

travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge

NEWS BULLETIN

Keeping agents up to date on the latest developments

AGENT BULLETIN

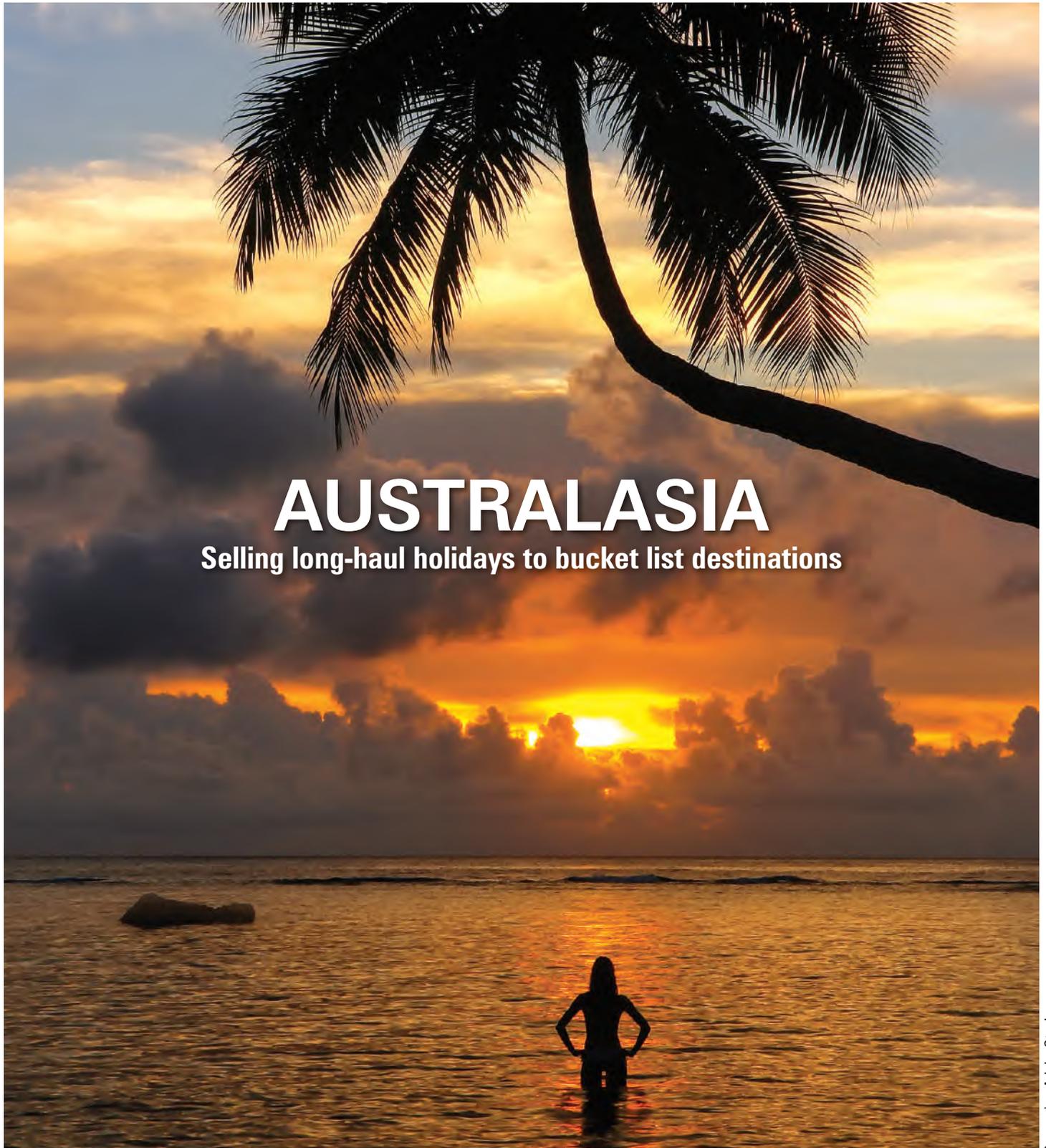
New incentives and online training opportunities for motivated agents

PUZZLE BULLETIN

Your chance to win a £50 M&S voucher with the Su Doku

TRAINING HUB

The first in a series of online training hubs starts with Australasia



AUSTRALASIA

Selling long-haul holidays to bucket list destinations

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2pm
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2.05pm – 2.55pm
Supplier
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2.55pm
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3.15pm
Webinar Ends

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Inspiration from the comfort of home, plus a new training hub.

FAMILY TIES

Thanks to the lockdown, many Brits have not been able to spend quality time with their families. Now restrictions are being eased, there are opportunities to sell multi-generation holidays.



Plenty of families are seeking to make up for lost time with multi-generation holidays.

BEFORE THE coronavirus pandemic, there was a strong trend in favour of multi-generation holidays. Research from Visit England that was released last year revealed that of the British travellers who took holidays in Europe, China and the UAE, 30% were multi-generation groups.

The study also found that for multi-generation travellers, the preferred types of accommodation were mid-range hotels (45%) and rented apartments and cottages (20%). Since the pandemic, multiple accommodation providers have reported an upswing in booking for apartments, cottages and villas, because of the ease of social

distancing in these types of accommodation compared with hotels.

When it comes to selling multi-generation holidays, the choice of destination may focus on regions where it is easy to avoid crowds, as well as book accommodation that allows for minimal contact with people outside the family groups.

With this in mind, there is an opportunity for travel agents to get creative with the destinations they suggest to their clients.

In Japan, for example, away from the busy city of Tokyo, the Setouchi region offers spectacular scenery, opportunities for hiking and accommodation in a traditional kominka, a

Japanese house which allows for complete privacy.

In the US, when travel restrictions are lifted, a sample itinerary could include a road trip to Mammoth Lakes in California, where lodge-style accommodation is available. The route could take in such sight as Death Valley, Yosemite National Park and Lake Tahoe, all of which allow for social distancing.

Closer to home, short-haul destinations, such as Greece, are reporting increased interest in villa holidays, which can offer large family groups privacy, hygiene and flexibility, particularly if car hire is included in the package to allow for safe sightseeing.



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Clear seas ahead as Crystal opens 2023 order books

RESERVATIONS ARE open for the 2023 itineraries aboard Crystal Symphony.

In all, Crystal Symphony will sail 36 all-inclusive itineraries of six to 15 nights, with 23 shorter sailings of 10 nights or less.

Itineraries focus on Southeast Asia and India; the Middle East, Holy Land and Egypt; and the Mediterranean, Baltic, as well as Australia – including a new year's eve celebration on Sydney Harbour.

For a limited time, the Crystal Confidence 2.0 programme offers guests 90 days from the time of booking to place their deposit on any of Crystal Symphony's newly released 2023 voyages or any 2020-2023 sailings across all brand experiences – Crystal Cruises, Crystal River Cruises, Crystal Yacht



Crystal has been upgrading health and safety protocols during lockdown.

Cruises and Crystal Expedition Cruises.

Book Now Savings cruise fares for 2023 sailings start from £1,800 per guest, based on double occupancy for a six-night Dubai to Manama (Bahrain) cruise departing March 10, 2023.

While its fleet is paused, the company has been developing new procedures

and policies to support public health and regulatory requirements. These have been developed with the latest data from health experts and will be updated when new information becomes available.

For more information, call 020 7399 7601 or visit www.crystalcruises.co.uk

VisitWiltshire shows off sights and safety with new video

VISITWILTSHIRE HAS unveiled a new video to invite visitors to Wiltshire following the easing of lockdown and to reassure them that it's safe to do so.

The one-minute video is also available on VisitWiltshire's website and showcases what the county has to offer those seeking staycations, including the World Heritage site, Stonehenge (pictured); Salisbury Cathedral, which features the tallest cathedral spire in the UK; the world-famous garden at Stourhead; Old Sarum, the Iron Age hill fort and original location of Salisbury Cathedral; Wiltshire's iconic White Horses; the Kennet & Avon Canal and Caen Hill Lock, a flight of 29 locks, one of the longest continuous locks in the country.



The video references 'We're Good to Go', the new industry standard launched by VisitEngland, informing visitors which businesses have made the changes to comply with social distancing measures.

To view the video: www.youtu.be/evDdE-RbqG0

An influx of eager agents for Not Just Travel

NOT JUST Travel has been taking applications to join their new Experienced Travel Agent Division, receiving more than 150 applicants in five days. The company appointed Cherie Richards to head this division.

Co-founder Paul Harrison said: "We are looking for people who want a bright future with fresh opportunities; people who want to build something significant. Entrepreneurial forward thinkers who, with our guidance and mentorship, can explode their business and

realise their dreams."

Cherie Richards added: "Between Steve, Paul and myself we have over 50 years' experience supporting people in travel. We have seen and witnessed pretty much most things in our industry. We understand what people need and the importance of relationships. These guys really do encourage "outside the box" thinking. It has been so refreshing in my first five weeks to be doing so much positive planning for the future, even during this crazy pandemic."



Safe Slovenia opens up to British tourists

SLOVENIA HAS been added to the UK government's list of travel corridor countries exempt from UK quarantine. Visitors to Slovenia are no longer required to isolate for two weeks when returning to the UK. Easyjet will resume flights between Ljubljana, the Slovenia capital, and Gatwick on July 31, and between Ljubljana and Stansted from September 1. British Airways flights between Ljubljana and Heathrow will be available from September 2. Ever since the outbreak of the pandemic, Slovenia has adopted a set of protective measures, resulting in rapid containment of the virus and a low number of infections.

Airline routes reopening – with a few exceptions

WHILE AIRLINES have been reopening many routes in a bid to recover from the pandemic-induced slump, the UK government’s decision to remove Spain and its islands from the air corridors list caused a reversal of UK-Spain routes for some airlines. Jet2 cancelled all flights to Spain until August 9.

KLM, meanwhile, will launch a new daily service between Southampton and Amsterdam from August 31. Flights will be operated by KLM Cityhopper, offering a total of 88 seats.

Air Transat has resumed flights from the UK to Canada, recommencing non-stop flights from three UK airports to Toronto, with services from London



KLM is taking off from Southampton once again.

Gatwick operating three times per week.

From Manchester Airport, Stobart Air, operator of Aer Lingus Regional, will operate up to four daily return flights from Manchester Airport to Belfast City Airport from September 14.

Madeira, which is included in the UK’s air corridor list for Portugal, along with Porto Santo and the Azores, is again more accessible with Easyjet, TAP Portugal, Tui, Jet2, Lufthansa and British Airways all resuming flights to the island destination.

Finnair has resumed flying to Shanghai from Helsinki with a new weekly service. The Airbus A350-operated flight will take off following the green light given by the Chinese authorities for the Nordic carrier to restart flying between the two cities. Finland has opened its borders for work-related travel from China, but entry to Finland is still restricted for the time being pending an EU-level decision on reciprocity.

For agents booking multi-destination African holidays, RwandAir is resuming flights between the capital Kigali and African cities, including Kilimanjaro, Cotonou, Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Lusaka, Libreville and Douala in the first week of August.



CHEERIO LOCKDOWN - VIVA MALTA

Welcome to Safe Malta

Covid-19 has spread around the planet, sending people into lockdown – the Maltese had to change the way they live. Thankfully correct measures, at the right time, were taken keeping the virus well under control. Malta’s excellent performance has been acknowledged by the European Commission, the Commonwealth, the World Health Organisation, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation and others. As the situation has recovered in various countries, Malta is now ready to welcome overseas visitors - the Maltese Islands have completed improvements to ensure holidays are enjoyable and safe.

To learn more: www.visitmalta.com

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Sustainable Samoa promotes eco-friendly tourism

WITH ENVIRONMENTAL protection and sustainability expected to be increasingly popular travel trends post-COVID-19, Samoa is geared-up to showcase its protected, natural wonders, deep sense of community and the Fa'aa Samoa, which means "the Samoan way".

As a small island nation, featuring various landscapes Samoa's ecosystems are diverse. The combination of tropical climate and fertile soil make Samoa the perfect breeding ground for rainforests and other lush landscapes, alive with native wildlife, such as skinks, flying foxes, geckos, many types of birds as well as unique flora.

Eco-tourism and sustainability have become a massive priority for the South Pacific islands in recent years, with Samoa



Samoa is promoting its clean, green destinations and accommodation.

being a regional leader in sustainable tourism interventions. Samoa's capital, Apia, is home to the Pacific Climate Change Centre, which serves as a space to deliver climate change development research and programmes.

Visitors to Samoa have the choice of staying in a range of eco-friendly accommodation, from

traditional wooden beach fale and self-catering bungalows and villas to sustainable luxury hotels and surf resorts. At these properties, the focus is on supporting local businesses, such as shops, farmers and fishermen.

To find out more about Samoa as a solo travel destination, turn to page 13.

Travel 2 and Gold Medal sing social media's praises

GOLD MEDAL and Travel 2 are reporting sales increases over the past two months as a direct result of increased content being made available across the operators' social channels. Research carried out among more than 2,000 travel agents across the UK in April saw almost a unanimous request for stronger content.

Gold Medal and Travel 2 put the wheels in motion and together with major suppliers prepared and rolled out a bank of content including videos, images, pre written inspirational copy, suggested itineraries, ready drafted social content and a raft of price driven offers covering late 2020 through to 2022.



Kerry Gallagher, marketing director, Gold Medal and Travel 2 commented, "We all know that content informs, entertains and can provide much needed inspiration. The feedback these past couple of months has been so positive with hundreds of agents contacting us to request copies of the videos we are posting, as well as more content."

ABTA welcomes refund credit note announcement

ABTA HAS welcomed announcements from the Department for Transport and the CAA that the government will extend ATOL protection for refund credit notes.

An ABTA spokesperson commented, "ABTA welcomes the Government's action to back Refund Credit Notes through the ATOL scheme; this gives reassurance to consumers and supports the travel industry at an especially difficult time. This development verifies that the ATOL scheme provides protection for cancelled holidays when a

refund remains outstanding in the event of a travel organiser's failure. This is the same for non-flight based package travel with ABTA bonding under the Package Travel Regulations. This assurance enables consumers to hold and rely on refund credit notes with confidence, before rebooking a much needed holiday."

"We now need the government to listen to industry calls for tailored support to protect businesses and jobs until its recovery can properly take effect," the spokesperson said.



Discover the first Australians in New South Wales

THE AUSTRALIAN state of New South Wales offers many ways to learn about the many different Indigenous nations and cultures. Events include Boomerang Festival with contemporary Indigenous artists in Byron Bay and June's NAIDOC Week to celebrate the unique cultures and history of the people. Aboriginal rock art is scattered across national parks – visit the dramatic formations and 36,000 years old relics in Mungo National Park; see Aboriginal rock art and hear Dreamtime stories at the Mutawintji Historic Site near Broken Hill; or Red Hands Cave in Blue Mountains National Park. Narooma. For more on New South Wales, turn to page 12.



Huben Travel, a new travel agency for the LGBTQ+ community, has opened in Surrey, founded by Hugh and Ben Eddon-Carruthers. The agency will specialise in personalised itineraries that include two sets of recommendations for clients, reflecting Hugh and Ben's differing interests and preferred travel styles.

AGENT TRAINING

JET2'S VIRTUAL Partners 2 Success programme includes virtual agency visits and key account meetings to keep agents abreast of the latest data, developments and trends. Additionally, Virtual Knowledge, a bespoke training programme for agents aims to help them grow their business, understand COVID-19 and how to sell and rebook holidays. The Virtual Holiday Show showcases destinations online. To find out more, go to www.jet2.com

IF ONLY... will be running an online training quiz for agents, encouraging them to test their trivia around the Jumeirah Flavours offer for food-focused trips to Dubai. Agents who share their results on the If Only... Partners Facebook Page will be entered into a prize draw to win a Fortnum & Mason Marylebone Hamper full of gourmet goodies. Visit www.ifonly.co/Jumeirah-flavours to take part in the training quiz.

MORE DATES and a new format have been added to PATA's programme of virtual travel agent training after a "hugely positive" response. The online training sessions include a variety of suppliers each session and have seen more than 170 travel agents participate to date. To find out more about the timings for the upcoming sessions, as well as other virtual events, go to www.pata.org.uk/event/pata-virtual-events/

AGENT INCENTIVES

- LUXURY TOUR operator If Only... has teamed up with Jumeriah Hotels & Resorts to offer one travel agent the chance to win a £250 voucher for restaurant chain, The Ivy. Launching in August, their joint campaign is 'Satisfy Your Appetite In Dubai'. To be in with a chance of winning, agents need to make as many bookings as possible with If Only... for the featured properties from August 1-31. At the end of the month, the agent who has booked the highest total number of room nights will receive the voucher. Find out more at www.ifonly.co/agent-incentive
- WENDY WU Tours is offering a £20 Love2Shop voucher for every booking made between now and August 31. The vouchers can be claimed by agents via the tour operator's Bambu Club. For more information, go to www.wendywutours.co.uk/agents/login.htm
- AMAWATERWAYS HAS brought back its popular Sell Five, Sail Free booking incentive six months ahead of previous annual launches to give its travel agent partners more time to earn a river cruise holiday. Agents who make five new individual bookings between now and December 31, 2021, will earn a complimentary seven-night AmaWaterways river cruise for themselves and a companion. Additionally, agents who make 10 or more new individual bookings will have the opportunity to be among the first guests to sail on board the AmaDahlia, debuting on Egypt's Nile River in September 2021. Visit AmaWaterways' Travel Agent Portal at www.amawaterways.co.uk for full terms and conditions.
- REGENT SEVEN Seas Cruises has launched a new booking incentive for travel agents called Sell & Sail, where UK travel partners will have the chance to enjoy a luxurious cruise experience. Any agent who makes three new bookings on voyages scheduled between 2021 and 2022, will earn a free cruise aboard one of Regent's modern five-ship fleet, sailing a 2021-2022 voyage for up to 14 nights, to various destinations across the world. All eligible bookings must be registered at www.rssc.com/2020SellandSail by August 15.

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SUDOKU

Win a £50 M&S voucher in the **travelbulletin** Su Doku prize puzzle A

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, August 13th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next issue.

The winner for July 17th is Stephanie Barwick of Hays Travel in Matlock

July 17th Solution: A=2 B=7 C=1 D=5

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



WHERE AM I?

THIS TREE is more than 400 years old and grows on a hill in the middle of a barren desert. As the area has a very low annual rainfall, it is not certain how it has survived so long although it could be that it has long roots that reach an extremely deep water source.

CROSSWORD

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

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|----|---|----|---|----|--|----|
| 1 | | 2 | | | | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| | | | | | 6 | | | | | |
| | | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | 9 | | | | 10 | | |
| | | | | 11 | | | | | | |
| 12 | | 13 | | | | 14 | | 15 | | 16 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | | | | | | 19 | | | | |

Across

- Carrier with a main hub at Madrid-Barajas airport (6)
- Hotel brand, part of 12 Down (4)
- Premier league winners who recently collected their trophy at Anfield (9)
- Popular ski resort in the Tyrol, St ____ (5)
- English singer-songwriter, ____ Smith (3)
- Alderney Channel Islands airport code (3)
- Canberra is the capital, initially (3)
- Budapest airport is named for this composer (5)
- San Jose is the capital of this Central American country (5,4)
- Currency of South Africa (4)
- Joanna, currently appearing in Unseen Adventures on TV (6)

Down

- Country location for the new BBC drama, A Suitable Boy (5)
- Popular resort on Israel's Red Sea coast (5)
- City in the Loire Valley famous for a Royal Chateau (5)
- State capital of Oregon (5)
- Country, sounds like a nut (6)
- Capital of The Bahamas and a popular cruise ship stop (6)
- Multinational hotel organisation (5)
- Boxer Mike, rumoured to be making a comeback to the ring (5)
- Scottish actress Sharon, probably best known for her role alongside Inspector Linley (5)
- Multicoloured houses circle this pretty Welsh harbour town (5)

Mystery Word: ITALY Where am I? - Tree of Life, Bahrain

Solution: Across: 1. IBERIA, 3. IBIS, 7. LIVERPOOL, 8. ANTON, 10. SAM, 11. ACI, 12. ACT, 14. LISZT, 17. COSTA RICA, 18. RAND, 19. LUMLEY. Down: 1. INDIA, 2. ELAT, 4. BLOIS, 5. SALEM, 6. BRAZIL, 9. NASSAU, 12. ACCOR, 13. TYSON, 15. SMALL, 16. TENBY.

MAKING BUCKET LIST BOOKINGS

Booking Australasian holidays can be challenging in terms of cost and distance, but with the right destination and market knowledge, you can book dream trips. Georgia Lewis reports.

AUSTRALASIA, WHICH is comprised of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia (pictured), New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, may seem like a hard sell for UK travel agents. However, the challenges of cost and distance can be overcome with strong destination knowledge, including an awareness of the diverse range of holidays that can be taken in this part of the Southern Hemisphere.

From city breaks in Australia and New Zealand, to nature-and culture-based escapes across the entire region, and beach holidays in picturesque island destinations, as well as a wide choice of

accommodation options for different budgets, Australasian countries have much to offer to a range of potential tourists.

For agents with clients interested in sustainable holidays, long-haul trips, whereby travellers stay a bit longer in a far-flung destination, rather than making multiple brief trips to short-haul destinations, can be appealing. It is about making the long-haul trip really count by staying longer so clients can take the time to immerse themselves in the destination.

This is reflected in a client database survey conducted in April by Original Travel which found that when travel restrictions are lifted, the three types of holiday preferred by luxury customers were crowd-free destinations, romantic breaks and sustainable travel – 30% of survey respondents expressed an interest in

travelling more sustainably by either opting for short-haul destinations or travelling less often but for longer periods.

With the Australasian region offering plenty of opportunities for crowd-free destinations, wide open spaces, romance and eco-friendly holidays, there is a market for selling to socially and environmentally aware travellers.

Agents need to be mindful of quarantine restrictions so the focus is likely to shift towards booking holidays for 2021 and beyond in this region. At the time of going to press, Australia was still enforcing a mandatory two-week hotel quarantine on all arrivals. However, with tourism ministers from Australia and New Zealand working on developing a travel corridor programme, there could be scope for multi-destination holidays in the mid- to long-term.

NEW ZEALAND'S SHOUT

While New Zealand's international borders remain closed for now, the country's tourism board is still keen to maintain destination awareness.

IN A first for New Zealand, the country's government departments have worked together to co-create a new campaign that gives a "shout out" to the rest of the world. The campaign is designed to keep the country, and its people, in the hearts and minds of friends and family around the globe.

The government agencies have created a series of videos that show real Kiwis being themselves at home, at work and play in different locations. There will be four videos in total – the first is a shout-out to people around the world. Renowned chef,



Peter Gordon features in the line-up saying hello to his mates in London. The other films look at what's important to the people of New Zealand.

The campaign asks

questions such as 'If you could encourage the world to do one thing, what would it be?' or 'What's the best way to start your day?'. The responses capture the New Zealand identity and spirit.

Tourism New Zealand general manager Americas and Europe, Sarah Handley said, "Given that people can't visit New Zealand right now, we asked New Zealanders if they'd like to share a message with people around the world. We hope that hearing these heartfelt messages from Kiwis will connect the world with us in a meaningful and engaging way. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to New Zealand when it is safe to do so."

The videos can be seen on the 100% Pure New Zealand YouTube channel.

AUSTRALIA AUSSIE SPECIALIST

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AUSTRALIA AUSSIE SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Fiji continues its marketing campaign with "Bula spirit" message

WITH DOMESTIC travel resuming in Fiji in May, the Pacific ocean country has been stepping up its marketing efforts to attract long-term interest among tourists with an ongoing market re-entry plan. Stage one of the plan focused on keeping Fiji in the hearts and minds of consumers with a "Sota Tale" message, which means "See you again." At the time of going to press, Fiji's borders were still closed to international arrivals, but the market re-entry plan has moved on to stage two with an updated message – "Our Bula Spirit awaits you". "Bula" is a common greeting in Fiji, which conveys wishes for good health, happiness and energy in life.

"It is an optimistic message that will rebuild consumer confidence and anticipation of a holiday to Fiji. What I like about it the most is that it focuses on what makes Fiji so special—our people," said Tourism Fiji's CEO Matthew Stoeckel. "It's part of Tourism Fiji's four stages to market re-entry that the organisation is implementing to return the destination to the New Zealand market. In stage one, it was all about inspiring Europeans to dream about a trip to Fiji. Now, as we transition to stage two, it is all about giving reasons for Europeans to choose Fiji for their next holiday and giving them the confidence to start planning for it."

"Despite all the challenges being faced as a result of COVID19, the "Bula Spirit" is alive and well and awaiting Europeans on their next visit to Fiji," Mr Stoeckel explained.

"We recognise that Europeans are wanting positive news now more than ever," says Jane West, regional manager UK/Europe for Tourism Fiji. "During these challenging times, we've seen Fiji's people really showcase the 'Bula Spirit' through their innovative ways of helping their communities, their steadfastness in remaining resilient and their genuine 'Bula' smiles. We are aiming to share all this with everyone through our online channels to give everyone a taste of what awaits them on their next trip to Fiji."

SOUTHERN COMFORTS

South Australia is promoting a wide range of accommodation options designed to appeal to discerning travellers with a love of luxury, pampering and good food and wine.

ADELAIDE, THE capital city of the state of South Australia, is developing a reputation for a city break destination in its own right. To this end, new hotels have opened up to help visitors appreciate the city.

Opening in September 2020, the Oval Hotel will be the first hotel in Australia to be integrated into a sporting stadium. Wrapped around the eastern façade of the Adelaide Oval, the 138 guest rooms will offer views across historic parklands. The stadium (pictured) is best known as the home of cricket in South Australia.



The November 2021-December 2022 Ashes test series will feature an Adelaide Test at the oval.

Eos, the new luxury hotel at Adelaide’s SkyCity, is due to open towards the end of

2020. The 120 rooms in the hotel will range from 40sqm to 305sqm. Two signature restaurants have been added along with a rooftop bar overlooking the River Torrens and Adelaide Oval. Other

facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, spa, on-call mixologist, personal training, and in room styling.

In 2022, a new luxury hotel and day spa is slated to open at Seppeltsfield in the Barossa Valley, the wine region located 70km out of Adelaide. Oscar Seppeltsfield will be a 12-storey property surrounded by bush vines with around 70 rooms including suites and penthouses. There will be a sky bar on the top level with 360-degree views of the Barossa, as well as a spa, infinity pool, and world-class restaurant.

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NEW SOUTH WALES DREAMS

Known as the Premier State, New South Wales offers multiple holiday types within its borders. Destination New South Wales suggests once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

TO PROMOTE the versatility of holidays in the state, Destination NSW has compiled a list of "once in a lifetime" experiences, such as World Heritage-listed Lord Howe Island, where only 400 visitors are allowed on the island at a time. It features untouched forests, ancient volcanic mountains, pristine beaches and rare flora and fauna, including 200 species of birds, such as the sooty tern bird (pictured).

New South Wales' own Big Five wildlife includes koalas, kangaroos, wombats, wallabies and platypus. An array of locations help



checking off the wildlife from your bucket list – catch kangaroos at Peppy Beach, visit Koala Hospital in Port Macquarie, spot wombats in the Kangaroo Valley, see the wallabies in Australian Botanic Gardens and watch

platypus at the Blue Lake.

An hour from Sydney will bring travellers to North Wollongong. You can drop from up to 15,000 feet and freefall for an insane minute, then float back to earth and soak up some unique views

of the beaches. Visitors can also skydive at Newcastle and fly over Lake Macquarie.

The Snowy Mountains, with Mount Kosciuszko, the country's highest peak, offers alpine resorts. Apart from winter sports, you can hike or cycle along tree-lined trails, kayak, horse ride or go trout fishing in the valleys.

Visitors can join in Sydney's renowned New Year's Eve party with the famous fireworks. Fireworks are also on show every Saturday at Cockle Bay, preceded by the Harbour of Light Parade of ships illuminating the harbour.



Learn more about Sydney & New South Wales

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Lifeline for struggling Solomon Islands tourism businesses

SOLOMON ISLANDS dive tourism entrepreneur, Belinda Botha has stepped up with a timely and proactive helping hand to offer virtual business coaching advice to struggling South Pacific tourism operators via her COVID-19 Human Capital Virtual Consulting project.

New Georgia-based Ms Botha has been approved to offer the services as part of a new programme instigated by Business Link Pacific (BLP), an Auckland-based private sector development programme committed to supporting Pacific Ocean-based businesses and funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

Ms Botha's aim is to provide virtual consulting service coaching to employers, entrepreneurs and employees across the South Pacific tourism and SCUBA dive sectors with strong focus on providing customised advice.

Essential to the project, Ms Botha said, is offering small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) the advice they need to navigate their way through the current pandemic, while at the same time helping them to prepare for a post-COVID-19 environment and be ready to kickstart their businesses when the region reopens its borders to international tourists.

"I am excited because I am in the position with my experience and background to be able to provide some real help in this time of crisis," she said. "While COVID-19 Human Capital Virtual Consulting's initial focus is on helping local (Solomon Islands) businesses, we are also ready to help other SMEs in those countries where BLP is already active."

As well as the Solomon Islands, BLP operates in Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Ms Botha is the owner and operator of SIDE Dive Munda and Solomon Islands Discovery Cruises.

www.businesslinkpacific.com

Diverse experiences in the Top End



ABORIGINAL CULTURE, cycling and pub crawls are among the experiences on offer in Australia’s Northern Territory.

Insight Australia have launched a Kakadu & Arnhem Land tour with Aus Geo and Venture North, which allows travellers to learn more about the culture of the first Australians. www.insightaustralia.com.au

For active holidaymakers, E-Bike Overnight + Brewery tour is a new way to explore the surrounds of Alice Springs with a camp out. Fully guided, your clients will be riding on sealed and unsealed tracks. The adventure finishes with a trip to a brewery. www.outbackcycling.com

The Rural Pub Crawl Tour lets people discover some of the Top End’s most iconic pubs and learn about the characters and situations that created them. www.wallarootours.com.au (Image Credit: Tourism NT/James Fisher)

Footballing Women Kick off

THE WORLD’S largest women’s sporting event is coming to the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) after Australia and New Zealand won the rights to host the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2023.

It will be the first FIFA Women’s World Cup to be held in Australia or New Zealand and Sydney, the NSW state capital, is well positioned to host big matches including the Final, when match dates and venues are confirmed at a later stage. New South Wales has put forward Stadium Australia, the Sydney Football Stadium and Newcastle Stadium.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian said the winning of hosting rights was a massive coup for New South Wales. “We are ecstatic to be welcoming the world’s best female footballers to New South Wales in 2023 for this historic tournament, which will deliver enormous cultural, social and economic benefits to our state for decades to come,” Ms Berejiklian said.

Minister for tourism, Stuart Ayres said the tournament would attract players and their passionate fans from every corner of the globe.

“This will be the first time that the FIFA Women’s World Cup features players from 32 nations, who bring with them supporters from all over the world,” Mr Ayres commented. “This was a true team Australia effort. Our bid was the strongest, and securing this World Cup reaffirms New South Wales as a destination of choice for global events. It will also play a significant role in helping our tourism economy bounce back.”



Solo in Samoa: A haven for single travellers post-lockdown

WITH SMALL group and solo travel expected to grow in popularity as travellers prefer to stay away from crowded places post-lockdown, Samoa has long promoted itself as an ideal destination for single travellers.

Located in the heart of Polynesia, the islands of Samoa is known for friendly locals, making it incredibly easy to get around and immerse yourself in the local culture. The most recommended Samoan islands include Savaii, and Upolu, which includes the thriving capital of Apia.

Samoa is ideal for solo travellers looking for an authentic and inspiring holiday while seeking to take a digital break. The islands’ one of a kind wooden fales dotted all over Samoa’s golden coast create the perfect paradise escape from your hectic daily life. Located close to the main villages, the fales’ design is based on the traditional Samoan home, allowing you to live like a true Samoan.

The island is not only very safe, but friendly Samoans are always eager to help with directions, making it nearly impossible to get lost. Visitors may use buses to get around, and car rental companies make it very accessible to hire a vehicle for your holiday. Local villagers offer a taste of their vibrant cuisine, and allow you to experience their colourful culture. A solo holiday wouldn’t be complete without attending a Fiafia Night, a celebration of Samoan culture with a traditional buffet and entertainment featuring songs, graceful dances and the fire-knife dance known as Siva Afi. Fiafia can be translated as happy get-together, and the performers are very enthusiastic and proud to share their traditional culture with the audience. The vibrant culture makes it incredibly easy to meet new people and feel a part of the local community.

Solo travellers also get to choose from an array of unique activities, from climbing the spectacular waterfalls of Papapapai-Tai Falls, to hiking through the tropical rainforests alongside Savaii’s coastline, and snorkelling among coral reefs and more than 900 fish species in Upolu.

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A plan for the Solomons

TOURISM SOLOMONS, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, has begun the process of initiating what CEO, Josefa 'Jo' Tuamoto' describes as a five-point plan intended to a rekindle and sustain the tourism sector's fortunes as it looks to adapt to the post-lockdown environment. Minister for culture and tourism, Bartholomew Parapolo launched the 'lumi Tugeda' (you and me together) campaign. He said as part of the tourism sector's proactive approach to deal with the impact COVID-19 has had, the ministry was taking the necessary steps as the country and its tourism sector begins settling into the 'new normal'. These, he said, included the development of extra care measures and standards for the destination's hotel and resort accommodation and tour and transport operators with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

"These measures will also see a roll-out of new criteria as part of the ongoing Tourism Minimum Standards



Programme, and the development of new medical standards protocols for entry into the country for tourists and their baggage," he said. "These protocols will be applicable to visitors before they depart from their home countries through to when they leave our country, with all protocols designed to ensure that any visitor's experience in the Solomon Islands is medically managed for both visitors and tourism workers alike."

What is your dream Australasian adventure?



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 A koala safari.



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SOFA-SURFING OZ

To inspire agents – and to help agents get their clients excited about booking holidays to Australia – Tourism Australia is promoting a range of ways to experience Australia virtually.

WHILE AUSTRALIA is a long way away and most Aussie bookings will come with a long lead time, Tourism Australia has shared a few ways to inspire agents and potential travellers, as well as maintaining the pre-holiday momentum for clients who have already made a booking – and all from the comfort of home.

“Storytelling is embedded in Australian culture. Thanks to our brilliant creative industry, there are many different means of soaking up our rich culture - even from the comfort of your couch. Whether you decide to pick up a book, get settled in for a film or tune in to a podcast, you’ll be sure to be transported somewhere worth travelling to, when the time is right,” says Phillipa Harrison, managing director of Tourism Australia.

Stream: The Sydney Opera House has launched a digital season of weekly broadcasts and premieres alongside podcasts and other features. From Wednesday to Sunday each week, event planners can tune in to see performances, interviews, behind-the-scenes tours and never-before-seen footage from the harbourside landmark. There are also insights from Opera House staff who share the memorable moments from the backstage life of this iconic Sydney landmark.

Listen: Victoria Together is an online hub created to support locals in Australia’s second-most populous

state through the coronavirus response. But, it’s not just locals enjoying a diverse list of digital experiences and activities. Global audiences, including event planners, can tune into ‘The State of Music’ – free online gigs often filmed in Melbourne and Victorian locations. Artists include Tim Minchin, Archie Roach, Paul Kelly and The Temper Trap with the Australian Children’s Choir. Each episode can also be watched on Facebook and YouTube.

Podcast: The Pass is an insider’s guide to the best food, restaurants and eating experiences, locally and around the world, chosen by the experts themselves. Foodies can hear from local chef and restaurateur Kylie Kwong as she shares her spiritual approach towards life and cooking, while renowned chef Matt Moran shares his favourite local in Sydney’s Eastern Beaches in his episode.

Lunch and learn: The Australian Museum Lunchtime Conversation Series features a selection of distinguished Australians sharing insights into the inspiration behind their ground-breaking contributions, which have helped define the nation across science, politics, sport and the arts.

Read: Grab a copy of *Down Under* by Bill Bryson (2000). When Bryson journeyed to Australia, he promptly fell in love with the country. This book

conveys the infectious Australian larrikin nature and “no worries” attitude, while conjuring images for the reader of the coastal cities and the outback.

Watch: *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* is a classic film of the 1990s featuring Guy Pearce, Hugo Weaving and Terence Stamp. As you watch the story of two drag performers and a transgender woman travelling across the Australian desert to perform cabaret, you can take in scenes from the Northern Territory and New South Wales, such as King’s Canyon, between Alice Springs and Uluru (pictured).

Hub of knowledge for online agent training

AGENTS CAN access a range of courses on Australasian destinations via *Travel Bulletin’s* new online training hub.

Australian courses which are currently available include an overall Australian course from Tourism Australia, as well as courses about South Australia, Northern Territory and New South Wales.

Away from Australia, Samoa and the Cook Islands are taking part.

The training includes 10-minute videos, and agents will have the opportunity to win prizes from the suppliers by answering questions in relation to these videos.

To find out more and view the training hub, go to:

www.travelbulletin.co.uk/austraininghub



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