

travelbulletin

January 18 2019 | ISSUE NO 2,092 | travelbulletin.co.uk

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Giving agents the edge

Cruise

Top trends: where
clients will be
cruising in 2019

this week

agent bulletin

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win a trip to Jamaica

bulletin briefing

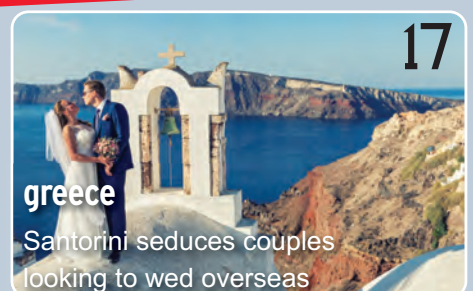
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get your year off to
a flying start



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greece

Santorini seduces couples
looking to wed overseas

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Prices are based on per property, per week, on selected dates in May 2019, they are subject to availability and Terms of Rental apply.



DOWN MEXICO WAY...

TO CELEBRATE the opening of its new luxury development in Costa Mujeres, Mexico, Palladium Hotel Group invited a group of 32 travel agents on the first of its fams to the five-star, adults-only TRS Hotels in the Yucatan Peninsula. Agents stayed at TRS Yucatan Hotel in the Riviera Maya and the new TRS Coral Hotel in Costa Mujeres with the fam also including excursions to explore surrounding attractions including a visit to Xel-Ha water park, a boat trip to Isla Mujeres and an evening in Cancun. Taking a group selfie is Palladium Hotel Group's Chris Redfern (front) with, from the left: (back row) Jamie Mcneil, Hays Travel; Palladium's commercial director for the UK, Nacho Gozalbo; and Scott Robertson of Barrhead Travel; and (front row) David Shepherd, South Elmsall Travel; Jemma Boal-Mckeown, Feherty Travel; Jane Castronovo, Midcounties Co-op; Siobhan McAuley Lane, ITE; Emma Barsdell of Hays Travel; Katerina Kustova, Luxtripper; Palladium's Joanne Peters; Sophie Jade for Travel House; Travel Counsellor Sam Peters; Jennifer Lynch from Arrange my Escape; Sabina Clay for Not Just Travel; Beatrice Paley, Arundel Travel; and Sarah Normington, A2Z Travel.

THIS WEEK

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discover exactly what clients are looking for with the top cruise trends for 2019

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'sea' it to believe it - here comes the first roller coaster at sea!



EGG-CELLENT...Haven is looking ahead to Easter 2019 and offering savings of up to 25% on breaks so that guests can enjoy a family break at one of its 36 locations nationwide and explore the great outdoors from £269. This price is based on a family of up to four sharing a standard two-bedroom Caravan at Thornwick Bay, Lincolnshire, departing April 19. Visit www.bourneleisuresales.co.uk

Israel reaches record tourism numbers for 2018 by welcoming 4.1 million

ISRAEL HAS hit a record number of tourists with 4.1 million welcomed in 2018.

The Israel Ministry of Tourism has confirmed a record-breaking year in incoming tourism with 4,120,800 tourists arriving in 2018. The huge rise in incoming tourism sees a 14% increase compared to 2017 statistics - 506,063 tourists - and a 42% increase on 2016.

Top international visitors came from the United States, France, Russia, Germany, UK and Italy. The research also highlighted the wide array of destinations and experiences available

in Israel with 40% of arriving tourists in 2018 having visited Israel previously.

The tourism sector as a whole also made substantial improvements in Israel. In 2018, as in previous years, the Ministry of Tourism gave grants to entrepreneurs to encourage the establishment, expansion and conversion of hotels in various cities, from north to south. Last year, NIS 145 million was allocated to help entrepreneurs build 3,829 new rooms, representing an annual year on year growth of 49% (2017: 2,566 new rooms; 2016: 1,936 new rooms and in 2015: 1,333 new rooms).

This significant milestone for Israel follows the appointment of Jerusalem as the fastest-growing tourism destination in the world by leading international market research firm EuroMonitor.

Amir Halevi, the tourism ministry's director-general, said: "This is the second consecutive record-breaking year in incoming tourism to Israel and this year we have crossed the threshold of four million tourists in a year. This is the result of hard and strenuous work in recent years, as part of a revolution in the way that Israel is marketed around the world as a tourist destination."

Reap the many rewards of becoming a Cyplon Holidays Trade Friend

THANKING TRAVEL agents for their loyalty, Cyplon Holidays has released a raft of exciting new incentives for 2019.

New and exclusive for agents is 'Cyplon Holidays Trade Friends', an agent-friendly Facebook Page where visitors can find out the latest news from the operator as well live offers, competitions and prizes. In tandem, the operator will also be releasing a series of tactical incentives throughout the year for special offers on products promoted via email and on the Facebook Trade Group and, as an added-value incentive for clients to book, agents can also utilise specially designed Loyalty Vouchers providing clients with £50 off their next holiday if they book with the same travel agency.

The operator will be challenging agents to complete a game of 'Brochure Bingo' to be in with a chance to earn up to £3,000 per branch and will also be running a monthly 'Celestial Cruise Prize Draw', through to October. To enter the draw, agents simply need to make one booking on any Celestial Cruise to be in with the

chance of winning a free stay for two on the Celestial Olympia Cruise, departing November 4.

Agents can also earn free stays in Cyprus, Greece, Egypt and Israel, by simply making bookings on selected hotels. For example, one booking at the Four Seasons or Amathus Beach Hotel will see an agent receive a complimentary seven-night stay for two people.

The tour operator has long supported the trade since its inception in 1972, and already offers £10 vouchers per adult booked, free gifts for bookings over £5,999 and £10 vouchers per hotel-only booking.

Stephanie Robins, the company's head of national sales, said: "Cyplon's relationships are based on trust and friendship before business. Our success could not have been possible without agents' unfaltering commitment and consistent support and we wanted to show our thanks and appreciation to all our new and continuing trade friends." To find out more go to www.cyplon.co.uk/agents-incentives

Acacia Africa launches New Year safari sale

ACACIA AFRICA is offering discounts of up to 20% in its New Year Safari Sale, including 43 camping overland itineraries and six small group safaris. The deal is available on select tours and departures from now through to March.

In a bid to boost forward bookings, the tour operator is also discounting departures later in the year, with savings of 15% on camping overland tours, 10% on accommodated overland tours and 5% on small group safaris. The offer is valid on select tours and scheduled departures from June 1 to October 31, 2019. All bookings should be made by January 31. Visit acacia-africa.com

AMResorts and Funway Holidays launch new brochure

AMRESORTS AND Funway Holidays have launched a new joint brochure called 'The Luxury All-Inclusive Collection 2019' as part of their on-going sales and marketing agreement.

The new brochure includes 92 pages and brings together luxurious hotels and destinations with fresh itineraries. Areas featured include the Caribbean, Mexico and Central America, and introduces for the first time two of AMResorts new family-friendly Reflect Resorts & Spas in Los Cabos and Nuevo Vallarta Mexico. In addition to the two new Reflect resorts, another accommodation boost to the programme includes the introduction of the new Sunscape Star Cancun in Mexico, opening mid-2019.

Commenting on a new wedding focus, Malcolm Davies, product destination manager for Funway Holidays, said: "We're expanding again following great sales this year and the success is set to continue - we're showing a 20% increase in forward sales for 2019, for wedding and honeymoon bookings with AMResorts."

Grenada's first self-sustaining rooms open at True Blue Bay

GRENADA'S FIRST self-sustaining rooms have opened at the True Blue Bay Boutique Resort. The 22 Cocoa Pod rooms are self-sustaining for water and electricity and are furnished using sustainable materials.

Rainwater is harvested from the roof, stored in tanks and treated before being piped into the rooms and two new freshwater swimming pools. Solar panels are used to heat the water and to generate electricity. The use of insulation means that the rooms stay cooler and for those

who want their rooms cooler, there are energy efficient air-conditioners.

Efforts have also been made to make the interiors environmentally friendly. Built in three blocks, the rooms have balconies or verandahs with views of the tropical gardens or the bay as well as the two new plunge pools. A new pool bar makes the pools and white sand waterfront area with its swaying palm tree the ideal place to relax and enjoy a cocktail.

For more information visit www.truebluebay.com

20°N 87°W
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Riviera Maya

7 nights All Inclusive from £1599 pp

Travel: 01 Sept - 10 Oct 2019

Alcoba Room

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Private Transfers

Save up to 25%

Adults Only

Experience a new category of all-inclusive.

Set on the stunning white beaches of Riviera Maya, UNICO 20°87° immerses guests in the culture of the region, from the locally-inspired cocktails and cuisines to the art in the rooms.



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virgin atlantic

DELTA



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from **£369_{pp}**

Valid for departures up to 29 Mar 2019.



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£479_{pp}

Includes reduced rates & one FREE night

Includes return flights Virgin Atlantic/Delta Air Lines from London Heathrow.
Valid for departure 13 Feb 2019.
Based on two adults sharing.

Save
up to **£445**
per person

Earn **£6** £18 Farebank Rewards on this holiday



Orlando

Rosen Inn at Pointe Orlando ●●●

7 nights room only from

£429_{pp}

Includes reduced rates

Includes return flights Virgin Atlantic/Delta Air Lines from London Gatwick.
Valid for departures 20 May - 17 Jun 2019.
Based on two adults sharing and two children sharing.

Save
up to **£165**
per person

Earn **£11** £33 Farebank Rewards on this holiday



Las Vegas Bellagio ●●●●●

3 nights room only from

£1,039_{pp}

Includes reduced rates

Includes return flights Virgin Atlantic/Delta Air Lines from London Heathrow.
Valid for departures 11 - 18 Mar 2019.
Based on two adults sharing.

Save
up to **£100**
per person

Earn **£5** £15 Farebank Rewards on this holiday



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For every booking, you will earn;

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Book with Gold Medal 02-20 January 2019

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BANK
TRIPLE
REWARDS**



Terms & Conditions: Holiday prices are per person based on twin share. Valid for departures specified. Holiday prices include return flights from specified airport with Virgin Atlantic/Delta Air Lines, pre-payable taxes and accommodation. Flight prices are from, per person based on economy flights from London with Virgin Atlantic/Delta Air Lines and valid for departure dates specified. Blackout dates may apply - subject to booking class availability, minimum stay requirements and advanced purchase requirements. Prices include all airport taxes and fuel surcharges, prices may fluctuate if surcharges, fees, taxes or currency change. Subject to availability. Book by 31 Jan 2019. Terms and conditions apply. Supplement applies for regional departures. Gold Medal reserves the right to withdraw this offer at any time. Prices advertised are for web bookings, a supplement may apply if booking by telephone. Triple Farebank Rewards valid on new package bookings (flight, plus hotel), made between 02 - 20 Jan 2019 (excluding Business and First Class flights). Holidays operated by Gold Medal Travel Group Limited, ATOL protected 2916, ABTA V6805.

GOLDMEDAL

Special report on tourism's "invisible burden" to be released in March

THE TRAVEL Foundation has partnered with Cornell University and EplerWood International to analyse how the more damaging impacts of tourism's rapid growth can be better understood and managed globally. The two organisations will be releasing a report in March which shows that destinations across the world are not prepared for the unprecedented demands this has placed on them, leading to reports of overtourism. With growth set to continue exponentially, reaching 1.8 billion tourists by 2030, a global crisis could be looming.

The report suggests that, wherever it exists, tourism places an "invisible burden" on destinations and their residents. This burden leaves inadequate revenue to provide a sustainable foundation to manage the rapid growth of tourism worldwide. The authors explore innovations in policy and finance to manage the "invisible burden" of tourism. It makes a case for public-private cooperation in the design of data-driven mechanisms for managing, monitoring and financing destinations worldwide.

To be on the mailing list for the report, go to www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/managing-tourisms-invisible-burden/

VisitGuernsey prioritises cruising and tours after cinematic success

VISITGUERNSEY IS prioritising the cruise market in its marketing campaigns in light of the destination retaining year-on-year visitor growth and commitment from the cruise industry for 2019 and 2020.

The tourist board's commitment to the cruise market is fuelled by its own analysis of the market showing that disembarking passengers create a £4.2m revenue stream equating to a £31 average spend per passenger.

There are 91 calls from cruise vessels scheduled for 2019, nine of which are inaugural calls. This includes the MSC Preziosa which has a capacity of 4,300 passengers. Other flagship visits will come from Royal Caribbean's Brilliance of the Seas and Princess Cruises' Sapphire Princess.

A major objective for VisitGuernsey is to encourage cruise passengers to



Picturesque St Peter Port in Guernsey.

return for longer, land-based visits to the island and the sister islands of Sark, Herm and Alderney. Research found that 94% of cruise passengers to Guernsey are likely to visit the island again.

New tours for the cruise market have focused on the success of *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, a film which was released last

year, based on the book. Tours now include a guided tour of St Peter Port highlighting important historical facts linked to Guernsey's WWII occupation and a tour by converted safari Land Rover through the rural lanes and communities depicted in the film.

For more information, go to www.visitguernsey.com



TEE TIME... For clients seeking an affordable European golfing holiday, Souillac Golf & Country Club in France's Dordogne Valley is offering seven-night, unlimited golf breaks from 175 euros per person (700 euros for a party of four). Flights with Ryanair start at £43 per person and there are five nearby airports with direct flights from the UK, including Brive, which is a 15-minute drive from the resort. The resort is also easily accessible by motorway from Calais. See www.souillaccountryclub.com for more information.

Travel agents urged to be data-smart

RESEARCH FROM the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) shows there has been minimal change to the number of consumers receiving unwanted calls and emails, despite the introduction of GDPR in May 2018. The organisation, which surveyed 1,500 consumers, has flagged up the importance of robust compliance with data protection laws for travel businesses.

Almost half (42%) of the consumers surveyed said they had received communications from businesses not permitted to contact them in the six months since the new data rules came into force. This is a marginal decrease in comparison to the 48% in the six months before GDPR.

Keith Cartwright, chair of CIM's travel group, said the survey results come at a crucial time for the travel industry

"The first weeks of the new year is one of the travel industry's busiest periods as consumers look ahead to the summer months and begin planning their holidays," Cartwright said. "But the CIM survey shows that trust in firms to use consumer data responsibly remains very low and has hardly changed since the introduction of GDPR. These results are a stark warning to any organisation which uses email marketing to leverage sales – a key tool in the travel sector. Organisations that have earned consumers' trust will engage with their customers and build brand loyalty – those who don't will get left behind."

AGENT INCENTIVES

- INGHAMS HAS launched a new incentive for agents which runs until the end of January for bookings made on Summer 2019 Lakes & Mountains and 2019 Italy holidays. A gift will be awarded each week with prizes such as a GHD hairdryer and straightener set, Fitbit watch, Echo Show and afternoon tea at the Shard in London on offer. To enter, agents need to submit their booking reference to agency.sales@hotelplan.co.uk
- AGENTS WHO make a booking with Cruise Plus by Travel 2 before February 28 will be entered into a prize draw to win a cruise holiday. To qualify, the booking must include a cruise with a minimum of four nights duration. Bookings that include flights with Virgin Atlantic or Delta Air Lines qualify for two entries. As a bonus, all bookings will earn up to £100 of T2 Rewards. For full details of the incentive, go to www.travel2.com
- THERE ARE two spots on the Trafalgar global incentive trip up for grabs for Trafalgar's top two performing UK travel agencies. All 2019 Trafalgar holiday booking secured with deposits or full payment by June 15 will count towards eligibility. The fam trip will include highlights of the company's Essence of South Africa trip. It will be a ten-day itinerary taking in Cape Town, Boulder's Beach, the winelands and a gala event at a secret location. For more information, agents can visit the Trafalgar Facebook page or log on to www.trafalgar.com/agents
- THE TOP-SELLING agent for Abercrombie & Kent's escorted tours for January-February 2019 will be offered a free educational place on one of a choice of four tours. The choices are an eight-day trip to Kenya (May 4-11), a four-day trip to Spain (April 25-28), a one-night trip to Paris (date TBC) or a five-day trip to Turkey (dates TBC). For more details about the incentive, go to www.abercrombiekent.co.uk/travel-agents

AGENT TRAINING

TO BE in the running to win a £50 Amazon voucher, log on to www.travelgym.co.uk/travelgym to learn more about the Ultimate Upgrade Sale by AMResorts and fill in a question-and-answer form along with your details.

For your clients to take advantage of this sale, with discounts up to 40%, on Club Room categories, bookings must be made by January 31 for travel between May 1 and December 22. Resorts are located throughout Mexico, Jamaica, Curacao, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and Panama.



JAMAICA JAMBOREE... Agents can be in the running to win one of 50 places on the Jamaica Tourist Board's fam trips, which are taking place in April, May, June, September and October on the 'Sell It & See It' trade campaign. To enter, agents need to make any booking to Jamaica, log on to www.jamaicarewards.co.uk and register their booking for the chance to win a place as part of the prize draw. The first winners will be announced in March and the other winners revealed throughout 2019.

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

- **NEW:** An Austrian hamper and bottle wine to be won with Visit Austria
- Win a seven-night all inclusive stay for two adults at UNICO 20°87° with Sunset Faraway Holidays
- Win a seven-night stay for two adults at the Luxury Bahia Principe Ambar
- Three-night stay to be won at the new Marconfort Costa del Sol Hotel in Torremolinos

FOR ALL COMPETITIONS ON THE SITE VISIT
travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions

Notes from

Normanton...



I CAN'T believe the weather in Greece – I'm looking out of my window, the sky is blue and the sun is shining but poor Greece has a covering of the white stuff! Some of my friends in Crete who feed the stray cats have been battling torrential rain and high winds. I know the ski resorts need snow but in Norway, Austria and Germany there have been 13 deaths due to avalanches and the authorities have warned of increased snowslide risk, so if you are doing ski bookings, please warn customers about the dangers of skiing off-piste.

I spoke to agents in Bradford and Leeds and everyone is busy on the phones and with footfall. Tony Mann at Idle Travel said business was buoyant with USA and cruising in particular. He didn't think Brexit was affecting bookings.

Tony was on Radio Leeds reinforcing the message of ABTA and the importance of booking with an ABTA travel agent. Michelle at Hanson Travel Leeds said people were asking about Brexit and if they need a visa for Europe, but it wasn't putting them off booking. She is busy with Jet2 Lakes & Mountains and Cruises bookings. It's all positive news.

Ryanair has been voted worst airline for the sixth year by Which? and by passengers, but when you see flights at £9.99, or even £25.99 each way, people are still going to book them however bad they get – it's cheaper than getting the train to London!

Here's to a fantastic 2019 for everyone. I had my pacemaker fitted and it's wonderful not to be breathless all the time. I just need to lose some weight and I will be like a Duracell Bunny!

'He who lives in harmony with himself lives in harmony with the world' and 'Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow''.

Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY
in Normanton, Yorkshire

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

Riviera unveils new solo options

RIVIERA TRAVEL has launched eight new itineraries exclusively for solo travellers, available as part of its programme for 2019. The offering includes three new solo cruises and five new solo tours, spanning across all corners of the globe. From New Zealand to Egypt to the USA, the company's solo travel programme has doubled since 2018, with 34 different itineraries designed for solo travellers now available.

Will Sarson, head of specialist product for the operator, said: "There has been a real shift in attitude over the last few years, with travellers increasingly choosing to discover the joys of solo travel. Following this increased demand and by taking on the valuable feedback provided by our customers, Riviera Travel has more than doubled its solo travel programme in the last year. While we have always offered sole occupancy cabins and rooms on our tours and cruises, in 2017 we introduced our first Solo Travel programme offering eight escorted tours. Our solo offer has expanded rapidly and in 2019 we are proud to offer customers a total of 34 solo tours and cruises. There will also be a new dedicated solo travel brochure available to agents in early 2019.

Our new tours and cruises are carefully created for solo travellers to ensure that hotels are in the right location, meals are included at the right times to encourage the wider group to come together, and that there is choice and flexibility for individuals to tailor their experience according to their own interests and needs." For more information, go to www.rivieratravel.co.uk/solo

Pandaw vessel issues resolved for ship-shape cruises from Yangon

PANDAW, A specialist in boutique expeditions in south-east Asia has announced that its Kandaw Pansaw ship, which was planned to launch earlier this month will now be launched this week from Yangon, after exporting issues were resolved.

Passengers who were booked on January and February departures have been offered a full refund or rebooked with most choosing alternative river voyages or land tours within India.

In September this year, plans remain unchanged for Pandaw's full launch on the Ganges of the Orient Pandaw. Sailings on the Lower Ganges, out of Kolkata, and the Upper Ganges, as far as Varanasi, are nearly fully booked, with India becoming the seventh country the company navigates through.

Additionally, Pandaw will send a third vessel from Myanmar to cope with the demand. This will be the Kalaw Pandaw, which with only two decks, can pass under obstructive bridges in high water and go year round as far as Varanasi on account of its ultra shallow draft.

Last October, the company launched a third vessel in Laos, the Sabaidee Pandaw, which sails up river to China. With near full occupancy of its Mekong ships, the company plans to launch a fourth vessel in Vietnam and Cambodia for the 2019-20 season.

For more information about the river cruises, go to www.pandaw.com

Su Doku

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

Number: 003

A	1				8		2	4
			5	9	1		6	
	7		6			9	8	
B	6			4	1			
	4	7					1	5
C					3	5		2
		6	2				8	7
		1		3	7	4		
D	5	4		8				9

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3 x 3 squares contains the digits 1-9.

Once you have completed the puzzle, simply identify the numbers that relate to the letters, A, B, C and D then e-mail the solution, with your name, company name, and full postal address plus phone and ABTA number if applicable to:

competition@travelbulletin.co.uk

Closing date for entries is Thursday, January 24th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 4th January is Susan Lockhart, TUI GROUP in Dumfries.

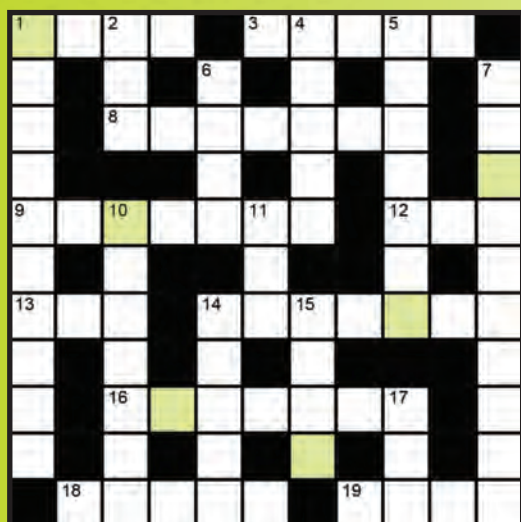
January 4th Solution: A=9 B=8 C=6 D=7

Where Am I?



In stark contrast to the urban city which surrounds it, this tranquil spot sees tourists weave their way through dense thickets on wooden pathways admiring both the sight (and sounds) of these plants that tower into the sky.

Crossword



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

Across

- Audley Travel offers holidays to this South Pacific destination (4)
- Lloyd Webber / Rice musical set in Argentina (5)
- One of the Canary Isles (2,5)
- Montgomery is the state capital (7)
- Flag carrier of Sweden, Norway and Denmark (3)
- South African country, initially (3)
- Gitega has recently replaced Bujumbura is this country's capital city (7)
- The Galapagos Islands are part of this South American country (7)
- Actress, Sheridan ____, Cleaning Up in a new TV drama series (5)
- The southernmost sea on Earth (4)

Down

- New presenter of BBC's Question Time (5,5)
- Airline operating out of Narita International airport (3)
- Flows through Russia (5)
- Operator specialising in holidays to the Arctic (7)
- Capital of Samoa (4)
- Now a major tourist attraction, this palace was once the residence of Louis XIV (10)
- Home of Disneyland Resort (7)
- Mauritius International airport code (3)
- Emily, starring as Mary Poppins at a cinema near you (5)
- Wightlink operates to this IOW destination (4)
- Brazilian city, in short (3)

For the solution to the Crossword and Where Am I?
Please see page 32



SNOW BUSINESS... Club Med is opening ten new resorts from 2019 and 2020, including Alpe d'Huez in the French Alps in December of this year. For more information, go to www.clubmed.co.uk

Wendy Wu Tours means business with flight upgrades to China and Japan now available

WENDY WU Tours is offering free business class upgrades, representing a saving of more than £1,000 per person, on selected fully escorted China and Japan tours when booked before January 20.

The upgrades with Air China means customers will benefit from a fully flat bed with pillows and duvet; dedicated check-in and priority boarding; access to VIP business lounges plus award-winning cuisine and wines.

As an alternative to the business class upgrade the operator is offering £200 per person off its group tour holidays to all destinations when booked before January 20.

Commenting on the free business class upgrade offer, John Warr, global sales director said: "The business class upgrade with Air China is one of the most luxurious additions to your holiday and highly recommended especially when you are flying 11 hours to the other side of the world. The inflight service is world class, so much so that you don't actually want the flight to end. Combining this with one of our award-winning tours to China and Japan and all in all you have the ultimate Asia travel experience."

Butlin's joins the digital revolution for family fun

BUTLIN'S HAS launched its 2019 digital 'Family Breaks Guide' for agents, with information about new developments and upgrades across its three resorts, as well as its entertainment line-up.

With on-screen access the 'Family Breaks Guide' maintains its simple-to-use and intuitive set-up, allowing agents to concentrate on their clients and talk through all the options.

The digital guide launches with an early offer of up to 30% off selected breaks in 2019; as well as a trade saving of £20 per booking when quoting BUTLINSTA20. Both discounts are available on new 2019 bookings when secured before February 5.

The guide updates agents on Butlin's

entertainment programme for 2019, which includes new performances from Paddington, a new interactive science-based show from Stefan Gates, CBBC's Danny and Mike bring Cirque du Hilarious to resorts and Titan the Robot performs live. Butlin's also welcomes a new pantomime performance of Sleeping Beauty across all three resorts and families can enjoy more daytime entertainment at the Skyline Pavilion as Active Afternoon and Discover Animals launch. The Just for Tots breaks will welcome back kids favourite Justin Fletcher as well as introduce a new show from the cast of Milkshake Live!.

Download the guide for free at www.bourneleisuresales.co.uk.

How can UK holidaymakers get more bang for their buck?

THE POST Office Travel Money's annual 'Holiday Money Report' has found that prices have fallen by as much as 21% in almost half of the resorts and cities surveyed for the Worldwide Holiday Costs Barometer, with the biggest falls seen in Singapore and St Lucia. The report rates destinations based on the cost of eight tourist staples.

Other findings include Bulgaria, Turkey and the Algarve rated best value among 42 destinations, and Cape Town taking over Japan as the cheapest long-haul option. Bali is benefiting from low prices and a weak currency – Rupiah sales have surged 483% in ten years on the back of an 18% fall against the Pound Sterling. Three new destinations – Abu Dhabi, India (New Delhi) and the Seychelles (Mahé) were added to the barometer this year. Delhi was cheapest of the three at £104.29, while Abu Dhabi (£168.66) and Mahé (£182.89) were the two of the most expensive destinations.

Post Office Travel Money expert, Andrew Brown said: "It is good news that prices are down in so many destinations this year, but it is still very important to be aware of the huge variation in costs we found across the 42 countries surveyed. For example, barometer costs in the six cheapest resorts and cities are less than half those in the 15 priciest destinations." For more information, go to www.postoffice.co.uk



Australia is a sun baked land home to some of the world's most wonderful wildlife, gorgeous coastlines and fantastic food and wine experiences. Visitors are welcomed by friendly locals, who love to share insider tips about the best beaches, aquatic encounters, coastal cafés, hip restaurants, favourite walking trails and secret surf spots.

Spotlight on... Australia



Sydney to Brisbane self-drive

Cambridge Hotel Sydney ●●●● 4 NIGHTS
 Hunter Valley Resort ●●●● 3 NIGHTS
 Ramada Resort by Wyndham Shoal Bay ●●● 1 NIGHT
 Breakfree Aanuka Beach Resort, Coffs Harbour ●●● 1 NIGHT
 Crowne Plaza Surfers Paradise ●●●● 3 NIGHTS
 Adina Apartment Hotel Brisbane ●●●● 3 NIGHTS

15 nights from
£1,759pp

Includes one FREE night & FREE room upgrade in Sydney, FREE Wine Theatre entry, FREE on site vineyard inspection and FREE wine tasting with the Resort Cellar Master in Hunter Valley, and one FREE night in Surfers Paradise & Brisbane

Includes return flights with Virgin Atlantic/Virgin Australia from London Heathrow and Avis car hire from Sydney to Brisbane. Valid for departures 06 May - 24 Jun 2019.

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 per person

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Vibe Hotel Darwin Waterfront ●●●● 2 NIGHTS
 The Ghan Expedition 3 NIGHTS GOLD SERVICE TWIN SHARE
 WITH ALL MEALS AND DRINKS
 Majestic Roof Garden Hotel, Adelaide ●●●● 2 NIGHTS

8 days/7 nights from

£3,189pp

Save
 up to **£425**
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Highlights

● Travelling from the tropical Top End on board The Ghan Expedition, on to the Red Centre and then South Australia, customers will enjoy an enhanced number of Off Train Excursions, including a visit to Katherine Gorge, an incredible Outback Pioneer Dinner and a guided tour of the underground opal mining town of Coober Pedy

Includes return flights with Virgin Atlantic/Virgin Australia from London Heathrow. Valid for departure 12 Oct 2019.

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 LIKE AUSTRALIA



Industry Insight by...



Tracey Poggio, chairman of ANTOR, looks at the impact the cruise market is having on visitor numbers in ANTOR member destinations.

IT IS widely recognised that cruise is the fastest growth sector in the travel industry, including river cruising and embraces family, multi-generational and LGBTQ travel. The cruise industry continues to spread tourists further afield and assist with accommodation and transportation in areas that are less accessible. Many destinations such as Sweden, the Dominican Republic and Samoa have adapted regulations or built new facilities to accommodate the growing number of passenger ship arrivals.

Cruise traffic remains important to Gibraltar. The destination is a leading Mediterranean port of call and a founding board member of the MedCruise association which works collaboratively with its 100 plus port members to ensure growth and development in the region. It actively encourages increasing port members' efficiency by exchanging information, best practices and statistics on cruise passenger traffic and new technologies on cruise port development.

The Swedish capital, Stockholm, is becoming an increasingly popular destination for cruise tourists. During the summer season, a record number of passengers from international cruise ships visited the city: 619,000 in total, an increase of 20,000 from the previous summer, another record year. All in all, 268 international cruise ships visited Stockholm's ports between May and October, compared with 263 in 2017. Of those, 67 were 'turnaround' vessels starting or ending their journey in Stockholm, often meaning passengers spent an extra day or night in the city therefore spending more money in the capital's restaurants, cafes, shops, and tourist attractions.

The English are in third place in cruise visitor numbers behind the Americans and Germans. This increase in Stockholm's tourism was not always good news though, with the Port Authority noting that in recent years 80% of cruise ships have left water waste in the city ports. Regulations for emissions in the Baltic Sea will be tightened from 2019-2021, requiring passenger ships to leave sewage on land or be equipped with approved treatment plants.

Visit Russia is promoting its visa-free tours to St Petersburg by incorporating a cruise element. These four-night tours start in Helsinki, Finland, and include

two nights on board the luxury Princess Anastasia ferry, with two more at a modern, comfortable hotel in the centre of St Petersburg. Tours include an English-speaking guide to help make the most of this fascinating city. This is a great way to discover the charms of this destination, along with the excitement of an unmissable cruise across the Gulf of Finland.

Pure Grenada, the Spice of the Caribbean achieved an historic milestone in 2018 by welcoming more than half a million visitors to the destination's shores. Spread across niche markets, the combined cruise, yachting and stay-over arrivals for 2018 was 528,077 representing a 12.90% increase over 2017. Cruise arrivals saw double digit growth with the sector growing by 14.49%. A strong performance was recorded in stay over arrivals with an increase of 9.97%, moving from 146,375 to 160,970 visitors with special mention given to the bumper Christmas season in which a growth of 17% was recorded. The USA maintains the top spot in market share for arrivals to the destination at 46.93% followed by the UK.

The Dominican Republic's Port Authority has announced that USD\$125 million will be invested in building a new cruise port in Puerto Plata. The port will be able to handle 680,000 passengers per year starting in 2020, and five cruise lines are already planning on having cruise ships stop at the new port. The port will be able to handle three cruise ships at one time, including the largest cruise ships in the world, the Oasis class ships from Royal Caribbean. The cruise market has grown from 384,878 passengers per annum in 2007 to 1,107,966 in 2017.

In November and December 2018, Samoa welcomed seven cruise ships including the Emerald Princess on her maiden voyage. This was the first large Princess Vessel to call into Samoa for two years following the Port of Apia's extension. Samoa is expecting nine cruise ships to visit its ports in 2019.

These are just a few examples of the impact the industry is having on ANTOR's member destinations. For more information and tourist board contact details, see www.antor.com.

For more on cruising, turn to page 21 for our special feature on river and ocean voyages.


training

'Peaks Means Prizes' with Funway

THE FUNWAY Holidays sales team will be out in force throughout February, chatting with agents and giving mini training sessions to further push its Peaks campaign.

The team will be visiting agencies around the UK and delivering 'Peaks Means Prizes' packs which will include brochures, window posters and energy boosting treats to get agents through the busy period.

Also included in the packs will be details of how agents can enter a competition with 90 prizes up for grabs. Agents will have until March 31 to enter. Go to www.peaksmeansprizes.co.uk to find out more.



WITH SUMMER sales just around the corner, the Austrian National Tourist Office has created a series of fun fact sheets; providing agents with all the information they could need at their fingertips in a compact format along with interesting suggestions and inspiration for a variety of Austrian experiences. The 'Destination Austria' fact sheets can be downloaded from: <https://b2b.austria.info/uk/destination-austria/>

'Typers not Talkers': Homeworkers trained to reach new January peaks

THE PERSONAL Travel Agents at Co-Operative Travel has launched a raft of initiatives to aid its 160 homeworkers during the January peak period.

Beginning with a regional roadshow last month entitled 'Time to Reach New Peaks' - which featured an update from the business, information on the January campaigns, marketing and communication training - this support will be continuing throughout January with a series of plans to help homeworkers make the most from the busy booking period.

Head of the organisation, Sheena Whittle said: "The focus of the December roadshow was on helping our agents to reach new peaks and reinforcing their confidence in being a part of The Personal Travel Agents at Co-operative Travel brand, as well as preparing our homeworkers for the upcoming key booking period. We have equipped them with the tools to talk about their impeccable service and untouchable experience, as well as help them to plan their strategy for early 2019.

"We introduced a new training module called 'Typers not Talkers' which looked at how to handle enquiries that come via digital live chat, for example from Facebook messages, as this requires a different skill set from traditional phone and face-to-face conversations. The motivation for adding this specific training module was that, in 2018, we generated £5 million worth of travel bookings via social media, and this in a key growth area for us."

This month will see the company deliver extra support for its agents; additional staff will act as runners for homeworkers, on-hand to do whatever it takes to help out and ease the pressure of the peak holiday booking season; and to help keep stress levels at a minimum, the introduction of 'Wednesday Walks' getting personal travel agents to step away from their desks, enjoy the fresh air and to share their snaps and positive vibes across the virtual office.

For more information go to www.thepersonaltravelagents.co.uk

New Year, Newmarket you – become a graduate for your chance to win prizes

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS is encouraging agents - both new and those who may already be familiar with the brand - to join Nic Newmarket and become a Newmarket Graduate.

Not only will agents have the opportunity to expand upon their knowledge and ultimately commission-earning potential through one of Britain's biggest tour operators, but they will also be in with the chance to win some top prizes and attain their own NNAA (Nic Newmarket Achievement Award) certification.

The training has been designed to educate agents about the brand's key differentiators (i.e. did you know the company has more than 100 air holidays or that it is one of the biggest suppliers to Lake Garda?) and field sales team, over the course of six quick modules and all guided by the friendly Nic Newmarket.

The operator is also recommending the training as a great refresher for those who may already sell Newmarket along with the chance to win a prize hamper.

seen one seen them all?

Every Greek Island has its own unique personality, so sometimes one just isn't enough. And because no one knows the islands quite like we do, you can expect a little more from our island hopping holidays.

Love2Shop incentives - Enjoy the sales!*

Incentive starts on 26th December 2018 - happy booking.

£20 Voucher for every island hopping booking

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*Terms and conditions and minimum spend applies. *See website for most up-to-date terms and conditions. Subject to change.



Seduced by Santorini: Planet Weddings sees the Greek island take the crown as the UK's top wedding destination

SANTORINI IS the top overseas wedding destination for UK couples looking to tie the knot abroad. According to Planet Weddings, the destination is set to continue its reign for 2019 and 2020 as the operator adds several new venues, including the Saint Antonio Vineyard.

Thanks to its dramatic scenery, sunny weather and wide choice of wedding venues, the Greek island plays host to approximately one thousand weddings a year to couples from abroad, with 60% of these coming from the UK.

Mathilde Robert, managing director for the operator, said: "Santorini is a popular choice because it's such a beautiful island that provides a great backdrop for photos, virtually guaranteed sunshine plus its close and affordable enough for guests to attend the wedding. We have expanded our programme for next year to include several new venues in Santorini, which gives couples even more options."

"We have also added new venues in Crete and Rhodes. These islands are the ideal choice for couples inviting small children because the venues are more suitable for accessibility and facilities. Our forward bookings for 2019 and 2020 are strong as more people are heading

abroad to get married because it offers great value, as well as a unique wedding experience."

Prices for weddings in Santorini start from £1,870 which includes the admin fees in the UK and in resort, a wedding co-ordinator in attendance, all paperwork, translation of documents and marriage certificate. Each venue has its own additional cost for the wedding set-up such as the chairs with or without covers plus extras can be added on with Planet Weddings to include musicians in resort or from the UK, hair and beauty, photographer and videographer, flowers, cake, reception, food and drink and more.

The operator has also introduced new venues in Crete and Rhodes, including: Isla by the Sea in Crete; a champagne cruise on traditional wooden schooner in Crete; and St Paul's Bay Platform in Rhodes.

Sister company, Planet Holidays also recently launched its new 2019 Greece lifestyle brochure with a wide selection of hotels for family and friends to join the happy couple in their wedding celebrations. *For more information and wedding advice go to www.planetweddings.co.uk or for honeymoons and packages visit www.planet-holidays.co.uk or call on 01438 841 270.*

Greek gourmets: Aldemar confirms 2019 Symposio dates

THE ANNUAL 'Greek Symposio Gourmet Touring' event - which brings together Greek producers, chefs, hoteliers, airlines, tour operators and travel trade businesses to experience Greece's culinary traditions - has announced its 2019 UK dates.

Organised by Aldemar Resorts in conjunction with the Greek National Tourism Organisation and Aegean Airlines, the event has visited 59 locations across the UK over the past nine years and shown more than 900 agents how to cook mouth-watering Greek dishes. Now in its tenth year, events will take place in Dublin, Edinburgh, Manchester and London on March 15, 16, 17, and 18 respectively. Mandy Kalliontzi, sales director for the hotel group and responsible for the UK market, added: "Agents have enjoyed the interactive event, often continuing to cook Greek for friends and family and sharing their delicious dishes."

The theme for 2019 will be 'Scents and Senses' of the past, the present and the future, with an emphasis on Greece's favoured natural ingredients - olive oil & wine.

For further information visit www.aldemar-resorts.gr and www.symposio.gr



COLLETTE HAS released a new 'Classical Greece' itinerary for November offering the opportunity for holidaymakers to explore Athens and its famed sites with a local expert. Clients will have their choice on tour - a comprehensive tour of the Acropolis or a walking tour of the ancient city's hidden gems, including the Temple of Hephaestus - with other itinerary activities including a Greek dance class to traditional music and a Mediterranean cooking experience followed by a traditional Greek lunch. Prices for this nine-day trip start from £1,549 per person, tour only, with regional flying options available. Go to www.collette.com

Mar-villa-ous Santorini options from James Villa Holidays

JAMES VILLA Holidays has added another new destination to its collection, with Santorini now the eleventh Greek Island offered by the villa holiday specialist and now available to book for holidays throughout 2019.

With villas in Firostephani and Akrotiri customers now have the choice of two of the most-sought after locations on the island. The handpicked Santorini collection of villas offers customers the chance to stay in traditional Greek white-washed properties with the iconic domed ceilings and views across the island's famous caldera. For families there is the more classic villa style with a large pool so holidaymakers can spend their days in relaxation and fun.

Robert Tipler, the company's head of overseas product and contracting, added: "Its natural and unique beauty, plus those stunning sea views, has made Santorini top of many people's holiday wish lists. We're delighted to be able to offer this iconic island to our customers. With an increasing trend of holidaymakers looking at Greek Island getaways we're excited to add to the collection and offer even more choice."

For more information visit www.jamesvillas.co.uk or call 0800-074 0311.

Grecotel in Rhodes receives regal rebrand

GRECOTEL'S 'ALL-in' resort on Rhodes will be getting a regal rebrand for 2019, welcoming guests to its remodelled property and introducing Grecotel LUX ME Rhodes.

Featuring the brand's 'luxury made easy' all-inclusive concept, the property's 276 guestrooms and 46 bungalows have been completely transformed enabling guests to choose from a new collection of open plan guestrooms, family rooms, stylish suites, and unique bungalows, with some options set by the pool.

Six new restaurants and bars overlooking the Aegean Sea offer à la carte Greek, Italian, Asian and Fusion cuisines and kids can stop by the Tasty

Corner to chow down on a variety of healthy choices with 'Petite Gastronomie' also offering farm to table fruit and vegetables and baby food. A Kids Club also has plenty to keep children occupied, with culinary lessons and creative activities happening throughout the week.

Luxe All-in Living is also available at the hotelier's LUX ME White Palace in Rethymno, Crete and at LUX ME Daphnili Bay Dassia, Corfu.

LUX ME Rhodes opens in May with bookings now available from 225 Euros for a Double Guestroom Garden View on LUX ME All-Inclusive.

To learn more visit rhodos.grecotel.com

Without a care in the open-air

ARISTI MOUNTAIN Resort & Villas has introduced an Open-Air Spa Experience, inviting guests to experience the relaxation and tranquillity to be found both within its grounds and scenic vistas.

Set in the upper part of Aristi village in the Zagori Region, the resort features panoramic views over the Vikos Gorge, the Towers of Papingo and the Astraka mountain peak. The result is an open-air face or body treatment balancing indulgent relaxation in a lush landscape that surrounds the unspoilt village of Aristi.

Guests can choose from a revitalising eye treatment, Mediterranean skin therapy, Thai & Balinese massages and reflexology or an Aristi Body Scrub all on the spa menu.

Nightly rates in a double superior room on a bed-and-breakfast basis begin from £115 based on two people sharing.

Go to www.aristi.eu/en to find out more.



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GREECE SAW an exceptionally strong year for tourism in 2018, recording a 15% increase in year-on-year arrivals for all modes of transport and 17% in revenues for the first seven months. With bookings for last autumn and this winter season continuing to add to this positive trend, the destination was seen to forecast a new all-time record of more than 32 million visitors (including cruise visitors) for the close of 2018, a number triple the country's population.

Celebrate Easter in Athens with Peter Sommer Travels

PETER SOMMER Travels has revised its 'Easter in Athens' itinerary for 2019 by adding new hands-on elements.

Departing April 22, this eight-day trip gives holidaymakers the opportunity to explore the ancient city of Athens and witness its traditional Easter festivities - from choral singing to local processions and dramatic performances. Athenian experts will lead walks around the Acropolis, the Agora, the old town of Plaka and more, complemented by Greek food and wine, including traditional Lenten dishes and an Easter Sunday feast.

Whilst not a brand-new trip, the itinerary has been revised extensively and new elements added to bring guests even closer to the life of Athens, past and present. These include a specially-arranged visit to a pottery workshop allowing direct contact with an ancient craft and a personal cooking lesson to produce some of the delicacies that form an integral part of Greek Easter.

Prices start from £2,875 per person based on two sharing and include full-board at a five-star hotel, expert-led excursions, entrance fees and airport transfers. Flights are extra.

Speaking on booking trends for next year, Peter Sommer said: "In the past few years, Greece has grown to be our number one destination, representing about half our entire business. As with last year, advance bookings are very strong. 2019 looks like it will be another very positive year for niche cultural tourism in Greece."

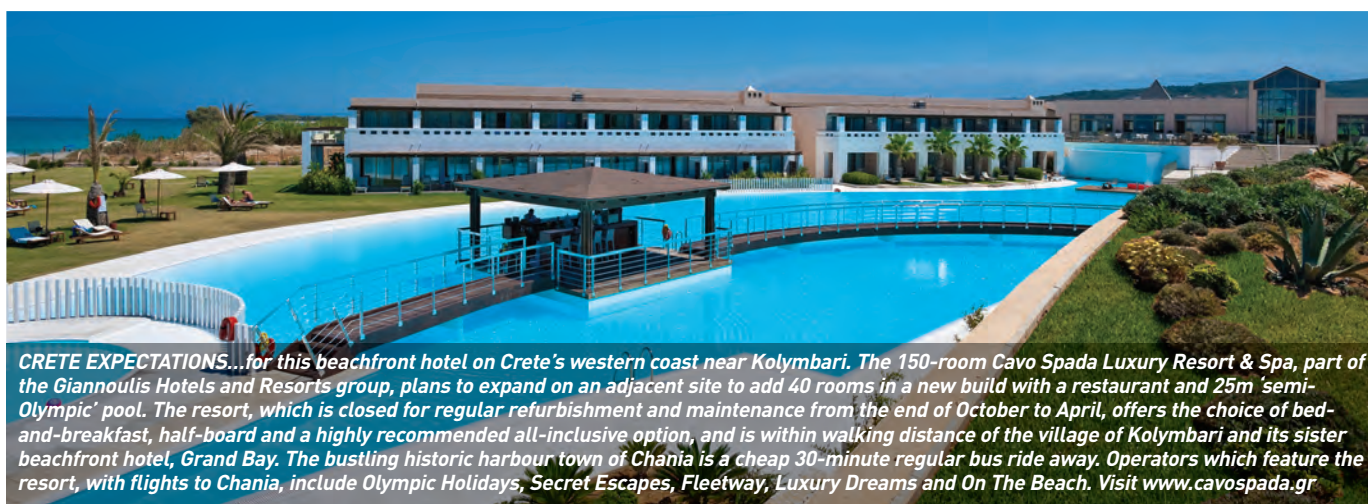
Go to www.petersommer.com or call 01600-888220 for more details.

AEGEAN supports extension of tourism season

AEGEAN AND Olympic Air reported a 10% growth in passenger traffic in November 2018, welcoming 969,000 passengers on board their flights. Passenger growth was mainly driven from its international network with the group carrying 555,000 passengers, an increase of 18% compared to November 2017.

Though passenger traffic in AEGEAN's domestic network remained at the previous year's levels, international traffic from Athens grew by 15%, with the group maintaining for the first time during the winter season, routes and frequencies (mainly in France, Italy and Germany) and contributing to the extension of the tourist season.

Mr Dimitris Gerogiannis, CEO of the airline, said: "Extending the tourist season in our country is crucial and requires investments in hotel accommodation, infrastructure and services, which could also support local employment. AEGEAN contributes to this effort by investing in its network expansion during the winter season at a cost. However, to ensure the effective results, coordinated efforts by the state and all interested parties in the sector are required."



CRETE EXPECTATIONS... for this beachfront hotel on Crete's western coast near Kolymbari. The 150-room Cavo Spada Luxury Resort & Spa, part of the Giannoulis Hotels and Resorts group, plans to expand on an adjacent site to add 40 rooms in a new build with a restaurant and 25m 'semi-Olympic' pool. The resort, which is closed for regular refurbishment and maintenance from the end of October to April, offers the choice of bed-and-breakfast, half-board and a highly recommended all-inclusive option, and is within walking distance of the village of Kolymbari and its sister beachfront hotel, Grand Bay. The bustling historic harbour town of Chania is a cheap 30-minute regular bus ride away. Operators which feature the resort, with flights to Chania, include Olympic Holidays, Secret Escapes, Fleetway, Luxury Dreams and On The Beach. Visit www.cavospada.gr

Viking reveals to agents the top cruise trends for 2019

BASED ON booking patterns and feedback from guests and travel trade partners, Viking Cruises has compiled a list of where, when, how and why travellers will be exploring in 2019 together with its top six predictions for travel this year.

Travellers are apparently waking up to the wealth of cultural experiences to be found in Portugal. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the country that boasts Lisbon, Porto and the Douro River is set to see a 2.6% rise in tourism every year until 2028 and a survey of the line's guests carried out last year placed Portugal in the top three destinations they would most like to visit. In testament to this, 'Portugal's Rivers of Gold', which takes guests through Lisbon, Coimbra, and Salamanca via the Douro River Valley, is one of the cruise line's most sought-after itineraries and sailings for 2020 were launched early in order to cope with this demand.

Wine tourism to some of the world's most beautiful destinations – Alsace, Provence, Tuscany and Stellenbosch – is also seeing a large increase in demand (Bordeaux alone has seen a visitor increase of 61% over the last 15 years) with travellers looking to combine wine tasting with unique experiences. The cruise line is therefore highlighting its wine focused sailings as a good way to experience Europe's top wine destinations, including 'Chateaux, Rivers and Wine', 'Lyon & Provence' and the 'Rhine Getaway'.

Experiencing art whilst travelling is nothing new, with most city breaks centred around visits to art galleries and museums. However, 2019 will see travellers seeking out accommodation that actively incorporates art into its offering. The demand for culinary tourism also shows no

sign of abating this year; recent research released by the line found that 62% of people like to experience a destination through its food, and ABTA's 2019 Travel Trends Report states that food and drink is now the most important factor for 78% of cruise passengers.

Reflecting the growing trend for British travellers to take shorter breaks more frequently rather than long holidays, Viking's recent survey of over 2,000 people aged 55 and above revealed that city escapes continue to be one of the most popular types of holiday. This trend is well geared toward those sailing on a river cruise with many vessels calling into and providing easy access to the heart of most 'bucket-list' cities.

Moreover, research carried out by Viking last year revealed that over 65s are living much more adventurous and active lifestyles and that this is affecting their travel choices; when asked where they would most like to visit were money no object, over half of those aged 65 plus chose far flung Australia and New Zealand as their most popular destinations. Wendy Atkin-Smith, managing director for the cruise line, said: "We know from the many guests we welcome each year that the over 65s are adventurous, active and culturally-curious. At Viking we have always ensured we offered a variety of excursions, providing different ways to access iconic destinations and experiences that offer real insight into the destinations that we visit all over the world. This month Viking will be launching its full river cruise programme for 2020 as well as ocean cruise itineraries for 2020 and 2021. Booking early will ensure guests receive the best value possible."

For more information call 0800-3196660 or go to www.vikingcruises.co.uk

Win an African Cruise with CroisiEurope

CROISIEUROPE IS giving travel agents the chance to win one of eight places on a South African cruise thanks to a new booking incentive.

Travel agents have until April 30 to make as many African Dream bookings as they can, with the eight top sellers winning a trip for themselves onboard where they will enjoy a unique four-day cruise on Lake Kariba, a four-day stay in a luxury lodge near Chobe National Park overlooking the Zambezi as well as overnights in Johannesburg and Victoria Falls. Flights and gratuities are also included.

To be in with a chance of winning, agents must sell a minimum of two cabins on any 2019 or 2020 African Dream itinerary. Winners will be announced in May and the prize must be taken on selected dates in 2019. Bookings must be secured by a deposit to qualify. For further information call on 020-8328 1281 or visit www.croisieurope.co.uk



Did you know? Viking's 2020 river cruises are now on sale from £1,395pp

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, destination inspired food and thoughtfully selected wines. Explore the cultures and customs of the places you visit on expertly led tours. And discover a unique and exciting new view of the world.

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- ✓ River-view stateroom
- ✓ All meals on board including wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner
- ✓ Free Wi-Fi on board*
- ✓ An included excursion in almost every port
- ✓ Free tea, coffee and snacks any time on board
- ✓ All port charges, government taxes and overseas transfers
- ✓ Plus onboard gratuities

2020 RIVER CRUISES

Portugal's River of Gold

10 days, 8 guided tours
Departing March to December 2020

From £1,595pp

Elegant Elbe

10 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,995pp

Rhine Getaway

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing March to December 2020

From £1,495pp

Romantic Danube

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing April to December 2020

From £1,495pp

Châteaux, Rivers & Wine

8 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,395pp

Waterways of the Tsars

13 days, 10 guided tours
Departing May to October 2020

From £2,795pp

Passage to Eastern Europe

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U by Uniworld gives clients 'Our Best Offer'

U BY Uniworld has issued its pricing for 2019 with a suite of offers and a 'Your Choice Cruising' modular product approach enabling agents to tailor their clients' experience so that they can sail their own way.

The company has announced the return of 'Our Best Offer' for 2019 cruises, so that agents can offer their clients savings of up to 30% on select sailings when booked by February 28. Furthermore, these offers now include flights from the UK, and air-inclusive prices start from £1,149 per person, sailing on the eight-day 'The Danube Flow'. To further enhance their clients' holiday experience, 'Our Best Offer' gives agents the opportunity to upgrade their customers to a Balcony Stateroom on U's ships, The A and The B, for £140 per person (commissionable for agents) and the option to pre-book their clients a premium onboard drinks package for £259 per person.

For more information call 0845-678 2795 or visit www.ubyuniworld.com



EMERALD WATERWAYS has launched its 'Ultimate River Cruise Sale' in which guests can cruise from £1,295 per person, taking advantage of savings of up to £1,000, plus an extra £200 per person discount should they book into a balcony suite. Starting at this price point is the eight-day 'The Charms of Holland & Belgium' which departs on October 18 with the offer available until January 31.

'Beautiful Rivers, Beautiful Ships' in a new-look brochure from Newmarket Holidays

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS has released a new-look European River Cruise brochure for 2019 featuring 64 sailings across ten itineraries aboard a fleet of A-ROSA vessels.

Presented as 'Beautiful Rivers, Beautiful Ships', in addition to sailings aimed at traditional river-cruisers the programme includes several multi-generational cruises designed for families and a selection of 2019 Festive Season sailings.

In reference to the strong growth of awareness about the A-ROSA brand amongst agents, David Sharman, Newmarket's commercial director, said: "Agents are recognising that the high quality of the ships' infrastructures, the range of on-board facilities, and features like all-inclusive drinks and flexible dining arrangements, appeal to seasoned river-cruisers and newcomers alike."

The operator is planning a series of events and offers for agents throughout 2019, in support of the A-ROSA programme. Richard Forde, the company's trade sales manager, said: "Look out for fam trip places, hotel accommodation and iPads to be won. Newmarket Holidays see retail sales as the principal channel for selling A-ROSA cruises, as agents are able to familiarise clients with the ships and the cruises face-to-face."

The operator will be providing 'How to Sell' guides and a programme of in-store and online training modules. To coincide with the new brochure launch, the brand has also announced an early booking incentive for all new bookings taken in January. Clients will be able to choose between a case of wine, a 'Prosecco Hamper' or a £50 credit added to a Revolut cash card.

For further details agents can call the agency sales team on 0330-160 7999.

Help clients go solo with Riviera Travel's additional trio of cruise itineraries

AVAILABLE AS part of its new programme for 2019, Riviera Travel has launched eight new itineraries created exclusively for solo travellers, including three new solo cruises.

The eight-day 'Spectacular Nile for Solo Travellers Cruise' aboard the MS Movenpick Hamees has been tailored toward solo travellers with historic highlights such as the famed tombs of the Valley of the Kings, the temple of Isis at Philae, and the towering red granite Obelisk of Hatshepsut. Starting from £1,699 per person the package includes Heathrow flights, transfers, all meals, a programme of daily tours and excursions accompanied by an expert tour manager.

Alternatively, clients can spend 15-days 'Cruising the Norwegian Fjords', aboard the MV Aegean Odyssey. Departing from Copenhagen, those travelling with the

operator will join a cruise across the Kattegat Sea to the historic Viking city of Oslo, before embarking on an expedition through Norway's immense western fjords with prices from £2,799.

Meanwhile the 'Rhine, Strasbourg & Heidelberg Cruise' takes travellers on a journey of contrasts, from refined and historic Heidelberg to quaint Boppard to medieval Strasbourg, aboard the MS Charles Dickens. Cruising down the Rhine River, this itinerary travels to the heart of Germany's wine lands, through the Alsatian countryside and concludes in the gothic streets of Cologne. Scheduled for October 2019, departures start from £1,799.

For more information visit www.rivieratravel.co.uk/solo or call 01283-248333.



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All bookings confirmed from 1 January 2019 – 28 February 2019 are eligible to be entered. All bookings must be registered via email at agencysales@rivieratravel.co.uk to be eligible for entry. If the bookings are not registered they will not be entered into the draw. The winning agent has the choice of South Africa, Vietnam & Cambodia or Budapest to the Black Sea for 2 people sharing a room. The holiday must be booked during 2019 and date restrictions may apply. All details for the relevant tour and cruise can be found in our brochures. Holidays are operated by and subject to booking conditions of Riviera Travel, ABTA V4744 ATOL 3430 protected. Subject to availability. Additional entrance costs may apply. Images used in conjunction with Riviera Travel. For further information please write to Riviera Travel, New Manor, 328 Wetmore Road, Burton upon Trent, Staffs, DE14 1SP.

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Big Christmas win for Cardiff travel agent as part of 'Big Fred. Olsen Giveaway'

FRED. OLSEN Cruise Lines made one travel agent's Christmas by gifting them a new Fiat 500 as part of the company's first-ever 'Big Fred. Olsen Giveaway'.

More than 4,000 entries were made in the giveaway incentive, with travel agent Phil Jones of Cardiff-based Cartwright Travel and Passion for Cruises, picked at random. Commenting on his win, Jones said: "When I got the call you could have knocked me down with a feather; when you enter a competition you think 'it's never going to be me'. I sell Fred. Olsen cruises often, I've been on board a Fred. Olsen ship and I think it's a lovely brand. This is the icing on the cake. This was so out of the blue, a complete shock, but I'm so pleased."

The Big Fred. Olsen Giveaway launched at the line's inaugural Closer Trade Conference last May and gave travel agents the chance to win a car in time for Christmas. Agents just had to register every booking they made for the cruise line between June 1 and December 14 – with each booking counting as a new entry into the draw. In addition, the company has also given away a cruise every month since June as part of the incentive.

Mike Evans, head of sales for the cruise line, said: "We have two main aims at Fred. Olsen: to create memories that last a lifetime, and to 'bring the world closer' to our guests, neither of which would be possible without the support of our loyal travel agents, who continue to sell our cruises to their customers time and time again. It was a pleasure to



deliver the good news to Phil, who was thrilled to have won our top prize in our 'Big Fred. Olsen Giveaway'. From all of us here at Fred. Olsen, a huge congratulations to Phil and the many travel agents who won a cruise with us last year."

The trade incentive was one of many launched by the cruise operator: Susan Forsdike of The Holiday Village won a cruise for two aboard the newest addition to the line's fleet, its river boat Brabant, simply by completing all five modules on its new online River Cruise Training Programme. In addition, all travel agents who complete the river and ocean training programmes on Fred. Olsen's dedicated Travel Agent Centre will receive £20 in shopping vouchers.

For further information visit www.fredolsencruises.com/agent or call on 01473-746164.



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Artist's impression of Coco Beach Club at Royal Caribbean's CocoCay

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Be a VIP at Sea with Royal Caribbean's new-look website and 'Member of the Month' initiative

ROYAL CARIBBEAN has re-launched its My Club Royal website, revamped with some cutting edge new features and a newly introduced 'Member of the Month' competition.

The new initiative will enable agents to acknowledge a co-worker's personal achievements by telling the line why they're extraordinary, giving them the chance to win a place on a VIP Seminar at Sea. This prize includes a sailing onboard Navigator of the Seas including a stop at Perfect Day at CocoCay as well other treats and spending money.

There will also be three Runners Up prizes each month with the first, second and third winners receiving a £100 experience voucher, Club Rewards branded Prosecco and £10 on MasterCard

respectively. Nominations can be submitted on the website between the 1st and 20th of every month and winners will be announced on the brand's celebration page with a photo and the reason for their win.

Accompanying these enhancements, Royal Caribbean has taken onboard feedback from travel agents across the UK and Ireland in order to make their experience of using the platform more user-friendly. Based on this feedback, the most used areas of the site - Make a Booking and Club Rewards - are now easier to access and navigate.

The cruise line has also released a video to familiarise agents with these changes, letting them know how they can register and showing them how they can make the most of the new improvements.

Hop aboard with CMV

FOR 2019, Cruise and Maritime Voyages (CMV) has announced 29 different opportunities for the travel trade to come aboard and visit five of its ships.

The cruise line plans to make Columbus, Magellan, Vasco da Gama, Marco Polo and Astoria available at 11 different UK ports for agents to choose from including: London - Tilbury, Bristol, Belfast, Cardiff, Dundee, Hull, Liverpool, Poole, Portsmouth, Newcastle and Rosyth. The complimentary ship visits will include a short presentation, refreshments, a five-course lunch with wine, plus the chance to explore the ship.

Lisa Jacobs, the cruise line's head of trade sales, said: "CMV remains committed to supporting our productive agents with good commission and helpful support such as these visits, and in offering a variety of alternative venues we hope we can save agents time in travelling too. In 2018 places for the ship visits in Scotland, Bristol and Liverpool were snapped up within a few days so we recommend agents try and book their places early."

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

Keel laid for PONANT's latest polar vessel Le Commandant Charcot

PONANT HAS reached the second key stage in its construction of Le Commandant Charcot, with the laying of the keel at the Vard shipyard in Tulcea, Romania.

The hybrid electric polar exploration vessel, propelled by Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), will look to offer its guests inspirational itineraries in the wake of the great polar explorers. Designed specifically for intense polar explorations, and with PC2 Polar Class certification, Le Commandant Charcot will be able to reach destinations such as the Geographic North Pole and remote sites of the Antarctic continent including the Ross Sea, Charcot Island and Peter I Island.

The ship will also be the first exploration vessel to go beyond the ecological standards set out in international regulations with a launch date scheduled for 2020, before delivery in 2021.

Go to www.ponant.com to find out more.

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Subject to availability. Terms & conditions apply. Book by 31st March 2019. Offered for sale in the UK by South Quay Travel & Leisure Ltd trading as Cruise & Maritime Voyages. Calls cost 7p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. ABTA V9945. ATOL 4619. 4892 ABTA No V9945





Pirouette with passion as Cunard partners with the English National Ballet

IN A first of its kind partnership, Cunard will be playing host to the world-renowned English National Ballet for a unique transatlantic crossing on the Queen Mary 2.

Travelling from Southampton to New York on August 11-18, guests on this seven-night voyage will have the opportunity to meet leading dancers from the British ballet company, including lead principal Erina Takahashi and first soloist James Streeter, watch their morning ballet class and drop in on afternoon rehearsals. Guests will also enjoy performances in the ship's Royal Court Theatre, including extracts from the all-time classic *Swan Lake*, the poignant contemporary work *Dust* and the visually stunning *Le Corsaire* - demonstrating the breadth of the company's repertoire.

In another first, dance workshops will run daily throughout the week at sea, offering the opportunity for guests to learn directly from English National Ballet associates. There will also be dedicated presentations, offering a fascinating insight to the dedication and exhilaration of the dancer's life, along with dance themed films and documentaries.

Angus Struthers, the cruise line's vice-president of marketing, said: "Dance in all forms is a passion for our guests and this unique partnership with English National Ballet is a great example of how Cunard wants to provide the very best of the arts on board. This voyage is a celebration of dance and what better lead partner than one of the world's most revered dance establishments."

Patrick Harrison, executive director of the English National Ballet, added: "English National Ballet is thrilled to be partnering with Cunard on this exciting voyage. Guests will get to experience the joy of ballet including performances and glimpses of behind-the-scenes. We're very much looking forward to sharing our artform with the guests on board Queen Mary 2."

SELLING CRUISE IS CLIA



by Andy Harmer,
director CLIA UK & Ireland

THE NEW Year has only just begun but there is already so much to look forward to in the cruise fold.

CLIA recently announced that it's expecting to confirm more than two million British travellers who took a cruise last year, meaning that more Brits are cruising than ever before. Positive figures from the key 2018 summer travelling period were recently released, revealing 573,000 Brits took to the seas last summer, a 2.1% rise on the same period in 2017.

The total number of cruises taken between January and September rose to 1,338,000 in 2018 from 1,310,000 in the same period the prior year.

These figures bear testament to how the cruise industry has become a major player within the UK travel sector. With 24 new ocean and river ships set to be delivered this year and many existing ships being renovated and refurbished, there has never before been so much choice for customers in terms of style of ship, itinerary and onboard experiences.

2019 is already off to a great start and we are looking forward to all that is to come over the next twelve months.

Oceania Cruises orders two next-generation Allura-Class vessels

OCEANIA CRUISES has announced an order for two new ships from Fincantieri S.p.A to be delivered in 2022 and 2025.

The two 67,000 gross ton Allura-Class ships will each accommodate approximately 1,200 guests. This new class of mid-size cruise vessels will look to retain the warmth, popular design elements and signature amenities of the line's Marina and Riviera while affording guests an additional level of comfort, convenience and new luxury amenities.

Bob Binder, president and chief executive officer of the cruise line, said: "This new class of ships will represent an evolution of the Oceania Cruises experience with all the elements our guests treasure – a warm, intimate, residential style; the most spacious standard staterooms afloat; amazing suites, and of course, the finest cuisine at sea."

Frank Del Rio, president and chief executive officer of Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd. added: "We are excited to expand the

Oceania Cruises fleet with our new Allura-Class ships to meet the strong demand for upscale culinary- and destination-focused cruise vacations around the globe. This new class of ships will further elevate the already best-in-class guest experience at Oceania Cruises and meaningfully strengthen demand from both new and loyal returning guests."

For more information visit OceaniaCruises.com or call 0345-505 1920.

'Calling life's explorers': celebrate peaks with P&O to pick up points & prizes

RUNNING THROUGH to February 28, P&O Cruises has a new peak booking period promotion offering agents and their clients: low deposits, extra on-board spending money and, on selected cruises, additional guests can travel from £1.

The 'Calling life's explorers' promotion aims to attract guests with a sense of adventure, who wish to explore the destinations and overnight ports of call that can be found on the cruise line's itineraries. The campaign coincides with the peak turn of year booking period and rewards guests in a variety of ways including extra on-board spending money on every Select Price sea view cabins and above, low deposits of 5% on Select Price and Early Saver bookings made during the campaign period and additional guests can sail from £1 per person on selected cruises of up to seven nights.

The cruise line has also announced the 100,000 Shine Point Giveaway; giving away a bonus 100,000 points to underpin the promotion. Agents will be rewarded for every Select Price booking made during the campaign period with each 'spin' giving them the chance of winning 1,000, 5,000 or 10,000 points. In addition, agents will get the chance to win a pair of tickets to the line's Shine Surprises Party, taking place at the start of the summer in a top-secret location with over 300 agents.

Alex Delamere White, the cruise line's vice president of sales and marketing, said: "We really want our agents to have a great New Year Wave period, and know that our seasonal promotion and advertising, coupled with the Shine incentive, will definitely help drive sales."

To find out more about the new campaign visit completecruisesolution.com or for more information go to www.pocruises.com

Submarine & helicopters included: Scenic Eclipse primed for 2019 debut

2019 IS set to be a big year for Scenic as it carries its more than 30 years of experience in river cruising into a new era, with the launch of the ocean bound Scenic Eclipse.

Labelled as the 'World's First Discovery Yacht', the vessel will travel from the far reaches of Antarctica and the Arctic Circle, to the Mediterranean and the South

American coastline, and will look to enable guests to take discovery to new levels with two onboard helicopters and a submarine.

The line promises an all-inclusive 'Six-Star Experience' with a host of savings and free inclusions available to help agents elevate their customers' love of travel and adventure. The company is extending

a 2019/20 offer in which clients can benefit from free private chauffeur driven door-to-door transfers, free submarine trip on Ultimate Cruises and USD\$500 on board credit on Ultimate Journeys when booked by January 31.

As an example of prices, a ten-day 'Discover Portugal & Spain' cruise departing April 24, 2020 starts from £5,465 per person.



PRINCESS CRUISES is readying the 3,560 guest *Regal Princess* as the second ship to be fully-activated with Princess Medallion. The Medallion, which is the same size as a 10p piece, gives guests access to several handy technological features such as keyless stateroom access, a more streamlined ship embarkation and disembarkation process, and enhanced interaction with crew members and other guests. All *Regal Princess* guests will have full access from February 17, during the ship's current Caribbean season. Visit www.princess.com

Azamara makes waves in BOGOHO offer

AZAMARA CLUB Cruises has announced details of its 2019 Wave campaign in which guests who book by March 31 can receive 'Buy One Get One Half Price' across 93 sailings in 2019 and 2020 – saving 50% on the second guest's fare. Those booking Club Oceanview categories and above will also receive free Wi-Fi.

Azamara's three ships – Azamara Journey, Azamara Quest and Azamara Pursuit – all have participating voyages, a number of which are country intensive such as Greece, Japan, France and Israel, allowing guests to visit a number of towns and cities in a single country to get under the skin of the destination. For the full list of applicable sailings go to www.azamaraclubcruises.co.uk



SEABOURN IS extending an invite to solo travellers and welcoming them aboard with single supplements starting at 25% above the line's Signature Savings Event fares on select worldwide voyages. The solo traveller promotion will be running until February 28 and available for suite categories up to V4 veranda. Some sailings on the line's newest ultra-luxury ship, Seabourn Ovation, are also included. Go to www.seabourn.com

Hurtigruten expands to Alaska

HURTIGRUTEN IS expanding its expedition cruise programme with several new destinations, including the chance from 2020 for its guests to explore the Alaskan wilderness on board the new and hybrid powered MS Roald Amundsen.

Company CEO, Daniel Skjeldam, said: "Alaska is a perfect fit for Hurtigruten and our expedition cruise concept. We will go where the big ships can't, taking our guests far beyond the ordinary while exploring the true beauty of Alaska."

Offering more than 250 worldwide destinations, the line's 2020/2021 expedition cruise programme will also see: the inaugural season of the eco-friendly MS Fridtjof Nansen exploring the raw beauty of Antarctica, Greenland, Iceland and the Norwegian coast; the widest selection of Antarctica voyages with more than 30 different itineraries; and an extreme makeover for MS Fram which will re-emerge as a brand-new expedition ship. *The full expedition programme can found at hurtigruten.com*

Sea it to believe it! Carnival Cruise Line unveils BOLT - the first roller coaster at sea

TAKING CRUISE innovation to new heights, Carnival Cruise Line's Mardi Gras will feature the first-ever roller coaster at sea when it debuts in 2020.

Providing a unique open-air thrill ride on the line's newest ship, 'BOLT: Ultimate Sea Coaster' will offer a rush of adrenaline with nearly 800ft. of twists, turns and drops as riders reach speeds of nearly 40mph. The all-electric coaster will allow two riders in a

motorcycle-like vehicle to race along a track 187ft. above sea level, enabling them to experience the sea in a new way complete with 360-degree views.

Christine Duffy, president of the cruise line, said: "Mardi Gras will be our most innovative ship ever with some truly special features and attractions, highlighted by BOLT, the first roller coaster at sea. BOLT will continue the tradition of Carnival providing exciting new ways for our guests to 'Choose Fun.' We are so thrilled to introduce this one-of-a-kind, game-changing, exhilarating attraction – our guests are going to love it."

Mardi Gras will be based in Port Canaveral, Florida., which will feature a new state-of-the-art terminal, and additional details about the ship's features will be announced soon. A second XL-class ship will start construction in 2020 and be delivered in 2022 to mark the 50th anniversary of Carnival Cruise Line's founding.

To learn more visit www.carnival.com



New 2019 Greek sailings from Celestyal Cruises

BASED IN Greece and with a philosophy of providing culturally immersive and authentic experiences, Celestyal Cruises' main ports of call are the Greek Islands and the Eastern Mediterranean, where it operates a variety of three-, four- and seven-night itineraries onboard two mid-sized vessels.

In addition to its existing seven-night 'Idyllic Aegean' and the three- and four-night 'Iconic Aegean' sailings, the cruise line has introduced two new seven-night itineraries for 2019: 'Eclectic Aegean' and 'Three Continents'.

'Eclectic Aegean' sails round trip from Athens and includes an overnight stay in Istanbul and calls at Volos for excursions to the mountains of Meteora, and to Canakkale for excursions to Troy and Gallipoli. The cruise also visits Heraklion and Santorini and, during its call at Mykonos, departs at 02:00 so passengers can fully enjoy the nightlife of this cosmopolitan island. 'Three Continents' also sails round trip from Athens and calls at Alexandria, Port Said, Ashdod, Kusadasi, Limassol and Rhodes.

Visit www.celestyalcruises.uk for more details.

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Crossword:

Across: 1. FIJI, 3. EVITA, 8. LA PALMA, 9. ALABAMA, 12. SAS, 13. RSA, 14. BURUNDI, 16. ECUADOR, 18. SMITH, 19. ROSS.
Down: 1. FIONA BRUCE, 2. JAL, 4. VOLGA, 5. TRANSUN, 6. APIA, 7. VERSAILLES, 10. ANAHEIM, 11. MRU, 14. BLUNT, 15. RYDE, 17. RIO.

Highlighted Word: FRANCE

Where Am I?: Sagano Bamboo Forest, Kyoto, Japan.

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We asked our staff the following question this week:

If your daily life was made into a movie montage what song would you use as its soundtrack?



Jeanette Ratcliffe

Publisher

jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk

We Are The Champions by Queen.



Adam Potter

Features Editor

adam.potter@travelbulletin.co.uk

'Back in Time' by Huey Lewis & The News.



Georgia Lewis

Managing Editor – News Team

news@travelbulletin.co.uk

I Am Woman, Hear Me Roar by Helen Reddy.



Hiriya Bairu

News Editor – News Team

news@travelbulletin.co.uk

'Simply the Best' by Tina Turner.



Lauretta Wright

Contributing Editor

lauretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk

The Benny Hill theme tune.



Paul Scudamore

Contributing Editor

The Beatles' 'All You Need Is Love'



Simon Eddolls

Sales Director

simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk

Shout - Tears for Fears.



Tim Podger

Account Manager – Far East

tim.podger@travelbulletin.co.uk

Don't Worry be happy.



Bill Coad

Account Manager

bill.coad@travelbulletin.co.uk

I've got to break free - Queen!!



Matt Gill

Senior Account Manager

matt.gill@travelbulletin.co.uk

Tarantula by Pendulum.



Sarah Terry

Account Manager

sarah.terry@travelbulletin.co.uk

O'Sole - Mio



Hannah Carter

Events & Sales Administrator

hannah.carter@travelbulletin.co.uk

Bohemian Rhapsody.



Ashweenee Beerjeraz

Events & Sales Assistant

ashweenee.beerjeraz@travelbulletin.co.uk

City of Stars - La La Land.



Vidwan Reddy

Online Editorial Assistant

vidwan.reddy@travelbulletin.co.uk

Pharrell Williams - Happy.



Lucia Mathurin

Junior Designer

lucia.mathurin@travelbulletin.co.uk

Best Life - Cardi B



Eugenia Nelly Mendes

Head of Production

production@travelbulletin.co.uk

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