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CANADA COUP...

PREMIER HOLIDAYS escorted a group of five agents to Eastern Canada over six days to enhance their knowledge of the destination. They flew with **Air Canada** and their first stop was Montreal where the group enjoyed a walking city tour, dinner at Modavie Wine Bar Jazz and hotel visits including Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth, inspecting the John Lennon and Yoko Ono suite where the couple staged their peace protest in 1969. Other highlights included a rail journey to Toronto, a trip to the top of the CN Tower and a visit to Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara Falls with a helicopter ride. Pictured enjoying the trip are, from the left: Kerry Lee, Departure Lounge Travel; Charlotte Collison, Premier Holidays; Sally New, Lincolnshire Co-op Travel; Alison Waterfield-Jones, Woods Holidays; Jill Clough, Escapes Travel; and Leisa Pritt, Premier Travel.

ABTA reveals how holidaymakers risk everything by not getting the right insurance

AS MANY as two in five people (38%) - 9.9 million Brits - who travelled abroad in the past 12 months have holidayed without the right travel insurance, took part in activities which may not have been covered, or didn't have any insurance at all, according to ABTA - The Travel Association.

The new research reveals that many British holidaymakers jetting off this year could be putting themselves at risk by travelling without the necessary travel insurance.

Breaking down the figures, more than one in five (22%) people reported travelling on some holidays completely uninsured in the past 12 months. One in four (27%) British holidaymakers have risked invalidating their insurance by not telling their insurance companies about pre-existing medical conditions or by taking part in activities without checking they were covered under the policy. An insurer can reject a claim in either of these situations.

Ahead of the summer holidays, the association is urging holidaymakers to take out travel insurance which covers their circumstances and the activities they are planning to do. This will avoid potentially costly medical bills should something go wrong.

The most common reason for not buying travel insurance was that people felt it wasn't needed - e.g. that the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) would provide sufficient cover. While it is important to have an EHIC card when travelling in Europe, the EHIC only provides access to state medical care and does not include repatriation to the UK if you are seriously ill. This can be extremely costly should you require an air ambulance, for example.

For almost one third of people who didn't buy travel insurance (29%) cost was a barrier and just over one in seven people (15%) said that they received insurance through their bank account. ABTA is encouraging people who have travel insurance with their bank to check that it covers their requirements as there may be restrictions around age, health, destination and activities.

While the average cost of a travel insurance claim is £1,296, the cost of medical treatment or repatriation can run into thousands of pounds, leaving people extremely vulnerable abroad. Without sufficient cover, many families are having to raise money for treatment or repatriation, with some resorting to crowdfunding.

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Joyce Kettle, 74, a great grandmother from Blyth, Northumberland was airlifted to hospital near Cancun having suffered from breathing difficulties on a cruise off the Mexican coast. She underwent an emergency heart operation resulting in a hospital bill of over £50,000. Joyce thought she had holiday insurance through her bank but the policy only covered her for trips in Europe. As a result, her family launched a Go Fund Me appeal to help pay for Joyce's medical costs and bring her safely home at gofundme.com/getjoycehome

Mark Tanzer, the association's chief executive, said:

"Every year we see cases of people falling into difficulty due to travelling without sufficient travel insurance. While many people are still choosing not to take out travel insurance at all, others are travelling unaware that their insurance policy is not protecting them as they expect."

"While not declaring existing medical conditions or taking part in activities that aren't covered are easy mistakes to make, they can be very costly, leaving holidaymakers and their families with expensive medical bills which run into thousands of pounds. I would urge all holidaymakers to make sure they take out travel insurance and check that it covers their circumstances and holiday plans."

For more information visit abta.com/travelinsurance

U Hotels celebrates tenth anniversary with offers & giveaways for guests

U HOTELS & Resorts, which has properties through Thailand, Bali, Indonesia and India, is celebrating its tenth anniversary by offering guests a series of promotions and giveaways, including room offers, reduced rates for selected menus and drinks and 11 giveaway vouchers.

All of the brand's hotels are offering room stays for THB 1,000 (approximately £23 per room, per night). The rate is available on every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday of each month between June and March next year, for reservations made by June 10 at uhotelsresorts.com

Meanwhile, ten selected food menus and drinks, with each item



priced at THB 100 (approximately £2.30) will be available at all hotels and resorts in June.

A grand prize giveaway and a further ten runner-up prizes are also

available. The grand prize is a free two-night stay at U Paasha Seminyak Bali including flights for two people, and the ten runner-up prizes offer one-night vouchers.



TURKEY TAKE-OFF... Thomas Cook Airlines has launched a new weekly flight from Edinburgh Airport to Antalya in Turkey. The carrier has increased the number of seats on sale from Scotland to Turkey by 43% this year and has more than 140 weekly departures to Turkey from 14 UK airports. The new flight comes as the Thomas Cook Holiday Report 2018 reveals that holidaymakers are returning to Turkey this summer with a surge in bookings compared to last year. Economy flight-only prices start from £90.99 one-way, while a one-week return leads in at £171.99. Pictured celebrating the new launch are the carrier's retail managers from shops across the central belt; from the left, is Eddie Zane, Nichola Lafferty, Alfie Hainie, Cheryl Cairney, Paul Morgan and Janet Merrins. For details see thomascook.com or call 0844-412 5970.

Jetset announces new JETS offer

JETSET HAS confirmed that its trade-only platform, JETS, will benefit from sourcing fares with the GDS surcharge eliminated for bookings made with Air France KLM.

The £20 per return flight fee was introduced by the airlines on April 1 for all bookings sourced through global distribution systems.

However, Jetset said it has reached a deal with Air France, KLM and Hop! to waive the fee for bookings made by Jetset from May 1. The waiving of the fee comes after discussions between the airline and trade operator about fully embracing NDC capability.

Speaking about the agreement Adrian Smyth, the company's sales director, said: "We are excited and happy to have this in place as we look to embrace and move ahead in the best way possible with NDC. Jetset fully understand that as the industry changes all around us, it will be important to be at the cutting edge for sourcing the very best availability and pricing from our key airline partners."

"This agreement with Air France and KLM will ensure that as we transition to new practices and methodology JETS remains the number one trade tool for purchasing competitively priced flight-only and package bookings. For 50 years our trade clients have relied on Jetset having strong partnerships with airlines and to be in a position to provide great choice at fantastic price points. This clearly demonstrates that thanks to our excellent supplier relationships, we will continue to be in a position to carry on the good work in the next 50 years!"

'2-4-1' sale running until May 22 with Sandals and Beaches Resorts

HOLIDAYMAKERS CAN take advantage of Sandals and Beaches Resorts' '2-4-1 Sale' on a variety of holidays for travel dates in 2018, 2019 and 2020 when booked before May 22.

The sale includes 25% more room categories than the previous year, including Club Level and Butler

Suites, and lead in prices are cheaper than before. Multiple twin-centre holiday options are also included in this year's sale meaning holidaymakers can experience the best of two islands in one trip.

As an example of prices, seven nights at Sandals Halcyon Beach in St Lucia costs from £1,299 per

person, offering a saving of £1,676 per person.

The price, based on travel on September 12, includes Luxury Included accommodation, Economy flights from Gatwick and resort transfers.

To book or for more information visit sandals.co.uk or beachesresorts.co.uk or call 0800-597 0002.

A2Btransfers rebrands to hoppaGo with expanded global network & services

A2BTRANSFERS.COM has announced a rebrand to hoppaGo and has unveiled a new website and an updated technology platform offering a wider choice of capacity around the world along with better connections to integrate and sell ground transportation.

hoppaGo has been developed to offer greater choice to agents via its updated technology, expansive global network and service promises. As B2B specialists in ground transportation, the company will connect clients to all ground transportation options via one platform providing a seamless experience.

Commenting on the launch, COO Matt Hall, said: "We are experts in our field with over ten years' experience and this new platform will increase our capacity tenfold which will assist agents with conversions. We are focusing this new launch on our trade partners and want

agents to feel confident that we have their reputation in mind with every transfer we fulfil and that their customers will always have an efficient and reliable experience with us."

The new technology offers flexible integration solutions to suit the needs of clients and their business infrastructure including automated account reporting. Connections can be made online and direct via the booking engine or through multiple API options or an integrated high converting white label solution.

New product additions will include point to point capabilities as well as flexible bookings to ensure solutions are available to suit all requirements.

New agents can register at hoppago.com with existing A2Btransfers and hoppa agents being automatically redirected to the new site.



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Lead in price of £549 refers to 2nd June at Phokaia Beach Resort. Mark Warner booking conditions apply.



CLUB MED IS launching a new resort on the northeast coast of the Dominican Republic which will open its doors to guests in December 2019. The all-inclusive resort will be the hotel brand's first 5-Trident luxury resort to open in the Americas region, and will join the company's Exclusive Collection - a selection of the brand's most luxurious properties around the world. It will be located approximately an hour from Punta Cana International Airport. The 93-acre resort will offer intimate accommodation, refined dining and lounge spaces, rich and culturally immersive excursion programmes, as well as reinvigorating activities and an extensive wellness programme. Also offered are adult-exclusive areas, children's clubs for ages four months up to 17 years and a selection of inclusive land and watersports. See clubmed.co.uk

Borneo debuts in Star Clippers' new 2019/20 sailings

STAR CLIPPERS has revealed its sailing itineraries for 2019/20 in a new preview brochure.

Borneo features as a new destination for the first time, as does a new Greek island itinerary on board Star Flyer which takes in the film locations of *Mamma Mia*. There are also additional Panama Canal sailings, with new ports of call, in addition to existing destinations and sailing itineraries in the Mediterranean, Caribbean and South East Asia.

New 11-night sailings from Kota Kinabalu, Borneo to Singapore on Star Clipper depart during May and October 2019 and cost from £1,963 per person, including all meals and port charges plus a 20% early booking discount for bookings made by January 31, 2019.

The Greek islands of Skiathos and Skopelos, where the 2008 movie *Mamma Mia* was filmed, are included for the first time in a new seven-night round-trip sailing from Athens (Piraeus), departing on May 18, June 8 and 29 and August 17, 2019.

During the new sailing itinerary, Star Flyer also drops anchor alongside Dikili, Turkey, as well as the Greek islands of Limnos, Skiathos, Skopelos and Poros. The seven-night sailings cost from £1,506, including all meals on board and port charges and a 10% early booking discount.

Other sailing itineraries in the line's new preview brochure include Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mediterranean and Caribbean waters and trans Atlantic and Panama Canal transits.

For further information or to book call 0808-231 4798 or visit starclippers.co.uk

London Southend sees three new Air Malta routes

AIR MALTA has launched three new Mediterranean routes to Malta, Sardinia and Sicily from London Southend Airport.

The airline is now operating three direct flights a week to the island of Malta, on which Valletta is the 2018 European Capital of Culture. The airline also has direct flights twice weekly to both Catania, Sicily, and Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia.

The carrier's acting chief executive office, Joseph Galea, said: "Air Malta is very excited. London has always been a major destination for Maltese people, and Malta is a popular attraction for British people, so the connectivity we are now offering between Malta and London - plus Cagliari and Catania - makes it very exciting for us. Mostly we fly point to point, but the London Southend product gives us the opportunity to combine Sardinia and Sicily - it is already doing well, so we are thrilled as it is where we want to go in the future."

Tickets are on sale now at airmalta.com with prices starting from £35 to the three new destinations.

VOTING FOR TRAVEL BULLETIN'S STAR AWARDS 2018 IS NOW OPEN!

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The glittering Star Awards takes place at the five-star Landmark Hotel in London on **Monday September 10th**.

NEW STAR AWARDS SPONSOR

EXCITE HOLIDAYS is proud to be a sponsor of the Travel Bulletin Star Awards in 2018, a premier event recognising excellence in the travel trade. As a global online wholesaler that works exclusively with the travel trade, these awards are important as we all step back and celebrate this incredible industry, and do so with awards that are solely determined by those who drive the industry forward everyday - travel agents. We are proud to be able to support and grow travel agents' businesses by giving them access to a huge range and competitive prices on hotels, activities and transfers across the globe.

exc!te
HOLIDAYS

Adrian Marpole, Head of Sales for Europe



BERKSHIRE BREAKOUT... The Minister of Tourism of St. Kitts & Nevis, joined by the Tourism Authorities of both islands, hosted a special dinner for travel agents last month at The Elephant Hotel in Pangbourne, Berkshire. Agents were given updates on St. Kitts and Nevis, including the addition of the Park Hyatt St. Kitts, which opened in November 2017, and the newly-announced Six Senses and Ritz Carlton properties, due to launch this year. Pictured are, from the left: Julie York, Park Hyatt St. Kitts; Hon. Lindsay F.P. Grant, Minister of Tourism for St. Kitts; Caroline Piccaver, Travel Counsellors; and Juliet Lodde, Nisbet Plantation Nevis.

NEWS BITES

- CROISIEUROPE HAS announced that it is waiving the single supplement on all 2018 departures (excluding New Year cruises) when booked by June 30. The offer is valid for new bookings on the line's range of 2018 cruises on the French canals, European rivers and Adriatic coast, as well as on the Volga, the Mekong and in Africa. Details on 020-8328 1281 or visit croisieurope.co.uk
- SPAIN'S LA MANGA Club will play host to the IAGTO (International Association of Golf Tour Operators) Spain Trophy for the first time from May 21-24.
- AIR CORSICA launched its new routes between Stansted and the airports of Ajaccio and Bastia. This is the first time the low-cost carrier has operated scheduled flights in the UK, operating nine flights every week from May until November. The third service to Figari will be added on June 2.

Butlin's joins forces with PAW Patrol

FAMOUS PUPS Chase and Marshall from PAW Patrol, as seen on Nick. Jr, will be appearing on selected Butlin's Just for Tots breaks throughout the year.

Families will have the chance to meet with their heroes while on a break and, with the characters making multiple appearances at intervals throughout the day, there will be plenty of opportunities to see them and grab a photograph.

The heroic pups will be making personal appearances in the Skyline Pavilion during Just for Tots breaks on June 6 at Minehead, September 12 at Skegness and September 13 at Bognor Regis.

Other characters and TV heroes include Mr. Potato Head, Teletubbies, Mr Men & Little Miss and Danger Mouse.

A four-night, mid-week break at Skegness in Lincolnshire starts from £88 per person based on two adults and two children sharing a Silver room arriving on September 10.



At home with Eileen...

What has homemaker Eileen
been up to this month?

IN THE last few weeks we've started some long overdue decorating in the house. This has involved a certain amount of sorting out and moving stuff around and in the process I came across a box of holiday photos which I had forgotten were there.

When I'd got over saying "OMG, don't I look young" or "What am I wearing?!" I started noticing the places and people in the photos and the memories came flooding back. Holidays and nostalgia go hand in hand and they stay in our memory perhaps more than anything else.

Like your first love, none of us ever forget our first holiday abroad. It's amazing how just by looking at a photo, the sights, sounds and even the smells all suddenly come alive again.

Travel has changed so much over the years and some of us are old enough to remember a time when smoking was allowed on board flights. I heard it said that on a long haul flight you could always tell when you were close to reaching your destination as you could no longer see across the cabin for the smoke. Hard to believe now isn't it?

Back then it was the 'norm' to always dress smartly on the plane and I particularly remember one occasion when I was in my early teens on a flight with my Mum and Dad; I was wearing a smart new black suit with white blouse and high heeled shoes and couldn't quite understand why each time I walked down the aisle, I was stopped and asked if I could get someone a drink. Nowadays we tend to choose comfort over style, don't we?

In a recent survey, people were asked what they now missed most about the holiday experience. With holiday messages and photos being posted online and received instantly, many people said they really missed receiving a handwritten "wish you were here" postcard and the excitement of collecting their holiday photos back from the chemist.

Some really missed the excitement of receiving their printed holiday tickets while others missed the ease of getting through the airport without all the security checks necessary these days. What things do you miss most?

For me - I miss lots of things but if I had to say one thing it's probably the holiday romance. That's nothing to do with the changing face of travel but everything to do with being married.

Eileen

by EILEEN SAUNDERS of Travel Counsellors
To respond to any of Eileen's comments email
lauretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk



Tucan Travel launches new walking & hiking tours in Europe

TUCAN TRAVEL has expanded its collection of walking and hiking trips in Europe with the introduction of seven new itineraries for a variety of walking abilities.

The company has also introduced popular highlights such as the Cinque Terre in Italy and a walking trip exploring the Elaphiti Islands in Croatia.

As an example, a seven-day 'Walking the Cinque Terre' is based from Riomaggiore and is on sale at £911 (normally £959).

Guests spend eight days walking between five protected villages while soaking up the views along the way. In the evenings, guests can indulge in Italian food in the picturesque village of Riomaggiore.

Included is six nights' hotel accommodation, most meals and guided walks in the Cinque Terre. To celebrate the launch agents can offer their clients 5% off until May 31.



FANCY A FAM?

- THE MAURITIUS Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA), in partnership with Premier Holidays and British Airways, is giving travel agents the opportunity to win a place on a six-night fam trip to the island. To be entered into the prize draw to win one of eight places, agents can visit the Premier Holidays 'Agent Resources' section of the website and make a booking. Agents making a Premier Holidays' Mauritius getaway receive one entry into the draw. Those making a booking with BA flights receive two entries and agents who view the Mauritius video and correctly answer the questions on the website also receive two entries. Finally, agents submitting a video blog to the Facebook page explaining why they deserve a place on the fam receive five entries. Entries must be submitted before June 30. For details see premierholidays.co.uk/mauritiusfam



QUIZ QUEEN.. Pictured on a 'Sandals on Tour' quiz night in Manchester is Donna Brooks (left), business development manager for Sandals & Beaches Resorts, awarding online training winner, Karen Brennan from TUI in Warrington with her prize of a voucher for 'Dinner & Cocktails for Two'. To register interest for upcoming events email agencysales@sandals.co.uk

AGENT OFFER

THROUGHOUT THIS month and next, Haven is giving agents the chance to enjoy a fam break with their families at a choice of 36 holiday parks. Agents have the option of booking a four-night midweek break from £79 per family or can opt for a three-night weekend break from £129 per family. These prices are based on the family sharing a deluxe two- or three-bedroom caravan that sleeps up to six or eight people. Dog friendly accommodation is also available at an extra £30 per caravan, as too is the option to upgrade to a prestige two- or three-bedroom caravan. This offer is subject to availability and is provided on a first come, first served basis. Agents can email their ABTA number, contact details, the date and park they'd like to visit and how many people will travel in their party to trade.sales@bourne-leisure.co.uk

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WEDDINGS & RENEWAL OF VOWS

NEW BROCHURE OUT NOW

Industry Insight by...



Three Little Words... By Derek Moore, chairman of AITO

At AITO there are always issues of concern to our members; they get discussed/thrashed out at one of our London get-togethers. The other day I was asked what the current big issues occupying members are, and how people feel about them.

Three big issues come to mind immediately. As to how we feel about them, easy: disgusted, baffled and frustrated.

- 1) The PTR/ATOL changes coming into force on July 1 – we're disgusted about that.**
- 2) There's the little matter of a £1 levy on every flight seat – we're baffled about that.**
- 3) And there's the ongoing problem of non-EU traders – we're frustrated about that.**

To explain:

1) On July 1 the changes to the PTR/ATOL Regulations are due to be enacted. These changes came from Brussels, and we must implement them, Brexit notwithstanding. We were supposed to know earlier this year exactly what the changes were to be, but the Government ran late. It's not the industry's fault – the Government failed to explain the changes required in sufficient time for us (a) to understand them and (b) to implement them.

Despite the Government's late delivery, they expect our industry to implement the changes in just a few short weeks. Clearly no thought has been given to the difficulties this imposes on us. Disgusted – that's how we feel about the July 1 deadline.

2) Then there's how to ensure that passengers on UK flights are protected and repatriated should an airline fail, no matter if their flight was ATOL-

protected or not – a distinction that consumers don't understand and that the Government ignored with Monarch's collapse, at least until their ignorance cost them circa £60m.

We suggested as long ago as 2005 that a simple, easy-to-understand method of ensuring every passenger on a UK flight is covered is to add a small sum – £1 for the sake of argument – to every flight leaving the UK. The public would know they were safe and any confusion about being covered or not would be avoided.

But the Government has always ignored this common-sense idea, primarily due to the strength of the aviation industry's lobbying, which puts the airlines' economic position before the guaranteed security of the consumer. Will the Government finally see sense now? We await the results of the current consultation, but we're not holding our breath. Why such a simple win-win solution continues to escape the minds of ministers leaves us, frankly, baffled.

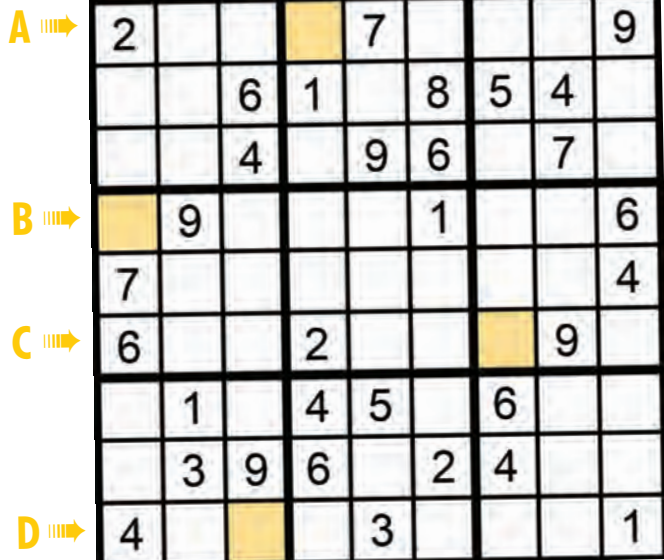
3) And then there's the perennial problem of non-EU traders – companies outside the EU that are allowed to sell unbonded – and therefore illegal – holidays offering no protection whatsoever to the unknowing UK consumer. Several UK consumer travel shows allow such illegal trading; technically, they are aiding and abetting an offence under UK law. Trading Standards, which supposedly police this situation, has neither the funds nor, it seems, the desire to stop such illegality. The fact that this situation continues, unabated, leaves us hugely frustrated.

Disgusted, baffled and frustrated – welcome to the topsy-turvy world of UK travel. Just ask any AITO member.

Su Doku

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

Number: 019



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, May 24th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 27th April is Justine Pountney, The Sussex Travel Company in Horsham.

April 27th Solution: A=4 B=7 C=9 D=8

Where Am I?



With a name which translates as 'suspended in the air', there were originally 24 structures built on the summits of these rock pillars by monks between the 14th and 16th century. Only six have made it through the centuries and are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Crossword



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

Across

1. Flag carrier of Bahrain, ___ Air (4)
3. American singer and actress, Jennifer, recently seen on The Voice (6)
7. Part of Canada, sounds canine (8)
8. Historic city in Tuscany (6)
9. Scenic Slovenian lake (4)
12. Capital of Qatar (4)
14. Condor Ferries operates to and from this island (6)
17. Capital of Queensland (8)
18. Singer, ___ Swift soon to embark on her Reputation Tour (6)
19. Normandy port (4)

Down

1. Steven, new manager of Rangers (7)
2. Eurostar destination (5)
4. US state (4)
5. Capital of South Korea (5)
6. Santa Eulalia is a popular resort on this island (5)
10. Hotel chain with a sunburst logo (4,3)
11. Kathmandu is the capital (5)
13. Prince, tying the knot in Windsor (5)
15. Ferry Line with HQ in Sweden (5)
16. Scandinavian capital city (4)

For the solution to the Crossword and Where Am I?
Please see page 30



UNDER THE theme of *The Next Chapter*, the Advantage Travel Partnership's annual conference took place in Miami last week. A range of topics were on the agenda – from social media to silver travellers – and delegates heard from a variety of speakers including US chat show host, Jerry Springer. Travel Bulletin's editor, LAURETTA WRIGHT, reports with a round-up of news from the event...

Reality Training imparts practical advice on the art of great persuasion

Bob Morrell and Jeremy Blake from Reality Training offered tips on how agents could get more customers who spend more money, more often.

Their top four tips included:

1. Educate them with expertise.
2. Give them a powerful statistic.
3. Use video/third party endorsement.
4. Give them something for FREE – reciprocity.

Morrell said: "Make sure you follow up with your customers. Don't start the conversation with a weak opening like 'I was wondering whether you had the chance to look at the quote I gave you...' Replace 'wondering' with good news such as 'Just to let you know that I've just found out that week you're planning to go on holiday there's a huge festival on that the kids will love.'

"This will make it seem that you've been beaver away looking at their booking and they will be more likely to make a quicker decision."

The duo also advised delegates to always have a strategy for dealing with answer phone messages.

Blake said: "Tell them you'll call them back – don't ask them to call you back. Also, when you tell them you'll follow up, do it – be a person of your word. This will prove to them

that you are consistent. After the third answer phone message, tell them that you won't call again. For your potential customer this then triggers a FOMO (fear of missing out) response.

"The real skill of a travel agent is to send their customers mentally on holiday first before they can get them there physically on holiday. Ask them an interesting question such as 'What's the single most important thing we can get right for your wife to be on your honeymoon?' or 'What would you like to remember most about your first retirement adventure?'"

Other tips from Blake and Morrell included asking questions such as 'What stage are you at?', 'What's led you to seek a comparison?', 'After price what's most important – quality or service?', 'What haven't you found elsewhere?' and 'What's your price range?' (and removing the word budget from your vocabulary). Agents shouldn't be afraid to ask their clients if they'd be willing to spend a little more if they could find a better option, as most people wouldn't mind paying a little more if they thought they were getting more.

Agents should also aim for 'boomerang' clients by offering first refusals on deals and give people excuses to reach their outcomes.

INBrief

- **INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER**, Antonia Wyson from Delta, spoke about her journey from cabin crew to a captain at Delta Airlines while battling cancer. She told delegates: "The more times you get up from a fall, the stronger you become. To truly succeed in your career and life in general you cannot be afraid of failure. Uncertainty is a great catalyst for making things happen."
- **PETER GREENBERG** from CBS News told delegates: "The last three years have been the safest in the history of aviation. Around 1.3 billion people will cross a border this year."
- **IN A session** entitled 'Digital Noise', Bruce Martin from Ginger Juice identified the three steps to becoming a social media best-seller as 'Content, Delivery and Response.' Tips for content on Facebook included window dressing – by having a mobile header, verifying your page, having two action buttons and enabling reviews. Martin said: "People don't like cold calls and spam. In terms of what works look at fun posts, personal posts, insightful and inspirational posts. Engagement is also key; if you get more engagement on posts on Facebook for example, your reach will increase. But any engagement on a social media post matters. Don't be afraid of getting personal and showing people images and content behind the brand. For example, share fam trip content, asks questions and seek feedback."
- **NEXT YEAR'S** conference will be held in Cadiz, Spain.

Getting diverse: how to appeal to wider markets

THE IMPORTANCE of being 'all-inclusive' in terms of appealing to a diverse market was highlighted in a breakout session with Dan Robertson from Vertica Consulting.

Robertson told delegates that in order to appeal to a diverse market, the industry should not make assumptions about potential customers and look at being more creative in their marketing campaigns. He said: "Look beyond the obvious diversity aspects of your customers and think more about people's personalities, their values and social background. Also, don't make it overly complicated. A lot of this is just good customer service. And if you extend good customer service into offering other suggestions for your clients, this will put you in a great position."

"Your market is massively diverse and it's only going to get more diverse, so look at how you commit to your market in different ways to appeal to potential customers."

Robertson's three take away tips for agents included:

- Educate yourself on legal and practical issues globally.
- Strive for diversity in your marketing campaigns.
- Research suppliers who can support you.

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@mercuryagents





HOLIDAY WIN... Winning a three-night all-inclusive stay at Marigot Bay & Marina in St Lucia was Travel Counsellor Muriel Morgan (left) which was gifted by the hotel's Victoria Cranmer.

EXCITING REWARD... Raffle winner Julie-Anne Vaughan of Oasis Travel receives 25,000 Rewards Points compliments of Excite Holidays, presented by the operator's Adrian Marpole.



FULL HOUSE... a packed room of agents listen to the evening's keynote presentation.



TRAVEL BULLETIN recently welcomed agents at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Cork and Ten Square Hotel in Belfast to its magnificent Luxury Showcase.

Breathtaking destinations, lavish properties and opulent operators were all on hand to chat directly with agents who were treated to a delectable dinner and a prize draw with some amazing gifts and holidays presented to the lucky winners!

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#TBSHOWCASES

BARBADOS BUNCH... from the left, Cedric Lynch from Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc meets with Travel Counsellors Tracy Lowry, Gerard Hughes, Aoibheann Smyth, Andrea Kirkpatrick and Lorna Henry.



LUXURY COLLECTION... Sarah Johnson (sitting) shares more details about AM Resorts' collection of luxury properties with, from the left, Cara Murphy of Terra Travel, Danielle Mc Veigh of STA Travel and Sharon Garland from Terra Travel.

WELCOME AGENTS... a warm welcome to agents at our drinks reception. From the left is Savannah Bracewell and Maxine Bracewell from Travelmax.co.uk, Brendan O'Connor of Travel Max Worldwide, along with Beala Tandon and William Wilson from Thomas Cook.





BAHIA BREAK...winning a complimentary stay in a garden view room at Bahia Del Duque is CTM Travel's Lee Healy (left) gifted by Alvaro Espada from the luxury property.



CYPRUS SURPRISE... Fiona Coghlan from Travel Focus receives her prize of a complimentary stay in an Elite Class Superior room for two people from Constantinou Bros. Hotel's Mark Richardson.



IN THE BAG...Joanne Durrant from CTM Travel was the winner of a Barbados gift bag presented by the tourism board's Cedric Lynch.



ISLAND ESCAPE...Courtney Robinson from the Turks & Caicos Tourist Board presents lucky winner Siobhan Dinneen from Lee Travel with a two-night stay in a junior suite for two at The Palms Turks and Caicos & a goody bag.



VIVA LAS VEGAS...winning a complimentary stay in a newly renovated Burgundy room at the Paris Hotel, Las Vegas was Dolores Carmody (left) from Dawson Travel with Marisa Costa of Caesars Entertainment.



WARM RECEPTION...from the left, Graham Brooks from RCD Hotels says hello to Caroline Clare and Gillian O'Flaherty of Blackpool Travel, with Palladium's Jo Peters and Adrian Marpole from Excite Holidays.

Want to get in on the [#TBShowcases](https://twitter.com/TBShowcases) action?
Travel Bulletin will be hosting its Mediterranean Showcase on June 11 in Leicester and on June 12 in Cambridge. Secure your place by emailing events@travelbulletin.co.uk



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ASIA'S BOUTIQUE AIRLINE



MALAYSIA AIRLINES recently whisked a group of agents and key trade partners away as part of its 'Know Malaysia, Love Malaysia' mega fam. The group - including 30 representatives from Trailfinders, STA Travel, Kuoni Group, Travel Pack, Travelbag, Lee's Travel, Audley Travel, Aviate, Reed and Mackay, BCD, Saga, THG, People's Travel and others - journeyed from London aboard the airline's new Airbus A350. Once in Malaysia, groups had the chance to head out on a 'Heritage Trip' which included a motorbike tour of Kuala Lumpur, a visit to the Batu caves, a trip to Terengganu and Melaka; or embark on an 'Adventure Tour' involving a sunset river cruise in Sarawak, a visit to Mulu Caves, a rehabilitation centre for orangutans, followed by the Ana Rais Longhouse. The airline operates twice daily between London and Kuala Lumpur on its new Airbus A350. Visit malaysiaairlines.com/uk/en.html

Vietnam Airlines welcomes 12th A350

VIETNAM AIRLINES has welcomed its twelfth Airbus A350 aircraft to its fleet and the first A350 aircraft in the world to showcase the SkyTeam livery with Vietnam Airlines' logo on the fuselage.

Le Hong Ha, the airline's executive vice president, said: "The unified livery demonstrates the vision and mission of Vietnam Airlines to bring increased benefits to customers through international integration, bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other airlines and global alliances. The special paint scheme is also part of our ongoing effort to provide a new flying experience to passengers and accomplish its goal of becoming the largest airline in Asia-Pacific."

The aircraft was put into operation last month on the Hanoi- Ho Chi Minh City route. The last two A350-900s out of a total order of 14 are due to be delivered in 2019.

Back-Roads Touring brings small group experience to Asia

BACK-ROADS Touring has announced its expansion into Asia, with eight new tours on offer in 2018/19 travelling across Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam and each with a maximum group size of no more than 14.

The announcement follows reports of the company's successful tours in Europe and the UK, with 2017 proving to be the company's best year to date.

The new itineraries include 'Bangkok & The River Kwai', 'Temples of Thailand and Cambodia', 'Spirit of Cambodia', 'Wonders of Thailand', 'Hanoi & Halong Highlights', 'Vietnam Adventure', 'Vietnam and Cambodia Discovery' and 'Flavours of Vietnam'. Keeping with the company's ethos, the new tours will focus on exploring the lesser-known side of each destination; showcasing mouth-watering cuisines, ancient attractions and one-of-a-kind experiences that are usually reserved for locals.

Daryl Raven, the company's general manager, said: "Exploring South-East Asia in a small group is something that we know

travellers are seeking and with our new Asia tours, they can do that with a company they know and trust. In South-East Asia, some of our amazing highlights include experiences such as exploring Angkor Wat with a stone conservation expert, visiting rescued elephants in a rehabilitation facility in Chiang Mai, or even showing guests where to experience the best sun set over a deserted beach."

"We've seen triple digit growth from UK agents in the last few years with the majority of our business coming this way so they're incredibly important to us. We believe that the launch of Asia will complement our Europe & UK Small Group Touring programme perfectly so we're looking forward to working even closer with our existing trade partners and developing new partnerships off the back of this release."

For further information visit backroadstouring.com/asia or agents can contact Lockie Kerr on L.kerr@backroadstouring.com

Discounted holidays for travel agents from China Links Travel

CHINA LINKS Travel is offering exclusive trade discounts on selected small group tours to China, Japan and Indochina.

The offer extends to travel agents and a companion with exclusive savings available of up to 25% per person. For example agents take in the magnificent landscapes on 'China Essential' departing October 18 from £1,798 per person and saving up to £600, or opt for the 'Essential Plus Panda' departing the month before from £1,948 and saving up to £650. Alternatively agents can discover traditional Japanese culture on 'Essential Japan' heading out September 6, with savings of up to £750, and now from £2,249 per person or explore the ancient sights of 'Grand Indochina' on November 9, saving up to £924 in the process with tours from £2,773 per person.

Offer prices include international and domestic flights, transfers, hotels and excursions as stated in each of the available itineraries, as well as visas where applicable. Moreover departures from regional airports are available. Other 2018 & 2019 dates also available but bookings must be made by May 31.

For more details visit chinalinkstravel.co.uk/agents-holiday-offer or call 020-8543 8133.

Thailand encourages tourists to discover off the beaten track destinations

FOR THE duration of 2018, the Tourism Authority of Thailand will be looking to highlight some of its lesser-known destinations and encouraging visitors to engage in local tourism for a more authentic experience.

Beyond the popular resorts, there are 50 provinces and cities each with a special reason to visit and in which holidaymakers can look to uncover the 'real Thailand'. As an example, Satun is a small province in Southern Thailand on the Andaman Coast which was recently recognised as a Global Geopark by UNESCO. This is Thailand's first and was awarded for its natural beauty and geological, ecological and cultural significance. Travellers looking for a remote beach holiday can head to Tarutao National Marine Park, populated with small islands and coral-rich waters and a popular spot with divers. This includes Koh Lipe, which is already making a name for itself, home to the aboriginal Malay people known as the Urak Lawoi, and known for its white sand beaches and turquoise sea.

Thailand houses five other UNESCO World Heritage Sites including: Ban Chiang Archaeological Site, Udon Thani province; the two historic former capital cities of Ayutthaya & Sukhothai; Khao Yai National Park in eastern Thailand; and the Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries that stretch from Tak to Kanchanaburi. The beauty of these destinations - and the many others the tourism authority is highlighting be it for their cultural, historical or gastronomy offerings - is that they're still relatively undiscovered by tourists making them good options for travellers seeking genuine, local experiences.

InsideAsia Tours takes agents on Japan FAM & launches themed travel pages

WITH 96% occupancy recorded during 2017, InsideJapan has increased the number of its small group tours for this year and is offering, for a limited time, 15% commission on all tours departing June and July.

Tours such as the 13-night 'Japan Unmasked' for £2,575 per person to the all-inclusive 12-night 'All In Japan' for £4,850 per person still have some places available and offer a good opportunity for agents. Matt Spiller, agent sales manager for the operator, said: "It is initiatives like these which have helped the increase in Agent sales; the first quarter of the year has been record breaking for all at InsideAsia Tours, but agent sales in particular are up 50% which is great to see".

As part of the company's initiative to work more closely with agents, the operator is currently hosting its first FAM, taking a group of some of its best performing agents - Travel Bureau, Beaver Travel, C The World, Travelwise and Off Broadway Travel - on a trip to explore Japan and its fascinating culture.

In other news, the company has launched a new 'Food and Drink' travel page featuring new trips from Vietnam, Cambodia and Japan, blog pieces looking at etiquette, infographic guides to street food, videos and more. The page also features a specially made 'Taste of Asia' recipe book to download, enabling people to get a taste for the operator's specialist destinations.

Moreover, the company has launched a series of new family-focused trips to suit increasing demand from the adventurous family. Family travel has been a growing focus for InsideAsia particularly with InsideJapan and the growth of popularity in this unique destination. It will be launching its new 'Family Travel' page in June highlighting helpful family-focussed blog posts, new trips, experiences, activity sheets and a competition with partners Trunki. Visit InsideJapanTours.com or call 01173-709730 for more details.



ONE OF the steepest tram journeys in the world, the Peak Tram will celebrate its 130th anniversary on May 30. Since its construction, it has carried millions of people up Hong Kong's Victoria Peak which offers stunning views across the city, harbour and over to the New Territories. Also this year, and considered one of the top ferry crossings in the world, Hong Kong's Star Ferry will celebrate its 120th anniversary; the fleet of nine ferries serve two routes between Tsim Sha Tsui and Central, and Tsim Sha Tsui and Wan Chai.

Taiwan strengthens ties with UK travel trade

THE TAIWAN Tourism Bureau is planning to build on rising UK visitor numbers by highlighting the island's strengths as a holiday destination at forthcoming travel trade events this year.

The tourism body will be attending Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) quiz nights and will have a presence at the Association of National Tourist Offices and Representatives (ANTOR) Meets the Trade event taking place in London in June. During these events agent attendees will have the chance to learn more about Taiwan's unique selling points, see suggested itineraries and have any questions they have about the destination answered.

This year, as part of its 'Year of Bay Tourism 2018' initiative, the tourist board will be raising awareness of the country's marine tourism assets, highlighting Taiwan's lesser-known collection of topographically diverse off-shore islands which offer white sand beaches, opportunities for snorkelling and scuba diving among vibrant coral reefs and tropical fish, along with the country's history and colourful culture.

Agents can email Taiwan@brightergroup.com for more information or visit eng.taiwan.net.tw



Pictured is, from the left, Mark Bloxham, managing director of Wendy Wu Tours; Robert Chen, general manager UK for Tianjin Airlines; Wendy Wu, founder of Wendy Wu Tours; Mingke Li, general Manager for Tianjin Airlines; and Joe Karbo, global chief executive of Wendy Wu Tours.

Tianjin Airlines connects London & Xi'an with free upgrades from Wendy Wu

TIANJIN AIRLINES has launched a new direct flight linking London for the first time to Xi'an, the capital city of Shaanxi province, home of the Terracotta Army UNESCO world heritage site and the eastern departure point of the ancient Silk Road.

The airline's first Airbus A330 arrived at Heathrow last week following a 14-hour journey from Xi'an Xianyang International Airport and the service will operate twice-a-week, Mondays and Fridays, carrying up to 260 passengers.

Wendy Wu Tours is currently offering free business class upgrades with the airline across many of its most popular holidays to China. Robert Chen, UK general manager for Tianjin Airlines, said: "We are delighted to be working with Wendy Wu. We have been working closely with the operator since February this year following our collaboration as preferred travel partners for the China's First Emperor and Terracotta Warriors exhibition at Liverpool's World Museum, currently the largest exhibition in the UK. Our partnership with Wendy Wu is very important, given the exceptional reputation of the operator and the high volume of passengers booking China holidays with them. This is a very important year for tourism between the UK and China and we are very excited to be working together to bring visitors to Xi'an, China's Cradle of Civilisation."

Wendy Wu, founder and chairwoman, said: "Tianjin's new London service is a landmark occasion in aviation history, connecting the UK's capital with the capital of Shaanxi province for the first time. The timing of the launch is perfect, given 2018 commemorates the EU-China International Year of Tourism, and is testament to the steady growth in economic ties, trade and cultural exchange and tourism between our two countries."

For more information visit wendywutours.co.uk/agents or call 0800-902 0888.



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'IRELAND'S ANCIENT East and the Wild Atlantic Way' is a new nine-day Globus escorted tour offered by Cosmos. Highlights include exploring Dublin's music scene, pubs and cobbled streets, a tour of Limerick, the pretty thatched cottages of Adare and marvelling at the Cliffs of Moher on a tour that takes in the history, culture and traditional culture of the Celtic people. Prices start from £1,577 per person based on a September 16 departure, including flights from Heathrow, VIP private home pick-up service, accommodation, transfers, services of a dedicated tour director, selected meals, Wi-Fi on coach, and all airport taxes. Other departure dates are available in July and September. Visit cosmos.co.uk

Attraction World visits Emmerdale & launches show incentive

FOR A few select dates in 2018, Harewood Estate is opening its gates for an exclusive tour of the Emmerdale Village available through Attraction World

On a normal day, the cast and crew would be bustling about, practicing lines and filming scenes, but on the days that filming takes a break, clients can get the chance to explore the real set of Emmerdale and see the most famous scenery from the show. They will be picked up from Leeds train station for the short coach journey to the village, in the grounds of Harewood House; be given a guided walking tour of the exterior set and get a chance to hear insider secrets, stories and fascinating facts behind the making of the multi-award-winning soap.

With limited dates left for 2018 - falling on August 18, September 30 and October 28 - the operator is recommending advance booking as essential and prices start from £60 per adult and £50 per child aged 0-15 years.

Meanwhile in London the operator is giving agents the opportunity to pass on significant savings to clients with the London BIG 5 Ticket. Available from £55 per adult and £40 per child (aged three to 15 years) the ticket gives access to the Coca-Cola London Eye, SEA LIFE London, Dreamwork's Tours Shrek's Adventure! London, Madame Tussauds including Star Wars & The London Dungeon. This is compared to the standard walk up rates of £146 per adult and £119.50 per child and as an added bonus the BIG 5 Ticket doesn't have to be used to visit all attractions in the same day either as it is valid for 90 days from first date of use.

Currently the operator is running a travel agent incentive on theatre bookings. Agents simply need to make any booking for a London theatre (or regional shows) to claim a £5 Love2Shop voucher throughout May and log their booking online to claim.

Go to attractionworld.com for further information.

Full steam ahead for Tewkesbury Park

AFTER AN absence of 58 years and to help celebrate the return of the steam train to Broadway Station in the Cotswolds, Tewkesbury Park has created the 'Full Steam Ahead Experience'.

The experience is priced at £380 and includes: two nights' accommodation in a Touch of Class room; daily breakfast; a three-course dinner; afternoon tea; and rover tickets (return from Cheltenham Race Course to Broadway Station).

Ideal for steam enthusiasts and those looking for a fun day out, the steam train stops off at some of the Cotswolds' prettiest chocolate-box villages and will run five days per week throughout the main season. There will also be a series of special events staged throughout the year.

For more details call 01684-272300 or visit tewkesburypark.co.uk

Warner Leisure Hotels reveals new Late Lounge at Sinah Warren

AS PART of its continued investment to improving facilities across its property portfolio, Warner Leisure Hotels has unveiled a £880,000 transformation of the Late Lounge at its Sinah Warren coastal property.

Newly opened this month, guests will benefit from a heightened show time experience with the installation of a giant LED back screen to complement live stage performances. In addition, the hotel has installed cutting-edge sound and lighting; fitted new seating and flooring to give the space a contemporary feel; and modernised the bar area.

Evening entertainment ranges from festivals, tribute acts and celebrity star breaks. A three-night break at the property starts from £310 per person when arriving on July 6. This price is based on two adults sharing Standard accommodation inclusive of the Simply Dine package.

Visit BourneLeisureSales.co.uk or call 0330-1009776 for more details.

Added-value incentives on Premier Holidays' summer holiday packages

PREMIER HOLIDAYS has launched a selection of summer holiday packages to the Channel Islands.

Agents can book various summer breaks to Jersey and Guernsey valid for travel from May to September, incorporating added value incentives such as free meals and free half-board. Tactical summer deals include travel by sea from Poole, or flights from Gatwick and a number of regional airports.

Offers start from £375 per person for five nights at Beachcombers in Jersey including dinner on the first night, travelling from July 4 to September 18. Other Jersey

highlights include five nights at the Radisson Blu from £529 per person, also with dinner on the first night, and seven nights at the Mayfair from £555 per person, including half-board and travel from July 14 to August 17.

Guernsey packages start from £299 per person for four nights at Driftwood inn in July and August, with other offers including seven nights at Hougue Du Pommier from £589 per person featuring free half-board, and five nights at St Pierre Park with dinner on the first night from £485 per person, valid from July to September.

Beverley Scarr, the operator's

short haul general manager, said: "The Channel Islands are perfect for a traditional family summer holiday. Jersey and Guernsey are close to home yet offer a Continental feel, they have the best sunshine record in the British Isles and clients don't have to worry about currency as the islands use Sterling."

Agents can promote the summer holidays with window posters and social media assets, which can be downloaded from the operator's trade website and can also earn £5 for every booking.

Visit trade.premierholidays.co.uk for more details.

Go behind the ropes and explore Windsor Castle with Super Break

SUPER BREAK is offering its customers a unique cultural experience with a private tour of the State Apartments at Windsor Castle led by an expert guide.

Ideal for agents to promote to those looking to delve a little deeper into history, this behind-the-ropes tour begins when the building is closed to the rest of the public and will take customers on a journey through 1,000 years of royal history.

The tour offers the chance to discover how William the Conqueror's wooden castle was rebuilt by Edward III as a stone fortress with magnificent apartments, how Charles II set out to rival the Versailles of his cousin Louis XIV, while George IV filled the rooms with outstanding works of art and gave the castle its famous skyline.

The tour is combined with overnight accommodation. A two-night package arriving September 26, November 7 or December 4 costs from £195.50 per person and includes the guided tour beginning at 18.30, a glass of champagne, a copy of the official guidebook and two nights at the De Vere Beaumont Estate on the outskirts of Windsor on a bed-and-breakfast basis and including dinner on the first night. One-night packages are also available.

For more information visit superbreak.com/agents or call 01904-436000.



THE GRAND Central Hotel in Belfast is preparing to open next month bringing with it the accolade of being Northern Ireland's largest ever hotel. Marking Hastings Hotels' biggest single investment to date, the hotel has seen the addition of 104 bedrooms bringing the total number to 304, along with a restaurant, bistro, rooftop lounge and new branding which will also incorporate the Seahorse, part of Belfast's Coat of Arms which celebrates the city's maritime history. Room rates will start from £153. Visit hastingshotels.com/grand-central

New 'Dublin Swift' catamaran boosts services from Irish Ferries

IRISH FERRIES is boosting services between the UK and Ireland with the introduction of the upgraded, high speed Dublin Swift twin-hulled catamaran, which has just entered service following a full internal refurbishment.

It replaces the Jonathan Swift which has been in service since 1999 and this addition to the fleet speeds across the Irish Sea at a cruising speed of 35 knots. It operates two crossings a day, in each direction between Holyhead in north Wales, and Dublin port.

The new vessel has greater car (220 vehicles) and passenger (820 people) capacity, making it the largest fast ferry on the Irish Sea. It offers a completely redesigned interior and a significantly upgraded level of passenger accommodation, which is all on one deck. Onboard facilities include a dedicated TV Snug, cafeteria, self-service restaurant and games area.

Spacious seating for passengers is offered in the standard cabin, while the Club Class lounge at the front of the Dublin Swift (£16 supplement each way) offers reclining seats with sea views, complementary refreshments and in-seat phone/media charging points. Free Wi-Fi is offered throughout.

One way fares start at £154 for a car and two adults. Visit irishferries.com or call 08717-300400 for more details.



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Emerald Waterways launch new tours taking in the River Nile

EMERALD WATERWAYS has introduced its first Egypt and Jordan touring and cruising itineraries, complete with a Nile river cruise on-board the exclusively chartered MS Hamees ship by Movenpick.

Fresh from an extensive 2018 refurbishment, the luxurious river ship has been designed to offer comfortable and contemporary accommodation during a four-night Nile River cruise, from Luxor to Aswan. During their journey guests will take in some of the most spectacular destinations and archaeological sites to be found along the Nile.

Dawn Quinn, the operator's head of UK trade sales, said: "Emerald Waterways continue to add exciting and unique products to their river cruising portfolio, and we are sure that the brand new Egypt & Jordan itineraries will be incredibly popular for agents. Guests will be able to explore the famous historical sites of Egypt and Jordan with a great introductory offer of £500 per person savings. Also, agents will receive River Rewards points for every booking they make as part of our great trade incentive."

To celebrate the launch of its Egypt, Nile River and Jordan brochure, the operator is offering savings of £500 per person on all 2019 and 2020 departures for a limited time. Prices start from £2,445 per person for the ten-day 'Cairo & Ancient Egypt' river cruise and from £3,795 per person for the 15-day 'Cairo to Amman tour & Ancient Egypt' river cruise. For more information email agency-sales@emeraldwaterways.com

A-ROSA announces construction of new ship to sail the Douro

A-ROSA RIVER Cruises has announced it will sail the river Douro for the first time in 2019, with a newly constructed ship.

Designated as an important step in the company's growth plans and the first new build since A-ROSA FLORA in 2014, this new ship will be built in Portugal and christened in May 2019. With a maximum capacity of 126 passengers and a length of almost 80m, the ship will have four decks, spacious cabins and suites, a swimming pool plus a spa and fitness area with sauna.

The company will sail the Douro from May to November 2019 with a seven-night itinerary that travels from Porto, calling at Pinhao, Vega Terron, Bacca d'Alva

(Salamanca), Regua, Entre-os-Rios and back to Porto.

Lucia Rowe, head of A-ROSA UK and Ireland, said: "This is really exciting for us and the first big development since our new owners took over in January. The Douro is a beautiful river and one that our tour operator partners have been asking us to feature for several years. I am delighted that we can now deliver it. Our focus going forward is growth, both in terms of our fleet and our destinations and the introduction of the Douro is our first step towards achieving this."

For more information contact 020-3290 5713 or visit arosa-cruises.com

GRJ presents early booking offer on Danube

GREAT RAIL Journeys currently has an early booking offer available on its new 'Five-Star Danube Cruise'.

Starting from £1,395 per person, guests will spend nine days sailing on the Danube aboard the state of the art Amadeus Queen and discover Budapest, Vienna, Melk Abbey, Regensburg and Bratislava.

Julian Appleyard, the company's commercial director, said: "On this tour guests will step back in time to the eras of the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of the Habsburgs, all whilst enjoying the surroundings of an ultra modern and comfortable cruise ship. With scenic cruises and historic cities this cruise is perfect for cruise enthusiasts and first timers alike."

Tours depart in 2019 on May 9 and 23, June 13 and 27, and September 13 and 25. Guests can save up to £100 per person when booking on or before June 1. Visit greatrail.com or call 0800-240 4470.

APT invites homeworkers to learn more about cruise over coffee

APT IS hosting a series of regional coffee mornings aimed at helping homeworkers learn more about its products.

The coffee mornings will take place in June and July in Manchester, Edinburgh, Bristol, Birmingham, Ipswich and Amersham and will be hosted by the operator's on-the-road sales team. The events are part of a broader company initiative to better engage and support homeworkers across the UK.

Angela Waite, head of sales and commercial, said: "River cruising is one of the fastest growing sectors of



the travel industry and it's a great product for homeworkers to offer as it holds such broad appeal. Through our events we want to help our homeworking partners to feel confident selling this product, as well as our escorted touring offering, because we know that when clients book with APT they tend to come back again. The end goal is to work together to help attendees feel equipped to build a solid portfolio of loyal and repeat customers."

For further information email agentclub@aptouring.co.uk or call 0800-046 3002.

The River Cruise Line introduces new 'Heart of Holland' cruise for 2019

FOLLOWING ON from the success of the 'Captain's Choice' itinerary aboard the MPS Lady Anne, The River Cruise Line has worked with the ship's captain, Wido Arts, again to develop a new 'Heart of Holland' cruise for May 2019.

The eight-day itinerary departs from Arnhem and follows a route that will take visitors to small fishing villages, historic towns and the idyllic Nieuwe Meersluis - the green heart of the Netherlands. Highlights include visiting Deventer, one of the oldest cities in Holland; an optional excursion to the Medemblik Bakery to learn about old fashioned Dutch break making; the cheese town of Gouda and star-shaped Willemstad. Also included on the itinerary is a visit to the Keukenhof Gardens.

The cruise will depart on May 12, 2019 and is priced from £929 per person. The price is based on two sharing an en-suite cabin on full-board basis, with UK coach travel, ferry crossing from Dover, included excursion to the Keukenhof Gardens and services of a cruise manager. Departures by rail including Eurostar from London to Brussels are also available.

Visit rivercruiseline.co.uk or call 01858-435655 for more information.



MINOR HOTELS is launching a selection of river cruises with **Mekong Kingdoms Luxury Cruises**. With a fleet of five vessels, guests can enjoy first class services whilst cruising along the Mekong River, from Thailand's Golden Triangle to the ancient Lao capital and now UNESCO World Heritage city of Luang Prabang. Visit mekongkingdoms.com

One-off 'Delta & Coast' voyage from Pandaw in Southern Burma

PANDAW HAS announced a new, one-off, two-ship expedition of southern Burma's delta and coast.

The 18-night 'Delta And Coast - All Southern Burma' expedition will set sail on February 28 and start with a river cruise around the Irrawaddy Delta, followed by an ocean-going cruise in the Mergui Archipelago, from the southern tip of Burma to Yangon. Passengers will travel both by shallow draft wooden ship and lovingly-refurbished 1960s motor yacht.

Paul Strachan, the company's founder and CEO, said: "This one-off expedition is a unique opportunity to see these rarely visited regions, which are vastly different from each other, yet both full of cultural and scenic interest. The Irrawaddy Delta's maze of tributaries, villages and ancient trading ports remain untouched by tourism, and paradise can truly be found in the azure seas, coral reefs and thousand islands of the Mergui Archipelago."

Prices start from USD\$6,095 per person, based on twin share which includes eight nights on RV Katha Pandaw, ten nights on MY Andaman Explorer, domestic flight from Yangon to Kawthaung, transfers, excursions and entrance fees, English speaking guide services, main meals, juggled coffee, selection of teas and tisanes, local soft drinks, local beer, local spirits, mineral water, crew gratuities, kayaks and snorkelling equipment. International flights are extra. For more information call 0208-326 5620 or go to pandaw.com

Kylie tickets 'Especially for You' with Avalon

AVALON WATERWAYS is giving agents the chance to see Kylie Minogue in concert, as part of its latest booking incentive.

For the chance to win a pair of tickets to see Kylie live on September 27, agents simply need to book a 2019 Avalon Waterways cruise before May 30 and then send their name, agency details and booking reference to agency-sales@avaloncruises.co.uk

For each booking made, agents will be entered into the prize draw.

The river cruise operator's 2019 programme includes an all-suite European fleet, Active Discovery offering along with the introduction of the Avalon Choice excursion programme.

For more information call 0800-668 1843 or visit avaloncruises.co.uk

Riviera Travel partners with Masters of Wine to enhance river cruise programme

RIVIERA TRAVEL has partnered with renowned Masters of Wine, Susie Barrie and Peter Richards, to offer a selection of exclusive river cruise departures this year.

Susie and Peter are perhaps best known for presenting the wine slots on BBC One's Saturday Kitchen, which they did for over a decade. The duo also educates and entertains audiences on wine across a host of platforms, from television and radio programmes to books and articles, as well as in-person at events including their own Wine Festival Winchester. During their time aboard Riviera's fleet of five-star ships, the pair will host lively after-dinner talks with quizzes and informal yet informative Q&A sessions to enhance customers' knowledge and enjoyment of wine.



The pair will join this year's 'Burgundy, The River Rhône & Provence' cruise on August 27 and the 'Cruise the Heart of Europe' itinerary departing October 19. Peter will be joining the Rhine, Strasbourg & Heidelberg cruise on July 23 and August 20, as well as the Rhine & Moselle cruise on July 25 and August 22.

This partnership is part of a wider strategy by the company to further invest in its exclusive cultural and culinary offering for its cruise customers. Katja Hildebrandt, head of river cruises for the operator, said: "Our river cruises sail to some of Europe's finest gastronomic capitals and iconic wine regions, offering customers the opportunity to taste delicious local wines. Our exclusive cruises with direct access to British wine connoisseurs provide the perfect backdrop to enhance existing wine and spirits knowledge. Culinary experiences remain an important part of the service we offer which is why we partnered with Susie and Peter as leaders in their field to impart expert advice for customers to take home with them." For more information visit rivieratravel.co.uk/masters-of-wine

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10 days, 8 guided tours
Departing March to December 2019

From £1,395pp

Elegant Elbe

10 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019

From £2,095pp

Rhine Getaway

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing March to December 2019

From £1,195pp

Romantic Danube

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing April to December 2019

From £1,095pp

Châteaux, Rivers & Wine

8 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019

From £1,745pp

Waterways of the Tsars

13 days, 10 guided tours
Departing May to October 2019

From £2,795pp

Passage to Eastern Europe

11 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019

From £1,995pp

Imperial Jewels of China

15 days, 11 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019

From £2,895pp

Magnificent Mekong

17 days, 14 guided tours
Departing January to December 2019

From £3,535pp

Grand European Tour

15 days, 12 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019

From £2,845pp

2019 Viking river cruises save £1,000pp – prices from £1,095pp

With the world's largest fleet of innovative river ships – including our multi award-winning Viking Longships – only Viking can promise you more. More comfort, more quality, more style and more choice of cruises across Europe, Russia and Asia. Relax in spacious, contemporary surroundings. Indulge in fabulous, freshly cooked food and thoughtfully selected wines. Explore the cultures, customs and cuisines of the places you visit on expertly led tours. And discover a unique and exciting new view of the world.

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THOSE TRAVEL agent winners who delivered top sales or achieved the most growth during Celebrity Cruises' turn-of-year period were recently surprised by the stars of Love Island who came by to hand over their prizes in-person. TV favourites Jamie Jewitt, Marcel Somerville and Gabby Allen joined the cruise line's on-the-road sales team to meet with agent winners across Scotland, the North West, the South East and in London. Pictured surprising the winners from Barrhead in Glasgow is, from the left, Mandy Burrie of Celebrity Cruises and Love Island's Gabby Allen with the company's Helen McHarg, Andrew Bolton of Celebrity, and Barrhead's Michelle Holt. The #CelebrityLovesAgents campaign saw the cruise line give away 36 cruises, 50,000 worth of cash giveaways and spot prizes. Visit [Facebook.com/CelebrityTravelAgents](https://www.facebook.com/CelebrityTravelAgents)

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines hints at upcoming decision for new build ship by PAUL SCUDAMORE

FRED. OLSEN Cruise Lines has announced that, following £10million being spent on refurbishing each of its four ships – the Black Watch, Braemar, Boudicca and Balmoral – in the last two years, it is “likely” to take a decision to opt for a new build of a small vessel. However, managing director Mike Rodwell added there was “nothing official so nothing firm”. Justin Stanton, sales and marketing director, added: “We’d be crazy not to be looking for growth, but we see ourselves as doing it at a time that’s right for us and not because everyone else is doing it.”

The news emerged when the company held a ‘Closer’ trade conference three weeks ago at The Belfry hotel and golf course near Sutton Coldfield, attended by 150 travel agents and tour operators.

The general theme of the conference was to emphasise the company’s fervent backing for the trade and deny that its advertising in the consumer press was aimed at getting people to book direct. Stanton said: “Advertising drives people into agencies. What we want to do is just

that – there is nothing in my remit to grow direct business, just to grow business.”

On pricing, head of sales Mike Evans justified any price increases in the coming years by the need to maintain standards. He said: “It comes down to this – if you want quality you have to pay for it. Agents should convince their customers that they and we are offering excellent value for money and not at all be embarrassed by the price. And remember, discounting has reduced considerably.”

Guest speaker at the conference was managing director of Silver Travel Advisor, Debbie Marshall, who focused on the over-50s sector – Fred. Olsen’s target market. She highlighted the size of the sector which represented 43% of the population and was growing at the rate of 17,000 per week. She said: “There will be more over-50s than under-50s in 20 years’ time, and over-65s will increase by 50% in 20 years. And remember, 77% of over-65s are now online.”

The message was to target this affluent sector who had the time and the money to indulge themselves in activities such as cruising.

Summer lovin’ from CMV

CRUISE AND MARITIME Voyages is giving agents the opportunity to be entered into a draw to win one of ten summer themed prizes throughout May & June.

Prizes up for grabs include a hot-air balloon flight at sunrise, a horse racing day for two, a hamper with Prosecco, a portable charcoal BBQ with accessories and an Amazon E-Reader Kindle with a £10 Voucher.

Lisa Jacobs, head of trade sales for the cruise line, said: “This incentive will run until the end of June and all an agent needs to do is to send details of their booking(s) to competitions@cruiseandmaritime.com with their name, ABTA number and booking reference”.

Bookings can be of any nature including overnight Festive events, repositioning cruises and all other cruises.

The cruise line has some availability remaining for this year and a wide range of cruises for 2019, featuring a choice of UK departure ports, special offers, destinations and durations. Visit [cruiseandmaritime.com](https://www.cruiseandmaritime.com) or call 0844-998 3877 for more details.

PONANT celebrates 30 years with anniversary programme

IN CELEBRATION of sailing for 30 years, PONANT is unveiling an anniversary programme and looking back over the great moments that have shaped its history.

For its most loyal customers, the members of the Ponant Yacht Club, the line is proposing two special itineraries which echo two regions of the world that are emblematic for the company: the Ponant Islands and Wallis and Futuna.

Moreover: aboard its ships, guests will be able to purchase a collection of limited-edition clothing and travel accessories celebrating the cruise line’s 30th anniversary; a book retracing the history of the company will be released in the autumn; and a documentary film will close this year. 2018 will also see the launch of the line’s first two ships in the new PONANT EXPLORERS series, Le Lapérouse and Le Champlain.

SELLING CRUISE IS CLIA



by Andy Harmer, senior vice-president for membership and CLIA UK & Ireland director

THE TIME has almost come - we are just one week away from the CLIA Cruise Conference!

This year's event comes at a really exciting time for the cruise industry, as huge levels of investment are made in new and existing ships, in shore-side experiences and in delivering amazing levels of service. As a result of these incredible developments, we can confidently say that there is a cruise for every person, budget and occasion.

With this in mind, the focus for the three-day CLIA Conference is #GenerationCruise and the importance of making cruise appealing to all. With the help of experts from inside and outside the cruise industry, we will be looking at useful strategies and techniques to cut through to different age-groups and demographics.

To help us understand how different generations buy and communicate, we will welcome Dr Paul Redmond. He will address delegates about the importance of realising the differences between the generations, and the best ways to talk to them. With almost 30 years of working in the employment and education sector, he has established himself as 'the employment and generations guru'. So, Dr Redmond will help delegates understand the different ways to talk to customers, from baby boomers, to millennials, via Generations X and Y, with insights which will prove invaluable.

Our speakers also include some of the global cruise industry leaders, and each will take an element of the current areas of industry innovation, and relate it back to how we can use those innovations to better sell cruise holidays. This is one of the reasons as to why we have a sub-theme of technology running throughout the event.

The cruise industry is often taking the lead in the introduction of new technology to enhance the holiday experience, and this is widely being rolled out by a number of cruise lines and across fleets. New technology includes wearable technology, face recognition, the use of apps and robots, plus new technology around the industry's ongoing environmental efforts. Sessions at the conference will look at how technology is impacting ship design and the experience on-board, plus how technology can be used to engage a first-time cruise customer.

As ever, there is a jam-packed agenda for our conference, and we are delighted that more than 400 CLIA agents are travelling to join us in Southampton.

From inspiring words from record-breaking explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes on the final day, to the very latest technology advances onboard ships, to meeting new and old industry friends, we have a lot to celebrate and work towards together, as we prepare to unlock the power of #GenerationCruise.

RCL brings new function to AirWaves

FOLLOWING THE successful roll out of AirWaves to 6,500 agents across the UK and Ireland, RCL Cruises Ltd has launched a new functionality to the platform which enables agents to book up to four staterooms at a time.

This update has been implemented in response to agent feedback to help save time, secure price and inventory and provide ease of booking for families.

Agents can learn more about how to book up to four staterooms with the new 'Try Me' module or short video clips that are accessible via Cruising for Excellence and Club Learning on My Club Royal.

The fully integrated packaging solution - which enables bookings across Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises - allows agents to dynamically book fly/cruise packages with greater flexibility and security.

Viking Cruises presents longest-ever continuous world cruise

VIKING HAS announced its most comprehensive itinerary to date with a new Ultimate World Cruise. This will span 245 days, six continents, 59 countries and 113 ports, with 22 port overnights and a full circumnavigation of the globe - making it the longest-ever continuous World Cruise itinerary.

Departing from London on August 31, 2019 on Viking Sun, this eight-month journey will mark the cruise line's third voyage around the globe and will nearly double the length of the company's previous World Cruise itineraries.

Within this 245-day world cruise, the company will also offer guests an option to sail one of two shorter segments: guests can choose between 'Viking World Treasures', a 127-day sailing from London to Los Angeles that visits 33 countries and 61 ports; or 'Viking World Wonders', a 119-day journey from Los Angeles to London that visits 29 countries and 55 ports.

Guests will receive a complimentary shore excursion in each port and free unlimited Wi-Fi. World Cruise guests also receive Business Class airfare and all gratuities and service fees, along with an extensive list of added-value included features in their cruise fare.

For more information go to vikingcruises.co.uk

Princess Cruises offers 'Three for Free' on 2018 and 2019 cruise holidays

PRINCESS CRUISES is offering a free bottle of wine, free speciality dining and up to \$200 shore excursion credit per person to every guest that books onto select sailings departing in 2018 and 2019.

The deal is available for booking until July 2 and comprises sailings from the UK, Europe and a number of other destinations including Asia, the Caribbean and Alaska. Voyages start from £500 per person and range in length from seven to 37 nights.

Featured in the offer are the first cruises of Sky Princess, the 3,660-guest ship that will launch in October 2019 in Italy. Seven-, 14- and 28-night sailings are available, which will tour the Mediterranean including Italy, Spain, Greece and Montenegro.

Visit princess.com or call 0344-338 8663 for more information.

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*Applies to sales achieved over £5k for 2017/18 cruises. Subject to availability. Terms & Conditions apply. Offers may be withdrawn without notice. Offered for sale in the UK by South Quay Travel & Leisure Ltd trading as Cruise & Maritime Voyages. ABTA V9945. ATOL 4619. Calls cost 5p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. 4274

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Crossword:

Across: 1. GULF, 3. HUDSON, 7. LABRADOR, 8. AREZZO, 9. BLED, 12. DOHA, 14. JERSEY, 17. BRISBANE, 18. TAYLOR, 19. CAEN.
 Down: 1. GERRARD, 2. LILLE, 4. UTAH, 5. SEOUL, 6. IBIZA, 10. DAYS INN, 11. NEPAL, 13. HARRY, 15. STENA, 16. OSLO.

Highlighted Word: LONDON

Where Am I?: Meteora Monasteries, Thessaly, Greece



HURTIGRUTEN HAS announced a ban on all unnecessary single-use plastic by July 2. Everything from plastic straws, drink mixers, plastic glasses, coffee lids and plastic bags will be removed from all ships and marks the first step in Hurtigruten's goal to become the world's first plastic free cruise company. Pictured is the company's CEO, Daniel Skjeldam. The single use plastic ban comes just a few days after the announcement of the largest environmental upgrade in the company's 125 year history; up to nine of the expedition operator's ships will be retrofitted to LNG- and battery propulsion.

We asked our staff the following question this week:

Describe the 'ultimate adventure' you'd like to go on?



Jeanette Ratcliffe

Publisher

jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk

Fly the Grand Canyon followed by a multi-million dollar slot machine win in Vegas!



Laurretta Wright

Editor

laurretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk

A Caribbean cruise and go on the world's longest zip line in the UAE.



Adam Potter

Online Editor

adam.potter@travelbulletin.co.uk

Outer Space (cue Star Trek theme) to boldly go where no Online Editor has gone before!



Paul Scudamore

Contributing Editor



Simon Eddolls

Sales Director

simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk

Shark diving.



Tim Podger

Account Manager - Far East

tim.podger@travelbulletin.co.uk

A cruise down the Amazon.



Bill Coad

Account Manager

bill.coad@travelbulletin.co.uk

It has to be the Moon.



Matt Gill

Senior Account Manager

matt.gill@travelbulletin.co.uk



Sarah Terry

Account Manager

sarah.terry@travelbulletin.co.uk

Coming into the office on the tube is enough for me.



Hannah Carter

Events & Sales Administrator

hannah.carter@travelbulletin.co.uk

Exploring the sea bed.



Ashweenee Beerjeraz

Sales & Events Assistant

ashweenee.beerjeraz@travelbulletin.co.uk

Hawaii, waterfalls, trekking adventure, zip-lining, sipping a cocktail on Waikiki beach and moreee!



Nicky Valsamakis

Design Team Leader

nicky.valsamakis@travelbulletin.co.uk



Miriam Brtkova

Designer

miriam.brtkova@travelbulletin.co.uk

A wedding in Las Vegas lol!



Lucia Mathurin

Junior Designer

lucia.mathurin@travelbulletin.co.uk

Parkour across the city



Eugenia Nelly Mendes

Head of Production

production@travelbulletin.co.uk

Sky diving!

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CANADA & NEW ENGLAND



Montreal to New York
26 Oct 2018 | 10 nights | *Silver Spirit*

Montreal > Quebec City > Cruise Saguenay River > Saguenay, Quebec > Baie-Comeau, Quebec > Day at sea > Sydney, Nova Scotia > Halifax, Nova Scotia > Bar Harbor, Maine > Boston, Massachusetts > Newport, Rhode Island > New York

Vista Suite from £3,100pp

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CARIBBEAN



Fort Lauderdale to Bridgetown
31 Oct 2018 | 10 nights | *Silver Whisper*

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Vista Suite from £3,400pp

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CARIBBEAN



Bridgetown to Fort Lauderdale
16 Nov 2018 | 12 nights | *Silver Spirit*

Bridgetown > St George's > Castries > Roseau > Basseterre, St. Kitts > Gustavia, St Barthelemy > Road Town, Tortola > San Juan > Samana > 2 days at sea > Key West, Florida > Fort Lauderdale

Vista Suite from £3,690pp ☺

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ASIA



Singapore Roundtrip
01 Dec 2018 | 12 nights | *Silver Muse*

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INDONESIA AND AUSTRALIA



Benoa, Bali to Sydney
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