

Lapland

Add some magic to your clients' holiday with these unusual activities & places to stay

this week

puzzle bulletin

11

play Su Doku for your chance to win a £50 M&S voucher

training

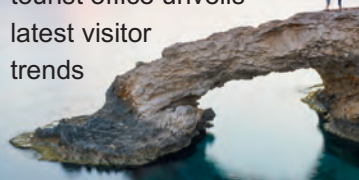
15

operators unveil new training programmes & schemes

cyprus

17

tourist office unveils latest visitor trends



caribbean

21

a look at what's new in the region from hoteliers & operators

travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

INVITES YOU TO ATTEND AN

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AGENT NETWORKING EVENING

#TBShowcases

Monday 26th September
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Travel Bulletin is delighted to invite you to this informative, fun event enabling you to learn more about the most diverse range of adventure and activity packages available to you and your clients. Discover the amazing landscapes of the world and the most exciting ways to explore them!

You will enjoy delicious food and drinks, enjoyable entertainment and a fabulous free prize draw with a number of fantastic prizes to be won.

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 of up to 5 staff members by Thursday 22nd September 2016 to: gemma.reeve@travelbulletin.co.uk or telephone:

020 7834 6661
for more information.

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

SPONSORS





MUSICAL MUNICH

Flybe celebrated in true German style as it commenced its new daily, year-round service between Southampton and Munich, with one-way fares starting from £29.99 including taxes and charges. The first passengers were treated to some traditional Bavarian music on the flight by the Edelweiss Bavarian Showband (pictured). Customers also have the added opportunity to benefit from the airline's codeshare agreement with airberlin for onward travel. Flights have started just in time for clients planning a visit to the city's Oktoberfest, which runs from tomorrow until October 3. Pictured marking the launch are, from the left: Dave Lees, Southampton Airport; Paul Willoughby, Flybe; and Stewart Dunn, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce.

Wi-Fi in the sky: Airport Parking & Hotels compares airline offerings

FOR AN increasingly connected world, access to Wi-Fi is often vital for those who wish to stay productive or entertained on their travels.

With this in mind, Airport Parking and Hotels (APH) has created a guide comparing Wi-Fi and connection offerings on board airlines to help travellers plan ahead.

The research compares 23 airlines including American Airlines, Emirates and Virgin Atlantic and looks at the availability of Wi-Fi on flights, incurred costs and whether other connectivity options are available for passengers, such as entertainment streaming and mobile network.

Of the 23 airlines researched, 12 provide Wi-Fi, including Aer Lingus, KLM and Norwegian Air Shuttle. Passengers should keep in mind that for safety reasons, Wi-Fi is activated once the aircraft is 10,000ft in the air and that Wi-Fi is not yet available when flying on select aircraft, including the Airbus A330

with Emirates and all international long-haul flights with Norwegian Air Shuttle.

The cost for accessing a plane's Wi-Fi varies - from £4 for one hour of access with Air Canada and Finnair to £15 for flight duration access when travelling internationally with American Airlines.

Of the 12 airlines offering Wi-Fi on board, three charge passengers according to the quantity of data used, including Virgin Atlantic, which charges £14.99 for 150MB of data, and KLM, which charges £8 for 40MB or £17 for 120MB.

Conversely, JetBlue and Norwegian Air Shuttle are two airlines offering complimentary Wi-Fi for all passengers on selected flights, while three airlines provide complimentary Wi-Fi access for passengers travelling in Business and First Class cabins, including those in the Saga Class cabin on Icelandair flights.

For frequent flyers, three of the airlines researched offer monthly or annual Wi-Fi subscription plans, with the cost varying from £38 per month with Delta Air Lines, to £535 per year with Air Canada. Passengers should keep in

mind that the subscription plan will automatically renew at the end of each period, regardless of whether the Wi-Fi is accessed, until the contract is terminated. To avoid disturbing fellow passengers with loud phone calls, two of the airlines researched do not permit access to voice services through the on board Wi-Fi, and passengers travelling with Qatar Airways are reminded to keep their electronic devices in vibrate or silent modes. Although 11 of the airlines researched, including British Airways, Ryanair and easyJet, do not yet provide Wi-Fi access in the air, two carriers do provide apps to allow passengers to live stream in-flight entertainment to their personal device.

These apps include the MPlayer app with Monarch for £3.99 and the Qantas Entertainment app. Similarly, four airlines, including Qatar Airways and Emirates, give passengers the option to connect to a mobile network, should they wish to send texts, make calls and access the internet on board at standard roaming charges.

For details see aph.com/airlinewifi

THIS WEEK

03

news

a round-up of this week's industry announcements & offers

08

notes from normanton

find out Sandy's likes (and dislikes) on her travels

09

agent bulletin

a look at the latest booking incentives & agent offers

11

puzzle bulletin

play Su Doku for your chance to win a £50 M&S voucher

13

bulletin briefing

Elite's Neil Basnett asks if there should be a cap on tourist numbers for certain destinations

15

training

operators unveil new training programmes & schemes

17

cyprus

market trends & what your clients can expect when visiting Aphrodite's Island

21

caribbean

a look at what's new in the region from hoteliers & operators

24

lapland

add some magic to your clients' experience with these unusual activities & places to stay

Online product training from The River Cruise Line now accessible via OTT

THE RIVER Cruise Line has announced that as of this month online product training is now available to agents through OTT (Online Travel Training).

The initial phase offers a module dedicated to cruising on the four-star MS Serenity, with additional modules due to be added, including those dedicated to the operator's sister brand, Diamond Rail Holidays.

On completion of each module, agents will receive a certificate and will find themselves better equipped to sell the line's product.

The company's agency sales manager, Rebecca Brett, said: "Online training is a fantastic innovation for agents and for us too. With increasingly hectic schedules and agents spread across the country, an online portal enables far more agents to familiarise themselves with our product in their own time. When it comes to the MS Serenity, the training module allows agents to gain a better understanding of our four-star river cruising product, to appreciate which clients our cruises would appeal to and to grasp our key USPs, which include the excellent range of excursions and regional travel options."

The training module will also highlight to agents the newly increased range of regional travel options for cruises on MS Serenity in 2017. In addition to coach travel from a network of joining points nationwide, many of the cruises now offer a choice of regional departure points for travel by rail using the Eurostar and European high-speed rail networks, as well as by air from Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow and Aberdeen, as well as Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted.

Agents registered with OTT will also be eligible to receive launch offers and should email Rebecca for more details at rebeccabrett@diamondhols.co.uk

For more information visit rivercruiseline.co.uk or call 0844-544 7580. (Training – page 15)

'Holiday blues' affects 60% of Brits according to new momondo.co.uk survey

A RECENT survey of 1,000 Brits carried out by momondo.co.uk found that 61% of those polled experienced 'the holiday blues' when returning from their travels, compared to 56% last year.

According to the results, holidays inspire a focus on being more off-duty in general, to make returning home easier, with almost a quarter

of all Brits making sure they have a couple of days off, after returning from holiday and starting work or study again.

The survey also found that following a holiday, 14% of Brits prioritise time to relax and 14% prioritise quality time with family and friends.

Meanwhile, the return to everyday life after a holiday is often made

easier for Brits by carrying on certain habits. For example, 17% of Brits admit to sleeping in longer than usual, for a period after a holiday. And perhaps wishing to retain that holiday glow and stay in shape, the company found 18% of Brits try to eat more healthily, 12% exercise more and 9% cut down on alcohol consumption to make returning home easier.



FELIXSTOWE FRIENDS... Fred Olsen Travel in Felixstowe held a travel show recently, which saw more than 350 of its customers attend. Pictured in a celebratory mood are, from the left: the agency's Harriet Fallon, Madeleine Mayers, Linda Fowler and Leah Johnson.



Gulf Air launches new pricing tool for travel agencies

GULF AIR has launched its Instant Book and Price tool for travel agencies in coordination with its General Sales Agent (GSA) Mack Air, technology partner Clarity Airline Solutions and Global Distribution System (GDS) partner, Travelport.

The carrier now offers instant pricing for any booking with interline itineraries using the airline's 68 airline partners.

Customers can stopover in many destinations and, more importantly, fly on a single Gulf Air ticket ensuring they have their baggage all the way to the final destination.

CLIA unveils plans for month-long 'Cruise Relay'

CRUISE LINES International Association (CLIA) is to launch Plan a Cruise Month in October. The month long campaign, running from October 1-31, is aimed at travel agents, cruise lines, industry partners and consumers.

Despite speaking to multiple audiences, all activity will have one common objective; to create awareness of cruise holidays.

In advance of the kick off on October 1, the association's team will embark on a nationwide tour of the UK, in what CLIA has coined the Cruise Relay.

Taking place from September 23-30, Andy Harmer, CLIA Europe VP Operations and Adele Foster, events and training manager, will travel the length and breadth of the UK visiting ten locations in total. Over the course of the eight-day tour, CLIA will host a series of agent events including events in Southampton and Leeds.

Harmer said: "We are incredibly excited to get on the road for the Cruise Relay, to mark the start of CLIA's Plan a Cruise Month activity. It's crucial that we meet with our cruise partners up and down the country to make sure they're up to speed on the latest developments and more importantly, to show our appreciation for their ongoing support."

"Cruise holidays are growing in popularity year-on-year, and cruises that depart from the UK are on the rise too, now accounting for 47% of the market (840,000 passengers in 2015). We hope that the Cruise Relay will showcase the importance that our regional cruise ports play in the growth of the cruise industry and in their contribution to UK and Irish tourism."

Cruise Relay starts on September 23 in Dover.

For more information visit cruising.org/planacruisemonth



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City Cruises launches new itinerary to appeal to culture vultures

BUILDING ON the success of its Shakespeare cruises, City Cruises is set to run a comprehensive programme of cultural cruises, launching this month.

Culture vultures will be able to take their pick from themed trips including The Great Fire of London and Georgian London to Bridges and Landmarks, Shakespeare and Liquid London.

The evening cruises, running from Wednesday to Sunday evenings at 19:30, include a glass of bubbly and canapes for cruisers to enjoy on board as they glide past London's most iconic sights and learn about the city's history.

Tourists looking for something a little more dramatic will have the option of booking a Shakespeare cruise and will be treated to a dining experience, hosted by Elizabethan party goers Falstaff and Cleopatra leading proceedings using Shakespearean language.

Prices start from £30 per person (aged 16+) and include canapes, a welcome glass of bubbly, one-and-a-half-hour cruise and expert commentary.

Winter sun Nile cruises launched with prices from £899 from Discover Egypt

DISCOVER EGYPT has kicked off its winter Nile cruise schedule, with sailings from Luxor throughout the winter months.

Philip Breckner, the company's commercial director, said: "September is the start of our winter sun sales and classic Nile cruises, and is also the best time to visit Egypt. Agents offering a Nile cruise as a winter sun break will know that their clients will be rewarded with the chance to see some of Egypt's most iconic attractions without the crowds, and be able to admire incredible monuments, tombs and temples such as the Valley of the Kings, the Valley of the Queens and the Temples of Luxor, Karnak, Edfu, Kom Ombo and Philae in peace.

"We have a good number of repeat clients and some say that when they ask their retailers to book a Nile



cruise, they are told there isn't anyone selling these. But the reality is (as it has always been) with a specialist, we stand by the destination in good and poorer times. Our message to agents is, keep selling Nile cruises and we're here to help you do just that."

The lead in price for a seven-night cruise on MS Mayfair is £899, which includes the full board cruise with ten guided excursions, flights from Heathrow and transfers.

For more information call 020-7407 2111 or visit discoveregypt.co.uk



OTTAWA WE GO... A group of operators were recently escorted on a summer fam trip to Ottawa in Canada, courtesy of Ottawa Tourism. Pictured at Parliament Hill are, from the left: David Marriott, Bridge & Wickers; Rachel Buckman, Hayes & Jarvis; Ergeta Mali, Axis Travel Marketing; Emma Watts, Virgin Holidays; Lucy Fuller, Saga Holidays; and Simon Ellingworth, Thomas Cook.

New additions from Neilson for 2017

NEILSON HAS announced a number of new additions to its 2017 summer beachclub programme, which is now on sale, including new activities, products and destinations.

Two new destinations - Alana Beachclub in Croatia and Baia del Mori Beachclub in Sardinia - have been added, along with three new beachclubs.

As an example, prices for the Alana Beachclub (in Paklenica) lead in at £655 per adult for seven nights on club board, including flights, transfers and most activities.

Meanwhile, two new activities have been added for next summer - rock climbing and kitesurfing, while new products include adults-only, exclusive to the new Buca Beachclub in Greece, and Club board, which is exclusive to the Phokaia Beachclub in Turkey and features regular evening meals served on four nights, as well as breakfast and lunch every day. The 'plus' is that guests also have access to a range of complimentary local spirits, house wine, beer and soft drinks every day (even on non-inclusive meal nights).

As well as the established Heathrow, Gatwick, Birmingham and Manchester routes, visitors can now fly from Stansted, Bristol and East Midlands airports.

For further information visit neilson.co.uk or call 0333-014 3350.

New fares from TAP

TAP HAS launched a new innovative fare structure to better serve its customers and provide a greater degree of flexibility, ensuring travellers pay only for the services they need.

Offered on all journeys to and from Europe and North Africa, the airline has launched six new products - four in Economy Class (Discount, Basic, Classic and Plus) and two in Executive Class (Executive and Top Executive).

With an average reduction of 34% in the Discount branded fares (the lowest fare level), customers can now purchase flights to Portugal starting from £50 one-way or £75 return, including all taxes.

Details at flytap.com or call 0345-601 0932.

Autumn promotion from Royal Caribbean International

ROYAL CARIBBEAN International has launched its 'Autumn 2016' promotion, where holidaymakers have the chance to receive savings on new bookings made until November 8 on selected ex UK and European 2017 sailings.

Guests taking advantage of the promotion will benefit from the line's new all-inclusive drinks offer which is worth the equivalent of £50 per person, per day; buy one get one half off (BOGOHO), with the second adult sharing the same stateroom receiving 50% off the full adult cruise fare price paid; and a 25% saving per person on third and fourth guests.

The promotion offers a range of destinations on ex UK and European

itineraries for 2017 and, for guests who are interested in travelling further afield to the Caribbean and the rest of the world in 2017, there are also a range of savings to be made on selected itineraries. For details see royalcaribbean.co.uk/cruise-deals/all-in

Meanwhile, the company has launched a new brand magazine aimed at travel agents across the UK and Ireland called The Buzz.

The publication will be delivered to more than 3,700 trade partners across the UK and Ireland, providing news and selling information, as well as a variety of competitions and exclusive offers.

See royalcaribbean.co.uk

Flybe launches new routes from Manchester

FLYBE HAS announced the start of its new year-round daily service to Lyon from Manchester Airport with one-way fares from £29.99 including taxes and charges.

The airline has also confirmed that it will be adding Chambéry as a new destination to its Manchester 2016/17 winter schedule from December 20 through to March 19, 2017.

Details at flybe.com



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Notes from Normanton...

I love travelling – I think it's one of the best things one can do. If I couldn't travel I think I would go into a deep decline! I'll never understand those who say there is plenty to see in this country – yes, there is but there is a hell of a lot more to see outside of it! Eating different foods and meeting new people with different outlooks and cultures to us etc.

As you all know, I also take an interest in the animals abroad and I find it sad that many are not looked after properly because of different ideas. But its thanks to tour operators like Thomas Cook who ban certain animal activities (e.g. elephant rides) which is what we need – tour operators that are prepared to say no to animal cruelty and not condone it, which brings me onto Monkeys in Mauritius.

Thank goodness for companies like Cruelty Free International (crueltyfreeinternational.org) whose appeal resulted in Thomas Cook contacting ABTA who have agreed to act on behalf of the UK tourism industry to talk about animal welfare concerns. It's a start and let's hope action is taken – I look forward to hearing how ABTA get on. Other operators can use their weight to influence the government as well – come on Beachcomber, If Only, Kuoni, Virgin, Thomson, First Choice etc. Just think what a difference could be made!

By the time you read this I will have attended the Travel Bulletin Star Awards evening in London. I look forward to telling you how I got on! I'm also off to Crete for five nights to find the sun and catch up with everyone in Gouves.

'Don't sail out further than you can row back' and 'Pull the string and it will follow wherever you wish. Push it, and it will go nowhere at all'.

Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY
in Normanton, Yorkshire

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

MOVERS

- ROB BARKER has been appointed MD of Vertical Systems, with immediate effect.
- ROTANA HAS announced the expansion of its corporate global sales office in the UK with the appointment of two new key account managers – Amy Curtis and Sheena Muthaiah.
- TRAVELSUPERMARKET has appointed Nigel Pocklington as MD.
- DAVID PITT has joined SilverRail as head of UK operations.
- JUMEIRAH HAS appointed Marc Dardenne as group chief operating officer.
- ADAM FORSDIKE has taken up the role of tourist board partnerships manager with Cheapflights.
- JET2HOLIDAYS HAS appointed Andy Cooper as head of regulation, compliance and resilience.
- APT HAS boosted its sales team with the appointment of two new account managers – Nicola Pearce and Sarah Ashmore.
- FLEXIBLE AUTOS has appointed Patrick Devonshire as sales executive for the south and has promoted Andrea Elwell to national sales manager.



On the case

NOWADAYS WHEN we travel we want to travel light but we don't want to compromise on quality when it comes to the gadgets that we take with us. That is especially true when it comes to once-in-a-lifetime adventures such as a safari or whale-watching. The CL Pocket 8x25 are foldable compact binoculars of exceptional optical quality. They offer optimum viewing comfort, even during long observation periods, and are easy to use. Even people who wear glasses can fully benefit from the large field of view (357 ft/119 m) thanks to the individually adjustable twist-in eyecups. What's more, you will hardly know you are carrying them as they weigh just 345g. They are available from www.swarovskioptik.com for £560.

Booking incentives

- Travel 2 is giving agents the chance to win one of two cases of Champagne, worth up to £200 each as part of its 'Fabulously Las Vegas' campaign. To be entered into the prize draw agents must make a qualifying booking (including flights with United Canada or Air Canada) and three nights' ground arrangements in Las Vegas by September 30. Meanwhile, agents can add up to £200 to their T2 Rewards Card as part of the operator's latest 'Every Day's A Pay Day' incentive. Highlights of its 'Tour the World with Travel 2' campaign include trekking in Peru, motorcycle tours on Route 66 and an outback adventure in Australia. Agents booking by September 30 can earn double T2 Rewards credits. For details see travel2.com
- Qantas has launched 'Unlock Australia with Qantas', an exclusive incentive for UK travel agents. Until September 30, agents who make an eligible booking will be in with the chance of winning their own Qantas Walkabout: a pair of Qantas Premium Economy tickets from Heathrow to Australia with up to three sectors from Zone 1 or Zone 2 on the Qantas Walkabout Pass. There are a number of other prizes available including a £1,000 Qantas travel voucher, a £500 Love2Shop voucher, as well as weekly prizes including travel vouchers, shopping vouchers and a case of Australian wine. Bookings must be made by September 30 and issued by October 6. For details see qantas.co.uk/agents.
- Sister river cruise companies Scenic and Emerald Waterways have launched a dual-branded rewards scheme incentivising agents who book cruises from either brand. The new River Rewards initiative offers UK agents the opportunity to redeem points against a collection of luxury gifts and experiences. Agents can earn points and collect prizes from booking and keep banking points to achieve the highest tier giveaways. Prizes range from Jamie Oliver kitchen goodies to the latest tech including Fitbit and GoPro brands, complimentary river cruises and big name fashion, beauty and fragrance products. The scheme runs quarterly and points can be accumulated each quarter and cashed at the end of every three months. For details see riverrewards.cruises or email rewards@scenic.co.uk
- The Villa Collection is offering up to £100 Love2Shop vouchers for all bookings including accommodation-only and ATOL-protected packages and transfers. See thevillacollection.co.uk/travel-agents/
- Silversea Expeditions has announced a new 'Sell to Sail' programme, rewarding travel agents with a complimentary suite on board a luxurious expedition. To qualify, agents need to book one new suite on select 2016 Silver Explorer or Silver Discoverer sailings. For more information email salesuk@silversea.com
- Warner Leisure Hotels has launched a new booking incentive which offers agents the chance to claim £5 and £10 Love2Shop vouchers for every break booked this month. £10 vouchers can be claimed for every 2017 break booked, while agents can earn a £5 Love2Shop voucher for every booking made for the remainder of this year. Vouchers are eligible for minimum three-night breaks booked by September 30 at any of the company's properties when agents claim at bourneleisuresales.co.uk

AGENT OFFERS

- Royal Caribbean has launched a new magazine aimed at travel agents across the UK and Ireland called *The Buzz*. It provides news and selling information, as well as a variety of competitions and offers exclusively for agents, along with updates from the cruise line. Agents who read the first issue of *The Buzz* can redeem a complimentary glass of prosecco, available at Jamie's Italian until September 30.
- Travel agents can win an Amarula gift hamper to celebrate the launch of Premier Holidays' 2017 Southern Africa brochure. The operator is inviting agents to visit its trade website to answer three questions before September 20 for the chance to win.

New-look European and Worldwide brochures from Travelsphere

TRAVELSPHERE HAS launched its new-look European and Worldwide brochures offering new tours to a selection of destinations including Cuba, Vietnam, India, Italy and a cruise on the Mississippi River.

As examples, the company has added a ten-day Tall Ship Cruise, taking in the wonders of Cuba and the Cayman Islands, while the South America programme has expanded with the addition of an 18-day Latin Wonders of the World holiday, travelling through Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil, taking in Machu Picchu, Iguacu Falls, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires.

Colin Wilson, the company's group sales director, said: "We have taken a fresh approach to our latest brochures; for each holiday there is a clear overview of what customers will experience, the highlights, what is included in the price, any special departures and add-ons if guests would like to extend their holiday. We know that customers prefer to depart from their regional airport, so the new brochures clearly show where a local airport is available for a particular holiday.

"Our new long-haul tours include a journey across South America, a foodie tour through Southern India, a 12-day adventure along the length of Vietnam and an inspirational exploration of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Closer to home we continue to expand our popular holidays in Italy, including a five-day tour of Turin, an Italian Winter Wonderland experience and a trip on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express taking in Lake Garda. We have combined a cruise and land tour with our Croatia to Montenegro – Ocean Cruise, where you can really get into the heart of these two Adriatic countries while enjoying the comfort of an exclusive cruise ship."

Meanwhile, demand for holidays in Africa continues to increase, with the company now offering tours to six countries in Southern Africa, included the newly launched Okavango Delta, Chobe and Victoria Falls, where customers can spot wildlife in Chobe National Park as they travel through three African countries ending up at Victoria Falls.

The operator is also offering 26 unique tours to North America and its new season tours include a journey along the Oregon Coast from San Francisco to Seattle, a cruise on the Mississippi and an exploration of the Six States of New England.

From now until October 2, the company is offering a saving of up to £300 per couple on selected long-haul holidays and up to £100 per couple on short-haul holidays.

For details or to book see travelsphere.co.uk or call 0800-987 5110.

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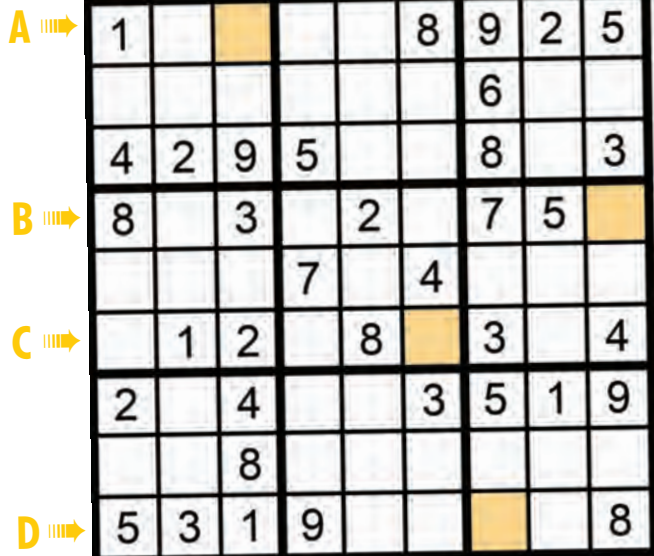
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Su Doku

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

Number: 035



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

The winner for 2nd September is Caroline Jenkins, Travel Counsellors, Bolton

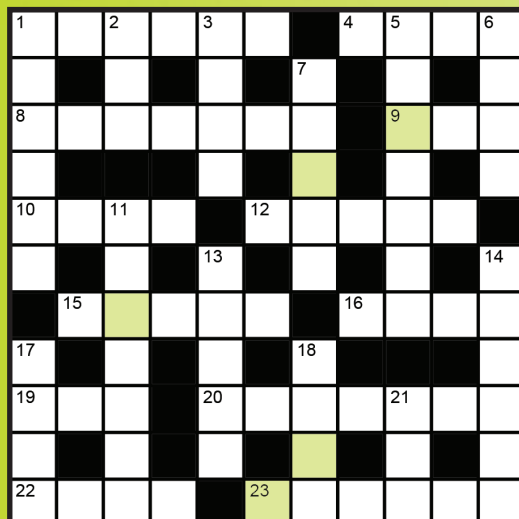
September 2 Solution: A=9 B=8 C=5 D=2

Where Am I?



This massive freshwater lake is considered to be the deepest in the world with a maximum depth of 1,642m. The seventh-largest lake in the world by surface area, it contains more water than all the North American Great Lakes combined.

Crossword



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

Across

1. Haven is part of this Leisure group (6)
4. Scenic lake in Slovenia (4)
8. Iconic points of interest off the Isle of Wight (7)
9. David Beckham is currently promoting this sports channel on TV (3)
10. Salt Lake City is the state capital (4)
12. Major car hire company (5)
15. One of the Florida Keys (5)
16. Known as the Eternal City (4)
19. Calabria forms this part of the Italian boot (3)
20. Capital of Tahiti (7)
22. Peru's capital city (4)
23. Bake Off winner recently seen in The Chronicles of ____ (6)

Down

1. Remake of a 50's historic epic at a cinema near you (3,3)
2. Abu Dhabi is the capital (3)
3. Flows through 13 Down (4)
5. Maseru is the capital (7)
6. Hotel chain, ____ Inn (4)
7. Colorado ski resort, sounds like a tree (5)
11. LA home of Disneyland Resort (7)
13. Country on the Red Sea (5)
14. Swiss lake and city (6)
17. Travellers' protection scheme, initially (4)
18. Capital of Samoa (4)
21. Edinburgh airport code (3)

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



PICTURED RECEIVING their personal demonstration of Omega Holidays' new website from the company's Dino Toouli are Helen Woodward (left) and Hollie Leighton from Spa Travel in Boston Spa near Wetherby, Yorkshire. (See story, below right)

New escorted tours for 2017 from Riviera Travel

RIVIERA TRAVEL has launched four new escorted tours, which are now available to book for 2017 dates.

A 16-day Western Wonders in the US offers selected departures from May to September and leads in at £2,299 per person. It travels through many National and State Parks including Arches National Park and Yellowstone, and visits attractions such as Mount Rushmore, Devil's Tower and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison.

Other new additions include an eight-day Burgundy, Dijon and the Rhône Valley from £899; a six-day Slovenia and Lake Bled from £599; and a five-day Cork, Kilkenny and the Ring of Kerry from £599.

For more information visit rivieratravel.co.uk/agents or call 01283-744370.

Jet2holidays announces two VIP conferences for travel agents

BUILDING ON the success of its first VIP travel agent conference in 2015, Jet2holidays has announced two VIP conferences on the island of Cyprus in November and December this year.

The company's top performing agency partners will be whisked away to the CBH Athena Royal Hotel in Cyprus for a two-night conference on December 1 to recognise and celebrate their achievements over the past 12 months. The conference includes presentations, supplier showcases, a gala dinner and an awards ceremony.

New for this year is a second two-night conference at the same hotel, which has been designed for 120 agents who are new to the brand and who want to learn more about how the operator can help them grow their business. This conference, starting on November 28, is particularly relevant for travel agents in the Midlands area, ahead of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays launching flights and holidays for the first time from Birmingham in March 2017.

Both events give agency partners the opportunity to learn more about the company's future vision and attend seminars from the management team on how to effectively promote and sell package holidays in order to help their own growth and expansion.

New trade website from Omega Holidays

THIS MONTH sees the launch of a new trade website for Omega Holidays, aimed at making it easier for travel agents to book its UK and overseas products.

The company's first travel trade website – tradesales.omega-holidays.com – will enable agents to book any one of its products including flights to see the Northern Lights, London Theatre Breaks and its overseas holidays and tours programme based on both scheduled and exclusive charter flights.

The company's head of trade sales, Dino Toouli, said: "For the past year we have been developing a trade website that we believe will give agents better access to our products and will help increase sales through the network of travel agents we have been working with since 2014. We have come a long way in the past three years and continue to see sales go from strength to strength."

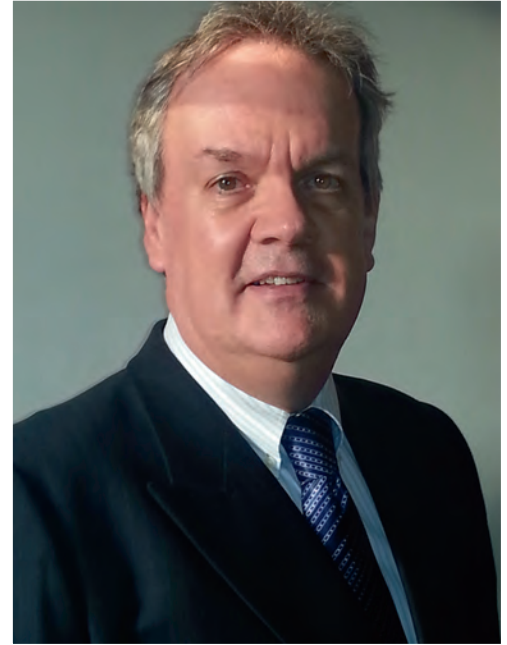
To celebrate the launch of the new website, the operator is giving agents the opportunity to win a weekend break for two to London including tickets to a West End show of their choice. All bookings made on the new website throughout this month will be entered into the prize draw. Booking references must be emailed to tradesales@omega-holidays.com by Friday October 7.

For further details call 01524-772010 or visit tradesales.omega-holidays.com

Industry Insight by...

elite
TRAVEL GROUP

Should restrictions on the numbers of tourists visiting certain destinations be introduced? Neil Basnett, chief executive of Elite Travel Group, considers the implications...



MANY COUNTRIES, especially those in the Third World, are reliant upon tourism. If there were no tourists how would, for example, places like the Maldives, Barbados and Koh Samui survive in the modern world?

Tourism creates employment for millions of locals in these countries and it also brings in much needed hard currency to assist the economy. With the advent of some evil terrorist attacks, popular destinations like Egypt and Tunisia have suffered dreadfully and sadly, for the foreseeable future, there is simply no end in sight to their problems ceasing and resulting in the return of tourists again. It is not only long-haul destinations that need tourists of course: many Mediterranean countries also benefit from the arrival each year of British holidaymakers and Greece, Portugal and Spain in particular would have even higher unemployment levels if we abandoned having our two weeks of sunshine in these countries.

Mass tourism however is not always good news for destinations attracting large visitor numbers. With five million fewer holidaymakers visiting Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia alone this year as tourists shun terror-hit nations in favour of safer destinations such as Spain, it is estimated that 15 million will have visited Spain this year from the UK alone. This pales into insignificance with the estimate that there will be 67 million in total that will have headed for Spain, which has a population of only 47 million. The island of Mallorca alone will attract three million British tourists and this is now leading to a backlash from some of the locals who feel that they are being crowded out of their own island. The island's capital city of Palma is perceived by many locals to be suffering from too many visitors with local shops closing down to be replaced by souvenir shops, for example. The little stone streets around Palma's beautiful El Seu Cathedral are often impassable owing to the sheer number of sightseers, and locals are now moving away owing to the city being so busy. In addition to the hundreds of thousands actually staying on the island, from 10:30 most days there is another mass

influx of visitors disembarking from ever-bigger cruise ships. On some days, there can be anything up to seven cruise ships with 4,000 plus passengers on each. This is resulting in the popular shopping districts becoming heaving and the many surrounding smaller roads becoming almost totally blocked.

This therefore creates a massive dilemma for the island of Mallorca and for Spain as a whole: should there be a cap on tourist numbers? In addition to the over-crowding situation, in the case of drought-prone Mallorca, the booming number of visitors is putting even greater pressure on the water supply especially in a year when the reservoirs are down to being only 32% full. When locals are facing restrictions, is there any wonder that resentment is building towards the huge number of tourists?

It is likely however that the local residents will have to grin and bear it as the money taken from these holidaymakers has without any doubt been the main factor in getting Spain's economy back onto its feet after the 2007 financial crash. In the Balearic islands alone, half of all their economic output and a third of all the jobs rely on the tourism industry so that is the dilemma: environment or livelihoods for the local people? Which has precedence?

The situation facing Mallorca is of course faced also by other countries. When I read therefore that P&O is planning to build the largest ship (5,200 passengers) for the UK market in addition to Carnival Cruise Line's announcement to have two more ships, my mind continues to be filled with images of the beautiful buildings of Venice being dwarfed by floating, modern cities and the lovely little villages of the Cinque Terre in Italy having to cope with regular huge numbers of tourists. No matter how environmentally-friendly these new ships claim to be, it still does not minimise the effect on the local environment when these ships disgorge their passengers. It does seem that once again, money rules and this is a subject that could be debated for a long time. Now, where should I go for my next holiday? Mallorca appeals!

airportgurusairlineextravaganza



Airport Gurus welcome new Birmingham agency Air Express to the event



A big "cheers" to Mid counties coop and Jet2



Thomson brush up on the Spanish routes with Vueling



Straight from receiving the Star UK Airport award at The Langham Hotel, Birmingham's Airport Gurus were busy at their own Airline Extravaganza.

After significant growth to 11 million passengers in a year, it was great opportunity for the Airport and Airlines to engage with the travel trade and thank them for their support.

Held at the Birmingham Metropole, 28 of BHX's key airlines were represented and 271 travel agents from all over the UK attended the event.

The agents were issued with a passport and had fun in collecting their airline stamps throughout the evening, whilst learning about the variety of airline products from BHX.

Of course no Guru event is complete without a whole variety of prizes and customary personalised chocolate to finish off the night! The second successful event of its kind, the Gurus look forward to inviting you to an even further high flying third!



A huge win with United Airlines for one of our Birmingham travel agents #flights



A little bit of Turkish Delight



Worldwide Motorhoming Holidays out in force



Thomas Cook talk Norwegian product...free Wi-Fi don't you know!



Cat tells Judy Masters (Journey The World) "you've got to be in it to win it"!



The Birmingham Airport Team



Three new destinations with Blue Air... Bucharest, Cluj and Larnaca.

Win a GoPro with AVIS training academy

AGENTS SUCCESSFULLY completing the Avis online training programme have the chance to win a GoPro Hero 4.

The company recently announced the quarterly winner of its last prize draw, with Amy Harris from Avios winning an Apple iWatch Sport after successfully completing the online training programme.

Mark Cornock, head of leisure international sales for the company, said: "Avis revamped its agents' online training programme earlier this year – it's very user friendly and designed to ensure agents are aware of our products, help them think pro-actively, maximise their car hire sales and fine tune their customer service skills, by ensuring customers book the most suitable car.

"The programme can now be accessed across all devices giving the flexibility to complete the training anywhere – on the daily commute, at home, waiting for an appointment – or wherever is most convenient.

"Agents tell us that after training they've increased their sales of car hire. Selling car rental is a valuable source of additional income and, with an average selling price of £238 per car, by selling one extra pre-booked car hire per week they can increase revenue by £13,000 per annum."

All agents successfully completing the training programme will receive a downloadable certificate and are entered into a prize draw. The prize is drawn quarterly and the new prize for quarter three is a GoPro Hero 4 camera worth nearly £400. The winner will be drawn at the end of October. See avistraining.co.uk for details.



LOUISE TANSEY (left) from Bourne Leisure recently presented a Samsung Smart Watch to online training winner Andrea Leak from Thomas Cook in Hartlepool. To become a Bourne Expert and be in with the chance of winning, agents need to complete the online training course and make two or bookings within the first three months.

Global Travel Group announces new autumn training days

FROM THIS month through to November members of The Global Travel Group will be able to sign up to a series of free full-day training events across the UK.

On September 29 and 30, the consortium will be hosting two days of cruise training in Southampton, starting with a speed-dating style session at the Grand Harbour Hotel for agents to meet with cruise suppliers including APT, Crystal Cruises and Saga.

In between the events, agents can benefit from presentations from Andy Harmer, director of CLIA UK and Ireland, and one of the consortium's top performing cruise agents, Jason Peters from Creative Cruises.

The second day will see a visit to Celebrity Eclipse, hosted by Celebrity Cruises, where an onboard training session will give agents essential

experience of cruise ships and the calibre of features that their customers can expect at sea.

The group is also organising a series of regional one-day training events over the coming months, providing agents and suppliers with one-on-one meetings during the day's speed-networking sessions.

Andy Stark, managing director of the travel consortium, said: "In a fast-evolving industry, our ongoing training events give members the opportunity to continually build on their travel knowledge and stay one step ahead of the competition. I'm confident that our combination of regional training days and themed events, including our upcoming cruise roadshow, will help develop their skills."

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

Win a holiday for two at Hard Rock Hotel Tenerife

AGENTS CAN win one of six seven-night holidays for two at the new five-star Hard Rock Hotel Tenerife.

For the chance to win, agents need to complete the new Hard Rock Hotel Tenerife Online Travel Training course and send a print screen of the certificate to HRHT@wearelotus.co.uk

For an additional chance, make a booking to the hotel with Classic Collection or Jet2.com and send a print screen to the same email address.

Agents can earn two points for completing the course and one point for each booking, which means that the more bookings, the higher the chance of winning.

The prize includes a seven-night holiday for two people in a deluxe silver room with breakfast included (in collaboration with Jet 2 Holidays and Classic Collection Holidays) and the competition runs until September 30.

The course can be accessed at HRHTenerifeexperts.com





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Seasonal routes

London Gatwick - Heraklion (up to 6 weekly)

Birmingham - Athens (2 per week)



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Tourist office unveils latest visitor trends & new website

CYPRUS HAS proved a popular tourism destination for British travellers. For summer 2016 there was a growth of 15% from the UK and up to the end of July the island welcomed just under half a million tourists. It has been a hit with families due to its pristine beaches – 59 Blue Flags and some of the cleanest water in the Med – and, over the years, hoteliers have been attentive to the needs of facilities for children.

Orestis Rossides, director of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) UK office, said: "More mature travellers choose the autumn period when Cyprus is still the warmest island in the Med. Many repeat travellers choose to hire a car, which is inexpensive, to explore our beautiful countryside and mountain villages.

"The winter months have proved more popular, with next winter bookings experiencing a healthy growth. In the meantime, there has been an improvement in facilities for winter visitors; there are four golf courses, new cycling and hiking routes, as well as a choice of activities within hotels for various indoor sports and entertainment.

"Accessibility year-round is improving constantly with new airlines operating to the island and more choice from regional airports by existing airlines, in addition to London departures. The major resorts are seeing constant investment – in the infrastructure, facilities and hotels, enhancing the overall experience of holidaymakers.

"Above all, visitors to Cyprus will be able to enjoy authentic hospitality in a relaxed atmosphere."

Meanwhile, the tourist office has unveiled a new website which can be accessed at visitcyprus.com

The new site offers a wealth of information aimed to enrich the experience of visitors to the island and highlight its diverse tourist product. It has also been designed to be user-friendly, enabling visitors to search the site based on interests, and includes practical information and a daily weather update as well as an interactive map and individual sections on each of the main tourist regions. In the 'Discover Cyprus' section, visitors can obtain detailed information on all types of special interest activities. There is also a section on events, which is updated regularly.

Rossides said: "We do hope our trade partners will find our new website a useful tool in updating their knowledge on Cyprus and that it will assist them in selling the island. We hope that they will also follow us on our various social media platforms."

Blue Air announces flights from Birmingham to Larnaca

BLUE AIR is adding a second UK departure to Cyprus on its UK network.

Complementing the recent commencement of flights from Luton to Larnaca in April this year, the airline will now start to operate flights from Birmingham to Larnaca from March 26, 2017.

Flights will operate on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, with prices starting from £37.99 one-way including all taxes (excluding hold baggage).

Passengers on the new route to Larnaca will receive a complimentary hot meal with a full beverage bar including wine served onboard.

The airline operates a fleet of Boeing 737 aircrafts, with retrofitted interiors featuring state-of-the-art Recaro seats, and offers a baggage allowance of 32 kilos per hold baggage item.

Bookings can be made via the GDS (Amadeus or Sabre) or via a login to the travel agency website.

For further information call 01293-874985.

Jet2holidays highlights new hotel offerings in Cyprus for families

FOR A FAMILY getaway Jet2holidays is recommending the new four-star St. Elias Resort in Protaras.

With a children's play park, kids' club, and kids' pool all onsite, there's plenty to keep little ones entertained. For adults, there's a chance to keep active on the basketball, tennis and volleyball courts before unwinding in the spa.

The operator is offering seven-nights' all-inclusive, departing from Manchester on September 21, for £689 per person based on two adults sharing.

Also new for 2016 is the Nicholas Color Hotel - a new property ideally located for guests to enjoy Agia Napa's bustling nightlife, while still being within a stone's throw of the resort's beach. Offering a large pool area, two bars and buffet-style restaurant, the complex has a modern feel while still retaining traditional holiday comforts, including a children's playground and regular evening entertainment. A seven-night, half-board stay at the three-star property, departing from Leeds Bradford on September 28 costs £599 per person based on two adults. Both breaks include 22kg luggage allowance and transfers. For further information agents can call 0800-408 5587 or visit tradesite.jet2holidays.com

Range of cultural events & festivals to promote in Larnaka this autumn

LARNAKA HAS a selection of entertainment and events that agents can promote to clients this autumn.

On September 20, theatre-goers will be treated to a performance by the Russian Ballet Theatre at the Patticheio Municipal Amphitheatre with excerpts from Don Quixote, Sleeping Beauty, Giselle, Romeo and Juliet and contemporary dance. Tickets are 25 euros for adults and 12 euros for children up to the age of 12.

Meanwhile, at the Larnaka Municipal Theatre, Anton Chekhov's Three Sisters

will be performed by the PERSONA theatre group on September 21. The play tells the story of the lives and dreams of three sisters, Olga, Masha and Irina, former Muscovites living in a provincial town from which they long to escape.

Following this, on September 23, is Opera Versus Street Dance. With soprano sfogato and lyrical artist Anoki von Arx and street dancer Jay Stamataris, the performance has been billed as 'an encounter of a very special kind' and prices are from ten euros and seven euros for those under 23.

On September 25, a Medieval Festival will take place at Larnaka Medieval Fort, where 30 artists from the 'Limborra Music and Dance Group' will perform medieval and folkloric dances and songs at the free event.

Also free is the Festival of Culture and Tradition, which this year takes place in the village of Ora in the Troodos Mountains on October 1. It includes tastings of local products, food displays, traditional music and dance.

For more information visit larnakaregion.com



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ABTA JATA AITO



LOCATED ON the coast just outside of Larnaka and a short 18-minute transfer from the island's main airport is the recently refurbished Palm Beach Hotel & Bungalows. Rooms start from £124 per room, per night this month for a garden view room for two including breakfast. Visit palmbeachhotel.com

Cyplon highlights selection of agent incentives

CYPLON HOLIDAYS is promoting four agent incentives that it is offering across all its destinations including Cyprus.

Agents can earn a £10 voucher per adult booked on Gold and Silver package holidays to any of its destinations when a minimum seven nights are booked.

They can also earn free stays for themselves and a partner, along with the opportunity to earn gifts and £10 vouchers for all accommodation-only bookings on Gold and Silver commission levels. For details see cyplon.co.uk/agentlogin.

Adams Beach Hotel, Agia Napa



Olympic showcases range of breaks for summer 2017

OLYMPIC HOLIDAYS' 2017 summer holidays are now available with a selection of deals designed for agents to secure next year's breaks with clients now.

Options available through the operator range from boutique properties to villas, apartments to spa resorts, self-catering to bed-and-breakfast and room-only to all-inclusive. The holiday company also offers a low deposit option of £49 to secure a booking, with the price guaranteed at the time of booking and nothing more to pay until ten weeks' prior to departure.

As an example of some of the holidays on offer, a seven-night stay at the Okeanos Beach Hotel in Agia Napa costs from £549 per person based on two travelling. It includes seven nights' breakfast accommodation in a standard room and flights from Gatwick, with departures available on June 10, 2017.

Alternatively, the operator is offering seven nights at the five-star Adams Beach Hotel in Agia Napa from £725 based on two travelling. It includes seven nights' breakfast accommodation in a classic room and flights from Manchester, with departures available on May 24, 2017.

For more information call 020-8492 6868 or visit olympicholidays.com



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one way, taxes included,
limited seats

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and full beverage bar onboard



Planet Holidays' new site offers unique wedding venues

PLANET HOLIDAYS & Weddings has launched a new website with the introduction of a number of new wedding venues in Cyprus, including one in the ancient capital of Kouklia on the outskirts of modern Paphos.

Mathilde Robert, managing director for the operator, said: "With the wedding season stretching into the winter sun months, venues such as Liopetro are a popular choice. Couples looking to get married abroad primarily do so to be outside and have spectacular views. Liopetro delivers both and has the ability to provide couples with something very special that can be tailor-made to suit the tastes of the couple. I'd recommend a swap of a country house wedding and party anywhere in the English countryside for Cyprus, where the weather is kinder even during the months of November and December too."

With a dedicated section on character venues on its new website, the operator aims to assist retailers up and down the country achieve lucrative wedding sales with venues that are unusual or unique and which can be 'taken over' by the couple and their wedding guests.

Alongside the Vasilias Nikolis Inn, also on the outskirts of Paphos, the new Liopetro venue is also featured offering a sustainably crafted stone house with beautiful gardens and a large terrace for the ceremony and reception.

Other options include the exclusive Aphrodite Beach in Agia Napa; the Shipwreck in Gliko Nero Bay in Peyia; the Minthis Monastery in Minthis Hills; the Paphos Ethnographical Museum; the newly featured Derhynia Folkloric Museum near Paralimni; the Cyprus Wine Museum near Limassol; Paphos' Medieval Castle; Paphos' Hammam; and Larnaka Castle.

The company offers agent commission on extras including cake, flowers, photographer and wedding transport.

For more information see planetweddings.co.uk, click on Cyprus and then on Character Venues or call 01438-841270.

Louis Hotels raises the benchmark at Protaras

THIS YEAR has seen a full restructure and the commencement of operations at three new hotels in Cyprus, with substantial upgrades from Louis Hotels.

Louis Nausicaa Beach opened its doors in April of this year following a complete renovation. Located at the award winning Fig Tree Bay and extending over an area of 21,000sq.m, all of the hotel's common areas as well as its 196 suites have been completely redesigned and upgraded. The resort's premises now include five mini clubs for children, three restaurants, two swimming pools, a gym and a modern spa centre.

The King Jason Protaras, which is located right next to Family Life Nausicaa, is also built on Fig Tree Bay. It is the first hotel of boutique design in the area and opened its gates in April this year following a full renovation and is now a part of the hotel group. The new property aims to combine luxury services for relaxation and rest with views across the sea, and consists of 88

studios and one-bedroom suites, two bars, two restaurants, as well as a boutique spa and beauty centre.

It also offers four swimming pools, water floating sunbeds, a pool dedicated to adults and another pool with hydro contact for hydro massage and Jacuzzi.

Meanwhile, the well-known St. Elias tourist village in Protaras reopened its gates in June fully redesigned as a four-star holiday resort.

Its transformation comprises 152 studios and one- and two-bedroom suites, all equipped with modern supplies, large verandas and panoramic views of the area.

The resort is located next to the chapel of Saint Elias and features a swimming pool with Jacuzzi, water slides in the new fully refurbished swimming pool, a children's club, a restaurant serving traditional Greek meze dishes, as well as a second restaurant serving international cuisine, a gym, plus a spa centre with facial and body treatments.

BookYourWeddingDay.com launches online platform

BOOKYOURWEDDING.COM, which launches today (September 16), is an international booking system that allows travel agents to secure confirmed overseas wedding dates and venues instantly.

Cyprus is one of the key destinations available for the platform's launch due to its popularity with the UK market. Throughout the coming year other destinations will also be added.

Aiming to facilitate an easier booking process, users can now log onto the platform, browse destinations, choose the preferred venue and view availability over a three-week period around the ideal date. Every venue will also list the available time slots for the actual ceremony, which are all synchronised with the local town hall's calendar.

Once the venue, date and time are chosen, the booking can be made online for a £100 booking fee with instant confirmation so that other aspects, such as booking flights, accommodation, and wedding packages can be arranged. For additional information email info@bookyourweddingday.com

caribbean

THE ISLANDS of the Bahamas are offering agents a series of new booking incentives. One booking will see agents earn a soft toy of a swimming pig of the Bahamas, while two bookings will be rewarded with a Bahamas carry-on cabin bag. For those agents able to make three bookings it will secure them a place on the 2017 fam trip. Agents can complete the training course at nassaurewards.com and then register their bookings by emailing mrayner@bahamas.co.uk

Rum, Rhythm & Roots returns to Sandals Resorts

DUE TO POPULAR demand, Sandals Resorts has announced the return of its culinary-focused holiday, 'Rum, Rhythm & Roots' at Sandals Ochi Beach Resort.

The week-long cooking adventure, which will take place from January 18-25, 2017 offers foodies the opportunity to learn how to cook authentic Jamaican cuisine from scratch, with the Caribbean Sea as a backdrop. As with last year's package, King of 'Reggae Reggae' cuisine, Levi Roots, will host two cooking masterclasses, as well as accompany guests to a local food market to teach them about local produce. Attendees will also be treated to a musical performance by Levi himself, at a private gala dinner.

The package costs £1,499 per person and includes seven nights' all-inclusive accommodation in a Butler Village honeymoon poolside one-bedroom villa suite, flights with Virgin Atlantic from Gatwick, No.1 Traveller Lounge passes with Premium Security Access, personal butler service, airport transfers in Jamaica, two cooking masterclasses, a visit to a local food market with Levi, a private one hour welcome cocktail reception with hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and open bar, an exclusive gala dinner in a private location with a singing performance from Levi and a pre-gala dinner photo session, plus one complimentary photo to take home.

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

Receive rewards & win a Bahamas break with Atlantis Paradise Island

ATLANTIS, PARADISE Island and the Nassau Paradise Island Promotions Board (NPIP) are giving agents the chance to earn up £45 for each booking made at the resort.

Agents can earn £10 per booking for Atlantis Beach and Coral Towers, £15 per booking for Royal Towers and £25 per booking for stays at the luxurious Cove or Reef. Agents are also offered an additional £20 reward for every booking made to the destination.

In order to start earning, agents need to make a booking for a minimum four-night stay and register it at atlantisbahamasrewards.com before November 30. All bookings made for travel up until December 31, 2017 are valid, and rewards will be earned with each booking registered. To claim the double rewards, agents must be registered to both the Atlantis Paradise Island and Nassau Paradise Island NPIP reward programmes. There is no limit to the amount of bookings individual agents can make or earn rewards for.

Moreover, agents who register and log their bookings will be automatically entered into a prize draw to win a five-night stay for two adults at Atlantis Royal Towers including breakfast for travel during 2017. The runner up will win two 12-month adult passes giving unlimited entry to all Sealife Aquariums and sanctuaries in the UK, including the Sealife London Aquarium.

New Caribbean escapes with Funway

FOLLOWING THE recent expansion of its Caribbean programme and recent launch of its first standalone Caribbean brochure, Funway Holidays is promoting stays at the newly opened Waves Hotel & Spa by Elegant Hotels in Barbados.

The operator is offering a seven-night stay at the all-inclusive four-star property from £1,389 per person including flights with British Airways from Gatwick. Travel is based on two adults sharing and departing on September 30. Visit funway4agents.co.uk for more details.



Paradise Beach Nevis to open oceanfront pole houses

PARADISE BEACH Nevis is to create five pole houses on its secluded sunset-facing beachfront, elevated over the sand to bring guests closer to the Caribbean Sea.

Due to be constructed by the end of 2017, each house will feature two en suite bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, airy living spaces and a sea-facing balcony for sundowners and al fresco dining.

The villa resort has also unveiled a suite of deluxe packages for 2016/17 plus an early booking deal providing 25% off 2017 stays between January 3 and December 18 for those making a reservation before November 30.

The packages and offer are available through Carrier, Caribtours, Elegant Resorts, ITC Luxury Travel and the Azure Collection.

'Bait to Plate' from Elegant Hotels in Barbados



Gone Fishin' - Elegant Hotels gets guests involved with Bait to Plate

WITH THE DEMAND from guests to experience more whilst on their winter sun holiday, Elegant Hotels' Barbados resort is offering a variety of daily activities that give guests the chance to learn more about Bajan culture and experience island life with the locals.

Led by one of Colony Club's chefs, 'Bait to Plate' takes guests out on a private boat to explore the plethora of sea-life on the reef before being taught to catch the best and tastiest fish. The skipper will anchor the boat in the best spots to catch bonito or other local fish, before returning visitors to the hotel to watch as their catch is grilled in front of them. The dinner is then served Bajan style with rice, peas and plenty of Bajan pepper sauce.

Sunil Chatrani, CEO of the hotel group, said: "As someone who was raised in Barbados, I am excited to share our wonderful culture with our guests. It always gives me a great thrill to hear from guests at our resorts that they want to get involved in all things Bajan. We know that the demand is there so we've formalised this to make sure that our guests can get involved as much as they like."

Capture the Caribbean: Keyonna Beach holds photo course

KEYONNA BEACH, located on Antigua's South-Western coastline, is holding its first photography course between December 3-10. Geared towards budding beginners and photographers who wish to improve, the course will provide enthusiasts with the opportunity to learn the skills needed to take professional images, with the added bonus of a Caribbean backdrop.

Providing participants with the basic rules of daylight photography, the course will be led by fashion and lifestyle photographer Alfred Saerchinger, who works with many A-list fashion magazines including Italian Vogue, Elle and Grazia. The whole experience is priced from £3,069 per couple which includes a seven-night stay in a one-bedroom Beach House Room, all meals and alcoholic branded drinks, private transfers, the four-day photography course, including excursions and transfers and a complimentary massage. Guests accompanying a photographer who do not wish to participate in the course, should subtract £600 from the price.

Furthermore, the couples-only resort is offering up to 15% savings off a week's stay for honeymooners or couples getting married at the resort.

For further information visit keyonnabeachresortantigua.com

Hard Rock opens Music Lab and offers 'Relax 'n' Rock' trade incentive

HARD ROCK Hotels' Music Lab is now available at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Punta Cana resort in the Dominican Republic.

Complimentary for all guests and available to anyone over the age of 12, programmes include 'The Jam Band' which provides expert instruction with rehearsals, sound check and a live performance on stage; 'RockTube', which helps guests star in their own music video; and 'mix', where guests will learn how to put a spin on classic and modern tracks by adding beats, vocals, special effects and overlaying tracks before performing on stage. All levels are welcome and no experience is necessary. Visit hardrockhotelpuntacana.com

The hotel group is also offering a Relax 'n' Rock incentive to travel agents where holiday bookings to the property can equate to a free night's stay. Wedding package sales earn more points, making it easier to earn a stay in a Diamond level room.

Email uksales@hrhaic.com for more details.



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Lapland



WITH FINLAND currently in high demand, On The Go Tours has developed a number of journeys which showcase the country's diverse landscape, including a six-day Lapland Explorer tour. With a trip to Santa's village and optional excursions to husky and reindeer farms, travellers can become a certified reindeer driver before jumping aboard a sleigh and heading out into the snowy wilderness or explore on a two-hour snowmobile safari. Priced from £579 per person, it includes five nights in a four-star hotel in Levi, five breakfasts, excursions and entrance fees to the Santa Claus village in Rovaniemi and transfers. Travel dates are between November 12 and April 22, 2017. Visit onthegotours.com

Inghams to offer Muotka Wilderness Lodge in Finnish Lapland

NEW FOR winter 2016/17, Inghams is offering guests the chance to stay in the remote Muotka Wilderness Lodge, situated amidst the Saariselkä fells, on the edge of the Urho – Kekkonen National Park.

Staying in the lodge on the operator's Northern Lights Adventure Weeks includes daily arctic activities - from daytime and evening Aurora hunts and husky, snowmobile and reindeer safaris to cross-country skiing or snowshoeing over 300km of marked trails. Guests can learn about the Sámi culture at a local farm or

spend the night under the stars in an Aurora Cabin.

The operator is offering seven-night stays at the lodge from December to March, with direct flights from Gatwick, Manchester and Bristol. Prices start from £1,579 per person on a full-board basis, departing on January 8, 2017 based on two sharing. A special offer of a free Aurora Cabin overnight stay for guests staying between January 8-28, 2017 is currently available.

For more information visit ingham.co.uk or call 01483-791114.

Transun treats families to a taste of Lapland

TRANSUN HAS reported that sales to Lapland have been 'exceptionally strong', with a constant flow of reservations coming in across summer. However, with schools returning at the start of September, the operator has noted a sharp increase in enquiries and bookings to the region in the last few weeks - a trend that is to be expected as autumn is traditionally peak sales season when people return back from their summer holidays and tend to focus on Christmas.

Providing authentic tours in the far north of 'True Lapland', highlights include wilderness locations in the Arctic, private family meetings with Santa in a traditional log cabin and charter flights, which now leave from 18 UK regional airports.

Currently there are a limited number of half-price or free child places available through the operator, which means that for a day trip a family of two adults and two children can go for £1,457, saving £479. The operator also recommends that the best availability at the moment is at the beginning of December.

The company also provides tours from January to March on the Arctic Spirit programme so that clients can experience the landscape of snow-laden forests, frozen lakes and vast expanses of tundra, and participate in a range of activities including snowmobile safaris, husky sledding, Northern Lights safaris, ice-fishing and cross-country skiing.

Simply Sweden offers a n-icehotel stay

THE ICEHOTEL has released details of some of the grand designs that will feature in the 2016 version of the famous frozen structure in Swedish Lapland.

A House of Cards and a White Cathedral provide the setting for two of the suites, while others will include 'Lapland Waves', in which the bed appears to float on an ocean of waves of ice.

More than 40 artists from around the world will be involved in the creation of the hotel, constructed from 5,000 tons of ice and which features 55 rooms, a chapel, bar, hall and gallery.

Simply Sweden is offering a new holiday taking in both the Icehotel - or the permanent Icehotel 365, which opens for the first time on November 1 - and new wilderness cabins, a snowmobile ride away. The break costs from £1,370 and includes flights, transfers, snowmobile excursions, two nights at the Icehotel and one night at the Wilderness Camp, (all with breakfast), one evening meal and warm outer clothing.

Visit simplysweden.co.uk for more details.

TRAVEL TALKS

by John Guinn, holiday researcher

John explores the prospect of prospecting in Lapland



Our regular guest columnist, John Guinn, runs Holiday Hut and regularly contributes to UK Health Radio.

Christmas is very expensive; I have always wondered how Santa manages to provide all those presents. Well, the secret is out, Santa seeks out yellow snow. Of course, with all those reindeer around, it can be difficult to find the right type of yellow snow.

Around three hours' drive north (it's quicker as the reindeer flies) from Santa's home in Rovaniemi, is the Tankavaara Gold Mining Village.

It can't be a coincidence that Santa has been giving better presents since the only authentic gold mining village in Europe opened in the 1970s.

As you'd expect from a country that is used to snow, the mining village is a year-round attraction. The gold panning moves indoors during the winter. Although, with all the biting insects in the area, indoors might be the preferred location in the summer months as well.

The largest piece of gold found there weighed 186 grams, worth around £10,000 today. The largest nugget found by a tourist was nearly 40 grams in size. You'll be pleased to learn that visitors get to keep whatever gold they find.

Most people who listen carefully to the guides do find some gold. However, if it isn't going well, inspiration may be found at the Gold Prospector Museum. The museum exhibits the history of Finnish gold, as well as the history of gold rushes from around the world.

Each year the village hosts the Finnish Open Championships in Gold Panning. This has been running since 1974. Each competitor receives a bucket of sand with various amounts of nuggets hidden in it. The winners are those who find the nuggets in the quickest time.

The village is also hoping to hold the 2019 Gold Panning World Championships (no, I didn't know this existed either) to mark the 150th anniversary of Finnish gold prospecting.

The gold panning is open daily, with the opening hours from 09:00 to 17:00 from June 1 to September 30 and 09:00 until 21:00 for the rest of the year.

For more information visit tankavaara.fi

Drive your own husky sled with Santa's Lapland

CLIENTS VISITING Santa with Santa's Lapland this Christmas will receive a free husky-sled ride as one of the included activities.

The operator has three-day/two-night 'Magic' packages departing on December 12 from Bristol from £2,149 for a family of three, which includes flights, transfers and half-board accommodation in a family room at the Holiday Club. Thermal clothing and activities, which range from a snowmobile search for Santa's log cabin home and a private meeting with Santa to a reindeer sleigh ride and visiting the elves, are also included.

For more information or to book call 01483-791915 or visit santaslapland.com

Taber suggests Sörbyn Lodge for a stay in Swedish Lapland

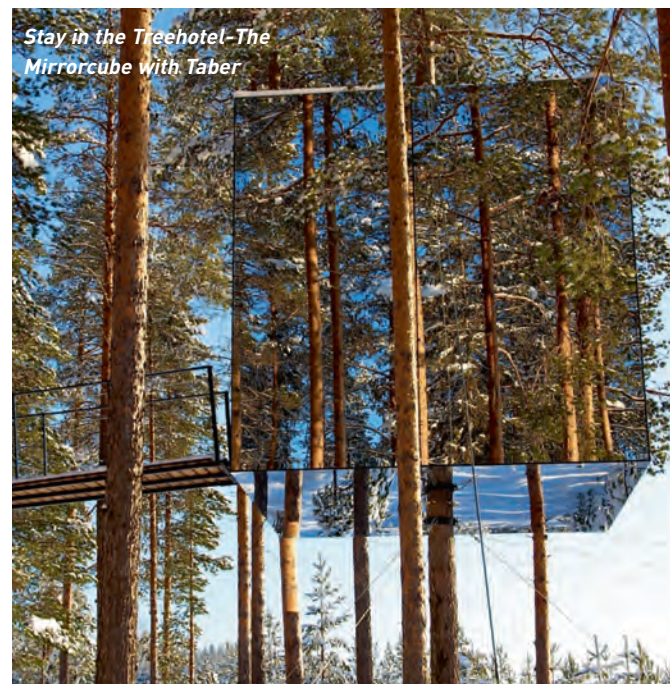
TABER HOLIDAYS is offering a new short break to Swedish Lapland for clients seeking a short trip with some activities or as a base to build their holiday into something rather special.

Sörbyn Lodge is located between a frozen lake and forest where guests can relax and unwind. For those who want to explore the wilderness around them, the lodge offers optional snowmobile, dog sledding, ice fishing and Northern Lights excursions.

For clients wishing to extend their stay, there's the choice of the Treehotel or Aurora Safari Camp, which are located nearby, or the world-famous Icehotel, a three-hour train journey north.

Prices for the three-night break start from £1,220 per person, which includes flights from Heathrow to Luleå via Stockholm, transfers and accommodation with breakfast and dinner. For an extra night at the Treehotel or Aurora Safari Camp, prices start from £1,730 per person based on two sharing, with departures from mid-December to mid-March 2017.

For more information call 01274-875199 or visit taberhols.co.uk



Stay in the Treehotel-The Mirrorcube with Taber

Image: Graeme Richardson



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Regent reveals Kelo-Glass Igloos for winter escape

REGENT HOLIDAYS has introduced a new accommodation option in Finland for guests of its four-day Lapland Winter Escape.

Located north of Rovaniemi and surrounded by Lappish wilderness, the Kelo-Glass Igloos at the Kakslauttanen Arctic Resort combine the warmth of a wooden cabin with the panoramic skyward views of a glass igloo – ideal for stargazing and witnessing the Northern Lights.

Each of the cabins sleep up to six people and feature a bathroom, kitchenette and private sauna.

During their stay, guests can also enjoy a unique dining experience at the Kakslauttanen West Village's new Restaurant Aurora, which serves authentic Lappish cuisine under a glass-dome ceiling.

This trip costs from £985 per person, based on two sharing on a bed-and-breakfast basis and includes flights with Finnair, transfers and accommodation throughout.

For more information visit regent-holidays.co.uk or call 020-7666 1290.

puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. BOURNE, 4. BLED, 8. NEEDLES, 9. SKY, 10. UTAH, 12. HERTZ, 15. LARGO, 16. ROME, 19. TOE, 20. PAPEETE, 22. LIMA, 23. NADIYA. Down: 1. BEN-HUR, 2. UAE, 3. NILE, 5. LESOTHO, 6. DAYS, 7. ASPEN, 11. ANAHEIM, 13. EGYPT, 14. GENEVA, 17. ATOL, 18. APIA, 21. EDI.

Highlighted Word: SPAIN

Where Am I?: Lake Baikal, Russia

We asked our staff the following question this week:

What is your favourite fact?



Jeanette Ratcliffe

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Everyone has a unique tongue print, just like fingerprints



Lauretta Wright

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A TI-83 calculator has six times more processing power than the computer that landed Apollo 11 on the moon. Mmmh.



Adam Potter

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Our solar system is around 4.6 billion years old - scientists estimate that it will probably last another 5000 million years.



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The reason we chink glasses. Ancient Greek. The sound is the last of the five senses that wine satisfies.



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There are more lifeforms living on your skin than there are people on the planet.



Tim Podger

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The only animal with 2 hearts? The octopus.



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Young sloths are so inept that they frequently grab their own arms and legs, instead of grabbing tree branches and then they fall out of trees.



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Paralympics 2016: Four 1500m runners finish faster than Rio gold medal winning time



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If a pregnant woman has organ damage, the baby in her womb sends stem cells to help repair the organ.



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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Kathryn Frost

Sales Executive

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Best wishes and good luck to our colleague Kathryn, who is now on maternity leave!



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