

travelbulletin

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DESERT DREAMS...



Dubai Tourism recently hosted a fam trip to Dubai in partnership with Kerzner and Qantas. Agents stayed at One and Only Arabian Court and Atlantis the Palm and experienced At the Top - Burj Khalifa, a desert safari, Aquaventure, snorkelling in the Ambassador lagoon and Downtown attractions. Pictured on the desert safari are, from the left: Elaine Blatcher, Travel Counsellors; Sangita Makwana, Dubai Tourism; Margaret Rae, Travel Counsellors; Petya Stoyanova, The Holiday Place; Lisa Nott, 360 Travel; Katie Blake, Audley Travel; Claire Howard, TUI; Carol Shoesmith, Designer Travel; and Carol Coetzee, Baily Robinson.

This Week

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Summer success for long-haul destinations in Post Office Travel Money's Fastest Growing Currencies chart

DESTINATIONS 'DOWN Under' look set to be star choices for winter sun holidays after emerging alongside Japan as the biggest success stories in Post Office Travel Money's Fastest Growing Currencies report for June-August. Australia, New Zealand and Japan have all benefited from sterling's surge in value this year and its continuing strength looks set to fuel heavy demand for winter trips as canny travellers respond to the value available.

The annual review of summer bestsellers by the foreign exchange provider reveals year-on-year sales growth of 56% for the New Zealand dollar just at a time when the currency had weakened more than 20% against the strong pound. The same applies to the Australian dollar, which has also weakened more than 20% in recent months. Consumers responded to this and Post Office Travel Money sales mushroomed 39%.

Andrew Brown of Post Office Travel Money said: "The surge in sales we have seen for the Australian and New Zealand dollars is a clear indication holidaymakers are becoming increasingly astute and doing their homework to see when exchange rates are in their favour. These may not be the cheapest places to visit but they are among the world's most aspirational destinations and the power of the pound

provides a great incentive to make this the year to visit."

The same applies to Japan, where the yen has remained weak against sterling all year. A 34% year-on-year increase in visitors reported by its tourist office during July shows that visitors have been quick to take advantage of the strong pound and a fall in flight prices. Latent demand for Japan, one of Post Office Travel Money's 2015 Top Ten Hotspots, has resulted in a 52% increase in summer sales of the Japanese yen compared with 2014, making it the second Fastest Growing Currency. Brown said: "Over the past five years sterling has strengthened by almost 50% against the yen and the extra cash in tourists' pockets means that Japan should no longer be regarded only as a luxury destination. Better still, our latest barometer research reveals that local prices in Tokyo are down 25% as well."

Long-haul destinations continue to dominate the Fastest Growing Currencies summer chart as they have for the past seven years – taking eight of the top ten places. Currency sales have risen by almost a third for the fifth-placed Indonesian rupiah, suggesting a buoyant time ahead for its most popular resort, Bali. Dubai has gained further ground against Middle East

● continued on next page

● *continued from previous*

competitor Egypt and sales of its currency, the UAE dirham, have strengthened 22%.

The Vietnamese dong (+21%) is the only currency to retain its top ten place this year. This is the fifth consecutive year that Vietnam's currency has featured in the growth chart and in that time sales have grown five-fold. Vietnam could expect to gain further ground this autumn if political unrest continues to depress demand for Thailand.

Meanwhile, Turkey suffered another disappointing summer and the Turkish lira was the only Post Office bestseller to show a sizeable fall in demand. Ironically, the lira has now fallen to its lowest rate against sterling in more than a decade, which means UK tourists visiting Turkey in the coming weeks can expect to receive more than 30% more lira for their pounds than a year ago.

A pizza the action with Jet2CityBreaks

JET2CITYBREAKS HAS expanded its summer 2016 programme at Manchester Airport with the launch of a new destination - Naples City.

Three- and four-night breaks are available between April 29 and October 26 and packages include twice-weekly flight options with Jet2.com, a choice of two- to five-star hotels and 10kg baggage allowance, with prices from £219 per person.

For more information visit www.jet2citybreaks.com



CANTERBURY TRAVEL held a drinks reception earlier this month to celebrate its 30-year association with Lapland. The company, which offers family holidays to visit Santa and Arctic adventure breaks, has been operating flights to Finnish Lapland since 1985. Representatives from the Finnish Embassy, Visit Finland, ABTA and other invited guests joined the team at Canterbury Travel for the event. Pictured celebrating is Pekka Isosomppi (left) from the Finnish Embassy with Dolores Collins, the operator's managing director.

Back-Roads Touring launches 15 new tours & river cruise series

BACK-ROADS Touring has launched its new winter 2015 summer 2016 brochure, revealing a renewed line up of tours including new itineraries in Portugal, Northern Ireland, Germany, Norway, Russia and Morocco, as well as a river cruise series.

The 15 new tours, with prices leading in at £475, include Goodwood Revival, Northern Ireland's Causeway Coastal Route, Discover Portugal, Majestic Morocco, Benelux & The Northern Rhine, From Berlin to Bohemia, Alsace & The Black Forest, Explore Eastern Europe, Baltic & Russian Explorer, Norway: Fjords & Glaciers and The 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin.

Along with the land-based tours, the company has also announced the launch of Charming Waterways, a new leisurely-paced water-based touring series as part of its summer portfolio. The new offering is dedicated to providing guests with more opportunities to travel in the Back-Roads style, with prices starting from £1,545 per person.

The operator's general manager, Hazel McGuire, said: "Selling through the trade is really important to us and all our tours are fully commissionable

for agents. We have been carefully planning the new tours and concentrating on areas we wanted to expand into. We now have six German tours and an area that many tour operators don't concentrate on. The 1916 Easter Rising Tour in Dublin is also a close-to-home tour which we think agents can really get behind as many customers are bound to be inspired by the anniversary this year."

As an example of prices, the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin option travels through the streets of Dublin learning the story of the Easter Rebellion and visits the sites where they took place, in chronological order. Guests will visit Liberty Hall, G.P.O Rebel Headquarters, St Stephen's Green, Trinity College, Dublin Castle, Four Courts, Kilmainham Gaol, Royal Barracks, the Guinness Brewery, 16 Moore Street and Glasnevin Cemetery.

The three-day option, with departures available between April and September next year, costs from £475 per person including flights from the guest's nearest international airport, private transfers to connect to the starting point of the tour upon arrival in Ireland, two nights' accommodation, a tour leader,

breakfast, two evening meals and entrances to Trinity College library, Dublin Castle, Kilmainham Gaol & Guinness Experience.

As an example of river cruises, a Croatian Wilderness Sailing

explores hidden coves on some of Croatia's most remote islands such as Mljet and Lastovo, with eight days starting from £1,595, departing on dates between May and September. It includes flights, private transfers, seven nights on M/Y Vjeko, a tour leader, breakfast, six lunches, three evening meals including a Captain's Dinner, wine tasting on Korcula, olive oil tasting on Solta, towels, beach towels and linen, plus all local taxes and entrances to Stonemasonry school and the Blue Cave.

To book or for more information visit www.backroadstouring.com or call 020-8987 0990.



Fred.\ Holidays highlights new winter breaks & Xmas markets in latest brochure

FRED.\ HOLIDAYS highlights new winter breaks & Xmas markets in latest brochure

Fred.\ Holidays has released its new-look 'Winter Breaks & Christmas Markets brochure' for 2015, featuring a handpicked selection of short breaks to festive destinations in Germany and Central Europe.

Including firm favourites such as Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt and Munich, the company has included a selection of lesser-known Christmas markets in traditional German cities such as Bremen, Baden-Baden, Rothenburg and Würzburg, and has also expanded its offering to include popular festive destinations such as Paris, Rome and Vienna; as well as Eastern European gems, Budapest and Krakow.

This year, Scandinavia and the Arctic Circle also make an appearance, with city breaks to Copenhagen, Helsinki and Stockholm accompanied by a new 'Dogsled the Arctic Circle' trip for February and March 2016.

Lawrence Peachey, the company's UK sales manager, said: "We are increasingly receiving calls from agents interested in Christmas markets and short breaks outside of Germany, therefore we wanted to produce a more-encompassing brochure for this year, highlighting just

some of our favourites. The packages included within the brochure are 'suggested breaks', i.e. our suggestion for making the most of each destination, whether this be a two-, three- or even four-night stay; however all holidays can be tailor-made to customers' personal requirements.

"We have also introduced a new four-step guide to help customers personalise their holiday which will, in turn, make agents' lives easier having prompted customers to think about how they would prefer to travel, where and when they would like to go, and how long they would like to stay for."

Packages start from £259 per person for a three-night short break to Budapest, departing on December 2 and staying at the four-star Benczur on a bed-and-breakfast basis. Flights and private transfers are also included.

For details visit www.fred.travel/travel-agents or call 01473-242650.



Sky high savings with DoSomethingDifferent.com

AGENTS CAN pass on savings of more than 10% to their customers when booking a hot air balloon ride in Orlando with DoSomethingDifferent.com

Rides now lead in at £105 per person (reduced from £121), with children aged four to ten paying £68.

The experience takes place at sunrise, with a one hour ride

in the early morning sky over the sites in the area before a Champagne toast and a full day ahead to enjoy the theme parks and other Orlando experiences.

Transfers from Orlando hotels can be arranged for \$10 per person, payable locally.

For more information call 020-8090 3890.



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Heathrow Express launches new ticket pricing structure for advance bookings

HEATHROW EXPRESS has introduced a £6.99 single fare for advanced bookings made between three and six months in advance.

The ticket price comes in as part of a new range of advanced purchase ticket fares, currently being trialled by the company to provide savings to travellers and can now be booked 24 weeks in advance.

The new ticket pricing structure starts with a 25% saving off the Express Saver and Business First fares for tickets booked up to seven days in advance and then steps up to 50% off for bookings made up to 30 days in advance and 66% for tickets booked for between 90 days and six months before travel.

Visit www.heathrowexpress.com for more details.

Rabbie's Small Group Tours announces new itineraries for 2016

RABBIE'S SMALL Group Tours has announced its latest itineraries departing from April 2016.

For the first time the company is heading across the channel for a five-day tour, taking in the vineyards of Champagne Ardennes and the Normandy Coast. Guests looking to extend their holiday also have the opportunity to continue their European adventure by taking a shortcut to Paris instead of returning with the tour to London on the last day.

Leading in at £480.80 per person, trade prices include breakfast accommodation, transport and services of a guide, and departures are on May 16 and 30, June 13 and 27, July

11 and 25, August 8 and 22, and September 5 and 19.

Other new experiences include a four-day Irish Castles, Gardens & Manor Houses tour from Dublin and two half-day trips from Glasgow with a tour of Loch Lomond & Whiskey Distillery and Glasgow Highlights. These can either be booked as half-day experiences or combined into a one-day itinerary.

Prices lead in at £14.40 per person for a half-day tour of Glasgow Highlights and £114.40 for a two-day exploration of The Cotswolds, Bath & Oxford.

For more information call 0131-226 3133 or see www.rabbies.com



'Manage My Booking' tool from Vertical Systems

VERTICAL SYSTEMS has introduced a 'Manage my Booking' tool to its portfolio for customers using its systems.

The tool can be customised with an agency's logo and personalised with booking reference and itinerary details which enables agents to manage their clients' bookings by viewing and printing itinerary details, updating contact information and paying balances via the secure payment gateway. The information is then highlighted in TARSC, a receipt automatically generated and sent to the lead name. The tool can be used as a standalone product or integrated into third party websites.

For more information contact rob.barker@verticalsystems.co.uk

GOLDEN CELEBRATIONS... Beacon Travel in Crowborough, East Sussex recently held an anniversary celebration for its customers, marking 50 years in the industry. Pictured celebrating the milestone are, from the left, the agency's Sheila Williams, Sue Poundsbery, Paul Philpott, Karen Heath and Trevor Williams.

A&K adds new villas in Sardinia & Sicily

A&K Villas has introduced a collection of exclusive luxury villas in Sardinia and Sicily.

The villas range from coastal to inland boltholes, with three to ten bedrooms for family and friends.

As an example of prices, the three-bedroom Casa Olivo in Cefalu, Sicily is a stylish holiday home set in a garden with twisted olive trees, a private pool and dramatic sea views. The property sleeps six and costs from £1,856 per week.

For more information see www.akvillas.com

Halloween Spook Fest at Kent Life Heritage Farm Park

THERE'S GOOEY and ghostly goings-on at Kent Life Heritage Farm Park's Halloween Spook Fest this half-term, from Saturday October 24 to Sunday November 1.

The attraction, located near Maidstone, invites families to brave the snakes, spiders and scorpions in Creepy Cuddle Corner, take the plunge with slimy zorbing, climb on board for a terrifying tractor

ride or join one of the many scary characters for a ghost story.

For something less spine-tingling, guests can test their artistic skills with daily pumpkin carving and the ghoulish fancy dress competition.

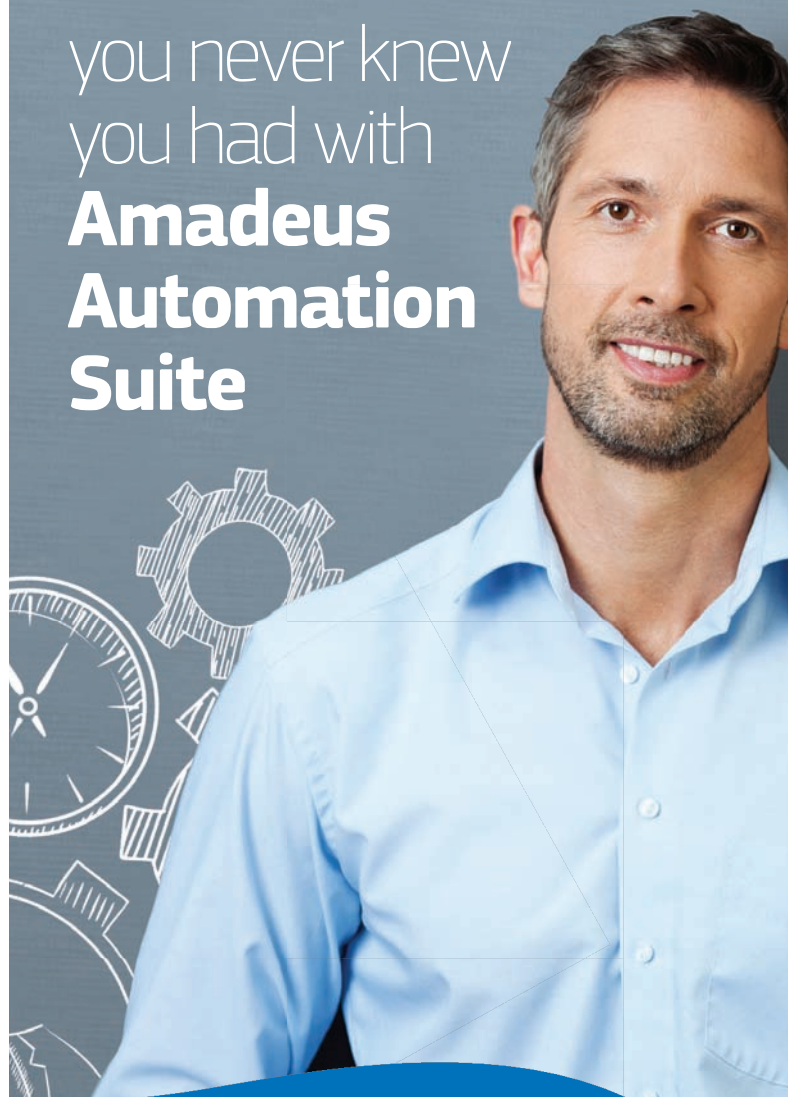
Admission for adults is £9.50 and children aged three-15 pay £7.50.

For further information call 01622-763936 or visit www.kentlife.org.uk



ALL HALS ON DECK... Holland America Line (HAL) launched its 2016/17 Worldwide Cruise Holidays brochure on flagship MS Rotterdam at the Port of Harwich earlier this month with the help of around 80 UK travel agents. Pictured marking the occasion are, from the left (top row): Mark Scrivener, Fred Olsen Travel; with James Scott and Aaron Myers from HAL; and (bottom row) Belinda Jessup (left) and Clare Aitchison from Fred Olsen Travel.

Discover the time you never knew you had with Amadeus Automation Suite



Are manual ticketing, schedule changes, and admin tasks taking up too much of your day? Amadeus Automation Suite works for you 24/7 – so there's no more pressure to catch up on the morning's airline changes and ticketing admin.

Win the latest Apple Watch and discover the time you never knew you had at www.uk.amadeus.com/AutomationSuite

Notes from

Normanton...

ATTENDED THE Travel Bulletin Star Awards in London – what a fantastic night – I loved the ‘cinema stars’ theme – and well done to everyone that won. We had three winners on our table – Silversea Cruises – Avro and Bourne Leisure who won two awards – well done Louise Tansey. Christopher Biggins was brilliant – he is such a natural lovely person and we had our picture taken – him with his wonderful silver sparkly jacket and me with my gold dress! As he said ‘Fabulous Darling’.

By the time you read this, fingers crossed I will have brought Tiger Murray back from Crete! I am going out for a week on the 17th with easyJet and returning on the 24th. Tiger is on his own on a Tui flight but I do get in 20 mins before him so hope all will go well. I have used a company called AIA pets and they have done most of the paperwork. The Kaissa being so popular could only book me from the 20th to 24th so she has booked me in at the Gouves Park Hotel (four-star with a spa), so I’m rather looking forward to three nights there. Can’t wait to have a couple of spa treatments – just what the doc ordered!

Thought this would make you chuckle – Me behave? Seriously? As a child I saw Tarzan almost naked, Cinderella arrived home after midnight, Pinocchio told lies, Aladdin was a thief, Batman drove over 200 miles an hour and Snow White lived in a house with 7 men!



Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY
in Normanton, Yorkshire

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

Newsbites

- **GOLDCAR RENTAL** has broadened its services through the Rhodium brand, a premium option for the holiday car rental market. The company has also announced that it is embarking on a new stage of international growth, to expand its consolidated position in the Mediterranean to new global markets.

For details see www.goldcar.es/en/

- **TO CELEBRATE** the UK release of the British feature film ‘Suffragette’, which includes scenes filmed at the Palace of Westminster, the Houses of Parliament is running a ‘Suffragette Season’ of special events and themed tours this October. Details at www.parliament.uk/suffragette-season
- **THE GTMC** has announced that Virgin Atlantic’s joint venture partner, Delta, has become its latest industry partner.
- **CAN BE Done**, which specialises in travel for disabled travellers, has expanded its range of destinations offered. The company now features two nine-night itineraries to Costa Rica in 2016. The first will be in April and the second in September, with prices from £1,955 per person including flights, breakfast accommodation, transfers and tours, three lunches and one dinner. There is a full itinerary including time in San Juan, a visit to a coffee plantation and rain forest, a river trip, two days by the beach and a ride in an aerial tram. *Details on 020-8907 2400 or see www.canbedone.co.uk*
- **TIPTO HAS** announced that JTA Travel has joined its organisation of specialist independent tour operators.

easyJet adds new route from London Southend to Paris

EASYJET has announced it is launching a new route to the French capital from London Southend Airport.

Flights to Paris Charles de Gaulle are now on sale and will operate four times weekly throughout the year from February 26.

The route is expected to be popular amongst leisure and business passengers, with the carrier expecting to fly 50,000 passengers between the destinations annually.

The airline’s commercial manager, Neil Slaven, said: “We’re delighted to be adding a new route to Paris. Our Paris routes have proved extremely popular in both the summer and winter owing to its world famous attractions and its global status for art, fashion, gastronomy and culture. There is a growing demand for short and long breaks in Paris and we are able to make it convenient to reach both sides of the route and to provide value for British and French consumers. Expanding our operations between London Southend and Charles De Gaulle shows our commitment to make travel easy and affordable for leisure and business travellers from the airport.”

For further information see www.easyjet.com

Booking incentives

- ATLANTIS RESORT, Paradise Island has extended its Atlantis Bahamas Rewards programme to include 2016 bookings, giving agents the chance to win more cash rewards of up to £20 per booking. To take advantage of the offers, agents need to make a booking of a minimum four-night stay before October 31 and report their bookings to www.atlantisbahamasrewards.com to receive or bank their cash rewards. If agents book before October 12, savings of up to 35% are offered and all guests staying at the resort for a minimum of three nights will receive \$150 in food and beverage benefits from the Atlantis Wine & Dine Pass.
- KOREAN AIR is celebrating the introduction of its new Prestige (Business) Class 'suite' on the route between London and Seoul from October 25 with an agent incentive. Every time an agent sells a Korean Air ticket, in any class, between now and the end of October, they will be entered into a prize draw to win Love2Shop vouchers. See www.koreanair.com for details.
- CRUISE & Maritime Voyages (CMV) has marked the launch of CLIA's month-long 'Festival of Cruising' which runs until October 19 by giving trade partners the chance to win up to five prizes including a £250 Ticketmaster voucher. For a chance to win, agents need to make a booking and email agents@cruiseandmaritime.com with the booking reference, agency name and ABTA number. One entry is allowed for each booking made.
For details call 0844-998 3877.

FANCY A FAM?

HAVEN IS giving agents the chance to experience and enjoy a four-night break with their families from £59 per family. Agents can book a midweek break on selected dates up to October 19 at more than 20 of the company's coastal holiday parks. The price is based on a family sharing a deluxe two- or three-bedroom caravan that sleeps up to six or eight people. Agents can also book a deluxe plus two- or three-bedroom caravan for £69 per family.

For details or to book see www.bourneleisuresales.co.uk or email trade.sales@bourne-leisure.co.uk



FESTIVE FRIENDS...Kelly Hunt (right) from Bourne Leisure marks Warner Leisure Hotels' festive breaks and 'Simple Pleasures of Life' incentive with Bourne Super Expert, Lyndsey Burgess at Travellers World, Brynmawr.

It's in the stars...

What's in store for

Expect a fresh start on the horizon, so now is the time to tie up loose ends and finish any outstanding tasks or projects. It's also the time to discover what you really want out of life, so book yourself some time off to make plans. Health-wise you're on a winning streak, so capitalise on that by staying ahead of the game – eat well and increase the exercise regime.

Lucky day: Friday

Lucky number: 24



GRAND PLAN...

Stargazing opportunities at Kakslauttanen Arctic Resort

THIS YEAR Kakslauttanen Arctic Resort in Lapland, renowned for its glass igloo accommodation, is launching a new concept in luxury stargazing with the introduction of the Kelo-Glass Igloo.

The extensive cabins combine the comfort of traditional log cabins with the sky views of the domed glass igloo, and give guests the opportunity to relax by the fireplace in the warmth of the pinewood cabin and spend the evening stargazing from their beds in the glass igloo bedroom.

Flights can be booked with Finnair from London or Manchester to Ivalo, via Helsinki from £195, and room rates start from £210 per person, per night based on two sharing.

For further information or to book see www.visitfinland.com and www.finnair.com

A total of 55 travel agents from 45 agencies in London and the home counties attended the biggest workshop of BRIGHT at the Grand Connaught Rooms in London recently. Pictured are, from the left: Liz Penn, Chris Papachristou, Donna Puffett, Ben Burgess, Sue Clutterbuck and Karen Goldman from Travel Counsellors; Hisham Mahmoud, chair of Bright; and Gillian Davis, Kate Self, Daryl Glean and Cathie O'Dea from Travel Counsellors. The next workshop and dinner events are in Gatwick area on October 20 and Portsmouth on October 21.

For details see www.brightconsortia.com or email colin@eventsfortravel.com

Winter sun offerings from Rotana & Thomas Cook

ROTANA HAS teamed up with Thomas Cook to offer complimentary airport transfers and a 20% early booking reduction off holidays taken in January 2016.

Holidaymakers can choose from a range of five-star properties across the Middle East and, as an example of packages, a seven-night stay at Fujairah Rotana Resort in Dubai costs from £829 per person in a

Classic room on a bed-and-breakfast basis including flights from Gatwick.

The price includes a 20% early booking reduction on accommodation when booked up to 60 days in advance and complimentary transfers, and is valid for departures between January 11-13, 2016.

For details call 01733 224808 or visit www.thomascook.com

Le Boat reveals new spacious Horizon fleet

LE BOAT, operator of self-drive boating holidays in Europe, has unveiled a spacious new class of cruiser designed with couples and small families in mind.

The new Horizon fleet has been created for the company by luxury boat builders Delphia Yachts as part of an £11million partnership, and the first wave of 16 new boats (which will be added to the fleet in 2016) will be available in key cruising areas including the Canal du Midi and Burgundy in France, as well as Germany, Holland, Italy and the UK's River Thames.

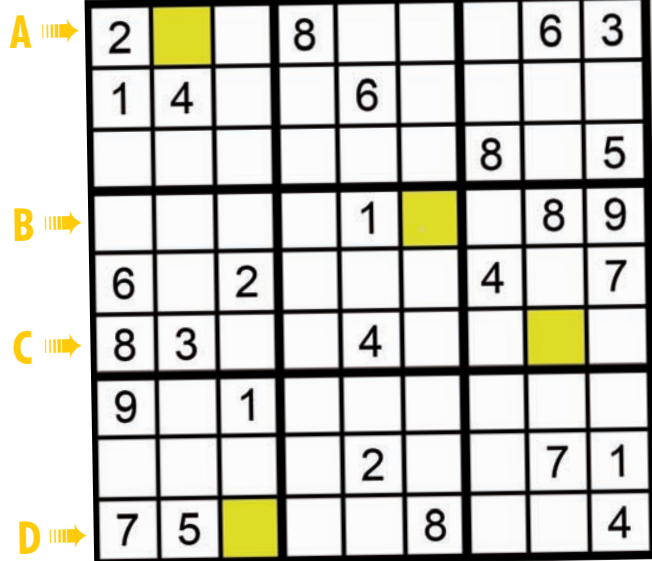
A signature feature of the new

model's layout is a spacious en suite master cabin with an adjacent smaller second cabin. The Horizon also combines an outside seating area at the rear and saloon with a 'fundeck' complete with a sunbathing area. It is now available to book online for holidaymakers wishing to travel from spring 2016 from £765 per week, excluding fuel and collision damage waiver. No experience is necessary as a full briefing will be given before setting off.

For more information visit www.leboat.co.uk or call 0844-273 8486.

Su Doku

Win a £50 M&S voucher in the [travelbulletin](http://travelbulletin.co.uk) Su Doku prize puzzle



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, October 1st. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 4th September is Lauren Chimes, Golden Goose Travel in Bedfordshire and September 11th winner is Faith Coles, Mike Coals Travel in Exeter

September 4 Solution: A=2 B=8 C=3 D=7

September 11 Solution: A=7 B=5 C=2 D=3

Travagrams

Can you solve the following anagrams to decipher the destination & tour operator?

A Coyly Dolphins



Tour operator with the slogan 'The home of Mediterranean holidays'

Sly Leeches



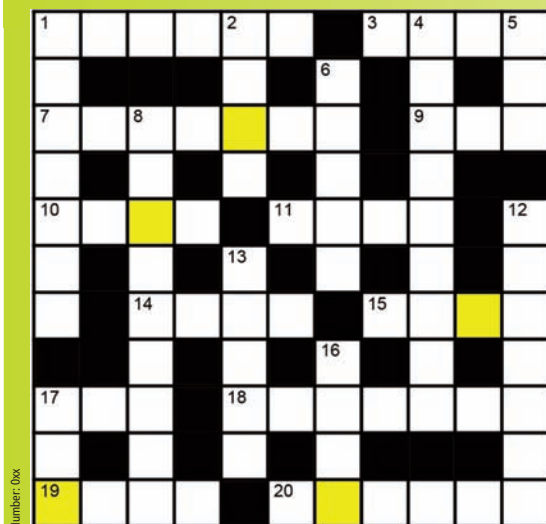
An archipelago of 115 islands in the Indian Ocean

Where Am I?



A 19th century palace located in Germany above the village of Hohenschwangau

Crossword



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

Across

- Carrier with its hub at Abu Dhabi International airport (6)
- Scottish isle, renowned for its scenery and wildlife (4)
- Celebrity cruise ship (7)
- First name of comedian/actor and regular on Would I Lie to You? (3)
- National airline of Israel (2,2)
- Hotel brand, part of Accor (4)
- Operator with routes to France and Holland, ___ Seaways (4)
- Tee off for a sporting holiday with ___ Escapes (4)
- Cross-Solent operator ___ Funnel (3)
- Pet name for petrolhead Richard Hammond (7)
- The villa holidays specialists, part of TUI (4)
- Mr Malone, searching for a Naked Choir (6)

Down

- Climbers face an epic challenge in this movie release (7)
- Mont Blanc is the highest mountain in this range (4)
- This Manor is the former Cotswold retreat of William Morris (9)
- London tourist attraction owned by Merlin Entertainments Group (3)
- City on the banks of the river Derwent (5)
- Popular seaside resort in North Wales (9)
- Recent winner of the Great North Run for the second year in a row (2,5)
- US state (5)
- First name of actress who played Hermione in the Harry Potter series (4)
- Rotterdam The Hague airport code (3)

For the solution to the Crossword, Where Am I? and Travagrams, please see page 30

Cosmos Tours & Cruises issues dedicated 2016 river & coastal cruise brochure

COSMOS TOURS & Cruises has launched its first dedicated River & Coastal Cruises brochure to meet the growing demand for worldwide river cruising.

Teaming up with leading river cruise lines, the operator has packaged cruises with flights and overseas transfers to offer a range of river cruises in Europe, Asia and the US for 2016 departures.

With an easy-to-read layout, the brochure has been designed to help agents identify the differences between the cruise products, and flags up the reasons for choosing a particular cruise, what is included in the price and ship facilities to suit individual customers.

A new partnership with luxury Germany Cruise Line A-Rosa provides a selection of European river cruises offering stylish and elegant river cruise ships, spacious staterooms and facilities including a luxurious spa. Flexible dining, all-inclusive drinks and a choice of itineraries on the Dutch Waterways and the Rivers Rhine, Rhone, Moselle and Danube are available. As an example, a six-day 'Romantic Rhone' Cruise on the four diamond plus rated A-Rosa Stella leads in at £799 per person.

Also newly featured is CMV Signature's eight-day Majestic Danube, which costs from £1,099 with on-board cabaret and show entertainment, plus the eight-day 'Magical Rhine' which costs from £849.

Developing its range of cruises with the French cruise line CroisiEurope, the operator has increased the number of departures, introduced a wider choice of durations from five to ten days, and launched a new five-day 'Tulips of Holland' (from £799). CroisiEurope River cruises are available on the Guadalquivir, Douro, Rhine, Loire, Danube, Po and Mekong Rivers.

The company's cruise product executive, Daniel Harrison, said: "Working with the most dynamic river cruise lines, we can now offer every customer something special with an exciting choice of experiences and inclusive cruise options to suit individuals. From sailing the Guadalquivir through Spain's Andalucia region and mooring up in the centre of Seville, to sailing on a luxury cruise ship through the breath-taking Rhine Gorge or through the USA's 'Deep South' on the Mississippi on a luxury paddleboat ship."

An included private home pick-up service is available for river and coastal holidays booked before December 18, available for clients living 50 miles away from their departure airport.

All cruise holiday prices include flights, transfers and cruise accommodation.

For further information or to book call 020-8315 4545, email agency.sales@cosmostours.co.uk or visit www.cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk

Four nights for the price of three in the Serengeti with Yellow Zebra

YELLOW ZEBRA is offering a special 'stay four nights for the price of three' at two of Tanzania's stylish properties - Chaka Camp and Kiota.

Offering nine en suite safari tents, Chaka Camp features an intimate mobile-tented camp located in the Serengeti ecosystem, moving to following the Great Wildebeest Migration. Sister camp, Kiota, offers ten tents, all with their own private verandahs, soaking up the surrounding bush.

Open vehicle game drives, balloon safaris and guided bush walks are all available at both properties.

For more information or to book call 0203-199-7776 or see www.yellowzebrasafaris.com



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digitaltrip
THE TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

DIGITAL DIALOGUE

In this month's column, Andy Speight - managing director at Digital Trip - highlights major trends that dominate the digital world...

MOST COMPANIES have now faced facts: in order to succeed, it is essential to have a digital strategy. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to discover that digital marketing accounted for a quarter of overall marketing spend last year - a proportion that is expected to rise. But what are the key trends that are currently making the biggest impact in the digital marketing industry? Econsultancy has noted several with regard to data; online travel companies - take note!

UNDERSTAND THE DATA

Companies are realising that it is all very well collecting data - but it is how the data is used that can lead to transformational results. Automation is still in use, but many firms now understand that they cannot rely too heavily on such tools; having lots of data won't necessarily boost the bottom line.

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC ATTITUDE

Data is now being used in a more clever way in order to anticipate consumer requirements and demands - helping to inform the choices that customers are presented with on their buying journey. While many brands have always excelled at this, it is becoming more commonplace and is now considered a standard marketing approach.

REAL-TIME APPLICATIONS

As well as having a better understanding of what customers want, it is now possible to anticipate demands in real-time. "Real-time" is certainly a buzzword at the moment, but - according to the article on Econsultancy - the number of businesses that take advantage of real-time data is relatively small. However, it says, real-time applications - whether through mobile apps or beacon technology - are showing no signs of going away, and we are witnessing a rise in customisation and personalisation at a mass level. The article notes that "this kind of thing can start from quite humble beginnings, and there are a lot of people trying it with beacon technology, through to really quite sophisticated systems." With better implementation of data, the customer experience can be vastly improved.

CAPABILITY

Lastly, there is a lot of talk currently about where data should live, and it's a source of great debate. Should it sit with IT or marketing? Should it be outsourced or handled in-house? Data, as we all know, is extremely valuable, so many believe that it should be kept in-house, while others want to use the knowledge and experience of agencies to bring extra value to it.

Different approaches work best for different businesses. But one thing is certain: the right data, used in the right way, is indispensable when it comes to digital marketing.

World Travel Market Travel Tech Show welcomes new exhibitors for 2015



THE TRAVEL Tech Show at World Travel Market will be hosting a range of new companies within the New Exhibitor Pavilion.

Launched in 2013, the Travel Tech Show has enjoyed more than a 20% growth in the past two years with more than £100million of new business generated for exhibitors last year.

This year the pavilion will welcome more than 14 new exhibitors including SDL and Virtual Service Solutions AG. Also making a debut is iPortfolio Inc, a company which has created a guidebook app called Travalloon which hosts enhanced e-Guidebooks, video-clips, and a traveller's social network for Web, Android, and iOS. ButlerPad, a virtual concierge application that provides guests with the ability to communicate with hotel departments will also be present. The new technology allows travellers to place orders, make reservations or ask a question all from the comfort of their own smartphone, tablet or PC.

Fabrizio Scuppa, managing director of Information Technologies, from pavilion sponsors Octorate, said: "We hope to meet with accommodation providers and destinations from around the world, and are looking forward to attending the wide variety of networking events that run alongside the Travel Tech Show at WTM. I have no doubt the four days will be extremely productive for us."

A number of existing exhibitors have re-signed for the Travel Tech Show 2015 including TripAdvisor CodeGen, Illusions Online, Pegasus Solutions, Comtec, Open Destinations, Digital Trip Ltd, eMax Revenue and eviivo.

Jo Marshall, sales manager for the show, said: "The growth of the Travel Tech Show at WTM has been phenomenal and the variety and quality of new exhibitors joining the event reinforces the decision to make it a stand-alone event in its own right. It offers travel and hospitality technology suppliers the perfect platform to promote their products."

Diveplanit app inspires divers to share underwater world with friends

AVAILABLE ON the iPhone App Store, the newly launched Diveplanit app gives divers the tools to share their underwater world with friends, followers and dive buddies and to log the details of each new dive with a few taps. The app has a built-in directory of dive sites and dive resorts as well as a fish identification guide for easy tagging about each dive.

Users are able to tag dive centres and dive sites in each dive log or post, which means with each social media share they are also promoting the dive resort or dive centre they are diving with.

For more information visit www.diveplanit.com



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Industry Insight by... Advantage

Could this be the start of a beautiful new relationship?
asks Colin O'Neill, business development director of The Advantage Travel Partnership

IN A previous edition of my monthly article, I mentioned that we were about to embark upon a major project within the organisation – replacing our central database with a new central relationship management system (CRM).

From an Advantage perspective, I am delighted to say that the first phase of the project is nearing completion and we take delivery on our new tailor-made system on the 1st October.

Incidentally, the system is being delivered exactly on schedule – which is remarkable given the complexity of the technology involved and the track record of technology projects in general.

Our first priority as part of the data migration process will be to review the quality of the information contained within the current system and to remove as much redundant data as possible. It's a bit like moving house in that prior to the removal men arriving, you take the opportunity to go through cupboards, the garage and the loft and to get rid of as much 'junk' as possible. Whilst in the case of our data it is not really possible to have a yard sale or to take car loads of boxes to the local charity shop, but you get what I mean.

We are very mindful of the adage: 'Rubbish in – Rubbish Out' – or words to that effect!

Once this vital process is completed, we will have the more interesting task of using the large and multi-faceted capacity of the new CRM system to build sophisticated profiles of each of our members.

We have always maintained that two of the core purposes of the central organisation are to serve as a central hub and to engage with our members.

In relation to the former, we are the communications meeting point between our members and preferred business partners – with better quality interaction, the greater likelihood of improved sales performance. A case of Quality Information In – Quality Performance Out.

With regards to member engagement, as we have re-positioned the business as a business consultancy it is important that we have an intimate understanding of as

much of our members' businesses as possible – how can you properly consult on business improvements if you don't have a complete understanding of the business on which you are trying to consult?

“Our first priority as part of the data migration process will be to review the quality of the information contained within the current system and to remove as much redundant data as possible”

As you can anticipate, the introduction over the coming months of a state-of-the-art CRM system will greatly improve our ability to deliver on both these business priorities and provide a very stable and intelligent technology platform with which to take the organisation forward into the new year.

However, as previously stated, none of the above will ultimately prove to be the real lasting benefit of the system as they are essentially allowing us to group information better and to communicate more effectively.

The big payoff will come further down the line when we can use the power of the system to go beyond simply understanding current member behaviour to potentially predict future behaviour based upon what other members with a similar business profile have done.

Being able to anticipate future business requirements will allow us to shape the quality of the offering to the member and ensure a much quicker and greater uptake to products and services that we are promoting.

However, let's not jump too far ahead – we need to get back to the start of our new member relationship and ensuring that the removal men only take with them what is truly relevant to the new home into which we are moving.

CELEBRATING

YOUR WINNERS OF 2015 AT

Travel Bulletin's Star Awards...

This month saw the **19th Star Awards** take place at the five-star Landmark Hotel in London. The event is held annually to recognise the companies and organisations that travel agents feel deserving of 'Star Awards', and the 35 winners across five categories, along with their messages to agents, can be seen over the following pages.

The schedule

The evening itself commenced with a welcome reception, followed by a delectable three-course dinner, before the Star Awards presentations got underway. Guests were delighted to see Christopher Biggins play host for the evening, and the ever cheerful Biggins even took time out to have

selfies taken with guests. Following the presentations, guests were treated to a performance by the English National Opera, which was kindly sponsored by Encore Tickets, before kicking up their heels at the after-show party.

As you'll see from some of the photos, attendees also had the chance to capture memories by taking part in the popular 'green screen' photographs, where they could choose from a selection of background images. Meanwhile, those willing to place bets had the chance to dabble at the casino.

The sponsors

We'd like to say a huge THANK YOU to our sponsors for the evening who, along with Encore Tickets, included: Jetset Holidays who sponsored the awards voting form prizes; Attraction World, who sponsored both the Star Worldwide Theme Park or Attraction Award and the Star European Theme Park or Attraction Award; Birmingham Airport, sponsor of

the Star Business Airline Award; Hard Rock Hotels All Inclusive Resorts, who sponsored a video competition where guests could win a goody bag or an all-inclusive, five-night stay for two at the company's Riviera Maya or Punta Cana resorts; and Chic Outlet Shopping (Value Retail), who sponsored the 'Best Dressed Guest' competition.

Well done to this year's finalists and huge congratulations to all the winners. Lastly, but most importantly, thank you to all our readers for taking the time to vote for and recognise those suppliers who have helped support you in your day-to-day role – and of course for your continued support as a reader of Travel Bulletin.





TYPICALLY TONY... Tony Byrne from Typically Italian perfects the look.

AGENT WINNERS

All agents who voted in the Star Awards were entered into a free prize draw to win one of twelve cinema themed prizes, courtesy of Jetset. And the winners are....

FIRST PRIZE

Christine Lloyd from Deva Travel won an annual unlimited cinema member pass for two.



PRIZE PACKAGE



RUNNER UP PRIZE

Katie Rickarby from East of England Co Operative Travel won two tickets to a London West End cinema of her choice.

PARTICIPATION PRIZES

Participation prizes: Ten winners will receive cinema gift vouchers to be used at local cinemas. The winners are: Lee Villiers, Upfront Travel; Kate Harris, Inspired Travel; Susan Watt, Cartwright Travel; Nicholas Marks, Sevenoaks Travel; Sam Bird, Carrick Travel; Anna Mavroulakis, Skyfare Travel; Cathy Ellis, Travelttime; Olivia Jackson-Price, Travel PA; Jane Rockley, Not Just Travel; Sarah BusbyAscot, Travel House.

All winners should email Jetset Sales at sales@jetsetflights.co.uk to arrange delivery of their prize.

...chatting over drinks are, from the left Rajan Sanhney, Holidayteam; Tania Codling, Advantage Travel; Brian Challis, Holidayteam; Chiara Ashenden, Advantage Travel and Feysal Nagi from Holidayteam.

ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET

SAY CHEESE

...happy to strike a pose are, from the left: Claire Hills, Gold Medal; Darren Mussell, Riviera Holidays; Amanda Schofield, Travel Cube and Tony Byrne, Typically Italian; Nisha Tailor, Jetset; and Rupert Diggins, Beachcomber Holidays.

Focus on Fotoseeker

view online at <http://tbawards.fotoseeker.com>.

To download any images, users will first need to register on the site, which is free of charge. Fotoseeker supplies image management and photo library software to the travel industry, including hotels, cruise lines, tourist offices and operators, who can showcase their images online and benefit from Fotoseeker's huge database of the world's media and travel professionals from as little as £95.00 per month. The site is currently used by more than 150 countries as a means of showcasing and promoting destinations and this figure continues to grow on a daily basis. The site features 350,000 images and is currently used by 40,000 registered users worldwide. All images are of an industry standard format for publication and do not need to be resized prior to publication, while Fotoseeker's bespoke service offers customised image libraries integrated into clients' Websites. For more information email colin@fotoseeker.com



Video Box

For an overview of the 2015 Star Awards evening, see the latest video at www.travelbulletin.co.uk

Star Tweets



@WeGiveUTheWorld
We've only gone and bagged ourselves an award at last night's #TBStarAwards! We are truly grateful #ThrilledToBits

@KateMcW
Absolutely fantastic to see the #EnglishNationalOpera @TravelBulletin #TBStarAwards - what a privilege. Thank you!

@CarlaHutchT2
Even managed a #selfie with Christopher Biggins! #winner #TBStarAwards @TravelBulletin @T2News proud winners!

@POCCUN_sales
Congratulations to our sister line @FunTeamUK for Star family cruise company at #tbstarawards

@alleisuresales
We're so happy to be runners up in the Star Specialist Cruise Company. Thank you to everyone that voted for us! #TBStarAwards

@Oman_Tourism_UK
Delighted to pick up the @TravelBulletin Star Middle East Tourist Office Award for second year in a row! @reppluspr

@VikingTradeUK
We were named Star River Cruise Company at last night's @TravelBulletin Star Awards! A BIG thank you to all who voted! #TBStarAwards



JETSET JUBILEE...enjoying the drinks reception are, from the left Madeline McFadden, Anna Malahova and Loraine Mehta from Jetset.



HIP HIP...Hurray! It's three cheers for Attraction World's Tony Seaman – sponsor of two Theme Park Star Awards, as he celebrates his win for Star Holiday Add-Ons Operator with his colleague Nicola Harper.

Pictured at the drinks reception is Travel Bulletin's Jeanette Ratcliffe (left), with Neil Dyson and Tracey Dyson from Hard Rock Hotels All Inclusive Resorts, who sponsored the video competition.



The English National Opera provided a dazzling performance on the night, sponsored by Encore Tickets.



Cyplon Holidays' Jayne Scott selected the business card draw prize winner - David Edwards from Peregrination, who won a seven-night breakfast stay for two at the new Amathus Beach Hotel in Limassol, Cyprus.



MOVIE MOVERS... Blending in with the background is James Lewis (left) from Holiday Extras; Vicky Jones from Advantage; and Mark Harris from Wendy Wu.

Invites you to attend an

ADVENTURE & ACTIVITY HOLIDAYS SHOWCASE

agent networking evening



Monday 5th October 2015
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Chester

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

The evening will involve a combination of networking and presentations, exciting entertainment, a free prize draw with a number of fabulous prizes to be won along with delicious food and drinks.

Registration: 18.00 hours

Networking & Presentations: 18.30 hours

Buffet, entertainment & prizes: 20.00 hours

Carriages: 21.30 hours

To confirm your place at this amazing event, email the names and job titles of up to 5 staff members by Thursday 1st October 2015 to:- gemma.reeve@travelbulletin.co.uk or telephone:

020 7834 6661

for more information.

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

SPONSORS



STAR AFRICA SPECIALIST OPERATOR

Winner: Somak Holidays

Runner Up: Kuoni

Finalists: Africa & Beyond, Africa Collection, African Pride, Travel 2

WE ARE delighted to have been recognised as 'Star Specialist Africa Operator' for the second year running. Everyone at Somak would like to take the opportunity to thank the agents who voted for us in this category. After a difficult year in promoting the Kenya coast, we are pleased to be able to report a noticeable upturn in bookings as confidence returns to this incredible destination. Over the last few months, we have also seen a

sizeable increase in the share of business to South Africa, despite it being such a competitive market. We have just distributed special offer mini brochures featuring Kenya and South Africa which highlight some really amazing deals, especially combined with the favourable exchange rate on arrival; it really is the place to travel to in 2016. We are looking forward to a busy few months ahead with agent customer events, agent dinners, training opportunities, as well as fam trips scheduled for the first time in a number of years. We welcome contact from agents who would like to receive brochures and updates from us.



Justin Coles from Somak picks up the award for Star Africa Specialist Operator

STAR MEDITERRANEAN SPECIALIST OPERATOR

Winner: Cyplon Holidays

Runner Up: Classic Collection Holidays

Finalists: Anatolian Sky Holidays, Jet2holidays, Olympic Holidays, Sunvil Holidays

"WE ARE delighted and truly humbled to win our fourth consecutive 'Star Mediterranean Specialist Operator'", says the operator's managing director, Harry Hajipapas. "We are over the moon to have been acknowledged, once again, with such a prestigious award and we must say an enormous thank you to our wonderful travel agents who have supported and voted for us – without them it just wouldn't be possible."

Tass Anastasi, the company's sales director, said: "Agents are our priority and you can see that in everything we do. With greater choice in product, commission flexibility and a more rigorous price matching policy (both online and offline), we have delivered on our promise to make life

easier and more efficient for our loyal travel agents. We have shaken off the tag of being 'expensive' and we are more aware and more geared towards helping our agents get the sale.

"2016 promises to be another year of excitement for us with the launch of our new Croatia brochure, as well as further expansion in Cyprus and Greece. You can also expect to see much more in terms of our North Africa and Middle East programmes, which had a hugely



Tass Anastasi and Jayne Scott collect Cyplon's award for Star Mediterranean Specialist Operator

STAR AMERICAS SPECIALIST OPERATOR

Winner: Funway Holidays

Runner Up: Virgin Holidays

Finalists: 1st Class Holidays, Jetset Holidays, Premier Holidays, USAirtours

WE ARE delighted to have won the 'Star Specialist Operator to the Americas' for the fourth year in a row. We'd like to say a huge thank you to all of our High Street and home-based travel agents; without your support this wouldn't have been possible.

We have been working hard at Funway over the last year to provide the very best service to our travel agent partners - from competitive pricing, to our MoneyCard loyalty scheme which continues to grow and receive great feedback.

Our dedicated trade website, Funway4Agents, provides an online booking facility but we have also invested in training our reservations team who can offer expert advice and recommendations for USA & Caribbean holidays.

Furthermore, our team of on-the-road business development managers are there to support all of our agents and are able to provide face-to-face training, marketing material for shop windows and promotional items for events and shows. Once again, thank you for your continued support.



Laura Smith from Funway celebrates the award for Star Americas Specialist Operator

STAR ESCORTED TOURS OPERATOR

Winner: Titan Travel

Runner Up: Newmarket Holidays

Finalists: Just You, Trafalgar, Travelsphere, Wendy Wu Tours

IT WAS another great night for us at the Travel Bulletin Star Awards, with Titan walking away with the 'Star Escorted Tours Operator' award for the fourth year running.

We are absolutely delighted to receive this incredible accolade and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the travel agents who voted for us; it is an honour to be held in such high regard by our trade partners.

This award recognises the hard work and dedication of everyone at Titan, and it really does mean so much to us. Our trade sales have seen

fantastic growth in recent years, thanks not only to our growing portfolio of products and our wonderful agency sales team, but also to the amazing support we get from our trade partners.

We have some new developments in the pipeline including launching our new Traveller, by Titan brand to the trade, plus our new partnership with AmaWaterways.

Thank you from everyone at Titan!



Picking up the award for Star Escorted Tours Operator is Edwina Coppock, agency sales manager for Titan

titan

Thanks for voting us as your

Star Escorted Tours Operator 2015

**Thanks a million,
we are over
the moon!**

2015 travelbulletin
**STAR
wards
WINNER**

SMOOTH OPERATORS

STAR ADVENTURE/ACTIVITY HOLIDAYS OPERATOR

Winner: Club Med

Runner Up: Mark Warner

Finalists: Exodus, Explore!, Kuoni,
Neilson Holidays

WE'RE OVER the moon to have won this award - it is wonderful news. We put a lot of effort into agency support tools with trade incentives, promotions, concessions and excellent commission offerings, all designed to reward the agents throughout the year.

The Travel Bulletin Star Award is one we really cherish as it's voted by agents for the company they believe to be the best. It also rewards our team, with Sarah Revell, Danny Joel and Phil Shipman on the road to support our partners. So far, we can report a successful start to winter 2016; with new openings including a new ski resort in Val Thorens and, for summer 2016, the awesome Finolhu villas in the Maldives. We are extremely grateful for all the support.

We have the most comprehensive premium all-inclusive product in the market to more than 70 resorts worldwide, and we offer more than 60 land and sea sports. With the new refurbishments like Da Balaia in Portugal and our new trade strategy for 2016, alongside the brochure launch in the coming weeks, we intend to keep agents at the forefront of our plans over the next 12 months - thanks again to all the agents for their support!



Ecstatic to win Star Adventure/Activity Holidays Operator is Danny Joel from Club Med

STAR OPERATOR FOR INCENTIVES & FAM TRIPS

Winner: Travel 2

Runner Up: Sandals Resorts International

Finalists: Classic Collection Holidays, Cyphon Holidays, Funway Holidays, Gold Medal, Kuoni

WE WOULD like to thank all our agent partners for voting for us in the recent Travel Bulletin Star Awards. We are thrilled to have been crowned 'Star Operator for Incentives & Fam Trips' once again and we couldn't have done it without your support!

We focus heavily on supporting our agents and rewarding them for their business and continued loyalty, which we will never take for granted and will always strive to improve. We have further enhanced our Fam School programme, as we feel it is crucial for agents to experience key destinations firsthand and continue to improve their knowledge and ability to sell with confidence.

In the past year alone, we have hosted more than 300 agents on fam trips to more than 20 countries, with a plan to host even more in 2016; invited more than 500 agents to our prestigious annual events; and awarded more than 3,500 agents with incentive prizes and rewards. We are delighted to have been recognised for our efforts by way of this award.

The past year has been one to remember and exciting times lie ahead. We hope you will all be there and part of the journey as nothing we do would be possible without the fantastic support from the trade - thank you.



A strong win for Travel 2 as Carla Hutchings collects the award for Star Operator For Incentives & Fam Trips

STAR ASIA SPECIALIST OPERATOR

Winner: Wendy Wu Tours**Runner Up:** If Only...**Finalists:** Insider Journeys, Inspired By Asia, Kuoni, Premier Holidays, Travel 2

WE ARE the UK's leading Asia travel specialist, offering a comprehensive range of group, private, luxury, adventure and tailor-made holidays to China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka.

Our inspiring range of tours caters for all types of traveller and, new for 2016/17, we have introduced a brand new range of Discovery Tours, including more immersive and active experiences across Asia. What's more, we have achieved an independent customer rating of 99% via our Feefo reviews.

Wendy Wu Tours continues to work very closely with the trade and next year will be no different, with our dedicated team of four BDM's on the road helping agents to maximise their sales.

We have also improved our agent loyalty scheme, Bambu Club, enabling agents to accrue 'Wu' points for making bookings, attending roadshows and pro-actively promoting us. The points can then be exchanged for shopping vouchers.

We really value the support of agents and by winning multiple trade awards, we believe agents value the dedicated marketing support, training and incentives that we offer. What's more, they know that when they sell a Wendy Wu tour, they will have a satisfied customer for life.



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STAR UK SPECIALIST OPERATOR

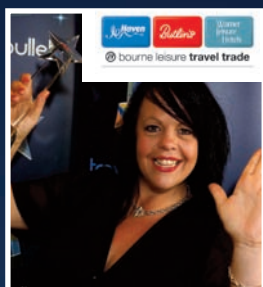
Winner: Warner Leisure Hotels
Runner Up: Hoseasons
Finalists: Butlins, Haven, Superbreak

WE ARE thrilled to have scooped the 'Star Specialist Operator' at this year's Travel Bulletin Star Awards.

To have been nominated in the UK Specialist Operator category by our travel agent friends is an achievement, but to go on to win this prestigious Star Award is excellent. This is testament to the continued commitment we show the UK trade. It is truly rewarding to see travel agents recognise our ongoing activity on the road, our targeted training workshops and our fun and interactive events. We strive to ensure the needs of the UK's trade are met in an informative way, and so we strive to develop fresh initiatives that keep things interesting.

Thank you to every single agent that voted and all those others that have supported us in our quest to keep the Warner product front of mind.

Warner Leisure Hotels has an overall product investment programme of £22million for 2014/15, the largest of which is the recent Bodelwyddan Castle Hotel re-development which has seen 45 newly built Garden Lodges, a Mulberry Coffee Lounge, a glass atrium and new dining and entertainment facilities join the portfolio.



Wowed to receive the award for Star UK Specialist Operator is Louise Tansey from Bourne Leisure.

STAR OPERATOR FOR AGENT TRAINING

Winner: Kuoni
Runner Up: Attraction World
Finalists: Bourne Leisure, Classic Collection Holidays, Club Med, Sandals Resorts International, Travel 2, Wendy Wu Tours

WE ARE delighted to win the 'Star Operator For Agent Training' Award. Over the last year we have attempted to make our training a much more bespoke and personal experience including

training overseas. Our first conference in Sri Lanka was a great success and one we plan to repeat in 2016.

We can educate our key agent partners on a key destination and the benefits of working with Kuoni by taking them there. We are very grateful to everyone who voted and we truly hope to deliver exceptional experiences to our agent partners next year.

Our portfolio continues to be refined with more boutique and exclusive offerings for our mutual customers. This week alone saw the launch of our Italy, Mediterranean and North Africa titles bringing the reassurance of the Kuoni you know so well not only to the far flung destinations but closer to home as well. Thank you so much to everyone who voted - it keeps us inspired to do our best.



Elize Maciel (left) and Lucy Ellingham from Kuoni pick up the award for Star Operator For Agent Training

STAR HOLIDAY ADD-ONS OPERATOR



Winner: Attraction World
Runner Up: Holiday Extras
Finalists: A2B Transfers, DoSomethingDifferent.com, Holiday Taxis, TravelCube

WE ARE delighted to have won such a prestigious award as 'Star Holiday Add-Ons Operator' at Travel Bulletin's Star Awards.

Winning an award at any trade event is a great accolade for a company but as the Travel Bulletin Star Awards are judged purely on agents' own votes we are even more proud to have won this one!

Watch this space for more exciting agent incentives, exclusive offers and new products coming your way in 2016!

In the meantime, it's a BIG THANK YOU to everyone who voted for us and we hope to remain your No.1 for many years to come!

Thank you

A BIG FOR YOUR SUPPORT

All the team at Bourne Leisure are delighted to have won **UK Specialist Operator** for Warner Leisure Hotels in the Travel Bulletin Travel Awards

Don't forget our Warner Leisure Hotels great incentive for you...

Simple Pleasures of Life

Earn £5 for every Warner booking*

For every Warner booking you make between now – 4 Oct for travel in 2015, you can earn a **£5 Love2Shop Voucher**. Plus Double Bubble, we'll **double** your £5 voucher to **£10** for every Warner Christmas and New Year booking*

DON'T MISS OUT! Ends 4 October 2015

To book online or to claim your vouchers visit **BourneLeisureSales.co.uk**

*Full terms and conditions apply.

Warner Leisure Hotels

STAR LUXURY OPERATOR

Winner: Classic Collection Holidays

Runner Up: If Only...

Finalists: Elegant Resorts, Prestige Holidays, Sandals Resorts International, Sunset Faraway Holidays

CLASSIC COLLECTION Holidays has been selling luxury holidays through the UK travel trade for 27 years. We're very proud of our Travel Bulletin Star Awards as they endorse our brand and our high levels of service.

Of all our customers, 99% confirm that they would definitely book another holiday and would additionally recommend our luxury short-haul holidays to family and friends. Our reservations team is comprised of highly motivated experts who match the right tailor-made holiday with customers' expectations. It is the flexibility of our product and the knowledge of our staff, plus a robust price promise guarantee, that has led to our success with agents.

Our on-the-road sales team is always available to visit, to train, and most importantly to listen to agents, reporting back from our travel partners about holiday trends and what agents expect from us. It is the strength of these relationships, together with treating others (customers and suppliers) as we wish to be treated ourselves, which ensures that we stand apart from our competitors. We loathe the computer-says-no culture and, because we know we can offer a superior yes-service over the telephone, feature an informative but non-bookable website and a freephone number for agents to call on 0800-008 7288.



Celebrating Classic Collection's win of Star Luxury Operator are, from the left the operator's Sophie Thackeray, Andrew Farr, Louise Stevenson and Claire Cannon



Star European Specialist
Operator 2015

THANKS!

Thanks to you all for your support!

We certainly wouldn't have got through the past 26 years without you...!

With our strict 'one price' policy Anatolian Sky Holidays has always tried to put agents first and it's so nice to be appreciated.



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Anatolian Sky
Dedicated to Quality

STAR EUROPEAN SPECIALIST OPERATOR

Winner: Anatolian Sky Holidays

Runner Up: Classic Collection Holidays

Finalists: Kirker Holidays, Olympic Holidays, Prestige Holidays, Typically Italian

SINCE ANATOLIAN Sky Holidays was first established 26 years ago, we have put agents at the heart of everything that we do. It is because of this that Travel Bulletin's 'Star European Specialist Operator' award means so much to us and is very much appreciated.

Anatolian Sky Holidays began as a specialist operator to Turkey in 1989, offering hand-picked properties in some of the most traditional and picturesque resorts of Turkey and North Cyprus. In recent years, following the successful model of the Turkey programme, we have expanded into countries such as Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Madeira, Morocco and Egypt, with a choice of relaxed beach holidays, multi-centre and tailor-made holidays, cultural tours and walking holidays.

Next year will see continued commitment to the trade with more fam trips across all destinations, as well as ongoing training programmes.

We are so grateful to all the agents who voted for us. We pride ourselves on our commitment to working with the trade and to win this award is validation of that ongoing commitment and of the close working relationships that we endeavour to maintain with all the agents who work so hard on our behalf.



A delighted John Cooper collects the award for Star European Specialist Operator for Anatolian Sky Holidays

WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT YOU!

Cyplon HOLIDAYS
The home of Mediterranean holidays

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TO ALL OF OUR VALUED AGENTS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT FROM ALL AT
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STAR MEDITERRANEAN SPECIALIST OPERATOR
2012, 2013, 2014 & 2015

STAR HOLIDAY PARKS OPERATOR

Winner: Hoseasons

Runner Up: Haven

Finalists: Butlins, Eurocamp, Pontins

WINNING AWARDS is always pleasing – especially when they are voted for by our colleagues in the trade.

This is the second year in a row we've won the 'Star Holiday Parks Operator' and the seventh in a row we've been recognised with a Travel Bulletin Star Award, so we must be doing something right!

We're always looking at ways to improve the support we offer agents and the last 12 months have been no different. The updated agent portal on our website makes it easier to process bookings, while training packs and e-learning modules mean support is always available whenever it is needed.

Agents have always loved the breadth of product we offer – so whether it's lodges, boats, cottages or caravans, they know we're 100% committed to developing our existing product ranges and introducing innovations that will help them sell our holidays.

The new products we've introduced in recent years have been warmly received by the trade and we fully expect our 2016 addition to be just as popular!



Ryan Carroll (left) and Tariq Khan from Hoseasons collect the award for Star Holiday Parks Operator

ATTRACTION PACKED

AND STARRY EYED!

We can't thank you enough for voting us as

**Star Holiday Add-Ons
Operator**

at this year's Travel Bulletin Star Awards



We're supporting



ATTRACTIONWORLD.COM



we give you the world





We are proud to have won the

SPECIALIST CRUISE LINE OF THE YEAR 2015



**THANK YOU
FOR VOTING
FOR US!**

*From all of us at the
Hurtigruten team*



HURTIGRUTEN

STAR FAMILY CRUISE COMPANY

Winner: Carnival Cruise Lines

Runner Up: Royal Caribbean International

Finalists: Disney Cruise Line, P&O Cruises, MSC Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line



You won't find more to do or see than on a Carnival cruise. With some of the largest cruise ships in the world, we carry a bigger cargo of fun. From delicious dining, fabulous bars and lounges and spacious accommodation, to fun-filled entertainment and activities, a Carnival cruise offers you so much more for your money. There are even shows, a fitness centre, a casino and best of all, amazing ocean views.

The launch of our brand new ship, the Carnival Vista, features heavily in our 2015 plans with our trade partners, as we aim to get a high number of them on board to experience all of the amazing facilities that she has to offer.

We feel that travel agents voted us 'Star Family Cruise Company', as this year we have really shouted about what we have to offer for all customers, particularly our family guests. We have done this by attending various trade events and training sessions where we engaged with our agents and were able to bring to life all aspects of a Carnival cruise via our interactive training sessions.



Thrilled to collect the award for Star Family Cruise Company are Charlotte Mendoza (left) and Lucy Northrop from Carnival.

STAR LUXURY CRUISE COMPANY

Winner: Silversea Cruises

Runner Up: Cunard

Finalists: Azamara Club Cruises, Celebrity Cruises, Oceania Cruises, Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Seabourn



We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all agents who, once again, voted us 'Star Luxury Cruise Company'. We are delighted with this award and feel this demonstrates the success and strength of the relationships we have built with the trade over the years.

As the luxury cruise industry expands year-on-year, Silversea continues to focus on innovation and offering superlative European service. With the introduction of the newest addition to our fleet, Silver Muse, set to debut in 2017, we maintain our commitment to operating the highest quality ships in the ultra-luxury segment, enhancing the small-ship intimacy and spacious all-suite accommodation that are the hallmarks of the Silversea experience.

Travelling to more destinations than any other cruise line, we ensure that many unique elements are woven together to create an extraordinary holiday experience for our guests.

These include intimate, all suite ships that can call in some of the world's most remote destinations and dock in ports that are inaccessible to larger ships, luxurious amenities, superb cuisine, stunning worldwide destinations, including both polar regions, and the ability our guests have to personalise their experience with bespoke land adventures.

We look forward to even stronger relationships with you, the travel trade, and to continue building our reputation as the best luxury cruise line.



A very nice surprise to win Star Luxury Cruise Company for Silversea's Donatella Valzasina (left) and Natasha Donovan.

STAR RIVER CRUISE COMPANY

Winner: Viking River Cruises

Runner Up: Riviera Travel

Finalists: AmaWaterways, APT River Cruises, Avalon Waterways, Emerald Waterways, Tauck River Cruises



We are immensely proud to have been voted 'Star River Cruise Company' at the 2015 Travel Bulletin Star Awards. The award, voted for by travel agents, is a clear reflection of our extraordinary success.

Viking continues to lead the river cruise market... by far. With more than 60 river cruise ships offering journeys across Europe, Russia and Asia, we offer guests more choice of destinations and more choice of dates. We also offer a more superior product, in terms of service, comfort and expertise. Now, with the successful launch of our first ocean ship Viking Star, we are taking our winning concept of destination-focused journeys to the next step. Initial reports from both press and guests are glowing. Clearly a Viking ocean cruise is exactly what people are looking for – smaller ships that visit more interesting destinations, and itineraries that give you more time in port, with a more interesting choice of things to do when you get there. Plus, all the inclusions – such as free Wi-Fi and alternative dining – that other ocean cruise lines do not deliver.

Our cruises have always been a popular sell for travel agents, who benefit from more generous commission, helpful selling tools and, most importantly, the best cruise product out there. For clients and agents, it's a win win with Viking.



Laurent Ferros (left) and Andrew Schweitzer from Viking River Cruises celebrate their win of Star River Cruise Company.

STAR SPECIALIST CRUISE COMPANY

Winner: Hurtigruten

Runner Up: Voyages of Discovery

Finalists: Azamara Club Cruises, Disney Cruise Line, Ponant, Star Clippers



In a world where humans live to a great extent on the surface and have little time for reflection, the need arises to be part of the real and the natural. People want to escape from the stress and hassle of daily life to participate actively in the powerful experiences

provided by closeness to dramatic landscapes and local culture. We, at Hurtigruten, will fulfil this need for both everyday travellers and for tourists.

When we go to work, it is to ensure that people have the opportunity to live where they want and that others can experience majestic scenery and local culture.

Our guests will feel just as much at home whatever the product they have purchased, and we will be just as much at the service of local people as of tourists.

By constantly improving this experience, our long-term aim is to be regarded as one of the world's ten most attractive tourist destinations. Quite simply, we go to work to create real experiences in unique waters.

Our aim with our industry partners is to help educate and inspire their guests to get ready to explore some of the most beautiful and untouched locations in the world.

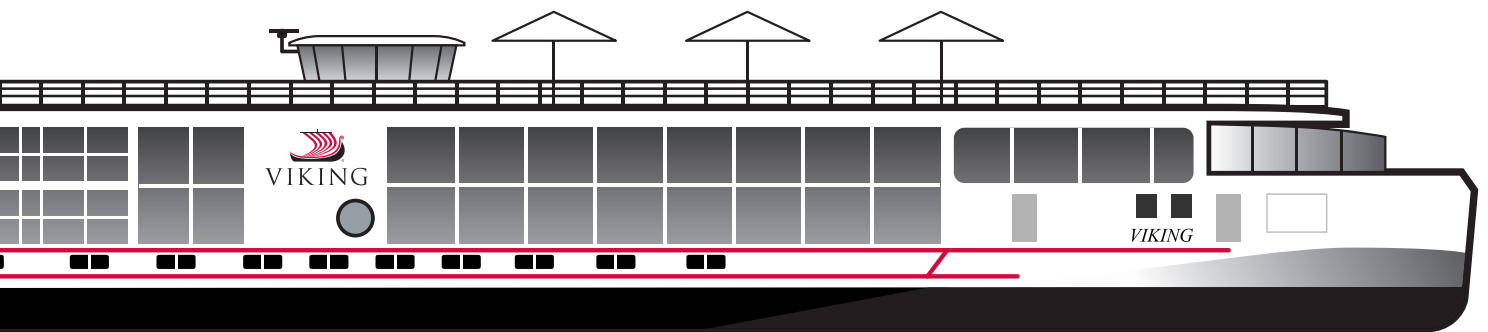


Anthony Daniels from Hurtigruten shows his appreciation for winning Star Specialist Cruise Company.

Our ship came in

Thanks to all the travel agents out there who
voted Viking **'Star River Cruise Company'**
at the 2015 Travel Bulletin Star Awards.

We couldn't do it without you.



For more information on any of our river or ocean cruises visit

vikingcruises.co.uk


VIKING
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STAR SCHEDULED FLIGHT CONSOLIDATOR

Winner: Jetset Flights

Runner Up: The Holiday Team

Finalists: Faremine, Gold Medal Travel, JTA Travel, Major Travel

JETSET IS delighted to have won the prestigious 'Star Scheduled Flight Consolidator'. This is actually our fourth consecutive win and we have now a total of six wins in this very competitive category. We never take the votes from agents for granted and are very happy to see that our innovative approach to Systems and Service is so well received by agents around the country.

This year has been a significant one for us as we released the new look JETS. The development resulted in a number of improvements but principally updated Booking Basket screens and of course the very popular SNAP SHOT on the flight booking side of the system. Rest assured we are keen to continue to develop the JETS system as the perfect tool for travel professionals. We are fortunate that as a trade-only operator we can focus entirely on one specific audience and make sure that the system works just for them. In terms of the future, we can't fully divulge but there is something very exciting being worked on ready for launch early in Q4 of 2015.

Thanks again for the support and we are confident we can continue to be worthy of such trade endorsement.



Delighted to win Star Scheduled Flight Consolidator are Loraine Mehta and Adrian Smyth from Jetset.

A Huge Thank You!



Avro

has won the Travel Bulletin

'Star Charter Seat-Only Operator' Award

The team at Avro would like to thank all of our valued trade partners for voting

STAR BUSINESS AIRLINE

Winner: Emirates

Runner Up: British Airways

Finalists: Cathay Pacific, Etihad Airways, Lufthansa, Virgin Atlantic



EMIRATES IS delighted to be named 'Star Business Airline' at the Travel Bulletin Star Awards 2015. To know that the votes were cast by industry experts reinforces to us that we are focusing in the right areas with regards to our trade strategy.

We continue to promote and support the travel trade and recognise each and every member of staff who took the time and effort to vote and award Emirates with the accolade.

We understand the importance of the travel trade, and the abilities of every single agent - these are the people whose knowledge and experience forms the pillars of the travel industry. We are truly honoured to have this award in the trophy cabinet, and would like to thank all those who voted and continue to support Emirates.



Rashid Nazir and Vicky Robinson from Emirates collect the award for Star Business Airline.

STAR CHARTER SEAT-ONLY OPERATOR

Winner: Avro

Runner Up: Jet2.com

Finalists: Thomas Cook Airlines, Thomson Airways

MONARCH'S TRADE-ONLY seat provider Avro is delighted to have won the 'Star Charter Seat-Only Operator' of the year for the 17th time in the awards' 19-year history. To be recognised by our travel agent partners as outstanding performers in this capacity is, in such a competitive market, a real accolade, and we would like to thank all of the trade partners that voted for us.

Whilst the market has changed considerably in recent years, we have continued to offer a genuine point of difference to our agent partners by providing trade terms on the Monarch scheduled route network; 6.8 million sector seats departing from five UK bases - Gatwick, Luton, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds Bradford - to city, ski and beach destinations across Europe and the Red Sea.

With a new fleet of Boeing 737 MAX 8's scheduled for delivery from 2018, and with the ongoing development of the scheduled route network, including our recently launched Israel programme for winter 2015, we look forward to continue working with our trade partners to offer the best available flight only terms for their customers.



Michael Vinales, managing director of Avro, is proud to collect Star Charter Seat-Only Operator.

STAR UK AIRPORT

Winner: Birmingham Airport

Runner Up: Manchester Airport

Finalists: Bristol Airport, Leeds Bradford International Airport, London Gatwick Airport, London Heathrow Airport, Stansted Airport



The Birmingham Airport team collect their award. From the left are Mandy Hague, William Pearson, Stefanie Bowes and Tracey Quirk.

WE ARE over the moon to have received this further accolade from Travel Bulletin's Star Awards 2015 for 'Star UK Airport'. It is testament to the hard work of both the

airport's travel trade team - the Airport Gurus - and our partner agents who are receiving great feedback from customers. The constant contact with agents up and down the country, plus the Airport Guru website and Facebook page means that we are able to constantly keep partners abreast with developments and be on hand to answer queries or offer special assistance.

As we grow our route network, with seven new carriers choosing to launch from Birmingham already this year, travel agents can give their clients even more reason to choose Birmingham as their departure airport. A £300m development programme completed last year has allowed us to focus on providing an excellent customer journey as well as first class facilities for our airlines. Record passenger numbers this year demonstrates that more and more people want to use Birmingham Airport to fly for business and leisure. We thank our travel partners for their continual support and look forward to working with them over the coming year.

Hello

Birmingham Airport would like to thank the travel trade for all of their support and for voting us the "Star UK Airport" for the second consecutive year !!



Hello new routes Hello American Airlines daily service to JFK Hello Norwegian.com to Madrid, Barcelona and Malaga Hello Emirates 3rd daily service to Dubai Hello Icelandair to Reykjavik and North America Hello Vueling to Barcelona Hello Turkish Airlines 12 weekly flights to Istanbul and beyond Hello Air India daily Delhi service and onwards throughout India Hello making the far flung, far easier Hello local gateway to the world



A BIG FLORIDA THANK YOU

TO ALL THE TRAVEL AGENTS WHO VOTED FOR US

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment made a big splash at the prestigious Travel Bulletin Star Awards. We won the title of 'Star Worldwide Theme Park or Attraction' 2015.

To learn more, visit seaworldparksagents.co.uk to complete our online training and become eligible for a free 3-park ticket for SeaWorld, Aquatica and Busch Gardens. You will also receive a goody bag and get the chance to WIN a place on one of our Florida FAM trips!

SEAWORLD PARKS
& ENTERTAINMENT™

FLORIDA



STAR ACCOMMODATION-ONLY PROVIDER

Winner: bedsonline.com

Runner Up: Getabed.co.uk

Finalists: Expedia TAAP, Medhotels, roomsXML.com, Superbreak, TravelCube

MANY THANKS to all the agents who voted for Bedsonline as 'Star Accommodation-Only Provider' for the second year in a row. Winning this award recognises that we are able to offer the very best accommodation options for agents to create their customers' dream holiday or short break.

As ever, it is our aim to provide the very best-in-class service, product portfolio and most competitive rates. Thanks again for your votes!



It's celebration time for Mark Hopper and Clare White from bedsonline.com as they pick up their award for Star Accommodation-Only Provider

STAR TECHNOLOGY SUPPLIER

Winner: Amadeus

Runner Up: Vertical Systems

Finalists: Sabre, Travelport, Traveltek, Vibe

WE ARE proud to have won the Travel Bulletin 'Star Technology Supplier' award - a huge thank you to all the agents who took the time to vote for us.

Despite a healthy list of contenders, this accolade shows that travel professionals recognise our unrivalled investment in new solutions and services that help them to shine.

Throughout 2015 we have promoted efficiency gains that can be enjoyed by adopting our award-winning technology. For example, we help travel agents eliminate time-consuming and costly manual ticket reissues, as well as automate other admin tasks that might distract them from delivering what customers really value (see www.amadeusefficiency.co.uk).

More recently, with studies showing that nine out of ten travellers take their mobile phone on their journeys, we announced a new solution for engaging with travellers via smartphones. But we're not ones to rest on our laurels. Working with industry stakeholders and our customers, we honestly believe that together, we can shape the future of travel.



Proud to collect the Star award for Technology Supplier is Andrew O'Brien from Amadeus

STAR EUROPEAN THEME PARK OR ATTRACTION

Winner: Disneyland Resort Paris

Runner Up: Siam Park

Finalists: Alton Towers, PortAventura, Thorpe Park, Warner Bros. Studio Tour London-The Making Of Harry Potter

DISNEYLAND PARIS has welcomed around 300 million visits since opening in 1992 (14.2 million visits in 2014).



Our resort boasts two spectacular theme parks (Disneyland Park and Walt Disney Studios Park) and seven themed Disney hotels with 5,800 rooms (more than 2,200 rooms are available in Selected and Associated Hotels). Two full-service convention centres and a world-class 27-hole golf course are also present.

In addition to this, the destination is home to Disney Village - a themed dining, shopping and cinema experience. Disneyland Paris comprises 59 attractions, 63 shops and 55 restaurants.



Elkie Bird (left) and Leanne Harley from Disney Destinations International are delighted to collect the award for Star European Theme Park Or Attraction

STAR CAR RENTAL COMPANY

Winner: Flexible Autos

Runner Up: Affordable Car Hire

Finalists: Alamo, Avis, Europcar, Hertz, Your Car Hire



WE WOULD like to extend a huge thank you to all of you who voted for us at this year's Travel Bulletin Star Awards, naming us 'Star Car Rental Company' for 2015.

Firmly established for over eight years, we are one of the UK's largest trade-only car rental brokers. Everything we do is about making agents' lives easier. Our dedicated account managers offer an outstanding personal service, plus we've made significant changes to our booking website, making it even easier to use. As well as showing live availability, agents now have more choices to offer clients, with the ability to book an in-resort delivery or an airport pick-up depending on your clients' preference. By offering a 100% trade-only product, your customers won't find our prices cheaper anywhere else, and our new fully inclusive, pre-paid product launched earlier this year offers complete peace of mind. Our 'Premium Package' requires no deposit at the time of booking, offers zero excess plus additional benefits, depending on location.

Thanks to you, we've expanded rapidly, re-branding last year and doubling our staff numbers. We now have offices in Europe and the Middle East, with China due to launch soon. We're also looking to add to our list of quality car rental partnerships, with more well-known brands, as well as key local suppliers who provide an in-depth knowledge of their local markets. To develop your car hire sales please contact one of our sales managers by calling 0161-667 5100 or emailing sales@flexibleautos.com



Andrea Elwell and Dean Dexter from Flexible Autos are delighted to receive the Star Car Rental Company award

STAR WORLDWIDE THEME PARK OR ATTRACTION

Winner: SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment

Runner Up: Universal Orlando Resort

Finalists: Disneyland Resort California, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Walt Disney World Resort Florida



SEAWORLD PARKS & Entertainment's offering in Florida includes SeaWorld, Aquatica Orlando, Discovery Cove and Busch Gardens Tampa, and all of the parks offer guests the perfect mix of up close animal encounters and even wilder rides.

We are hosting hundreds of agents in Florida this year so that they can experience the thrills and spills of the parks for themselves as VIP guests, including going behind the scenes at SeaWorld to see the animal rescue and rehabilitation facilities.

Agents should stay tuned for even more opportunities in 2016 to see the parks first-hand, as we prepare to launch two new attractions – Mako and Cobra's Curse.

We're delighted to have won such a prestigious title. I believe the trade voted for us because the parks tick all the boxes for groups and families of all ages. There is such a great mix of cutting edge rides, amazing shows and unforgettable animal encounters that there really is something for everyone to get excited about during their visit. The tickets we sell are also fantastic value and offer access to multiple parks, allowing clients to really get the most out of their time in Florida. Everyone at SeaWorld Parks in the UK would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who voted for us, we are so very proud of this award.



Attraction World sponsor Tony Seaman stands with the winners of Star Worldwide Theme Park Or Attraction - SeaWorld Parks' Nichola Parr (left) and Michaela Gray

STAR WORLDWIDE HOTEL CHAIN

Winner: RIU Hotels and Resorts

Runner Up: Hilton Hotels & Resorts

Finalists: Iberostar Hotels & Resorts, Marriott Hotels, Radisson Hotels, Ritz-Carlton Hotels, Starwood Hotels & Resorts



WE WOULD like to express our thanks to all our travel agent partners who have voted us 'Star Worldwide Hotel Chain'. It is a real pleasure to receive a Travel Bulletin Star Award for the 11th year, during which time our presence in the UK market has grown considerably alongside agents' knowledge of our properties.

Our ever popular Riu PartnerClub scheme rewards agents every time they make a customer booking to any RIU hotel in the world, meaning that agents can reap the benefits of their hard work by experiencing our hotels either free of charge or at extremely attractive discounted rates.

We believe that our continued support of the trade through our UK sales team, as well as training events and incentives, has helped agents get to know our product better and given them the confidence to recommend us as the world's number one hotel chain to both colleagues and customers alike.

We have recognised the strong growth in demand for all-inclusive hotels and, as a consequence, the majority of our properties are now offered on this basis. Additionally, we have introduced an Adults-Only concept as well as investing significantly in the refurbishment and upgrading of our existing hotels, ensuring that our renowned standards of quality and service are maintained throughout our product range. New openings are also planned for 2015 in Berlin and New York and in 2016 in Sri Lanka.



Rob Doran, UK Sales Manager for RIU Hotels and Resorts, collects the award for Star Worldwide Hotel Chain

Thanks

from everyone at



for voting us

STAR ACCOMMODATION ONLY PROVIDER!



Two years in a row!



STAR AUSTRALASIA TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: New Zealand Tourist Board

Runner Up: Tourism Australia

Finalists: Destination NSW, Samoa Tourism Authority, Tourism Queensland, Tourism Victoria

**100% PURE
NEW ZEALAND**

WE ARE delighted to have been voted the 'Star Australasia Tourist Office' 2015. A huge thank you to all the trade who voted for us; your support is really appreciated.

This year has been a busy one for Tourism New Zealand with the launch of the latest evolution of our 100% Pure New Zealand campaign, 'Every Day a Different Journey', which focuses on the range of experiences within close proximity that visitors can immerse themselves in while travelling through Aotearoa - Land of the Long White Cloud.

Last month saw us reach the three million annual visitors mark; an achievement that has largely been made possible with the support of our UK trade.

Our strongest tool to help support travel trade is our 100% Pure New Zealand Specialist programme, which has seen a significant increase in the number of accredited travel sellers over the last year. The online training modules, which are a key component of the specialist programme, are a fantastic way for us to help travel sellers build their knowledge base and give them the confidence needed to plan unique and diverse itineraries for their clients travelling to New Zealand. For more information see www.traveltrade.newzealand.com



Pleased to accept the award for Star Australasia Tourist Office is Marc Mulchay from Tourism New Zealand

STAR EUROPE TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Malta Tourist Office

Runner Up: Spanish Tourist Office

Finalists: Cyprus Tourism Organisation, Greek National Tourism Organisation, Italian State Tourist Board, Portuguese National Tourist Office



UK director for the Malta Tourist Office, Peter Vella, collects the award for Star Europe Tourist Office.

WE ARE delighted to have been recognised by travel agents at this year's Travel Bulletin Star Awards and to be named as the winner of 'Star European Tourist Office.' The whole team would like to thank all travel agents who voted for us. Malta, Gozo and Comino are truly amazing places to visit. Condensed into three tiny islands, everything imaginable is available, not to mention a wonderful climate and very friendly, hospitable people who have a particularly strong affinity with the British.

It is very encouraging for us to know that the industry is now recognising that in our case at least, the best things come in small packages. Sun and sea, great culture and history, excellent restaurants and impressive opportunities for visitors wanting to participate in sporting activities or the arts, make Malta and Gozo a strong option for travel agents who want to recommend a destination that will appeal to most people who are looking for a holiday, regardless of age, gender or specific interest. Even better is that we all speak English and are only three hours away. Thank you all again for your kind recognition.

STAR AFRICA TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Tunisian National Tourist Office

Runner Up: South African Tourism

Finalists: Botswana Tourism Board, Egyptian Tourist Authority, Moroccan National Tourist Office, Namibia Tourism

WE WOULD like to thank Travel Bulletin and the UK travel agents for their tremendous support towards Tunisia. We are delighted to have won 'Star African Tourist Office' for the second year in a row; it is a testament to the strong relationship which we enjoy with the travel trade all over the UK.

We are, of course, aware that the whole industry is wondering when Tunisia will be back to business. Tunisia has chosen a very difficult path, that of democracy with respect for the rule of law and for human rights. For this reason both the British and the Tunisian governments are working hand-in-hand very hard to ensure that Tunisia is as safe and secure as possible.

Tunisia is now under enormous pressure as hotels are closing down and the livelihood of 400,000 workers is in jeopardy. All businesses related to tourism such as handicrafts, cafes, bars and many other industries are struggling to keep up with these tough challenges.

We are sure we don't need to remind you that the British market was the jewel of Tunisia's European markets, and was up a staggering 20% in the year to last June. We know that this is down to the support and trust shown by both tour operators and travel agents. We are using this valuable time to review our marketing and PR strategies to make sure that we will be able to support you in every way possible once the FCO travel advice changes.

First and foremost though, we know that for Tunisia to get back on track, in the words of our general director, we must work hard on "the three S's – safety, safety, safety".

Thank you again for all of your support. It really means a lot to us all.



Proud to collect the Star award for Africa Tourist Office are Mounira Derbel Ben Cherifa and Moncef Battikh from the Tunisian National Tourist Office.

STAR ASIA TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Tourism Authority of Thailand

Runner Up: China National Tourist Office

Finalists: Hong Kong Tourism Board, Japan National Tourist Organisation, Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board, Singapore Tourism Board

THANK YOU so much to all our travel agent friends who voted for Thailand at the recent Travel Bulletin Star Awards where we won the 'Star Asia Tourist Office'.

We are totally committed to our great relationship with the UK travel trade and we continue to run a whole series of workshops and trade evenings throughout the year.

Our 'Friends of Thailand Club Road Show' brings you the best airlines, hotels, destination management companies and attractions Thailand has to offer. These workshop style evenings include ten-minute 'speed dating' presentations from key Thai suppliers, as well as a destination overview from Thailand Tourism. During the evening great Thai food, Thai beer, wine and soft drinks will be served with a prize draw at the end of the evening.

Over the last six years, our 'Cities and Dates' roadshow has visited 41 cities in the UK and Ireland. In 2016 we will be visiting another nine cities – to register or for more information email marketing@tourismthailand.co.uk

Meanwhile, as an active member of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), we will also be attending the PATA quiz in Brighton and Bournemouth in October and the PATA quiz in Bristol and Cardiff in March next year.



Chris Lee from the Tourism Authority of Thailand waves the flag for their Star Asia Tourist Office award.

STAR NORTH AMERICA TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Visit California

Runner Up: Canadian Tourism Commission

Finalists: Alaska Tourist Board, Kissimmee Convention & Visitors Bureau, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau, Texas Tourism



WE ARE delighted to be named 'Star North America Tourist Office' for 2015. This year has been busy for us – as you read this edition of Travel Bulletin, Visit California will be hosting 60 UK and Irish travel agents in the Golden State on five different itineraries, taking in everything from wine tasting and surfing, to cooking classes and theme parks, before all meeting in the state capital Sacramento for an unforgettable finale night.

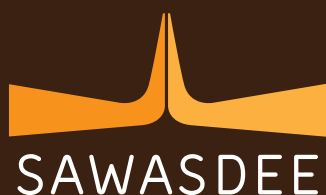
Earlier this summer we brought a delegation from California for a week of agent training, sales calls and spectacular events to make sure agents from across the country were fully up to date on the amazing destinations and attractions that California has to offer. It's programmes like this that enable agents to experience the very best that California has to offer, and ensure that Visit California is engaging with and rewarding our top sellers.

The Visit California trade team are always happy to help with any enquiries or questions agents may have, and can send visitor guides, maps and other collateral items to help you sell California even more!

Visit our dedicated website traveltrade.visitcalifornia.com for more information.



Andrea Sims from Visit California proudly shows the award for Star North America Tourist Office.



FACEBOOK SEARCH: SAWASDEE CLUB

Thank you for voting us 'Star Asia Tourist Board'

Don't forget

To check out and like our Trade only Facebook 'Sawasdee Club' where you can:

- Share Thailand fam trip photos and stories
- Check out a Monthly Destination Focus
- Enter a Monthly Competition

Use the Thailand Toolbox which includes:

- On-line training scheme
- Visitor Arrival Statistics
- Multimedia library
- YouTube TV Channel
- Brochure, map, poster request form
- TAT Website



STAR MIDDLE EAST TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Oman Ministry of Tourism

Runner Up: Dubai Department of Tourism And Commerce Marketing

Finalists: Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority, Israel Government Tourist Office, Jordan Tourism Board



THE OMAN Ministry of Tourism successfully attracted the most votes amongst UK travel agents in the 'Star Middle East Tourist Office' category from a very strong shortlist. Speaking about winning the Travel Bulletin Star Award, Alison Cryer, director of the Oman Ministry of Tourism UK & Office said: "We are delighted to have won for the first two years of its existence the Travel Bulletin Star Award as 'Star Middle East Tourist Board' in the UK - the competition was tough. These awards are voted for by travel agents and cannot be influenced, which makes them very special.

"I would like to thank and congratulate everyone in the Ministry, Oman Air and the hoteliers and DMCs for helping to make this happen, for their support and input, as well as all those agents who voted for us who we will continue support in the future. We trained 2,100 agents in 2014 alone, had a roadshow in four cities and set-up an online booking rewards programme, reaching 17,000 agents with 3,500 signed up. This all lead to a further increase in UK visitors of 4.4% or 145,000 in total."



It's celebration time for Alexander Gray and Erica Van Rooyen as they collect the Oman Ministry of Tourism's award for Star Middle East Tourist Office.

STAR SOUTH AMERICA TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Brazil Tourism Board

Runner Up: Argentina - The National Institute for Tourism Promotion

Finalists: Costa Rica Tourism, PROMPERÚ, Turismo Chile



WE ARE once again very honoured to be chosen as the 'Star South America Tourist Office'. Thank you all who voted for us.

Brazil is such a diverse destination to be explored by British tourists and this is a great challenge for us in terms of promotion. This year we intensified our activities throughout the country, providing information to a larger number of professionals. Later this year we will have a luxury dedicated event, a UNESCO Heritage sites exhibition at the Embassy of Brazil in London, a MICE dedicated event and more than 60 Brazilian exhibitors (destinations and suppliers) coming to participate in WTM. With Rio 2016 Games just around the corner, we would like to encourage all UK professionals to keep learning more about our country. Please count on us – and thank you!



A thumbs up from Lilas Nascimento from the Brazil Tourism Board as she collects the award for Star South America Tourist Office.

travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

We asked our staff the following question this week:

If you could present an award...what would it be for & who would it go to?

Publisher: Jeanette Ratcliffe
jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk
To Andy Murray for getting us to the Davis Cup Final

Editor: Lauretta Wright
lauretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk
Most Loyal Starbucks Customer - Jack (AKA Adam).

Editorial Assistant: Adam Potter
adam.potter@travelbulletin.co.uk
'Random quote of the day' - a close thing in our office, but quite often won by Gemma.

Contributing Editor: Paul Scudamore
post@travelbulletin.co.uk
A Lifetime Achievement Award for my wife (and one for me!).

Sales Director: Simon Eddolls
simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk
Best Smile - Louise Tansey.

Advertisement Manager: Tim Podger
tim.podger@travelbulletin.co.uk
It would be to Eric Cantona when the seagulls follow the trawler quote.

Account Manager: Bill Coad
bill.coad@travelbulletin.co.uk
Best Country In The World To Visit - Thailand.

Senior Account Manager: Matt Gill
matt.gill@travelbulletin.co.uk
Best Football Team In The World - West Ham FC.

Sales Executive: Matthew Weinreb
matthew.weinreb@travelbulletin.co.uk
It'd go to 'the pavements' for keeping me off the streets.

Sales Executive: Kathryn Frost
kathryn.frost@travelbulletin.co.uk
My dad for wisdom and wisdom. Happy Birthday!

Events & Sales Administrator: Gemma Reeve
gemma.reeve@travelbulletin.co.uk
The award for keeping coffee shops in business - Adam Potter.

Assistant Designer: Tom Davies
thomas.davies@travelbulletin.co.uk

Design Apprentice: Liam Jackson
liam.jackson@alaincharles.com
I was nervous thinking of an answer to my first TB question!

Production: Carol Mthembu
carol.mthembu@alaincharles.com
BEST KIDS EVER!...to go to my son and HUSBAND of course!

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STAR CARIBBEAN TOURIST OFFICE

Winner: Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority
Runner Up: Saint Lucia Tourist Board
Finalists: Bahamas Tourist Office, Barbados Tourism Marketing, British Virgin Islands Tourist Board, Grenada Tourism Authority, Jamaica Tourist Board



WE WOULD like to thank all Travel Bulletin readers for voting for us and we'd also like to thank Joel Henry in our team who has worked so hard to give you the confidence to sell.

We have worked very hard over the last 12 months to strengthen our relationship with you and this is just the beginning. In the coming months we plan to announce dedicated training evenings, extra fam trips and more incentives to support and thank you for growing the UK market to Antigua and Barbuda.

Come and visit us at the WTM stand on Thursday to learn how to dance to carnival music and to enter a game to get a beach named after you. Please do reach out to us if there is any way that we can work together to grow the business further. On behalf of all of us – a big thank you.



It's a win for the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority as Jean-Marc Flambert takes home the award for Star Caribbean Tourist Office.



STAR AWARDS NEEDS YOU!

Calling all suppliers and travel agents, we'd like to hear your suggestions and ideas for new award categories for our special 20th Star Awards anniversary year in 2016. Email lauretta.wright@travelbulletin.co.uk with your comments and suggestions.

Voting for next year's awards opens on April 29 and runs until June.

puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. ETIHAD, 3. SKYE, 7. ECLIPSE, 9. LEE, 10. EL AL, 11. IBIS, 14. DFDS, 15. GOLF, 17. RED, 18. HAMSTER, 19. MEON, 20. GARETH.

Down: 1. EVEREST, 2. ALPS, 4. KELMSCOTT, 5. EYE, 6. DERBY, 8. LLANDUDNO, 12. MO FARAH, 13. IDAHO, 16. EMMA, 17. RTM.

Highlighted Word: PALMA

Travagrams: Top: Neuschwanstein Castle Bottom: Seychelles

Where Am I?: Neuschwanstein Castle

Thank you from the Malta Tourist Office.

The Malta Tourist Office is delighted to have been recognised by travel agents at this year's Travel Bulletin Star Awards and to be named as the winner of the Star European Tourist Office.

We would like to thank all travel agents who voted for us.

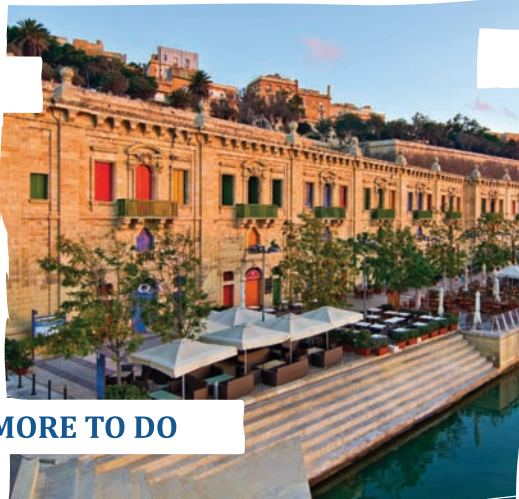
We appreciate your continued support and it is our pleasure to invite you and your customers to experience the sun and sea, cuisine and activities, culture and history, of our islands Malta, Gozo and Comino.



MORE TO SEE



MORE TO DO



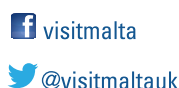
MORE TO REMEMBER



- Easy to get to.
- Exceptional range of accommodation.
- 300 days of sunshine.
- Gozo, rural and undiscovered paradise.

- Valletta, UNESCO World Heritage site & European Capital of Culture 2018.
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COTE D'AZUR

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*For stays until 31 Oct



SAVE
£336*
per couple per week

BARBADOS

The Atlantis Hotel

REDUCED
RATES

7 nights from **£1,299**pp

B&B, departs Gatwick 28 Oct

*For stays 8 Oct-15 Dec.

Book before 30 Sep.



SAVE
£572*
per couple per week

BARBADOS

Little Good Harbour

REDUCED
RATES

7 nights from **£1,839**pp

RO, departs Gatwick 8 Oct

*For stays 8 Oct-15 Dec.

Book before 30 Sep.



SAVE
£483*
per couple per week

ITALY Puglia

5★ Maseira
Torre Coccaro

FREE NIGHT
OFFER

7 nights from **£1,049**pp

B&B, departs Gatwick 6 Oct

*For stays 29 Sep-28 Dec



SAVE
£228*
per couple per week

SARDINIA

4★ Su Gologone

FREE NIGHT
OFFER

7 nights from **£989**pp

HB, departs Gatwick 17 Oct

*For stays until 1 Nov.



SAVE
£174*
per couple per week

KOS

5★ Atki Palace

REDUCED
RATES

7 nights from **£599**pp

AI, departs Gatwick 29 Sep

*For stays until 31 Oct.

Book by 30 Sep.



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