

# travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge



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## Caribbean & Mexico 2018 holidays Available to BOOK NOW with Gold Medal

Your customers can discover their own rhythm on their 2018 holiday to the Caribbean or Mexico. Each Caribbean island has its own unique charms; Barbados offers that little bit of Englishness, Antigua boasts as many beaches as days of the year, while Saint Lucia is regarded as one of the prettiest islands to visit. Across the Gulf of Mexico lies the colourful and vibrant Mexico. No matter where your customers pick, you can guarantee clear blue waters and golden white sands.



### Barbados

Almond Beach Resort ●●●●

7 nights all inclusive from

**£1,669<sub>pp</sub>**

Includes reduced rates

Save  
up to **£320**  
per person

Includes flights from London Gatwick with Virgin Atlantic and transfers  
Valid for departures 03 Jan - 20 Mar 2018



### Mexico

Secrets Playa Mujeres Golf and Spa Resort ●●●●

7 nights all inclusive from

**£1,779<sub>pp</sub>**

Includes reduced rates

Save  
up to **£485**  
per person

Includes flights from London Gatwick with Virgin Atlantic and transfers  
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### Jamaica

Moon Palace Jamaica Grande Resort & Spa ●●●●

7 nights all inclusive from

**£2,389<sub>pp</sub>**

Includes \$1500 resort credit

Save  
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Includes flights from London Gatwick with Virgin Atlantic and transfers  
Valid for departures 08 Jan - 12 Mar 2018

### Virgin Atlantic

For over 30 years, Virgin Atlantic has been the long haul airline for people who want flying to be a thrill. Every year, it flies over six million of those people to top business and leisure destinations around the world. Step onboard and you'll experience a unique spirit and sense of adventure brought to you through friendly, intuitive service. Along with plenty of innovative touches that make your journey feel really special. So whether you're travelling for work or pleasure, with Virgin Atlantic your journey's a springboard to grab life and 'let it fly.' Virgin Atlantic flies regularly from London Gatwick Airport to Cancún, Mexico and seven of the Caribbean's hottest beach destinations, plus selected regional departures from Manchester, Glasgow and Belfast.

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Terms & Conditions: Prices are per person based on two adults sharing. Valid for departures specified. Prices include return flights from London Gatwick with Virgin Atlantic, pre-payable taxes, transfers and accommodation. Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply. Supplement applies for regional departures. Price advertised is for web bookings, a supplement may apply if booking by telephone. Book by dates may apply. Holidays operated by Gold Medal Travel PLC, ATOL protected 2916, ABTA V6805.

Call: 0800 014 7777  
Visit: [goldmedal.co.uk](http://goldmedal.co.uk)

**GOLDMEDAL**



## BORDEAUX BREAK...

A GROUP of Kuoni agents recently enjoyed a Luxury Grand Bordeaux river cruise courtesy of APT. The group travelled from Bordeaux to Blaye on the AmaDolce and were treated to the company's fully inclusive lifestyle both on and off the ship. Sightseeing highlights included two VIP Signature Experiences – dinner at Château de Cazeneuve and a special wine tasting led by an expert oneologist at a traditional cooperage in Pauillac. Pictured at the Chateau along with some of the evening entertainers are the agents, from the left: Monique Williams, Richard Williams, Laura Robertson, Julie Holland, Nicola Pearce (from APT), Roxanne Howard and Laura Connor. For details on the company's French river cruises email [agentclub@aptouring.co.uk](mailto:agentclub@aptouring.co.uk) or call 0800-046 3002.

## Post Office Travel Money looks at real cost of all-inclusive holidays

AS MORE families choose all-inclusive packages to cut the cost of kids' meals and drinks, new research for the Post Office Travel Money All Inclusive Holiday Report reveals that wallet watchers who stick to what is included in their all-inclusive package could save more than 25% in Marmaris compared with the cost of a week's bed-and-breakfast holiday in the Turkish resort with meals added.

Similarly, in Mallorca the cost of a week's all-inclusive package without any added expenditure was £508 (24%) lower than the equivalent B&B trip.

However, all-inclusive spendthrifts who splash the cash in local bars and restaurants could find their trip sets them back hundreds of pounds more than they bargained for – and the majority of families do exactly that.

The research found that almost two-thirds of parents spent an average of £271 on meals, snacks and drinks in resorts outside of their all-inclusive hotel – including £67 on eating out. And seven-in-ten families admitted spending an average of £321 on long-haul, all-inclusive holidays.

To establish the impact of this extra spending, Post Office Travel Money compared summer prices for a week's holiday in ten European hotspots. When the average expenditure on food and drink was added to the price of an all-inclusive package, a family week away in a B&B hotel, with meal and drinks costs

included, was significantly cheaper in seven of them. Only Crete, Mallorca and Marmaris proved cheaper for an all-inclusive holiday.

The biggest potential family saving is in Malta, where canny travellers could save a third (£646) by swapping an all-inclusive holiday for a bed-and-breakfast one. The research also found big savings in Spain's Costa del Sol (£465) and Costa Blanca (£344).

Andrew Brown of Post Office Travel Money said: "All-inclusive holidays are becoming increasingly popular with families because of the potential to control spending. In fact, our research shows that 11% of families travelling abroad this year will be taking an all-inclusive holiday for the first time.

"However, holidaymakers should also be aware our report reveals that spending on top of paid-for packages is on the increase. Since most families will pay for extras on their all-inclusive holidays it is important to carry enough foreign cash to the cover all eventualities.

"Our latest research found that only two-in-five families took enough cash with them and didn't have to change more money abroad. As a result, almost one-in-five incurred charges for withdrawing cash at an ATM abroad and one-in-seven incurred transaction charges when they used their credit cards."

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**COOK-ING UP A STORM...** Thomas Cook has launched its 2017 summer programme from Birmingham which features exclusive flights from £35 one-way to Comiso in Sicily and from £49 one-way to the Greek island of Lesbos. A new Sentido hotel, the Acacia Marina, also opens this week in Sicily with seven-night packages starting from £486 per person based on two sharing, while new flights to Naples (£39) and Malta (£49) have also launched. Pictured marking the new launches are Louise Arscott from Thomas Cook and William Pearson from Birmingham Airport.

## River cruise brochure from Newmarket Holidays

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS has issued its 2018 European River Cruise brochure, which includes six all-new cruise itineraries on MS Olympia exploring rivers such as the Rhine, the Moselle and the Blue Danube.

As an example of prices, an eight-day cruise of Dutch Delights & Medieval Flanders costs from £899 for the coach-inclusive cruise, which takes in some of northern Europe's most engaging cities including Amsterdam and Antwerp.

The company has also introduced overnight en-route accommodation on selected coach-inclusive holidays, 'extend-your-holiday' opportunities on selected voyages and flexible travel options.

Bookings made by May 31 can also benefit from a 'buy one, get one half-price' early booking offer on all 2018 cruises.

## Icelandair offers year-round service to Vancouver following demand

DUE TO the increasing demand to Vancouver, Icelandair will increase its current seasonal service to a full year-round schedule starting this winter.

The carrier offers three cabins of service with one checked bag, personal in-flight entertainment systems and

gate-to-gate Wi-Fi available for all passengers.

The expanded service will further strengthen Vancouver airport and the carrier's partnership, which started with the launch of its YVR – KEF service in 2014. The flight will continue to use the

Boeing 757 aircraft and will depart KEF two days a week on Thursdays and Saturdays at 17:10 and arrive in YVR at 17:50. It will depart YVR on Fridays and Sundays at 15:45 and arrive at KEF at 06:00. Services will increase up to three days a week in 2018.

## Savings of up to £150 on summer cycling breaks with BSpoke Tours

AGENTS ARE now able to offer their clients a £100 John Lewis voucher for clients booking a selected European tour with BSpoke Tours before May 31.

Applicable tours are available to France, Germany and Italy and exclusive savings of up to £150 per person are also offered.

As an example of prices, an eight-day Garmisch and the Romantic Castles explores Germany's fairy-tale castles, spa-towns and breweries whilst cycling through some of Bavaria's picturesque scenery. Prices lead in at £1,025 per person (saving £150) and guests are also offered the free John Lewis vouchers.

The tour includes seven nights' breakfast accommodation in a number of three- and four-star hotels; luggage transfers; flights; transfers; and bike/equipment hire.

For more information visit [bspoketours.com](http://bspoketours.com) or call 020-7471 7750.



## HAVE YOU VOTED YET?

Take a look at this year's categories by clicking [travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/categories](http://travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/categories) - voting ends on June 2!

You can also join us at London's Langham Hotel on **Monday September 4** by taking advantage of our early bird rate. Go to [travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/tickets](http://travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/tickets)





## bmi regional launches Gothenburg and Nuremberg routes

BMI REGIONAL has launched two new routes from Birmingham Airport to Gothenburg and Nuremberg.

Both operate six times weekly and are the latest in a series of new routes from the airline which also launched Stansted – Derry recently and Birmingham – Graz in February.

The conveniently timed flights are aimed at both business and leisure travellers based in the Midlands and further afield.

Commenting on the new launches, the carrier's chief commercial officer, Jochen Schnadt, said: "We are delighted to be introducing these two new flights from Birmingham as part of our ongoing growth strategy to connect key business regions.

"Both Nuremberg and Gothenburg have a great deal to offer both business and leisure customers and, as such, are already proving popular."

Fares start from £79 one-way for Nuremberg and £89 for Gothenburg and include 23kg of hold luggage, allocated seating, complimentary in-flight drinks and snacks and speedy 30-minute check-ins.

For more information or to book visit [flybmi.com](http://flybmi.com) or call 0330-333 7998.

**RAISING THE BAR...Nicola Graham from Reuben's Retreat (centre) is joined by (from the left): Lynne Brocklesby, Olympic Holidays; Diane Court, USAirtours; Ashley Dellow, Leger Holidays; Lorna Willis, TIPTO; and Mike Bowers, Shearings, at TIPTO's Liverpool SuperShow. Celebrating another fundraising event, the team raised almost £200, which brings their total for this year to almost £2,000 with six more events to go.**

## Parents opt for family city breaks over beach holidays

IN A bid to expose their children to more cultural locations at a younger age, British parents are opting to take their children on city breaks within Europe instead of more traditional all-inclusive beach holidays, according to new research.

The study, conducted on behalf of Staycity Aparthotels, polled a total of 3,193 British adults, all of whom had at least one child aged 16 or below, in a bid to understand how parents' attitudes towards foreign travel with their offspring had evolved in recent years. Respondents were split evenly according to gender and region, and disclosed to researchers prior to being polled that they'd been on at least one European trip abroad with their children in the past 12 months.

Just over half of those polled (52%) stated that they'd taken a traditional beach holiday, with 39% taking a city break and 9% revealing that they'd enjoyed both types of trip with their young families.

Those who had enjoyed a family city break were asked how old their youngest child had

been during the holiday, with the average answer emerging as 11 years old. Comparatively, those who'd enjoyed beach holidays had children with an average age of seven years old.

The most common cities visited included Amsterdam (14%), Paris (12%), Dubrovnik (7%), Barcelona (5%) and Copenhagen (3%) and reasons given for opting for a city break included: The appeal of local attractions/landmarks/events (36%); To introduce children to a new language/culture (18%); To educate children on the history of the city (14%); To visit family/friends in the city (11%); and No other holiday appealed to the family (6%).

The company's CEO, Tom Walsh, said: "Foreign travel with children is a notoriously stressful experience, but the findings of our research clearly highlight that an increasing number of British parents are growing bored of the traditional all-inclusive holiday, and instead want to immerse their children in city culture from a younger age."

## AW marks American Independence Day with new deals

BETWEEN NOW and July 4, Attraction World is celebrating American Independence Day with new discounted and value-added offers in the US.

The first offer, running until May 31, offers £25 off per person for top Florida packages for departures this year.

They include The Mini ONE, The Original ONE, Florida FlexiTicket – 5 Park, Florida FlexiTicket – 6 Park, Disney & Universal Orlando Combo and Disney & SeaWorld Special Offer Pass.

For more information see [attractionworld.com](http://attractionworld.com)



## New Douro River options follow fleet expansion from DouroAzul

RIVER CRUISE specialist DouroAzul is now offering a choice of nine cruise ships after welcoming Douro Elegence and Douro Serenity to its fleet.

The line is centred around the Douro region of Portugal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and its luxury river cruises take holidaymakers on an inland journey along the Douro ('golden') river, between Porto, named Best European Destination for 2017, and Vega Terrón, just over the Spanish border. The river valley cuts through the hills and terraced vineyards of the renowned Port region – the oldest established wine producing area in the world.

The line's CEO, Mário Ferreira, said: "We're so excited to welcome these new cruise ships to our luxury fleet. Although they are similar in size to our other ships, we have consciously worked with a more 'edgy' design, including a steel-grey colour scheme to reflect the look of some of the world's most impressive super-yachts."

Each ship will have a 126-passenger capacity, and features two master suites, six junior suites, and 55 standard staterooms. The ships will be fully chartered across the season.

Riviera Travel charts the ships throughout the season between April and October and bookings can now be made. For more information see [douroazul.com](http://douroazul.com)



**QUIZ MASTERS...** The British Virgin Islands Tourist Board (BVI) held its Summer Freedom Quiz Night earlier this month at the BVI House in London where suppliers and agents got the chance to network. Pictured is the hotel rep for Rosewood Little Dix Bay, Andrea Miller, with David Pollard from Peter Island.

## Debut Muscat launch in Ghala Heights from Centara Hotels & Resorts

CENTARA HOTELS & Resorts has unveiled its first hotel opening in the Middle East, Centara Muscat Hotel Oman.

The hotel offers a convenient location in Ghala Heights business district and is surrounded by a variety of sights and shopping opportunities. These include Muttrah's souk – a hive of Omani social activity; Royal Opera House Muscat – with live performances; and the Al Qurum featuring many department stores and shopping centres, along with direct access to the beachfront.

Other landmarks within easy reach are the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, The Al Bustan Palace, The Bait al Zubair Museum, and Oman International Exhibition Centre.



Meanwhile, opportunities for desert excursions and pastimes at an oasis or wadi are also available, with a picnic and a visit to a Bedouin home at Wadi Al Arbeien being one of the highlights.

The four-star property features 152 guestrooms; three restaurants serving Thai, Middle Eastern and International dishes; a dedicated Thai spa; rooftop pool and terrace with views overlooking the Gulf of Oman; meeting facilities; premium lounge and complimentary Wi-Fi, and is suitable for both business and leisure travellers.

Rates start at 39 OMR per night on weekdays and 29 OMR at weekends. To book or for further information visit [centarahotelsresorts.com/cmo](http://centarahotelsresorts.com/cmo)

## NEWS BITES

- GOCOMPARE.COM HAS created a road trip calculator tool which allows users to explore and compare road trips around the globe - see [gocompare.com/van-insurance/best-road-trips/](http://gocompare.com/van-insurance/best-road-trips/)
- HILTON HONORS is offering double points this summer to be used towards free stays. The offer is applicable to every point earned, whether it's the first or 50th booking made by a member registered at [hiltonhonors.com/bonuspromotion/gb](http://hiltonhonors.com/bonuspromotion/gb). The offer is valid on stays between now and August 31.
- ON THE Beach Group has announced that its subsidiary, On the Beach Travel, has agreed to acquire the entire issued share capital of Sunshine.co.uk for a total of £12m.
- HAVEN HAS officially opened Hafan y Môr's new swimming complex, Splash Away Bay. Following a £3million investment, the complex has been restyled and features three flume slides, play areas for young children, a multi-lane slide, bubble pool, lazy river, wave pool and a lane for those wanting to just swim.



## MSC announces new partnership developments

MSC CRUISES has announced the next step in its exclusive partnership with Cirque du Soleil, as the two show names and concepts which will feature on its new ship MSC Meraviglia, launching in June are announced.

The two original shows - VIAGGIO, a poetic adventure into the world of colour and a painter's journey into his imagination, and SONOR, a show with sound at its heart which takes guests on an auditory adventure - will be available to view on MSC Meraviglia from June 4.

## Early launch of Cosmos' 2018 A-ROSA programme

COSMOS HAS launched its 2018 A-ROSA river cruise programme two months earlier to help agents capture the early booking river cruise market.

Agents can book the operator's fully packaged A-ROSA cruises with flights, overseas transfers and a VIP private home pick-up service included. Offering a choice of six ships on four rivers, the programme features 37 cruise itineraries with 297 departures for customers to choose from, with prices leading in at £649 per person.

An early booking offer is also available for any 2018 holiday booking made before July 31, while a private VIP home pick-up service is available for customers living within a 100-mile radius of their departure airport.

Janet Parton, the operator's head of trade sales, said: "We are delighted to have the whole A-ROSA product range on sale earlier than last year to help agents maximise sales in this important period. We're confident that A-ROSA's key USP's such as the family offering, spas on all ships and flexible dining will appeal to our customer base. With our newly launched website, sales team and planned training, we will be working hard to communicate this to agents in the coming months."

*For a unique login to [cosmos.co.uk/agents](http://cosmos.co.uk/agents), agents can email [agency-sales@cosmos.co.uk](mailto:agency-sales@cosmos.co.uk) or call 0800-223 0949.*



A-ROSA Stella



# We would really appreciate your vote for Star UK Airport

Thank you to all agents for your ongoing support. Watch out for a new trade incentive coming soon!



**Patrick Alexander**  
Head of Marketing  
Manchester Airport



**Nico Spyrou**  
Travel Trade Marketing Manager  
Manchester Airport

Contact us:

**Email:** [traveltrade@manairport.co.uk](mailto:traveltrade@manairport.co.uk)  
**Facebook:** 'Manchester Airport Agents'  
**Twitter:** @manairporttrade  
**Phone:** 0161 489 3311







Notes from

## Normanton...

I'VE JUST returned from an amazing If Only educational to Dubai - a big thank you to Richard Hey for looking after us so well. It's about 12 years since I was there on holiday and boy, has it changed! They have done so much building work it's a wonder they haven't run out of space! But it's a great place to visit and has some fantastic beaches and countrified areas as well. We flew with Emirates and the flight passed quite quickly - I watched 3 films out and on the return. I have been on lots of educationals during my 40yrs in travel, but I can honestly say that I stayed in 3 of the best hotels ever - 2nts in The Address Boulevard in Dubai which is just across the road from the Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa 'At The Top'; the hotel hasn't been open very long but the decor, staff and food are excellent, especially the infinity pool which overlooks the city. We went up the Burj Khalifa which is well worth a visit and isn't scary at all even if you don't like heights.

Then it was on to Atlantis, The Palm which is huge and has an area of fish, stingrays and sharks swimming alongside as you walk along, plus you can try some exciting rides at Aquaventure Waterpark. The next day we stayed at the Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah followed by the new Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort. We also had a visit to Le Meridien Al Aqah Beach Resort which has a lot more going on and is ideal for families and those who enjoy diving. We had one of the best lunches in their Italian restaurant and they even have a helipad!

Last but not least was The Oberoi Beach Resort, Al Zorah, which I think was my favourite. It had an air of tranquillity and quiet luxury. The villas are amazing and brilliant for friends or large families and yet quite private with their own plunge pool. The food was also excellent and I met the Director of Sales and Marketing who has the best surname ever (bearing in mind I'm such an animal lover and got 3 cats!) Albert Meow, who you can tell is passionate about his hotel.

'One destination is never a place but a new way of seeing things' and 'There are no foreign lands, it is the traveller who is foreign'.

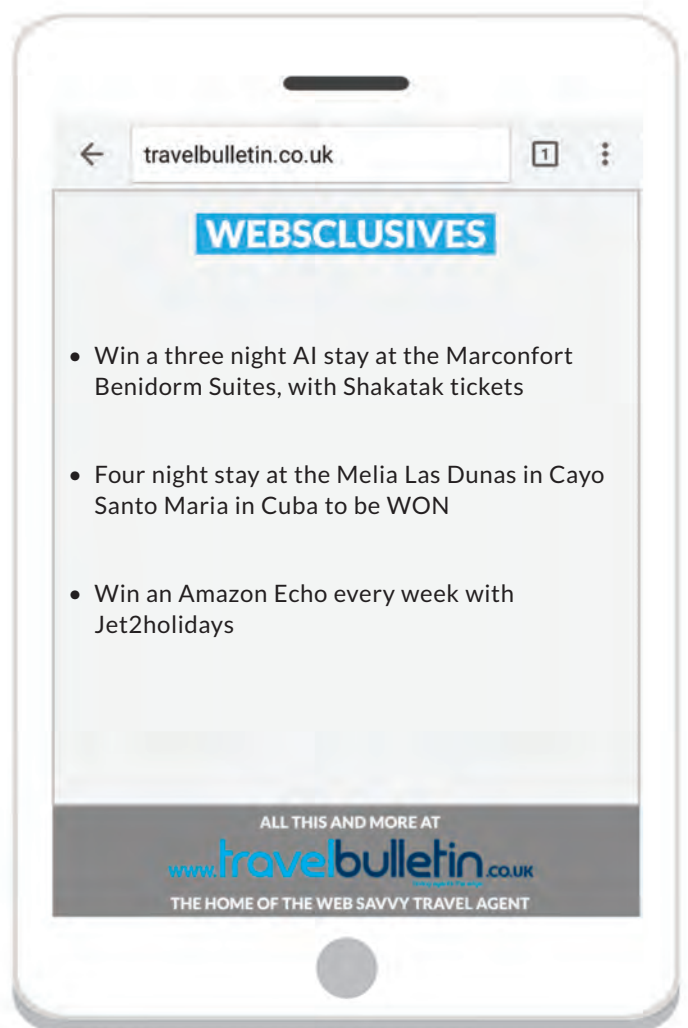
Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY  
in Normanton, Yorkshire

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



**THE FIRST** flight operated by Thomas Cook Airlines took off from Luton Airport (LLA) earlier this month, marking the arrival of the 14th airline at the airport and the 14th new route this year. The new route serves the Greek island of Corfu, operating every Sunday throughout the summer season. The airport is continuing to expand its route network as part of its current transformation project, and plans will increase annual capacity by 50% to 18 million passengers by 2020. This includes doubling the size of its shopping and dining area for passengers.





## BOOKING INCENTIVES

- UNTIL MAY 31, agents have the chance to win one of 25 places to Ladies Day at Royal Ascot this June with Carnival Cruise Line. To enter, agents should make a booking with the cruise line, register at Loyalty Rocks Club and register their booking. For details see [carnival.com](http://carnival.com)
- TRAVEL 2 is offering agents the chance to win a scratch card with guaranteed prizes including cinema vouchers, designer handbags and luxury holidays including spending money. The operator has partnered with Dubai Tourism, Emirates, Qantas and Kerzner properties: Atlantis The Palm, One&Only Royal Mirage and One&Only The Palm on its latest campaign - 'Dreaming of Dubai'. For the chance to win, agents should make five qualifying bookings to Dubai with return Emirates or Qantas flights and a minimum of three nights' ground arrangements with one of the hotels included in the campaign by November 30. Meanwhile, until May 31, agents can earn up to £200 T2 Rewards on a number of qualifying itineraries, with cruise and tour packages offering the most worthwhile rewards. Agents should email [payasyouearn@travel2.com](mailto:payasyouearn@travel2.com) within seven days of the booking to claim, and include name, address, booking reference, lead name, travel dates and T2 Rewards Card number details.

## FANCY A FAM?

HAVEN IS giving agents the chance to take a three- or four-night break with their families from £79 per family staying in a deluxe caravan on selected dates this month and next. Agents wanting to upgrade to a Prestige two- or three-bedroom caravan can do so from £99 for three nights and £139 for four nights per caravan. The offer is subject to availability and is offered on a first come, first served basis.



**LYNCH'S LUCK** Joanna Lynch of Reach Travel in Preston, part of the Hays Travel Group, was the winner of Your Car Hire's travel agent April incentive. To enter, Joanna had to make two bookings that included Super damage Excess Waiver for the chance to win £100 in Marks and Spencer's vouchers. The incentive is ongoing and offers a monthly draw.

## AGENT TRAINING

TRAVEL ALBERTA has launched its Alberta Specialists Programme for UK agents to build their knowledge of the Canadian province. Those who complete all six modules by May 31 are also in with a chance of winning a ten-night ski holiday to the Rockies with BA, which offers daily flights to Calgary on the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. For details see [albertaspecialist.com](http://albertaspecialist.com)





**UNMASKED...** Pictured enjoying the festivities at last week's Advantage conference in Provence are Jonathan Tighe from Oakwood Travel and Michelle Betley-Jones from Eurocamp.

## Early launch for Collette's 2018/19 preview brochure with up to £500 savings

COLLETTE HAS issued its 2018/19 preview edition brochure which features more than 70 popular tours for consumers looking to explore the US, Canada, Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Asia.

The brochure showcases the carefully crafted itineraries with tour managers on every tour, along with the choice of airlines, where to dine on many tours with the 'Diner's choice' and how to experience a chosen destination through 'Choice on Tour'.

Carl Burrows, the company's UK MD, said: "We are bringing our preview brochure out earlier than ever before, on the back of customer demand and strong early bookings already for 2018

and 2019. We have had the best start ever to 2017 with trading up 25% year-on-year. It looks like we have been bucking the trend in April too, where we have just seen an increase in revenue of 50% year-on-year for the month, which is great news in light of the impending election."

To encourage early bookings, savings of up to £500 per person are available on bookings made before August 31, with 2018 holidays secured for a £99 per person deposit.

Meanwhile, the brochure launch will be supported by increased incentives for agents booking between now and August and a new online training course at [collette-academy.co.uk](http://collette-academy.co.uk) has also been

launched to help agents understand more about the company and what it offers.

As an example of prices, a 13-day Cultural Treasures of Japan option visits Tokyo, Hakone, Matsumoto, Takayama, Kanazawa, Kyoto and Hiroshima and leads in at £4,419. It includes four-star breakfast accommodation, luggage portage, the services of a tour manager, four lunches and seven dinners and is based on two adults sharing a twin room. Flights from Heathrow and private transfers are also included.



## Atlantis, Paradise Island reveals new Coral Towers following renovation

ATLANTIS, PARADISE Island Resort, The Bahamas unveils the new look Coral Towers following its complete renovation.

Opening for guests in July and designed with families in mind, The Coral Towers will offer contemporary rooms and suites – including those with King and Double Queen beds to accommodate families. Exclusive in-room amenities include pint-sized robes and a refrigerator with the ability to pre-purchase snacks.

A new Lobby Lounge offers a soda fountain serving milkshakes, espresso and coffee drinks, cocktails, patisserie and gelato, while the new poolscape provides a setting for families to relax and enjoy time together. Families can also indulge in a private cabana, join in family-friendly water activities or enjoy a treat at the swim-up popsicle bar, which features locally-made, preservative-free frozen treats that are prepared daily with Bahamian fruit.

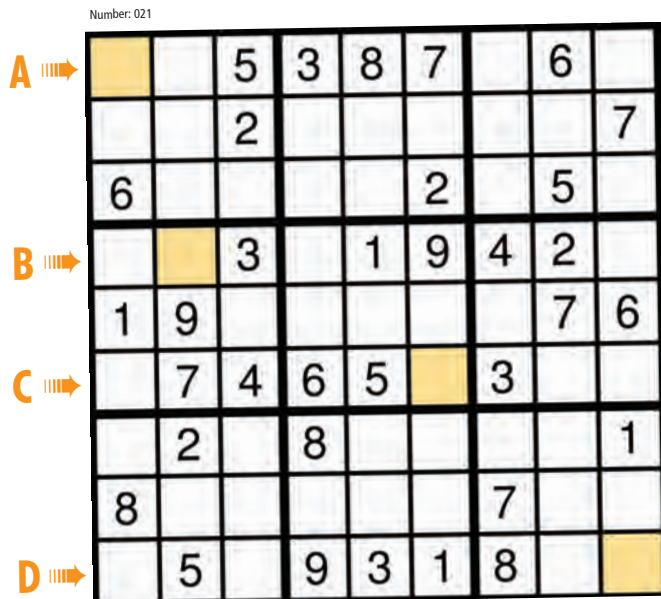
For further information visit [atlantisbahamas.com](http://atlantisbahamas.com)

## NEWS BITES

- OLYMPIC HOLIDAYS has signed a partnership with airline ASL France, boosting flight options and locations from the UK to the Mediterranean for the summer 2017 season and beyond. Details at [olympicholidays.com](http://olympicholidays.com)
- TRAINLINE HAS expanded its coverage by partnering with Austria's private rail operator WESTbahn. Customers can now book WESTbahn tickets, including special deals and offers, through Trainline.
- RED FUNNEL Isle of Wight Ferries has appointed Enterprise Rent-A-Car as its preferred car hire partner.
- ON THE first anniversary of Gatwick's Hidden Disability Lanyard service, the airport has announced that it has purchased an Eagle Hoist 4 – a passenger lifting facility that provides safer and more respectful transfer for wheelchair users requiring full assistance to their aircraft seat. It is also investing in two specialist hoist assisted toilet facilities in the next 12 months, each with a height adjustable adult sized changing bench, for people with learning and physical disabilities.



# Win an Amazon Echo with



**Jet2holidays**  
Package holidays you can trust

Complete this Su Doku puzzle and then go to the competition section on [travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions](http://travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions) and submit the highlighted numbers.

A... B... C... D...

Closing date for entries is **Friday, June 2nd**.

The winner for May 12th is Devina Gill from Barrhead Travel.

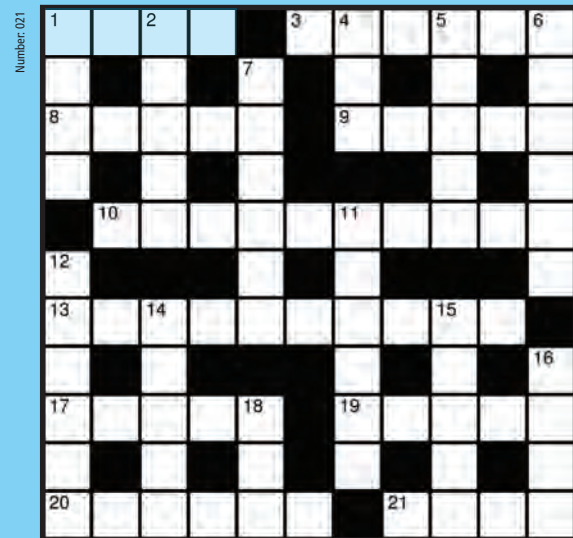
Where is  
#Simon from  
the Jet2Holidays'  
Tradeteam this  
week?



'A Jet2holiday to this gleaming new Theme Park promises all the high-speed thrills you would expect from this legendary car super brand.'

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

## Crossword



### Across

- How many UK bases do Jet2holidays fly from? (4)
- Canadian walled city (6)
- Valley in France, renowned for its historic châteaux (5)
- This Mission is a popular Texas tourist attraction (5)
- Moroccan city (10)
- David Beckham makes a cameo appearance in a film about this legendary monarch (4,6)
- A prince and a princess were attendants at her recent wedding (5)
- Native inhabitant of the Arctic (5)
- Ski resort in the Austrian Tyrol (6)
- Capital of Fiji (4)

### Down

- The world's longest river (4)
- Currency of Nigeria (5)
- Country, initially (3)
- You may need to be an Egghead to win The \_\_\_ of Britain (5)
- Steve, appearing with Rob Brydon in The Trip to Spain (6)
- Carson City is the state capital (6)
- Country on the Baltic (6)
- Capital of Macedonia (6)
- Himalayan country (5)
- Aka Ayers Rock (5)
- A BBC crew recently got too close to the eruption of this volcanic Mount (4)
- Acapulco International airport code (3)





The Global Travel Group held its annual conference at La Manga Club Resort in Spain earlier this week. With sessions covering visual merchandising, technological improvements, marketing to millennials and more, travel agents and key industry figures imparted valuable advice and relayed a positive outlook in travel for the future...



**PICTURED ENJOYING** a barbecue at the conference's White Party are, from the left: Robin Virmani, Ashas Travel; Matt Giles, Ceri Arnold and Mohammed Pasha, Fusion Travel Group; Leighann Morgan, Opulent Travel Services; Noor Al-Jobori, Travel Promise; George Ayman, Ashas Travel; and Richard Reed from Prestige Travel.

## TGTG reports 'healthy outlook' in run up to anniversary year

AS THE Global Travel Group approaches its 25th year of operation, the consortium reported that it has welcomed 33 new members and has seen bookings up by 16%.

Andy Stark, MD of TGTG, said: "It's a good and sustainable product. There's a lot of desire out there from entrepreneurs who want to start their own businesses and we've clearly got it right in the products and the services we provide. We continue to change and evolve throughout the years and, even through difficult times, it's still a good option for people to move into travel."

Although the consortium traditionally welcomes new people into the travel industry, it has seen an increasing trend in its membership over the last 18 months of more experienced travel professionals. Explaining this rise, Stark said: "We've seen a real step change with professionals and travel agents that probably have worked for bigger organisations wanting to have a go and start for themselves. They have the knowledge but may just need that helping hand and support which we can offer."

To reflect this growth, more training courses are now being offered - not only for those new to the industry, but 'refresher' courses and workshops tailor-made to suit the needs of more experienced travel agents.

Stark also told delegates that the desire for consumers to spend on holidays remained strong and highlighted how Brits are increasingly opting to holiday in the Western

Mediterranean, central areas of Europe and Portugal as well as Italy and Croatia.

Also noted was the opportunity for travel agents to capitalise on the attractive fares offered on long-haul destinations. He said: "Traditionally, going long-haul was always seen as expensive but holidaymakers can now fly to Dubai for anything between £350-£400 return. The pricing from a schedule perspective is great from a consumer's point of view; it's competitive pricing and there's a load of value there. Agents should definitely be highlighting to clients how flying long-haul is cheaper than it has ever been before."

Stark wrapped up by telling attendees about the need for, and the opportunities available, to travel agents in today's market saying: "We've had a record year including new businesses into TGTG and that can only tell you one thing; we are getting more travel agents joining us and that's certainly on the increase. I don't see any slowdown in the need for face-to-face travel agents."

"The more complex a holiday, the more advice customers will need: a holiday might involve travelling to an airport they've never been to with their family, airport changes, going to a different country where they might not know the language and a different currency - just having the comfort and somebody to speak to is immensely important and I see that as a ripe opportunity for agents."

## The power of display: first impressions count

IT ONLY takes a few seconds for a consumer to decide whether or not they are going to buy something from a shop, according to Helen Goodwin, managing director of Made You Look.

The Visual Display & Window Dresser advised agents on how a good first impression with a window display is crucial - and how they can tailor their designs to stand out from the crowd.

Touching on the demise of the High Street and why so many shops are going out of business, Goodwin said: "If a shop looks dull, grey and tired then people will assume that there's not much going on inside - if you don't have much of a shop front are customers going to stop or even notice it? First impressions are critical. Colourful shop window displays will have consumers stop, explore and stay for a while and it's smart businesses which are luring in these customers."

Goodwin said that although it is tempting to fill a window with everything available, this could lessen the impact - effectively meaning that passers-by will see nothing. In tandem with the adage that 'Less is more', agents should also consider how the space feels.

She said: "With display we are selling the lifestyle so think about what you can do to catch the idea. Get ideas from Pinterest or social media, open your eyes and look all around you for something simple and eye catching that says we are



Helen Goodwin



*Invites you to attend a*  
***Mediterranean Islands Showcase***  
*An agent networking evening*

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Edinburgh**  
DoubleTree by Hilton

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Dublin**  
Morrison Hotel - City Centre

Agents come and join the Travel Bulletin team and leading Mediterranean suppliers at one of our informative and fun agent events. Through a combination of networking and presentations we will enable you to discover the paradise that is Mediterranean Islands. From unique hotels to once in a lifetime experiences, you will learn how to deliver your clients their dreams.

Registration: **18:00 hours**  
Networking & Presentations: **18:30 hours**  
Buffet, Entertainment & Prizes: **20:00 hours**  
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## Kids go free on BA family flights to Billund

FAMILIES SEEKING a cost effective mix of attractions, beaches and activities this summer might want to take advantage of a special offer from British Airways and holiday in Denmark.

The airline is running a 'Kids go free' promotion where up to two children can fly free with one adult on flights between Heathrow and Billund from June 1 to October 31.

The launch of the first BA flight from Heathrow to Billund at the start of May last year has opened up new opportunities for families to explore the history, landscapes, towns and coastline in Southern Denmark. With three UNESCO sights, the region is renowned for its natural diversity as well as an extensive choice of family-friendly attractions that make up the Legoland Billund Resort, including the original Legoland, the waterpark in Lalandia and GIVSKUD ZOO.

**MONARCH MARKED 20 years of services between Luton and Gibraltar this month. The route, which commenced in May 1997, has carried more than 1.5 million passengers and is one of the company's longest operating scheduled routes. Pictured marking the occasion are, from the left: Terence Lopez, Gibraltar International Airport; the operating crew of flight ZB062; Monarch's Ian Chambers (third from right); Gilbert Licudi QC, Gibraltar's minister for Tourism and Commercial Aviation; and Nicky Guerrero from the Gibraltar Tourist Board. Flights to Gibraltar are also available from Birmingham, Gatwick and Manchester with 18 weekly departures this summer season, offering in the region of 190,000 return seats.**

## TAP Portugal unveils new branded fare concept

TAP PORTUGAL is now offering customers travelling to Brazil, Africa, Venezuela, Canada and the US more freedom of choice with new branded fares where customers can pay just for the services they require.

There are four fare brand options available for travel in Economy and two in Business Class, with the possibility of purchasing additional services at any time.

The Discount brand is available for passengers choosing to travel with carry-on baggage only at the most competitive price. For those who prefer to travel with one checked bag, Basic brand will be the best option, while customers who travel with two checked bags and want to pre-assign their seat should book Classic brand. To travel with additional baggage, comfort and flexibility, the Plus brand offers three bags up to 23kg each, pre-assigned front seats, priority check-in and flexibility in making changes to reservations.

In Business Class, the Executive brand

offers two pieces of baggage up to 32kg each with lounge access and priority boarding. With the Top Executive brand, maximum exclusivity and flexibility is included, together with three pieces of baggage up to 32kg each.

In other news from the airline, a new route is being launched on June 10 flying from Heathrow and Manchester to Toronto via Lisbon five times weekly. Prices start at £347 return including all taxes and surcharges. Passengers can also take advantage of the free Portugal stop-over programme on the route, giving them the opportunity to spend three days in Lisbon before heading on to Toronto.

On October 29, the airline will also fly a new route from London City Airport to Lisbon. Flights will operate twice daily Monday to Friday and once daily on weekends, with flights available for customers to book now. For more information visit [flytap.com](http://flytap.com) or call 0345-601 0932.

## Etihad Airways launches 48-hour Abu Dhabi challenge for transit travellers

ETIHAD AIRWAYS is challenging travellers to experience Abu Dhabi's host of 'once in a lifetime' activities and major attractions in two days.

The '48-Hour Challenge' is part of the airline's wider stopover campaign promoting Abu Dhabi as a 'holiday within a holiday' for transit travellers.

For the campaign launch, the airline challenged Ricky Wilson, singer-songwriter, TV personality and frontman of British indie rock band Kaiser Chiefs, to spend 48 hours exploring the best Abu Dhabi has to offer which can be viewed on YouTube.

Wilson said: "For me a stopover meant sitting in the airport or visiting duty free, but this is not what a stopover should be. It should be flying falcons across the desert, kayaking, visiting water parks....imbibing the culture of the place.

'Abu Dhabi has taught me that stopovers can be as relaxing as they are exhilarating. It is an incredible place, with warm, generous and extremely hospitable people. It is a beautiful city with endless things to do in a short space of time.'

The airline has also launched a special competition. Until the end of 2017, the carrier is giving away 500 prizes to members of the public who take up the 48-hour challenge and post their experiences on Instagram using the hashtag #EtihadChallenge. Prizes range from 24-carat gold spa treatments to desert safari trips.

More information can be found at [etihad.com/abudhabi](http://etihad.com/abudhabi)



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We've been on the road to host our Luxury Showcases – both at the Macdonald Randolph Hotel in Oxford and the Crowne Plaza Chester. Tourist boards, resorts and specialist operators all gathered to chat with agents and share their knowledge and product details, with fabulous food, fine wine and amazing holiday prizes presented throughout the night!

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## #TBSHOWCASES



**CHOCOS AWAY...** Alison Harris (right) from Flight Centre Chester won a chocolate hamper from Liverpool John Lennon Airport's Ashley Morgan.



**HOLIDAY PRIZE...** Katerina Bomshtein from Gran Canaria presents prize winner Nicola Cullen from Sandy Lane Travel with a five-night holiday to the Canary Island.



**CALIFORNIA DREAMING...** Brendan Croft from Visit California updates Chester agents.



**FLORIDA FACTS...** Agents find out more about Florida Keys & Key West from the tourism board's Lauren Sycamore.



**WINE WINNINGS...** Cheryl Johnson (left) from Access World Travel won luxury bottles of Croatian wine and olive oil, presented by Maja Buic from the Croatian National Tourist Office.



**ROCK ON...** Joanne Peters (left) from Hard Rock Tenerife presents a five-night stay at Hard Rock Tenerife to winner Rachael Coyne from Not Just Travel.



**WARM WELCOME...** Kirsty Lilley (left) from AM Resorts welcomes Paul Sulisbury and Emily Preece of Guru Travel.



**SWISS STUDY...** Heidi Reisz and Nick Robb from Switzerland Travel Centre talk agents through some of the latest developments and key highlights of the destination.





**A TASTE OF JAPAN...** Sarah Thorely from Co-Op Travel in Chipping Norton is pictured collecting her bottle of Sake prize from Hiro Sato of the Japan Tourist Board.



**AGENT READY...** Mladen Ljubisic (right) from the Slovenia Tourism Board and Matej Knific from Imperial Luxury Slovenia prepare to talk all things Slovenian luxury with agents.



**FREE SPIRIT...** Jane Walsh from Free Spirit Holiday was thrilled to win a two-night weekend break for two in Stockholm, presented by Chris Graham from Simply Sweden.



**COOK CHAT...** From the left are: Jayne Ellis, Jade Callaghan and Lauren Ottley from Trailfinders being welcomed to the showcase by Ian Griffiths from the Cook Islands.



**OFF TO MEXICO...** Philip Baker (right) from Thomas Cook in Abingdon won a complimentary three-night stay at UNICO 20°87°, gifted by Hard Rock AI Resorts' Graham Brooks.



**TRAVEL TALK...** Sara Ellis from the Massachusetts UK Office of Travel & Tourism chats to agents about what the destination can offer clients.



**RUM REWARD...** Kyle Harrigan from the British Virgin Islands Tourist Board presents Veronica Bailey from Fare Wise Travel with a goodie bag containing ingredients to make the a Pussers Painkiller rum drink.



**CRUISE OPTIONS...** David Chidley discusses why clients will enjoy luxury options with Uniworld.



**MELIA MEET...** Vicky Brown from Melia Hotels highlights luxury options available for agents to sell.



**Want to get in on the #TBSHOWCASES action?**  
Join in the fun at our next Luxury Showcase events in Cambridge on June 19 and Leicester on June 20. All agents who wish to attend can secure their spot by emailing [oliver.barton@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:oliver.barton@travelbulletin.co.uk)



# Industry Insight by...



**There's more to summer holidays than staycations says Andy Stark,  
MD of The Global Travel Group**

ACCORDING TO recent reports, domestic tourism could be crowned the biggest winner in these uncertain times. And whilst even our shiny new 12-sided pound proves no match for sterling's ongoing slide, we're assured that holidaying at home is becoming more attractive than ever.

Whilst this rings true for many young families, as someone who's been subjected to more games of 'I Spy' during tortuous car journeys than I care to remember, it's important to see past the headlines. After all, there will always be parents who don't relish the idea of wasting two days of their well-deserved holidays stuck in traffic somewhere along the M5 and spending the money they've saved on over-priced motorway snacks.

Similarly, whilst the suggestion is that holiday parks and camping sites across the UK are gleefully rubbing their hands, what isn't always conveyed is that many of these are short breaks. In fact, one recent report I spotted indicates that the trips planned by over half of staycationers will actually be just three days or less – up 8.8% on last year's figures. Throw into the mix the noticeable decline in those planning a UK break of 12 days or more (5.2%) and the international outlook is still looking pretty rosy.

The fact is that Brits still want to go on holiday. It's just that value for money has become even more of a driving factor when it comes to deciding where to go. At the beginning of the year ABTA reported that overseas bookings for this summer were already up a very encouraging 7% compared to the previous year, a figure that was mirrored by our own members with January sales up 15% across the group.

All-inclusive breaks are an excellent way for holidaymakers concerned by potential currency fluctuations to feel protected without compromising on

their wanderlust. According to ABTA research, one in four travellers are planning to take a package holiday this year compared to one in five in 2016.

At the same time, there are some people for whom the post-Brexit uncertainty translates into a bigger desire than ever to head to Europe to take full advantage of the visa-free travel. So Eurozone favourites such as Spain and Greece continue to prove attractive.

There's good news too for agents with a far-flung focus. It seems long-haul flights have dropped by up to 18% over the past year, according to a piece I read

**"The fact is that Brits still want to go on holiday. It's just that value for money has become even more of a driving factor when it comes to deciding where to go"**

from Skyscanner, so there's no reason why we can't continue to help make our customer's dreams of distant destinations come true.

What all this demonstrates is that all of us in the travel industry need to keep a flexible approach to selling holidays for the foreseeable future and keep an eye out for those silver linings despite the Brexit uncertainty.

After all, whilst holidaying at home might be becoming more attractive for some, this includes foreign tourists lured by the promise of a falling pound. So anyone hoping for a deserted spot along the 'Costa del Cornwall' might be in for a bit of a surprise this August after all.



## Venice Port looks to welcome more cruise passengers

THE VENEZIA Terminal Passeggeri (VTP), the company that manages the cruise ships calling at the port of Venice, is currently working with the Venice Port Authority and the Italian government to find an alternative route to allow large cruise ships to again call at Marittima port facilities.

Sandro Trevisanato, the president of VTP, said: "The connection between Venice and tourism has always been very strong. We have played an important role in promoting Venice as a cruise destination, given important investments – more than 70m euros since 1997 - and a commitment in developing eco-friendly technological solutions to secure an excellent experience for passengers."

Despite a registered drop in traffic following the 'Big Ship in Venice' incident, the company hopes to find a speedy solution.

Trevisanato said: "This year we expect to welcome 473 calls and 1,422,000 cruisers, and we are particularly proud that our board of directors agreed to leave the fares for cruise ships support services unchanged to foster and eventually increase the traffic in the Marittima area."

"This year will also welcome new vessels including Aida Blu, Arethusa, Artemis, Norwegian Star, Silver Muse, Seabourn Encore, Viking Sky and Viking Sun, which underlines how appealing Venice is for the cruise industry."



## UNESCO listed palace opens for guests to stay in Genoa

A NEW four-star design hotel, the Palazzo Grillo, has opened in the heart of Genoa's medieval centre. The hotel is located in one of the city's Rolli Palaces and has been listed as a UNESCO heritage site since 2006.

Built in 1545, the restoration of the palace began in 2011 and the hotel offers 25 rooms, including five suites and junior suites. There are a number of public rooms available, many

of which showcase original frescoed walls, and the property is also home to the 'Primo Piano', an exhibition area with a vault ceiling and frescoed walls painted by Bergamasco.

The hotel is a unique chance for travellers to stay in one of the city's 100 plus palaces, which were built by aristocratic families in the 16th century, with 42 holding UNESCO World Heritage status.

Genoa is home to 25 museums and makes for an ideal cultural short break from the UK. Three of the most important are the Strada Nuova Museums - Palazzo Rosso, Palazzo Bianco and Palazzo Tursi. All three have been recognised as UNESCO World Heritage Sites and showcase art from the 15th and 19th century, while Palazzo Tursi is home to the violin of Nicolò Paganini, which he named 'il Cannone' (the cannon) due to its powerful sound.

Return flights from Gatwick to Genoa with British Airways are available from £105,w while a standard double room at the Palazzo Grillo costs from 135 euros including breakfast.

For more information visit [hotelpalazzogrillo.it](http://hotelpalazzogrillo.it) and [visitgenoa.it](http://visitgenoa.it)



## New flight options from Inghams to Italian destinations

INGHAMS ITALY has increased its charter flight offering this summer to popular Italian destinations including Palermo, Catania, Bari, Naples, Cagliari and Olbia.

The new BA flights will operate on a weekly basis from Gatwick and Heathrow from May 13 until the end of September for seven-night holidays.

Sarah Coates, operations team leader for the company, said: "We are pleased to expand our flight offering to Italy this summer, opening up more availability to customers to a range of fantastic destinations."

For more information, brochure supplies or training, agents can email Charlotte Yeomans at [sales@ingham.co.uk](mailto:sales@ingham.co.uk)

# TRAVEL TALKS

by John Guinn, holiday researcher

**John 'steps' up by highlighting the best way to sightsee (and exercise) in Italy**



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

**I**TALY IS rightly famous for its food. Unfortunately, too much good food can increase your waist size. Here are four attractions in Italy that can help the overfed to burn off the excess calories.

## Messina Strait pylons

In 1955, a power line was run between Torre Faro, Sicily and Villa San Giovanni on the mainland. The power line was carried by two 232m high towers, which were once the tallest electricity pylons in the world. The line was shut down in 1993 and the towers are now national monuments. The pylon at Torre Faro is illuminated at night and tourists can visit it to check out the view of the Messina Strait. To see the view however, tourists must first climb the tower's 1,250 steps and possibly the tallest public staircase in Europe.

## The Phoenician Steps, Capri

A mere 921 stone steps, this attraction in Capri was actually built by the Ancient Greeks between the 7th and 6th century BC. It was, until 1874, the only connection between the town of Anacapri on the slopes of Monte Solaro and the port at Marina Grande. As Anacapri had no wells, townsfolk had to use these steps to reach the fresh water spring down by the port.

## Giotto's Bell Tower, Florence

For a slightly easier climb, there is Giotto's Bell Tower in Florence. It only has 414 steps to climb. There are opportunities to rest while climbing too, as the tower has three middle floors.

## Caltagirone, Sicily

With only 142 steps, the staircase of Caltagirone is not going to burn off the pasta. This is especially true when you are inspecting the stairs during the last two weeks in May. Then, as part of the Infiorita Festival, they are decorated with flowers and illuminated with candles to form a mural design from the bottom to the top.



## Jet2holidays & Jet2CityBreaks boost access with new routes for 2018

JET2HOLIDAYS AND Jet2CityBreaks have announced more ways for clients to enjoy Italy next year, with new routes from three of its UK bases. These include Birmingham to Naples, Rome and Pisa; Belfast to Naples; and Manchester to Verona.

The new routes are in addition to the new Naples options introduced for this year from Leeds Bradford, Edinburgh and East Midlands. The brand's year-on-year capacity growth to Naples will increase by 74% from 2017 to 2018.

Jet2CityBreaks offers weekend breaks to the city of Naples from £279 per person, which includes 22kg luggage allowance. Trips to the Neapolitan Riviera or Amalfi Coast through Jet2holidays cost from £419 per person, including a 22kg luggage allowance and transfers.

For further information call 0800-408 5587 or visit [trade.jet2holidays.com](http://trade.jet2holidays.com)

## Planet Weddings highlights unique venues & offers tips to agents

PLANET WEDDINGS has featured weddings to Italy for six years with new venues added on a yearly basis in popular areas such as Tuscany and the Lakes, alongside new destinations such as Venice, Rome and Sicily.

Mathilde Robert, managing director of the operator, said: "Italy is a magnet for couples looking for something stylish or rustic and venue locations can be magical, such as a Tuscan Villa, a vineyard or even a castle in the Lakes. The options are plentiful and varied and, with Sunvil Holidays offering holiday options to Italy, we can package the wedding and a stay in many beautiful Italian locations including Sicily. We try and provide retailers with maximum flexibility."

The operator has put together some useful tips for agents. For example, six months is required to organise a wedding in Italy and necessary documents need to be legalised by the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO). All scanned document copies also need to be with the operator at least ten weeks prior to the couples travel dates.

The company's dedicated wedding co-ordinator in Italy at the chosen location can deal with the translation of the necessary documents, and couples will need to be in Italy at least three days prior to their wedding day with a total minimum stay in Italy (including the wedding day) of seven-nights. In addition, couples must have a valid ten-year British passport although other nationalities can also be advised accordingly when this information is passed on at the time of the initial enquiry.

The operator recently updated the Italian section of its website which now features four tabs - Tuscany, Amalfi Coast, Sorrento and the Lakes - and more to be added during the course of the year.

Agents can also use the company's expertise just for the wedding or can request packages that include flights, transfers and accommodation.

For more information call 01438-841270, email [weddings@planet-holidays.co.uk](mailto:weddings@planet-holidays.co.uk) or visit [planetweddings.co.uk](http://planetweddings.co.uk)





## SuperBreak adds new tours in Florence

SUPERBREAK HAS added 11 new add-on attractions and tours in Florence.

Offering everything from a Dan Brown 'Inferno' themed tour to a LGBTB-friendly visit to the Accademia Gallery, the tours cover a broad range of the city's highlights to suit clients' interests. The operator is encouraging agents to pre-book activities for their clients to help boost revenue and increase earning potential.

As an example of some of the new tours on offer, a 'Best of Florence' option is a half-day walking tour with visits to the Uffizi and Accademia for £63.50 per person. Alternatively, a LGBTB-Friendly Tour of the Accademia Gallery and Florence is led by a guide who uncovers the real biography of Michelangelo for £35.50.

A selection of early access and 'skip the line' tours are also available such as a guided 'Accademia Gallery - The David and Stradivarius Skip the Line tour' from £33; a full day Dan Brown's 'Inferno' Florence Tour for £76; and the 'Bohemian Oltrarno Walking Tour with Olive Oil Tasting' from £29.50.

For more information call 01904-436000 or visit [superbreak.com/agents](http://superbreak.com/agents)

**HILTON HAS opened La Bagnaia Golf & Spa Resort Siena, Curio Collection by Hilton - the first property from the brand to open in Italy. Once a medieval village and now a hotel, the property is 12km from Siena in the Tuscan countryside and features an 18-hole golf course, 99 guestrooms with 12 suites, La Voliera restaurant serving Tuscan cuisine and a spa. Rooms start from £150 per night based on a stay for two in a Queen Filetta room. Visit [curiocollection.com](http://curiocollection.com) for details.**

## Simply Luxury by Travel 2 explores Sardinia for 2017

SIMPLY LUXURY by Travel 2 has expanded its Italian offering to include Sardinia for 2017.

Highlights of the region include the chance to explore Roman ruins, beaches, go scuba diving or dine on local food and wine.

The operator suggests highlighting a stay at the Costa dei Fiori Hotel on the southern coast, close to Nora, Chia and Teulada beaches. The property dates back to between the 16th and 19th century and is decorated in a traditional Sardinian style with furnishings made by local craftsmen.

As an example of packages offered, seven nights at the four-star property costs from £769 per person based on a superior Ibisus room and a September 21 departure. It includes breakfast, flights from London, private transfers and complimentary lounge access in the UK.

Holiday offers including free nights, free upgrades and discounted rates, with the chance for agents to also earn reward points. Visit [travel2.com](http://travel2.com) or call 0800-022 4182 for more details.

## ABTOI welcomes delegates to annual conference

THE ASSOCIATION of British Travel Organisers to Italy (ABTOI) recently held its annual conference, with more than 40 tour operators and media from the UK attending the event in Paestum, Campania.

The summit opened with James Wallman, author and strategic advisor of travel tech start ups, highlighting the strong shift in trend towards experiential holidays.

Travel writer, Lisa Gerard-Sharp, followed and introduced delegates to the highlights of Paestum and the Cilento coast with a focus on its culture, food and wine, as well as the Greek Temples (c 600 BC), all of which were sampled over the three-day event.

For more information see [loveitaly.co.uk](http://loveitaly.co.uk)

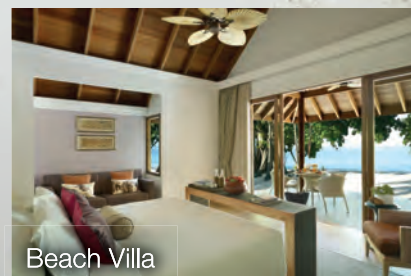




Mudhdhoo Island



Devarana Spa



Beach Villa

## Dusit Thani Maldives

Dusit Thani Maldives blends gracious Thai hospitality with the unparalleled luxury setting of the Maldives. Encircled by white sandy beaches, a vibrant 360 degree house reef and turquoise lagoon. Located on Mudhdhoo Island in Baa Atoll, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, this luxury resort is the perfect springboard for discovering the majestic underwater world that lies beneath and only a 10 minute speedboat ride to a plankton-rich feeding ground for manta rays and whale sharks. The resort's 94 spacious villas and residences feature elegant and contemporary Thai interiors integrated with traditional Maldivian architecture. Guests can scuba dive and snorkel in the turquoise waters, swim in one of the Maldives' largest infinity pools, enjoy a thorough pampering in one of Devarana Spa's treetop treatment pods, or dine at one of the resort's five award-winning restaurants and bars.

   #DusitThaniMV

Dusit Thani Maldives, Mudhdhoo Island, Baa Atoll, Republic of Maldives  
Tel: +960 660 8888 Fax: +960 660 9999 Email: [resmaldives@dusit.com](mailto:resmaldives@dusit.com)

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# india&indianocean

*LOCATED ON Dhuni Kolhu Island in Baa Atoll and part of the Coco Collection, the Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu offers a range of accommodation options to suit groups, couples and families. Ocean Front Villas, Beach Villas, Sunset Beach Villas and Deluxe Villas have been designed to blend into the natural environment, while Lagoon Villas offer an element of exclusivity and indulgence. Caribtours is offering seven nights at the property from £1,619 per person based on two adults sharing an Ocean Front Villa on full-board. This includes flights, transfers and use of a UK airport lounge, and is part of a 'stay seven pay five' and 35% off promotion with a complimentary upgrade from full-board to all-inclusive.*

## Experience Travel Group launches Sri Lanka architecture tour

EXPERIENCE TRAVEL Group is launching a series of small group tours starting with a new 'Architecture and Design - Sri Lanka' tour guided by one of the destination's most highly regarded architects, Aishani Jayasinghe.

Providing insights into the cultural importance of the island's colonial architecture and UNESCO World Heritage sites, the shared travel experience has been designed to meet the growing demand for one-off experiential group tours.

A recent traveller survey undertaken by the operator found that 68% of its clients would consider a group tour, up 50% on the survey conducted two years prior.

Booking trends indicate this rising demand is largely driven by women - both single, or with partners less interested in travel - seeking like-minded individuals to travel with, as well as couples wanting to visit more 'off-the-beaten-track' destinations where they can fulfil a particular interest.

Itinerary highlights of the 15-day exploration include access to Colombo's floating parliament, discovering the life and works of the late architect Geoffrey Bawa and private dinners with some of Sri Lanka's most prominent designers.

Time is also spent with the company's co-founder Tom Armstrong to gain an insight into the design and construction of eco property The Mudhouse, with visits to the wonders of UNESCO World Heritage-listed Sigiriya Rock Fortress and Anuradhapura providing a contrast of ancient Sri Lankan architecture.

The new tour costs from £3,886 per person and includes flights from London to Colombo, accommodation with a stay at Geoffrey Bawa's famed Kandalama Hotel, hosting from leading Sri Lankan architects, signature experiences, transport and a number of meals.

For further information call 020-3355 7873 or visit [experiencetravelgroup.com](http://experiencetravelgroup.com)

## Gold Medal suggests Ravenala for honeymooners

GOLD MEDAL is recommending the Ravenala Attitude Hotel in Mauritius as an option for honeymooners looking for an escape to the Indian Ocean.

Tricia Birmingham, the operator's senior product manager for the Indian Ocean, said: "The hotel has ten dining options so there's plenty of choice for romantic dinners and, as part of the honeymoon offer at the hotel, brides stay free on an all-inclusive basis when the groom pays a single room rate, which is a great saving.

"Honeymooners will also receive a cake, a gift from management, a special turndown service, a relaxing bath prior to departure and a candlelit dinner."

A seven-night stay at the four-star retreat in a Couples Suite on all-inclusive leads in at £1,489 per person, with a saving of up to £530 per person. This includes flights with Emirates from Gatwick and transfers and is valid for travel between August 10 and September 23.

## Goa Experience adds Kerala in Style

NEW FOR winter 2017/18, Goa Experience has launched a collection of Kerala add-on tours to its 'Beyond Goa' holiday options.

The most luxurious option of these, Kerala in Style, enables guests to take in many of the state's highlights while staying in boutique properties.

Highlights of the seven-night tour include exploring the historic port city of Cochin, cruising the Kerala backwaters on a houseboat, a jungle walk or boat trip around Periyar National Park & Tiger Reserve and sampling Ayurvedic spa treatments in Kovalam along with a beach finale.

The operator is also running an agent incentive, offering one agent the chance to win a £250 Red Letter Days gift card. Each booking made through the operator will equal one entry into the draw until the deadline on June 19. The winner can choose from a variety of experiences, such as driving and spa packages. For more information visit [goaexperience.co.uk](http://goaexperience.co.uk) or email [trade@serenityholidays.co.uk](mailto:trade@serenityholidays.co.uk)





**THE RESIDENCE Mauritius** is inviting guests to enjoy a cinema experience under the stars with its new outdoor cinema. Designed for honeymooners and couples to relax and enjoy a romantic evening with their favourite movies, it has been set up on the property's Belle-Mare beach with freshly made popcorn, snacks and drinks available and tickets starting from 25 euros per couple.

## Simply India Holidays by Somak continues to see strong demand

AFTER RE-INTRODUCING India to its portfolio last year, Somak Holidays is continuing to see strong demand from consumers.

The operator says that this has been attributed to the diverse amount of experiences available in the destination and, in part, to films and television franchises such as Viceroy's House and The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel igniting interest.

Simply India Holidays by Somak is able to offer tailor-made itineraries and can also incorporate luxury options to meet requests, including a combination of five-star hotels around the Golden Triangle, a rail journey on the 'Palace on Wheels', a Ayurveda spa experience, or beach resorts in Goa or Kerala.

The operator will be welcoming a group of agents on a fam trip to India this September and agents can earn Amazon vouchers to the value of £50 per person based on a minimum spend of £1,200 per person, staying at least five nights.

## Centara Hotels & Resorts increases presence in Maldives

CENTARA HOTELS and Resorts has signed a new hotel management agreement for its fourth beach resort under the brand's umbrella in the Maldives; the Centara Grand Muthaafushi Resort & Spa.

Under the agreement, the hospitality group will manage and operate the new five-star resort in the South Western portion of Baa Atoll. It will comprise 24 land villas and 77 water villas with an array of international restaurants including an underwater restaurant, a floating cinema, a dedicated Thai spa and fitness centre. The

new resort is expected to have soft opening in the fourth quarter of 2018 and a grand opening in 2019.

Thirayuth Chirathivat, chief executive officer for the company, said: "We are delighted to be selected by Muthaafushi Orient Investments Limited to manage and operate its new five-star resort in the Maldives. This expansion of the business in the Maldives is in line with our growth strategy to strengthen our presence both in the South Asian region and internationally." Find out more at [centarahotelsresorts.com](http://centarahotelsresorts.com)

## Kandima Maldives helps guests 'Relax, Reset & Evolve'

FROM AUGUST, Kandima Maldives in Dhaalu Atoll will be offering guests the chance to experience a new kind of health retreat, hosted by TV presenter Nick Knowles alongside yoga therapy instructor, Luke Bache.

Called 'Relax, Reset and Evolve', the week-long retreat - held within the surroundings of the new Maldivian resort - are designed to give guests the tools to form new habits to change their lifestyle and balance through yoga, cooking and inspiring talks on stress reduction, focus and wellbeing.

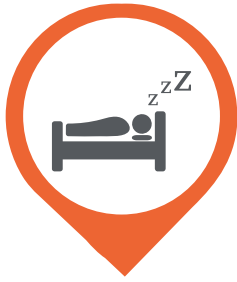
Each morning begins with a therapeutic yoga class tailored to a specific part of the body closing with a short mindful meditation. During the afternoon there will either be a mindful moving class for cardio or a yin yoga class that works on the connective tissue, ligaments and tendons. Every evening Nick and Luke will also lead inspiring talks about health and wellness or a guided total body relaxation class.

In addition, guests on the retreat are eligible for two massages at esKape spa and three cookery classes, with visits to the chefs' garden to pick fresh herbs and vegetables.

The dates of the retreats fall on August 6-13 and 13-20, October 29-November 5 and November 5-12, and are available from £3,340 per person based on two sharing or £4,300 on single occupancy. This includes all mentioned activities and full-board accommodation. For further information visit [kandima.com](http://kandima.com)







In a series of features that focus on different hotels, we take a closer look at...



#### NAME OF HOTEL:

Heritage Le Telfair Golf & Wellness Resort



#### LOCATION:

A unique destination on the unspoilt South coast of Mauritius



#### STAR RATING:

5 star Deluxe



#### MEMBER OF ANY BRANDS:

Small Luxury Hotels of the World



#### TYPES OF ROOMS/SUITES AVAILABLE:

All suites which come with butler service



#### NO. OF SUITES:

158 suites



#### NO. OF FLOORS:

2 floors. All suites are located on the ground and 1st floor



#### NOTABLE VIEWS FROM ROOMS:

Garden, ocean view and beach front



#### NO. OF BARS & RESTAURANTS:

Heritage Le Telfair is located on the Domaine de Bel Ombre which provides guests with access to 8 bars and 14 restaurants, 13 of which are a la carte



#### SPA/SWIMMING POOLS/GYM:

2 pools within the hotel and total of 6 in the resort



#### FACILITIES (KIDS):

Free Baby Club dedicated to babies from birth to 36 months open 7 days a week from 08:30-16:00

Free kids club and teens programme also available



#### ENTERTAINMENT:

Live music every night at Heritage Awali/Heritage Le Telfair/C Beach Club.

Free access to Timomo Kids Club for children aged 3 to 11 years (08:30-23:00)



#### MEETING/CONFERENCE FACILITIES:

Air-conditioned conference room - 94m2  
Up to 70 seatings in theatre style layout



#### NEAREST AIRPORT/DISTANCE:

45 minutes



#### WI-FI:

Free throughout the hotel



#### TRAINING INCENTIVES (WEBSITE)

Register your bookings at [www.vhrrewards.com](http://www.vhrrewards.com)

Follow us on Facebook: Amy W Veranda-Heritage Resorts & Heritage & Veranda Resorts Mauritius for Travel Agents

Learn more about our hotels on our training platform at [www.vhrtraining.com](http://www.vhrtraining.com)



#### ANY OTHER INFORMATION:

Highlights include:

- Fully renovated hotel for summer 2017
- Offering a unique Gourmet Bliss dining passport on the island
- A 2,000sq.m spa; 1km of pristine beach
- Complimentary baby corner for toddlers under 3
- An array of restaurants across the Domaine with different gourmet experiences
- An 18-hole championship golf course with unlimited green fees for all guests
- Upgrade to GOURMET BLISS to dine in all 14 restaurants with no restrictions, unlimited green fees, half way snacks, complimentary golf cart, afternoon tea, ice-cream parlour, upgraded mini bar and room service with no tray charge.



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**WONDERS OF Sri Lanka** is a new 11-day trip from Trafalgar incorporating authentic local experiences; from learning how Ceylon tea is made and rehabilitating orphaned elephants, to enjoying lunch with a local family in Katugastota, taking dance lessons in the village of Habarana and staying in one of the destination's oldest hotels, Galle Face. Departures run until December 22 with prices from £1,995 per person.

## puzzlesolutions

### Crossword:

Across: 1. NINE, 3. QUEBEC, 8. LOIRE, 9. ALAMO, 10. CASABLANCA, 13. KING ARTHUR, 17. PIPPA, 19. INUIT, 20. ELLMAU, 21. SUVA.

Down: 1. NILE, 2. NAIRA, 4. USA, 5. BRAIN, 6. COOGAN, 7. NEVADA, 11. LATVIA, 12. SKOPJE, 14. NEPAL, 15. ULURU, 16. ETNA, 18. ACA.

Where Am I?: PortAventura World Parks and Resort



@TravelBulletin



TravelBulletin

We asked our staff the following question this week:

**What always makes you laugh?**



**Jeanette Ratcliffe**

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*Peter Kay in Car Share*



**Lauretta Wright**

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*Katherine Ryan and playing 'It'*



**Adam Potter**

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*The rest of the TB team :p*



**Paul Scudamore**

Contributing Editor

*Being tickled by my wife. And Would I Lie To You?*



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*About three pints of beer*



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*Queueing*



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*When I'm in a situation where I'm not supposed to laugh!*



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*Miri saying 'Pamela'*



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*funny situations*



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*A lot of things, can't name one*



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# EXPERIENCE A NEW LEVEL OF LUXURY IN THE MALDIVES

The Maldives is a gem when it comes to tropical retreats, and the family-friendly **Centara Grand Island Resort and Spa Maldives** is taking the experience up another level with its “**Ultimate All-Inclusive**” package, where guests can leave their credit cards at home because absolutely everything is included. From fabulous dining options, an open bar and daily champagne breakfast to fun off-island excursions and boat trips. And now, we’ve even added FREE SCUBA DIVING to the array of exciting activities available, so the options for guests are endless. The same goes for adult-only **Centara Ras Fushi Resort & Spa Maldives**, which offers an intimate escape for couples and honeymooners and of course an All-Inclusive, cash free experience.



**CENTARA**  
GRAND  
ISLAND RESORT & SPA  
MALDIVES

**CENTARA**  
RAS FUSHI RESORT & SPA  
MALDIVES





PERSONALISED HOLIDAYS  
tailor-made for you

CLASSIC  
COLLECTION  
— HOLIDAYS —

CROATIA SLOVENIA MONTENEGRO

PRIVATE  
TRANSFERS  
INCLUDED

*luxury offers*

**CROATIA**

EXCLUSIVE  
OFFER  
to CLASSIC

4★ Hotel Park Makarska  
B&B

**FREE HALF BOARD**

Book by 31 May

7 nights from **£1,139**<sub>pp</sub>

Departs Gatwick 31 May

SAVE  
**£143**

per couple per week



**CROATIA**

4★ Hotel Kompas  
B&B

**REDUCED RATES**

Book by 27 Dec

7 nights from **£499**<sub>pp</sub>

Departs Gatwick 15 Dec

SAVE  
**£134**

per couple per week



**CROATIA**

EXCLUSIVE  
OFFER  
to CLASSIC

4★ Grand Hotel Palazzo  
B&B

**FREE MASSAGE**

Book by 31 May

7 nights from **£979**<sub>pp</sub>

Departs Gatwick 11 Jul



**SLOVENIA**

5★ Kempinski Palace  
Portoroz B&B

**REDUCED RATES**

Book by 7 Jun

7 nights from **£1,299**<sub>pp</sub>

Departs Gatwick 28 May

SAVE  
**£227**

per couple per week



**CROATIA**

EXCLUSIVE  
OFFER  
to CLASSIC

4★ Port 9 Apartments  
ROOM ONLY

**REDUCED RATES**

On selected dates. Book by 31 May

7 nights from **£899**<sub>pp</sub>

Departs Gatwick 17 Jun

SAVE  
**£127**

per couple per week



**MONTENEGRO**

5★ Regent Porto  
Montenegro B&B

**2 NIGHTS FREE**

Book by 25 Dec

7 nights from **£1,599**<sub>pp</sub>

Departs Gatwick 13 Jul

SAVE  
**£375**

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