

travelbulletin

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THAI-STYLE HOSPITALITY IN THE CITY OR ON THE BEACH



#BookCentara

Centara's hospitality and value are well-known in Thailand, at destinations ranging from luxurious city hotels to tropical island retreats. Our winning formula is also available in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and now, the Middle East. Each location offers something special: spectacular nature; romantic ambience; prime shopping; or hi-tech style.

Your clients will find a world of delicious cuisine – not only expertly-prepared Asian dishes, but also European and Middle Eastern favourites. They'll be pampered in our famous Thai spas. Families appreciate our Kids' Clubs and water features.

Most of all, our guests appreciate Centara's graceful, Thai-style service. For a unique experience your customers will thank you for, find out more at the contacts below.

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DISCOVER MORE AT centarahotelsresorts.com/b2b



CHILL VIP...

THE PERSONAL Travel Agents at Co-operative Travel partnered with Kuoni for its annual Top Performing Homeworker trip, "Chill VIP", which saw 32 agents set off on an Italian adventure to the island of Ischia. On the four-day trip, homeworkers enjoyed walking tours, fine dining and the chance to explore Ischia, Sorrento and Pompeii. The FAM was also attended by the senior management team for The Personal Travel Agents at Co-operative Travel.

2.5 million Brits have taken to slippery slopes without winter sports travel insurance

NEW RESEARCH from ABTA shows more than 2.5 million British adults who have been on winter sports holidays admitted never checking whether they had taken out the appropriate insurance for the activities they were undertaking, including skiing and snowboarding.

ABTA is encouraging people of all ages to stay safe both on and off piste, by ensuring they have the right level of fitness to enjoy their holiday injury free as well as taking out winter sports travel insurance to cover any potential accidents.

According to new figures, ABTA members reported two British ski-related fatalities and 197 significant

incidents on the slopes overseas in the past 12 months. However, these figures represent just those cases reported by ABTA members and the association believes the total number of incidents to be much higher.

Researchers found that just over one in five (22%) people who have ever been on a winter sports holiday never check their insurance, with this figure rising to more than a quarter (28%) of people aged 55 and over.

Nikki White, ABTA's director of destinations and sustainability, said: "Thousands of people are hitting the slopes each year without the right travel insurance. Many wrongly assume they are automatically covered for winter sports as part of their travel insurance, putting them at risk of costly medical bills if they have an accident."

"As we head into the winter sports season we advise holidaymakers to check their insurance cover before travelling. It's also important that holidaymakers get themselves ski-fit in order to be safe on the slopes."

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discover why this destination is attracting more visitors each year



WARNER LEISURE Hotels is driving last minute Christmas and New Year bookings with festive break options throughout November and December. Guests can visit one of the brand's 13 country and coastal hotels this November or December and enjoy a break packed with all of the festive trimmings. See www.warnerleisurehotels.co.uk for more information.

Funway Holidays unveils 2019 USA & Canada brochure

FUNWAY HOLIDAYS' USA product offering in its recently launched 2019 brochure sees the addition of a refreshed selection of hotels in the Big Apple, plus a greatly expanded range of self-drive holidays.

The following eleven self-drive itineraries are new for the operator: 'Pacific Coast Explorer', 'Completely California', 'The Great Texas Escape', 'Talkin' Texan', 'Colonial America', 'Heartland of America', 'Jazzy Jambalaya', 'Southern Hospitality', 'Yellowstone & Wyoming Wind River Country', 'National Parks Explorer' and 'Cycling Sonoma and Napa'.

Commenting on the new self-drive focus, Malcolm Davies, product destination manager for Funway Holidays, said: "We have seen a strong 15% increase on self-drive holiday bookings, year on year. Customer demand for this type of holiday is high and is the reason why we have significantly expanded our offering in this area, from 14 to 25 self-drive holiday itineraries."

The holiday specialist is offering a 14-day 'Completely California' self-drive

holiday including return flights from the UK. Prices start from £2,479 per person including all accommodation with an overnight stay in Bakersfield, two-nights in Cambria, San Diego and Yosemite N.P. and three-nights in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Travel is based on two adults sharing, departing 2019.

The tour itinerary starts at San Francisco, the 'city by the bay' with visits to iconic sites including the Golden Gate Bridge. The next stop on the tour is Los Angeles where holidaymakers can experience the glamour of Beverly Hills and Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

Further south is San Diego, with its historic Gaslamp Quarter and turning north, guests will see the old mining town of Calico before arriving at Sequia and Yosemite National Parks where can travellers enjoy breathtaking views. Travellers can also venture to El Capitan and the Half Dome before making their way back to San Francisco.

For more information visit: <https://funwayholidays.inbro.net/>

PONANT commences construction of Le Commandant Charcot

PONANT HAS officially commenced construction of its polar exploration vessel, Le Commandant Charcot, with the traditional steel cutting ceremony taking place earlier this month.

The delivery of the ship is scheduled for 2021. Named after the French explorer Jean-Baptiste Charcot as a tribute to the 'gentleman of the poles', the polar vessel will incorporate the latest innovations in environmental protection. It will have a scientific laboratory, to be used for operational and research missions on oceanographic research.

As an electric hybrid vessel, Le Commandant Charcot, will be powered by Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and designed for intense polar explorations with a PC2 Polar Class certification in order to sail to the Geographic North Pole.

Jean Emmanuel Sauvé, CEO and co-founder of the cruise line, said: "I am proud to be involved in the inception of a project that marks the culmination of 30 years of effort. Exploring little-known lands and sharing and transmitting our passion for the sea and for nature have always been our driving forces. Our fervent desire is that our passengers, being in daily contact with scientists and experts, and meeting with the local populations, become ambassadors for the protection of these regions."

HYY Group to open historic hotel in Helsinki

TWO OF Helsinki's most historic grand lodgings will be join forces, creating one of the city's most-exciting hotel openings to date. HYY Group has purchased the oldest running hotel in Helsinki – Seurahuone – which opened in 1833.

HYY Group will combine the two buildings, to create a 180-220 room property. Both buildings were designed by Finnish architect Armas Lindgren. Students will still use some parts of the building, bringing vibrancy to the hotel project once completed and in use.

The hotel project and its renovation are set to improve the development of the city's central historic area of Kaivopuiho. The surrounding district and its economy are predicted to thrive, with the planned new hotel set to create new jobs and drive visitor numbers. Antti Kerppola, CEO of HYY Group said: "With this acquisition, a new and internationally appealing hotel complex will be created right in the centre of Helsinki. We are planning a comprehensive renovation of the facilities. Our aim is to open a new hotel...in the spring of 2021. We are currently seeking an operator for the hotel: either an international hotel chain or a Finnish company".

Ring in the new year in New York

NYC & Company, New York City's official destination marketing organisation has announced a festive line-up of celebrations in Times Square this New Year's Eve.

NYC & Company President and CEO Fred Dixon said: "The ball drop on New Year's Eve in Times Square is one of the world's most iconic annual celebrations and we invite visitors and residents alike to enjoy this incredible spectacle."

Dick Clark's New Year's Rocking Eve with Ryan Seacrest will broadcast the Times Square festivities globally with the help of performances by superstar acts (to be announced) and hosts Ryan Seacrest and Jenny McCarthy.

Additional festivities in the Big Apple will include: a multicultural feast at the Z Hotel NYC, a New Years Eve Gala at the Nicotra Ballroom at The Hilton Garden Inn and a glitzy party on Park Avenue the Loews Regency Hotel in Manhattan's Upper East Side.

Dixon added: "New York City is poised to welcome travellers with signature style at several key events that will ensure a memorable start to 2019." *The official NYC & Company guide to the festivities can be found here:* <https://www.nycgo.com/articles/new-years-eve-in-times-square-dont-drop-the-ball>



SHEARINGS HOLIDAYS and A-ROSA River Cruises hosted 20 agents on a fam trip on board A-ROSA VIVA sailing on the Seine and visiting Vernon, Rouen and Paris. From the left: Phil Nuttall The Cruise Village; Teresa Williams Hays Travel Homeworker; Michael Bowers national sales manager Shearings Holidays

Greece set to welcome a record 32 million visitors this year

VISIT GREECE announced that the country has experienced its best year to date, recording a 15% increase year-on-year in arrivals for all modes of transport, and 17% in revenues for the first seven months.

Throughout the autumn and winter bookings have remained strong and Greece is forecasting a new all-time record of more than 32 million visitors (including cruise visitors) by the end of the year.

According to the tourism authority, air arrivals and bookings are up 9% for 2018 compared to last year and early bookings continue strong for 2019.

For summer 2019, new flight routes have been announced by Ryanair, Jet2 and BA. Ryanair has announced the launch of a number of new routes connecting the UK with Greece for summer 2019 from April through to October. These are two flights a week departing from Liverpool John Lennon Airport to Corfu (from £73 one way), one flight a week from Southend to Corfu (from £85 one way), two flights a

week from Manchester to Thessaloniki (from £53 one way) and a daily flight from Luton to Athens (from £58).

Jet2 has announced it will run 140 flights per week to Greece from early May to October 2019, which represents a 20% growth on 2018. The new flight routes are as follows: six flights a week each departing from Birmingham, Leeds Bradford, Manchester and London Stanstead to Chania, Crete. One flight a week departing from Edinburgh to Corfu, one flight a week departing from Birmingham to Kefalonia and one flight a week departing from Glasgow to Kos.

Also launching two new seasonal routes to Greece for 2019 is British Airways. It is offering passengers three flights a week from Gatwick to Kos, from May 15 to October 26. The four-hour flight starts from £70 one way in economy. There are two flights a week from Gatwick to Preveza, departing on Wednesday and Sunday starting from £87 one way in economy.

Putting in paradise: Mauritian golf club Ile aux Cerfs celebrates 15th anniversary

ILE AUX CERFS Golf Club, situated on Mauritian island Ile aux Cerfs, is celebrating its 15th anniversary. The island, situated off Trou d'Eau Douce in the largest lagoon of Mauritius, is known for its golf, white sandy beaches and wide range of activities. It features an 18-hole par 72 championship course designed by the golfing legend Bernhard Langer and is ranked among the best in the world. The course is accessible to players of all levels, set among exotic gardens and guests can perfect their swing at the Golf Academy, or relax on Filibusters, the exclusive beach for golfers.

The anniversary of Ile Aux Cerfs Golf Club coincides with the launch of the 'Go Green' concept on Ile aux Cerfs. This ongoing project aims to ensure that the island is as sustainable and eco-friendly as possible, with initiatives being rolled out at a number of places, including bars and restaurants which have stopped serving straws with their drinks.

For more information www.ileauxcerfsgolfclub.com



Tobago Tourism goes 'beyond the ordinary' for 2019

THE TOBAGO Tourism Agency announced it will be launching a number of tourism developments at this year's WTM, including a new initiative designed to reward UK travel agents who have 'gone beyond' with bookings to Tobago during peak periods. Winners will be treated to a gala event on the island in a series of events to celebrate their success.

Under its new brand tagline to be 'Beyond Ordinary', Tobago's accommodation sites and attractions, service delivery and hospitality towards visitors have to be similarly 'Beyond Ordinary'. Therefore, the Agency will roll out a number of initiatives for 2019.

A new online training programme is expected to encourage Tobagonians to aim for excellence in service delivery. The

Agency, together with the Tobago Hospitality Tourism offer training in the provision of customer service in all aspects of service delivery.

Also new for 2019 is a collaboration between The Tobago Tourism Agency and Tobago Bureau of Standards to improve and standardise the quality of products and services being offered to visitors and locals.

A social media campaign with the hashtag #101reasonstobago has been created to highlight 101 unforgettable reasons to visit the country, from authentic experiences that showcase what Tobago has on offer to thrilling adventures that take you 'beyond the ordinary'. The idea behind the campaign is to enable visitors to have their say about the untouched, unspoilt, undiscovered Tobago.

Centara Hotels' deputy CEO talks new openings and growth strategy

LAST YEAR, Centara Hotels, Thailand's largest domestic hotel group, announced plans to expand its portfolio and now this growth strategy has been implemented, with new hotel openings in Thailand and across other regions.

Markland Blaiklock deputy CEO at Centara spoke to *Travel Bulletin* about the company's five year vision. He said: "We have a five-year plan that we worked on last year and the fifth year is 2022 and the essence of that plan is really focused on development and the growing scale of the company doubling in size – so we're moving in that direction. We're expecting by the end of the year to have signed up another 15 projects."

Blaiklock told *Travel Bulletin* about the development of an affordable lifestyle brand the hotel group is particularly focusing its efforts on called COSI. He added: "We opened the first one a year ago in Samui and according to the plan we will have 40 within five years so we have to move fast. We have a second one under development in Pattaya which will open next year and the third one in Chiang Mai the year after.

"Those three are all owned by the company and we have another one by a third party Krabi, in the south and we are signing this month three properties in Laos and one in Luang Prabang and Vientiane but most prominent is the opening of our first property in Doha which is actually residences and suites that will be our second property in the Middle East."

For more information on the resorts visit www.centarahotels.com

Everything is fine in Sardinia for Spring 2019

FINE TIME Sardinia, a new marketing initiative created by Confindustria Centro Nord Sardinia and launched at WTM 2018, features an online training programme and fam trip dates for the travel trade taking place in Spring 2019. It involves a combination of eight different, privately owned/managed, four-star luxury hotels as well as local mineral water, cheese, wine liqueur and olive oil production companies.

A website will be launched with their new branding at the end of the year along with an online training programme. The total project investment is €600,000 and will be completed by March 2020.

From the hotelier's perspective, the aim of the project is to introduce the hotel partners to the UK market through the media and to work more closely with travel agents, homeworkers and MICE specialists to generate business to the properties for a variety of breaks, such as, spa, golf, diving or gastronomy.

Tullio Datome of Gabbiano Azzurro Hotel & Suites at WTM 2018, London said: "We are delighted to be able to showcase our region as a whole with such like-minded hoteliers all striving to offer compatible and yet very different luxury travel experiences to our guests."

Black Friday bonus for boating beverages

EMERALD WATERWAYS is offering a Black Friday bonus as part of this year's autumn sale.

The river cruise operator has savings of up to 30% on a range of European cruises and, as an extra incentive for agents, guests on bookings made until November 30 will receive unlimited free drinks during their time on board.

As well as the offer on beverages, the cruises feature a range of inclusions, such as daily excursions, dining experiences, return flights, transfers and tips.

For more information about this offer and the autumn sale deals, go to www.emeraldwaterways.co.uk



SPANIEL TRANSMISSION... To promote its properties as dog-friendly, Haven has appointed Severus and Lily, two spaniels, as "Directors of Walkies". Thirty-three Haven holiday parks, located near pooch-friendly facilities such as doggy ice cream parlours and pubs that welcome dogs, allow guests to bring a furry friend along. A deep-cleaning service is offered to ensure the dogs enjoy their stay without leaving any traces behind.

Multi-million milestone for Manchester

MANCHESTER AIRPORT is celebrating 28 million passengers passing through its three terminals for the first time in its 80-year history.

The UK's third-largest airport saw more than 2.5 million passengers use the airport in October this year, an increase of 6% on October 2017.

This brought the annual rolling total to 28,022,344, with numbers boosted by the October half-term with many families taking an autumn break.

Last month saw a total of 18,192 aircraft take off and land at the UK's third busiest airport, an average of 587 flights per day. Almost 11,000 tonnes of cargo were also carried to destinations across the globe last month, the equivalent of 870 London buses.

As reported in *Travel Bulletin* last week, a direct route between Manchester and Mumbai has opened up with JetAirways – the five-flights-a-week service had its inaugural flight on November 5 and it left the north-western city 96% full.

Other airlines have added to their capacity at Manchester, with Ryanair, easyJet and Jet2.com all upping their winter schedules, which is expected to continue bolstering overall passenger numbers.

Additionally, Manchester's access to Africa will be improved with the commencement next month of flights to Addis Ababa on Ethiopian Airlines.

The airport's £1 billion transformation project continues apace with a topping out ceremony held to mark the extension of Terminal Two after just over a year of construction work. A 45-metre, 85-tonne bridge, which will connect the terminal extension with the new multi-storey car park, has been lifted into place. Work on the car park is scheduled to be finished by the middle of next year.



A fresh new design for the ideal beachfront getaway



Playa Bávaro · Dominican Republic



Notes from Normanton...

I GOT my pacemaker fitted but it's a bit like the Christmas lights – it's not switched on yet! And I've got to give it four weeks to make sure there is no infection or rejection. Fingers crossed that December 5 will be switch on day and I will have the ablation in the New Year. I can't wait.

In Leeds, I attended the ABTA meeting. There was a good turn-out and discussions on the implementation of the new package travel regulations, FCO advice, IATA NewGen ISS, and what it all means to members. Eighty pounds was raised for ABTA Lifeline and Helen Parry from Arundel Travel, the new ABTA chairperson for the region, introduced herself. I am sure she will do a fantastic job.

I attended one of the best events so far this year at Oulton Hall, near Leeds. It was hosted by Star Clipper, AMA Waterways and Hurtigruten. Alison Jared from RSM North gave a presentation telling how Star Clippers offers an authentic sailing experience and passengers can get involved with sailing the ship, climbing the crow's nest and pulling ropes. They visit the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Asia and Cuba. Check them out on www.starclippers.co.uk – and they don't sell cheaper direct.

Joanne Smithies updated us about AMA Waterways. I haven't done a river cruise but really fancy it. Their AmaKristina and AmaMagna vessels are twice the width of traditional European river ships and will sail the Danube from May 2019. AMA is trade-focused and trade-friendly and you can email them on AgencySupport@amawaterways.com

Mark Walter's presentation on Hurtigruten was full of interesting information on exploration travel, including Antarctica, Arctic, the Americas and Europe. They do Norway's Northern Lights and the best time to go is between October and March. Brilliantly, all Hurtigruten ships are plastic-free.

'A negative mind will never let you have a positive life' and 'Time is like a river, you cannot touch the same water twice because the flow that has passed will never pass again.'

Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY
in Normanton, Yorkshire

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

New routes boost trans-Atlantic travel

VISIT THE USA is keen to highlight to agents a raft of new routes between the UK and Ireland and popular American destinations, which will be debuting in the new year.

In March 2019, America Airlines will start flying daily from Heathrow to Phoenix, Arizona, helping more travellers to access the Grand Canyon.

April 2019 will be busy for new routes – British Airways will start flying from Heathrow to Charleston, South Carolina, between April 4 and October 29, 2019; from April 2, British Airways will start flying four times a week from Heathrow to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and American Airlines will launch a new service from Edinburgh to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania's largest city from April 2, running daily until October 26, 2019.

Delta Airlines will be launching a daily Edinburgh-Boston route on May 23, 2019, and Virgin Atlantic will start flying from Manchester to Los Angeles three times a week from May 26, 2019.

In June and July next year, two new routes from Dublin to the US will increase access for travellers from Ireland.

Between June 6 and September 28, 2019, American Airlines will be flying daily between Dublin and Dallas Fort Worth.

On July 8, 2019, Aer Lingus will start operating a new route from Dublin to Minneapolis-St Paul, Minnesota, flying daily. This route will be the 15th North American destination for Aer Lingus.

For more information about visiting these American destinations, go to www.VisitTheUSA.co.uk

*Good interior design is essential
for passenger comfort in the air.*



Future flights of fancy in focus at second RedCabin conference

IMPROVING THE airline passenger experience will be high on the agenda at the second RedCabin conference, which will be held in Hamburg from December 4-6.

Leading airlines, manufacturers and design agencies from around the world will discuss the trends and challenges faced by the aviation industry as they develop new ways to improve the passenger experience and ensure flights are safe and comfortable.

Attending this year's conference will be senior executives from companies such as Etihad Airways, JetBlue, Recaro, Boeing, Zodiac Aerospace, Rockwell Collins, Acumen Design Associates, ANA, Safran and Lufthansa.

For more information about the conference, including the agenda, go to www.aircraft-cabin-innovation.redcabin.de

AGENT INCENTIVES

- **GOLD MEDAL** is offering agents the chance to win one of four prizes of Farebank rewards, each worth £400, when they book holidays to Tobago before December 16. To be entered into the draw, agents need to send booking references to win@goldmedal.co.uk and more details about the incentive can be found at www.goldmedal.com
- **AGENTS CAN** earn up to £150 in shopping vouchers for every Singapore holiday booked in Premier Holidays' long-haul incentive between now and the end of December. To help agents, the operator is providing marketing materials. For more information, www.trade.premierholidays.co.uk
- **UNTIL THE** end of November, Avis Budget Group will enter agents into a prize draw for every Avis or Budget booking made for car rentals up to December 31. The top prize is 15,000 Norwegian Reward CashPoints to spend with the airline and there will be ten prizes of £360 shopping vouchers. To be in the running, agents should enter booking references at www.avis-promotion.com/getmore

AGENT TRAINING

THE GOA experience is offering training for agents keen to sell the tour operator's southern Indian packages, which include beach holidays, spa breaks and boutique hotel experiences. For access to training and agent support, call 01489 866955 or email trade@serenityholidays.co.uk.

Agents who book five holidays across any of Serenity Holidays' six brands, including the Goa Experience by November 30 will win a year's subscription to Spotify or £100.



THE TEAM at Seaside Travel in Durham have been named the most successful travel store in the UK for selling hot tub breaks from Hoseasons. The team was presented with a free Wanderwood getaway in south-west Scotland. Pictured from the left are: Jodie Young, Emma Vout, Yasmin Kane, Vanessa Reay and Rebecca Pearn. Additionally, ten agents can win one of ten Lifestyle vouchers worth £50 if they register their Hoseasons bookings until December 9 by emailing agency.sales@hoseasons.co.uk

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

- **NEW!** Win a three-night stay at the Hotel La Torre Golf Resort & Spa with Youtravel.com and Costa Calida!
- Win a £50 Love2Shop voucher with Bangkok Airways
- Win £25 worth of lifestyle vouchers with Titan Travel
- £125 Love2Shop vouchers and more to be won with Exodus Travels

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

An Australian island resort re-opening for Daydream believers

DAYDREAM ISLAND, which has long been a popular Australian tourist destination, will be having a soft launch on April 10, 2019 following almost two years of redevelopment. The redevelopment project was in response to the devastation caused in 2017 by Cyclone Debbie.

As well as the redevelopment, a new brand identity has been launched with a logo featuring mermaids and stingrays. The island's marketing team called on the social media community to share their memories from past holidays. Three new restaurants, three new bars and revived pool landscape are the major facets of the redevelopment.

Jayson Heron, director of sales and marketing at Daydream Island Resort, said the rebrand was an important step in the Island's transformation: "Daydream Island has undergone a huge journey from the devastation caused in 2017 by Cyclone Debbie and we wanted the new brand to signal the evolution of the Island. The new brand gives a nod to Daydream's heritage whilst also looking to the future."

Bookings from April 10, 2019 are now being taken. Go to www.daydreamisland.com for more information.

Club Med goes exclusive at Playa Esmeralda in the Dominican Republic

CLUB MED's Exclusive Collection 5 Trident brand will be making its first foray into the Americas with Club Med Michès Playa Esmeralda in the Dominican Republic.

The opening, scheduled for December 2019, means Club Med will be the first hospitality brand to open a resort in the Michès region.

New concepts to the Club Med brand featured at the 93-acre resort include four boutique villages for guests to choose from, two of which are adults-only (Archipelago and Emerald Jungle) and two of which are geared towards families (Caribbean Paradise and Explorer Cove).

The infrastructure of the project has undergone a series of assessments on its environmental, social and economic sustainability performance. Once finished, the resort's daily operations will perform under the Green Globe certification to



The Instagram-worthy swing of Montaña Redonda.

meet the highest standards of sustainability.

"Staying true to the property's surrounding natural beauty, our newly announced environmentally friendly approach will help preserve and conserve the ecological environment in which the resort finds itself," said Estelle Giraudeau, managing director, Club Med UK and Northern Europe.

As well as the resort activities for which Club Med properties are well-known, the Michès region offers such attractions as Laguna Limon, a nature reserve with waterfalls; Samaná Bay, a bay featuring protected islands; and Montaña Redonda, a "rounded mountain" with 360-degree panoramic views of the surrounding flourishing landscape, known for its swing.



GAINS IN SPAIN... Puy du Fou, France's second-largest theme park has opened its first venture in Spain. Located in Toledo, the park will open in the new year and focus on the history of Spain.

Bedbank wakes up to new brochure

YOUTRAVEL, AN online bedbank, has launched its first brochure with the aim of informing agents about accommodation offerings in the Mediterranean, Africa, United Arab Emirates and the USA.

The brochure includes selling points for agents, star ratings for every property, meal plans and location details.

The bedbank offers a wide range of accommodation types, from two-star to five-star. These include apartments and hotels across the Greek islands, Balearics, Canary Islands, the Algarve and mainland Spain, coastal resort areas of Turkey and Egypt, as well as ships, which are operated from Luxor, Dubai, Ras al Khaimah, Oman and New York City.

"We created this brochure to give our partners easier access to the price points and key selling points of each unit, which will naturally help increase sales," said Matt Carpenter, Youtravel's UK general manager. "We introduced this brochure at World Travel Market and it acted as a great reference during meetings – the feedback we received from our partners was great and we will now spend the next few months introducing the brochure to all regional partners."

The brochure can be viewed online at www.youtravel.com/news/tech-savvy-youtravel-goes-low-tech

Su Doku

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

Number: 043

A →

B →

C →

D →

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

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, November 29th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 9th November is Karen Stone, Classic Travel in Essex.

November 9th Solution: A=4 B=1 C=8 D=7

Where Am I?



With a name that means 'vast place' this is one of the oldest and largest deserts, stretching inland from the Atlantic Ocean. This arid hotspot surprisingly supports a diverse number of plants and animals, some of which are found nowhere else in the world.

Crossword



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

Across

1. Car rental company, sounds economical (6)
4. Italian holiday isle (4)
8. Montpellier is the state capital (7)
9. Known as the Garden of England (4)
10. Capital of Lesotho (6)
12. Largest of the Dodecanese islands (6)
13. One of the Hawaiian islands (4)
16. Swiss resort on Lake Maggiore (7)
17. Cellist, ___ Ma who performed at the Arc de Triomphe Armistice ceremony (2-2)
18. Middle East country (6)

Down

1. This manic shopping event follows Thanksgiving (5,6)
2. The South West Coast Path runs through this county (5)
3. Spain's longest river (4)
5. Polish airline (3)
6. Shakespearean comedy (2,3,4,2)
7. Sea off the northeast coast of Australia (5)
11. Actress, Dame Judi (5)
14. Greeting heard in 13 Across (5)
15. Official language of Pakistan (4)
16. London City Airport code (3)

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

Big savings on business class upgrades with Wendy Wu and Cathay Pacific

WENDY WU Tours is offering discounts on business class upgrades from £299 per person on fully escorted tours of China, Japan and Vietnam when booked before November 30. The offer has been introduced to celebrate the company's 20-year anniversary. Upgrades are available on outbound and return journeys from £1,299 per person.

Availability is extremely limited and agents are encouraged to book as soon as possible to benefit from this offer. The offer applies to departures from Gatwick and Manchester and there is a supplement of £100 for departures booked from Heathrow.

John Warr, global sales director for Wendy Wu, said: "The business class upgrade with Cathay Pacific is undoubtedly one of the most luxurious business class services in the world having won numerous awards and commendations over the last few years. Combining this with one of our award-winning tours to China, Japan and Vietnam and you have the ultimate VIP Asia travel experience."

For more information, go to www.wendywutours.co.uk/agents or call 0800 902 0888.

Cape Town encouraging water-wise tourists to flow in

DESPITE WATER restrictions still being in place, Cape Town Tourism is urging visitors to come as the impact of these restrictions is minimal. Tourists are encouraged to take short showers and ensure taps are not left running. As of October 2018, local dams were at 75% capacity.

Cape Town enjoys increasing international tourism, with the latest figures showing 13% growth in international arrivals year-on-year.

According to the Euromonitor Megatrends Report 2019, which was released at World Travel Market, one of the trends which is influencing holiday choices made by consumers is the desire for a seamless experience from start to finish. For visitors to South Africa, this includes the use of proximity payment products to minimise the amount of cash carried by tourists.

"We extend our invitation to all travel enthusiasts, explorers and holidaymakers to come and see for themselves that Cape Town is a must-visit destination with unparalleled experiences, that hold



sustainable tourism practices at our foundation," said Cape Town Tourism CEO, Enver Duminy.

Sizzling summer sailings with MSC

MSC CRUISES has announced new itineraries and a new ship for the summer 2020 season with bookings now open.

Eleven ships will be deployed for a range of Mediterranean cruises. The new flagship, MSC Grandiosa will be one of the ships spending summer 2020 in the western Mediterranean after her planned christening in November 2019. The Mediterranean itineraries include a voyage taking in Barcelona, Cannes and Civitavecchia, Rome; a Balearic Islands route with the addition of a full day in Naples, Italy; and a trip which takes in Sicily, Sardinia and the Spanish city of Valencia.

Four ships will be deployed to northern Europe for 2020. There will be a voyage to Norway and Iceland; a seven-night cruise from Hamburg taking in Le Havre, Southampton, Zeebrugge and Amsterdam, 11-night cruises of the Baltics; and seven-night cruises visiting the Norwegian fjords and Baltic capitals respectively. There will also be cruises around Ireland and a 21-night northern Europe voyage taking in Greenland and Iceland.

In the Caribbean, seven-night itineraries from Miami will include the Cayman Islands and the Mexican destination of Cozumel. There will also be options for 14-night cruises taking in destinations such as Havana, San Juan, St Thomas and Nassau.

For details, go to www.msccruises.co.uk



SEAWORLD SNACKS... SeaWorld Orlando will again be holding the Seven Seas Food Festival. Running from February 9 until May 5, visitors will be able to enjoy food and drink from around the world and local treats, such as craft beer. Top artists will be performing at Bayside Stadium.



Industry Insight by...



Passion, personality and perseverance are essential, says Charlie Hopkinson, managing director of Dragoman

JULIE GABBOTT has guided Dragoman tours since September 2013, leading trips through South America, India, Nepal, West, East and Southern Africa, Central Asia and Mongolia. She scooped the Wanderlust Guide of the Year accolade with a staggering 4,000 nominations. During her five years as a guide for Dragoman, we have consistently received excellent feedback on Julie's tours. She certainly possesses the inherent qualities needed to be an award-winning leader – passion, personality and perseverance – in shedloads, while she's gained other useful

qualities via our rigorous training programme.

All Dragoman overland crew complete an in-depth assistance programme, with an initial one-week trial culminating in the all-important eight-week training schedule. Overland crew means challenging work and, whether you become a driver/mechanic or tour leader, the responsibilities and pressures on you – both individually and as a team – can test the best of us. It can also, of course, be the most rewarding and satisfying thing you've ever done. From camping in the wild Andes to spotting big game in Africa, no two days are ever the same. You will travel overland, leading your group across continents and to places

rarely visited by tourists. All of our crew drive our overland trucks – if you'd like to see one for yourself, come to Destinations in London or Manchester. Even if you ultimately focus on becoming a dedicated tour leader, you will still need to obtain the correct licence and know your way around Dragoman's custom-built trucks to ensure that you have the all-round knowledge and expertise to run our trips. You won't find a garage around the corner in many of our destinations!

Once training is complete and leaders are out on the road, there are some important qualities

"The important qualities essential to becoming a great overland tour leader and these are often closely aligned to those of a travel agent."

essential to becoming a great overland tour leader and these are often closely aligned to those of a travel agent. Not only do you need to be incredibly sociable and enjoy meeting people, you need to go the extra mile to make their experience really special. A good leader needs to be constantly thinking ahead, planning every minute detail, not only for prearranged activities but also pre-empting what might go wrong. Sometimes it's the things

that the group are completely unaware of that are most important. A good crew leader, like a good agent, needs bags of patience, diplomacy, good communication and organisational skills and, of course, a great sense of humour which is essential when dealing with the most demanding clients!



AIR TRANSAT has announced it will be offering services to six Canadian destinations from the UK starting May 1, 2019. The airline will run direct flights from: Gatwick, Manchester and Glasgow to Toronto; from Gatwick and Manchester to Vancouver; from Gatwick to Calgary and Montreal; along with a range of connecting services via Toronto and Montreal to Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Quebec City. In total, the airline will offer 40 direct flights and almost 60 connecting services from the UK every week. The airline offers multi-destination flight options, where passengers can land in one Canadian city and return from another at no extra cost. Visit www.airtransat.com to find out more.

Fleet expansion sees Air Europa living the Dream(liner)

AIR EUROPA is promoting its new 2019 routes to Panama and Iguazu, Argentina.

The new flight to Panama will be operated by a Dreamliner aircraft and commence on February 25, 2019, with five flights a week between Madrid's Barajas International Airport and Tocumen International Airport, the international airport of Panama City. Connections will feed in from across Europe, including Gatwick airport.

The twice-weekly flight to Puerto Iguazu, Argentina will commence in June 2019, a third destination in the country for the airline, after Buenos Aires and Córdoba. It will be the first international service for the airport, with the region being a popular tourist destination well known for the Iguazu Falls, the largest waterfall system in the world.

Since this time last year the Brazilian city of Recife has also been added to the Air Europa long haul network, the third Brazilian destination for the airline, the other two being Salvador de Bahia and Sao Paulo.

These new additions mean that the number of Latin American destinations now served by the airline total 21 across 14 countries. Long-haul flights to Latin America operate out of the airline's hub at Madrid airport with Air Europa short-haul services connecting in from all over Europe, including a twice-daily service from Gatwick. This year has also seen airline enter phase two of its \$3.5billion fleet investment programme which will see 27 Dreamliner 787 aircrafts delivered by 2022. Visit www.aireuropa.com/en/flights to find out more.

Jet2 expands free resort flight check-in service

JET2HOLIDAYS HAS expanded its Free Resort Flight Check-in Service to a further four new destinations, after the service saw another summer of popularity with customers.

The tour operator is launching the smart service in Faro (Algarve), Madeira, Costa de Almeria and Girona (Costa Brava) in time for Summer 19. The expansion means Jet2holidays now runs the service in four destinations on the Spanish mainland as well its destinations in Portugal (Faro and Funchal). The service already features in all of the company's destinations across the Canary Islands and in Cyprus.

Steve Heapy, the holiday brand's CEO said: "Jet2holidays customers love the simplicity and ease of our market leading Free Resort Flight Check-in service and are continually telling us what a difference this smart, secure service makes to their overall holiday experience. The popularity of the service means we are delighted to be expanding it yet again, meaning customers in 13 destinations can now extend their valuable holiday time, be luggage-free, and breeze through the airport before their flight home."

To find out more visit www.jet2holidays.com/resort-flight-check-in

Flying high as Finnair to launch new Premium Economy cabin

FINNAIR IS to introduce a new Premium Economy cabin for customers as part of a major investment in onboard improvements. The investment package will see all the cabins of the airline's domestic and regional ATR turbo prop aircraft completely overhauled, with new seats, carpets and a refreshed interior.

The cabin enhancements are part of the Finnish flag carrier's on-going commitment to offer a high level of customer comfort and increased choice, with new ATR cabins being unveiled next year and the new long-haul Premium Economy cabin making its debut in 2021.

Andrew Fish, the airline's general manager for UK and Ireland and Benelux, said: "We know our customers will love our new Premium Economy cabin once it debuts on our fleet and offer increased choice and flexibility when flying long-haul to destinations across China, Japan and Asia. Finnair's investment in new and refreshed cabins in its regional ATR aircraft will also enhance the customer experience on shorter journeys, featuring familiar colours and designs from Finnair's distinctive Nordic long-haul cabin interiors."

For further information visit finnair.com or call 0208-0010101.

From Manchester to Tel Aviv with EL AL

EL AL Israel Airlines has announced to the trade a new direct flight from Manchester to Tel Aviv.

The new route is scheduled to start on May 26, 2019, with flights from Manchester Airport to Ben Gurion Airport operating on a Boeing 737-800 aircraft with two service classes – Business Class and Economy Class – three times per week.

Launching the route from Manchester Airport in response to strong demand from travel agents and consumers, Malu Montenegro, the airline's sales and marketing manager for UK and Ireland, said: "This is very exciting for us and that we would like to convey the message to the travel agent community in the north that we are and always will be listening to them. We shall be working closely with Manchester Airport to make sure we promote the route effectively and will also be working with the Israel Government Tourism Office to further support the destination."

The new route ties effectively into the Israel Government Tourist Office's 'Two Sunny Cities, One Break' campaign showcasing the highlights of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Ben Gurion is conveniently located between the two and offers an ideal starting point for cultural city breaks, adventure and beach holidays in Israel.

The route will open a wide range of selling opportunities for agents, not only as direct fully-serviced departure point in the north of the UK but also, and a key differentiator, offering two cabins in Economy and Business Class.

For more information, go to www.elal.co.uk

Tourism Australia confirms Singapore Airlines as airline partner for 2019 Corrobboree West

TOURISM AUSTRALIA has confirmed a partnership with Singapore Airlines to be the official European airline partner for Corrobboree West 2019, an annual training and familiarisation event held exclusively for Aussie Specialist Programme members.

Corrobboree West sees more than 100 Australian tourism operators meet with 300 specially selected frontline travel sellers from the UK, Europe, the USA, Canada and New Zealand, alternating its location between Eastern and Western markets each year. The 2019 event will be held in Perth, Western Australia from October 9-11, in partnership with Tourism Western Australia, which will host a destination fam for all Aussie Specialists attending.

John O'Sullivan, managing director for Tourism Australia, said: "Corrobboree is a great opportunity for Aussie Specialists to see first-hand a range of extraordinary travel experiences and the professionalism, creativity and innovation of Australia's tourism operators. We want these frontline travel sellers from our priority Western

markets to be fully equipped to sell fantastic Australian holidays to their customers."

This will be the third time Tourism Australia has partnered with Singapore Airlines and will see the airline provide almost 200 seats for agents across Europe, allowing them to meet with fellow Aussie specialists and local industry partners in market.

Subhas Menon, the airline's regional vice president for Europe, said: "Singapore Airlines is delighted to be involved in Corrobboree for the third time. As Australia's most frequent visitor, the Singapore Airlines group not only flies over 150 times a week to nine cities throughout the country but also operates many of our newest aircraft and products on those routes too. We believe it to be a perfect partnership as a result and look forward to welcoming all our valued travel partners on board for Corrobboree West 2019."

Details of how to register for Corrobboree West will be announced in early 2019.

To register as an Aussie Specialist visit www.aussiespecialist.com



PICTURED MARKING the partnership at Heathrow is, from the left: Elen Thomas, UK market manager for Tourism Western Australia; Subhas Menon, regional vice president Europe for Singapore Airlines; and Sally Cope, regional general manager for UK & Northern Europe, Tourism Australia.

California dreamin as Air New Zealand & Visit California team up

KICKING OFF its partnership with a Memorandum of Understanding signed this month, Air New Zealand and Visit California have joined forces to promote its direct London-LA service with a 'Dream Bigger, Fly Better' digital marketing campaign. The campaign highlights Air New Zealand's onboard product as well as giving a guide to the Californian state, showcasing the cultural hotspots and experiences to be had in Ojai Valley along Big Bear Lake, Greater Palm Springs and along the SoCal coastline.

Cam Wallace, the airline's chief revenue officer, said: "California is an important destination for Air New Zealand, with the airline operating more than 500,000 seats into the western US state with up to double daily direct services from Auckland to Los Angeles, a daily service between London and Los Angeles and up to daily Auckland-San Francisco service. This popular destination is a key focus for our sales and marketing teams across the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. Joint activity to be undertaken across these markets by Air New Zealand and Visit California will include consumer campaigns, joint investment in showcasing California's attractions through international media programmes and trade media, as well as trade education."

More information can be found at www.visitcalifornia.com and www.airnewzealand.com



Costa Rica's new minister of tourism reveals how Rural Tourism will deliver the authentic experiences adventurous holidaymakers are looking for...

RURAL TOURISM will be an important product for Costa Rica in 2019, offering travellers an intimate glimpse into the country's pastoral heritage and communities.

Costa Rica's new minister of tourism, María Amalia Revelo Raventós, said: "Most of our hotels and accommodation options are small and medium sized hotels so really Costa Rica has developed its tourism based around these; the European market is looking for authentic and very personalised experiences, something that will permit them to have contact with the locals and there is where rural tourism starts to develop."

Such experiences include working alongside local farmers, tasting traditional foods with Costa Rican families and hiking into unspoiled natural landscapes. Raventós added: "It's very important for sustainability within the destination. When we talk about sustainability we're not only talking about nature, we're talking about the economy, the people, the Costa Ricans and the Costa Rican way of life. So rural tourism is coming into place particularly where we can really rescue a lot of our authentic experiences and give them the value they deserve."

In 2019, the Costa Rica Tourism Board will be developing its tourism products throughout the country to encourage visitors to discover the national parks and towns that still remain hidden gems. Raventós said: "When somebody comes to Costa Rica it's not that they're looking just for a beach vacation, it's beach plus

adventure, plus nature, plus volcanoes, plus zip lining, plus hot springs and relaxation. Costa Rica has such diversity and in such a small territory, that if you arrive at San Jose on average you will visit five different regions. We have five million inhabitants and three million tourists, but the good thing is that these tourists aren't staying in an enclave - they really visit all the areas and have the opportunity to take advantage of the full diversity that the country has to offer."

Visitor numbers from the UK during the first half of 2018 were up 2.5% compared to the same period in 2017. From January to June 2018, a total of 40,907 visitors from the UK travelled to Costa Rica, compared to the 39,915 from the same period last year. This has been helped with British Airways operating flights from Gatwick twice a week during low season and three times a week in high season.

Going forward, the tourism board will be developing its niche markets and promoting the activities that can be done during the off season such as whale watching and bird spotting in the months of September and October.

The tourist board will also look to further develop its relationship with the trade. Earlier this year, Costa Rica's online training portal, Pura Vida University, re-launched with a new design to help agents become Costa Rica experts. A new module of Rural Tourism will soon be added as well the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw for agents who complete the training.

Intrepid Travel sails around Asia on new small ship adventures

INTREPID TRAVEL has introduced its first range of adventure cruises around Asia for 2019.

The tours will take place on small ships with no more than 50 passengers on board, allowing them to reach little-known towns and villages away from the crowded tourist hot spots. As with the adventure operator's land tours, sustainability has been a major consideration - these smaller vessels will generate less waste than larger ships, have a smaller footprint and won't overwhelm towns with thousands of travellers all at once. There's a focus on supporting local restaurants and communities by eating on shore and shopping from local markets.

As an example of itineraries, travellers can explore the west coast of Malaysia and Thailand on a new eight-day adventure cruise from £1,484 per person. As well as discovering the popular Penang and Phuket, holidaymakers can visit Langkawi, explore Turatao National Park and join in local life in laid-back Ko Yao Yai. The clear waters of the Andaman Sea are an ideal setting for off-the-boat fishing, paddle-boarding, kayaking and snorkelling. The price includes accommodation aboard the ship, selected meals and activities.

Even more reasons to zip over to RAK

THE RAS AL KHAIMAH Tourism Development Authority has announced the commencement of construction on a new adventure tourism product; the 'Jebel Jais zipline tour' located at the Toroverde Adventure Park on the UAE's highest mountain.

The Zipline Tour, scheduled to launch in February 2019, will feature seven ziplines flying over Jebel Jais from top to bottom, connected by hanging bridges, rappel style cables, and creatively designed platforms resembling bird's nests to give a feeling of closeness to nature.

The new aerial rides will add to the existing Jebel Jais Flight – the longest zipline in the world at over 2.8km – and is the latest instalment to Ras Al Khaimah's ongoing efforts to expand and develop its adventure tourism offering to become the region's adventure tourism hub. The Jebel Jais Flight has welcomed more than 18,000 riders since its official launch earlier this year, while a 37-villa Luxury Mountain Camp and a Survival Training Academy are due to break ground in Q1 2019.

Jordan Trail-blazes into 2019

THE LAUNCH of the nation-long Jordan Trail, a growing food scene and new direct flights to the Red Sea resort of Aqaba this month with easyJet has seen Jordan climb back up traveller's hotlists.

Earlier this year, the Jordan Tourist Board revealed that 2017 British arrivals increased by 6% compared to the year before, with 2018 continuing to show this strong pattern of growth.

The epic 650km-long Jordan Trail, which officially opened in Spring 2017, has been helping to draw in more visitors to the nation. In tandem, several tour operators have increased their regional offering, including the introduction of new tours following sections of the hike. Adventure tour operators are also seeing an increase in traveller numbers, with Intrepid Travel revealing last month that global bookings were up 146% for Jordan in the year-to-date.

The destination was recently recognised by Lonely Planet as one of the ten best countries in the world to visit for 2019. Dr. Abed Al Razzaq Arabiyat, managing director of the Jordan Tourism Board, said: "We are thrilled to see that the efforts invested by the Jordan Tourism Board has been recognised by leading travel publication Lonely Planet, which has been guiding travel enthusiasts from every corner of the world for nearly 45 years. The list will showcase Jordan as a hub for adventure through the Jordan Trail, where visitors can hike, bike or visit the lowest point on Earth at The Dead Sea. Not only that, but visitors can also camp in the Wadi Rum desert and marvel at the sky's clear stars, visit the Nabatean's Petra, one of the SEVEN WONDERS of the World or enjoy the Red Sea's lush coral scene in Aqaba."

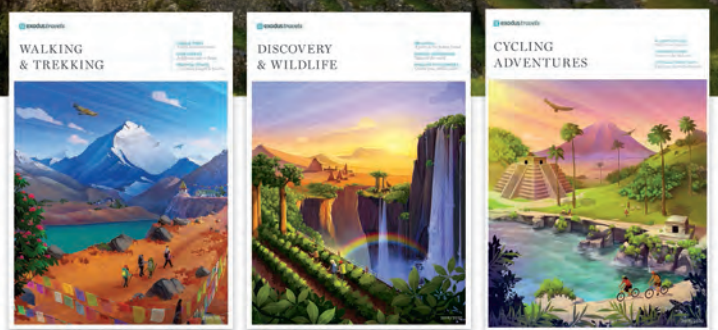
Go to www.visitjordan.com to find out more.



Brand-new brochures from Exodus travels

Newly released Discovery and Wildlife, Cycling and Walking brochures available now.

For tailor-made trips contact our dedicated team now on tailormade@exodus.co.uk



exodustravels
global adventures since 1974



G ADVENTURES has launched a collection of tours dedicated to wellness and adventure. The 'Wellness' travel style features a programme of trips in ten destinations, all designed to help travellers find their balance and reconnect with the world, as well as with themselves. They range from seven to 13 days in duration, and balance must-see highlights with a slower pace of travel. Regular yoga sessions, intention-setting and healthy food choices are all offered so travellers can return home feeling more balanced, with each destination selected for its unique wellness aspect – travellers will participate in local rituals such as a purification bath in Bali, a prayer ceremony with monks in Nepal and an ashram stay in India.

Millennials to book more bite-sized bursts of adventure

FACTORS SUCH as the growth in Instagram users, its influence over people's desire to travel, and research by software company Condeo suggesting millennials are driving the global shift to more flexible and remote working, have created the ideal conditions for an increase in spontaneous short trips, according to Acacia Africa.

Arno Delpont, sales and marketing manager at Acacia Africa, said: "Instagram clearly motivates its users to discover more people and places, as it's the world's most authentic travel brochure. We already know, millennials place a much higher value on experiences as opposed to things, so we're definitely going to be seeing Gen Y booking more bite-sized bursts of adventure, and more frequently during 2019."

In recognition of this growing trend, the operator is launching a four-day 'Garden Route Express' overland tour for next year. The itinerary starts in the Tsitsikamma National Park (home to the Otter trail), and takes in the world's highest commercial bungee jump, outdoor activities from kloofing to canoeing, the coastal reserve part of the Garden Route National Park, and ends in Cape Town. Along the way, the trip branches off into the Klein Karoo and the 'Ostrich Capital of the World,' with a visit to the Cango Caves and Hermanus, the 'Whale Watching Capital of the World' situated on the Whale Route.

Other bite-sized overland safaris include the four-day 'Kruger Safari', six-day 'Troop To The Gorillas', seven-day 'African Insight' and seven-day 'Kruger Swazi & Beach'. The tours will go live on January 2, 2019 and departures begin onward from that month.

For more details call 020-7706 4700 or go to acacia-africa.com

National Geographic Expeditions appoints Fred.\ Holidays as general sales agent

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Expeditions has appointed Fred.\ Holidays to help launch and grow its Land Expeditions - small group tours with an expert.

The travel business for the world-recognised brand will give up to 25 people per group the opportunity to travel on one of its tours, most with multiple departures, with prices typically in excess of £10,000 per booking (excluding flights) providing significant earning potential for travel agents.

Travellers can visit Tibet and Nepal with Peter Hilary (son of the late Sir Edmund), sit with gorillas and visit the Dian Fossey Gorilla Research Centre in Rwanda or enjoy a private sunrise tour of Chichen Itza before it opens with a National Geographic Explorer in Mexico. Tours include stays in one of National Geographic's Unique

Lodges of the World where available or other five-star luxury accommodation. Offering unique access and experiences, the company returns a portion of all proceeds to the non-profit National Geographic Society to support researchers and explorers who work to preserve, protect, and advance understanding of the planet and its people.

Fred.\ Holidays will provide prices in GBP and financial protection to consumers under its existing ABTA and ATOL bonding. It will also represent National Geographic and look to recruit and train further travel agents who wish to sell these premium adventure tours.

All travel agent enquiries should be directed to sales@fredholidays.com or 01473-242636.

Be the change in G Adventures' challenge incentive

G ADVENTURES has launched its largest-ever incentive programme called 'Change Makers Challenge' which focuses on changing people's lives through travel and invites agents to rediscover their purpose – why they love selling travel – in the process.

The 'Change Makers Challenge' is now live and runs until March 31, 2019, culminating in a 'Change Makers Summit' which will take place in an undisclosed location in June 2019. In total, more than 100 agents from the UK & Ireland, Central Europe, Canada, the United States, and Australia & New Zealand will be brought together at the mystery destination. The summit will comprise of a week-long trip where agents can see first-hand the impact responsible travel has on local communities, as well as visiting destination highlights to help build their product knowledge. At the end of the trip, agents will have a full-day, immersive G Adventures experience where they will meet the company's founder, Bruce Poon Tip and be treated to a final night party.

Agents will automatically receive one entry per 'life changed' (trip sold) and the operator will be giving out 'random act of G' swag packs and vouchers throughout the entry period. Agents should look out for surprise challenges and awards along the way, which could help them secure an extra entry to attend.

Visit www.gadventures.com/agents/ to find out more.



CENTRAL ASIA has continued to prove popular for Explore, with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan seeing increased interest and the operator's new-for-2018 Kazakhstan trip – timed to coincide with a rocket launch – selling out. For 2019, the company is offering the opportunity for a true adventure 'Along the Pamir Highway', the 1,250km road connecting the ancient trading cities of Dushanbe and Osh. Starting in Tajikistan and traversing the Tien Shan range, across wild Kyrgyz meadows to the Kazakh city of Almaty, this journey of ever-changing scenery will see hardy travellers come across high mountain passes, raging rivers, isolated villages and resilient people. Prices for the 19-day tour start from £4,679 per person including flights, internal transfers, 18 nights' accommodation, 18 breakfasts, 15 lunches and 12 dinners.

Exodus Travels' 2019 brochures feature heart and art

EXODUS TRAVELS has released its new brochure collection for 2019-2020 featuring cover art created by celebrated Bosnian and Herzegovinian artist Martina Crepulja who will be donating one-third of her fee to Exodus' Inspiration Project, an initiative that takes disadvantaged children from around the globe on exciting trips within their homelands.

Tom Harari, the operator's responsible tourism manager, said: "We are proud to be working with Martina and are truly

thankful that she has decided to support children around the world through our Inspiration Project. We look forward to making a positive change to people's lives through the fantastic work of the project over the coming years. We wanted to ensure that a portion of the money spent on creating these brochures goes back into the communities we visit – where it can influence real, positive social exchanges."

Using a whimsical style informed by warm, sunset tones, Crepulja designed the brochures around an inspirational 'make believe' theme drawn from the destinations the operator travels to such as Ha Long Bay in Vietnam, Arenal Volcano in Costa Rica, and Nepal's Gokyo Lakes. The operator features more than 600 tours to over 100 countries worldwide, so each 2019-2020 brochure includes both new and classic adventures all centred on four travel styles: Adventure, Culture and Wildlife; Cycling; Walking and Trekking and Self-Guided Adventures. New experiences include cultural escapades like 'Egypt: Alexandria to Aswan', cycling adventures like 'Cycle Chile and Argentina: Atacama to Salta', trekking trips into 'Japan's Kumano Kodo', searching for brown bears in 'Wild Finland', and self-guided tours such as 'A Taste of Tuscany'.

For more information visit exodus.co.uk



Downtown Project enhances Palm Springs' mix of adventure and city cool

AS PALM SPRINGS looks to attract travellers with its downtown revitalisation project and enhanced hotel offering, the destination is highlighting the Californian adventures to be found amidst the desert oasis.

Thanks to its location, Palm Springs offers a good base from which to explore the Indian Canyons, San Andreas Fault and Joshua Tree National Park, with 'Desert Adventures Red Jeep Tours' offering off-road adventures through the tribal lands of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The tours combine jeep tours, hiking and sightseeing with guides who can offer insights into the region's history, people, flora and fauna.

Taking explorers up to an elevation of 8,516ft in around ten minutes, the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway is the world's largest rotating tramcar and offers scenic views of the desert floor and Palm Springs. Having been transported from the desert oasis to the cooler climes of the San Jacinto Mountains, nature lovers can explore more than 50 miles of hiking routes or join a guided nature walk.

Alternatively, for a desert horseback adventure suggest to clients they try the Smoke Tree Stable. Offering more than 150 miles of convenient riding trails, the family-owned and operated stables offer riders a range of tours through the Agua Caliente Canyons and Murray Canyon, with the option of one-hour rides or excursions for the whole day.

For more information go to www.visitpalmsprings.com

france



FRANCE WITNESSED 86.7 million tourist arrivals in 2017, up 5.1% from the previous year. The UK remained the main source market for inbound travellers to France with 12.7 million tourist arrivals, representing a 6% increase on 2016. It means that Brits are still the primary foreign clientele visiting the country and represent almost 15% of the total number of international tourists. France is still the second favourite destination for British travellers – just behind Spain – as well as the second favourite for family holidays and business trips. For mini-breaks and winter sports holidays, France remains high on British holidaymakers' go to destinations.

Tres chic: Paris' cultural attractions are back in vogue

PARIS' CULTURAL attractions are benefiting from a recovery in tourist numbers, welcoming 70.2 million visitors in 2017 representative of a 5.9% increase compared to the year before.

This performance is thanks to a strong growth in foreign visitors and illustrates the recovery in tourism in the capital, which saw a record number of hotel arrivals in 2017.

The survey of cultural visitors, carried out each year by the Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau (PCVB), looks at data on visitor numbers to Paris' museums and monuments – both permanent collections and exhibitions – over the past year. The survey of the year 2017 covers visitor numbers for 62 cultural attractions and 68 temporary exhibitions.

The cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris and the Sacré-Coeur Basilica of Montmartre were the two most visited monuments in the capital with 12 million and ten million visitors respectively, in 2017. In third place was the Louvre Museum, which saw renewed growth with more than eight million visitors, up by 14.8% compared to 2016 – and it remains the most visited museum in the

world. The Eiffel Tower, with 6.2 million visitors in 2017 (up 4.6%), crossed the symbolic mark of 300 million visitors since the World Fair of 1889.

This successful rise in numbers has been attributed to two main elements; an attractive cultural programme and a favourable tourism climate. Temporary exhibitions have played a vital role in the annual variations in attendance with cultural attractions recording significant rises, like the Grand Palais (up 24.9%) thanks to the success of 'Gauguin, The Alchemist'; the Petit Palais (up 32.2%) with the exhibitions 'The Art of Pastel, from Degas to Redon' and 'Anders Zorn, Sweden's Master Painter'; or the Fondation François Sommer – Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature (up 68.7 %) with 'Beau doublé, Monsieur le Marquis'.

Some 10.2 million visits were recorded in 2017 for 68 temporary exhibitions at 25 Parisian cultural attractions; 19 of which recorded more than 200,000 visitors.

The exhibition 'Being Modern. MoMA in Paris', at the Fondation Louis Vuitton, was the most visited exhibition in Greater Paris with a total of 755,184 visitors in 2017.

DFDS launches 'See Ports' campaign

DFDS, in partnership with the Calais Tourism Office and Dunkirk Tourism Office, has launched 'See Ports' – a campaign encouraging its passengers to take the time to experience the tourism experiences these towns have to offer.

Though the operator ferries more than 1.8 million passengers a year to the French ports of Calais and Dunkirk from Dover, only a small percentage take the time to enjoy these bustling port towns. To help entice people to visit, DFDS is offering exclusive discounts for local attractions such as the World War II Museum in Calais and Princess Elizabeth Restaurant and Tea-room in Dunkirk, in addition to free entry to Dunkerque Wine and Beer Fair.

To launch the campaign, the ferry operator visited Dunkirk and Calais to ask locals and visitors what it is that they love most about the destinations with the beaches, good food and culture being popular choices in both towns.

The brand operates daily sailings between Dover-Dunkirk from £39 each way (for a car with maximum of nine people) and Dover-Calais from £45 each way.

Visit dfds.co.uk to find out more.

Shearings flies high with new tour to see Paris Air Show

SHEARINGS HOLIDAYS has launched a new 'Paris Air Show' short break, which offers the chance for holidaymakers to enjoy one of the world's oldest and largest air shows.

Departing on June 21, 2019, this four-day coach tour includes tickets to the 53rd Paris Air Show, which takes place every two years for one weekend only. Enthusiasts can expect to see more than 150 different types of aircraft on display before enjoying a Grandstand seat for the airborne displays. There is a guided city tour of Paris and free time included so customers will have time to explore the capital city's beautiful boulevards and many sights.

Prices start from £210 per person from various pick-up points around the UK including all coach travel, three nights bed-and-breakfast accommodation, a grandstand ticket to the air show and a guided tour of Paris based on two sharing. Go to www.shearingsagent.com for more details.



Image credit: M. Quemener OT Bayeux Intercom, via Atout France

Taste your way along the Rhone on CroisiEurope's new culinary cruise

CROISIEUROPE HAS announced details of a new culinary cruise on the Rhone that will launch in April 2019.

The seven-night cruise round trip from Lyon will travel through the gastronomic heart of France with a focus on the food and wine that can be found throughout this region. Sailing onboard the MS Rhone Princess, the itinerary will visit Arles, Avignon, Viviers and Tain L'Hermitage, taking in the colours of Provence and the landscapes of the Camargue.

Highlights include a guided tour of the Cité du Chocolat in Tain L'Hermitage which is located on the site of Valrhona's historic chocolate factory where guests will discover the secrets of how chocolate is made; a tasting of local specialities at the covered market of Les Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse; and an exclusive dinner at Paul Bocuse's Abbaye de Collonges situated on the banks of the Saone.

There are weekly departures between April and October with cruise only prices starting from £1,089 per person for the seven-day cruise with all meals and drinks onboard plus excursions. There is a charge for dinner at Abbaye de Collonges but clients who book before December 1 will receive this free of charge.

For further information call 020-8328 1281 or visit www.croisieurope.co.uk

ALL EYES will be on Normandy in 2019 with June 6 marking the 75th anniversary of the D-Day Landings and the Battle of Normandy – a significant day in history marked with an event to celebrate peace, liberty and reconciliation. The D-Day Festival will run from June 1-9 with a rich programme of events designed to bring the memory of this tragic period of world history to life, while emphasising the spirit of hope. The 75th anniversary will be commemorated with events and festivities such as parades, firework displays, air shows and military re-enactments. Go to www.normandy-dday.com

An action-packed year ahead for Puy du Fou

A NEW immersive attraction and an investment of 28.5 million Euros are among some of the major initiatives announced by Puy du Fou for 2019

Retaining its position as France's second largest theme park, a record 2,301,000 visitors were welcomed in 2018, 15% of which were from overseas. Drawn to the park's unique historical concept, visitor numbers from the UK and Ireland increased by 22% during this year.

Inspired by a pivotal period in the history of France, 'Le Premier Royaume' will be a new production for 2019, featuring grand sets and unique special effects. Visitors will step back in time to the 5th century and follow the destiny of Clovis, the famous king of the Franks, against a backdrop of Attila's rampaging followers and a declining Roman Empire. They will relive the military conquests undertaken by Clovis who found himself increasingly torn between the ancestral traditions of his people and his quest to found the first kingdom. Puy du Fou will lead its guests on a 20-minute walk-through experience, following Clovis through 14 different fantasy worlds, passing through rooms surrounded by Attila's Huns, through the bustling royal armoury and the Mérovingian palace until they reach the legend-rich world of Valhalla where some of the uncertainties of this troubled period will be unravelled.

The park will be investing the significant sum to guarantee the successful delivery of its ambitious new projects and ensure the continued evolution of all its shows and attractions. The park will also be upgrading all the entrances to the Grand Park with a more efficient entry system.

The 2019 season will run from April 6 to November 3 with tickets starting from 36 Euros per adult and 26 Euros per child for park entry.

Agents can book directly via www.puydufou.com/en/user/login

Pepper the robot welcomes Eurostar customers at St Pancras

EUROSTAR WELCOMED 'Pepper', the first robot in the UK travel industry, to its St Pancras team.

The high-speed rail operator has introduced the interactive humanoid robot to offer customers, particularly families and children, a fun new way to enquire about their journey before departure. Pepper, designed by SoftBank Robotics, is the first robot that can recognise principal human emotions and adapt her own behaviour accordingly. Eurostar has recruited the robot to entertain and help customers, and in partnership with Robots of London she can respond to questions or even pose for a selfie on request.

Located in the departure lounge at London St Pancras, Pepper will interact with passengers using an inbuilt tablet, where travellers will find an interactive station map,

information about the on-board experience, and destination tips for Paris, Brussels, Lille and Amsterdam.

Perrine Allain, head of digital at the rail company, said: "We are always looking for new ways to innovate, and explore technologies that can help enhance the overall customer experience. Pepper offers a fun way for customers to find out more about their journey and destination, and we look forward to hearing the feedback from our customers so that we can continue to improve their experience."

Pepper will be located at St Pancras International for the rest of this year, with plans to re-locate to one of the operator's other locations in 2019.

For more information, visit www.eurostar.com

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puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. BUDGET, 4. ELBA, 8. VERMONT, 9. KENT, 10. MASERU,
12. RHODES, 13. MAUI, 16. LOCARNO, 17. YO-YO, 18. KUWAIT.
Down: 1. BLACK FRIDAY, 2. DEVON, 3. EBRO, 5. LOT, 6. AS YOU LIKE
IT, 7. CORAL, 11. DENCH, 14. ALOHA, 15. URDU, 16. LCY.

Highlighted Word: BAVARIA

Where Am I?: Namib Desert, Namibia, Africa



ONE OF Europe's oldest Christmas Markets and the first in France, dating back to 1571, Strasbourg boasts more than 300 chalet stalls selling arts, crafts and culinary treats. As well as festive shopping opportunities, the 'Strasbourg Christmas Market Break' from Ffestiniog Travel includes time to visit picturesque Colmar (half an hour away by train) and its traditional Christmas Market, as well as the city of Mulhouse, home to the largest railway museum in Europe, the Cité du Train. This three-night holiday costs from £820 per person based on two sharing with departures available until December 30. Visit www.ffestiniogtravel.com

We asked our staff the following question this week:

What fictional place would you most like to travel to?



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SHOWCASES

JANUARY

Africa Showcase

Monday 21st January - Home Counties (Surrey)

Canary Islands Showcase

Tuesday 29th January - Birmingham

FEBRUARY

Luxury Showcase

Monday 4th February - Reading
Tuesday 5th February - Cheltenham

Weddings & Honeymoons Showcase

Monday 18th February - Belfast
Tuesday 19th February - Dublin

LGBT Travel Showcase

Monday 25th February - Manchester

MARCH

Escorted Tours Showcase

Monday 11th March - York

Airline Showcase

Tuesday 12th March - Birmingham

North America Showcase

Monday 18th March - Oxford
Tuesday 19th March - Sheffield

Cruise Showcase

Tuesday 26th March - Liverpool

APRIL

Caribbean Showcase

Monday 8th April - Cambridge
Tuesday 9th April - Brighton

Pacific Islands Showcase

Monday 15th April - Chester

Luxury Showcase

Monday 29th April - Southampton
Tuesday 30th April - Northamptonshire

MAY

Family Holidays Showcase

Monday 13th May - Bristol

Airline Showcase

Tuesday 14th May - Manchester

The Travel Bulletin agent training dates, themes and locations for 2019 have now been announced!

Calendar
2019

JUNE

Mediterranean Showcase

Monday 10th June - Oxford
Tuesday 11th June - Sheffield

Luxury Showcase

Monday 17th June - Liverpool
Tuesday 18th June - Glasgow

JULY

Far East Showcase

Monday 1st July - Home Counties (Essex)

City Breaks Showcase

Tuesday 2nd July - Southampton

Cruise Showcase

Monday 15th July - Belfast

Australasia Showcase

Tuesday 16th July - Home Counties (Surrey)

SEPTEMBER

Cruise Showcase

Wednesday 18th September - Cambridge

Adventure & Activity Holidays Showcase

Tuesday 24th September - Exeter
Wednesday 25th September - Bournemouth

Luxury Showcase

Monday 30th September - Peterborough

OCTOBER

Luxury Showcase

Tuesday 1st October - Sheffield

Airline Showcase

Monday 14th October - Chelmsford

Family Holidays Showcase

Monday 21st October - Birmingham

NOVEMBER

Indian Ocean Showcase

Monday 18th November - Chester
Tuesday 19th November - Home Counties (Kent)

travelbulletin
SHOWCASES

To register to attend any of these Showcases, simply email your name, job title and contact details confirming which events you are interested in to events@travelbulletin.co.uk



BLACK FRIDAY SALE

SAVE UP TO £350 PER PERSON +
\$1,000 ONBOARD CREDIT PER SUITE +
ONE-CATEGORY SUITE UPGRADE

Book and pay in full by 26 November 2018

Our Black Friday Sale starts on **16 November 2018** and offers guests great value on a selection of worldwide voyages departing in the next few months. We are offering up to **£350 per person saving, one-category suite upgrade** AND an **onboard credit of \$1,000** per suite, which can be used for shore excursions, spa treatments, speciality restaurants and more.

For more information please call 0207 340 0700, visit silversea.com/black-friday-sale or email salesuk@silversea.com

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Black Friday Savings offer valid on new, individual bookings made between 16 November 2018 and 26 November 2018. Guests benefit from an extra saving per person, valid on all categories, on a select list of voyages. Full booking payment is due no later than 26 November 2018. Cancel and re-books do not qualify. Offer is not applicable to group bookings. Single supplements will apply and vary by voyage. Other restrictions may apply. Visit Silversea.com/terms-and-conditions.html for complete terms and conditions. Ships' registry: Bahamas.

