

travelbulletin

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GOLDMEDAL



World of Adventures...

TITAN RECENTLY hosted a day of fun at Chessington World of Adventures for more than 20 agents. The day began with agents brushing up on their Titan knowledge with some help from Bruce the bearded Dragon and Charlie the Meerkat, Titan's special furry friends. After lunch, it was time for a private tour of the Sea Life Centre, followed by private feeding time with the lions and their cubs. Pictured enjoying their day are, from the left: Karen West, Premier Travel; Denise Bent, Fabulicious Travel; Kim Evans, Premier Travel; George Singh, Hays Travel; Jackie Darbourne, Air Viceroy; Sarah Hill, Thames Valley Travel; Jenny Jackson, Luxury Travel Guru; Graham Tann, Distant Destinations; Linda Buckingham, Travel Counsellors; Naomi Coombes and Georgie Rawstone, Woods Travel; Linda North, Your Holiday Booking; Georgia Emm, Distant Destinations; Rebecca Heffernan, Travel Counsellors; Carla Hodgson, Hays Travel; Louise Sword and Alana Jones, Titan; Joanna Mapperley, Travel Counsellors; Komal Rajani, Tripino; Emma Gillott and Lesley Keefe, Travel Four Seasons; Mary Triggs, Tripino; Kerry Cansdale, Travel Counsellors; and Simon Crockford from Your Holiday Booking.

Agents urged to embrace technology following new findings from Apadmi

THE FUTURE of the High Street travel agent could be under threat, as a new report finds that only 9% of UK holidaymakers now visit travel agents to book their holiday.

For 18-24 year olds, this figure drops to 4%, but older generations weren't left out of the limelight either. While most might expect this age group to be more traditional in their holiday planning, only 18% of people over the age of 65 still visit High Street travel agents.

Interestingly though, it appears that the clout of a reputable travel agent brand is still effective in the minds of consumers, as 39% of UK holidaymakers still search online through a travel agent's website, with this figure shooting up to 53% for 18-24 year olds.

Leading mobile technology group, Apadmi, surveyed 1,000 people who had taken a holiday in the previous 12 months to discover how the use of mobile technology could impact the entire holiday experience.

The survey found that a much higher demand for technology that will make it quicker and easier ways to arrange trips was driving this trend. For instance, a fifth of holidaymakers (21%) would like to see the use of artificial intelligence and digital chat bots to provide tailored support and improve the booking process.

However, the company asserts that new interactive technology presents opportunities for agents to attract travellers back to the High Street, with 48% of those polled wanting to see travel agents invest in augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) so they can view destinations, hotels or transport in store before booking anything.

Nick Black, CEO of Apadmi, believes that it's time to change the focus of the 'shop front', opting for a richer, more personalised digital experience. He said: "With price comparison and travel-specific review sites now widely used by holidaymakers, travel companies are finding it

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harder than ever to maintain that market edge. If travel agents and operators want to create and maintain a competitive advantage, they need to build immersive and engaging digital channels, rather than relying on traditional High Street retail outlets.

"Our research has found that customers are asking for more innovative technology from the travel sector. Investing in areas such as virtual and augmented reality will help build value-added services for High Street travel agents, rather than simply providing a service that people can get

from other, more convenient channels.

"Embracing this technology could help bring people back to the High Street so they can interact and engage with lots of destinations in store before they make a decision on their trips. They could use VR headsets to view hotel rooms or explore visitor attractions at their chosen destination before they book. We're already seeing technology like this being used in sectors such as retail to offer a more interactive, immersive experience where shoppers can try on or test products before they buy them. So, it makes perfect sense for the travel sector to get on board and invest in VR and AR going forward."

To view the report see apadmi.com/travel-report-2017/

VisitEngland's UK campaign encourages young people to holiday at home

A UK-wide tourism campaign has launched to inspire young people from Great Britain and Northern Ireland to take a holiday at home. Statistics show that 16-to-34 year olds took almost 1.4 million fewer holidays at home last year compared to a decade ago.

VisitEngland's £2.5million 'Join the World - Discover the UK' digital and social media campaign targets the 'lost generation' using overseas social media influencers and travellers to showcase to their peers the amazing moments and experiences that can only be had on a holiday at home in the UK.

The campaign is run in partnership with the national tourism organisations

of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as tourism businesses and destination management organisations across the UK.

Part of the UK Government's GREAT Britain campaign Join the World - Discover the UK is expected to generate more than one million additional overnight stays with an £80million boost to the economy.

UK government minister for tourism, John Glen, said: "There is an incredible amount to see and do across the whole of the UK and we want to inspire more young people to take in our world-class attractions, sites and cities. Tourism boosts our economy, creates jobs and supports

local businesses. By showcasing the exciting and diverse range of trips on offer I hope it will encourage many more young people to explore the UK." For more information see visitbritain.com/jointheworld



MERRY MUSINGS...Silver Muse, the latest ship to join Silversea's ultra-luxury fleet, made its first call this year into the UK at Southampton earlier this month. The line celebrated the special occasion by hosting on board Venetian Society guests, trade agents and media for tours, dinners and a Q&A session hosted by BBC news reader and journalist, Michael Buerk. Pictured are, from the left: Dawn Gascoigne, Kim Pierce, Caroline Howden, Gemma Fletcher, Janet Whittingham and Sue Plummer, all from Travel Counsellors.

Bid for First Class with Virgin Trains

VIRGIN TRAINS customers can now bid on last minute upgrades for First Class tickets on east coast services via innovative upgrade app Seatfrog. The partnership is a world first for rail passengers and will enable more people than ever to enjoy the perks of First Class.

Customers will be able to upgrade up to 30 minutes before departure from their smartphone. Completely seamless and easy-to-use, there's no hassle of extra paperwork, printing tickets or additional fees, and upgrades to First Class can cost from £5. The free app works by creating a live, dynamic bidding system for First Class seats that would otherwise travel empty.

Customers who successfully bid on a First Class ticket will be able to enjoy the benefits of First Class, including complimentary food and drink from a menu curated by James Martin, reclining leather seats, additional legroom, mood lighting, free Wi-Fi and, in selected stations, First Class lounges with free Wi-Fi, relaxation areas and refreshments.

Suzanne Donnelly, the company's east coast commercial director, said: "We have a strong record of innovating for the benefit of our customers and we are really excited to be partnering with Seatfrog to offer customers more opportunities to experience First Class.

"Our innovative partnership with Seatfrog means passengers can get last minute upgrades to First Class seats from as little as £5 and there are real deals to be had. Plus, the live bidding element means you can decide at the last minute if you fancy treating yourself and, if you do, bidding to bag a bargain is a great way to go about it."

For details see virgintrainseastcoast.com/upgrades



A-MAZE-ING DAY... Holiday Extras hosted its second annual Partner's Day at its campus in Kent recently, where 50 of the company's partners attended, including representatives from TUI, National Express, Hilton, Radisson and James Villas. Activities ran from the morning through until the evening, with one of the fun highlights being the team-building activities of the afternoon, The Crystal Maze. For those who stayed for the evening event at the Hythe Imperial, there was a drinks reception in the Moët and Chandon Champagne bar, followed by dinner in the ballroom and live entertainment from local indie/rock band, Realm 79.

Jet2.com grows winter ski programme by a third

JET2.COM HAS announced a 30% capacity increase to its ski programme this winter, as customers start booking their ski trips following the summer holidays.

The airline will operate its largest ski season with more than 60 weekly flights to seven top ski destinations - Andorra (Barcelona), Geneva, Grenoble, Lyon, Salzburg, Turin and Verona.

In total, more than 330,000 seats are available to the most popular slopes in Europe, a 30% capacity increase on last season. In response to skiers looking for weekend flights and short ski trips over a long weekend, the company has scheduled a choice of weekday and weekend flights, ideally timed for those looking to shred the slopes over the weekend or over a short break.

The programme includes its first ski flights from new bases, Stansted and Birmingham and the carrier will operate up to 11 weekly ski flights to four ski destinations from Stansted, including an exclusive service to

Lyon as well as flights to Grenoble, Geneva and Salzburg.

From Birmingham Airport, the airline will operate seven weekly flights to four ski destinations - Grenoble, Geneva, Salzburg and Turin.

Steve Heapy, CEO of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays, said: "Weekend breaks and short breaks are proving increasingly popular so we have accommodated this by putting on more flights to suit those skiers, making it easier than ever to head to the Alps for a short ski break. With these friendly flight times, alongside 22kg of baggage and ski allowance, we're confident of a very busy and popular ski season this winter."

To launch the programme, the carrier is offering half price ski carriage on flights to Geneva, Grenoble, Salzburg, Turin and Lyon from all nine of its UK bases.

The promotion applies to bookings made by October 12 for travel between November 30 and April 30, 2018.

For more information see jet2.com/ski

Explore the French waterways with Saga Holidays

SAGA HOLIDAYS has introduced a new collection of cruise and stay programmes.

The seven-night breaks are an ideal introduction for those wishing to experience river cruising, explore the French waterways and combine a leisurely day cruise past vineyards, villages and medieval towns with a relaxing stay in a carefully selected hotel.

There are several week-long itineraries to choose from and itineraries cover places such as Bordeaux, Provence, the Loire and Normandy.

As an example of prices, a seven-night option from Montargis to Sancerre departing on September 29 costs from £1,399. The price is based on two sharing a twin room and includes seven nights' hotel accommodation; optional travel insurance and additional cancellation rights, or a reduction if not required; UK travel service; coach travel via Eurotunnel or ferry; transfers; a welcome drink; a glass of local wine with lunch; a cruise escort; and a minimum of four included excursions.

For details call 0800-656 9919 or visit saga.co.uk/river-barge

Thomson rebrand

THOMSON HAS now rebranded to TUI. The company announced in December 2016 that its summer 2017 marketing campaign 'moments' would be the last under the Thomson brand name, paving the way for a full rebrand by the end of the year.

Jeremy Ellis, marketing director at TUI UK and Ireland, said: "The foundations for our rebrand are firmly in place and we are primed ready to become TUI. We want to ensure our customers are ready to take this exciting journey with us, so it's really important that we communicate the transition clearly."

"A CRM campaign has been underway since May, engaging with 5m loyal customers and a special issue of our glossy magazine Discover has been sent to 1.5 million people. Customers are already used to seeing the TUI smile logo as it has been an integral part of Thomson branding for some time. TUI has also been visible in our overseas resorts for three years and on our airline livery this summer. People will now notice changes on the High Street as our 600-plus stores shift from Thomson to TUI."



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COOKING UP A STORM... A group of agents donned their APT aprons and cruised their way through a fun-filled cooking class with celebrity chef Luke Nguyen recently. During the class, which was held at the Waitrose Cookery School in London's Finchley Road, Nguyen taught the group how to prepare and cook two Vietnamese dishes, with the group dining on the results of their creation at the end of the class. Pictured about to tuck into their creations are, from the left: Lorna McDowell, Eton Travel; Dawn Humphries, Carrick Travel; and Nicola Pearce, APT.

National Geographic Journeys & G Adventures expand partnership programme with new destinations & itineraries

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Expeditions and G Adventures continue to grow their joint travel programme, National Geographic Journeys, with new destinations and itineraries. Starting in 2018, the National Geographic Journeys collection of 83 tours will include destinations such as Botswana and Mongolia, as well as less-travelled wildlife parks in Southern Tanzania.

In Botswana, travellers will get up close to one of National Geographic's important initiatives on a visit to a field camp of the Okavango Wilderness Project.

In Mongolia, they have the opportunity to spend time with a nomadic family in the Gobi Desert and try out traditional archery, meet with Buddhist monks and yak farmers, and learn from park rangers about efforts to reintroduce native Takhi horses to the wild.

National Geographic Journeys' repertoire of African safaris now also stretches to the lesser-known parks of Southern Tanzania, where expert guides will discuss wildlife conservation in areas including Ruaha National Park and Selous Game Reserve—places that harbour some of the greatest concentrations of lions in the world.

Nancy Schumacher, head of travel and tour operations at National Geographic, said: "These tours combine travelling for fun with travelling for good, and they have a strong appeal as people become increasingly conscious about the impact of their holiday choices."

"We've collaborated closely with G Adventures to design enhanced experiences and capture National Geographic's long history of exploration and discovery. When travellers go on our trips, they help support the work of our explorers and scientists, as a portion of our proceeds go directly to the nonprofit National Geographic Society."

As an example of prices, a new ten-day Botswana & Zimbabwe Safari visits some of the top wildlife reserves in southern Africa and costs £3,699 per person.

For more information or to book call 0344-272 2040 or visit gadventures.co.uk

Trafalgar puts agents first for 2018

TRAFALGAR HAS asserted its ongoing support for its industry partners by unveiling a new 2018 trade strategy that firmly places #agentsfirst.

The company has undertaken a rigorous review of trade feedback from the trade and has taken action to improve the sales process and agents' earning potential by developing a suite of helpful tools.

They include the launch of a standalone 2018 Worldwide brochure for the first time in four years, collating holidays across Europe, the Americas, South Africa, Asia and Australasia that most appeal to UK customers; the assurance of 100% Definite Departures on all 2018 Discoveries and 2017/18 Autumn, Winter Spring journeys to provide peace of mind for customers and confidence for agents when closing sales; a new, responsive web booking engine and a new agent site that will speed up response times for the trade; and an expansion of the in-depth Urban Explorer series to include Madrid and Berlin, meaning that travellers can easily combine business trips with leisure.

Commenting on the #agentsfirst initiative, Ruth Hilton, the company's sales and business development director, said: "In responding to agents' honest feedback, we pledge to make 2018 even more effortless, fun and successful for them, thanks to the tools we're equipping them with. Watch this space for more information about our 10% Early Payment Discount, an enhanced brochure, a new agent site, an expanded range of itineraries and countless opportunities to sell and earn more."

Warner Leisure Hotels promotes £160 getaway

WARNER LEISURE Hotels is offering deals on last minute getaways this autumn, with headliners for entertainment including Morecambe and Wise from Eric and Ern; Showstopper! The improvised musical; Collabro; and David Essex.

Prices start from £160 per person for an October 27 arrival at Bembridge Coast on the Isle of Wight. The price is based on two adults sharing a Signature Room inclusive of the Simply Dine package which includes English and continental buffet breakfast and a three-course evening meal.

Notes from Normanton...

Decided to have a quick week in Crete as the doctor said I could travel. I seem to have got the atrial fibrillation back which has been making me a bit breathless and may have to have the cardioversion done again. I'll find out when I go back to the hospital to see my cardiologist - I think he will be impressed that I have not had a drop of alcohol since August! It's just something I decided to do, and I'm fascinated to see how long I can do it for. I know none of you believe me, do you?

Had a lovely relaxing week in Crete at Gouves. Went with TUI, but talk about two different flights. Outbound was basic seats and no room to put a book, whilst coming back I had nice padded seats and a pouch for my book. Their flight safety video is the best ever, with young Alice telling us what we should do along with her little helpers! I booked Meet & Greet for T2 with Holiday Extras. Have used it a few times - it's so fast and efficient and the guys there are always cheerful. A nice way to start and finish your holiday - and Fastrak is a must!

Found a great apartment in Gouves only five to ten minutes from the beach and my favourite local restaurants; the Anfield Bar, the 2 Friends and the Paradise Restaurant. They are all on the front and you can sit and watch the sun go down. The apartments are called Haristellamare, and Anna and Yannis make you feel so welcome with fruit and a bottle of water in the fridge.

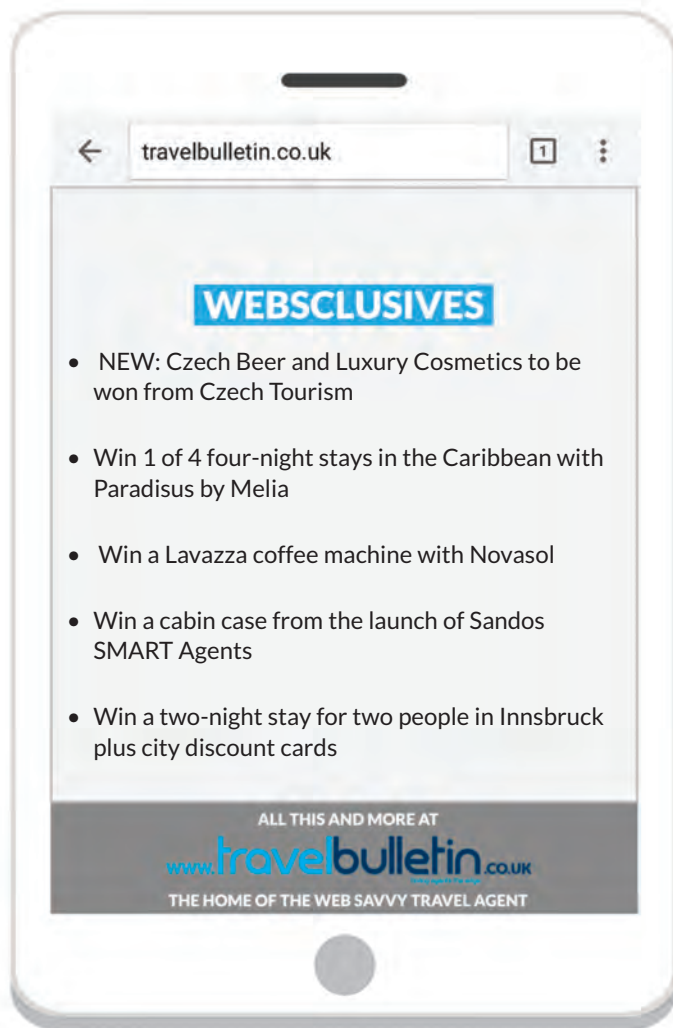
I've got to mention it, but what on earth does Michael O'Leary think he is doing with Ryanair? I find it incredible that because he needed to change holidays dates being taken from April-March (tax reasons) to now have them Jan to Dec! Surely it wouldn't have hurt to allow some staff to carry their holidays forward to even it out a bit - I really can't imagine any other operator/airline doing what he has done; it will certainly be interesting to see how many people decide enough is enough!

'Let go of what's gone but keep the lesson' and 'Don't be afraid to take a big step, you can't cross a chasm with two small jumps!'

Sandy

by SANDRA MURRAY
in Normanton, Yorkshire

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



THERE IS a new 'Love Hut' for weddings at the popular, recently renovated and refurbished Palm Beach Hotel & Bungalows on the outskirts of Larnaka in Cyprus. Couples can choose from a number of wedding venues at the property including any denomination religious ceremony at the blue domed Chapel of Saint Constantine and Saint Helena; a civil ceremony on the beach in a seafront gazebo, or the exotic gardens or an indoor wedding hall; or for something more intimates - the Presidential Suite terrace. From this month, the new 'Love Hut' offers a purpose built wooden gazebo located in the gardens of the hotel. Prices start from £970 and include a civil ceremony. For more information see palmbeachhotel.com

BOOKING INCENTIVES

- **SUPER BREAK** has launched a new competition for agents to win a magical Christmas worth £500. By promoting or booking the operator's new Ultimate London packages or Incredible Iceland packages, agents could win themselves a host of festive treats. The prize includes £200 in supermarket vouchers; £100 towards a pre-Christmas team night out; six bottles of Prosecco; four cinema tickets; board games and much more. Every time agents promote or book they can enter a prize draw to win. Each direct mail, window display, social media post or e-shot will receive five entries, while bookings receive three entries. Agents need to email the booking reference or screen shots plus their name and ABTA number to sales@superbreak.com by October 31.
- **CRUISE AND Maritime Voyages** is giving agents the opportunity to be entered in a draw to win a number of prizes including the star prize - a Warm Up for Winter Hamper - by making bookings. The star prize includes a pair of scuff, scuffette (male or female), leading brand Ugg slippers, plus other winter goodies, including a Whittard hot chocolate gift set, hot water bottle and a bottle of Gin! There are 15 additional runner-up prizes. The incentive runs until the end of October and agents should send details of their booking to competitions@cruiseandmaritime.com



GOING FOR GOLD...Claire Hills (left) from Gold Medal presents Sheena Todd from Eagle Executive Travel with £1,000 of Farebank Rewards. Sheena was one of ten lucky winners from Pure Luxury's tenth birthday incentive.

AGENT TRAINING

FOLLOWING ITS successful launch in March 2017, The Academy from Inghams has expanded further with the addition of three new modules. They include: The Mountains, featuring advice and top destinations for a summer holiday to the mountains; the best destinations for walking; and the best destinations for a relaxing holiday. For details see <https://learning.ingham.co.uk/>

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- International flights from regional airports available on many Europe itineraries, look out for the 'regional flights' label in the brochure*

For more information,
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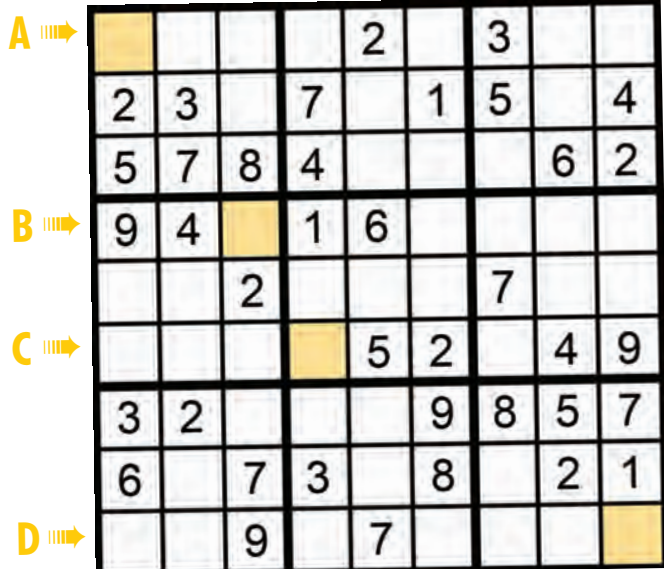
*Excludes Scottish islands and Sark. Home transfers and free regional flights are not included on Titan's 'Essential Collection' holidays.



Su Doku

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

Number: 037



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 5th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 15th September is Su Dillon, Travel Counsellor in Thorngumbald

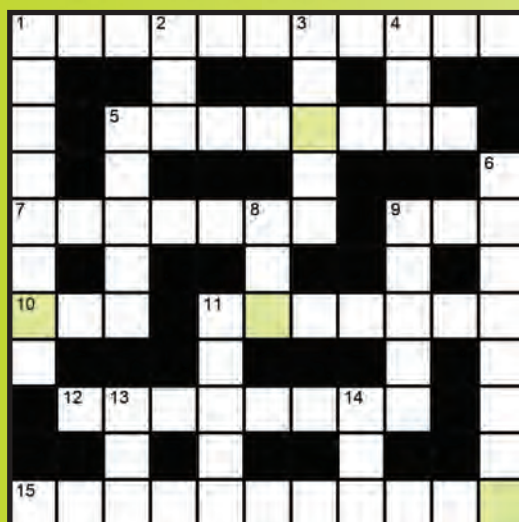
September 15th Solution: A=6 B=5 C=3 D=2

Where Am I?



This holy Jewish site is a remnant of the Herodian retaining wall that once enclosed Temple Mount and supported the Second Temple. The open area that faces the wall functions as an open-air synagogue and some worshippers place slips of paper containing written prayers into the cracks.

Crossword



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

Across

1. Award-winning global brand of independent hotels (4,7)
5. Major cruise company (8)
7. English professor, author of A Brief History of Time (7)
9. Airline with a Prague hub (3)
10. Odessa International airport code (3)
11. Welsh city (7)
12. Long-running BBC documentary programme (8)
15. Popular holiday resort close to Torremolinos (11)

Down

1. Seaside resort recently named the happiest city in the UK (8)
2. Britain's favourite drink? (3)
3. Stage name of singer Gordon Sumner (5)
4. Estimated time of arrival, initially (3)
5. Popular sailing resort on the Isle of Wight (5)
6. This region is known as the toe of Italy (8)
8. Sydney is the capital, initially (3)
9. Cruise line based in Genoa, part of 5 Across (5)
11. Capital of South Korea (5)
13. Avignon - Provence airport code (3)
14. The island of Ischia is found in this sea, in short (3)

For the solution to the Crossword and Where Am I?
Please see page 34

Industry Insight by...



Neil Basnett, chief executive of The Elite Travel Group, comments on the latest media headlines...

NONE OF us involved in the travel industry can fail to have been moved by the tragic happenings that have taken place recently in the Caribbean and Mexico. This is when it comes home to roost how vulnerable and totally powerless we are to act against acts of nature, whether as a result of extreme weather conditions or geological occurrences such as earthquakes. These follow on from the horrendous flooding that has taken place in Bangladesh and some areas of India, which has claimed thousands of lives but which has seemingly failed to attract as much headline news.

Sadly so many of these extreme events seem to happen in more impoverished countries where they simply do not have the means to support themselves without seeking assistance from the outside world. Countries such as the British Overseas Territories of the Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands have for so many years been offshore financial centres or tax havens for incredibly wealthy financial institutions and individuals, so they must now dig deep to assist in the rebuilding of these islands. They have had the extreme benefits financially so it is only fair that they now in turn play their full part in rebuilding the islands and helping the poorer people who live there, many of whom have lost their homes and their livelihood.

Similarly, millions of travellers who have enjoyed idyllic holidays in the Caribbean islands should now be prepared to play their part in helping to fund the enormous costs involved in rebuilding islands that have been devastated by hurricanes Irma, Jose and Maria. This time it may have been the islands of Barbuda and Tortola that may have been the worst hit, together with parts of Puerto Rico, but it could so easily have hit other islands as well. Many tour operators, airlines and travel agents have made a lot of money from high value bookings to the Caribbean. Why does the travel industry therefore not take a lead and ask

clients for a minimum donation of £10 per person (rising to £25 for higher value bookings) for all future bookings for the next few years for any holiday to the Caribbean? This in turn can be matched by the travel agent, operator and airline as our combined joint effort to support those who have looked after our clients for so many years. This is what responsible tourism should all be about after all. We may complain about our weather in the UK, but we are fortunate never to have to suffer the effects of extreme weather conditions for which we should count our blessings.

Ryanair has been in the news again! It beggars belief that such a large airline has sloshed up annual leave arrangements for its pilots resulting in many flights being cancelled. It is a hard fact that for travellers who have made their own flight and hotel arrangements separately, this is going to cause anxiety and stress especially where fully prepaid hotel bookings can't be changed. The fault for the cancelled hotel booking is not down to the hotel, so it is not unreasonable for them to charge cancellation fees. This is where travel agents should extol the virtues of booking through an agent as they are on hand to help their clients unravel the mess.

We are very proud at Elite that we are celebrating 40 years of our existence this year. The industry does go in cycles with the message that sometimes being a large organisation is best, whereas at other times one hears that it is better to be a small company: being small enough to remain personal but large enough to still count is the compromise with which I shall remain happy. In a few weeks' time, members and suppliers alike will be converging in Mallorca for our annual conference to which I am greatly looking forward. It is my aim for every valued delegate to enjoy the conference with lots of good networking and even better 'notworking'!

Property additions from Ski Beat

IN ADVANCE of Ski Beat's 30th season of offering catered ski chalet holidays in the French Alps, the company has added five new properties for the 2017/18 season; three in the high altitude resort of Arc 1950, one in Val Thorens and a further chalet in La Plagne, one of the top destinations for British skiers.

For the coming season, the operator offers a choice of more than 50 chalets in France - in La Rosiere, La Plagne, Les Arcs, Meribel, La Tania, Tignes, La Plagne and Val Thorens. Each chalet is hosted by an experienced chalet manager and home comforts include cooked breakfasts, afternoon tea with home-made cakes and three-course evening meals include unlimited wine, six days out of seven.

The company's sales and marketing manager, Laura Hazell, said: "We put our emphasis on delivering what guests tell us what they want, including premium toiletries, comfort foods, premium wine packages, and of course, chalets in the best locations in the top resorts, with extensive skiing and good snow records."

For families, the company has chalets with triple rooms, high tea for children and close to kindergartens and nursery slopes. For groups, this season the company is offering one place free for every ten booked, saving up to £1,479 for a group of ten skiers.

Prices for a week's catered chalet holiday start from £499 this season in Chalet Laponia and Chalet Arpette in the French Alpine resort of Plagne 1800, including cooked breakfast, afternoon tea, three-course evening meals with wine, Gatwick flights and transfers.



STRICTLY COME Dancing Live Tour UK has announced its 2018 Arena programme following the launch of the 15th Strictly Come Dancing BBC One TV series on Saturday - and Super Break is showcasing a range of packages for the tour on sale from today. The 2018 tour, which runs from January 19 to February 11 will see the welcome return to the Strictly family of reigning Strictly Champion Ore Oduba (pictured) as this year's host, who will be joined on stage by Strictly judges Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli, alongside many of the celebrities who will be announced over the coming months. Packages start from £120 per person including one night's breakfast stay in a three-star hotel and a ticket to the live tour at the O2 Arena.

Golf-themed cruises from European Waterways

EUROPEAN WATERWAYS is bringing 'golf to the fore' with the announcement that it is offering special golf-themed cruises to 'bookend' The 2018 Ryder Cup in France, being held from September 28-30. The venue for the biennial match will be the L'Albatros Course, located 20 miles south of Paris and just hours from the cruise routes of several of the line's hotel barges.

The six-night, all-inclusive cruises depart on Sunday night and conclude the following Saturday, making them ideal for fans attending the event. They are also great for avid golfers who may not be attending the event, but still want to soak up the excitement at local golf courses as France hosts the Ryder Cup for only the second time in history.

Eligible hotel barges in the company's fleet include the 12-passenger L'Impressionniste, the eight-passenger Renaissance and the eight-passenger L'Art de Vivre, all of which cruise the Burgundy region of France, just south of the Ryder Cup venue. When chartering one of these barges, golfers will be able to play several rounds at top golf courses with pre-booked tee times during their cruise. Non-golfing guests will enjoy escorted excursions to castles and chateaux, wine tastings, food markets and other sightseeing opportunities and attractions.

Full barge charter prices cost from £22,300 plus £425 per person for the golf package.

The line's managing director, Derek Banks, said: "We're still a year away, but the excitement is already building in France and accommodation is selling out as the country prepares to welcome the greatest players from the US and Europe.

"A golf-themed cruise is ideal at this time. Guests can 'warm up' with a few rounds of golf the week before the event as they cruise the beautiful canals of France; or they may be immediately eager to put into practice afterwards any great tips they picked up by watching the pros."

As part of the special cruises, guests will be treated to a special Ryder Cup-themed welcome dinner and receive a gift pack of official Ryder Cup golf balls and other event memorabilia. For those who charter a hotel barge and are attending the event, a chauffeured Mercedes minibus will pick them up at the venue afterwards or drop them off at the site after their pre-event cruise. The company can also pick up and drop off guests at a designated, centrally located hotel in Paris.

For further information visit gobarging.com



PASSENGERS TRAVELLING between Manchester and Glasgow can now benefit from a 50% boost in service frequency, as Loganair officially took to the skies solo from Manchester Airport this month. The airline, which previously operated Flybe's services between the two cities for eight years, terminated its franchise agreement with the carrier last month and is now operating up to six Glasgow services a day. Pictured welcoming the inaugural flight to Glasgow is the carrier's Kay Ryan and Manchester Airport's Julian Carr. The airline is also launching flights to Norwich with fares starting from £49.99 one-way including taxes. Visit loganair.co.uk

- EMIRATES IS set to launch its fourth daily service from Dubai to Sydney from March 25, 2018, complementing its existing three daily A380 services. The new service will be operated by an A380 aircraft and will increase passenger capacity on the route by 6,846 seats a week, inbound and outbound between Sydney and the airline's hub in Dubai, and represents a 7.3% increase in capacity for the company's Australian services. Visit emirates.com
- AER LINGUS' inaugural direct service to Miami, Florida took place earlier this month from Dublin Airport. Operated by an Airbus A330-200 series, flight EI41 is the first scheduled service between Ireland and Miami and marks the airline's 13th direct route to North America. It will operate as a three-times weekly service from Dublin year-round and fares start from £199 one-way. Visit aerlingus.com
- EVA AIR has said goodbye to the old and welcomed in the new in a retirement celebration for its Boeing 747-400 passenger aircraft, an event which also saw the debut of its new uniforms as designed by SHIATZY CHEN. The celebration was attended by more than 500 guests, including travel agents, aviation enthusiasts and experts, airline employees and their families. Visit evaair.com

Virgin Atlantic becomes fully Wi-Fi connected

VIRGIN ATLANTIC has become the first airline in Europe to offer Wi-Fi across its entire fleet ensuring customers remain connected across flights to and from the US, Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Using a combination of Panasonic and Gogo technology, the service is now available across the airline's fleet of 39 aircraft.

Whilst Wi-Fi is typically commonplace on domestic carriers, an ongoing challenge for the air travel industry has been to find reliable connections over vast expanses of ocean, such as the Atlantic. Unlike flying over Europe or the US, the signal cannot come from the ground, and instead has to be transmitted to aircraft from satellites. With this latest development, connectivity will be

available above 10,000ft and now means customers will be able to connect shortly after take-off and remain online up until just before landing.

Mark Anderson, the airline's customer executive vice president, said: "Customers can work and play throughout their flight as we become the first airline in Europe to offer a fully Wi-Fi enabled fleet. Innovation has always been in our blood and we've worked closely with Wi-Fi providers to develop the fastest, most reliable connection across the Atlantic, and are the first carrier to offer Wi-Fi between the UK and the Caribbean, China and Africa."

Wi-Fi package prices start from £2.99 for messaging access with various options up to £14.99 for full



flight internet access. Stats released by the company show that so far 42% of customers opt for the Wi-Fi max package and that the most popular routes for use are Heathrow to New York (JFK), San Francisco and Atlanta.

Air Europa to launch new Gatwick route to Brazilian city of Recife this December

AIR EUROPA is introducing a new service from Gatwick to the Brazilian city of Recife in December, via Madrid.

The twice-weekly route will commence on December 20, operating on Wednesdays and Fridays, with the addition of a third weekly flight expected in 2018.

Colin Stewart, UK managing director for the airline, said: "We are thrilled about the launch of this route – particularly as we will be the first airline to fly from London to Recife via Madrid. As our third Brazilian destination, this consolidates our presence in the country."

In addition to the direct connection, the airline also flies to Brazil's Salvador de Bahia and Sao Paulo. To improve connectivity within the country, the carrier has maintained a code-sharing agreement with Avianca Brasil, with a codeshare on several weekly domestic flights, which links Recife to other parts of the country.

Recife, the fourth-largest metropolitan area in Brazil, is known for its rivers, bridges, monuments and rich history. It is located in the north-eastern state of Pernambuco where highlights include Olinda, famous for its Carnival, and World Heritage site, Fernando de Noronha, an archipelago of islands with picturesque beaches.

Flights start from £651 return in January 2018. Visit aireuropa.com for more details.

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more than **60**
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THE MIDLANDS Travel Trade Club (MTTC) held its first East Midlands Summer Ball earlier this month at the Radisson Blu Hotel at East Midlands Airport. Attendees enjoyed pre-dinner drinks, a 'frisking' by 'airport security', followed by a three-course meal, entertainment and dancing. Headline sponsors included Birmingham Airport, Emirates, Elite, JTA and Travel Bulletin.



BRUMMIE MATES... Looking glam are, from the left: Tom Screen; Cat Reeves; Rachel Pick and Shellie Harris, all from Birmingham Airport.



BULLETIN BUDDIES... Travel Bulletin's Simon Eddolls catches up with Rachel Dearden (left) representing Tenerife's Hotel Botanico and Siam Park/Loro Parque and Sophie Thackeray from Classic Collection.



CONSULT THIS... Kirsty McBride (left) and Helen Large from The Holiday Consultants consult with Dave Broad from JTA.



FRISKY FELLAS... Elite Travel Group's Neil Basnett enjoys a security frisk, looked on by a bemused Dominic Carrick from If Only...



RAISE A GLASS... Celebrating a successful evening are, from the left: Stacey McAteer and Lucy Gaunt from Trailfinders, with Phil Courtney, Emirates.



ROCKIN' OUT... Letting their hair down are, from the left: Amanda Leithhead, Radisson Blu; Tracey Bartlam, Attraction World; Gemma Ward, Radisson Blu; and Rachel Briady, East Midlands Airport.



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Sri Lanka is on Faye's wish-list

Faye Anderson

Business Development Manager, the south, Collette



On weekends I like to...

I love to find quirky new pop-ups, watch live music gigs and West End Musicals. I am festival crazy too!

How do you relax?

A good chick flick or a book and a glass of Malbec.

What's your favourite gadget?

Electric cork screw opener!

What's your favourite movie or TV programme?

Favourite movie is True Romance. Favourite TV programme has to be Him&Her or anything Ricky Gervais has to do with!

What is the last

picture you took on your phone?

Sheldon, our pet tortoise.

What is the strangest thing you have ever eaten?

May not be strange to some, however my strangest thing I have eaten is mushrooms. They are like slugs! Strange.

What has been your most extravagant purchase?

Eric Clapton tickets. Would have been cheaper to hire out Wembley for the world and for the night!

What's been your latest DIY project?

Trying to get a corked cork out of a bottle. (This was before I invested in my favourite gadget)

What's your most embarrassing moment?

I spent hours at the wrong wedding. In those hours I danced with the bride and groom, tucked into their buffet and enjoyed the free bar with their family and friends. Officially a wedding crasher!

Do you have any nicknames?

Fayamous and Mouse - I squeak when excitable!

What's the best compliment you've received?

Portia Griffith from The Sweet Inspirations once told me "Girl you got soul!"

My greatest strength is...

I'm like a chameleon. I can adapt to any environment!

My one weakness is....

Cheese - all kinds.

What gives you the greatest satisfaction?

People achieving their goals both personal and business.

What's your favourite quote?

"It's always alright in the end. If it's not alright, it's not the end".

What skill would you like to master?

Another language. I love the English language old and new (maybe not so much the new), but to fluently speak another language, would be great.

Who is your celebrity crush?

Elvis Presley, but alive it would have to be Ricky Gervais.

Who would you most like to be seated with on an aeroplane?

Sir David Attenborough.

If you could change one thing in the industry what would it be?

Solo traveller prices.

What is your top travel tip?

Ask the locals! They always know best.

Where currently ranks highest on your travel wish list?

Sri Lanka.

Anything else that you'd like people to know about you?

I suffer from serious travelling FOMO.



lapland

How to turn Lapland trips into a Christmas bonus

RICHARD FORDE, head of trade sales for Newmarket Holidays, shows how agents can make the most of this festive opportunity...

WITH THE nights drawing in rapidly and the first signs of seasonal displays appearing on the High Street, it will soon be time to climb into the loft to retrieve the Christmas lights (why is it that they were working when you put them away, but now they're as dead as a dodo?) and to hope that the mice haven't chewed off the fairy's wings while in storage.

Yes, it will soon be *that* time of year again and with it opportunities for family fun and rewards for all good children, along with plenty of opportunities for agents to cash in on the fact that whichever way the economic winds are blowing, families still manage to find the cash for a special treat at Christmas time. And festive treats don't come much more special than a search for Santa in Swedish Lapland and true 'once-in-a-lifetime' adventures in the snowy wilderness high above the Arctic Circle.

These kind of trips are guaranteed to bring smiles to the faces of children of all ages (as well as a few tears of joy to those of the adults), and offer a host of never-to-be-forgotten, winter-wonderland delights that will be the stuff of memory for years to come. They also offer agents the chance to cash in, with good levels of commission often available - particularly on day trips - and operating from a range of regional airports across different dates throughout December.

Lapland is fast becoming a bucket list item (so much so that we expanded our flight offering to 11 regional airports, three of which sold out in July!), so when you are selling you might want to consider the kinds of activities families

would most like to do and what you can offer them. As an example, there are day trips which can include return flights to remote regions with all activities organised by friendly Lappish hosts, complete with hot drinks and a traditional lunch. This can give the whole family the chance to enjoy some fun in the snow; with 'ski-doo' and sleigh rides and encounters with husky dogs and reindeer always proving popular, along with snowman-making and snow-ball fights and - a sure fire highlight of a fun-packed day - a walk through a forest path lit by twinkling lights, to a tiny cottage that is home to a Very Special Person.

Agents need not worry; Lapland trips are an easier sell these days as typically everything is provided such as thermal suits supplied to keep out the Arctic chill - December days in northern Sweden can be more than a little chilly - but it's also important to weigh up whether a booking will or will not see your clients queuing for activities, especially to see Santa.

We've found that the most successful trips are also the ones that are able to retain the authenticity of the region, with all the activities being hosted by local Sami people keen to share their homeland with wide-eyed visitors.

Whether it's doting parents wanting to share one of the greatest of all family memories with their loved ones or - quite often - just as doting (and perhaps more flush) grandparents looking to treat the whole clan, Santa day trips are a genuine opportunity for agents to connect with three generations at once - cementing relationships for years to come.



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Finnair launches new routes to Lapland

FINNAIR IS to launch two new seasonal direct routes to Lapland, Finland in December.

The first is from Gatwick to Kittilä in Finnish Lapland on December 12 and the second from Gatwick to Ivalo, the northernmost airport in Finland, on December 14.

Prices start from £169 return in Economy Class on the route to Kittilä, whilst fares to Ivalo start from £220 return in Economy Class including all taxes and charges.

Visit finnair.com or call 020-8001 0101 for more details.



Finland's luxury Jávri Lodge to reopen this December

JÁVRI LODGE, the boutique hotel lodge that was once the retreat of Finland's longest-serving former President, Urho Kekkonen, is to reopen on December 1.

The lodge is currently undergoing an extensive renovation which will increase guests' comfort to new levels. The changes will include five new suites, a lounge where guests can enjoy a drink, a new sauna and a newly built glass viewing dining area commanding uninterrupted views of the surrounding areas. In total, it will be able to host up to 26 guests in 13 suites.

Guests will also be able to take advantage of a variety of activities including cross-country skiing, downhill skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing, husky safaris, reindeer safaris, horseback riding, ice-fishing, snowmobiling and exploring the wilderness in search of the Northern Lights.

Rooms start from £1,360 for a double room during the winter 2017/18 season inclusive of full-board, one nature experience and access to the in-house swimming pool and saunas.

Visit javri.fi for more details.



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Fly from a selection of regional airports on a 3 or 4 night short break in the Arctic Circle this December, perfect for combining nature's breath taking Northern Lights show with the atmosphere of the festive period.

✓ Return flights ✓ Airport transfers ✓ Full-board accommodation ✓ Loan of thermal suits and boots

Festive Lights			
Date	Nights	Airport	Prices From
Friday 24 November 17	3	Bristol	£829
Monday 27 November 17	4	Stansted	£829
Tuesday 05 December 17	3	London Gatwick	£829
Friday 08 December 17	3	Belfast	£829
Monday 11 December 17	4	London Gatwick	£929
Friday 15 December 17	3	Doncaster	£829
Monday 18 December 17	3	East Midlands	£829
Saturday 23 December 17	4	Stansted/Birmingham	£1099
Wednesday 27 December 17	3	London Gatwick/Manchester	£989
Saturday 30 December 17	3	London Gatwick/ Birmingham	£1099

*Terms and conditions apply, call our team on 01865 265200 or visit our website.



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Included Excursions



✓ Northern Lights Snowmobile Safari



✓ Reindeer Camp



✓ Husky Safari

Inghams extends winter programme & puts Santa breaks on sale for winter 2018

IN CELEBRATION of its 20th year in Finnish Lapland, Inghams is extending its winter season in Levi and Ylläs, with seven-night holidays running up until Easter 2018 (April 1).

New direct flights from Gatwick to Ivalo, from December 17 through to March 3, 2018, will shorten the transfer to Saariselkä to 20 minutes, saving two-and-a-half hours in travelling time. The operator's three- and four-night Santa breaks have also been extended to include departures from November 26 right up until Christmas, with direct flights from Bristol, Manchester and Gatwick.

Thanks to the high demand of these kind of breaks, the company is already looking ahead to next year with Santa short breaks now on sale for winter 2018. Families can visit Santa's workshop and bake gingerbread cakes with his elves, meet Comet the reindeer and visit the Icelandic horses and enjoy dinner with Santa which includes party games, a disco and a chance for children to give their wish list to Santa himself. A stay at the three-star Crazy Reindeer hotel for four nights, on a half-board basis, starts from £798 per person departing on November 28, 2018 including flights and transfers.

skiLapland highlights why more families are choosing Lapland for a ski holiday

ALTHOUGH FINNISH Lapland may be a destination renowned for Father Christmas, skiLapland is highlighting the many benefits of the destination's selection of ski resorts which have seen more skiers, especially those with families, opt to take their ski holiday there.

One of the biggest selling points highlighted for families travelling in the school holidays is how quiet the resorts are; short to non-existent lift queues and quiet slopes are not uncommon, even in half-term, plus reliable late and early season snow is another attraction. Lapland is a snow-sure skiing destination from the start of December, right through to the end of April. Skiing at Easter is especially popular with young families and beginners and the long days of spring are ideal for packing in lots of skiing and extra activities. Lapland is one of the best places in Europe to see the Northern Lights, which are visible from September right through to April. There are also reindeer sleigh rides, snowmobiling safaris, as well as loads of other activities and trips to take part in. Most resorts also have hundreds of kilometres of cross-country skiing trails, which are freely available without paying for a lift pass.

The operator has a range of skiing and adventure holidays to Finnish Lapland's most popular ski resorts: Levi, Ruka, Saariselkä and Ylläs. There are departures available throughout the winter with direct flights available for some destinations. As an example, a skiing holiday in Ruka, Finnish Lapland costs from £645 per person for seven nights on a self-catered basis, including flights and transfers, based on departures from Heathrow on February 10, 2018.

For more information email enquiries@ski-lapland.co.uk or call 020-7199 6012.

Visit Santa in Lapland!

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Day trip

Departing this December
from your local airport

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Santa's Lapland to feature Star Arctic Hotel this December

SANTA'S LAPLAND provides three- and four-day breaks to Saariselkä in Finnish Lapland with the opportunity for families to stay in one of 'Santa's Christmas Cabins' or hotel accommodation options to suit a range of budgets.

During their stay guests can participate in activities such as a private meeting with Santa; husky sled ride; reindeer sleigh rides at the Reindeer Centre; Elf & Igloo Fantasia; snowmobile and sleigh rides. Flights are available from 19 UK regional airports and transfers to the resort are included. New for 2017, the company has added more departure dates with a three-day 'Post-Christmas Magic Break' and a four-day 'New Year Spectacular Break'.

Also for this winter, the company is to feature the new Star Arctic Hotel, Saariselkä opening early December. Located at the top of the fell, the new five-star property provides a good spot from which to view the Northern Lights from the comfort of bedrooms. All of the hotel suites, located in their own buildings a short walk from the main reception and restaurant area, will be duplex with a large glass

window looking out over the main village.

The hotel will provide guests, staying through the operator, with a shuttle service to and from Saariselkä village centre several times daily. The property also offers a public sauna with large glass windows and a modern restaurant and bar, all located in the main building. Prices are based on half-board for all dates. Guests staying between December 23-26 will have full-board included on these nights, and those staying on December 25 and December 31 can enjoy festive gala dinners at the hotel.

Visit SantasLapland.com for more details.



Chase the Northern Lights with Intrepid

INTREPID TRAVEL'S new eight-day tour will have guests tracking the shimmering Northern Lights as they travel through Lapland.

Priced from £1,945 per person, clients see the white wilderness' rivers, ski slopes and World Heritage listed Sea Fortress; strap on hiking boots and trek through Finland's taigas, meet the locals over a glass of salmari and experience the rush of a dog-sled.

The price includes six breakfasts, six nights' hotel accommodation, one overnight sleeper train and additional transport including public buses, private vehicles, tram and activities including dog sledding and a visit to a Saami Reindeer Farm. Visit intrepidtravel.com



Monarch's biggest ever Lapland programme on sale now

Visit Monarchagents.co.uk or call 0333 777 4740

Santa Trips – December

Prices from **£699^{pp}**[^]

Flights from Gatwick, Manchester and, **NEW for 2017, Birmingham**

3 and 4 night trips throughout December with activities included

The Arctic Experience – January & February

Prices from **£489^{pp}**[†]

Flights from Gatwick and, **NEW for this winter, Manchester**

3 and 4 night trips in January and February with activities included

Holiday deposit only

£59^{pp}^{*}

rivercruising



Win a Christmas markets cruise with The River Cruise Line

THE RIVER Cruise Line is offering agents the chance to win a Christmas markets cruise by making any booking throughout October.

Agents booking from the company's cruise portfolio or from the Arena Rail Holidays programme will automatically be entered into the prize draw to win one cabin for two on the four-star MS Serenity, on the four-day 'German Christmas Markets' itinerary.

The cruise follows a route along the Rhine, taking passengers to the atmospheric market spread throughout the cobbled streets in Rudesheim; a choice of markets in Cologne, including stalls set out in the shadow of the imposing cathedral; and Bonn, where as well as bustling markets, the town hall is turned into an enormous advent calendar.

Following an extensive refurbishment of the ship's public areas earlier this year, passengers can enjoy a warm, festive atmosphere onboard and an opportunity to stock up on treats at some of Europe's most popular Christmas markets.

For more information visit rivercruiseline.co.uk or call 01858-435655.

A-ROSA has launched a new nine-night Seine itinerary for 2018, its longest one available on the river. Available on July 7 and August 9, 2018, the 'Seine Intensive' sails onboard A-ROSA VIVA with calls at Paris, Vernon, Caudebec-en-Caux, Le Harve, Rouen, Les Andelys Mantes-La-Jolie. The cruise offers holidaymakers the chance to follow in the footsteps of Monet, Renoir and Van Gogh and discover more of Normandy as the Seine travels north to the sea. Prices are from £1,749 per person based on an August 9, 2018 departure with all meals and drinks onboard plus flights from Gatwick, transfers and VIP home pick up service within 50 miles. Visit cosmos.co.uk

Viking River Cruises' Viking Ra to sail the Nile in 2018

THE ALL-SUITE Viking Ra, a new addition to Viking River Cruises' fleet, is to sail a Nile River Cruise tour for spring 2018.

Torstein Hagen, chairman of the cruise line, said: "Egypt is one of the most intriguing countries in the world, and it remains a top destination for many of our guests. For two decades, we have led the industry in river cruising with our innovative ship design and itineraries that bring our guests closer to the cultures of the world. We are committed to Egypt and, with the introduction of Viking Ra, we look forward to providing our award-winning service to our guests and to them experiencing this culturally rich region in the Viking way."

Acquired earlier this year, the vessel has been stripped down for a complete renovation. The newly rebuilt ship will offer 24 staterooms across three suite stateroom categories, accommodating 48 guests for an intimate cruising experience.

In addition to two Jacuzzis, the vessel features a pool at the back of the ship, along with sculptural sail-shades inspired by local dhow ships and intricate mashrabiya-influenced screens surrounding the pool and sun deck.

The ship will sail the Nile on a new cruise tour called 'Pharaohs & Pyramids', which will launch in March 2018. During the 12-day itinerary, guests will experience the country's unique cultural treasures in seven destinations.

The cruise begins with a three-night stay at a first-class hotel in Cairo, where guests can visit iconic sites such as the Great Pyramids of Giza, the new Grand Egyptian Museum and the Mosque of Muhammad Ali.

Guests will then fly to Luxor, where they will visit the Temples of Luxor and Karnak, before boarding Viking Ra for an eight-day roundtrip cruise on the Nile River to Aswan, featuring privileged access to the tomb of Nefertari in the Valley of the Queens and excursions to the Temple of Khnum in Esna, the Dendera Temple complex in Qena and a visit to a Nubian village to experience a traditional elementary school.

Finally, the journey concludes with a flight back to Cairo for a final night in the historic city.

For further information or to make a booking visit vikingrivercruises.co.uk



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APT reveals new Vietnam sightseeing experience for 2018

APT HAS announced a new collaboration with its brand ambassador and celebrity chef Luke Nguyen, which will see guests travelling on the Vietnam tour to Ho Chi Minh City in 2018 gain exclusive access to Nguyen's new restaurant, Vietnam House.

Retaining its original features from the early 1900s, the restaurant resides in a restored colonial building and as part of the new 'Luke Nguyen Signature Experience', guests will sample a special tasting menu designed to showcase classic and modern dishes from across North and South Vietnam.

Commenting on the new sightseeing experience, Luke Nguyen said: "Authentic culinary experiences are an important ingredient in APT's Vietnam holidays and so it was only natural that as brand ambassador I extend an invitation to guests to come and enjoy a special dining experience at my own restaurant in Ho Chi Minh City. I'm looking forward to extending a warm welcome to our travellers from the UK."

The dining experience at Vietnam House will also feature as one of four signature experiences included on the operator's latest journey, the 16-day 'Luke Nguyen Vietnam and Mekong River Cruise' which departs on August 9, 2018. For further information email agentclub@aptouring.co.uk or call 0800-046 3002.

Aqua Expeditions partners with luxury brands for Indochina tours

RIVER CRUISE company Aqua Expeditions, luxury resort Soneva Kiri and Bangkok's Siam Hotel, are each offering 10% off their published rates and special complimentary experiences at Soneva Kiri when booking two out of the three properties for the same trip.

Clients can take a bespoke river cruise showcasing the highlights of Cambodia and Vietnam on a three-, four- or seven-night itinerary on the Aqua Mekong, a floating five-star hotel with 20 design suites featuring floor-to-ceiling glass windows, a 1:1 staff to guest ratio and twice daily off-board excursions.

Before or after their cruise, guests can fly to Soneva Kiri, the closest beach resort to Siem Reap, on Soneva's private eight-seater Cessna and unwind on Thailand's least populated island, Koh Kood. Guests can also begin or finish their stay at The Siam Hotel, which is located along the River of Kings and nestled amongst Bangkok's historical palaces, temples and museums.

The 10% discount on published rates applies when booking at least two of the three brands involved as part of the same trip between October 6 to November 24 and August 17, 2018 to November 27, 2018 (excluding certain black-out dates). The offer is valid for any number of nights in any room or villa category.

An extra experience will be offered to guests who stay at Soneva Kiri, and they can select from The Treepod Dining experience; a private Cinema Paradiso Experience; a cooking class; a private sunset cruise; a father and son picnic as well as a mother and daughter spa; or a cheese and red wine tasting with gourmet canapés, chocolates and ice-cream with mocktails for the kids.

To book a 'Secrets of Indochina Tour' contact reservations@aquapexpeditions.com, reservations@soneva.com or reservations@thesiamhotel.com and quote the booking code: 'Secrets'.

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HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises' new expedition ship, the HANSEATIC inspiration, is to launch in October 2019. In addition to Arctic cruises in the European summer and expeditions to the Antarctic in the winter, the vessel will set sail for the Amazon, the Chilean fjords, the Azores and Cape Verde with cruises ranging from short four-day cruises to the Frisian Islands to 20-day expedition trips to the Antarctic. After almost a decade, the operator will also be returning to the Great Lakes in North America; with a retractable bridge wing, the special design of the HANSEATIC inspiration makes it possible for the ship to pass through the narrow locks.

RV Sabei Pandaw to arrive on Mekong River for 2019

PANDAW IS to add a third ship to its Laos Flotilla on the Mekong River in September 2019, marking the 17th vessel to enter the operator's fleet of ships that travel the waterways of six South-East Asian countries.

The double decked vessel, to be named RV Sabei Pandaw, will be 45m long and designed to meet the navigational challenges of shooting the rapids in the Laos gorges. It will have the shallow draft to enable year-round passage across Yunnan into China and will feature 12 classic staterooms and an open plan saloon with flexible indoor or outdoor dining.

It will be deployed between Vientiane, the Laos capital, to Jinghong in China. Travellers on this four-country expedition will visit Laos, Thailand, Burma and China with highlights

including the ancient Laos capital of Luang Prabang, visits to tribal villages, national parks and the river itself which is intensely dramatic and wild.

Commenting on travel through the upper Mekong, Paul Strachan, founder of the company, said: "There can be no waterborne experience to match sailing through Laos. The fast river with its continual spate of white water, the jungle clad peaks and the gorges. Then there is the friendly welcome in every village, the ethnic diversity and the cultural riches. Traversing the remotest parts of four very different countries you see all of South-East Asia, lost and timeless."

For more information call 020-8326 5620 or go to pandaw.com

Celestyal partners with Hays Travel

CELESTYAL CRUISES has announced a new partnership with Hays Travel, which will see the cruise line's complete product range of six different three- to seven-day Aegean cruises and seven-day Cuba Cruise now readily available for agents to sell.

Jonathon Woodall, group head of commercial at Hays Travel, said: "I'm absolutely delighted to be able to announce that Hays Travel is the only UK High Street agent in partnership with Celestyal Cruises. The product will be rolled out to all of our retail agents and homeworkers, as well as Hays Travel Independence Group members. Cruise is a big focus for us as a group and we will be fully supporting Celestyal Cruises' UK expansion plans. The Celestyal product will also be made available through Hays Tour Operating Limited, giving other independent agents across the UK the opportunity to offer these cruises to their customers."

Cruises will be packaged with a selection of transport options and ground arrangements from the UK.

Kyriakos Anastassiadis, CEO of the cruise company, added: "This partnership marks an exciting step in the continuing development of our UK sales strategy. Hays is a market leader with a strong specialisation in cruising - we're confident that together we will generate strong sales."

Agent incentives and training on the cruise product are in planning and are expected to be announced in the coming months.

Avalon Waterways offers autumn river cruises from £1,199

AVALON WATERWAYS is highlighting its special offers and range of river cruises running throughout autumn as an ideal time for guests to visit Europe's town and cities by river.

The company's CEO, Giles Hawke, said: "We are attracting new customers who want to experience Avalon's relaxed style of luxurious river cruise at the lowest guaranteed price with virtually all elements of the holiday included.

"There's the added benefit of experiencing a wide region of Europe from the river without needing to unpack more than once and, with the focus on great value, now is the perfect opportunity to experience Europe's incredible cities and places of interest at a far less crowded time of year, when lower temperatures are ideal for sightseeing."

The line's eight-day 'Charms of Holland & Belgium' is priced from £1,199 per person based on an October 13 or 20 departure.

Highlights of the journey include sightseeing in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Kinderijk, Willemstad, Veere, Middleburg, Ghent, Antwerp and Brussels and. As with the other packaged river cruises for autumn, a private home pick-up service, flights, full-board cruise accommodation with wine served with meals, guided excursions, overseas transfers and on board gratuities are all included.

For the full range of discounted river cruises call 0800-668 1801 or visit avaloncruises.co.uk

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LEARNING WITH LAURA...Laura Croft from Norwegian Cruise Line discusses the line's premium all-inclusive offering with a table of attentive agents.

TRAVEL BULLETIN set sail for the Mercure Hotel in Norwich last week to present our Cruise Showcase. With an exciting collection of operators and destinations attending, local agents had the chance to discuss the latest product news directly with each exhibitor, enjoy a delectable dinner and have fun with a variety of games and prize giveaways!

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Programme Sponsor



A CMV WELCOME...Laura Cann (centre) from CMV welcomes, from the left: Liz Miller, Annette Lambert, Natalie Bishop and Becky Margaron from Broadland Travel Worldchoice to the showcase.



HAVING A BALL...Annabel Jenkins (right), on behalf of Quebec, presents Rosanna Ball of Trailfinders with a £50 Love2Shop voucher.



ADVENTURE BOUND...Carl Larkin (left) from G Adventures presents lucky Travel PA winner Gary Woodcock with a £500 voucher to be put towards the adventure of his choice.



AZAMARA GIFT...Lee Surman (left) from Azamara Club Cruises presents a gift of a bath robe & bottle of bubbles to raffle winner William Thompson of Travel Counsellors.



BOUNTY OF QUEBEC...Annabel Jenkins for Quebec highlights the unique experiences available at every port of call and the beautiful landscapes that can be found across the Canadian province.



CRUISE CHAT...From the left, Sarah Reeve and Suzie Clare from Travel Norwich Airport talk with Louise Craddock from Oceania Cruises, along with Simon and Santha Waldron from Travelserv.



PAMPERED BY UNIWORLD...David Chidley (left) from Uniworld presents raffle winner Ian Fleming of Not Just Travel with a L'Occitane gift set



PRESENTING VIKING...Andrew Schweitzer from Viking River Cruises discusses the latest product news with, from the left: Louise Wright, Elizabeth Robson and Karen Mitchell from Thomas Cook, Diss; with Zoe Pope and Lara Chlopas from Thomas Cook, London St, Norwich.



CRYSTAL PRIZE...Natalie Read (right) from Crystal Cruises presents Laura Sudder of Oyster Travel with a £50 lifestyle voucher.



TALKING TUNISIA...Sami Tounsi from the Tunisian National Tourist Office tells agents that Tunisia is back and ready once again to welcome holidaymakers.



PRINCESS TREAT...Charlotte Brailsford (right) from Princess Cruises presents Jessica Crisp from Trailfinders with a Hotel Chocolat gift set.



RIVERIA REWARD...Susan Fleming from Not Just Travel collects her Prosecco prize from Joseph Grimley of Riviera Travel.



SILVERSEA SURPRISE...Prize winner Melissa Jolly (left) from Noble Holidays collects a £50 voucher of choice from Silversea Cruises' Donatella Valzasina.

Want to get in on the action?
Travel Bulletin will be hosting its Airline Showcase in Bristol on Monday October 16.
All agents who wish to attend can secure their spot by emailing
hannah.carter@travelbulletin.co.uk

oceancruising



HOLLAND AMERICA Line's newest ship, the ms Koningsdam, has unveiled its \$4.1 million art collection. This floating art gallery incorporates 1,920 pieces ranging in style, from classic to contemporary and traditional to avant-garde, with the museum-quality works of art spanning the decks, public rooms and staterooms and representing the work of artists from 21 nationalities. Visit hollandamerica.co.uk

Saga expands fleet with Spirit of Adventure launch in 2020

SAGA CRUISES is to expand its fleet of new build ships with a second cruise ship - the 'Spirit of Adventure' - due for delivery in August 2020.

The new ship will be a sister ship to Spirit of Discovery, which sails in July 2019, and will be similar in external design, carrying less than 1,000 passengers and with balconies for all cabins, retaining the brand's sense of intimacy and personal touches. Both ships will be built by the Meyer Werft shipyard.

Robin Shaw, chief executive for the cruise company, said: "Our loyal customers have played a key role in the design process for our first new build ship 'Spirit of Discovery'. To date, almost 7,000 passengers who had pre-registered to sail on her have already gone on to book one of our new itineraries. This is a phenomenal conversion of more than 80%.

"Thanks to this strong demand, the desire of Saga members to keep doing the things they love and the forecast growth in the cruise industry, I am absolutely delighted to confirm

that we have now agreed to build a second new ship, 'Spirit of Adventure' for delivery in Summer 2020. This is an incredibly exciting time for us and I am immensely proud of my team, both onboard and ashore, and the customers that will continue to help shape the look and feel of our future fleet."

As part of the company's new brochure launch, which includes the maiden voyages of the Spirit of Discovery alongside a collection of 2019/20 Saga Sapphire itineraries, the operator is running a series of booking incentives.

Agents can receive £100 in shopping vouchers for every ocean cruise confirmed before October 31, plus every Spirit of Discovery booking made will qualify as an entry into a weekly prize draw with the chance to win a boutique hotel break. Finally, agents taking a photo of the new brochure and uploading it to Saga's Trade Facebook page will be in with the chance of winning a case of wine.

Voyages to Antiquity explores ancient wonders of Egypt

PACKED WITH history, the new 'Aegean Experience & Cairo' cruise from Voyages to Antiquity aims to appeal to travellers keen to experience the ancient marvels of Greek and Egyptian civilisations.

The 13-day 'cruise-tour' combines an extensive new shore excursion programme from Cairo with an itinerary that includes a total of six nights in premium hotels, inviting travellers to spend more time on land to soak up the local culture.

Programme highlights include the ancient sites such as Athens, Delphi, Knossos and the Pyramids of Giza, along with a host of other gems from the Crusader fortresses of Rhodes to the catacombs of Alexandria. Clients can also enjoy a dinner cruise on the River Nile.

As with all cruises offered through the company, guests will be accompanied by expert speakers chosen to help bring the destinations visited to life; in this case archaeologist Dr David Price-Williams who knows the local sites well, and broadcaster Ernest Rea, who specialises in the history of religions.

The cruise circuit costs from £2,800 per person and departs Athens on October 18, 2018 returning to Piraeus - 7.5 miles from the Greek capital - on October 30. Along the way the MV Aegean Odyssey will call at Delphi, Nauplia and Piraeus (on the Greek mainland) and Heraklion in Crete before reaching Alexandria and Cairo (Egypt) and returning to Piraeus via Rhodes. The price includes flights, transfers, all meals onboard and drinks with dinner, shore excursions, onboard guest speakers and onboard gratuities.

For more information visit voyagestoantiquity.com or call 01865-302550.

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- Agency Sales: 0844 414 6140 • Brochures: www.trade-gate.co.uk

Princess Cruises launches single brochure for 2018/19

PRINCESS CRUISES has launched a new and expanded brochure for its 2018/19 programme, with the majority of the line's voyages listed and intended as a 'one-stop-shop' for agents and their customers.

The new version replaces the three brochures (divided between The Mediterranean and northern Europe; the Caribbean, Panama Canal and Hawaii; and longer-haul sailings), previously produced by the company twice a year.

In addition, and for the first time, prices are not listed in the brochure. This is in response to requests from agents to help encourage non-price related conversations with customers, and because costs can change when individual campaigns are launched. Extra maps have also been included and guest testimonials feature more prominently.

The brochure features dedicated sections on the routes served by the cruise line, including examples of shore excursions for different groups such as families or couples; several of the 360 destinations sailed to; onboard cuisine, entertainment and amenities on offer; suite accommodation and related benefits; and Princess Wilderness Lodges in Alaska and associated cruise tour options. It also highlights the voyages that will feature the latest Ocean Medallion technology.

Tony Roberts, the line's vice president for UK and Europe, said: "Our new brochure is a one-stop cruise encyclopaedia for agents, making it easier to use and tempt more guests into sailing with us."

"With almost 250 pages of cruise holiday options, covering 360 destinations in six continents, there is a huge range of choice on offer and something to suit all tastes and budgets."

For more information visit princess.com



Pictured celebrating the launch of Princess Cruises' new brochure on Caribbean Princess are, from the left: Iglu agents Cristian Maldonado Retamales, Kerry Hewitt and Sebastian Nalden.

CMV releases worldwide winter cruises brochure

CRUISE AND Maritime Voyages has launched its 'Worldwide Winter Cruises 2018/19' brochure, featuring a new selection of opportunities for clients to see the world.

To encourage early booking, clients can continue to benefit from the company's 'Buy one get one free' deals for the sharing passenger. As an example, a 15-night sailing on Columbus for the 'Christmas & New Year Canaries & Maderia' cruise departing on December 21, 2018 costs from £2,329, with the first adult paying £2,329 and the second adult, sharing, going free. This equates to £1,165 per person and reservations must be made by October 31.

The line has set aside 150 cabins on Columbus & Magellan for single occupancy at 25% single supplement on the equivalent category twin share price. There are also group prices available starting from 12 people and, on a select number of departures, the cruise line is offering added value benefits such as up to £1,000 per person of onboard credit, reduced fare upgrades to all-inclusive drinks packages and London-Tilbury coach transfers.

Lisa Jacobs, head of trade sales for the cruise line, said: "After the success of sales for our 2018 season, passengers are realising that going away during the winter has extra savings and benefits. With many of the offers available to our passengers also applying to longer cruises, our customers are in for a treat with our newly released 2018/19 winter schedule."

"With choices that include a 70-night adventure circling South America on Marco Polo, or Astor down to Australia, a selection from Bristol Avonmouth that offers the Land of the Northern Lights, the West Indies & Mexico on Magellan, and not forgetting our Grand Round the World 2019 cruise on Columbus, there is a lot to look forward to and sailing locally from the UK could not be easier, or better value for our passengers."

Full details can be found at cruiseandmaritime.com or by calling 0844-998 3877.

More families take to the seas for annual summer holiday

CRUISEDEALS.CO.UK HAS found that an increasing number of UK families are choosing cruises for their annual family holiday.

Company representative Ian Crawford commented: "Over the last 24 months we've seen an increasing focus on marketing cruise holidays for families with young children. This year is the first that we've really seen such efforts pay off, with a distinct increase in the number of bookings for parties of three people or more – in particular those with child places included."

As an example, Princess Cruises has reported a 7% year-on-year increase on Mediterranean bookings from groups with third and fourth guests, the majority of which are under 21. By 2018, the amount of under-18s travelling on its main UK ship will have almost doubled in only two years.

A range of contributing factors has been identified to this general increase, including a surge of deals for those taking children on board. The industry has also witnessed a push from cruise lines to make larger ships even more family-friendly.

Many cruise lines now offer additional deals on kids' dining or activities, the likes of which appear to be making cruising a more viable option for families.

Crawford concluded: "Families and those with young children are arguably the demographic that are least associated with cruising. In actual fact, it's one of the fastest growing demographics within the industry, with increasing numbers of cruise lines making an effort to appeal to all generations".

Coral Expeditions builds next gen cruise ships for ocean expeditions

CORAL EXPEDITIONS has signed a contract with Norwegian shipbuilder, Vard, to build its fourth expedition cruise ship, due to be delivered in mid-2019 with a further vessel intended to follow.

The new ship will be designed for ocean cruising to remote areas and will carry a maximum of 120 guests in 60 cabins. Custom-designed around its clientele and expedition-focused itineraries, the ship will feature several of the cruise line's signature features including twin 'Xplorer' tenders mounted on hydraulic platforms that will allow guests to embark and disembark for shore excursions without steps, queues or waiting; a natural light-filled lecture lounge equipped with modern technology for daily presentations and briefings by expedition experts; facilities onboard to host scientific research missions and local exhibitors; spacious communal areas; all outside-

facing cabins with en-suite bathrooms (more than half with private balconies); an open bridge policy and guest observation lounge overlooking the bridge; and multiple indoor and outdoor bars where guests can see the world go by over a glass of Australian wine.

The ship will join the line's fleet exploring the Kimberley region, Cape York and Arnhem Land (the top of Australia), Papua New Guinea, the Spice Islands, Indonesia and the South Pacific. She will be available for bookings from next month.

Visit coralexpeditions.com for more details.



Silversea orders Silver Moon for delivery in 2020

SILVERSEA CRUISES has signed a contract with Fincantieri, worth approximately 310 million euros for the construction of a new ultra-luxury cruise ship.

As the sister ship of Silver Muse, which was delivered earlier this year at the Fincantieri shipyard in Sestri Ponente, Genoa, this new ship has been tentatively named Silver Moon and is due to join the fleet in 2020.

The new build will expand the line's fleet to ten ships and will be designed to raise the bar in the ultra-luxury segment with a series of enhancements to the on board experience. At 40,700 gross tons and with a capacity to accommodate 596 passengers on board, the new small-ship will also maintain the brands hallmarks of on board intimacy and spacious all-suite accommodation.

Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio, chairman of the cruise line, said: "Based on the high praise Silver Muse has earned with our guests, we are eager to build on our flagship's success and move forward with a sister ship, which will bring us closer to fulfilling my father's dream of a 12-ship fleet. We pride ourselves on delivering an outstanding luxury cruise experience, and are delighted to partner once again with expert luxury shipbuilder Fincantieri as we continue to grow and evolve our fleet".

For more information visit silversea.com

SELLING CRUISE IS CLIA



by Andy Harmer,
SVP Membership & Director, CLIA UK & Ireland

THIS OCTOBER, the travel industry, and in particular those specialising in cruise, will be celebrating Plan A Cruise Month. The event provides travel agents with the opportunity to showcase to their customers all of the incredible experiences that a cruise holiday can offer.

For those that have sailed before, now could be the time to consider a different type of cruise holiday, perhaps something further afield or even a river itinerary if they've always been an ocean goer? And, for those considering a cruise holiday for the first time, agents can really demonstrate their value by sharing their knowledge on all of the amazing cruise experiences on offer.

This year's theme for Plan A Cruise Month is 'destinations' and as anyone that has cruised before will know, there is no better way to experience multiple destinations in one holiday than on a cruise.

Many cruise lines offer incredible itineraries to the world's most iconic ports, both closer to home and further afield.

In Europe, calling into iconic cities such as Barcelona and St. Petersburg to discover the incredible architecture, history and culture, as well as further afield to iconic destinations including New York, Sydney and Hong Kong are a real highlight of any itinerary.

More than ever though, cruise lines are also offering sailings to some lesser known destinations as part of their itineraries, docking right in the heart of the world's true hidden gems such as Khasab in Oman, the Kornati Islands in Croatia and Puerto Limon in Costa Rica. All of which offer a more off-the-beaten-track feel for those keen to really get under the skin of a destination, away from the hustle and bustle of the more well-known locations around the world.

My advice for agents this October is to take the time to update your destination knowledge. CLIA offers training modules on a wide range of ports of call. By sharing this wisdom with your customers you will open their eyes to the incredible shore side experiences that they can enjoy whilst on a cruise, in addition to the fantastic on board offerings that the cruise lines are so well known for.



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AHEAD OF its first World Cruise scheduled for this winter, Viking Cruises has revealed that Viking Sun (the soon-to-be delivered fourth vessel of the line's ocean fleet) will continue to sail the globe on a second World Cruise for January 3, 2019. Departing from Miami, the new 2019 cruise will be the first from the cruise line to explore South America and the islands of the South Pacific, ports in Africa from Cape Town to Dakar, the Strait of Magellan, Tasman Sea and Indian Ocean before concluding in London. It will span 128-days, five continents, 21 countries and 44 ports with prices starting from £39,990 per person. Visit vikingcruises.co.uk

puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. BEST WESTERN, 5. CARNIVAL, 7. HAWKING, 9. CSA, 10. ODS, 11. SWANSEA, 12. PANORAMA, 15. BENALMADENA.

Down: 1. BRIGHTON, 2. TEA, 3. STING, 4. ETA, 5. COWES, 6. CALABRIA, 8. NSW, 9. COSTA, 11. SEOUL, 13. AVN, 14. MED.

Highlighted Word: IOWA

Where Am I?: The Western Wall, Jerusalem, Israel.

We asked our staff the following question this week:

What's the best holiday you have ever been on?



Jeanette Ratcliffe

Publisher

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Week in Cornwall with family...fishing, kite flying & cricket on the beach.



Lauretta Wright

Editor

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It's an even split between the Florida Disney trip I took in April this year and the one to South Africa I took last year.



Adam Potter

Editorial Assistant

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River cruise on the Danube.



Paul Scudamore

Contributing Editor

So many top ones but Cobblers Cove, Barbados is up there.



Simon Eddolls

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Interrailing throughout Europe in my 20s



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Bill Coad

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My most recent trip to Bali.



Matt Gill

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Budapest with the lads.



Hannah Cater

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Exploring Bulgaria with a Bulgarian friend.



Nicky Valsamakis

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Game ranging in Botswana!



Miriam Brtkova

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Psychobilly Meeting in Pineda de Mar - Spain, every year - it's the best.



Lucia Mathurin

Design Apprentice

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Nelly Mendes

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