumed someone was playing a cruel trick. Two decades can't have flown by so quickly!

Like any great story, Harry's Hogwarts adventures seem to have captured the imagination of adults and children alike which has contributed to its enduring appeal. So it's perhaps little surprise that within our very own world of travel, family tourism remains one of the most lucrative sectors, one I recently read is reportedly worth £15billion.

Mintel research last year revealed that only half of those taking a family holiday fall under the traditional category of the 'nuclear family', which shows how important it is to take changing family structures into account if it's a market you're targeting.

Throw into the mix the fact that multi-generational travel is really taking off as a trend and '3G' could be a new chapter worth exploring for your business.

Even if the idea of taking the whole tribe away isn't your cup of tea, an ageing society means that grandparents increasingly have more free time to spend with their extended family. In fact, a piece in the

Telegraph last month suggests that in the last year alone more than 12.5 million Brits (18%) have been away in search of quality time on a trip involving at least three generations - grandparents, parents and kids.

Sometimes these overseas family get-togethers are prompted by weddings or milestone birthdays. And other times travellers have been incentivised by the financial reforms which allow people over 55 to withdraw a quarter of their pension tax free. But, regardless of whether the motivation is economic or emotional, it seems this trend is here to stay. Here at Global, our members have reported that typical 'family destinations' are off to a great start for 2017 with bookings up for Spain, Portugal and the Canary Islands.

As you'd expect, travel companies have evolved to provide family-oriented holidays with elements that will keep all ages entertained. Cruises are one popular option, ensuring families have a myriad of activities to choose from plus the flexibility to spend time both together and – critically – apart as they need it.

Similarly, with experiential travel still very much a hot topic for 2017, more and more families are heading off in search of authentic experiences that allow them to delve into a destination's history, culture and people.

So, whilst Harry Potter may have grown up with family he'd sooner escape from, it's clear that there are still many ways to reconnect in our Muggle world's own magical way.





# italy

## Private dining in The Vatican with Insight Vacations & Luxury Gold

A PRIVATE DINING experience within The Vatican is an exclusive experience for guests travelling to Rome with the TTC family of brands, of which Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold are part.

The new addition to selected Italy trips sees guests fast-tracked through a VIP entrance of the Vatican Museums with a local expert, where they can admire the Papal art collection and enter the Sistine Chapel to admire Michelangelo's masterpiece on its ceiling.

After the museums close their doors to the public, the tour culminates with a special invitation from a curator of the Ethnological Museum who shares their knowledge of the collection, before a private Signature Experience dining within the Vatican.

The experience is included on 2017 departures of Luxury Gold's 'Ultimate Italy' and on three of Insight Vacations' Premium journeys - Italian Intermezzo, Italian Elegance and Italian Escapade.



**TRAVELLING FROM** the coastal town of Sorrento, a 'Day Trip to Capri & Anacapri' is a popular tour offered through Attraction World, where clients can sail across the bay of Naples over to the island and visit the villa of Dr Axel Munthe, a Swedish doctor whose best-selling book 'Story of San Michele' tells of his time on Capri. Guests will then travel to the buzzing main square Piazza Umberto, with free time to enjoy the shops before returning to Sorrento. The tour costs from £96 per adult and £75 per child aged two-11.

## Diamond Rail takes a trip on the Little Trains of the Dolomites

ALTHOUGH AVAILABLE throughout the summer months, Diamond Rail Holidays is recommending that clients consider a late spring time trip on its new 'Lake Garda & the Little Trains of the Dolomites' itinerary.

Guests will be able to catch the last dustings of snow on the peaks and can make the most of the region before the summer crowds descend.

Based on the shores of Lake Garda, the ten-day trip includes a journey on the Mendola Funicular Railway, one of the longest and steepest in Europe; a trip on the 100-year-old Renon Railway from

Bolzano to Collalbo, across a plateau high in the mountains; plus a boat trip across Lake Garda and a cable car ride to the summit of Monte Baldo, from where it's possible to see the whole of Lake Garda.

The tour costs from £1,049 per person, including all rail travel, seven nights' half-board accommodation, breakfast accommodation on the outbound and return journey, plus excursions.

Departures are available on a selection of dates between May and October.

For more information visit [diamondrailholidays.co.uk](http://diamondrailholidays.co.uk) or call 0844-544 7581.

## Sherpa Expeditions seeks out 'the other side of Amalfi' & Cilentan Coast

FOR CLIENTS looking to experience what is beyond one of Italy's most popular stretches of coastline, Sherpa Expeditions is launching a new trip to the lesser known Cilentan Coast, found on the Gulf of Salerno's southern shore and the natural extension of the Amalfi Coast.

The new trip is a short walking break designed to showcase 'the other side of Amalfi' and concentrates on Cilento, Italy's largest National Park, which remains largely undisturbed, with rocky ridges, pinewoods and olive trees interspersed with fishing villages, mediaeval farm houses and traditional water mills.

Tali Emdin, manager of the activity holiday specialist, said: "Year after year we are finding that the Amalfi Coast is a part of the world that strikes a real chord with our customers; however, we are often asked if there is a different side to it, one which is lesser known and off-the-beaten-track, and this is how the idea of the trip was born.

"Most visitors to the Amalfi Coast do not veer off beyond Vietri sul Mare, its easternmost point. Cilento, a National Park with World Heritage listing, is like a step back in time and just a short distance further south. This is Campania's real secret."

New for 2017, the five-day 'Cilento Coast and Mountain' costs from £580 per person with daily self-guided departures between March and October. The trip can be taken either as a standalone short break or as an extension to the operator's eight- and 11-day Amalfi itineraries.

For more information visit [sherpaexpeditions.com](http://sherpaexpeditions.com) or call 020-8875 5070.



## A Tuscan treat from Great Rail Journeys available with £99 deposit

NEW FOR 2017, Great Rail Journeys has introduced the 'Tuscan Retreat' from £2,295 per person.

Based near the UNESCO village of San Gimignano, the itinerary includes an exploration of the renaissance delights of Florence, the Gothic beauty of Siena, and the rich fruits of the Tuscan sunshine, complete with a cookery lesson and wine tasting during nine

nights in four-star hotel accommodation and First Class rail travel. The holiday can be secured for a deposit of £99 per person when booking on or before February 28.

Sharon Smith, head of sales and distribution for the operator, said: "Italy practically sells itself. It has been a top destination for ours for years and it's clear why. With friendly locals, great

food and world-famous culture and history, Italy is the country with the most UNESCO sites in the world and a must-see destination.

"To meet customer demand, we have introduced four new tours to Italy for 2017, including the ten-day Menaggio on Lake Como, from £2,425 per person." Visit [greatrail.com](http://greatrail.com) or call 0800-240 4470 for more details.

## Sunvil adds Naturalis Bio Resort & Spa in Puglia to 2017 programme

NEW TO Sunvil's 2017 programme - and an ideal retreat for couples looking for a unique trip to Italy, the Naturalis Bio Resort & Spa is a traditional Masseria (fortified farm house) which produces its own wine and beauty products in southern Puglia.

Situated in the Salento peninsula in southern Puglia, the organic farmstead has been restored with contemporary interiors and each room offers its own en suite bathroom featuring a chromotherapy shower (which uses coloured lights to heal the body).

Surrounded by citrus orchards, herb gardens and a small vineyard, the hotel also produces its own Negroamaro wine, while its aloe plants are used to produce the Naturalis organic health product range, which are used in the spa. A salt-water infinity pool offers uninterrupted views of the organic estate and the surrounding countryside.

The lead-in price for seven nights is £944 per person based on two sharing, departing on September 20. It includes flights from Gatwick, breakfast accommodation and car hire.

Guests can also stay at the hotel as part of a new itinerary to Basilicata and Puglia on the Adriatic Coast which costs from £1,345 per person, based on two sharing. The package includes seven nights' breakfast accommodation, flights from Gatwick and car hire.

To book or for further information call 020-8758 4722 or visit [sunvil.co.uk](http://sunvil.co.uk)



**MONARCH IS offering a 20% saving on early bookings for stays at the four-star Miramare Sea Resort and Spa Naples Beach in Ischia. The property overlooks the Bay of Maronti and features a spa with a range of treatments available as well as thermal pools. A seven-night breakfast stay leads in at £725 per person, based on two sharing and departing Luton on May 5. Visit [monarchagents.co.uk](http://monarchagents.co.uk) for details.**

## SuperBreak adds three-night dinner package in Rome from £283

SUPERBREAK HAS added a new dinner package at the four-star Romanico Hotel in Rome.

It includes three nights' breakfast accommodation plus dinner and a welcome drink on one of the nights. Flights can be added from a variety of UK airports and are fully commissionable.

The hotel, which is the only Rome property in the operator's programme to offer this package, is located in the heart of the city and is suited for short break customers with everything within easy reach.

With a traditional and elegant charm, guests can also dine in the Roof Garden Fulvius restaurant which offers 360-degree views over the city.

Prices in mid-March start from £283 per person including flights from Stansted.

For more information call 01904-436000 or visit [superbreak.com/agents](http://superbreak.com/agents)



*FOR THOSE staying in Hong Kong looking to experience mainland China, Attraction World recommends its 'Guangzhou Day Trip', priced from £199 per adult and £179 per child aged up to eight years. Historically known as Canton, Guangzhou is the largest city of the Guangdong province with a history of more than 2,000 years that saw it serve as an important gateway to southern China. On the one-day sightseeing excursion guests will embark on a Catamaran ride to the port of Shekou, see the Chinese Pandas, enjoy a stroll through a local market as part of a city tour with visits to The Six Banyan Tree Temple and The Memorial Hall of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, enjoy a set Chinese lunch menu and see a Terracotta Warrior Exhibition, before returning to Hong Kong by express train.*

## New cruise options fuel growth in Brits visiting Singapore

IN RECENT years the popularity of cruising has continued to grow amongst British holidaymakers, as has the popularity of Singapore, with data showing that from January to October last year the number of UK visitors increased by 5% compared to the same period the year before.

These two factors are expected to lead to a significant increase in the number of pre- and post-cruise stopovers in Singapore this year, part of a wider trend for longer pre- and/or post-cruise stays in far flung destinations.

In anticipation of this, P&O is offering a 'Taste of Singapore' package aimed at the UK market, which includes a three-night stay in Singapore. In addition, Royal Caribbean's current season is its longest ever in Singapore.

In 2015, there were more than one million cruise passenger arrivals in Singapore, with a total of 385 cruise ships visiting the destination, demonstrating its growing reputation as a key Asian cruise destination and one which is set to be a larger and more significant part of cruise itineraries in 2017.

Jason Chan, area director for the Singapore Tourism Board, Europe, said: "Singapore's standing as a world-class cruise destination for the European fly/cruise market is growing fast and the trend for longer stays in fly/cruise-destinations is set to offer a significant boost for Singapore visitor numbers throughout 2017.

"It's demonstrative of Singapore becoming a destination in its own right, with Brits wanting to spend more time to explore the wealth and diversity of experiences on offer, including the Botanic Gardens, multiple cultural ethnic enclaves, world-class food, as well as world-renowned attractions such as Marina Bay and the Supertree Grove."

## Eva Air joins with RIMOWA for cutting-edge luggage e-tags

EVA AIR is collaborating with RIMOWA, a premium travel and carry-on luggage manufacturer, to introduce cutting-edge electronic tags into the carrier's check-in procedures.

Becoming the first airline in Asia and the second worldwide to officially offer the new service, airline passengers and owners of RIMOWA's suitcases can now use the carrier's mobile App and RIMOWA's electronic tag system for a seamless check-in experience.

The concept allows passengers to fast-track through the usual airport check-in procedure, skipping queues and processing their luggage. With one click they can connect the app to their luggage and confirm all e-tag

information on an electronic panel built into the side of their suitcase. On completion of the e-tag check-in process, passengers drop their luggage at the airport's designated online check-in counter, before continuing their journey.

Initially, the new e-tag baggage check-in service will be available for all passengers travelling outbound from a number of international airports, including Paris, Vienna, San Francisco, Seattle, Houston, New York, Vancouver, Toronto and Tokyo, with plans to add more airports in the near future.

For more information visit [evaair.com](http://evaair.com) or call 020-7380 8300.

## Korea's Haenyeo becomes part of a UNESCO Cultural Heritage

SOUTH KOREA'S 'Haenyeo' (or free-diving ladies) from the southern island of Jeju were recently listed as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The women continue the island's tradition of diving to the sea bed without breathing apparatus to collect conches, abalones and seaweed and, in a bygone era, these ladies had to risk their lives to collect the sea bounty as their chief source of revenue.

The Haenyeo became Korea's 19th intangible cultural heritage inscribed by UNESCO; and is another addition to Jeju's UNESCO recognitions of natural science in the categories of Biosphere, World Natural Heritage and Global Geoparks. The island received intangible cultural heritage designation for the Chilmeoridang Yeongdeung-gut, a shamanist ritual to a local sea and wind goddess who protects both divers and fisherman.

## Wendy Wu offers flight upgrades & Hong Kong stopovers

WENDY WU TOURS has teamed up with Cathay Pacific and the Hong Kong Tourism Board to bring customers an exclusive Business Class Upgrade and stopover in Hong Kong.

Bookings for tours to China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma or Japan made throughout this month benefit from a flight upgrade to Business Class, with fully-flat bed, Champagne on tap and lounge access for an extra £199 per person.

The upgrade is available on the inbound journey and is valid on Cathay Pacific flights from Gatwick and Manchester, while a return upgrade costs from £999. Customers from Heathrow can upgrade on the inbound flight from £399.

In addition, flying via Hong Kong, guests can experience the stopover city from £199 for three days, including four-star

accommodation at the Eaton Hotel, transfers and a city tour. On the tour guests will visit Stanley Market, take a trip to Victoria Park and have the chance to explore the quainter side of Hong Kong life at Aberdeen Fishing Village.

Ben Briggs, head of marketing for the operator, said: "We continue to offer incredible value when travelling to Asia and it's great we can partner with award-winning Cathay Pacific and Hong Kong Tourism this February to make it happen.

"Not only can guests experience the luxury of flying Business Class, but we are also offering the opportunity to experience one of Asia's must-see cities, Hong Kong, when en-route to other destinations in China, Southeast Asia or Japan."

Visit [wendywutours.co.uk](http://wendywutours.co.uk) or call 0800-902 0888 for more information.



## Finnair expands Far East frequencies for winter 2017

FINNAIR HAS announced that it is adding the Indian coastal city of Goa to its winter schedule and adding extra frequencies to many other popular winter destinations, making destinations in Asia easier to reach for UK travellers.

The airline will fly twice-weekly flights to Goa between November 29 through to March 21, 2018, with flights being operated from Helsinki on Wednesdays and Sundays with an A330 aircraft, and customers travelling from the UK able to take advantage of fast connections at Helsinki Vantaa Airport.

In line with this growth strategy, the carrier will also boost capacity and improve flight schedules to Thailand during the winter 2017 season.

Two additional weekly frequencies will be added to the Bangkok route, bringing the total number of weekly flights between Helsinki and Bangkok to 16. The airline will also adjust its schedule to offer a late evening flight between both cities offering additional flexibility for travellers.

Flight schedules for the Krabi and Phuket routes for winter 2017 have also been adjusted in order to enable more efficient connections for passengers flying from Helsinki.

The company is also adding two new frequencies to its Singapore route, making it a daily destination year-round, plus three additional weekly frequencies to Hong Kong, making it a ten-weekly operation year-round.

The new flights are available for sale at [finnair.com](http://finnair.com)



**DUSIT THANI Krabi Beach Resort has opened three new restaurants and bars. The Malati Beach Bar is easily accessible from the resort or directly from Klong Muong Beach and provides a place to relax and enjoy speciality snacks. Located next to Limoncello Italian Restaurant and by the Coco Vida Pool, is the Coco Vida Bar open from 16:00 to midnight. The bar offers a daily happy-hour with Thai boutique beers and cocktails crafted with home-made infusions. A new look for Italian restaurant Limoncello is also now on show, offering a casual ambience with views over the Andaman Sea.**

## First Kew Green branded hotel launches in Hong Kong

FOLLOWING THE purchase of Kew Green Hotels by HK CTS Hotels Co Ltd, the hotel group has launched its first Kew Green branded hotel in Wanchai, Hong Kong, marking the group's expansion into the Chinese market.

The hotel is the first of a number of Kew Green branded hotels which will be rolled out in China over the coming year. The properties will offer a taste of British hospitality to visitors from around the world, supported by members of the team in the UK to bring guests an authentic experience.

In addition, Kew Green will be bringing a taste of the Far East to the UK via a new concept restaurant in Liverpool, with a new Chinese restaurant to be opened at the Crowne Plaza Liverpool - John Lennon Airport Hotel in the city.

Alex Pritchard, chief executive officer for the hotel group, said; "We've had a fantastic first year working alongside HK CTS. Last year was a great one for us; we launched our new visual identity, saw the opening of the first Kew Green Hotel in China, executed a huge refurbishment programme across a number of our sites, as well as developed a fantastic cultural exchange with our counterparts in China. I'm excited to see what 2017 has in store for us as we expand further in the UK, Europe and China."





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Ticketing 020 7495 8641 (UK)

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## Regent Holidays discovers more of North Korea on hikes & highlights tour

REGENT HOLIDAYS has added to its programme of North Korea itineraries.

A 13-day 'Hikes & Highlights of North Korea' trip combines some of the more well-known sightseeing spots, such as the capital city of Pyongyang, DMZ and the International Friendship Exhibition, with opportunities to hike and explore North Korea's mountains as the autumn leaves start to turn.

Before returning to Pyongyang, there are opportunities for off-the-beaten-track experiences including bathing in the Sea of Japan, a visit to the Masikryong Ski Resort, a tour around a local secondary school and discovering the port city of Wonsan.

The trip departs on September 25 and costs from £2,750 per person, based on two sharing and including flights from Beijing to Pyongyang, accommodation throughout, many meals, transfers and excursions. Flights to Beijing are excluded.

For more information visit [regent-holidays.co.uk](http://regent-holidays.co.uk) or call 020-7666 1244.



## Chiva-Som completes Suite renovation

CHIVA-SOM International Health Resort in Thailand has completed the renovation of all its Ocean Rooms and Suites in the North, Central and South wings, which are now open and available for booking.

The newly-upgraded rooms and suites feature contemporary Thai design and additional space in the bathroom, with dressing areas and redecorated interiors combining luxury and serenity with the use of Thai teak, silk and bamboo, together with hidden mood and sensor lighting systems to create a calming effect.

The improvements extend to nearly all in-room accessories, including new guest robes, amenities and stationery as well as the inclusion of a sleep spray and a stylish take-home bag. The rooms boast seating areas on the balconies and terraces and full floor-to-ceiling windows to provide guests with an immersive nature experience.

The property's wellness retreat and destination spa aims to provide an integrated and collaborative approach to transformations in mind, body and spirit, guiding guests towards optimal wellness.

For more information visit [chivasom.com](http://chivasom.com)

## Tokyo & Kyoto focus from Gold Medal

GOLD MEDAL has introduced a six-page Japan feature to its Asia brochure focusing on Tokyo and Kyoto.

Rebecca Turner, senior product manager Asia and Australia for the operator, said: "I would recommend visiting Tokyo between September and November as during the autumn months it's beautiful as the seasons change, the temperatures are more comfortable and visitors can enjoy the city without it being as busy as during the summer months."

Unlike the metropolis of Tokyo, Kyoto is an old traditional town and the operator suggests that clients consider a visit here in October or November or between March and May.

Turner said: "When in Kyoto I would suggest visiting Nijo Castle, the Kyoto residence of Tokugawa Ieyasu - the first shogun of the Edo period. Other must-dos include viewing the city from Kyoto Tower, Kyoto's tallest tower and, for anyone visiting in April, taking a walk along Philosopher's Path to see hundreds of cherry trees in full blossom."

A highlight of the operator's programme is a seven-day Japan Explorer tour which starts in Tokyo, travels via Hakone and Mount Fuji and concludes in Kyoto. A selection of three-day tours are also available in both Tokyo and Kyoto.

## New hotel and city developments increase Hong Kong's appeal

HONG KONG has a series of new developments lined up as well as new hotel openings for this year.

Examples include the opening of Kerry Hotel, a new offering from the Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts group. Designed by Andre Fu, the flagship property will sit on Kowloon's waterfront at Hung Hom Bay, offering views of Victoria Harbour and the HK Island skyline. The five-star, urban hotel will feature 546 rooms, four innovative dining options and a rooftop bar.

Another addition to the city's hotel portfolio will be The Murray, a Niccolo Hotel, which is due to be unveiled in the fourth quarter of this year.

Located on the Cotton Tree Drive in the heart of Hong Kong, The Murray will offer a luxury hotel with a contemporary urban chic design.

Sir Norman Foster has accepted the challenge to re-design the architectural and interior finishes for this historic hotel (originally built in 1969), bringing it to life as a celebration of the past and future of Hong Kong.

Other developments include new transport links, which will make it easier for visitors to explore the city. As an example, the newly opened MTR South Island Line (East) will connect Ocean Park, Wong Chuk Hang, Lei Tung and South Horizons to the centre of Hong Kong and create a new tourism district, allowing visitors to discover even more of Kowloon.

For more information visit [discoverhongkong.com](http://discoverhongkong.com)





**GUESTS CAN** enjoy a seven-night stay at Phuket's Kata Rocks for £2,435 per person, based on two sharing a one-bedroom Sky Villa on a bed-and-breakfast basis. The price includes flights from Heathrow with Emirates, two complimentary 60-minute massages in the spa, a welcome cocktail on arrival at the exclusive Sunset Bar, private transfers and a UK lounge pass. Visit [elegantresorts.co.uk](http://elegantresorts.co.uk)

## Travel 2 reveals emerging booking trends across Asia

TRAVEL 2 HAS reported that this year to date has been 'strong' for destinations in Asia, with Thailand, Malaysia and Bali each showing positive year-on-year growth.

Mark Mallinson, Asia assistant product manager for the operator, said: "Malaysia and Indonesia sales have been greatly helped by the air fares we've had to these destinations this year. Multi-centre holidays are selling well across Asia, combining different countries in addition to different regions of the same one, such as Thailand and Vietnam and Hong Kong and Bali. Holidays appear to be increasing slightly in length too because of this. With airfares offering more and more additions and side route options, this can only increase into 2017."

China and Japan are also reported to be popular, with both destinations showing more than 30% growth for 2016 arrivals, consistent every month.

Mallinson said: "In terms of trends, we're also seeing a continued increase in luxury hotels. The quality of many Asia luxury properties is world class but the prices are so much less than any other part of the world, opening up their affordability to many more consumers."

As an example of packages, the company is offering 12 nights including three nights at the four-star Rembrandt Hotel and Towers and eight at the four-star Centara Karon Resort from £849 per person. Economy flights with Emirates from Gatwick and shuttle transfers in both Bangkok and Phuket are also included, as is a complimentary room upgrade in Bangkok and four free nights in Phuket, valid for departures between April 18 and June 30. Visit [travel2.com](http://travel2.com) or call 0800-022 4182 for more details.

## Korean Air introduces first direct flight to Barcelona

COMMENCING FROM April, Korean Air is to introduce direct flights from Incheon to Barcelona.

The new direct flight will run three times a week from Incheon and marks the first direct flight to Barcelona from Northeast Asia.

Due to a rise in demand, the airline is also increasing the frequency of flights between Incheon and San Francisco from seven to fourteen flights weekly. The increase in frequency will be introduced on a gradual basis; from late April to June flights will be increased to twelve weekly, from June to August flights will be increased to thirteen weekly and from September flights will be increased to

fourteen weekly.

In addition, the carrier will increase the frequency of flights between Incheon and Seattle from five to seven flights weekly from May. The current two daily flights between Incheon and Los Angeles will also increase to three daily flights during the summer high season from June to August.

The airline is also to suspend two routes this month. From early February it will suspend the Incheon to Siem Reap Cambodia route and from late February the Incheon flight to Jeddah, Saudia Arabia (via Riyadh) will cease operation. More information can be found at [koreanair.com](http://koreanair.com)

## New secret pool villas on Thailand's Koh Samui

THE LIBRARY, a conceptual hotel built in a semi-minimalist architectural style, situated on Koh Samui's Chaweng Beach is due to launch 20 new secret pool villas in April.

Designed around an 8m salt-water swimming pool, the villas offer a new design accommodation option on the island and complement the property's current 26 rooms.

Interspersed with works of art and sculpture, The Library and its surroundings feature verdant gardens, blue waters and pale beaches offset by a bold colour scheme dominated by white, red and grey. Interiors are bathed in an ultra-minimalist palette completed with modern facilities.

The project was shaped by the hands of island local and owner Kasemtham Sornsong, who was inspired to create a new icon for the island, reflecting the enthusiasm and modern artistry of the younger local Samui generation. For more information visit [thelibrary.co.th](http://thelibrary.co.th)



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**WITH ITS hosting of the Lantern Festival this month, all eyes will be on Yunlin County in Taiwan. Celebrated on the first full moon of the Chinese New Year, Lantern Festivals are one of Taiwan's tourism highlights and a must-see spectacle for many international travellers. Festivities include lantern making, lantern riddle games, light shows and lantern parades, together with displays of decorative lanterns. The festival route takes visitors through the region; from the traditional sites, including the God-Bene Sesame museum and the historic Hand Puppet museum; to the quirky, such as the iiCake Yunlin Cake Towel Café. Also along the route is the Gukeng Green Tunnel and the historic Yungzhong Street alongside the grand Beigang Chaotian Temple, where the bustling annual parade can be enjoyed.**

## puzzlesolutions

### Crossword:

Across: 1. TANZANIA, 7. BOWIE, 8. DIANA, 9. ONE, 10. SWANSEA, 11. BOLIVIA, 12. TAP, 14. CANAL, 15. GHANA, 16. DEV PATEL.

Down: 1. TABOO, 2. NEW ZEALAND, 3. ACE, 4. INDIANA, 5. PRAIA, 6. BASS STRAIT, 10. SEVILLE, 11. BACKS, 13. PEARL, 15. GAP.

Highlighted Word: TAIWAN

Where Am I?: Kremlin, Moscow, Russia.

## We asked our staff the following question this week: How will you be spending Valentine's Day?



### Jeanette Ratcliffe

Publisher

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*Champagne, candlelit dinner for two...oops then I wake up and realise it's a night in watching Eastenders!*



### Laurretta Wright

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*Probably nursing a sick child - or myself! Roll on summer!*



### Adam Potter

Editorial Assistant

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*Constructing haiku poems out of sweet love hearts*



### Paul Scudamore

Contributing Editor

*In Australia on the Queen Mary 2 where my wife is a speaker! Who's a lucky boy!*



### Simon Eddolls

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*Cooking Steak and Chips*



### Tim Podger

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*An evening river cruise in Bangkok as it is our wedding anniversary*



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Senior Account Manager

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*Sharing the love with Travel Bulletin*



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*Boozy*



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### Catherine Dillon

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*Hopefully wine and dined*



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*Watching Bridget Jones*



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*Watching Deadpool on Blu-ray.*



### Miriam Brtkova

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*I don't celebrate valentine's day. If you love someone, you would give them presents everyday*



### Lucia Mathurin

Design Apprentice

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*Stuffing my face with Chocolates*



### Nelly Mendes

Production

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*Going to London Zoo*





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