

# travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge



## Call to Adventure

The biggest action-packed trips  
for thrill-seeking travellers

### this week



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All the fun of York's Escorted Tours Showcase in pictures



Invites you to a

# NORTH AMERICA

Agent networking evening

Monday 18th March - Jurys Inn, Oxford

Tuesday 19th March - Novotel Sheffield Centre Hotel

## Featuring



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 ambience 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.

This evening 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.

Registration: 18:00 hours

Networking & Presentations: 18:30 hours

Hot Dinner, Entertainment & Prizes: 20:30 hours

Carriages: 21:45 hours

To confirm your places at one of these amazing events, email the names and job titles of up to 5 staff members to: [events@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:events@travelbulletin.co.uk) or telephone:

**020 7834 6661**

For more information.





## STANSTED JAM...

THE UK'S first live music festival to take place airside at an airport was held at Stansted. The Departures Live event offered an early preview of some of the up-and-coming acts which are lined up to perform at European music festivals throughout 2019. The gig featured London grime MC and Boy Better Know member Jammer (pictured), DJ and YouTuber Jack Maynard, and indie rock bands Magic Gang, who played guitar-pop songs, and Eliza and The Bear, a quintet from Essex known for their life-affirming lyrics.

## Holiday-loving Brits cutting back on gastronomy, garments and gadgets

BRITISH TRAVELLERS are cutting back on eating out, clothing and electronic gadgets rather than cutting back on holidays. This is according to new research by ABTA which examines the most popular activities and items people would be most willing to spend less on, with taking holidays remaining one of the country's top spending priorities.

Researchers found that 25% of respondents would cut back on eating out, 18% would limit their spending on clothing and accessories, and 17% would spend less on electronic gadgets. Other items people are willing to spend less on in order to afford to travel include alcohol, cigarettes and takeaway meals. Leisure activities, such as going to the cinema and concerts, were activities people were least likely to cut back on at 11%.

The study points to British people viewing holidays as a necessity rather than a luxury, with 86% of the population saying they took a holiday, either at home or abroad in 2018. Of the groups polled, 18-24-year-olds are the most committed to holidays with only 6% saying they would cut back on travel to save money. This age group is the most likely to cut back on eating out to save for a holiday.

Among those with children, they are most likely to moderate their spending on eating out, compared to just 13% who would cut back on the amount they spend travelling the world.

Victoria Bacon, ABTA's director of brand and business development, said: "For those looking to go on holiday this year, but are a bit conscious of cost, it's really worth having a look at the deals and offers available at the moment. Many travel companies still have holidays left with free-child places or money off for summer breaks, and 60% of UK travellers say they booked a package holiday last year because it was the best value option for the price."

### THIS WEEK

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## Save the date for the Travel Bulletin Star Awards

THE 2019 Travel Bulletin Star Awards will be held on Monday September 9 at the five-star Landmark Hotel in London. Once again, it promises to be a spectacular evening of entertainment, fine dining, networking opportunities and the chance to celebrate the high achievers in the travel industry.

A new voting system, as well as some fresh categories for 2019 will be announced on March 22. This will be followed by our Star Awards preview issue on April 26.

Tickets for the Star Awards will be available online from March 22 but 'Early Bird' discounted tickets at £235 per seat or £2,250 for a table of 12 can be reserved in advance of this date. To take advantage of this special rate, email [jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk)



## Coral Adventurer is ready to set sail with Aussie adventures

AUSTRALIAN EXPEDITION cruise company, Coral Expeditions, has successfully completed the first sea trials of its new world expedition ship Coral Adventurer.

A team of 12 senior marine and management staff from the company's Cairns headquarters joined representatives from the shipyard and systems manufacturers to put the vessel through her paces in rough sea conditions. She passed the trials with flying colours, demonstrating excellent stability and sea-keeping characteristics.

Coral Adventurer will be the fourth ship in the fleet of Australian-flagged ships, purpose-built for expedition-style cruising. Following final touches, including the installation of a collection of Australian art and photographs, the vessel will begin her sold-out maiden voyage from Singapore to Darwin on April 24.

"While we could have easily justified a bigger ship, we restricted her to 120 passengers, which we feel is the limit for a true expedition experience," said Paul Chacko, executive director of Coral Expeditions. "With this successful



*Coral Adventurer will embark on her maiden voyage next month.*

build behind us, the company is poised to further develop its new-build programme to cater for growing demand for expedition cruising."

## ABTA urges companies to go tech-savvy ahead of tax administration changes

ABTA IS reminding members to plan ahead to accommodate a change to tax administration which requires UK companies with a taxable turnover of more than £85,000 to file VAT returns digitally.

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is introducing the 'Making Tax Digital for VAT' obligations from April 1, meaning manual records are no longer accepted and VAT returns will need to be submitted digitally via accounting software, rather than being manually entered onto the HMRC portal.

Companies will have to keep records and file returns digitally using 'functional compatible software' designed by HMRC to record and preserve files and submit digital tax returns. Certain businesses can be exempt from the change if their religion prevents them from using computers; as well as for reasons of age, disability or remoteness of location.

Carolyn Watson, director of finance and resources for ABTA, said: "It is important that our members plan ahead and make sure their accounting systems are ready for Making Tax Digital. Software and process changes may need to be implemented, so businesses will need to be well prepared."



## Homeworkers to descend on Cyprus for future-proofing

FROM MARCH 27-30, The Personal Travel Agents at Co-operative Travel will hold its seventh annual conference, with more than 100 of the company's homeworkers gathering in the Cypriot town of Paphos.

The conference theme is 'Destination Future' and homeworkers will explore the ways they can future-proof their businesses.

Sheena Whittle, head of the company, said there will be an emphasis on personal wellbeing in one of the workshops, as well as focusing on how their agents can stand out.

For more details, go to [www.thepersonaltravelagents.co.uk](http://www.thepersonaltravelagents.co.uk)

## SeaWorld Parks adds thrills and removes polystyrene

SEAWORLD PARKS has announced two new rollercoasters at its Busch Gardens attraction, as well as a ban on polystyrene foam dinnerware products across all 12 of its theme parks.

At Busch Gardens, now celebrating its 60th anniversary, Tigris, Florida's tallest launch coaster, is set to open in spring 2019. Additionally, construction has begun on a hybrid coaster, opening in 2020. It will be North America's tallest hybrid, and the fastest, steepest hybrid coaster in the world.

As part of the group's ongoing environmental programme, it has removed polystyrene foam dinnerware products, including bowls, plates and trays, from all



Artist's impression of Tigris.

of its dining operations. The company has invested in projects to reduce energy and water use and the amount of waste it generates, including drought-resistant landscaping, LED lighting and installing solar panels at its Aquatica San Diego park.

## Princess Cruises expands MedallionNet to ten ships

PRINCESS CRUISES is rolling out its high-speed onboard WiFi, MedallionNet, on ten of its ships – more than half the line's fleet – by the end of 2019.

The system is already available on four ships: Caribbean Princess, Regal Princess, Royal Princess and Ruby Princess. The roll-out will continue with Crown Princess on June 30 during departures from Southampton; Coral Princess on April 5 and Island Princess on May 15 during their Alaska seasons; Sky Princess in October; and Golden Princess on December 20 as she sets sail on a range of voyages in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific.

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# Spotlight on... United Airlines



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Valid for departures 27 Oct - 12 Dec 2019

**San Francisco**  
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Valid for departures 27 Apr - 23 May & 27 Oct - 12 Dec 2019



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## New York paves the way for Pride Year

WITH 2019 declared the Year of Pride in New York, the city has organised a LGBT extravaganza to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots.

Among the events planned is an Andy Warhol exhibition in the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn and a Pride Action, consisting of artwork and literature created by members of New York's effervescent LGBT art scene.

The year-long celebration also includes a total of 50 exhibitions in tribute to the Stonewall riots, running from May 24 to September 22. These exhibitions explore the history of LGBTQ bars in New York, as well as graphic installations and imagery from the past 50 years of pride marches in the city.

Fred Dixon, president and CEO of NYC & Company, said: "We have declared 2019 the Year of Pride, to not only celebrate WorldPride and Stonewall 50 but to acknowledge the perpetual spirit of New York City's vibrant LGBTQ community. In addition to the iconic events in June, the City is brimming with a yearlong roster of cultural activity."

New York will also play host to WorldPride in June – the first time this event has taken place in America – with more than four million visitors expected to make their way to The Big Apple to take part.

For a full listing on New York's Year of Pride events go to [www.nycgo.com](http://www.nycgo.com)



U BY Uniworld is launching a drag-themed cruise to set sail in Germany this summer. Featuring RuPaul's Drag Race alumni Darienne Lake, Jiggly Caliente and Phi Phi O'Hara, 'U in Drag' includes drag makeup lessons, a karaoke night, a bar crawl and, of course, performances from the queens themselves.

## London - Amsterdam popularity sees record performance for Eurostar

EUROSTAR HAS seen record numbers both in its sales revenues and passenger numbers for 2018, underpinned by a buoyant business travel market, strong US traveller numbers and the launch of its new service between London and Amsterdam.

11 million passengers travelled using the high-speed rail link between the UK and mainland Europe in 2018, representing a 7% increase compared with 2017 (10.3 million) and the highest ever number of travellers in a single year. This year also marks the celebration of 25 years of Eurostar with over 190 million passengers since services began in 1994.

The business travel market grew by 12% last year, testament to the enduring popularity of the company's Business Premier service which offers travellers complete flexibility, ten-minute check-in and a range of sustainable menu options on board in partnership with Michelin starred chef, Raymond Blanc, OBE.

Leisure traffic last year were boosted by the success of the new service between London and Amsterdam. The high-speed rail link between London and the Netherlands, which marks its first anniversary next month, has seen more than 250,000 travellers travelling



since launch in April 2018. To meet consumer demand, the company has put tickets on sale for a third daily service starting in June this year and is committed to introducing additional services as soon as the governments have put border controls in place for the Amsterdam-London leg of the journey.

Mike Cooper, chief executive of the company, said: "Over the last 25 years Eurostar has led the way in cross-Channel travel, cementing the links between the UK and mainland Europe. The popularity of our new service between London and Amsterdam shows the growing appetite among customers for international high-speed rail travel and a sustainable alternative to the airlines."

For more information or to book tickets visit [www.eurostar.com](http://www.eurostar.com)

## A whale of a time with Crystal's porpoise-ful partnership

IN A bid to keep cruise lines eco-friendly, Crystal Cruises has announced a partnership with conservation organisation ORCA.

Focusing on the protection of whales, dolphins and porpoises, the experts at ORCA are set to join two sailings through Alaska between Anchorage and Vancouver on August 20 and 27 in order to learn more about the animals' behaviour.

John Stoll, Crystal's vice president of land programmes, said: "We are honoured to join ORCA in its admirable work to monitor and protect the animals and the oceans we sail. The passion of the expert Cruise Conservationists on their team is truly contagious and will certainly enlighten and inspire our guests."

These Crystal Symphony Voyages are open for booking with fares starting from £2,012 per person based on the August 27 sailing.



## AGENT INSIGHT

James Whitaker-Sheppard  
Travel Designers

**M**EXICO IS one of my favourite destinations to recommend to my customers. Having been in the travel industry for almost ten years, I was made aware of the high standards offered by the five-star Mexico resorts and the premium all-inclusive packages available early on when meeting with hoteliers and suppliers for training. I absolutely love the Caribbean, and had originally seen the Caribbean Coast of Mexico as a slightly second-rate relative, but following my first holiday to the destination in 2014, I was proven totally wrong!

In 2015, I was fortunate enough to be hosted on an AM Resorts Fam Trip which really showed me the Mexican difference. To go to a luxury five-star property with up to ten a la carte restaurants, sip away on any premium branded cocktail around a pool bar and have a high-end room for a fraction of the cost of what you would pay on one of the islands – what's not to love?

After a direct ten hour flight over to Cancun, I would recommend a private transfer as there are a lot of resorts that you could end up stopping at for other guests, even if your hotel is located just 30 minutes from the airport. To the north of Cancun International Airport is the exclusive area of Playa Mujeres. The famous hotel zone is located a hop, skip and a jump from Cancun airport and is home to the high-rise hotels, packed tightly in with bars, restaurants and clubs all within walking distance. This is definitely the area for party animals, as well as holidaymakers looking for a taste of the action during a relaxing beach break.

Further south is the stunning Riviera Maya, Playa Del Carmen and Tulum; all sprawled with fantastically priced all-inclusive properties ranging in standard. Whether you have clients travelling as a family, a couple on their honeymoon or friends travelling together; there is something for everyone in Mexico.

*For more Mexico highlights look out for Travel Bulletin's dedicated feature next week.*

## UNWTO gets on the case to manage urban overtourism hotspots

THE WORLD Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has released a report, *Overtourism? Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth Beyond Perceptions: Case Studies*, to help destinations manage urban tourism for the benefit of residents and visitors, and for travel industry professionals to take a responsible approach to organising holidays.

The report features 18 case studies offering a wide range of strategies and measures for a better understanding and management of challenges and opportunities.

Case studies from Amsterdam, Antwerp, Barcelona, Berlin, Besalú, Cambridge, Dubrovnik, Edinburgh, Ghent, Hangzhou, London, Lucerne, Macao, New York, Lisbon, Seoul, Porto, Prague and Venice feature in the report, demonstrating that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to managing overtourism in diverse urban destinations.

Overall, the most common measures implemented by destinations relate to the dispersal of visitors within the city and beyond, showing the need to manage tourism congestion in certain areas and attractions. Measures with the aim of improving the city infrastructure and facilities are frequently mentioned, reflecting the fact that many challenges are linked to the growing number of visitors as well as the pressure placed by residents, commuters and tourists on the resources and services of cities.

*For more information about the report and the ongoing work of UNWTO in sustainable tourism, go to [www2.unwto.org](http://www2.unwto.org)*



**ALL THE RIGHT MOVES...** Diversity will be among the acts that will be performing at Butlin's Bognor Regis this summer, with a show choreographed by Ashley Banjo. Stephen Mulhern will also be mixing comedy and magic at Butlin's over the summer months. Selected breaks at Bognor Regis, Minehead and Skegness will attract discounts of up to 40% if booked before March 26.



## AGENT INCENTIVES

- WITH PLANS to operate three weekly services from Manchester to Tel Aviv from May 26, El Al Israel is offering five £50 Love2Shop vouchers for any bookings made before the end of the month to/from Manchester Airport. To be in with a chance of winning a voucher, agents must send details of their bookings to [saleslon@elal.co.uk](mailto:saleslon@elal.co.uk)
- ABTA AND its partners are offering complimentary places for travel agents to attend a range of travel related conferences organised by the travel association throughout this year. Each conference will provide an opportunity for agents to gain expert knowledge about the travel market, as well as advice about how to improve their marketing strategies and network with other ABTA members. Complimentary places are available for ABTA's Cruise Conference on September 19, the Adventure Travel Conference on September 26, the Manchester-based Domestic Travel Conference in November and London's Over 50s Market in Travel Conference, also taking place in November. To apply for one of the limited complimentary places, agents can email [events@abta.co.uk](mailto:events@abta.co.uk)
- WITH THE Rugby World Cup taking place in September and the Tokyo Olympics scheduled for 2020, the popularity of this destination is set to soar. On the back of this InsideAsia and InsideJapan have launched an agent incentive in which agents will receive commission of 15% on the sale of all 2019/2020 small group tours booked before the end of this month.



*SUPER BREAK hosted 13 of Hays Travel's top performing travel agents from its homeworking division on a trip to London, where they were treated to an overnight stay with tickets to see Come From Away in the West End's Phoenix Theatre, a celebratory dinner at Zizzi's and a river cruise the following morning.*

## WIN WIN WIN!!! with **travelbulletin** COMPETITIONS!

- NEW: Win £500 with Manchester Airport.
- NEW: Win accommodation and park tickets for the family at Europa Park in Germany.
- NEW: Win a £100 Amazon voucher with El Al Israel Airlines.
- Enter the Car Hire Survey to win £500 worth of Love2Shop gift cards.

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### LOG BOOKINGS

Submit the bookings you have made for approval by our partners.



### EARN REWARDS

Use your points to redeem high street voucher rewards and fam trip opportunities.



# Industry Insight by...



GLOBAL TRAVEL GROUP



## Andy Stark, managing director of the Global Travel Group, on the neverending story for the travel industry that is Brexit.

WHAT IS it about us Brits that makes us revel in misfortune? People falling over or suffering some sort of misery has been a mainstay of comedians and satirists for hundreds of years.

I'm guessing it has something to do with what we have been through as a country. Plague, pestilence, invasion, war and corruption – yep, we've seen it all. And if you can't laugh, well...

Which brings me on to Brexit. Sorry, I know, it really is tiresome. And again, I've got to be that person who caveats everything here with the statement: "and who knows if this will come true because I wrote it a week ago and things might have changed since then."

Anyway, when it comes to Brexit. I guess the point is that I wonder what we'll be saying about it in ten or 20 years' time?

The situation we find ourselves in now seems to be a slightly strange plot to test if the country still has its Dunkirk spirit – in part by threatening us all with food shortages and the possibility that the UK will be out of basic materials by the middle of April. Will we eventually be laughing about all this fuss in the future or will it be too painful to make jokes about?

Like everyone else (including our esteemed MPs), I actually have no clue about what might happen after March 29. And as travel agents up and down the

country will tell you, the general public are desperate for someone – anyone – to give them some clarity.

Global Travel Group's retailers have been telling me of the daily challenges of trying to sell holidays to consumers with genuine concerns about their financial wellbeing. In those cases, human nature kicks in and – counter-intuitively – you'd perhaps want to advise people to wait before booking.

On the other hand, agents are well placed to offer the latest travel and holiday advice. Having expert help for your big holiday purchase is always reassuring, and that hand holding is being amplified now.

While we are all in the dark about the most obvious question – will holiday prices go up after Brexit? – we can help with queries about

everything else, be it passport rules, visas, flights, international driving permits and myriad other things.

As an industry we are used to change and adapting pretty swiftly when new legislation and guidelines are often thrown at us with very little room for practical planning – Package Travel Regulations (PTRs), I am looking at you...

Building relationships and trusted service has always been essential and Brexit, perversely, gives our business another way to shine while delivering these services. Who knows, agents might have the last laugh.

**"Will we be laughing about Brexit in the future or will it be too painful to make jokes?"**



# Su Doku

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

Number: 011

A →

B →

C →

D →

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

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, March 21st. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

**The winner for 1st March is Lisa Clover, East Of England Co-op Travel in Essex.**

**March 1st Solution: A=5 B=8 C=2 D=3**

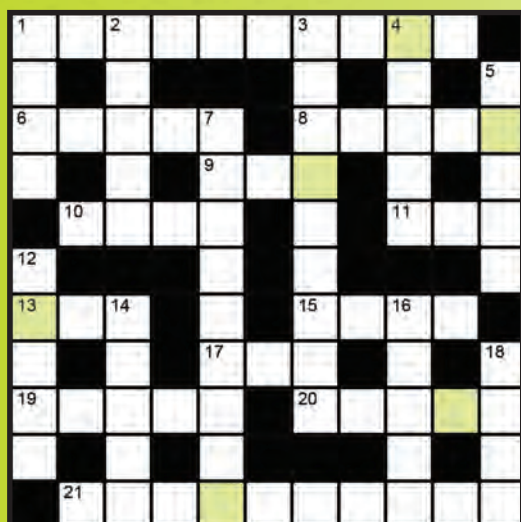
## Where Am I?



Those willing to wade through water and mud into the dark heart of these caves will be rewarded with the soft blue light of a galaxy of glow worms twinkling from the ceiling above.

The chambers are a good free alternative to the famous Waitomo Glowworm Caves and offer a more rugged adventure.

## Crossword



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

### Across

1. MSC cruise ship recently named in Southampton (10)
6. The resort of Mayrhofen is in this province (5)
8. Oranjestad is the capital (5)
9. Flows through the capital of 6 Across (3)
10. Usain, the world's fastest man (4)
11. Flag carrier of Portugal (3)
13. Canberra is located here, initially (3)
15. Hotel brand, part of Accor (4)
17. Auckland international airport code (3)
19. Historic Normandy city (5)
20. Car rental company (5)
21. Capital of Mauritania (10)

### Down

1. The Pulteney Bridge is a popular tourist attraction in this city (4)
2. One of the Florida Keys (5)
3. Hotels and resorts company with HQ in Hong Kong (7-2)
4. Iconic Marazion landmark, St Michael's \_\_\_\_ (5)
5. England's football team recently won the SheBelieves Cup in this Florida city (5)
7. Vilnius is the capital (9)
12. Scenic Italian isle (5)
14. Cornwall's only city (5)
16. Boise is the state capital (5)

For the solution to the Crossword and Where Am I?  
Please see page 22





**FLYING THE FLAG...** Lisa Kaye from Titan Travel (left) was on hand to chat with agents. Here she is with Tom Parley from Hays Person Travel Advisor and Sandy Murray from Sandy's Travel Escapes.



**TRICKS OF THE TRADE...** from the left: Hayley Morris (sitting) from Saga Holidays talks all things travel with Co-Operative Personal Travel Advisors Gaynor Tuby and Elaine Overton; and Jessica Ross, Glyn Stead and Anne Stead from Getaway Travel.



**SHOP TIL YOU DROP...** Helen Smith (right) from Conexo Travel, York is destined for a shopping spree after winning a £50 Love2Shop voucher from Riviera Travel, as presented to her by Riviera's Emma Rodgers.



**PARTY FAVOURS...** Emma French (right) and Helen Smith from local travel agency Conexo Travel sported Travel Bulletin bags as they networked their way around the showcase.

## #TBSHOWCASES

**EARLIER THIS** week, the Travel Bulletin team made its way to York to present an exciting Escorted Tours Showcase. Throughout the evening, local agents seized the opportunity to network with thrilling tourist boards and captivating operators, with a few lucky guests winning prizes along the way.

## HEADLINE SPONSORS



**A ROOM WITH A VIEW...** Jane Chappelow from Thomas Cook (right) couldn't hide her excitement after winning a £50 Q Hotel voucher from Travelsphere & Just You, as presented to her by representative Rachel Mould.





**POINTS GALORE...** Tracey Peacock from Thomas Cook bagged herself 500 River Rewards & More points, worth £50 and redeemable on a selection of luxury prizes. It was presented by sponsors, Scenic Tours & Emerald Waterways, and the company's William Young.



**BON APPÉTIT...** Glyn Stead from Getaway Travel found himself on the receiving end of £30 meal voucher from Newmarket Holidays, presented by company representative Gemma Walker.



**COSMOS WIN...** Norma McAtear from More Than Travel (right) was chuffed to receive a £50 gift card from Cosmos Tours & Cruises, presented by company representative Danielle Radford.



**OFF THE BEATEN TRACK...** Steph Stewardson (left) and Alison Marden from Travel Counsellors chatted to Lockie Kerr from Back-Roads Touring about the perks of taking the road less travelled.



**SMILES ALL AROUND...** clockwise from the left: Candice Reading from Not Just Travel meets with Ashley Dellow from Ledger Holidays, along with Kathleen Bulmer from Love Red Travel, and Diane Hart and Kerry Lakey from Savannah Travel.



**TREAT YOURSELF...** Jessica Ross from Getaway Travel was all smiles as she picked up a £50 Love2Shop gift voucher from G Adventure's Tim Hardie.

Fancy joining the next [#TBShowcases](#) evening?

Our next event will be the Cruise Showcase taking place in Liverpool on March 26.

To confirm your place or find out when we will be hosting our next event year you

contact [events@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:events@travelbulletin.co.uk)



# adventure&activity



## How holidaymakers will answer the call to adventure in 2019

FROM 2-in-1 travel to customers being inspired in their own living rooms, Exodus Travels shares its insights into some of the biggest trends that will be taking place in adventure travel and the standout events taking place across the globe which will inspire travellers to visit this year.

### 2-in-1 Travel

Japan will host the Rugby World Cup this year, closely followed by the Summer Olympics in 2020 and so visitor numbers are expected to soar. Historically, sporting events create a huge buzz around a destination – last year's World Cup in Russia saw football fever sweep the nation and trips to the destination rose by 68% from 2017 to 2018, with people extending their stay to explore more of the country. With so much to discover in Japan, travellers will be looking to make the most of their visit.

### On-screen Inspiration

Adventurer Levison Wood will be returning to TV screens and inspiring wanderlust later this year when he embarks upon his latest adventure to the Arabian peninsula and, for budding adventurers inspired to follow in his footsteps to Jordan, the operator is highlighting its 'Petra and Wadi Rum' tour. Last year's popular BBC series *Dynasties* showcased some of planet's most incredible natural landscapes and the adventure operator recorded a 72% rise in wildlife trip searches on its website compared to the same period in the previous year. Fans of Attenborough's series can take part in an 'Emperor Penguin Expedition' to find the elusive Emperor penguin colony off the coast of Snow Hill Island.

### Walking Wellness

Many travellers are looking to experience

destinations at a slower pace, promoting mindfulness while being out in the open, whilst also leaving a smaller carbon footprint on their adventures. Trekking holidays, therefore, have been one of the biggest areas of growth for the operator; in 2018 'Walking the Amalfi Coast' was its best-selling trip to date, with more than 1,000 people taking in the Italian region's idyllic coastal views, heritage sites and picturesque towns.

### Tickle those taste buds

Exodus has seen a rise of 416% since 2015 in foodie trips, with 2019 shaping up to be all about authentic flavours, traditional techniques and recipes handed down through the generations. More travellers are looking to have their destination served up on a plate as they dabble in Gastro Travel and so, from cookery classes to street food, the operator has put together a 'Mexico Food Adventure' so that clients can get an authentic taste and explore the country in a whole new way.

### Exploring the unexplored

Thanks to Joanna Lumley's *Silk Road Adventure* airing in 2018, many travellers are now turning their attention to this area of the world and to their next 'off-the-beaten-track' adventure. Dotted with alpine meadows and wild pastures inhabited by nomads, Kyrgyzstan is one such place graced with panoramic views, Lake Issyk-Kul and the snow-capped peaks of the Tian Shan Range (meaning Mountains of Heaven). The operator has put together a 'Kyrgyzstan: Tian Shan Gorge Trek' and recommends early booking to avoid the crowds.

For more information call 0208-7123 486 or visit [exodus.co.uk](http://exodus.co.uk)

## Funway targets #thrillseekers

THIS YEAR, Funway Holidays is highlighting that there's more to the Dominican Republic than beaches and sunshine. The operator's latest campaign, #thrillseekers, targets adrenaline seekers looking to explore the destination's expansive terrains and nine distinct ecological zones.

Malcolm Davies, the operator's product destination manager, said: "Most visitors to the Dominican Republic know the country for its white-sand beaches, crystal clear turquoise waters and ample opportunities for relaxation. But the Dominican Republic is also a prime destination for adventure seekers, offering water-sports, golfing, mountain biking, diving and more. Whether on land or at sea, the Dominican Republic is very literally a mecca for outdoor adventure."

As an example of packages to the destination, the operator is offering seven nights staying at the Dreams La Romano Resort & Spa from £1,205 per person. This includes Heathrow flights with British Airways and is based on two adults sharing and departing on June 13.

For more details, go to [www.funway4agents.co.uk](http://www.funway4agents.co.uk)

## Go wild in 'So Sri Lanka'

AN AWARD-winning team of nature documentary filmmakers has released a first-of-its-kind film capturing the essence of Sri Lanka, from the perspective of the country's diverse wildlife.

The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) engaged the team to create the film to bring to life its new branding – 'So Sri Lanka' – which encapsulates the message that Sri Lanka is more than just a destination, it's a feeling, and to entice more experience-seeking travellers to visit.

SLTPB chairman, Kishu Gomes, said: "Sri Lanka is like nowhere else in the world. We wanted to visualise what travellers can do, see and feel when they visit Sri Lanka in a way that is as unique as our country – which is why we wanted to tell our story from the viewpoint of our amazing wildlife. Sri Lanka is one of the best Safari destinations outside of Africa, and we also have many other pleasures for visitors to discover; our beaches enjoy sunshine all year round, our people are warm and welcoming, and our food is abundantly flavourful. Sri Lanka must be felt to be believed, and we welcome all travellers to our country for an experience like no other."

To check out the film go to [www.srilanka.travel](http://www.srilanka.travel)



## Explore puts Lebanon back on the map

EXPLORE HAS introduced a new eight-day 'Highlights of Lebanon' trip, putting the destination back on the tourist map.

Lebanon has recently re-opened its doors to visitors; with the FCO recently updating its travel advice and no longer advising against travel to much of the country. Using local, knowledgeable guides, travellers on this trip will learn about Lebanese life, discover aromatic souks, walk through fragrant cedar forests and savour local dishes.

The trip starts in the capital city of Beirut where clients can get a taste of local life and enjoy a traditional breakfast at the old souk before heading south to the coastal city of Tyre and its UNESCO World Heritage archaeological sites, dating back to 2750 BC.

There is a chance to stay overnight at an eco-lodge in the grounds of St Anthony's Monastery in the Qadisha Valley, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, and wake up to the sound of bells calling the monks to mass and experience rural Lebanese life and homemade food.

Guests will then visit the Bekaa Valley and tour the labyrinth of Roman cellars at Ksara, Lebanon's oldest and biggest winery to learn about the wine-making process and taste the red wine which makes the region famous. The trip ends in Beirut with a guided tour of the city followed by a traditional mezze meal.

The trip costs £1,350 per person and includes flights, internal transfers, seven-nights' accommodation, seven breakfasts and three dinners, and services of a tour leader. 2019 departures fall on September 21, October 12 and November 9; and in 2020 on March 21, April 11, May 23, June 13, August 1, September 26 and October 17. Call 01252-884709 or go to [www.explore.co.uk](http://www.explore.co.uk) to find out more.

## See St. Lucia from a different perspective with BodyHoliday's Adventure Programme

FROM MOUNTAIN biking and waterfall abseiling to hiking up The Pitons, the Adventure Programme by BodyHoliday runs year round and encourages guests to explore the terrain of St. Lucia 'off-the-beaten-track'.

The Rock-Climbing Adventure offers an empowering physical and mental challenge as guests ascend Signal Peak on one of St. Lucia's National Landmarks, Pigeon Island, overlooking the Caribbean Sea.

Alternatively, the Errard Waterfall Abseil allows explorers to experience one of the few accessible waterfalls on the Eastern side of the island, with spectacular views as they enjoy the thrill of abseiling down a 66ft. rounded cliff. The En Bas Saut Trail (Under the Waterfall) is set in the heart of the Edmund Rainforest and takes guests

on a wild trek before heading downhill into a waterfall, where they can then enjoy a swim.

For adrenaline junkies, the Sailing Club offers holidaymakers the chance to race high performance speed yachts and explore the neighbouring island of Martinique.

Guests will have the opportunity to hike up St. Lucia's most iconic landmark and World Heritage Site, The Pitons. At 798m above sea level, Gros Piton is a challenging climb and at the summit hikers will be able to take in the breathtaking views of St. Lucia from a different perspective.

Andrew Barnard, deputy managing director at BodyHoliday, said: "With the launch of BodyHoliday's adventure programme, we are looking to offer guests a wide range of activities that

encourage them to explore the rest of the island outside the resort and experience the beauty of St. Lucia's landscape so that they leave feeling energised."

Located on the north west of the Caribbean island, the resort offers a unique approach to health, fitness and wellbeing with an extensive programme of classes and activities – including training with Olympic athletes, quadrathlons and assault courses.

The facility includes an award-winning spa, with 33 treatment rooms and indulgent experiences.

Rates start from \$500 per person per night, with a supplementary cost applied for the Adventure Programme. For more information visit [www.thebodyholiday.com](http://www.thebodyholiday.com)





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**bodyholiday**  
Saint Lucia

## Over-50s crave exploration & adventure

FORGET FLY and flop; research released by Saga has revealed that the over 50s are more likely to opt for an adventurous jaunt to Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan when booking their annual holiday.

Exploring the Eurasian states, alongside Tallinn in Estonia and seeing the Northern Lights in Scandinavia, all featured within the top ten experiences over-50s wanted to have on their next holiday, according to the research.

While the traditional package holiday destinations of Spain, Portugal and Greece remain popular, more travellers are putting an emphasis on exploration. Respondents to a separate survey of 12,623 over-50s from across the UK, commissioned by Saga and carried out by Populus, revealed that weather, natural wonders, an abundance of historical sites, interesting culture and wildlife were the most important factors when it came to choosing which country to visit.

The survey examined some of the reasons people might be unlikely to book a holiday to a particular country. 84% said 'political instability' put them off, while crime at 75% and human rights concerns at 55% were likely to turn them off. Some 4% of those surveyed said the United States' political leadership 'deterred' them from wanting to travel there, with the figure higher for Russia (6%) and West Africa (8%).

Maria Whiteman, managing director of Saga Travel, said: "We are seeing a seismic shift in the number of people that want to combine luxury and relaxation with something just that little bit different when choosing where to go on their holiday. Whether that's immersing themselves in the



culture of a destination and it's people or doing something a little more adventurous.

"Our customers are very particular about what they want and don't want; great weather, interesting culture, history, wildlife, exciting journeys and the people they might meet are all critical. Whilst many places can deliver that sort of adventure, they often want to try somewhere they may not have had a chance to visit before, explaining perhaps why the number of bookings to places like Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are soaring. They also leave their mark on the people they meet on holiday, often bonding over a shared passion, whether that is for adventure, dancing or wildlife."

## G Adventures launches TailorMade tours in response to agent feedback

INCREASED DEMAND for personalised travel has led G Adventures to launch a new range of individually created travel solutions, called TailorMade.

In December of last year, the operator surveyed more than 450 travel agents globally and 84% reported an increase in requests for tailor-made travel and private tours. 44% stated it as being 'in high demand' and 40% said demand had increased in the past year.

Bruce Poon Tip, founder of the adventure travel operator, said: "The flexibility of TailorMade means travellers can combine experiential travel with customisation. While we've recognised an opportunity in the mid-range travel market, we'll also be able to cater to higher-end tastes in transport, meals and accommodation.

"Most importantly, when booking a TailorMade trip, all travellers are still booking what G Adventures is best known for, which is socially responsible travel. Our 'G for Good' social enterprise projects are available as an option to visit in all 11 launch destinations, and when travellers use our recommended suppliers their money stays in the local economy."

The 11 launch destinations for TailorMade travel in 2019 are Botswana, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecuador (including the Galápagos), India, Laos, South Africa, Thailand, Vietnam and Zimbabwe, with two or three sample itineraries available for each as inspiration for travellers making a TailorMade request.

For more information visit [www.gadventures.com/travel-styles/private-travel/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-styles/private-travel/)

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## Intrepid launches polar charters

INTREPID TRAVEL is expanding its offering in the polar regions with a new programme of sustainable small-group expeditions to Antarctica.

In 2017, Intrepid Group acquired a 50% stake in Chimu Adventures and the charters will mark the next stage of the strategic partnership. Cruises will take place on board the newly refurbished Ocean Endeavour and will start operating in October 2020, operated by sister brand Peregrine Adventures. James Thornton, the group's CEO, said: "We know there is a huge appetite for a more sustainable and experiential style of cruise, so we're thrilled that this partnership will introduce more polar expeditions in our own small group sustainable style."

The Ocean Endeavour carries 199 travellers and has a range of accommodation options, including single cabins, as well as a health and wellness centre on board with saunas, a well-equipped gym, yoga classes, and a salt water pool.

A team of six polar experts in Intrepid's Brixton office has been set up to take bookings on the trips, and there will be a total of 15 departures and five itineraries available, including the ten-day 'Discover Antarctica' and 11-day 'Best of Antarctica'.

Onboard clients can expect a ratio of one expedition staff member to eight guests, rigorous sustainability standards and a range of optional on- and off-board activities to explore the White Continent such as sea kayaking, snowshoeing, photography tours and ice-camping.

Greg Carter, co-founder of Chimu Adventures, added: "Travellers of all ages are visiting Antarctica, they want to get closer to nature and understand the world we live in. Antarctica needs advocates and tourism creates a global constituency of people ready to support – and indeed fund – its preservation. When you're there, you see how fragile the earth is and that really does inspire travellers to come back with a renewed momentum to protect the planet."

Voyages start from £3,995.

For more information, visit

[www.intrepidtravel.com/uk/antarctica](http://www.intrepidtravel.com/uk/antarctica) or go to

[www.chimuadventures.com/en-gb/destinations/antarctica](http://www.chimuadventures.com/en-gb/destinations/antarctica)

## A triple treat of Bermuda sailing

THE BERMUDA Tourism Authority, NYC & Company and Discover Newport will be joining forces this summer to introduce discerning travellers to a new trio of sailing, luxury/lifestyle and adventure experiences.

The joint destination marketing collaboration will see premier sailing events in each destination beckon sailors, superyachts and socialites alike to destination hop along the Eastern seaboard this summer. Bermuda will host the 'Argo Gold Cup' and 'Antigua Bermuda Race' in May as well as the 'Marion to Bermuda Race' in June; NYC will host a 'SailGP' in June with modified boats from the 35th America's Cup; and in July Newport will host the 35th 'Anniversary Newport Regatta at Sail Newport' and '12 Metre World Championship'.

Go to [www.nycgo.com](http://www.nycgo.com) or [www.discovernewport.org](http://www.discovernewport.org) and [www.gotobermuda.com](http://www.gotobermuda.com) to find out more.

## Branch out in Barbados with these grand adventures

DO YOU have clients heading to Barbados seeking to combine relaxation with epic island adventures? Here are some great ways in which they can discover the hidden wonders of this popular Caribbean destination...

### Scenic spots for selfies on the Island Safari

They say it's the journey that makes the adventure and Island Safari Barbados offers an alternative way for clients to explore the trails around the island. The Adventure Safari – which starts and ends at whichever hotel passengers are staying in – is 5.5 hours long, runs daily, and offers plenty of opportunities for clients to explore and pose for photos at scenic spots, from the shore of Little Bay St Lucy to the heights of Edgecliff St. John. See [islandsafari.bb](http://islandsafari.bb)

### Spelunking Harrison's Cave

Travellers can truly explore the heart of the island as they disappear underground on a Harrison's Cave tour. Streams of clear water flow beneath the surface carving their way through the earth's limestone to create deep pools and towering columns that holidaymakers can see for themselves. The tours can be undertaken on foot or by tram, making the experience accessible for everyone. See [harrisonscave.com](http://harrisonscave.com)

### Undersea adventures with Dive Fest

A festival dedicated to celebrating the underwater world of Barbados. The event will feature scuba diving, underwater photography, lionfish hunting, a boat race for rafts made entirely from recycled materials, an underwater photography contest and an Ocean Awareness Program for kids. This year it will take place between July 3-7 and has been designed to have something for all levels of experience. See [www.divefestbarbados.com](http://www.divefestbarbados.com)

### Trot along the sands

There are plenty of horse riding trails for all abilities on the island. Whether visitors wish to canter across fields, meander on the sands, jump the tracks of the steam train or trail blaze through the undergrowth, there are tour guides available to show visitors and their hoofed companions the way. See Ocean Echo Tours at [barbadoshorseriding.com](http://barbadoshorseriding.com)

### Off Road Fury is all the rage

Off Road Fury offers an adventurous Go-Kart experience with guided tours that take guests through indigenous sugar cane fields and hidden 'off-the-beaten' tracks that showcase the interiors of Barbados. See [barbadostraveller.rezdy.com](http://barbadostraveller.rezdy.com)

### Walk among nature at Welchman Gully

For a chance to get close to nature, visitors might like to visit Welchman Gully and stroll on its easy paved walkways through tropical rainforest. Home to troupes of wild monkeys, delicate native plants and reputedly the origin of the grapefruit, visitors can hear more about the site's ongoing conservation efforts beneath a verdant canopy. See [welchmanhallengullybarbados](http://welchmanhallengullybarbados)

### Surf's up

Barbados is one of the top watersports destinations in the Caribbean with Bathsheba Bay being the most reliable destination on the east coast for superb surf. The island hosts the Pro Surf competition each spring. See [www.facebook.com/barbados.surfingassociation](http://www.facebook.com/barbados.surfingassociation)

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## Tourism Australia to deliver new trade show in London

AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE encounters, luxury experiences and unique adventures will be on show at the first Australia Marketplace – UK & Europe trade show to be held in London later this year.

Announced by Tourism Australia, the inaugural event will see up to 130 sellers including inbound tour operators, key airline partners, new Australian products and established Aussie tourism businesses meeting face-to-face with approximately 100 buyers and will cater for specific market interests and segments such as youth travel, premium experiences, wildlife and adventure travel. The Australia Marketplace will also be open to product managers, marketing managers and frontline sellers.

Sally Cope, the tourism board's regional manager for UK & Northern Europe, said: "The new Australia Marketplace will highlight the very best of what Destination Australia has to offer

and with visitor numbers from the UK and wider Europe at near record levels, it is the right time to launch this event and build on current momentum.

"The UK remains one of Australia's largest tourism markets and continues to show resilience in the face of current local uncertainty. Tourism Australia sees this as a key moment to work closely with the travel trade to create new and lasting opportunities for visitation from this market. The UK trade has remained highly engaged with Australian industry partners and the new Australia Marketplace, alongside our Aussie Specialist Training Programme and will allow these strong ties to continue to flourish."

The event will be held annually over two days in the last week of October at a central London venue with an evening gala event at Australia House. An announcement of the exact dates for the 2019 event and venue details will be made in May.

## Complete Saga's training for a chance to win a £20 voucher

SAGA TRAVEL'S new online learning platform has now gone live with the chance for the first 50 agent partners who complete the training courses to receive a £20 lifestyle voucher.

Noting how busy agents are, the newly refreshed training features eight courses comprised of bite-sized modules which take about five minutes to complete.

Iain Powell, head of trade sales for the operator, said: "At Saga we're constantly looking at ways to better support our agent partners to grow our mutual business. It is so important that agents understand all about the Saga brand for over 50s and to be able to pass this information to our potential customers. Our new online training platform will provide the perfect place for agents to improve their knowledge in easy to digest modules." Visit the new learning platform at [www.sagaexperts.co.uk](http://www.sagaexperts.co.uk)

## Take a Tobago101

THE TOBAGO Tourism Agency has launched a new online training programme tailored to UK travel agents and in line with the island's recent 'unspoilt, untouched and undiscovered' rebrand.

Features of the learning platform include six modules covering all of the brand pillars, alongside selling tips, sample itineraries and opportunities for incentives and fam trips.

Stephen Smith, sales and marketing manager for the Tobago Tourism Agency, said: "The primary objective of our online training programme is to educate, inspire and provide selling tips to agents whilst offering as much information as possible in an inspirational and informative style so that they can sell holidays to Tobago with confidence."

"Our content highlights all the key selling points of the destination through each of its four cornerstones (sea & beaches; eco adventures & nature; romance & weddings and local culture, people & heritage) and also encourages agents to log their bookings towards rewards including places on a mega-fam trip which is being planned for the end of the year. We will also be announcing details of forthcoming and exciting prizes shortly."

To join the new online training programme go to [www.Tobago101specialist.co.uk](http://www.Tobago101specialist.co.uk)

## Take the first step & access A Coruña

TURISMO A Coruña now offers face-to-face destination training at the premises of any interested travel agents.

Steeped in history and famously associated with the iconic Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route; the Spanish city is a dynamic destination that looks to draw modern British travellers seeking an eclectic mix of culture, architecture, gastronomy and nature.

The news follows the recent appointment of Merce Carballo as the city's first ever international travel trade representation for the UK and Irish markets and she will be working closely with the trade to educate them about the destination, help design itineraries and facilitate liaising with local operators, hotel partners and other suppliers.

To arrange a training session agents can email [traveltrade@coruna.es](mailto:traveltrade@coruna.es)



**BRIGHT RECENTLY** held its first event for 2019 in Bath hosted by members from Kirker Holidays, First Class, Exodus, African Pride, Veloso, Cox and Kings, Inside Japan, Viking Cruises and Sunvil. Pictured from the left is Andre Ashford and Rupinder Bahra from C the World Travel welcomed to the event by Sarah Turner from Cox and Kings, and Ian Roberts from Marco Polo Travel.

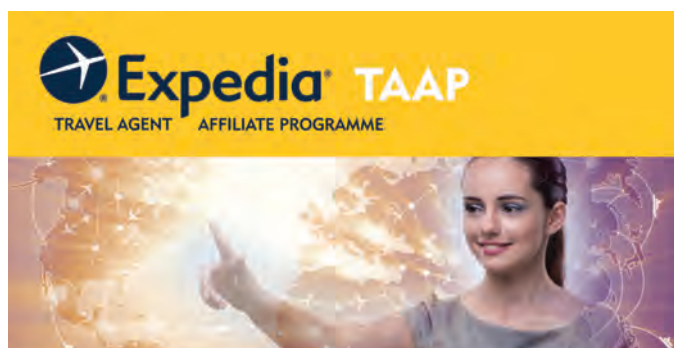
## Become a Premier Expert with new online academy

PREMIER HOLIDAYS has launched a series of online training courses where agents can enhance their knowledge of the operator's destinations.

The 'Travel Training Academy' is available on the operator's trade website and covers destinations in the Far East, Middle East, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Channel Islands with new training modules released each week. Each module features detailed information on the destination along with helpful hints and tips, as well 'Did You Know' facts that agents can take away.

Agents who pass the modules with 75% will receive a certificate, while those who score a 100% pass rate will be awarded the 'Premier Holidays Expert' title and will be sent a dedicated logo to use.

To take part in the training visit [www.trade.premierholidays.co.uk](http://www.trade.premierholidays.co.uk)



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## puzzlesolutions

### Crossword:

Across: 1. BELLISSIMA, 6. TYROL, 8. ARUBA, 9. INN, 10. BOLT, 11. TAP, 13. ACT, 15. IBIS, 17. AKL, 19. ROUEN, 20. ALAMO, 21. NOUAKCHOTT.  
Down: 1. BATH, 2. LARGO, 3. SHANGRI-LA, 4. MOUNT, 5. TAMPA, 7. LITHUANIA, 12. CAPRI, 14. TRURO, 16. IDAHO, 18. PORT.

Highlighted Word: MANAMA

Where Am I? Waipu Cave, Whangarei on the North Island, New Zealand.



**HAVEN IS** giving travel agents the opportunity to try an educational break with their families this spring at a choice of 36 holiday parks and starting from £59 per family. Agents have the option of booking a three-night weekend break or four-night midweek break, with a choice of caravan types, on selected dates during March, April and May. The offer is subject to availability and provided on a first come, first served basis. In order to book a Haven break agents can simply email their ABTA number, contact details, the date and park they'd like to visit and how many people will travel in their party to [trade.sales@bourne-leisure.co.uk](mailto:trade.sales@bourne-leisure.co.uk)

We asked our staff the following question this week:

**If you were a biscuit what kind of biscuit would you be?**



**Jeanette Ratcliffe**

Publisher

[jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk)

*At 5 ft 2" tall, I suppose I should be a shortbread!*



**Adam Potter**

Features Editor

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*The Viennese sandwich – best all rounder.*



**Georgia Lewis**

Managing Editor – News Team

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*A Tim-Tam – it's an Australian classic...*



**Emmet McGonagle**

Staff Writer – News Team

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*I'd be a dark chocolate digestive because it's (controversially) the best damn biscuit ever created.*



**Lauretta Wright**

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*A Custard Cream. A boring Custard Cream.*



**Paul Scudamore**

Contributing Editor

*Garibaldi because there are no flies on me!*



**Simon Eddolls**

Sales Director

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*Probably a Fox's Crinkle Crunch...a very good dunker.*



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*Jammie Dodger – Timmy Podger.*



**Bill Coad**

Account Manager

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*A Digestive – you can dunk me twice and I still will not plop in your tea.*



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*Who doesn't love a Ginger biscuit!*



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*Party Rings.*



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*Sainsbury's Belgian Chocolate Chunk Cookies.*



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*A yummy bourbon biscuit.*



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## Spotlight on... the Maldives



All inclusive

### Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu

★★★★

7 nights all inclusive from

**£1,699<sup>pp</sup>**

Includes two FREE nights, reduced rates & FREE upgrade to all inclusive

Save up to **£1,505** per person

This beautiful island is surrounded by a lagoon of bright turquoise water, boasting a variety of dining options, Coco Spa, land and watersports, and a diving centre offering PADI courses.

Includes flights from London and transfers. Valid for departures 02 - 23 Sep 2019.

**Earn £9 Farebank Rewards on this holiday!**



### Ayada Maldives

★★★★★

7 nights with breakfast from

**£1,899<sup>pp</sup>**

Includes reduced rates

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Includes flights from London and transfers. Valid for departures 02 - 23 Sep 2019.

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All inclusive

### Heritance Aarah

★★★★★

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**£2,659<sup>pp</sup>**

Includes reduced rates

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