

travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge



Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year

FROM ALL OF US AT TRAVEL BULLETIN



the seychelles islands
another world



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Image: © Barbara & Hartmut Röder



PRIZE PAIR...

MORE THAN 80 travel agents attended Dubai Parks and Resorts' 'Official Travel Agent Launch Party' last month. The evening gave agents the opportunity to participate in quizzes and games to win a selection of goodie bags. Pictured are two of the winners – Jackie Prats (left) from Co-operative Personal Travel Advisers and Annette Beckford from Global Getaways, who both won a three-night trip for two to Dubai, staying onsite at the Dubai Parks and Resorts' Lapita Hotel, with entry to the parks and flights with Emirates Airlines. Pictured presenting Jackie and Annette with their prize is Ian Scott from Dubai Parks and Resorts.

Post Office Travel Money survey reveals family skiing costs least in Kranjska Gora

FOR THE first time in its ten-year history, research for the Post Office Travel Money Family Ski Resort Report has revealed that Kranjska Gora is now the cheapest of 16 ski resorts across Europe – overtaking long-time leader Bansko.

The Slovenian resort was one of six surveyed where prices in the local currencies have slid downhill to reduce the impact of sterling's fall in value on families planning ski holidays this winter.

Featuring European resorts recommended as most suitable for family skiing by Crystal Ski Holidays, who conducted the research in partnership with the Post Office, the report compared the cost of six days' ski and boot hire, lift passes and ski school, together with a sample price for lunch on the slopes and a range of drinks for two adults and two children.

At a total cost of £1,071 for the basket of goods, Kranjska Gora was the cheapest resort surveyed. Local euro-based prices have fallen 5% since last season – in part due to discount offers on equipment hire. This means the weaker pound will have less of an impact than in many other resorts surveyed, where half of those surveyed saw year-on-year rises exceeding 25%.

The low cost of family ski tuition was a key factor in helping Kranjska Gora to overtake Bansko. Its £340 price tag for six sessions was almost £200 lower than in the Bulgarian resort (£530). As a result, while Bansko has remained lowest-priced of the 16 ski resorts for ski/boot hire and lift passes, its barometer basket costs £1,151 – 7.5% more than Kranjska Gora.

Andrew Brown of Post Office Travel Money, said: "One of the most important considerations for parents planning ski holidays is likely to be the cost of tuition – particularly for their children. We have been tracking low prices for ski school in Kranjska Gora for some years and in today's cash-conscious environment the resort is looking unbeatable value.

"But it does depend on what costs you need to factor in for your ski trip and families will be well-advised to do their homework to establish the price that covers all their planned activities before booking. When you have to budget for three, four or more people, the price differences between resorts can really add up and swapping to a cheaper one could save hundreds of pounds."

For more details on the findings see postoffice.co.uk/familyskiing

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£182million lost by travelling from the wrong airport new research reveals

SEVEN MILLION airline passengers are wasting almost 1,000 years in additional travel time and £182million between them by choosing to fly out of the main London airports instead of their local airport, a study reveals today.

Holidaymakers flying to European leisure destinations are wasting the most time and money, the analysis of official figures shows.

Each passenger is £27 worse off in terms of lost time and travel costs per trip over the past four years, the analysis by York Aviation consultancy for Bristol Airport found.

Last year alone, leisure passengers wasted £101million and business passengers £82m. The average holidaymaker lost £17 each per trip compared with £67 extra for each business passenger.

The number of passengers from the South West and South Wales flying out of London airports has risen by almost 20% over the past four years to seven million in 2015. Those passengers endured an additional 512 million minutes, or 974 years, 45 days, 13 hours and 20 minutes of extra travel time on the motorways and railways.

Applying official guidelines for transport appraisals, the researchers calculated that this lost time and extra travel equated to £182m worth of additional cost in 2015.

Most of the 'leakage' from the South West and South Wales to London was for short-haul travel - 3.8 million short-haul passengers and 3.1 million long-haul passengers.

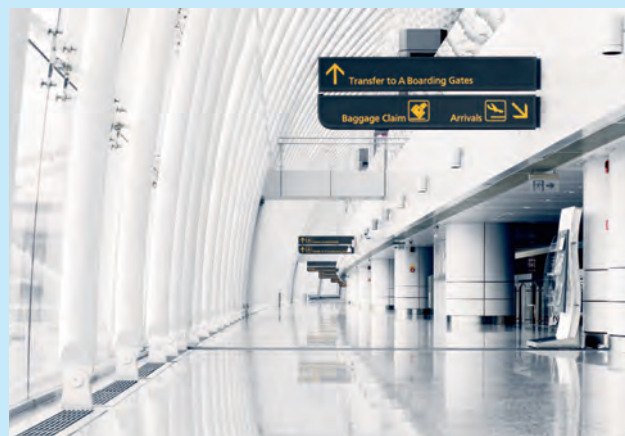
Passengers flying from Heathrow lost £100m, those traveling from Gatwick incurred £54m extra costs, Stansted £19m and Luton £10m.

More than 2.7 million people chose to fly from London to destinations served by Bristol Airport, wasting 200 million minutes and £72m in lost time and money.

Bristol Airport is calling for improvements to road and rail links to the main airport serving the South West and South Wales. The airport is the only Top 10 UK airport without a rail link or dual carriageway access. It has invested £150m in new facilities since 2010 and was the most punctual airport in the world last year.

Robert Sinclair, the airport's CEO, said: "We are well placed to play our part in solving the country's airport capacity crisis, and save travellers hundreds of millions in lost time. With the third runway at Heathrow still several years away, it makes little sense to continue funneling passengers from other regions to airports in the South East.

"With better road and rail links, we could take the pressure off Heathrow and Gatwick and keep business connected and holidaymakers flying."



Xmas kicks off with AWTE lunch

THE ASSOCIATION of Women Travel Executives (AWTE) hosted its Christmas Lunch last week, bringing together executives from the UK travel and tourism industry and raising more than £20,000 for the Alzheimer's Society.

This year's headline sponsor was Attraction World, with Seabourn sponsoring welcome drinks and Feefo sponsoring the musical entertainment.

The lunch took place at the Grange Tower Bridge Hotel in London and exiting AWTE Chair Debbie Dale exclusively announced that AWTE Ireland will launch in early 2017 and the recent AWTE International membership launch will hopefully lead to Global chapters of the Association.

She said: "This year has been a landmark year for the AWTE - taking the association global is a fantastic step to achieve and it's exciting to have our first few members around the globe sign up to be part of our dynamic community of female travel professionals. The start of a new beginning in Ireland - with our Irish chapter launching early next year - is also fantastic to see come to life. The AWTE Christmas lunch, as well as just being enormous fun, is a great opportunity for the AWTE and its members to join together and celebrate these achievements and support female progression and development in the travel and tourism industry."

Guest speaker Sally Lindsay spoke movingly about the AWTE Christmas Lunch charity - the Alzheimer's Society and her own personal experience and Classic FM's Aled Jones performed a song from his new album One Voice at Christmas.



LA CHAMPAGNE, La Marne launches its brand new Short Breaks and Tailor-Made Breaks sales guide. Make sure you keep your copy.



GOAL SETTERS... Some of the UK's biggest travel companies attended the German National Tourist Office's Travel Trade 'Round Table' earlier this month to plan and discuss about Destination Germany 2017/18. Guests learnt about the 2017 themes for the tourist office and general industry trends, plus were given a preview of the GNTO's updated online training platform, which will go live in January 2017. Pictured are, from the left: Lawrence Peachey, Fred Holidays; Tim Greenhalgh, Martin Randall; Jeanette Schuchmann, GNTO UK and Ireland; Evelina Herderer, Expedia.com; Gemma Higgs, Ramblers Worldwide Holidays; Klaus Lohmann and Charles Wilson, GNTO UK and Ireland; and Rob Carroll, Rail Trail.

Jet2holidays announces dedicated villa programme

JET2HOLIDAYS HAS announced the launch of a dedicated villa programme, with package holidays in a villa, available from summer 2018.

Going on sale in April 2017, with holidays available from summer 2018, the programme includes more than 600 properties across popular destinations including Mallorca, Menorca, Algarve, Mainland Spain, the Canary Islands and Greece.

Customers will be able to book package holidays in a villa, with the price including car hire or villa transfer, through a £60 per person deposit. The programme also includes the company's 22kg baggage allowance.

Steve Heapy, CEO of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays, said: "We are enjoying fantastic growth, with more and more customers enjoying what we have to offer all the time. We're always striving to give our customers the very best, which is why we are announcing our brand new villa programme. This means that on top of fantastic two- to five-star package holidays across thousands of hotels, we're delighted to be able to offer customers fantastic package holidays in villas too."

Taber announces new sub-brand to help agents identify more with product



SCANDINAVIA SPECIALIST Taber Holidays has announced plans to launch a new sub-brand in the New Year – Scandinavia Only – in a bid to help agents better understand and sell its products.

From January 1, the operator will be moving its entire portfolio of tours to the new sub-brand and will introduce a freshly redesigned website at scandinaviaonly.co.uk

While Taber Holidays will still exist as the company name, Scandinavia Only will become the face of its product and will create immediate identification with the destinations in which it specialises, bringing clarity to agents and their clients. The sub-brand will also have its own logo featuring a reindeer, synonymous with Scandinavia.

The company's managing director, Suzel Taber-Shaw, said: "By introducing Scandinavia Only we are aiming to make it easier for agents to promote our products to their clients. While some people may be

wary of those companies they haven't heard of, they tend not to be so wary of those with brand names geared directly towards their purchase requirements. We also think it will benefit newer agents who aren't so familiar with the Taber brand.

"In addition, we have noticed more and more agents using social media; we wanted to help them by introducing a brand that worked better both visually and in terms of instant product identification – something we believe Scandinavia Only does well. While this refresh reflects better who we are, we want to reassure agents that nothing else has changed."

With a year-round programme, Scandinavia Only features breaks throughout Norway, Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Greenland and The Faroe Islands. A series of new tours are being introduced for 2017 including specialist activity, family and romantic breaks.

Finnair issues festive promotional fares from £425

CHRISTMAS HAS come early for Finnair customers, who can take advantage of special festive offers for travel to a variety of Asian destinations.

Customers booking by January 9, 2017 can enjoy fares on flights to Asia from the UK via Helsinki. The promotional fares include popular destinations such as Beijing, Shanghai, Bangkok, Xi'an, Seoul, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Finnair flies from Heathrow, Manchester and Edinburgh to 17 destinations across Asia via Helsinki with fares leading in at £425 return in Economy Class to Beijing and £1,305 return to Bangkok in Business Class.

The offers are available on bookings for travel between January 16 and October 28, 2017 and terms and conditions apply.

For more information see finnair.com for further details.

PALLADIUM

HOTEL GROUP

EXPERIENCE A

world of freedom

Diversity, luxury and individuality that is tailored to your desires. From music-themed hotels to exclusive beachfront resorts, Palladium Hotel Group offers the world's best year-round destinations to accommodate all travelers' preferences.

Find the perfect beachfront vacation on the infinite sandy beach of extraordinary Jamaica or discover Mexico's myriad cultural wonders. Enjoy our unforgettable family-friendly vacations. Wherever you choose to go, Palladium Hotel Group offers a wide range of exclusive resorts with excellent service, amazing outdoor activities and modern facilities.

This is what **Palladium Hotel Group** stands for.

A world of freedom where you can create fond memories.





GRAND PALLADIUM
LADY HAMILTON
 RESORT & SPA

GRAND PALLADIUM
WHITE SAND
 RESORT & SPA





Notes from

Normanton...

MUST SAY well done to Tony Mann and the team at Idle Travel; they scooped two awards at the Jet2 Conference in Cyprus – 'Agent of the Year' and 'Best Performing Individual Branch from LBIA'. Well deserved!

Tony is often interviewed on Radio Leeds and he was telling me about a really good question he was asked by a lady phoning in whilst on the radio: 'Why don't Insurance Companies that sell holiday insurance offer loyalty rates/discounts for repeat bookings?' That's a good question, so any insurance companies out there who might be reading this – why don't you? Either email TB (lauretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk) or me (s.murray922@btinternet.com)

Went to support Helen at High Ridings Coffee morning with Bev from Premier Holidays, Clive from aurigny Airlines and the lovely Emma from LBIA, who were promoting Guernsey flights and holidays from LBIA. You can also visit Alderney, Sark and Herm - it must be wonderful to go on holiday and not have to worry about traffic, as Sark and Herm are car free! You can island-hop as well and there's plenty to do or just chill out and it's only a short journey across.

Is everyone ready for Christmas? I always seem to be last minute but am looking forward to spending the day with my brother Rod over at North Ferriby. Whatever you are all doing I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year. And my wish for 2017 is that we all stay nice and healthy (and happy) and that business is good and we get to go away a lot! (and lose some weight!)

'Speaking without thinking is like shooting without aiming' and 'True wealth is what you are not what you have'.

Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY
in Normanton, Yorkshire

To respond to any
of Sandy's comments email
lauretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk

Anguilla TB welcomes new route

THE ANGUILLA TOURIST Board (ATB) and CHL Airlines have partnered up to offer a new scheduled route into Anguilla, specifically catering for UK visitors.

The new route, which starts from December 20, will offer the option to connect to Anguilla's Clayton J Lloyd International Airport from Antigua V.C Bird International Airport, and will provide greater flexibility for holidaymakers and travellers to Anguilla from the UK's preferred route of Antigua.

Additional access is via the US, San Juan (connecting with Norwegian) or via boat transfer from St Martin to Blowing Point (London via Paris with KLM and Air France).

The flights have been timed to connect with the direct British Airways and Virgin Atlantic arrivals from London as well as regional arrivals from other Caribbean islands. The scheduled flights have been carefully planned to minimise waiting time after the long-haul flight from the UK.

The CHL Airlines' route into Anguilla will operate two return flights daily - Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with fares starting from £169. However, new walk up fares from £79 have been introduced to cater for impulse travellers deciding to travel to Anguilla on the day. These tickets can only be purchased at the airport, on the day of travel.

Carolyn Brown, director UK & Ireland for the Anguilla Tourist Board, said: "The new route is fantastic news for independent UK travellers and the local Anguilla marketing traveling to and from Antigua. Not only does it allow greater choice and flexibility beyond the current route options but it also provides a very affordable option for those looking to take a last minute trip across from Antigua to Anguilla.

"With easier access to the island, combined with three new hotels opening this season and the island celebrating 50 years since the Anguilla Revolution, 2017 is set to be an exciting year for Anguilla."

For more information on Anguilla see IvisitAnguilla.com and to book flights visit flychl.com/airplanes

NEWS BITES

- **TURKISH AIRLINES** has expanded its global reach by adding two new destinations in the Americas. Operating from its Istanbul hub, the airline now offers travellers flights to the Cuban capital, Havana, and the Venezuelan capital, Caracas.
- **ROUTEHAPPY**, A TECHNOLOGY platform that powers merchandising content for flight shopping, has announced its partnership with Qantas. The news comes off the back of major airline signings for the company this year including United, Delta, Cathay Pacific and Air Canada. The company has also announced the rollout of its pilot partnership with Travix, a leading online travel company operating 35 OTA websites in 29 countries.
- **ACCOMABLE**, A GLOBAL platform for finding adapted hotels and vacation rentals for disabled and elderly people, has partnered with Sykes Cottages to showcase accessible holiday rentals from across the UK and Ireland.

AGENT TRAINING

- Travel 2 is giving agents the chance to win a holiday to Dubai and tickets to Dubai Parks and Resorts with its latest campaign. The operator has partnered with Dubai Parks and Resorts to celebrate the launch of the new attraction, with holiday highlights including heading behind the scenes of Hollywood's most successful motion studios at motiongate Dubai, a visit to the LEGOLAND Water Park and a stroll down the streets of Mumbai at Bollywood Parks. To be entered into the prize draw, agents should make a booking with the operator that includes Dubai Parks and Resorts tickets before December 31. For details see travel2.com
- Contiki is giving agents the chance to win the trip of a lifetime: a VIP trip that culminates at a legendary music festival as part of the hotly anticipated ROCK Around the World annual incentive. The secret trip's destination and festival will be revealed early next year and agents can earn their space on the trip with places available to both top sellers and wildcard winners. In 2017 there will be more spaces available to UK trade agents than ever before, plus it's an open age trip so agents of all ages are invited to enter. The incentive booking period will open on January 1, 2017 and agents will have until March 31 to make as many bookings as they can to qualify for one of the top seller spots. Plus, every booking an agent secures between January and March will count as another entry into the wildcard draw.
- To coincide with its new 2017/18 brochure launches, Gold Medal has introduced two new booking incentives to run throughout the peak booking season. Every week from January 2 to February 26, 2017 agents who book a package holiday with the operator will be entered into a weekly prize draw to win a holiday of their choice worth up to £2,500. An additional 15 agents will also have the chance to win a place on next June's VIP fam trip to Queensland, Australia. For details see goldmedal.co.uk



A CRACKER OF A DEAL...Agents signed up to Funway Holidays' loyalty scheme, MoneyCard, can earn up to £50 worth of rewards this month. Rewards will be given for qualifying bookings from the operator's programme made before December 30. For details see yourmoneycard.co.uk. Pictured promoting the incentive are some of the company's team - from the left: Laura Woodford, Jermaine Agyako and Lizi Wharton.

AGENT TRAINING

- AFFORDABLE CAR Hire is running a special webinar throughout this month to gear agents up for new transparency rules introduced by the Competition and Marketing Authority (CMA), which come into effect on January 1, 2017. Under new regulations, car hire websites and comparison sites must show transparency and provide details of all mandatory and extra costs, so customers can immediately see the overall price they have to pay. To assist agents to understand these changes, Affordable Car Hire has created a short presentation to show how agents can benefit with no hidden extras and by earning additional bottom-line revenue. Agents can book the webinar presentation at a time to suit them by calling 0345-900 0420 or emailing agency-sales@affordablecarhire.com

Visit Kent outlines ambitious five-year vision to increase tourist numbers

VISIT KENT has unveiled ambitious plans to grow Kent's visitor economy by a further five million visitors by 2021.

The announcement comes days after the news that a record 60.6 million visitors came to The Garden of England in 2015, and the visitor economy has grown 49% in the last ten years under Visit Kent and its public and private sector partners' governance.

Visit Kent chairman, Jonathan Neame, said: "Kent's visitor economy is in a strong position, having grown significantly and steadily over the last decade, welcoming more people, supporting more jobs and bringing more money to the county than ever before."

"However, we are not complacent. With the support of our public and private sector partners and leading stakeholders, including Kent County Council, we have great ambitions for the future of Kent's visitor economy. We aim to bring an additional five million visitors to Kent in the next five



Visit Kent chairman, Jonathan Neame, with Visit Kent CEO, Sandra Matthews-Marsh MBE

years, and create an additional 5,000 jobs for the county."

These new visitors will generate more than £300million for the Kent visitor economy, and this in turn will create more than 5,000 new jobs.

Earlier this month, independent research commissioned by Visit Kent revealed that Kent's visitor economy topped £3.6billion for the first time ever in 2015, welcoming a record number of domestic and overseas visitors and supporting 72,000 jobs.

The county remains the third most visited destination outside of

London for foreign visitors, and is outstripping other destinations' national growth figures.

CEO of Visit Kent, Sandra Matthews-Marsh MBE, said: "Our latest figures show that we really do deliver on our promises. We set ourselves ambitious targets from the day we started to grow the visitor economy with more day trips and short breaks, and have seen consistent economic growth ever since."

"This is thanks to billions of pounds of investment by the public and private sector into Kent's tourism infrastructure to ensure a world-class visitor offer, and the unceasing commitment of our partners to work together on a single vision and strategy for tourism."

"This is a long-term strategy that will benefit the entire county. Not only does the visitor economy support job creation at all levels, from apprenticeships to graduate roles, but it also supports social inclusion."

For more information about the county see visitkent.co.uk

Winter 2017/18 now on sale

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£59

per person*

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All holidays ATOL protected

Baggage included*

Ultimate duration flexibility

Monarch Holidays holds an Air Travel Organiser's Licence (ATOL) which is granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. *Deposit of £59 is per person (including children) and available for holidays booked at least 10 weeks before departure. Full balance is payable 10 weeks before departure. **20kg luggage for all passengers included, excluding city breaks (optional add-on) and infants.

Warner Leisure Hotels announces entertainment line-up for 2017

WARNER LEISURE HOTELS has unveiled its new line-up of entertainment for 2017. The hotel group is spending £500,000 on first class bands, shows and artists in addition to the extra £1million it spent in 2016.

Guests will be able to enjoy top name acts, shows from the West End, concert orchestras and a choice of live entertainment every night of their stay.

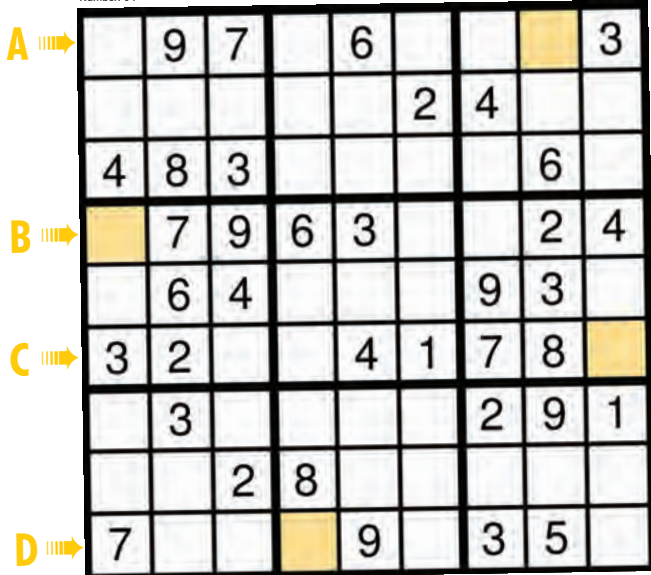
New entertainment includes Rock Anthems – a different live band each night playing homage to the biggest rock anthem classics made famous by Queen, Status Quo, Bruce Springsteen and more; Darts Legends Tournament Break, exclusive to Gunton Hall, where guests can watch some of the nation's champions step up to the oche on this three-night weekend break from January 13, 2017; Party Beat, with live bands putting guests in the mood for dancing; An audience with Martin Kemp; Million Dollar Quartet, a musical which brings to life favourite rock 'n' roll hits such as Blue Suede Shoes, Fever, Great Balls of Fire and many more; and the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and its performances of Sounds of the 60s and 'Symphonic Elvis' – a tribute to the rock and roll legend.

Prices for a three-night weekend break at Gunton Hall Coastal Village in Suffolk start from £179 per person arriving on January 13, 2017. The offer is based on two adults sharing standard accommodation and includes the Simply Dine package.

Su Doku

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

Number: 048



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, December 22nd. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 2nd December is Sharon Clifft, Langley Travel in Herts.

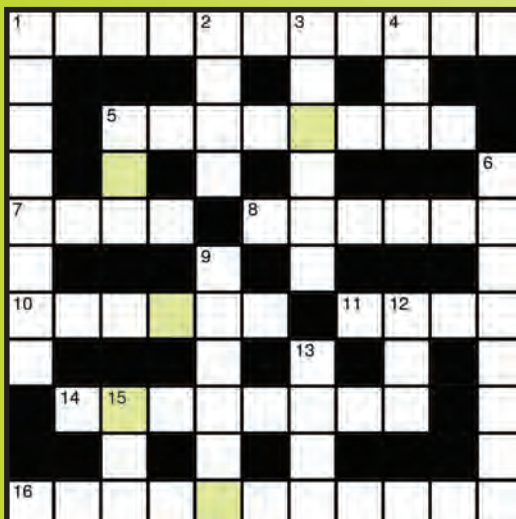
December 2nd Solution: A=3 B=5 C=9 D=1

Where Am I?



'The official home of Santa Claus' good boys and girls can visit the city's most famous resident every day of the year at this sight located right on the Arctic Circle.

Crossword



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

Across

1. This song could be ringing in your ears during the Festive Season (6,5)
5. Cumbrian lake (8)
7. Hotel brand, part of Accor (4)
8. Durrell Wildlife Park is a popular tourist attraction on this island (6)
10. Creamy protein drink with a taste of Christmas (6)
11. Scottish island, sounds like a TV channel (4)
14. The Pope's Christmas message is delivered from the balcony overlooking this Square (2,5,'1)
16. Swashbuckling pantomime villain (7,4)

Down

1. First name of actress starring in Office Christmas Party at a cinema near you (8)
2. Austrian city on the Danube (4)
3. Name of the boxer seen trampolining in the John Lewis Christmas TV ad (6)
4. Star sign (3)
5. Cairo international airport code (3)
6. London venue for a Winter Wonderland (4,4)
9. Luciano Pavarotti's Home Museum is located in this city (6)
12. One of the Dodecanese islands (3)
13. English actor, Sean ____ (4)
15. Flag carrier of Portugal (3)

For the solution to the Crossword and Where Am I?
Please see page 26

#FEELAUSTRIA

the must-stop
mountain hotspot



Austria

arrive
and revive



AUSTRIA: WHERE SKI TRADITION RUNS DEEP

Whether you're a skier perfecting your moves or a snowboarder looking to twist some turns in freshly fallen snow, you'll find everything you need in abundance out and about on the slopes of Tirol in Austria. Come here for pristine pistes, top-of-the-notch resorts and optimal snow conditions, all amongst some of the most beautiful mountains and scenery in Europe. World-class ski schools, challenging slopes and family and beginner-friendly areas cater for all ages and levels of ability.

austria.info/ski16



© KitzSki

Kitzbühel: Height of competition

Kitzbühel offers more than 190 ski days for unforgettable ski holidays. The resort hardly needs an introduction thanks to its infamous Streif descent on the Hahnenkamm. But, though it is one of the most challenging runs on the World Cup circuit, depending on your own ability you can earn your bragging rights on the 'family Streif' red run or even the beginner's 'mini-Streif'. Up in the mountains and away from the cobbled pedestrian streets, chic boutiques and characterful cafes, join the thronging crowds and world's media to watch competitors throw themselves into a heady mixture of twists, turns and 80-metre jumps. Feeling ambitious? Once the crowds have abated you can even try your hand at this world-famous course yourself.

www.kitzski.uk



© Wildschönau Tourismus/T. Trinkl

Ski Jewel - Chocolate-box setting

The ideal place to experience that notion of Austrian 'Gemütlichkeit' – something akin to cosiness, and homeliness – is the aptly named 'Ski Juwel Alpachtal Wildschönau'. Just 45 minutes away from Innsbruck lies a fairytale Tirolean setting, oozing with authentic charm, family-friendly offerings and awash with tranquil beauty. Take a stroll through the narrow streets lined with timber-clad houses in Alpbach, regularly voted Austria's most beautiful village, or explore the quaint villages in the neighbouring Wildschönau region before stopping off at a cosy café. The Wildschönau slow train will chug you along to the most beautiful spots in the Alpine valley, or you can simply curl up in a woollen blanket in front of a roaring log fire in a rustic mountain hut whilst devouring the delicious local specialities.

www.skijuwel.com

New meal, wheel & homestay experiences from G Adventures

NEW SUSTAINABLE travel experiences in Belize, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, and Nepal have been announced by G Adventures for 2017, empowering travellers to support local communities while offering them a truly local experience.

The five new social enterprise projects include a guided cycle tour on Caye Caulker, Belize, local meals at restaurants in Playa del Carmen, Mexico and Nakuru, Kenya, and homestays near Chitwan National Park in Nepal, and inside Bromo-Tengger-Semeru National Park in Java, Indonesia.

The initiatives, known as G Adventures for Good projects, aim to support women, indigenous communities and at-risk youths, while offering travellers immersive experiences in culturally unique parts of the world.

For more information or to book call 0344-272 2040 or visit gadventures.co.uk

Holland America Line's 'View & Verandah' promotion offers free flights

HOLLAND AMERICA Line's annual 'View & Verandah' promotion is back and UK travellers who book selected 2017 and 2018 cruises receive a variety of perks including free airfare on European cruises from London, Manchester, Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh airports.

Clients can benefit from the free air offer on a number of cruises including the 12-night Baltic Adventure from £1,499; the seven-night Norse Legends Cruise from £999; and the 12-night Adriatic Dream cruise from £1,399.

Offers also include stateroom upgrades, up to £400 onboard spending money and up to 10% off select Journeys Ashore when booked before

March 15, 2017. Those who enjoy the Suite Life (Vista suite and above bookings) will also receive prepaid gratuities (hotel service charges).

The View & Verandah offers are available on all cruises from March 30, 2017, through to April 28, 2018 which are booked by February 28, 2017, excluding Grand Voyages and Grand Voyage segments.

As part of the View and Verandah, guests can book an ocean-view stateroom for the price of an interior and a verandah for the price of an ocean-view. Depending on the length of cruise and category of stateroom, guests can receive on-board spending money of up to

US\$400 per stateroom and \$500 per suite. The spending money is available to the first and second guests in a stateroom and can be used for speciality dining, spa services, gift shop purchases, beverages and more.

Meanwhile, guests who reserve select Journeys Ashore shore excursions can take advantage of up to 10% savings if booked by March 15, 2017.

As an added bonus, suite guests also receive prepaid room gratuities in addition to the onboard spending money and discount on Journeys Ashore tours.

For more information see hollandamerica.co.uk or call 0843-374 2300.



RACHEL'S REWARD... Rachel Ashton from Prestbury Travel Group was the recent winner of Travel Bulletin's Su Doku competition, picking up £50 in M&S vouchers in time for Christmas. Turn to page 11 for your chance to win.

MOVERS

- **FRED. OLSEN** Cruise Lines has promoted Clare Ward to the role of director of product and customer services and has promoted Jeremy Hatton to head of customer services.
- **BROADWAY TRAVEL** Group has announced the appointment of Tim Buckman as group CMO.
- **GOLD MEDAL** and **Travel 2** have boosted their account and product teams. Colin Currie has been promoted to the newly created role of senior key account manager, while Koral Lipton, who has worked for the group across a variety of reservation, tours and cruise-related sales positions since joining in August 2008, takes over Currie's previous account area. The dedicated cruise team has received a boost with the recent recruitment of Nicola Payne as product and commercial manager. Tricia Birmingham has also joined the product management team as the new senior product manager covering the Middle East, Indian Ocean and Africa team.
- **CRUISE LINES** International Association (CLIA) has announced that Tom Fecke will join the organisation on January 3, 2017 as secretary general, CLIA Europe.
- **ROYAL CARIBBEAN** has appointed George Scott as regional sales manager (RSM) for Scotland.
- **ANDREW DUNN**, the founder and lifetime president of luxury tour operator Scott Dunn, is joining The PC Agency as non-executive chairman. He will also be taking a stake in the company for an undisclosed sum.
- **CARIBTOURS** HAS appointed Danny Joel as trade sales manager.
- **BETTY RADIER** has joined the Kenya Tourism Board as CEO.
- **ADIEL MAMBARA** has joined Royal Brunei Airlines as UK country manager.



A WHOLE LOT OF SHAKIN'... SuperBreak recently teamed up with Newcastle Airport to run a month long incentive with agents in the area to win a place on an afternoon of cocktail making in Newcastle. Each week, agents were sent a selection of short break deals flying from Newcastle Airport and they had to promote them in the best ways possible via social channels, windows, clipboards, e-shots etc. Each week, the best promotion won a place on the event. Pictured are the four winners for the month - from the left: Samantha Heslop, Gazelle Travel in Durham; Laura Hartshorne, Newcastle International Airport; Karen Sreenan, Thomson Marske By The Sea; Katherine Auld, Travel Lounge in Beadle; Kelly Giblin, SuperBreak; and Jane Williamson, Travel Box Holidays in Sunderland.

Free Paris weekend for Renaissance bookings from European Waterways

EUROPEAN WATERWAYS is offering a free weekend at the four-star Hotel Westminster in central Paris for guests who charter the luxury hotel barge Renaissance during 2017.

The two-night hotel stay includes breakfast and can be used either pre- or post-cruise.

Offering a scenic voyage through France's Upper Loire region on the Canal de Briare, the Renaissance cruise is 'the perfect setting' for a wedding anniversary celebration, or

small family reunion, according to managing director Derek Banks.

He said: "The intimate, eight-passenger Renaissance is the height of luxury and fine dining as it cruises France's oldest canal through lush, rolling countryside and storybook villages. Guests can enhance their vacation experience with a stay at the 'crown jewel' of Paris hotels, the Hotel Westminster. Its central location will enable them to visit nearby, 'must see' attractions that include Place d'Opéra,

the Tuileries Gardens, and the designer shops in Place Vendôme."

Charter prices are from £29,900 and include all gourmet meals, fine wines, open bar, escorted daily excursions and transfers to and from the hotel barge and Paris.

To take advantage of the offer, booking deposits must be made by January 6, 2017.

For more information email sales@europeanwaterways.com or see gobarging.com

Italy expansion from Kirker Holidays

KIRKER HOLIDAYS has expanded its Italy programme for 2017 to offer a wider choice of hand-picked hotels in city, coast and countryside locations, as well as adding several new Italian Cultural Tours & Music Holidays.

Clients receive a range of added extras including tickets for Rome's Vatican Museums, the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, the Doge's Palace in Venice and, new for 2017, tickets for the Brera Gallery in Milan.

As an example of prices, a new Milan break offers the cultural highlights of Italy's fashion capital, with three new hotels to choose from - the five-star deluxe Mandarin Oriental (three nights from £1,448 per person); the intimate, Art Nouveau Château Monfort (four-star deluxe, three nights from £876); and the four-star superior Manzoni - a peaceful, privately owned retreat in the heart of the shopping district, where three nights cost from £788. Prices are based on two sharing and include flights, private transfers, breakfast accommodation (based on two sharing), guide notes and the services of a concierge.

The company has also doubled its offering on Sicily, adding the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Noto as well as Cefalù and the operator's debut dedicated Sicily brochure will be launched this month.

For details call 020-7593 2283.

NEWS BITES

- VERTICAL SYSTEMS has started to roll out its new 'end to end' booking journey platform across 30 new contracts. A new dashboard allows access to all products with a single log-in and, from a minimal data entry at enquiry stage, every piece of communication is highly personalised with all information recorded and reported within the back-office system. The system works across PC and tablet, so full control is retained whilst away from the office.
- ROYAL CARIBBEAN has announced that the Cuban government has granted approval for cruises to Cuba and the line plans to announce its first Florida - Cuba itineraries in the near future.
- FLYDUBAI WILL use SDL's digital web-service, SDL Web, to ensure its website and mobile platforms are available in different languages with localised content. Customers will now have a tailored user experience which utilises passenger location and background information when using flydubai's digital platforms.

Industry Insight by...



Advantage

SPECIALISTS IN TRAVEL

Don't look back in anger says Colin O'Neill,
business development director of Advantage...



As this is my final column of the year, I thought that I would use it to reflect on the year that is rapidly coming to an end. It would be all too easy to look back in anger at all of things that have hindered our industry during the year, but borrowing a line from another song, there are reasons to be cheerful too.

My 6 key highlights of the year are:

Resilience: Despite the unsettling effect of terrorism on consumer safety, the collapse of operators and the uncertainty around the Brexit vote, the industry has remained resilient. And whilst no one can really make a claim for it to have been a very successful year, the trade has performed better than we could have wished, particularly when many traditionally popular holiday destinations were effectively off-sale.

Partner Stability: With the high-profile failure of a leading operator earlier in the year, the last thing the industry needed was another high-profile failure which is why the industry overall breathed a huge sigh of relief when the Monarch sale was successfully completed. It was clearly difficult for the deal to be completed against a backdrop of heightened media speculation and rumour, but it is good that we have retained a long established and respected brand, despite competitive difference.

A New Kid on the Block: August saw the launch of Advantage Holidays, our in-house tour operation, which gives our members the ability to create their own holidays packages under a central Advantage ATOL licence. We are clear that Advantage Holidays is not intended to compete with our long-established business partner relationships, but to give our members the opportunity to grab business that may have previously eluded them.

Engagement: As an organisation we are all about engagement and it is one of the three core values of the organisation, bringing our members together with the central team and our business partners. During the year we held more than 30 events, both large and small, making those connections. A

particular highlight for me was the introduction of a new event to the calendar, The Big Celebration Lunch at the end of September. The aim of this event was to recognise and celebrate the achievements of all of our members with an entrepreneurial spirit that drive so many of them to success – it was a spectacular success, even if I do say so myself.

Entrepreneurial Spirit: The Big Celebration Lunch leads me nicely onto my fifth highlight of the year, the continued rise of the entrepreneur. At a time when trading conditions are tough, logic would suggest that it would be better to consolidate your position rather than extend it. However, there are a number of Advantage agents who have ignored that logic and have chosen to go on the offensive. New retail outlets have been opened during the year, teams have been increased and new business has been won.

Independent-Minded: My final highlight of the year ties much of these highlights together under the collective heading of independence. I spend quite a lot of my time out of the office meeting members across the country. One thing that strikes me again and again is the huge diversity of the members and their approach to business. This is not really surprising as each business is often shaped and fashioned by the personality of the owner and the people within that business. Their ability to make fast decisions to respond to local and general market conditions makes them what they are and why so many of them continue to thrive under difficult circumstances – long may this continue.

Finally, the recent announcement that the parent status of the major independent membership organisations was going to change has prompted a number of the effected members to contact Advantage. This clearly indicates that being independent does have a value and validates our long-held belief that there is a healthy and cherished future for independent agents. So, looking at my highlights of the year, there are plenty of reasons to be cheerful about 2016. Wishing you all a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas.

Austria - where ski tradition runs deep!

Architektur Beza (c) Adolf Bereuter Bregenzerwald Tourismus



Whether you're a skier perfecting your glides or a snowboarder looking to twist some turns in freshly fallen snow, you'll find everything you need in abundance out and about the slopes of Austria.

Pristine pistes, top-of-the-notch resorts and optimal snow conditions, all amongst some of the most beautiful mountains and scenery in Europe, not to mention great restaurants, Apres ski to rival anywhere or perhaps time your visit to shop the Christmas markets after your day on the slopes.

The beauty of Austria's landscape, the abundance of high-quality ski resorts, it can be difficult to know which destination to recommend, so to help we have compiled some tips for great places to ski.

Visit www.austria.info/ski16 #feelAustria

Skicircus Saalbach Hinterglemm Leogang Fieberbrunn - a resort of many surprises



Skicircus (c) Saalbach Hinterglemm, Bause

The linking of the Saalbach, Hinterglemm and Leogang ski areas to the Tirolean resort of Fieberbrunn by a state-of-the-art Tirol-S 10-seater gondola has transformed this area and created a total of 270km of piste, immediately taking it onto the list of top ten biggest ski resorts in the world.

Apart from extensive skiing the Skicircus is also well known for its mountain restaurants, boasting more than 60 reasonably priced mountain eateries.

Off-piste it also has much to offer with five freeride parks and numerous freeride runs.

Overall the resorts combine excellent hotels, varied skiing as well as a wide choice of restaurants the Skicircus Saalbach Hinterglemm Leogang Fieberbrunn is most certainly a resort of many surprises

Zell am See - Kaprun



Kitzsteinhorn Freeride 1 (c) Gletscherbahnen Kaprun AG

Just an hour's drive from Salzburg airport, Zell am See's Schmittenhöhe mountain offers intermediate skiing. The medieval town, itself, sits on the shore of a beautiful lake and is the main accommodation base for the area, as well as a mecca for those wishing to shop the chic boutiques that line the cobbled streets.

Kaprun has its own small ski area but the resort is best known for the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier which offers 'snow-sure' slopes from late September until the middle of July. Just outside kaprun the SPA Water and sauna World comprises 12 swimming pools, 13 saunas and steam rooms as well as several restaurants and 17 treatment rooms.

Both intermediate and 'sure-snow' skiing late in the season, Zell am See and Kaprun offer both the glacier and the lake.

Vorarlberg - something for everyone



Lech (c) Lech Zuers Tourismus Sepp Mallaun

In the far west of Austria, the region of Vorarlberg has one of the best snow records not only in the country, but in much of the Alps, with more continuous skiing on one lift pass than anywhere else in Austria!

One must for advanced skiers is the 22km Lech Zurs circuit, the 'White Ring', not only is it great for off-piste action, but also a gourmand's delight with many award-winning restaurants.

By contrast Brand and Buserberg offer families 55km of linked blue and red runs. Also in Vorarlberg is Bregenzerwald, renowned for its innovative architecture and craftsmanship, and home to several resorts, including Warth-Schröcken, part of the vast Arlberg ski area.

In short, Vorarlberg really does have something for everyone!

£20m upgrade for Bristol Airport car parks

IMPROVEMENTS TO car parks at Bristol Airport are on the way, following approval of three schemes by North Somerset Council's Planning & Regulatory Committee.

A total of £20million is being invested across the Silver Zone, staff and long-stay car parks, with a new reception building for customers headlining the improvements.

The new facility will be located at the heart of an extended Silver Zone, which will see the addition of more than 3,500 new spaces in order to meet expected demand next summer. On a typical day during the peak summer season, thousands of people will pass through the reception building, which will also host up to 50 staff from the airport's ground transport team.

The new two-storey structure will be designed to create a more positive first impression for passengers, helping to make sure trips get off to a stress-free start.

Work has begun to meet landscaping and ecological conditions ahead of construction of the new parking areas. At the same time, preparations are underway for the first phase of a multi-storey car park, to be located opposite the terminal and set to open in May 2018.

An extension to the airport's staff and visitors car park was also approved by the council, catering for the growing number of staff and contractors on site. This will ensure flight crew in particular can park close to the administration building, reducing the potential for delays which could adversely impact airline punctuality.

Robert Sinclair, the airport's CEO, said: "These developments demonstrate our continued drive to enhance passenger and staff facilities. By bringing forward improvements to Silver Zone we can meet customer demand for good quality, secure car parking at a competitive price."

Public transport options will also be enhanced, with a 'Weston Flyer' express bus service between the airport and Weston-super-Mare, scheduled for launch in spring next year.

This follows the successful introduction of the Falcon service from Plymouth, Exeter and Taunton earlier this year.



LESLEY'S LUCK...*The South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) recently held an event in Canterbury, where around 50 travel agents attended to find out more about the nations of the South Pacific. Pictured is Ian Griffiths from Cook Islands Tourism, who presented Lesley Dean from Travel by Lesley with a Cook Island Black Pearl.*

Prestige Holidays launches luxury South America adventure by private jet

PRESTIGE HOLIDAYS has launched an epic adventure for 2017 that takes in seven 'bucket list' locations on one easy three-week trip, with the chance to travel with explorer, Sir Ranulph Fiennes, OBE.

The 20-night journey by private jet visits South America's top sights; from the buzzing cities of Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires to the mysterious Falklands Islands, the awe-inspiring Iguassu Falls and the captivating Easter Island.

It also features a luxury train journey to the iconic citadel of Machu Picchu and a four-day cruise of the remote archipelago, the Galapagos Islands, with its diverse range of wildlife.

David Skillicorn, the operator's general manager, said: "In terms of the private jet market our new tour is great value considering the high standard of accommodation provided and all the inclusions. The itinerary ticks off a number of 'bucket list' destinations and will not disappoint even the most discerning clients.

"South America was chosen for our first private jet itinerary as we have an expert in this region and because it lends itself well to this kind of travel. We know that some clients find travel in South America daunting, but our tour makes it easy, comfortable and safe to see the very best this continent has to offer in just three weeks."

Sir Ranulph Fiennes will be with the tour for the first five days and will interact informally with travellers as well as giving talks about his many adventures and expeditions. In Buenos Aires, veteran ITV journalist and news anchorman John Stapleton will join the group to recall his reporting of the Falklands Islands war back in 1982 through a pre-dinner presentation and informal conversations.

Departing on November 6, 2017 prices for the 19-night tour start from £34,995 per person including five-star accommodation, flights in First Class luxury on a privately chartered Boeing 767 from Stansted, plus the finest dining throughout. One night will be on board the private jet on the return journey. Also included is overseas transport with English speaking guides, a full programme of excursions with entrance fees, tipping and taxes and the services of a tour expedition team, which will include a doctor.

To book or for more information see toursprestigeholidays.co.uk or call 01425-484221.

Funway launches new look agent website

FUNWAY HOLIDAYS has revamped its dedicated agent website with a number of changes and additional information on a large number of destinations, holiday types and partners, along with access to all the latest offers.

Commenting on the developments, Nick Talbot, head of marketing for the operator, said: "It is now a 'one-stop-shop' for our agents and there are a few more pages still to come too. Our website now has so much more to offer agents looking to book with us.

"We recognise that the trade is an essential part of the whole customer journey and want to provide them with as much information and as many tools as possible to help them. Investment in technology is an important part of the equation."

The updated website now features an extensive number of destination pages covering the US, Caribbean and Mexico, along with useful 'top destinations' highlighted for quick access, the ability to explore areas of the US, plus a destination index.

The Caribbean and Mexico destinations page features links to all islands and quick links to all Sandals Resorts. A new section showcasing Holiday Types includes detailed information on self-drive holidays, motorhome, motorcycle, rail, ranching and escorted touring options, plus sample itineraries. Offer posters are also available to download and print which can be used on social media and in agency windows.

The re-launch comes ahead of the operator's PEAKS campaign 'Take OFF Sale' which kicks off next month.

Visit funway4agents.co.uk for more information.



Velas Resorts updates experts programme for agents

MEXICO'S VELAS Resorts, which offers four luxury all-inclusive properties in Vallarta-Nayarit and Riviera Maya, with a fifth opening in Los Cabos, has expanded its incentive bonus programme for travel agents.

The online 'Velas Resorts Experts program' enables agents to become experts on the properties by completing video lessons and quizzes for each resort. As agents become more qualified and move up the different levels of certification - Velas Expert, Master Agent, and Elite Agent - they are rewarded with bonuses and access to special amenities, complimentary nights, suite upgrades and VIP amenities for their clients, as well as a 50% extra bonus for all reservations and qualified bookings made during the first month of their Velas Expert registration, in addition to any commissions made. A referral programme is also valid where, in addition to all of the benefits, agents are awarded for referring team mates to the programme.

Agents can register at velasexperts.com

Global Travel Group launches dedicated LGBT toolkit

AS PART of its ongoing commitment to arming members with the latest information, The Global Travel Group (TGTG) has created a dedicated lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) toolkit hosted on the consortium's intranet 'Horizon'.

The free toolkit is now available to all members and provides agents with an overview of the key issues affecting this fast-growing market, helping them to better understand the needs of their LGBT customers and tailor their product and marketing accordingly.

Andy Stark, managing director of TGTG, said: "Our members want to provide exceptional service that helps customers

get the best out of their holidays. Given the differing cultural as well as legal attitudes to LGBT communities around the world, we feel it's important that our members have the background information to understand LGBT travellers' concerns and ensure they can give the right advice when it comes to holiday planning. We therefore hope that our new specialist toolkit will help to further demystify this lucrative market and, in doing so, better enable and empower agents to tailor trips to their clients' specific needs."

For more information visit globaltravelgroup.com or call 0844-826 4567.

Travel 2 adds new modules plus dedicated cruise section with double point rewards

TRAVEL 2 HAS launched a range of new modules and a new dedicated cruise section to its training programme, the T2 Academy.

The new cruise section provides agents with an overview of key cruise partners and is designed to complement the newly launched 'Cruise Plus by Travel 2' module, which outlines the operator's dedicated cruise brand. In addition, the operator has partnered with China Southern Airlines and Tourism Chile to create new air, ground and destination modules that take half an hour to complete. The company has also introduced a new module to increase agents' knowledge on its 'Simply Luxury' brand and, to complement the trio of new additions, is offering agents the chance to earn double 'Learn & Earn' points across all T2 modules completed by December 31.

The 'Learn & Earn' scheme allows agents to earn points on their T2 Rewards cards which can be used in more than 50 High Street shops including Argos, Boots, River Island and Marks & Spencer.

Visit t2academy.co.uk for more details.

Cruise & Maritime Voyages to welcome 700 travel trade partners in 2017

CRUISE & MARITIME Voyages (CMV) is set to welcome more than 700 travel trade partners on board its ships in 2017.

A total of 28 fam and training days will take place in nine different regional ports used by the cruise line, with plans to make available Columbus, Magellan, Marco Polo and Astoria for ship visits in London – Tilbury, Bristol – Avonmouth, Belfast, Liverpool, Hull, Greenock, Rosyth, Newcastle and Dundee.

Lisa Jacobs, the line's head of trade sales, said: "This is our most ambitious number of ship visits for the



trade. This year saw more than 500 agents and cruise specialists come on board and see for themselves why the company is so successful and an established trade favourite. We look

forward to welcoming many new people in 2017."

For more details or to book email agents@cruiseandmaritime.com or call 0844-414 6140.



NICOLA LEICESTER from Virgin Holidays, Trafford Centre is heading to Jamaica after winning Jewel Resorts' new online training incentive competition. Nicola was chosen at random from a 500-strong number of agents who completed the hotel group's new online training programme. Together with her partner, she will spend five nights on an all-inclusive stay at the company's adults-only Paradise Cove property on Jamaica's northern coast, close to Montego Bay.

Daytona Beach Expert rated highest performing North American course

FOLLOWING THE launch in May 2016 of the Daytona Beach Expert training programme, a first in the UK for the destination, more than 512 agents have completed the course with 374 agents successfully passing.

Figures from OTT show that since the course was launched, the Daytona Beach Expert training programme is performing well above the average and is in fact, the highest performing North American course since the beginning of May 2016.

Linda McMahon, director of group sales meetings/conventions travel trade for Daytona Beach Area CVB, said: "We are delighted with the fantastic response and take up for our Daytona Beach Expert training programme by UK and Irish agents. We are experiencing an exciting chapter in our destination's history with nearly \$2billion being invested in renovations, new hotels and shopping experiences. The world-famous Daytona International Speedway completed a \$400million renovation project in January and our Expert training programme aims to give agents all the information and tools they need to sell Daytona Beach as the 'must-do' Florida holiday destination."

The programme is broken down into five modules covering Destination Overview, Beaches & Waterways, Away from the Beaches, Festival Capital of Florida and Groups & Lodgings. Each module is followed by four to five multiple choice questions and agents can also find out more about key selling points, the events calendar and fun facts - all geared to provide them with the latest information on the destination.

New training badges from Brand USA's 'Discovery Program'

THE USA Discovery Program, Brand USA's official travel agent training platform for the US, has recently launched three new badges, including 'North Dakota Department of Commerce', 'Texas Tourism' and 'Universal Studios Hollywood'.

Each badge provides an overview of the destination, product and attraction, with in-depth sections focusing on accommodation options, food and drink, nightlife, must-see and must-do experiences, as well as new rides and car hire locations.

The new badges join a host of existing 'Extra Learning' material available on the site, as well as ten experiential specialist badges, including Music, Culture & Heritage, Fly/Drive and the Great Outdoors, bringing the total number of badge modules available to earn on the site to 33.

From January 1, 2017 agents logging British Airways and American Airlines' flights to the US can apply for a place on the US mega fam, due to be the biggest to date and which will take place from May 11-18 next year. As part of the selection process, agents are encouraged to earn as many badges as possible in order to win a place.

For more information and for inspirational destination travel ideas head to visittheusa.co.uk



SEAWORLD PARKS & ENTERTAINMENT is giving agents the opportunity to win a chocolate hamper complete with a bottle of bubbly just in time for Christmas. There are ten hampers to be won and agents are invited to log on at seaworldagents.co.uk and complete the eight training modules to become a SeaWorld Parks Expert. The competition ends on December 19.

Diamond Rail adds new tours & introduces online training programme

ANTICIPATING A RISE in the number of people considering staying in the UK for holidays next year, Diamond Rail Holidays has introduced a number of new UK-based holidays for 2017, as well as new online product training for agents.

Tim Fleming, sales and business development manager for the operator, said: "As far as Brexit is concerned, it's still too early to say what the effect on travel is going to be, but the less favourable exchange rate certainly means that our European suppliers and services are getting more expensive and this is likely to impact on the cost of holidays. The market for UK trips is currently very strong, especially in the summer months, and we expect that our new programme of UK rail breaks will be very popular."

The company's new collection of UK holidays by rail includes seven itineraries departing between April and October 2017, all incorporating journeys on some of the country's most historic and picturesque railways.

Following the successful launch of training modules for sister brand The River Cruise Line, agents registered with OTT will also have access to training on all of the company's range of products, including the new UK tours. The new product training is accessible from this month and a number of special offers are also available on a number of European tours for 2017, when booked by the end of this month.

Agents should contact agency sales manager, Rebecca Brett, for more information on 0844-544 7581 or e-mail rebeccabrett@diamondhols.co.uk

Premier prizes for top scoring travel agents

PREMIER HOLIDAYS is giving out prizes to agents who score top marks on its revamped travel training packs.

The online training is designed to provide agents with information on the company's core destinations served - from the Channel Islands to Indochina - and has recently unveiled its updated training packs, challenging agents to become a 'Premier Holidays Expert'.

Those who pass will receive a certificate with the option to use the operator's exclusive logo if they score 100%, as well as the chance to win daily spot prizes.

For more information visit trade.premierholidays.co.uk

Bourne Leisure announces series of interactive online courses for 2017 with prizes

BOURNE LEISURE has launched a series of new and interactive online training courses for 2017, complete with prizes and added benefit extras.

Agents who 'Train with Brainz', the Bourne Leisure Expert, can update themselves on all the latest product developments across the Butlin's, Haven and Warner Leisure Hotels brands. Agents will be in with a chance to win a free break by successfully completing any of the Butlin's, Haven or Warner courses by December 31, and can also receive a free day pass to experience any one of the properties on successful completion of a training course.

Agents making a booking will be automatically entered into

a quarterly draw to win a Fitbit, with other bonus prizes up for grabs throughout the year.

Erman Housein, sales and marketing manager for the company, said: "Our training service is extremely important to us and we always strive to keep it fresh and fun."

"Our aim is to give agents the tools and knowledge needed to successfully sell our products and gain rewards. The new training modules for 2017 will give agents the opportunity to update their knowledge of our brands whilst also benefiting from even more rewards."

For more information and to access the training courses visit bourneexpert.co.uk

WIN A TITAN FAM TRIP!

California Dreamin'

EARN LOVE2SHOP

Book any USA holiday
between 1 Oct – 31 Dec 2016
and **earn a £20 Love2Shop
voucher for every booking**

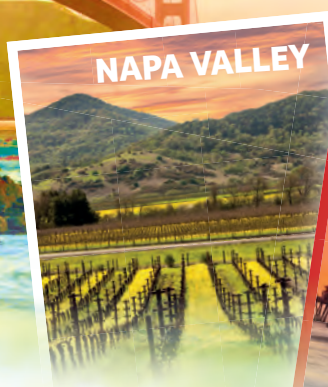
TOP 10 USA BOOKERS

Will win a place on the
**California and the
Golden West** FAM trip in 2017!
Book between 1 Oct – 31 Dec 2016

PLUS

THANKSGIVING PRIZE

Every USA booking
will also enter you into
a prize draw to **WIN**
a **USA hamper!**



NAPA VALLEY



HUNTINGTON
California
— BEACH —

For more information
visit **titanagents.co.uk**

Terms and conditions apply. Valid for bookings made between 1 October – 31 December 2016. To claim you must email agentincentives@titantravel.co.uk with your name and booking reference within 7 days of making the booking. No cash alternatives. Agents are responsible for their own tax implications. 10 Fam trip places available and a minimum age of 21.

titan

iceland

THE TOWER SUITES is one of the latest luxury additions to Reykjavik, consisting of eight suites on the 20th floor of one of the city's most iconic buildings, Hofdatorg. Guests can enjoy panoramic views across the Icelandic skyline from the highest point in Reykjavik. Each suite has its own distinctive design and character along with a VIP elevator. Visit towersuites.is

Iceland offers advice on taking a picture perfect 'Safe Selfie'

AS PART of its Iceland Academy Educational Video series, Inspired by Iceland has released a special video on 'A Guide to Safe Selfies' to promote responsible tourism and in response to the recent global rise of tourists taking additional risks to one-up their friends and capture that picture perfect selfie.

The video is one of five new online tutorials, launched as part of the online educational tool's Winter Term, for those wanting to learn about how to experience the best of Iceland firsthand, from the people who know it best – the locals.

Other classes for this term include: 'How to Travel Further' showing how easy it is to explore all corners of the island; 'A Beginners Guide to Sagas' a series of historical tales important to Icelanders, young and old; 'A Guide to Icelandic Festivals' for that dream festival experience covering Reykjavik's Design March to Iceland Airwaves to the horse round-ups that are the very heart of Icelandic farm life; and 'Power in Iceland', a look at sustainability and the geothermal energy that plays a huge role in everyday life.

Each online academy class is hosted by a local 'tutor' including Head of Iceland Academy and Guide Stína Bang, Kamilla Ingibergsdóttir, music aficionado and PA to global successes 'Of Monsters and Men' and Settlement Centre manager Sigríður Margrét Guðmundsdóttir.

Classes are open to all via the Icelandic tourism campaign's website and social media channels. Users are invited to watch the video tutorials and complete a short quiz, testing their newly learned knowledge. On successful completion, viewers will receive a special Iceland Academy badge and will be entered into a competition to win a once-in-a-lifetime 'field trip' to Iceland where they can test out their new skills. This term, Inspired By Iceland will also host a special Facebook Live video class in partnership with Horses of Iceland, educating viewers on all that is wonderful about the Icelandic horse. Viewers can tune in by liking the Inspired By Iceland Facebook page.

Since launching in February 2016 the academy has helped more than 15,000 visitors learn about all aspects of Icelandic nature, culture and etiquette offering advice on avoiding awkwardness in the hot tub, how to drive safely in Iceland, what makes local food so healthy and delicious, how to travel responsibly, winter sports, staying safe, how to pack for Iceland's ever changing weather system and how to capture the Northern Lights. For more information visit inspiredbyiceland.com

Ski Iceland launches new itinerary for North Iceland

SKIING IN ICELAND makes for a unique winter holiday experience with the dual benefit of good skiing conditions and a wide range of activities, from Northern Lights hunting and whale-watching, to bathing in hot springs heated by geothermal activity.

Reflecting the ever-growing interest in the area for skiing, skIceland has introduced a new skiing itinerary focusing on a peaceful escape to the traditional fishing village of Siglufjörður.

Right on the tip of the Troll peninsular on the north coast of Iceland, fjord-side Siglufjörður offers views towards the Arctic Ocean along with ideal ski opportunities. The four-night trip starts from £1,886 per person, based on four nights in Siglufjörður on a bed-and-breakfast basis, including flights to Akureyri from the UK via Keflavik plus car hire. Departures are from the beginning of March with a Reykjavik add-on also available.

For more information visit ski-iceland.co.uk/holidays



THE WILDERNESS CENTRE, based just outside of Egilsstaðir in the east, recently opened its new exhibition space and has proven to be a popular base for tourists. The centre offers accommodation, horse-riding, hiking tours, escorted tours and local food. The new area is open from 11:00-18:00 daily and is set to host a range of exhibitions throughout next year. Visit wilderness.is

Taber Holidays combines Icelandic highlights with a touch of luxury

FOR CLIENTS seeking a touch of extravagance in the heart of Reykjavik, Taber Holidays has put together a new luxury short break to Iceland for 2017 complete with stay at the Black Pearl.

On arrival at the airport, guests will enjoy a private transfer to the Blue Lagoon for a premium experience, which includes a complimentary bathrobe, slippers, a glass of sparkling wine and the opportunity to eat at the Lava restaurant. Surrounded by black lava fields, guests can enjoy the milky blue waters of this naturally heated spa and, after a few hours of relaxation, a chauffeur will escort guests to the Black Pearl; contemporary apartments located in the heart of the Reykjavik and home for the next three nights.

The following day offers a full day private Golden Circle tour by superjeep

and includes some of Iceland's most popular sights such as the geyser area, Gullfoss Waterfall and the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Thingvellir National Park, where the American and Eurasian tectonic plates are pulling apart by a few centimetres each year.

During a day of leisure guests can also choose from an array of optional excursions offered by the operator. Examples include a journey inside a dormant volcano for £220 per person, a trip into the unique man-made ice cave inside one of Iceland's largest glaciers for £166 and snorkelling in a lava fissure cracked open by earthquakes between two continental plates for £127.

Prices for the three-night break start from £2,350 per person and include flights from Heathrow,



Gatwick, Birmingham, Manchester or Glasgow, private transfers, a premium Blue Lagoon experience, three nights' accommodation at the Black Pearl Apartments and a private Golden Circle tour by Superjeep. The price is based on two sharing with departures daily year-round. For more information see taberhols.co.uk

Take the Icelandic cycling challenge in June 2017 with Wow air

ADVENTUROUS UK cyclists are encouraged to get on their bikes and join in the next annual 'WOW Cyclothon', one of the largest ultra-cycling competitions in the world, taking place under Iceland's iconic midnight sun over June 20-23, 2017.

Attracting cyclists from around the world, the event is the largest and longest road race in Iceland, spanning more than 1,358km with a total ride time of just under 84 hours. The race is divided into three categories, catering to riders of varying abilities; A-category (four-person relay with two drivers), B-category (ten-person relay) and an individual category.

Since its conception in 2012 by Skúli Mogensen, founder and CEO of WOW air, the event has brought together cycling partners, friends and even co-workers to compete together towards a common goal. This year 1,100 entrants in more than 100 teams got involved to soak up the Icelandic scenery, cycling past waterfalls, geysers, sulphur pools and mountains, whilst raising funds for a good cause. In 2016 funds were raised for Hjólakraftur, an Icelandic organisation that promotes cycling among young people.

As the main race sponsor, the airline awards flight tickets as prizes for each member of the winning female and male teams. Open to cyclists of all abilities with all types of bikes, registration is now open and costs £496 for teams of four, £886 for teams of ten and £212 for a solo team.

A 'WOWCYCLOTHON' promotional code offers 10% off travel to the sixth edition of the cyclothon, valid for return trips from Gatwick, Bristol and Edinburgh to Keflavik taking place between June 15 and June 28, 2017. The code will remain valid for bookings made by March 1. Those using the code also receive free extra check-in luggage (max. 20kg) and a bicycle bag, meaning they can take their bike on the plane for no extra charge. The airline's direct route between Gatwick and Reykjavik costs from £39.99, one-way, pre-discount.

For more information visit wowair.co.uk and wowcyclothon.com

Glaciers, Geysers & Golden Circle with Kirker Holidays

NEW TO its Cultural Tours programme for 2017, Kirker Holidays has added 'Glaciers, Geysers & The Golden Circle'.

Guests can embrace Iceland's dramatic landscapes and natural phenomena on this five-night escorted tour that explores its rugged attractions from the comfort of specially modified Land Rover Defenders.

The holiday also includes a visit to the Harpa concert hall with the opportunity for visitors to meet with members of the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra and hear them perform.

Departures are on May 14 and September 3, 2017 with prices from £2,493 per person based on two sharing. The price includes flights with Icelandair from Heathrow to Reykjavik, five nights' breakfast accommodation at the four-star Hotel Borg, three dinners, sightseeing, all gratuities and entrance fees, plus the services of a tour lecturer and a local guide.

For more information call 020-7593 2288 or visit kirkerholidays.com

Icelandair brings back Celebration Stopover Buddy Service along with new destinations for 2017

DUE TO popular demand, Icelandair's 'Buddies' are back with the launch of the airline's free Celebration Stopover Buddy service designed to provide a truly personalised service and help passengers make long lasting memories.

The Buddies are all members of the Icelandair team who are not only local experts but also have connections to other locals, offering visitors an additional Buddy boost. For example, co-pilot Sverrir's brother is in Icelandic band 'Of Monsters and Men' and could arrange an exclusive meet at Iceland Airwaves festival; or flight attendant Hlíf is related to the captain of the women's national football team and could take football fans to watch her at a local game. Alternatively, captain Bjorn is a keen adventurer and could help travellers to plan the ultimate proposal in one of Iceland's best secret beauty spots.

On a transatlantic stopover, all passengers can request a free Buddy and are matched according to their celebration request. Buddies will also



be on hand to act as a host in Iceland and offer their personalised local expertise. The service is available until March 31, 2017 with more information to be found at

icelandair.co.uk/stopover-buddy

In other news, two new international flight destinations have been announced for 2017; Philadelphia and Tampa. The two cities are the airline's 17th and 18th gateways in North America and passengers will have an easy connection from all UK airports that the airline services. The transatlantic airline will start four weekly direct flights from Reykjavik to Philadelphia on May 30 running until September 20, while Tampa will be a twice-weekly year-round destination starting from September 7, 2017.

Taber Holidays

SCANDINAVIA

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REGENT HOLIDAYS has recently released its 2016/17 brochure which features a range of new helicopter excursions including a new Golden Circle and Glaciers tour, which takes guests around some of the country's most iconic sites - from Thingvellir National Park to Gullfoss Waterfall and the hot spring geysers. Another tour which is set to be popular is the Glacier Landing excursion, which allows visitors to admire the view from Langjokull, Iceland's second largest glacier, before flying over the Skjaldbreiður shield volcano. Visit regent-holidays.co.uk for details.

puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. JINGLE BELLS, 5. CONISTON, 7. IBIS, 8. JERSEY, 10. EGGNOG, 11. SKYE, 14. ST PETER'S, 16. CAPTAIN HOOK.
 Down: 1. JENNIFER, 2. LINZ, 3. BUSTER, 4. LEO, 5. CAI, 6. HYDE PARK, 9. MODENA, 12. KOS, 13. BEAN, 15. TAP.

Highlighted Word: SANTA

Where Am I?: Santa Claus Village, Rovaniemi, Finland.



@TravelBulletin



TravelBulletin

We asked our staff the following question this week:

What's top of your wish-list for Christmas?



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A Fitbit...



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Final Fantasy XV ultimate collector's edition.



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AC Cobra or peace on earth!



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A fun time with my family.



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Tickets to The Lion king

travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

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agent networking evening



#TBShowcases

Monday 23rd January
Crowne Plaza, Chester

Travel Bulletin is delighted to invite you to this informative, fun event enabling you to learn more about the diverse range of flight options and destinations available, allowing your clients to discover some of the most amazing landscapes and places on the planet.

The evening 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 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 this amazing event, email the names and job titles of up to 5 staff members by Thursday 19th January 2017 to oliver.barton@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.

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