

travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge

DON'T MISS...



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Exploring new
tourism concepts
to attract clients



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travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

Invites you to attend a

North America Showcase

agent networking evening



Monday 16th March 2015
Crowne Plaza Leeds



Monday 23rd March 2015
Park Inn by Radisson, Cardiff

Agents, come and join us at one of these informative, fun events and learn more about the accommodation and flight options available to this amazing part of the world. Soak up the North American ambiance and update yourselves on the diverse range of activities, multi-centre holidays, fly drives, city breaks and tailor-made packages on offer to meet your customers' needs.

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

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 4 staff members by Wednesday 11th March 2015 to:- tasneem.rahman@travelbulletin.co.uk or telephone:

020 7834 6661

for more information.

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

SPONSORS





WHO 'NOSE' BEST...

1 We have compiled a list of their favourite amusing questions from passengers to get into the spirit for this year's Comic Relief. Questions included "What are the hanging arrangements on board?", "Will the lift take me up or down?", "Do the crew sleep on board as well?" and "I'm on a British Isles cruise but I've lost my passport...can I use my bus pass instead?" Pictured dressed to impress for today's Red Nose Day are members of the line's reservations team. The company is supporting the charity with a range of events to raise money, and guests who donate to Comic Relief can enter the draw to win a range of prizes including a three-night cruise, a six-night cruise and a cruise up to 14 nights.

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Survey reveals sterling's rise in value against the euro means average holidaymaker saves £79 per trip

NEW ANALYSIS from travel money business Centrip reveals that sterling is now worth around 15% more against the euro than it was this time two years ago, and estimates this could save British holidaymakers going to the EU around £79 per trip on the value of their spending money.

The company's research reveals the nation took around 28.5 million holidays in the EU in 2013, spending a total of

£14.6billion whilst there. It says if the valuation of sterling against the euro remains the same this year when compared to two years ago, we could on average spend £78.77 less in 2015 and have more or less the same spending power we did in 2013. The company estimates that two years ago people spent on average around £511.84 per holiday, and to have the same level of spending money today they only need

to spend around £433.07.

Brian Jamieson, the company's co-founder and managing director, said: "As sterling continues to grow against the euro, the power of our spending money whilst holidaying in the EU increases. Sterling has recently hit new seven-year highs versus the euro, and many of our customers are locking in current attractive rates and buying euros to use today or at a later date."

Cosmos survey reveals ideal flight time

COSMOS HOLIDAYS recently conducted a survey of more than 2,000 UK adults to reveal the elements that contribute to the nation's 'ideal' holiday. Unsurprisingly, the majority like to escape to sunnier climes, with 76% of Brits voting for beach breaks. The survey also revealed the ideal length of a flight to their holiday destination of choice, with 68% of respondents having a preference for a three- to four-hour flight. When asked about their favourite European holiday destinations for 2015, Spain came out on top, with Greece ranking as the second most popular for those looking for some sun.

Following the results of the survey, the

operator is highlighting a choice of 21 Greek destinations for summer with flights from Birmingham, Luton, Gatwick and Manchester.

As examples, a seven-night, self-catering stay at Katelios Studios in Kefalonia, departing from Manchester on May 16, leads in at £179 per person, based on two adults sharing a studio.

Alternatively, a seven-night, half-board stay at Apostolata Resort in Kefalonia's Skala, departing from Gatwick on May 16, costs £345 based on two sharing a twin room. For more information or to book see www.cosmos.co.uk or call 0843-227 0962.

Gatwick gets fresh as new Wondertree restaurant confirmed for summer

GATWICK AIRPORT has announced that Wondertree, an all-day dining experience from the creators of Giraffe restaurants, is the latest high-quality new restaurant to move to the airport.

The new restaurant has been secured by The Restaurant Group plc and follows a highly successful year of new openings at Gatwick for TRG Concessions.

The Wondertree restaurant will open at Gatwick's South Terminal this summer and its location will allow passengers to take advantage of airfield views over the runway.

It will include 5,250sq.ft of restaurant space offering seats and runway views for up to 200 passengers, natural and fresh foods cooked to order in an open kitchen with all dishes served within 15 minutes; the offer of both a café for passengers to grab-and-go food and a full service restaurant for those that want to relax; and an extensive menu and drinks choice.

The Wondertree news follows Gatwick's announcement of a further £1billion of investment to continue the transformation of the airport, including the retail and catering offering for passengers.



Attraction World has announced a new partnership with Guide Dogs for the Blind. The company will support the charity through fundraising activities involving agents, as well as committing for a three-month booking period a donation of £3 for every three bookings an agent makes (until May 31). Agents who commit to making three bookings during this period will also win themselves a Labrador mascot and also get the chance to suggest a name for the first puppy the company will sponsor. Pictured marking the new partnership inside the branch of Thomas Cook in Solihull are various members of staff along with Nicola Harper (front) from Attraction World and Miles Northwood (front) from Guide Dogs for the Blind.

WLH offers savings on new lodge rooms at Bodelwyddan Castle

WARNER LEISURE Hotels is giving guests more reasons to sample the new lodge rooms at Bodelwyddan Castle with a selection of savings.

Guests wishing to visit the new Garden Lodges between April 20 and June 29 can take advantage of the savings with a three-night weekend Lodge room break starting from £279 – £60 more than the standard option – and a lodge suite break starting from £319 per person, per break including a Simply Dine package.

The Garden Lodges are situated within landscaped gardens complete with pond and water features. Three of the blocks will be two-storey, comprising of ten lodges in each and



three will be single storey containing five lodges in each.

Guests can spend the day by the heated swimming pool or relax with a spa treatment. Onsite activities include 'BalletBeFit - feel young' classes,

boules, Zumba, archery and wine tasting.

The savings will be bookable until April 20, subject to availability, and they include the £20 per room and £30 per suite off upgrade brochure offer.

New research suggests the holiday doesn't start at the airport for some Brits

JETTING OFF on the annual holiday isn't quite as glamorous as it once was according to new research which found that almost half (43%) of Brits say that the long queues at airports make them feel like cattle, and 58% wish that UK airports would use faster, more automated processes.

The research, conducted by Holiday Extras, revealed that more than a third (35%) of holiday travellers claimed that they find waiting in security queues stressful, and given the chance, 50% would head straight to the restaurants, bars or shops to relax.

Despite their concerns over queues

at the airport, two thirds (67%) of those polled agreed that UK airports have the best waiting facilities in comparison to those at railway and coach stations, dentist's and GP's surgeries.

When asked what would improve their airport experience, the top response (27%) was unlimited free Wi-Fi, while nearly one in ten (8%) opted for fresh air 'park' benches and 9% said child-free zones would give them welcome respite.

Ant Clarke Cowell, the company's communications director, said: "Queuing at airports can be stressful, but unfortunately much of the queuing

is unavoidable if airports are to ensure passenger safety, which is paramount. Our research highlights interesting development areas for airports to consider in 2015 and beyond though.

"There are things that holidaymakers can do to minimise stress at other stages of their journey through the airport as well. If you want a truly relaxing start to your holiday then we'd advise resting-up in an airport hotel the night before you fly and booking an airport lounge. If you really can't face the queues then it's worthwhile investing in a fast-track security pass."

JTB celebrates 'Escape to the Country' popular itinerary

THE JORDAN Tourist Board (JTB) is celebrating after the destination was announced as the most booked adventure holiday in 2014 by Responsibletravel.com

A nine-day 'Escape to the Country' proved to be the most popular holiday booked by responsible travellers last year, with the itinerary including two full days at Petra, a desert experience with local Bedouin at Wadi Rum, relaxing in the healing waters of the Dead Sea, time in Amman and snorkelling amongst the corals of the Red Sea in Aqaba.

Responsible Travel's co-founder and managing director, Justin Francis, said: "Jordan's diversity, culture and history coupled with iconic landscapes without the need for long-haul flights are a real draw for adventurous travellers and families alike. We are seeing more and more people wanting a deeper experience from their holiday and the full week-long trip to Jordan, which engages with local Bedouin communities and encourages travellers to immerse themselves in local culture, food and landscapes – does just that."

For more information see www.visitjordan.com



COACH TRIP...

Pictured marking the launch of a new National Express service from Bristol Airport are, from the left: Kevin Gale, National Express; Robert Sinclair, Bristol Airport and Jason Edwards, Edwards Coaches. The new service, operated by South Wales-based Edwards Coaches on behalf of National Express, has been launched to save the only direct public transport link between South Wales and Bristol Airport. The service, which runs from Cardiff Bus Station and takes around an hour-and-a-half to reach the airport, operates 12 times a day in each direction with single fares starting at £13 and a 25% discount available to those who book a return ticket.

For details see www.nationalexpress.com or call 0871-781 8181.

Córdoba plays host to AITO & AITO Agents' joint conference

AITO OPERATORS and AITO Specialist Travel Agents have announced that its joint overseas conference will take in Córdoba in Spain from June 11-14. This year will also mark the return of a combined conference format involving all members of the AITO family.

Sponsored by the Córdoba Tourist Board, Andalucía Tourist Board and the Spanish Tourist Board, the joint conference will see the two organisations come together to engender greater links between AITO and AITO Agents.

Chairman of AITO, Derek Moore, said: "This will be the first joint conference for three years, with the last one being in Madeira, Portugal, in 2012. At the end of last year, we quizzed all AITO members as to whether they would prefer a combined tour operator and travel agent overseas conference, and the majority replied 'yes'.

"Córdoba is an unspoilt gem of a city, often

overlooked, with an historic past steeped in the lore of Arabia, but just a couple of hours' flying time from the UK. We wanted somewhere exotically redolent of a distant culture and somewhere that is not an obvious destination; somewhere with a lot to offer but not as well-known as its near neighbours. We think we have found all these qualities in Córdoba."

Chairman of AITO Agents, Gemma Antrobus, said: "I am extremely excited that we shall be travelling to Córdoba for the AITO and AITO Agents' joint conference this summer. Most of the conference will be situated within the old town, which will not only add an element of extra interest, but will also aid all delegates in terms of networking during the conference."

For more information visit www.aito.com and www.aitoagents.com

(Bulletin briefing - page 14)

New ten-day 'Real Food Adventure' in Israel from Intrepid Travel

INTREPID TRAVEL has launched a ten-day Real Food Adventure in Israel for 2015.

Clients will have the chance to try shakshuka in Tel Aviv, browse the fish market in the Old Town of Akko and try Arabic sweet knafeh in Nablus.

The tour also takes in the

Palestinian village of Battir, a barbecue lunch in Bethlehem and falafel and kaek (sesame bread) in Jerusalem.

Prices lead in at £1,525 per person including accommodation, selected meals, transport and a local guide, based on a June 11 departure.

The operator's UK managing

director, Michael Edwards, said:

"Israel is fast gaining global recognition for its diverse, colourful, earthy-flavoured cuisine, making it a truly unique country to experience food like a local. This trip also offers clients an opportunity to explore Battir, which was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site last year."

Newsbites

- **VIKING CRUISES** has confirmed that it will operate Mississippi River cruises from late 2017. The company will take passengers on a journey along the Mississippi River from New Orleans to itinerary stops in St. James, East Baton Rouge and West Feliciana parishes; continuing upriver to Memphis, Tennessee; St. Louis; or St. Paul, Minnesota, depending on the season.
- **COSMOS HOLIDAYS** will rebrand its reps as 'Destination Hosts' and step up its focus on targeted and technology driven customer service overseas this summer. The operator will have almost 100 people across its major resorts, a number of who will be based mainly at the airports. Destination Hosts will help ease any stress that customers may feel on arrival and will be on hand to provide them with guidance and assistance as they pass through the airport.
- **VISITORS TO the National Marine Aquarium** this Easter will be able to learn about eggs of a very different variety, with a range of activities dedicated to the plethora of eggs found in our oceans. Families will be able to experience a selection of activities and shows, including daily talks about the aquarium's various breeding programmes.
For details see www.national-aquarium.co.uk

Economy Sleeper Class by Air Astana

AIR ASTANA, the flag carrier of Kazakhstan, has introduced an Economy Sleeper Class product on Boeing 757 services from Astana to London and Frankfurt, with Paris to be added on March 29.

The new class has been added to provide more comfort and allows passengers to rest and sleep in a lie flat position, by combining three Economy seats. The Economy Sleeper Class cabin is completely separate from Business and Economy Class cabins and up to 12 seats are available on each flight.

A kit, containing a mattress, Business Class pillow and duvet, is offered for Economy Sleeper Class passengers, and additional benefits include priority check-in, 30kg baggage allowance, Business Class lounge access, priority boarding, Business Class amenity kits and in-flight entertainment system.



Australia's Nature Coast

Stretching from the Glass House Mountains north of Brisbane to iconic Fraser Island and containing some of the most serene and unspoilt landscape anywhere on the continent. With miles of breathtaking Queensland coastline, sweeping countryside, lush rainforest and abundant wildlife, it's easy to see why this region is becoming increasingly popular. Although it seems like a world away from the hustle and bustle of Australia's East Coast cities, it's accessibility is one of its major assets.

8 Day Australia's Nature Coast Coastal Highlights

Excellent for those wishing to get up close and personal with nature, this Self Drive package takes you to Fraser Island and the breathtaking Sunshine Coast Hinterland.

Includes:

- Return flights
- 2 night at 3*+ Oaks Oasis Caloundra, Sunshine Coast
- 2 nights at 5* Outrigger Little Hastings Street, Noosa, B&B
- 2 day Fraser Island Experience Tour including 1 night at 3* Fraser Island Wilderness Retreat, sightseeing, various meals & transfers
- 2 nights at 5* Outrigger Little Hastings Street, Noosa, B&B
- Car Hire for duration pick up & drop off Brisbane

Win a holiday for 2 to Australia's Nature Coast in Queensland*

From **£1479** pp

Valid for travel: 01 May - 30 Jun 15

New conservation holiday from Dive Worldwide

LAST YEAR marked a milestone in manta conservation when the Indonesian government revealed it is to establish a manta ray sanctuary, encompassing six million square kilometres of ocean. The new legislation now enforces full, nationwide protection for manta species across Indonesia. To further protect the giant rays, Dive Worldwide has added a conservation holiday in association with the Manta Trust that monitors the mantas off the island of Yap.

A 14-day trip costs from £5,385 per person based on two sharing including flights, transfers and 12 nights' lodge/liveaboard accommodation, plus a donation of £100 to the Manta Trust.

For details call 01962-302087 or see www.diveworldwide.com (Pacific Islands - page 25)



AGENTS CAN get free access to Busch Gardens, Tampa, for their customers when booking tickets with DoSomethingDifferent.com. The three-park pass, which also includes SeaWorld Orlando and Aquatica, costs £97 per person – the same price as a two-park pass, and includes transport from Orlando to Busch Gardens on the Busch Gardens Shuttle Express. For details call 020-8090 3890.

Tourico Holidays launches new bidding engine system for group reservations

TOURICO HOLIDAYS has announced that it has launched a new Group Bidding Engine, where travel agents and other distributors submit highly-specific group reservation requests and selected hotels have a 24-hour window to bid on them.

The new system is completely transparent and also allows travel agents to bundle their hotel selection with group transfers, activities and attractions, making it a one-stop transaction for all group services.

The company's vice president of global activities and groups, Ofir Cohen, said: "The Group Bidding Engine simplifies the

reservation process and encourages healthy competition, revolutionising the way group travel is booked by agents and quoted by hotels. Our clients will have the ability to specifically choose all of their desired trip details and then review hotel bids over the next day as they come in at real-time."

Using the new engine, clients can search for hotels based on destination, the number of rooms desired, the check-in and checkout dates and star ratings. Agents can then filter their results based on location, price range, hotel names and brands, amenities and

more. They can then select up to seven specific hotels from which they would like to receive pricing quotes.

Once a client has submitted their specific group request, the automated system notifies the selected hotels and initiates a 24-hour period where they can adjust rates multiple times in order to attract the group business. Clients can review the quotes in real-time and select a hotel at any point during the 24 hours. Bookings are finalised and processed on the site after agents have been given the option to add specific transfers, activities and attractions to their reservations.

CroisiEurope announces expansion with four new ships for 2016/17

CROISIEUROPE is continuing its expansion with the addition of four new vessels for the 2016/17 season.

MS *Princesse Elbe*, an innovative paddle steamer accommodating 80 passengers in 40 cabins, will sail on the Elbe and the Moldau between Berlin and Prague and back (Berlin - Magdebourg - Wittenberg - Meissen - Dresden - Litomerice - Prague) from spring 2016.

RV *Princesse Apsara*, a colonial-style boat accommodating 60 passengers in 30 cabins, will join the line's four other vessels on the Mekong. The ship will sail

from Angkor to Ho-Chi-Minh between Siem Reap and Ho-Chi-Minh and back.

MS *Daniele*, a contemporary and stylish hotel barge accommodating 24 passengers in 12 cabins, will travel an unprecedented route on the Briare Canal, between Burgundy and the Loire Valley. And MS *Deborah*, a contemporary and stylish hotel barge accommodating 24 passengers in 12 cabins, will offer a unique journey along the Garonne Canal. For reservations and further information call 020-8328 1281 or visit www.croisieurope.co.uk

New brochure from Fred.\ Holidays offers new product in Slovenia & Croatia

FRED.\ HOLIDAYS has launched its new 2015 brochure which features new product including Mannheim, Ljubljana (Slovenia), Lyon and Bordeaux; Adriatic cruise tours from Croatia as well as new F1 Grand Prix short break packages to Germany, Belgium, Austria and Hungary.

The new products are in addition to the company's existing selection of European city breaks and in particular, Germany, as well as beer festivals, lakes and mountains, Christmas markets, rail holidays, river cruises and tailor-made options, as well as the Hotel Jardin Tecina on La Gomera, cruise holidays and expedition cruises.

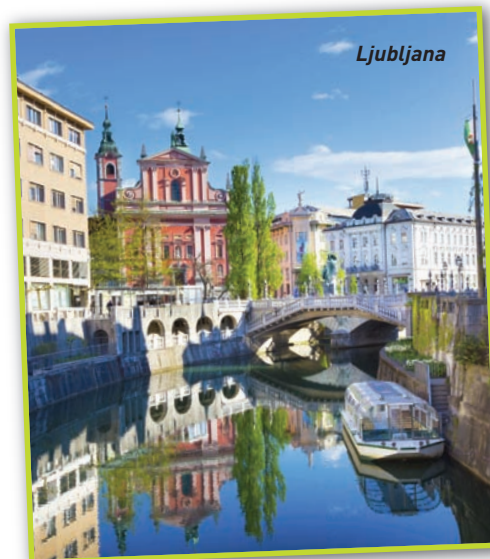
Overall brochure prices lead in at

£229 per person for a two-night short break to Brussels staying at the four-star NH Atlanta Hotel on a bed-and-breakfast basis, including Eurostar travel.

Other sample packages include F1 Grand prix special short breaks to Belgium, Germany, Austria and Hungary leading in at £749 for a three-night city break stay in a four-star hotel, including flights, transfers and seated race day tickets.

Alternatively, a seven-night Adriatic Cruise Tour costs from £670, cruise only.

For more information or to book call 0808-256 8148 or see www.fredholidays.co.uk



Cabin upgrades and free bubbly on Select Price bookings from P&O Cruises

P&O CRUISES is celebrating the arrival of its new flagship, Britannia, with complimentary cabin upgrades across the fleet on a range of holidays sailing from Southampton, as well as a bottle of bubbly with every Select Price holiday booked by March 31.

The line is offering cabin upgrades on more than 100 cruises for travel until February 2016, across all eight ships, and clients can choose from a variety of food and wine themed cruises.

As examples, options include a seven-night May half-

term cruise to Guernsey, Spain and France with Eric Lanlard on Britannia from £799 per person for a balcony cabin; a 12-night British Isles cruise departing July 6 with James Martin, Mary Berry and Theo Randall on Britannia from £1,199 for a balcony cabin; and a 14-night Strictly Come Dancing themed Mediterranean cruise departing May 28 on Ventura from £1,299 for an outside cabin.

To book or for more information call 0843-374 0111 or visit www.pocruises.com



BATH TIME...

Pictured at Bright's first workshop for 2015 - at Bailbrook House Hotel in Bath - are, from the left: Sally Turner from JG Collection with Jenny Watt and Vanya Styles from Howard Travel.

www.travelbulletin.co.uk

Go

WEBSCLUSIVES

- For the chance to win a 7 night holiday courtesy of **Mediterraneo Marine Park**, head over to the competitions page at <http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions>
- Complete **Samoa's** online training and be in with the chance of winning a signed copy of Monica Galetti's cookbook, enter the completion at <http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions>
- Don't miss out on the chance of winning a trip to Thailand courtesy of **Amazing Thailand**, to enter the competition go to <http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions>

All this and more at:

www.travelbulletin.co.uk

The home of the web savvy travel agent

Booking incentives

- **THIS MONTH** agents have the opportunity to earn 1,000 points on the Celebrity Rewards agent loyalty programme from Celebrity Cruises with a dedicated 'Celebrity Rewards You' month of extras. For the first time, agents booking any cruise for travel during 2015 will receive the bonus booster to their account. Throughout the month agents should look out for additional points that will be allocated to 'surprise sailings'. This means just one booking made this month has the potential to earn more than 2,000 points, plus the usual points the cruise booking would accrue. In addition, a 'Modern Luxury Squad' sales team will also be on the road this month to award golden envelopes to agents making cruise bookings. The prize draw golden envelopes offer agents the chance to win a range of prizes including free flights, team nights out, Champagne, spa vouchers and a two-night sailing on Celebrity Eclipse.
- **FUNWAY HOLIDAYS** and SeaWorld have teamed up to give one lucky agent the chance to win £500 on their MoneyCard. To enter, agents have to book a package to Orlando with the operator including a SeaWorld ticket by the end of this month.
- **IF ONLY...** has partnered with Qatar Airways to provide agents with new offers this month. All agents booking a holiday with the operator that include Qatar Airways flights will be able to claim a £20 Bonus MoneyCard reward on top of the company's existing level of rewards for bookings which currently range between £10 and £300. Agents also have the chance to win an iPad by visiting agents.ifonly.net and answering questions about the airline.
- **TITAN HAS** launched March Madness, its biggest incentive to date. Agents booking a holiday with the operator this month can claim a £50 Love2Shop voucher, with no limit to the number of claims. In addition, every branch that books five or more 2015 holidays can claim a group spa day for up to ten members of staff and every agency booking ten or more holidays can claim a trip for two on the operator's New York, New York six-day tour.
For details see www.titanagents.co.uk

FANCY A FAM?

- **ENTRIES CLOSE** on April 3 to enter Brand USA's MegaFam, where agents can win one of 100 places. This year, the fam takes place from May 14-21 and visits 22 states on seven different multi-state itineraries, each culminating in Philadelphia. Agents in the UK and Ireland can enter to win a place by registering American Airlines, British Airways and US Airways flights sold to the US and completing the bespoke MegaFam Airlines badge on the USA Discovery Program.
To enter visit www.usadiscoveryprogram.co.uk/megafam
- **AS PART** of its 'V.I.P. Access to Dubai' campaign, Travel 2 will be hosting three fam trips this year, the first of which is based around music and entertainment. Agents will stay at the five-star Atlantis The Palm. For a chance to win one of 20 places, agents need to make a booking to Dubai by March 31 which includes Emirates/Qantas flights and a minimum three nights' stay.



POOLE PARTY...

Nicola Poole from Travelbag in Cheltenham was one of three lucky winners who picked up £6,000 in shopping vouchers in Emirates' January incentive scheme. The winners were selected from a pool of regional and national travel agent employees. Pictured with Nicola is the airline's Phil Courtney.



Butlins opens 50s style rock 'n' roll diner at Minehead Resort

THIS MONTH saw the launch of Butlins' new rock'n'roll diner that transports guests back to the glamorous age of the 1950s.

The company has created the family restaurant using authentic memorabilia from its past as well as bringing the spirit of British 1950s culture to life.

To begin, guests can tuck into starters such as popcorn chicken bites, buffalo chicken wings and messy

nachos. Main courses include ribs and a variety of hot dogs and gourmet burgers, wraps, steak and salads. Guests with a sweet tooth can tuck into treats such as sundaes, banana splits, cherry pie and chocolate fudge cake.

As well as finding a DJ at the jukebox playing rock and roll tunes throughout the day, every 20 minutes diners will be treated to live performances of classic 1950s singing

favourites from the diner team.

And for guests celebrating, the diner has a 50s fairground inspired table which can be reserved.

A four-night break costs £59 per person, based on four people sharing a silver self-catering apartment for a March 23 arrival.

For further information visit www.bourneleisureales.co.uk or call 0845-070 4742.

Seychelles' MAIA Resort & Spa introduces 'Beyond All-Inclusive' product

MAIA LUXURY Resort & Spa in the Seychelles, which features 30 one-bedroom villas, is now offering a new Beyond All-Inclusive rate.

The new offering goes beyond standard all-inclusive properties with not only all food, drink and premium alcohol,

but also unlimited exploration scuba diving, yoga sessions and non-motorised watersports included in the price.

ITC Luxury Travel offers seven nights for the price of six from £5,075 per person, based on two adults sharing an Ocean Panoramic Villa on an all-inclusive

basis for travel up to October 31.

It includes flights with Emirates from Heathrow and private car transfers, plus a saving of up to £1,080 per person.

For details see www.maia.com.sc or to book call 01244-355527 or visit www.itcluxurytravel.co.uk



TRY IT OUT...

Pictured at the opening of Thomson's newest Holiday Design Store in Gateshead's Metro Centre is rugby star Warren Fury from Newcastle Falcons with the agency's Danielle Cannon (left) and Sophie Wilson. The 2,000sq.ft site showcases cutting edge technology innovations including high definition screens and projections featuring destination and hotel content plus an 84" touch screen interactive map designed to inspire customers. Customers will also be able to view 'top ten' lists and live weather information, read reviews and view videos of destinations and hotels. Social media feeds will be streamed onto the screens, with customers encouraged to celebrate their holiday bookings by tweeting to see their name and holiday destination appear on the screen.

Twin-centre stays from Sandals Resorts

SANDALS RESORTS has combined four of its most popular inter-island twin centre holidays so that guests can now experience two resorts on one holiday.

As examples, a 14-night all-inclusive Barbados and Grenada twin-centre stay offers a week at Sandals Barbados in a Caribbean Village Honeymoon Premium room followed by a week at Sandals LaSource Grenada in a South Seas Hideaway Junior Suite with a balcony and 'Tranquillity Soaking Tub'. Prices lead in at £2,729 per person including flights from Gatwick, inter-island flights and transfers.

Alternatively, a 14-night all-inclusive stay in Grenada (Sandals LaSource Grenada) and Antigua (Sandals Grande Antigua Resort & Spa), staying a week in each resort, costs from £2,929 including flights from Gatwick, inter-island flights and transfers.

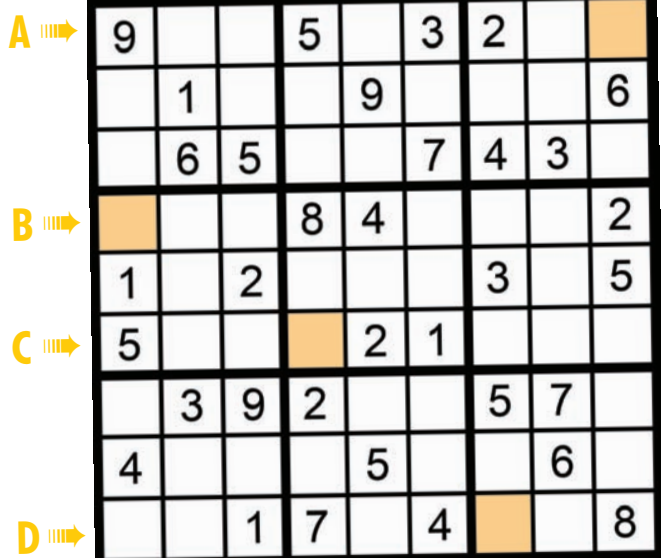
Other twin-centre options include 14 nights in Barbados and Antigua from £2,889 and 14 nights in Saint Lucia and Antigua from £2,615 - both including flights, all-inclusive accommodation and transfers.

For more information call 020-7590 0210 or visit www.sellingsandals.co.uk

Su Doku

Win a £50 M&S voucher in the [travelbulletin](http://travelbulletin.co.uk) Su Doku prize puzzle

Number: 010



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

Closing date for entries is Thursday, March 19th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 27th February is Katey-Mae Grimwood, Virgin Holidays in Norwich.

February 27 Solution: A=6 B=7 C=3 D=8

Travagrams

Can you solve the following anagrams to decipher the destination & tour operator?

A Ail Tail



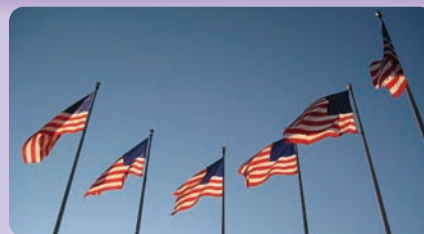
Italy's national carrier

Tab Real



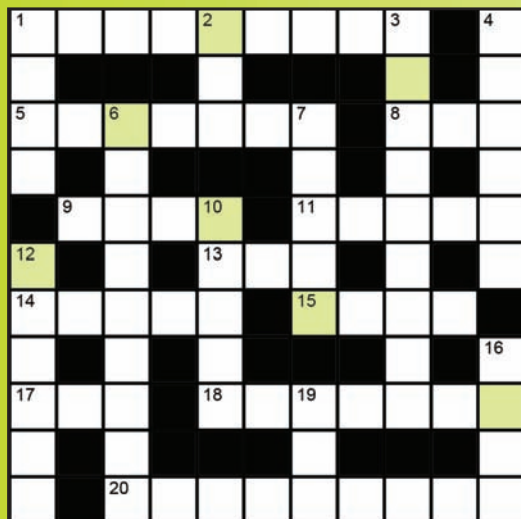
The Canada Badlands are in this province.

Where Am I?



World's fastest wooden roller coaster reaching 72 mph.

Crossword



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

Across

- Recently named by the Queen, this P&O ship is set to rule the waves (9)
- County town of Suffolk (7)
- Singapore airport code (3)
- Tourist town in the Scottish Highlands, _____ William (4)
- Costa del Sol resort (5)
- Landmark tower on London's south bank (3)
- One of the Great Lakes (5)
- Surname of Monty Python member, sounds lazy (4)
- Flows through Chester (3)
- Montgomery is the state capital (7)
- Scenic Devon resort (9)

Down

- Swiss resort, sounds like an old sailing ship (4)
- Alderney airport code (3)
- Country jointly hosting the 2015 Cricket World Cup (9)
- Kent-based tour operator specialising in America (6)
- National Trust property in Wiltshire, famous for its landscape garden (9)
- Capital of Vietnam (5)
- Polynesian kingdom (5)
- Largest of the Dodecanese islands (6)
- You can take the waters in this Somerset city (4)
- Queen Alia international, Amman airport code (3)

For the solution to the Crossword, Where Am I? and Travagrams, please see page 26



Facts & Figures: TUNISIA

- The most competitive destination in the Mediterranean
- Ranked as the second largest spa destination after France
- 3 hours, is the average journey time to Tunisia from any regional airport.
- Beach, History & Culture, Golf, Spa and Sahara desert are the five major selling points of Tunisia.
- Very low cost of living against a very strong British Pound
- Thomas Cook, TUI Travel, Jet2holidays, Monarch and Just Sunshine are the five TOs and Airlines chartering flights to Tunisia from over 20 regional airports in the UK. Tunisair and EasyJet (From June) are the only scheduled airlines from London
- Boasts long sunny and warm periods from March till end of November
- Captivating sceneries in the Sahara Desert including three Star Wars film Locations
- Perfect destination to have fun and entertain the families as well as relaxing long stays for seniors
- Fantastic beach front Hotels hand-picked by Tour Operators
- It is an open-air museum : 3000 years of history especially, the roman era
- 425,000 British holidaymakers travelled to Tunisia 2014.
- It is considered as an emerging golf destination
- An enticing dishes from a rich and varied Mediterranean Cuisine
- Very warm and friendly population

For more information or for further details on transport, attractions and accommodation in Tunisia, visit our website

www.cometotunisia.co.uk or

Email trade@cometotunisia.co.uk or Call 0207 224 55 61





ST. REGIS HOTELS & RESORTS

...has announced that The St. Regis Venice San Clemente Palace will open its doors next month following an extensive restoration. Situated on a private island in the heart of the Venice lagoon, the Venetian retreat will join Starwood's portfolio of nine luxury hotels in Italy, and will offer 191 luxury guestrooms and suites overlooking the lagoon and lush gardens, a signature spa, an outdoor swimming pool with cabanas, a tennis court and a children's club. For more information visit www.stregis.com/venice

InBrief

- KEMPINSKI HAS introduced Doha's Marsa Malaz Kempinski in Qatar to its portfolio. The resort, which features more than 281 guestrooms and a private butler service, is set on a private island and is the first ultra-luxury hotel in Doha's sought after waterfront location, The Pearl. Guests are offered a wealth of bespoke dining and entertainment, options, as well as a secluded beach, outdoor swimming pools, a spa by Clarins, a selection of watersport facilities, a yacht jetty, tennis courts and gardens.
- ONYX HOSPITALITY Group has announced its plan to operate at least ten properties in India by 2022.
For details see www.onyx-hospitality.com
- MINOR HOTEL Group (MHG), which has a portfolio of more than 120 hotels and resorts in 22 countries, has announced a partnership with Dubai Properties (DP) to develop a new Anantara to open in Dubai in early 2018.
- HOLIDAY INN Hotels and Resorts, official hotel partner of the Virgin Money London Marathon, is drafting in two of the UK's leading body and mind experts to help get runners across the finish line. Renowned mental performance coach Andy Barton and acclaimed physiotherapist Sammy Margo will be revealing a series of insightful tips at www.facebook.com/HolidayInnEurope to help runners get through their training ahead of the race on April 26.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts announces aggressive European growth plans

STARWOOD HOTELS & RESORTS has announced it is on track to open more than 40 new hotels and resorts across Europe in the next five years, expanding its portfolio by almost 30% with openings in both fast-growing and established markets.

Further underlining its long-term growth strategy, the company is set to open five new hotels in Turkey this year, including The St. Regis Istanbul, which opened at the beginning of this month.

The company's president of global development, Simon Turner, said: "2014 was a record year of deal signings for Starwood in Europe with consistent, sustainable high-quality portfolio growth in key European markets and sought-after destinations.

"Our growth momentum continues this year with 14 hotels on track to open across Europe and strong owner interest in our nine lifestyle brands, backed by our loyalty programme, the collective strength of our global platform and our highly-experienced, local teams."

Hotel opening highlights for this year include five new hotels in Turkey, two new properties in Russia, the launch of the Aloft brand in Germany's Stuttgart and Munich this summer, the introduction of the W and Element brands to The Netherlands by year-end and three further additions to the Sheraton brand portfolio in Romania, Lake Como in Italy and Croatia's Dubrovnik.

Best Western announces launch of 'Shotels' for app savvy travellers

BEST WESTERN GB is launching a new 'Shotels' brand for app savvy travellers who want to access to gaming pods, Google+ and the latest technology in their rooms. The new app follows IKEA's announcement that it is releasing a furniture range fitted with wireless charging spots for mobile devices.

The hotel group has responded to this new demand by breaking with tradition and launching its own Shotel called V b [as in vibrant], its first new hotel brand in nearly 70 years, and the company's GB chief executive, Richard Lewis, is projecting 'Shotels' as the next major travel trend.

He said: "The change of direction for Best Western into what we are calling Shotels reflects a major new travel trend, not just for the UK but worldwide.

"In addition to being able to sync and customise content in rooms, Best Western V b will have large lobby areas with media walls as well as gaming pods. They will offer style,

technology and a social experience for a traveller no longer defined by age or demographics, and join the ranks of other interactive hotels which have recently launched into the market.

"Shotels are about the visual and interactive experience. Today's travellers are increasingly swapping afternoon tea for apps because technology has revolutionised travel behaviours. Shotels reflect and meet those changing digital demands.

"In traditional Best Western hotels guests might have used the social areas in isolation from everyone else or felt more comfortable in their bedrooms, but Shotels will flip that concept on its head. The technology will encourage guests to leave their rooms and enrich their experiences in the lobby by enjoying spending time interacting with the gadgets as much as their fellow guests. Shotels will be a gamechanger for the whole hotel and hospitality industry."



Industry Insight by... AITO Agents

Quality • Expertise
Independent

Gem's hidden gems: how going that extra mile for your clients makes all the difference
by Gemma Antrobus, chair of AITO Specialist Travel Agents

TODAY'S SAVVY retail travel agent is well aware of the challenges when booking holidays for their most discerning clients. Many have travelled extensively on business and have often tagged on a few extra days with their spouse or family to enjoy the wonders of the city or destination in which they are working.

Long gone are the days when our clients would rely on us, as their travel agent, to provide them with every piece of destination knowledge and recommendations for their next overseas holiday. The guide books that we all once sold were their 'go to' fact providers, in addition to our knowledge. But now it is common for clients to do plenty of online research about a destination before they even call us for a holiday quotation.

The growth of the Internet and the availability of information has always been a concern for our industry, where the value of 'service' is decreasing. It therefore remains distinctively important for our agency businesses to continue to make ourselves indispensable to clients. Many of us work on our service offering to ensure our clients are better looked after than any other traveller, but can we do more?

Of course we can! Not only should we be sending our sales teams on educational visits to the world's most popular destinations and hotels – in order to sell from experience holidays that suit our clients best – but we must also be forever searching for those 'hidden gem' destinations that our clients wouldn't find without our help, thus ensuring that they continue to value their relationship with us.

For the joint AITO Specialist Travel Agent and AITO Tour operators' overseas conference in June, we have worked hard to find such a gem, so we can maximise on the value for the delegates attending. Spain, as a host country, appears to be far from 'undiscovered'. In fact, its incoming visitor figures were double that of the UK's in 2014 – 60.7m and an increase year-on-year of 5.6%. Most people who enjoy travelling will tell you that they have visited Spain, so have ticked that box and don't need to return.

However, Cordoba, southern Spain, in the region of

"The growth of the Internet and the availability of information has always been a concern for our industry, where the value of 'service' is decreasing"

Andalucía, is vastly diverse from its crowded sister cities of Seville and Granada. This ancient city has been declared a world heritage site and contains a mixture of diverse cultures that have settled throughout history.

During the 10th Century, Cordoba was heralded as the largest and greatest city in Europe, something I wasn't aware of. Nor did I know that following its capture in 711, Islamic rule led to the original Catholic church being divided into Muslim and Christian halves, until some 80 years later when the Great Mosque of Cordoba was built.

Once one of the greatest cities of the medieval world – rivaling Constantinople in the east, with its palaces and mosques – its city attractions are all available on foot. You may happily wander amongst the squares of the old town and the tiny alleyways of the Jewish quarter, whilst grazing on delicious tapas from the local eateries.

Now, did you know all of that? I didn't, but I know we have an abundance of clients who would just love a hidden gem like this and most likely would never get there without our help.

Your thirst for 'out of the box' or 'hidden gem' destinations will be your continuing strength and will most certainly be one of the qualities that ensures your clients book every travel adventure with you – keep searching for those 'gems'.

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DIFFERENTLY



Rhian Herbert

Head of new business development
at The Global Travel Group

At home

What's your favourite household gadget?

My bluetooth shower speaker. I love listening to the radio first thing in the morning.

What are your favourite TV programmes?

At the moment I am enjoying Netflix and currently working my way through The Good Wife & House of Cards. I have to confess I do love Glee, TOWIE and Made in Chelsea.

Who does the cooking?

My partner Nick! I can boil an egg but it doesn't get much better than that.

What's a typical weekend for you like?

Busy, Busy, Busy! We're usually visiting friends and family in Cardiff, Bristol, Glasgow, Stoke and London. One of my best friends has just moved to Barcelona so I'm looking forward to spending weekends there too!

What's your guilty pleasure?

Musicals, Bubl , Disney, Muppets, Smooth FM and Glee.

What do you do to relax?

Going abroad for me is my number 1 way to relax.

What music do you listen to?

Anything and everything - my iPod goes from Al Green, the Carpenters and Fleetwood Mac to Taylor Swift, One Direction and Sam Smith.

What's your favourite movie?

Dirty Dancing - classic!

What's been your latest DIY project?

My front lounge. I can only describe it as a Canadian hunting lodge.

At work

What other companies/organisations have you previously worked for?

The Co-operative Travel Group, Freedom Travel Group & Thomas Cook.

If you could change one thing in the industry what would it be?

I would reduce airline taxes.

What personal item do you have on your desk at work?

A beautiful handmade chicken given to me by wonderful travel agent friends. It sounds bonkers but I love it.

What's the best thing about your job?

Every day is different. One day I can be in the office and the next I will be driving to another part of the UK. You can never get bored!

What's a typical day like?

I don't honestly have a typical day and no one day is ever the same. My week will be filled with meetings at HQ in Chester alongside days out to visit with potential new global members.

What's your favourite travel app?

Skyscanner. I am constantly looking for flights for holidays so I find it really useful for a very quick browse.

Who has been your inspiration in the travel industry?

Mike Greenacre. Between the ages of 16 – 31, I worked for the Co-operative Travel. Mike created a company that we were honestly all very proud to work for and we all had a real loyalty too; something you don't see much of anymore. I was just 21 and he asked me to do a day in the life, he would work in my branch for the day and I would mirror his role. It was a fantastic opportunity and a real insight to a part of the business I had not seen before. I took a lot away from that experience and he took a lot away from the day he spent with me. He spoke many times about this making a difference. Not many CEOs, to my knowledge, go back to the floor.

What was the last email you received?

An internal announcement confirming the sale of Stella Travel Services to dnata - fantastic news.

At play

Where would you most like to visit and why?

Uganda. I am very much an animal person and would love to see gorillas in their natural habitat.

What are your hobbies?

Buying clothes and shoes online, it's quite an art!

What's your favourite (non-work related) website?

ASOS. It's so easy to use and you can have whole outfit including all accessories delivered by the next day.

Do you use social media for work and play?

Twitter for work and Facebook for play.

What trait do you dislike in other people?

Greed.

What is your best quality?

I am very honest – sometimes too honest.

What's your most embarrassing moment?

Has to be trampolining in school, in those early days I needed a little extra padding in my bra. I only noticed the padding was bouncing with me when all the boys pointed it out.....I said they were my shoulder pads!

Do you have any nicknames?

Reeni for friends and Rhi or Rhi Rhi in work.

If you could invent a new law, what would it be?

Euthanasia.



has added the spa town of Crikvenica to its summer programme. Based on a May 2 departure, prices start from £679 per person for seven nights' half-board stay at the four-star Grand Kvamer Palace including flights and transfers.

Tourist board helps agents capitalise on demand for unexploited tourism

LAST YEAR saw a total of 450,109 Brits visit Croatia, representing an increase of 10% on the previous year's 23% increase in arrivals from the UK.

The Croatian National Tourist Board (CNTB) also reports that the beginning of this year has already seen a positive trend, with visitors up 10% compared to January 2014 and overnights scoring a surprising 22% increase.

To encourage further visitor growth, in October last year the tourist board launched its new pre- and post- season campaign (PPS) to increase the number of year-round visitors to the country. Named Croatia 365, the campaign aimed to showcase how Croatia's cultural, gastronomic and adventure offering make it the ideal tourist destination

throughout the year.

This year, the CNTB is continuing its campaign by organising a range of trade events, both in the UK and in Croatia.

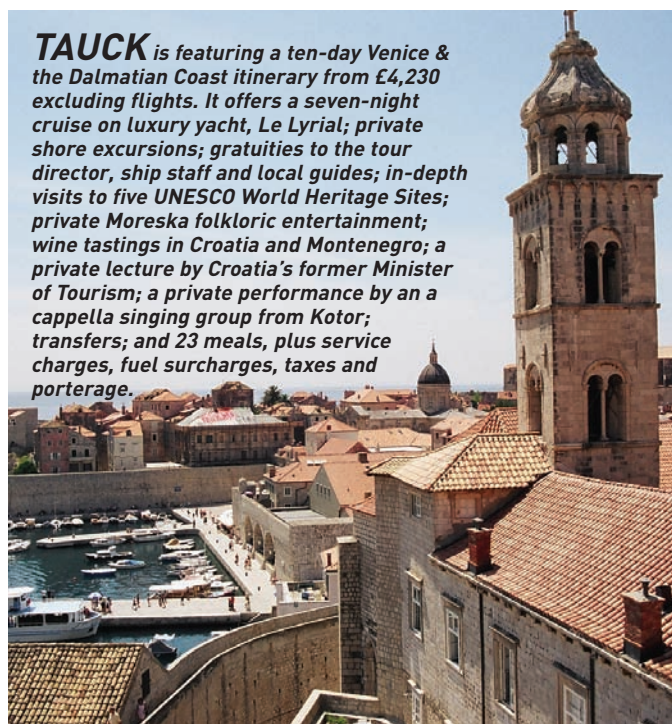
UK director of the CNTB, Tonko Rilovic, said: "The Croatian National Tourist Board, in cooperation with its London office and local tourist board will organise BUY Croatia fam trips for UK agents to Croatia. These are aimed at highlighting the types of tourism that still have an unexploited potential in Croatia, such as medical tourism, sports and adventure tourism and nautical tourism.

"The goal of BUY Croatia trips is to extend the tourist season in Croatia and acquire new business partners. In London, we will organise PPS media and trade events that will showcase how

Croatia's cultural, eno-gastronomic, adventure, wellness & health and MICE offerings make it the perfect tourist destination throughout the year.

"We are confident that 2015 will be another positive year for Croatia in the UK. British Airways has introduced new flights from Heathrow to Split and easyJet has increased its connections to Split from more UK airports. TUI Thomson Cruises has also set its homeport for Thompson Celebration in Dubrovnik and opened new flights to the destination from six UK airports, as well as introduced new flights from Manchester and Gatwick to Split. We are confident that all these factors will help Croatia establish itself as the 'go-to' year-round destination.

TAUCK is featuring a ten-day Venice & the Dalmatian Coast itinerary from £4,230 excluding flights. It offers a seven-night cruise on luxury yacht, Le Lyrial; private shore excursions; gratuities to the tour director, ship staff and local guides; in-depth visits to five UNESCO World Heritage Sites; private Moreska folkloric entertainment; wine tastings in Croatia and Montenegro; a private lecture by Croatia's former Minister of Tourism; a private performance by an a cappella singing group from Kotor; transfers; and 23 meals, plus service charges, fuel surcharges, taxes and portage.



New tour from Cosmos Tours & Cruises takes in Rovinj & Plitvice Lakes

COSMOS TOURS & Cruises has introduced a new tour of Croatia to include the Plitvice Lakes and the town of Rovinj.

Visitors can experience the natural beauty, culture and history of Croatia and Slovenia on the tour, which is based at the beachfront Hotel Laguna Molindrio in Porec for seven nights.

Highlights include a visit to Europe's largest cave system, the Postojna Caves in Slovenia, to the Lipica Stud Farm where the famous Lipizzaner horses are bred for the Spanish Riding School in Vienna.

Other activities on the agenda include the medieval walled town of Motovun, Istria's oldest town of Pula with a 3,000-year history, and the Venetian houses and Roman remains of Rovinj.

Prices are from £733 per person including flights, seven nights' breakfast accommodation, guided sightseeing and transfers.

For more information or to make a booking see www.cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk

TRAVEL TALKS

by John Guinn, holiday researcher

John aims to get accustomed to Zagreb's local cuisine...



John Guinn runs Holiday Hut and has a weekly travel show on internet radio station, Secklow Sounds. He also contributes regularly to UK Health Radio.

When asked about the local dishes, Darja Juzbašić was unusually coy for a tourist board representative. This wasn't because the food in Zagreb is bad, but as Darja said, if she shared too many details you might want to cook the meal at home and miss out on visiting Zagreb.

Zagreb's location and history means that the local cuisine has all sorts of influences, including Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Italian, French, Balkan and Turkish.

With this mix why would anyone want to cook the meal at home instead of visiting Croatia's main gastronomic showcase?

Luckily Darja did share what can be experienced in Croatia's capital city, which some say is the 'biggest outdoor living room in the world'.

It's called this as the favourite pastime in Zagreb is to sit and watch the world go by while drinking coffee. All year round the locals can be seen sitting outside cafes drinking their coffee and chatting with their friends. Sometimes tourists wonder if any work gets done at all.

An ideal location for some coffee-fuelled people watching is Ban Josip Jelačić Square. This is an Austro-Hungarian styled square in the centre of the city.

Here there is a statue of Count Jelačić which was returned to the square in 1990 after being removed in 1947. The leaders at the time felt that it was a magnet to nationalistic protests.

Although perhaps it was due to all roads seeming to lead to the square that made it a natural meeting point for generations of Zagrebians.

Also in the square is Manduševac Fountain; if you throw a coin into the fountain then you may be granted happiness.

Happiness is nice, but I'm looking for a fountain that restores hair...

Listen to my chat with Darja to find out more about Zagreb (but not including how to cook the local dishes)
<http://tinyurl.com/k4279hr>

Prestige welcomes new Pula flight for summer

PRESTIGE HOLIDAYS has welcomed the introduction of a new twice-weekly easyJet service from Gatwick to Pula for this summer, commencing in June.

The operator's general manager, David Skillicorn, said: "The Istria and Kvarner regions of Croatia have been less accessible for British holidaymakers due to a shortage of air capacity, but this new service will fill the gap. In anticipation of a sharp rise in demand for these destinations, we have contracted extra beds and will be deploying more resort based staff to deal with the anticipated increase in guests."

The company is offering a week's break in Porec using the new Gatwick-Pula service from £538 per person. The break, based on a June 23 departure, offers breakfast accommodation at the four-star Hotel Flores, transfers and an early booking offer saving £71 per couple if booked by March 31.

For details see www.prestigeholidays.co.uk or call 01425-480400.

Anatolian Sky offers choice of Adriatic cruising options for summer

ANATOLIAN SKY Holidays has a range of luxury Adriatic cruises available to book for dates throughout May to September.

The coastal cruises have proved to be one of the operator's most popular elements of its Croatia programme, with options available incorporating Dubrovnik and Split, as well as many of the Adriatic's charming islands. Also available are cruise and stay holidays incorporating a week's cruise with a short break in Dubrovnik or Split.

As an example, a 'Dalmatian Highlights' cruise on deluxe cruiser MS Adriatic Pearl, offers a seven-night itinerary from Dubrovnik, travelling to Korcula, Brac, Omis and Split, before returning to Dubrovnik via Hvar and Mljet.

Prices start from £879 per person based on two sharing a lower deck cabin for seven nights on half-board including transfers.

For more information or to book visit www.anatoliansky.co.uk or call 0844-273 3585.





ISTRIA, CROATIA

Fabulous Istria with new Pula flights from Gatwick with Easyjet.

3, 4 and 5 star hotels, self-catering and twin-centre options - something for everyone.

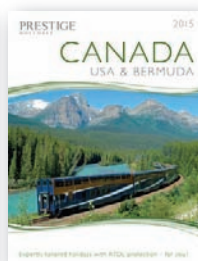
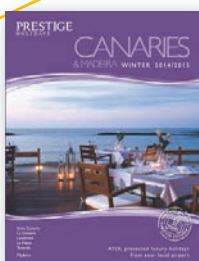
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ADRIATIC LUXURY HOTELS has announced the re-opening of three Dubrovnik properties this month. Hotel Bellevue (pictured) is one of the hotel group's boutique properties and offers a 91-room luxury retreat carved into a secluded cliff-side. Also re-opening this month is Villa Orsula, which features 11 rooms and two suites, and the five-star Hotel Dubrovnik Palace which is re-opening all its 308 rooms and suites with a new design, each offering private balconies and sea views. For details see www.adriaticluxuryhotels.com

Cruise expansion from Orbital Travel

ORBITAL TRAVEL has expanded its cruise programme along the Dalmatian coast by adding a small ship experience that showcases the region's scenery.

Cruises are on board A+ and Deluxe category ships. A+ ships have 15-21 cabins for a more intimate cruise experience, while deluxe ships are larger and feature 19-20 cabins. Meals are cooked and prepared on board and served in the air-conditioned restaurant or in the outside dining area. During the day, guests can swim, snorkel, sunbathe or relax on the sundeck, while the evenings are free for guests to find a good restaurant or explore the islands and coastal cities that line the route.

It is also possible to discover more of Croatia before or after the cruise on a 'Cruise & Stay' holiday, with hotel stays in Split or Dubrovnik or a three-night extension to discover the capital city Zagreb and the Plitvice Lakes.

Prices lead in at £699 per person in April including seven nights' half-board on the cruise, flights, transfers and a captain's gala dinner.

Cruises are available from April to October and departures are either on a Saturday or Sunday.

For more information call 01763-274174 or see www.orbitaltravel.co.uk

Classic Collection adds new resorts

HAVING SEEN summer sales to Croatia finish more than 30% up year-on-year, Classic Collection Holidays has introduced two new resorts for this summer - the island of Losinj in the Gulf of Kvarner and the city of Zadar.

The operator has also added an eight-day Adriatic cruise departing from Dubrovnik on the newly launched MS Atlantic motor cruiser, with prices from £1,336 per person.

The operator's deputy managing director, Matt Rice, said: "Croatia is a beautifully unspoilt area of the Mediterranean, but one which, in the past, has not necessarily been associated with luxury hotel products.

"Nowadays it's not just the main area of Dubrovnik which features luxury hotels but areas such as Split, Makarska, the Istrian peninsula and the Croatian islands. It's also a destination well supported by regional flying, allowing us to offer customers our usual service of a flexible choice of UK departure airports, airlines and holiday durations.

"Newly introduced Losinj is less well known than Krk and Rab, and features uncrowded beaches, pretty fishing villages and is renowned for its spas and therapy centres."

Seven-night stays at the waterfront Boutique Hotel Alhambra in Cikat Bay start from £1,744 per person in late May, while the Falkensteiner Family Hotel Diadora is ideal for families, with adult prices from £794 and child prices from £222. For further information visit www.classic-collection.co.uk or call 0800-008 7288.

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Anatolian Sky

Dedicated to Quality

Zagreb issues new app & tourist guide

The Zagreb Tourist Board has announced the launch of its first audio travel guide. The VoiceGuide app, intended for smartphones, is free to use and features 188 stories about the city using GPS technology to track visitors' movement. Users can customise the app to suit their needs by setting the time available for a tour of the city. In addition to photos and information about sights, it also contains a full public transport timetable.

cyprus

Aether Residence

Studio Suite

Junior Panorama Suite

THE ANASSA HOTEL

...is reopening this spring with newly renovated suites, garden studio suites, junior suites and villas. Sovereign is offering a seven-night holiday at the five-star property from £1,399 per person including breakfast. The offer includes access to airport lounges, private transfers and flights from Gatwick with Monarch, and is based on a May 6 departure. For details or to book call 01293-731566 or see www.sovereign.com

Tourist office encourages visitors to unplug their devices for a digital detox

NEW RESEARCH released by the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) sees almost one in five people admit that when on holiday they are too preoccupied uploading pictures and updating their status, rather than experiencing the holiday they are updating about.

With 'selfie' recently named the word of the year, more than a quarter of those aged between 16 and 44 years old admit the only photos they take on holiday are selfies which don't even show where they are.

The CTO commissioned the survey to shine a light on Brits' attachment to their mobile devices and to understand why it can take time to switch-off from life back home, when on holiday.

Key findings from the survey include Brits' love for social media has become so all-consuming that one in five adults now admit they spend too much time uploading pictures and updates, which rises to more than one in three for 16-44 year olds; and almost one in seven admit their holiday snaps now almost solely

consist of selfies where it's difficult to tell where they have even been, with more than a quarter of 16-44-year-olds admitting to doing this.

Other results from the survey revealed that more than a fifth get frustrated when friends and family spend their whole holiday attached to their phones and one in five say they log onto social media whilst on holiday because they are worried about missing out on something back home.

For more information see www.visitcyprus.com

Palm Beach Hotel welcomes new Jet2 flights to Larnaka this summer

LARNAKA'S PALM Beach Hotel & Bungalows is optimistic that Jet2Holidays' new flights from Newcastle and Glasgow to Larnaka this summer will entice more visitors to the destination.

The resort's general manager, Antonis Papakyriakou, said: "The additional flights will introduce more visitors from the north east of England and Scotland to our sandy shores, as well as Larnaka town's soulful centre

and the district's distinctive, vibrant villages. We are looking forward to welcoming families to our renovated bungalows and couples to our recently renovated double sea view rooms."

Flights to Larnaka commence on May 2 through to October and departure airports include East Midlands, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester and Newcastle.

Fares lead in at £460 per person for departures from Newcastle on May 27

including seven nights' breakfast accommodation, transfers and baggage allowance of 22kg.

Prices for a Glasgow departure on May 6 for a family of two adults and two children aged 12 and under, staying in a garden bungalow, lead in at £1,460 including flights, transfers and breakfast accommodation.

To book or for further information call 0800-408 0778 or see www.jet2holidays.co.uk



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New adult-only Larnaka property from Planet Holidays with seven nights from £670

A NEW small luxury hotel that combines the charm of a private house with five-star facilities is being offered as an adult-only property by Planet Holidays. The seafront Ciao Stelio Deluxe Hotel, located in Larnaka, features 52 air-

conditioned rooms and suites with flat-screen TVs with satellite channels in guestrooms as well as a pillow choice and free Wi-Fi.

A seven-night breakfast stay leads in at £670.75 per person based on two

sharing and including flights from Gatwick on May 13.

To book call 01438-841270 or see www.planet-holidays.co.uk and for more information on Larnaka visit www.larnakaregion.com

Olympic Holidays offers seven-night, all-inclusive breaks for less than £500

OLYMPIC HOLIDAYS is featuring seven-night, all-inclusive holidays to Cyprus for less than £500 for the coming season. One-week prices at the Papantonia Hotel Apartments, a 112-apartment complex in Protaras, start from £457 in early May, with two-week holidays at the property leading in at £686.

The company's commercial director, Photis Lambrianides, said: "Cyprus has outstanding all-inclusives to suit every pocket and there are many top-value properties at the lower end of the price

scale. Properties like Makronissos Village Club in Agia Napa and the Papantonia Hotel Apartments offer exceptional value and put an all-inclusive holiday within reach of many more people."

At four-star hotel level, all-inclusive holidays start at £493 for seven nights in early May at the Polycarpia Hotel in Protaras, based on two sharing a twin inland view room.

New additions to the operator's programme for summer include the five-star Olympic Lagoon Resort Paphos, the

Helios Bay Hotel Apartments and the Basilica Complex, all in Paphos.

Among the 170 all-inclusive properties across the operator's featured destinations, 38 are in Cyprus.

As an example of prices, a seven-night, all-inclusive stay at the four-star Golden Coast Hotel in Protaras costs from £573, based on an April 30 departure from Gatwick with easyJet and two sharing a twin inland view room.

For more information call 0844-499 4449 or see www.olympicholidays.com

Cyplon Holidays unveils new bookable website for agents with price match tool

CYPLON HOLIDAYS has announced that agents are now able to make reservations at any time on its new bookable website, which features absolute price parity and gives agents the option to choose from three levels of commission - Gold, Silver and Bronze.

A Price Match tool also allows agents to submit the necessary information so that the operator can do its best to either match or beat

the price.

Meanwhile, the company reports that with a strengthening pound against the euro, there has never been a better time to promote Cyprus.

The operator is currently running a family deal at the five-star Anassa, where children receive a free room, saving £2,163, when clients book two studios or garden suites. Prices lead in at £2,859 for two adults and



Protaras

two children including flights and transfers and the deal is available for holidays completed between April 1

and June 1.

For more information visit www.cyplon.co.uk or email sales@cyplon.co.uk

Attraction World highlights selection of add-ons to boost commission

ATTRACTION WORLD is promoting a range of add-ons to agents to encourage them to sell to clients and boost their commission.

As examples, a ticket to the WaterWorld Water Park in Agia Napa costs £36 per adult and £21 per child

(aged three-12), while a Famagusta tour (from Paphos) leads in at £98 per adult and £62 per child (aged two-11) and takes in the destination's hidden treasures, one of which is the City of Salamis.

Alternatively, agents can promote a

Fireworks Night Cruise in Paphos which costs £74 per adult and £38 per child (aged two-11) or an Akamas Adventure, also in Paphos, which costs £29 per adult and £15 per child and explores the remote beaches and wild coastline of North West Cyprus.

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Classic Collection extends villa portfolio in Pomos, Miliou & Latchi

CLASSIC COLLECTION Holidays' customers can enjoy the freedom of self-catering villa holidays in Cyprus this summer as the operator has added a new selection of luxury villas, ranging from stone-built properties in traditional style to more modern and contemporary designs.

Located in Pomos, Miliou and Latchi, all the villas feature private outdoor pools, as well as a Jacuzzi and barbecue area. Kitchens are well equipped and some of the villas offer an indoor Jacuzzi and sauna.

Some of the properties are set within an easy stroll of the beach, whilst others are located in the countryside. The operator has included car hire for all of its villas for easy exploration of the surrounding areas, and for the 45-minute drive from Paphos airport.

As an example, Clarissa & Carmel Villas in Pomos offer views of the coastline and are close to a private beach. The villas sleep up to eight with one double and two twin rooms, all with en-suite facilities. Prices range from £458 to £1,046 per person, per week.



Alternatively, the two-bedroom Levandah Villa in Miliou sleeps up to four guests, with prices ranging from £512 to £1,151 per person, per week. For further details or to book visit www.classic-collection.co.uk or call 0800-008 7288.

Half price savings from Villas4You

VILLAS4YOU IS offering a selection of half price villas in Cyprus.

As an example, a seven-night stay at the Villa Kyveli II in Coral Bay, which sleeps four, leads in at £269 per person based on an April 29 departure from Gatwick.

For details see www.villas4you.co.uk

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New ways to Explore the islands of Tahiti

FROM NOVEMBER, visitors to the Islands of Tahiti can experience the wonders of the Marquesas Islands on the new Aranui V, a 126m long ship that can carry up to 254 passengers.

The ship doubles as a freighter, providing the otherwise isolated islands with vital supplies. Only six of the 12 islands are inhabited, so amongst discoveries of waterfalls, canyons and wildlife, the voyage gives guests the chance to meet the locals and experience their way of life.

Turquoise Holidays offers a 13-night cruise on Aranui III from £4,475 per person, based on two sharing a cabin and including all meals (on-board and in local restaurants), wine, water and most activities (excluding scuba-diving and horse-riding), transfers and flights.

To book or for details see www.turquoiseholidays.co.uk or call 01494-678400. For more information on Tahiti visit www.tahiti-tourisme.co.uk

Samoa Tourism Authority highlights events calendar

THE SAMOA Tourism Authority is encouraging agents to become familiar with its line-up of events this year to entice would-be visitors to travel to the destination.

This year's annual Samoa Swim Festival will take place from May 21-24, giving swimmers of all ages the chance to compete in a variety of open-water races. The race distances vary between 500m and 10km for different age groups with prizes for the winners and medals for all finishers.

On January 1, 1962, Western Samoa became the first South Pacific island to gain independence from New Zealand. Independence

Day, however, is celebrated on June 1 with Samoa Independence Celebrations. The annual event sees locals come together to celebrate local culture and traditions with a mixture of parades, musical performances and boat races.

On Friday June 12, the Shakespeare's Globe will be staging a one-off unique performance of Hamlet in Samoa as part of its two-year world tour. The tour kicked off in 2014 to mark the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and is due to perform in every country of the world.

Meanwhile, on July 8, the world champion New

Zealand All Blacks will play an historic first-ever rugby test match against the Manu Samoa on their home turf. The game will be the first between the two nations to be played in Samoa and will serve as a warm-up match before the Rugby World Cup in the UK in autumn.

Other upcoming events include the fifth edition of the Commonwealth Youth Games, held from September 5-12, and Samoa's Teuila Festival, which takes place from September 6-12 and offers a variety of events and activities.

For more information visit www.samoa.travel

Up to 50% savings on 2016 voyages from Paul Gauguin Cruises

PAUL GAUGUIN Cruises has announced details of its 2016 voyages featuring popular favourites along with a new seven-night Tahiti, the Society Islands & Tuamotus itinerary and an 11-night Society Islands & Tuamotus voyage.

The company is offering savings of 50% off standard cruise fares on all 2016 voyages on both its ships plus an included airfare from Los Angeles on MS Paul Gauguin itineraries.

New for 2016 on Paul Gauguin is a seven-night Tahiti, the Society Islands & Tuamotus voyage that adds the Tuamotus archipelago to the line's most popular Polynesian itinerary with visits to Papeete, Tahiti; Huahine, Society Islands; Fakarava, Tuamotus; Rangiroa, Tuamotus; Taha'a (Motu Mahana), Society Islands; Bora Bora, Society Islands; Moorea, Society Islands; and Papeete, Tahiti. The sailing departs on February 6, 2016.

Paul Gauguin is also offering a new 11-night Society Islands & Tuamotus sailing featuring a second full day on the line's private island of Motu Mahana, departing on December 3.

Ports include Papeete, Tahiti; Huahine, Society Islands; Taha'a (Motu Mahana), Society Islands; Bora Bora, Society Islands (overnight); Rangiroa, Tuamotus; Fakarava, Tuamotus; Taha'a (Motu Mahana), Society Islands; Moorea, Society Islands (overnight); and Papeete, Tahiti.

The company will also be featuring its most popular itineraries in 2016: the seven-night Tahiti & the Society Islands; two-night Society Islands & Tuamotus; 11-night Cook Islands & Society Islands; and 14-night Marquesas, Tuamotus & Society Islands, which all feature complimentary access to two exclusive retreats - Motu Mahana and a private beach in Bora Bora. At Motu Mahana guests enjoy a day of watersports, Polynesian activities, a barbecue and cocktails from full-service and floating bars. In Bora Bora guests can relax on the beach with refreshments, enjoy a game of volleyball or go snorkelling.

For more information visit www.pgcruses.com

travelbulletin

Giving oge's the edge

We asked our staff the following question this week:

Who's your favourite comedian?

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All-time? Eddie Izzard. But I think Charlie Brooker is currently the funniest person on TV

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Code share agreement from Soloman Airlines

SOLOMON AIRLINES has hailed a decision by fellow Melanesian airlines, Air Niugini and Air Vanuatu, to combine resources with the Solomon Islands' national carrier to jointly develop and promote partnership in aviation services.

Seen as offering major benefit to the Melanesian region, the three airlines recently signed an initial agreement in Honiara in principal agreeing to work in unison to assist and promote better understanding, partnership and generally promote the ideals of the Melanesian Spearhead Group, an intergovernmental organisation, composed of the four Melanesian states of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and the Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front of New Caledonia.

A key outcome of the meeting will see the three airlines entering into a tri-partite code share arrangement on the Port Moresby/Honiara/Port Villa route.

Expected to commence in June, the code share agreement will see Air Vanuatu and Solomon Airlines utilising an Air Niugini Fokker 100 aircraft on the route.



A 12-DAY 'BEST OF HAWAII' TOUR leads in at £3,130 (excluding flights) from Tauck. Highlights include a private evening with cocktails and dinner at Iolani Palace in Honolulu; meet a real-life Waikiki 'beach boy' and hear the story of life on the water; a visit to the USS Arizona Memorial, built over the remains of the fallen WWII battleship in Pearl Harbour; a presentation on the unique ecology of the Pacific islands; a hands-on gourmet cooking experience and an evening of dance, song and exotic flavours at a traditional Hawaiian luau; a tour of a coffee farm on the Big Island complete with Kona coffee tasting; and a private catamaran sail at sunset. The tour includes transfers, 21 meals, service charges, admission fees, taxes and portage.

DOSOMETHINGDIFFERENT.COM, which offers a selection of tours to the Hawaiian Islands of Kauai, Maui, Oahu and Big Island, is highlighting one of its best-selling options - a sunset and star gazing trip to Mount Kea, the world's tallest mountain rising more than 32,000ft from the ocean floor to its summit. The trip leads in at £159 per person, including dinner, and lasts for eight hours. For details see www.dosomethingdifferent.com or call 020-8090 3890.



puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. BRITANNIA, 5. IPSWICH, 8. SIN, 9. FORT, 11. NERJA, 13. OXO, 14. HURON, 15. IDLE, 17. DEE, 18. ALABAMA, 20. DARTMOUTH.

Down: 1. BRIG, 2. ACI, 3. AUSTRALIA, 4. FUNWAY, 6. STOURHEAD, 7. HANOI, 10. TONGA, 12. RHODES, 16. BATH, 19. AMM.

Highlighted Word: AUSTRIA

Travagrams: (top) Alitalia (bottom) Alberta

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