

Travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

Far East

Affordable, accessible and authentic adventures

MORE IN...

News

Stay in the loop with updates from all corners of the trade Pg. 4

Luxury

Budgets and opportunities continue to grow Pg. 18



Balancing the pros and cons of 'The White Lotus' effect as a luxury travel agent (Pg. 10)

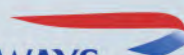
Jetset



MAY THE TICKETS BE WITH YOU



This month there are hundreds of Cinema tickets
+ pairs of BA longhaul tickets released !



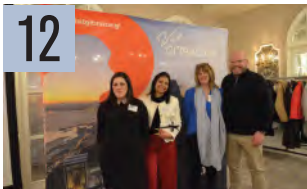
THIS
WEEK

04

**NEWS**

Never a dull period in travel! The latest headlines, movers and shakers.

12

**ROADSHOW ROUNDUP**

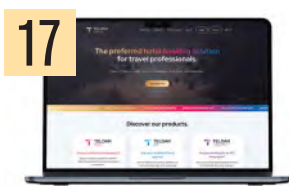
We have been out on the road up and down the UK showcasing the best in travel!

13

**LUXURY HOLIDAYS**

Opulent getaways to elevate any holiday.

17

**TECH UPDATE**

Tech developments to streamline those holiday searches and supercharge your sales.

18

**FAR EAST**

Far-flung adventures in this bucket-list destination.



A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Three quarters of Brits say nostalgia plays a key role when booking their holidays.

HOLIDAYMAKERS ARE looking to recapture the good ol' days of their youth according to research conducted by Jet2holidays, which has found that almost 72% of travellers are searching for a sense of nostalgia when choosing a destination.

Almost three quarters (71%) of those surveyed have travelled back to familiar places they visited in the past to see if the childhood wonder that made their memories so fond is still there. Of that 71%, two thirds revisited a place in order to recreate childhood memories, and 39% chose to bring along their loved ones to share the experience with.

It is not just the destination itself that is getting Brits to travel back down memory lane: one in five (19%) have said they would stay in the same hotel and visit the same places they did as children.

The research has also found that a family

summer holiday tops the nostalgia table as the 'most cherished childhood memory', with 39% agreeing with the sentiment over the joy of previous birthdays, first pets and Christmas celebrations. When asked what made family summer holidays so special, over half of the respondents (54%) said it was the quality time with family, followed by activities (40%) and the destination (39%).

For those yet to return to their childhood favourites, 57% of travellers said they are interested in re-exploring their younger years spent abroad.

A spokesperson from Jet2holidays said, "For many of us, childhood holidays are some of our most cherished memories – they stay with us long after the suitcases are unpacked. As we approach a busy summer season, it is great to think of all those customers revisiting those special places to relive the magic and create new memories."

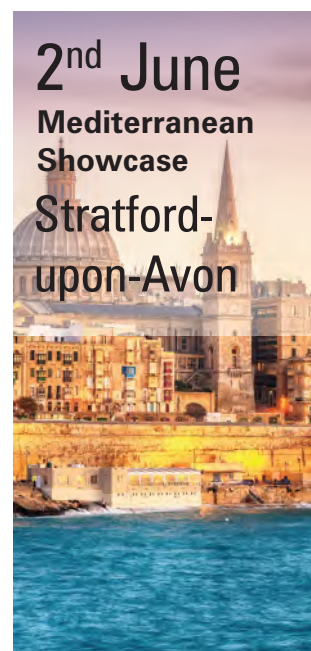
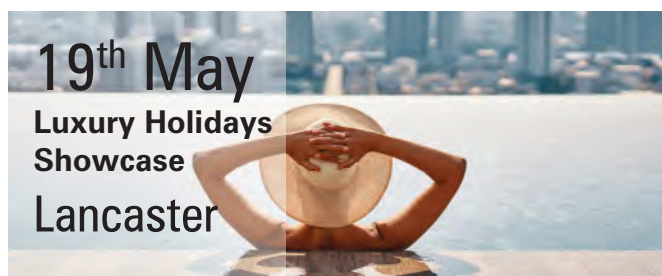
Published by :
Alain Charles Publishing (Travel) Ltd
University House, 11-13 Lower Grosvenor
Place London, SW1W 0EX

Printed by: Buxton Press
Subscriptions are £125 p.a.
£195 overseas
ISSN: 0956-2419

020 7973 0136

www.travelbulletin.co.uk

@TravelBulletin
 @TravelBulletin
 Travel_Bulletin



AROYA Cruises unveils maiden Med season

AROYA CRUISES is crossing another significant milestone with the launch of its inaugural Mediterranean season as the countdown begins to the first Med voyages, due to set sail from June 2025.

Guests will embark on seven-night itineraries through the Med with port calls in Türkiye and Greece including Bodrum, Marmaris, Kaş, Kuşadası, Athens, Mykonos and Crete.

In July, the sailings will expand to Rhodes and İzmir, with Fethiye joining the destination roster from August.

Dr. Jörg Rudolph, president of AROYA Cruises, said, "Launching our Mediterranean season is a proud moment for AROYA Cruises, offering a new way to discover one of the world's most iconic cruise regions through an Arabian inspired experience."



Shearings expands 'Mini-Break' range

FIVE NEW 'Music & Theatre Breaks' and 'Event Getaways' have been added to Shearings' 'Mini-Break' programme due to the successful launch last year.

The three-day Mini-Breaks were introduced as an alternative to much-loved classic tours which offer

shorter journey times for guests looking to make the most out of their weekends.

New additions include a tour covering *Mamma Mia! The Party* and time in the capital from £349 and the *Coronation Street* 'Meet a Star' experience from £279 per person.

Brand USA wraps up roadshow ahead of mega-fam

BRAND USA and a selection of destination partners wrapped up a two-week roadshow across the continent, with events in central London.

Jackie Ennis, Brand USA's VP of global trade development, says Brand USA and its partners (Discover Flagstaff, Grapevine Texas, Illinois Office of Tourism, Miami CVB, Travel Texas, Visit California, Visit Pasadena, Visit Salt Lake and Visit Springfield, MO) were "delighted to celebrate our finale in London."

At the finale event, 60 agents joined Brand USA and representatives from its destination partners.

This month will see the destination organisation host its 10th mega-fam trip, inviting 60 agents to the States between May 11th and 19th, 2025.

Travel Counsellors reveals new interactive itineraries

TRAVEL COUNSELLORS' new itineraries embed interactive multimedia to the traditional travel plan, promising clients and agents a more engaging way to showcase their travel plans.

Now explorable for Travel Counsellors via the myTC platform, the itineraries took around a year to develop, and have been pilot tested by an exclusive group of around 80 agents.

Among that pilot group was Vanessa de

Vere, who said the response to the new feature "has been amazing." Vanessa cited one specific example of a new client who booked a complex New Zealand holiday immediately after being shown the itinerary.

The platform's chief technology officer, Jon Bauer, said the itineraries "represent another step forward in how we use technology to enhance the personal touch that our Travel Counsellors offer."



ONYX reports strong start to 2025

THE UK market is already proving fruitful for ONYX Hospitality Group, the property management firm behind Amari.

The group has reported a 31.5% increase in UK room nights and 36.1% hike in room revenue in January and February 2025 compared to the first two months of 2024.

Andrea Hogg, UK sales director, thinks the growth "reinforce[s] the appeal of our properties across Thailand and beyond... collaboration with the trade is key for us."



PTC confirms 14-guest booking after Transun fam

AFTER A group of five homeworking Personal Travel Consultants by Blue Bay Travel joined Transun on a three-night fam at the end of February, one agent has already sold 14 places on a 20-guest group tour in 2026.

Since the trip, which took place from February 27th to March 2nd, the PTCs have reported a 25% year-on-year hike in Lapland sales.



AE Expeditions waives solo supplement

SELECT 2025/26 AE Expeditions voyages have had their solo supplement waived for bookings confirmed by June 30th, 2025.

The waive invites solos on some of the expedition line's most remote and adventurous departures without the regular 50% sole occupancy surcharge.

Among the applicable adventures is the 15-day Wild Landscapes of West Greenland departure on August 15th, 2025. The sailing, roundtrip from Toronto, starts from £13,795 for solos.

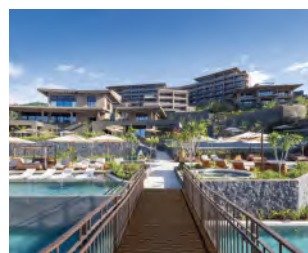
September 7th, 2025's departure of The Northern Passage (Eastbound) leads in from £31,595 per person during the promotion.

Hilton expands with new Costa Rica Waldorf

HILTON'S LUXURY portfolio saw a Costa Rican boost last month with the opening of the Waldorf Astoria Costa Rica Punta Cacique.

The property is the first to open in the cliffside luxury retreat of Punta Cacique, around 25 minutes' drive from the Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport.

Danny Hughes, Hilton's



president of the Americas, promised guests "an unparalleled level of luxury and our signature Waldorf Astoria hospitality."



Just Go! adds long-haul winter sun duo

TWO NEW destinations have joined Just Go! Holidays' winter sun programme for 2025/26.

The upcoming winter season will include holidays to Goa and the Seychelles for the first time, with a new resort option in Cyprus. Trade sales manager Claire Dutton said last year's addition, Sri Lanka, "proved really popular with agents [...] I'm delighted that we've added two more exciting destinations."



**Explore
more
possibilities**

April has been a whirlwind for VisitMalta as we've been buzzing around Liverpool, teaming up with Liverpool Airport and local travel agents to brainstorm fresh ways to promote and boost bookings to our sunny island. From lively store agents to savvy homeworkers, it's been fantastic connecting with everyone and watching this route flourish. The energy and enthusiasm have been truly infectious, inspiring us to think outside the box and create exciting new campaigns. Fancy a quick, fun online training session to become a Malta expert? Give us a shout! Whether you're dreaming of golden beaches, historic streets, or vibrant festivals, Malta has something special waiting just for you.

Gabriela Milkova
gabriela-ruseva.milkova
@visitmalta.com



JET2HOLIDAYS HAS put its Jet2Weddings brand on sale to independent agents, with tailored Cyprus packages available from summer 2026. A choice of over 35 venues are available to book across Classic, Deluxe and Ultimate ranges, with almost instant wedding day confirmation.

Wyndham to debut Super 8 brand in Spain & Portugal

SOLITEIGHT, AN existing franchisee of the Wyndham brand, is set to debut Super 8 into the Iberian market, with 40 properties in the pipeline across Spain and Portugal over the next decade; the first of which will open in Leiria, Portugal in the last quarter of 2027.

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts' EMEA president, Dimitris Manikis, said the "strategic move" to bring Super 8 to Iberia will ensure "great value without sacrificing quality [...]"

Southern Europe has a growing demand for reliable, budget-friendly accommodations and our collaboration with Soliteight allows us to meet that need," pointing to a 10% budget brand penetration gap as a key driver, as well as Spain's reported 94 million international visitors last year.

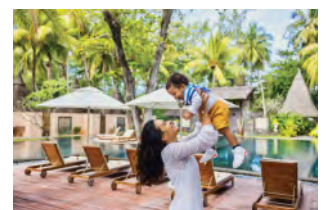
14 Super 8 hotels are currently open to guests across Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

Dusit expands presence in China

THE CAPITAL of China's Sichuan province is set to welcome a new 250-key Dusit International property, the result of a joint venture between the Thailand-based hotel development company and Dongfan Nongbo.

Dusit Hotel AG Park is set to open on June 1st, 2025, inside the Tianfu Agricultural Expo Park. The hotel is a 30-minute drive from the Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport and 20 minutes from the Xinjin high-speed rail station.

A range of room categories, including private villas and guest rooms, will be available to book among the property's expansive and gorgeously-maintained garden.



Free kids spots at Beachcomber

BEACHCOMBER RESORTS & Hotels has announced a Kids Stay Free offer at Dinarobin, Paradis and Trou aux Biches - from June 1st to 31st, 2025 and Shandrani, Victoria, Cannonier and Mauricia from May 11th to 17th, June 1st to 20th and August 1st to 23rd.

AGENT INCENTIVES

- **ANY AAT Kings 2025** holidays booked before July 25th, 2025 could earn you A-Lister status, with the highest-selling agents invited on a five-day tour of Australia or New Zealand. Agents must book and deposit AAT Kings or Inspiring Journeys guided holidays to qualify: the two highest-selling agencies across both brands will be invited to participate on the A-LISTERS ON LOCATION prize trip. The prize includes return economy flights to the mystery tour destination, four nights' accommodation, all-inclusive touring with most meals covered, experiences pulled straight from the operator's roster, and a Top Achievers award dinner.
- **UNTIL JUNE 26th**, all new Fred. Holidays package bookings could earn agents up to £1,000 in One4All vouchers, depending on booking value. The incentive celebrates Fred. Holidays' new Extraordinary Encounters campaign, which launched with a 32-page brochure. Agents can request copies of the brochure from their Fred. Holidays business development manager or digitally via the Agent Fred portal.

AGENT BULLETIN



LA TOURISM brought some Californian sunshine to Travelbag stores as it kicked off a joint campaign, with agents earning a prize for every flight and hotel booking to the City of Angels and bonus prizes for attractions. The grand prize winner will jet off on a holiday for two to Los Angeles.

Travelbulletin COMPETITION

YOU COULD win an all-inclusive five-night stay for two at the Sentido Apollo Palace in Corfu, Greece!

Find out more at
www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions

AGENT TRAINING

- **BRAZIL TRAVEL** Specialist hopes to showcase the destination's authentic and sustainable experiences, with personalised training modules and marketing materials exclusively designed for travel agents selling Brazil now available. Marcelo Freixo, Embratur president, said the platform strives to "create ambassadors for Brazil in every corner of the world. We want travel agents to have the tools and knowledge necessary to inspire tourists to experience the transformative experiences that our country has to offer."
- **CELESTYAL'S TRAINING** platform, Celestyal Campus, was revamped as part of its refreshed trade portal in late 2024. The Campus now offers agents training modules focused on the brand itself, life on-board the vessels, key itinerary and shore excursion information, and advice on how to capitalise on client's needs to grow sales.
- **VISIT CENTRAL** Florida's Tourism Institute platform blends classic e-learning opportunities with sales and marketing tools purpose-built for agents. The Visit Central Florida Tourism Institute stars two multi-modal chapters showcasing the region's attractions, accommodations and experiences as well as exclusive insights from top-selling agents.

The preferred
hotel booking solution
for travel professionals.

2 million properties worldwide
Privileged access to Accor group hotels
Miles Attack rewards program

teldartravel.com
sales.uk@teldartravel.com

TELDAAR
TRAVEL



G Touring's Jasmine Evans on peaks and agent partnerships

FIVE YEARS after leaving her role on the High Street, Jasmine Evans landed at G Touring – speaking to *Travel Bulletin*, she described her first peaks with the group as "a really great time," revealing how life on the road as a key account manager differs to her life as an agent.



The importance of peaks this year was paramount after G Touring's trade team reshuffle in early 2024; Jasmine felt herself and fellow new recruits "brought a new energy into the trade team," and described the start of the year as "amazing," reporting a 30% increase in overall sales performance.

"It was really fantastic for us as the trade team... we found that it definitely went in peaks and troughs, but overall we had really great results from it."

Swapping the High Street for the highway as an on-the-road account manager might seem like two sides of a similar coin, but Jasmine admits that since taking on the role with G Touring, she "really understand[s] the differences from a travel agent to a trade role... it can be chaos at times, but it's the best job. I've really loved it." *Full interview at* <https://shorturl.at/P75jg>



AGENTS CAN earn their guests a free Disney dining and drinks package on select departures between January 7th and December 19th, 2026. The popular offer returns on bookings confirmed before November 5th, 2025. 14-day tickets can also be purchased for the price of seven during the same promotion period and departure date range.

Travelmarvel encourages agents to act quickly

GUESTS CAN save up to 50% across a wide range of Travelmarvel's European and Asian cruises when booking by May 31st, 2025.

Itineraries featured in the sale include the eight-day 'Highlights of the Danube' with prices now leading in from £1,645 per person

The Final Call Cruise sale also includes up to 40% off Croatia Yacht cruises and up to 30% off Mekong River cruises. The sale is valid for the remaining July to December

2025 departures.

Brad Bennetts, APT & Travelmarvel, head of sales and business development, "This is the most competitive cruise campaign we've launched this year, and we've built it with the trade in mind.

"With high demand across our core destinations and limited availability, we're encouraging our partners to act quickly and make the most of this opportunity."

HF Holidays responds to group demand hike

AFTER GROUP guest numbers rose by 18% in 2024 against 2022, HF Holidays hoped to capture early demand as it unveiled its group tour brochure for 2026.

More than 500 group tours departed last year, hosting over 10,000 travellers. Group numbers for 2025 are already expected to exceed last year's figures.

Chris Simmonds, HF Holidays' CEO, attributed a lot of the demand to "the lovely British countryside, culture and the company of other fellow walkers."

The brochure spans tours across the UK and worldwide.



Manchester makes connectivity strides

AS OF June 4th, 2025, three additional weekly services will operate to Qatar from Manchester to support increasing demand for the airline ahead of the summer season, increasing connectivity to Doha and onwards to Australasia and the Far East.

SUDOKU

WIN A £20 M&S VOUCHER IN THE *Travelbulletin* SUDOKU PRIZE PUZZLE

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3 x 3 squares contains the digits 1-9. Once you have completed the puzzle, simply identify the numbers that relate to the letters, A, B, C and D then e-mail the solution, with your name, company name, and full postal address plus phone and ABTA number if applicable to:

competition@travelbulletin.co.uk
Closing date for entries is May 16th. Solution and new puzzle will appear in the next issue.

April 18th Solution: A=2 B=4 C=6 D=1

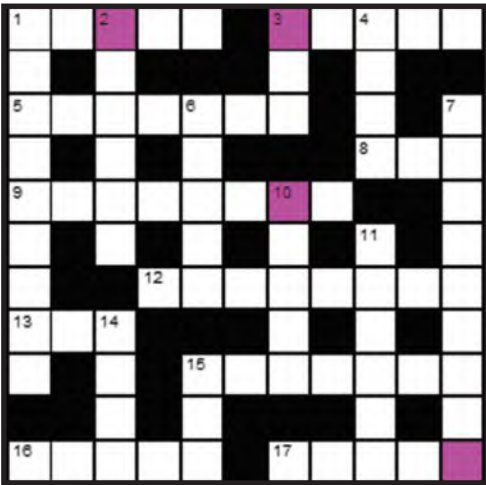
A	8	2		4		9			3
		4	5			6	2		
3				5					
B	6	9	3	1					
	2			9		8			1
C						2	6	9	4
				2					6
			2	6			8	7	
D	7			5		1		2	9



WHERE AM I?

THIS CAPITAL city, just slightly larger than Greater London, has its name derived from the nilad plant which ones grew profusely along the banks of Pasig River.

FILL IN THE CROSSWORD TO REVEAL THE MYSTERY LOCATION HIGHLIGHTED BY THE PURPLE SQUARES.



- Across**
- 1 Dorking based tour operator offering in-store appointments and video calls (5)
 - 3 Capital of Menorca (5)
 - 5 Famous high-end jewellery company (7)
 - 8 Acapulco international airport code (3)
 - 9 Landlocked South American country (8)
 - 12 Devon port city (8)
 - 13 Pretoria is the capital (3)
 - 15 Steve Coogan's latest movie features this seabird. (7)
 - 16 Accra is the capital (5)
 - 17 Travel company whose tagline is: Adventure Made Effortless (5)

- Down**
- 1 Pop star who recently went into space (4,5)
 - 2 This English city gave its name to a dictionary (6)
 - 3 Queen guitarist, Brian (3)
 - 4 In Greek mythology she was both the sister and wife of Zeus (4)
 - 6 These Falls are Venezuela's top tourist attraction (5)
 - 7 Iconic Temple that dominates the Acropolis (9)
 - 10 Capital of Jordan (5)
 - 11 Popular month for beach holidays (6)
 - 14 Cruise company, sounds like a Verdi opera (4)
 - 15 Flag carrier of Pakistan (3)

CROSSWORD

Across: 1 KUONI, 3 MAHON, 5 TIFFANY, 8 ACA, 9 PARAGUAY, 12 PLYMOUTH, 13 RSA, 15 PENGUIN, 16 GHANA, 17 TITAN.
Down: 1 KATY PERRY, 2 OXFORD, 3 MAY, 4 HERA, 6 ANGEL, 7 PARTHENON, 10 AMMAN, 11 AUGUST, 14 AIDA, 15 PIA.
Mystery Word: OMAN



AGENT INSIGHT

ZOE PALMER TRAVEL COUNSELLORS

LUXURY TRAVEL has taken centre stage recently, and it's fair to say that a certain HBO series – *The White Lotus* – is playing a leading role in bringing the sector to the fore! You can argue the pros and cons of the impact such productions have on the destination featured but one thing's for certain, they inevitably increase interest and drive bookings in luxury products – be that in the travel sector or fashion, beauty and otherwise.

If you are building a luxury business, then there are several ways you can capitalise on the opportunity that such shows present but also do so in a way that delivers a positive impact.

Use the popularity of the show to discuss the destination to clients and showcase the breadth of what's on offer. Let your knowledge of alternative offerings shine. For example, in Thailand, multi centre itineraries or alternative resorts and islands.

If it's the hotel brand that has caught your client's eye, then open up the portfolio and share the breadth of where they could choose to travel. The Four Season in Koh Samui is doing rather well but there are many more options to explore!

Being realistic on budget is also important. If your clients have been captivated by what they've seen on screen, then they might not appreciate the reality of the price tag. There are many layers to our luxury clientele – from ultra through to aspirational.

All are worthy of our time and attention and it's down to us as agents to utilise our knowledge and experience and use '*The White Lotus Effect*' to match the right client to the right product in an ethical and responsible way and ultimately secure more business as a result!



Icelandair brings rock 'n' roll to Reykjavik

ICELANDAIR WILL connect the Icelandic capital with Nashville until the end of October, marking the airline's 18th destination in North America.

The new route will be operated by four weekly services, departing on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays aboard a Boeing 737 MAX.

The route offers a variety of connection options. Southwest Airlines, Nashville's largest air carrier, has recently launched an agreement with Icelandair to help connect travellers with transatlantic itineraries. The agreement combines Southwest's connections with Icelandair's extensive European network.

News Bites

- THE CODE 'Orange' can save up to £200 per package holiday with easyJet Holidays until May 6th, 2025
- UNFORGETTABLE CROATIA will offer 144 departures across eight itineraries from May to October 2026, with a €75 per cabin bar credit incentive for early bookers



RIVIERA TRAVEL'S head of trade & partnerships Vicky Billing thanked the trade for its support as the operator recognised its best-selling agents from across the UK at the Riv Awards in central London. "Personally, if I could give every single person in the trade an award, I would. The support and growth we've seen—across both river cruise and touring—has been nothing short of phenomenal, but it's the people behind it all who make the real difference."

Rove Hotels makes Ras Al Khaimah debut

RAS AL Khaimah's Al Marjan Island project welcomed Rove Hotels' first property in the emirate last month, which COO Paul Bridger said "perfectly captures the spirit of adventure and cultural richness that Ras Al Khaimah offers."

After welcoming over a million overnight guests in 2024, the Nature emirate earned a 441-key boost with the Rove Al Marjan Island. Those join the brand's 4,000 open

rooms across the United Arab Emirates.

Continuing, Paul attested, "Entering such a rapidly growing destination aligns seamlessly with the Rove ethos of exploration and excitement, and we look forward to welcoming visitors from near and far to experience the unique charm and vibrant atmosphere of our new property."

The property opened in April.

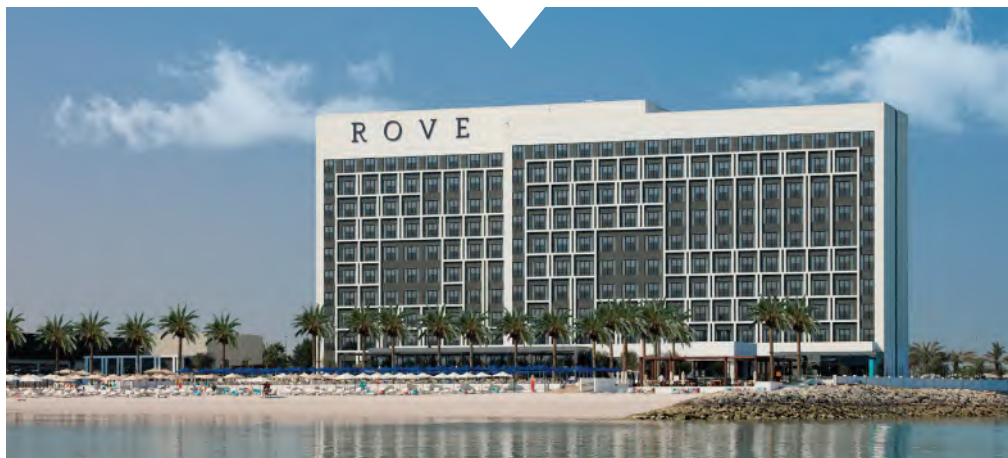


Holland America ends decade Dover hiatus

HOLLAND AMERICA Line began its first UK-based season in 10 years as *Nieuw Statendam* sailed from Dover on a 14-night voyage to the Canaries, Morocco and Portugal.

The ship will sail 10 roundtrip voyages from Dover this season before returning next year from April to October.

Karen Farndell, UK director of sales and marketing, said the return marked "an exciting new chapter for us, and reflects the growing demand we're seeing from guests to set sail from the UK."



MOVERS & SHAKERS



RAJ MISTRY and Levi Barrett

have joined the Railbookers trade team as the new head of trade sales and development, and the new key account manager respectively.



JUST YOU has welcomed author,

presenter and broadcaster Janet Ellis as the new brand ambassador. She will join a series of tours to share her stories.

Booking.com reports rigid sustainable demand

FOR THE first time in Booking.com's decade of publishing an annual sustainability report, over a half (53%) of guests have reported a consciousness about travel's impact on the environment and communities.

32% of Brits said they want to travel more sustainably in 2015; 10 years later, that figure is up to 93%. Nearly three in four (72%) said they want holiday spend to benefit local economies.

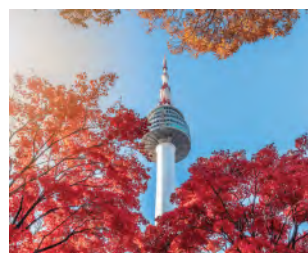
Only 14% of travellers think that capping tourism numbers in destinations is the correct solution to sustainability challenges.

The survey gathered insights from 32,000 travellers in 34 countries.

Virgin Atlantic announces new Seoul service

NEW DAILY flights from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia were celebrated with Virgin Atlantic's announcement of Seoul services from March 2026. The new service join recent expansions out East, including Dubai, the Maldives and India.

Chief commercial officer Juha Jarvinen said, "Building on new flying to Riyadh in



Saudi Arabia... we're delighted to offer customers the opportunity to fly in style to a wide range of destinations."



Brightsun celebrates Dubai surge

BRIGHTSUN TRAVEL has responded to a 37% surge in Dubai bookings year-on-year with a new range of Dubai and Beyond packages, leading in from £599 per person. Paul Jadav, head of ground products, said the packages "have been carefully designed to offer great value and flexibility for customers."

Family travellers account for almost half (49%) of Dubai bookings.



Family Holidays Showcase

WE WERE delighted to host some of Durham's finest agents at our Family Holidays Showcase!

GrecoTel Hotels & Resorts, Sandals, Yas Island, Louis Hotels, Jetset, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority, Tunisia, Visit Malta and South African Tourism showcased everything their brands and destinations have to offer, and gave away prize stays, goodie bags and more to the lucky winners of the evening's prize draw!



We are bringing more Family Fun to Crewe on May 12th! Register or enquire about our next local [#TBSHOWCASES](#) by emailing events@travelbulletin.co.uk

LIMITLESS LUXURY

Carrier's new big ticket collection offers tailored agent support for high-end bookings.



CARRIER LUXURY Holidays has unveiled its new 'big ticket' collection which offers agents full marketing support on high-ticket bookings. The new collection, Limitless, has been created in direct response to demand that has seen bookings over £100,000 comprise almost a quarter of its total sales.

Palma refines a classic

FOLLOWING AN extensive renovation, Hotel Victoria Gran Meliá has reopened its doors in the heart of Palma just in time for the start of the summer season. First opened in the 1920s as Villa Victoria, this landmark property has undergone a €12 million transformation to usher in a new era of refined luxury in the city centre. The property's 171 rooms have been redesigned and elevated, each offering breath-taking views of Palma's port and cathedral. Not only does this new chapter reaffirm the hotel's position as a luxury mainstay in the city, but it pays tribute to Palma's rich heritage in an elevated package.

23% of Carrier's bookings in 2024 were in excess of £100,000, up from just shy of 20% in 2023. Managing director Natasha Towey said, "We continue to see a steady growth in the number of high-value bookings we have coming in [...] due to the make-up of these trips, they can be difficult to facilitate. Most of these bookings come through our agent partners, because having a trusted advisor is key."

Six itineraries and four buy-out options comprise the inaugural Limitless range. The latter includes a private rent of Sir Richard Branson's Necker Island in the British Virgin

Islands, while the tours span Africa, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Antarctica.

Each agent partnering with Carrier on the Limitless campaign will receive a dedicated white-label website, showcasing the Limitless range in a more interactive way.

On the new range and agent support initiative, Natasha continued, "Our aim is to help agents grow their business [...] this sample range is designed to inspire agents and their clients about the possibilities for multi-gen celebrations, once-in-a-lifetime trips, big family adventures – we show that the options are indeed Limitless."

Join the Explora Club

EXPLORA JOURNEYS has launched its new loyalty programme, Explora Club, to celebrate and reward guests who want more from their journeys. The programme offers a five-level structure –Classic, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond–with each level unveiling a curated collection of benefits including priority access, personalised gifts, exclusive events, elevated onboard services and value savings.

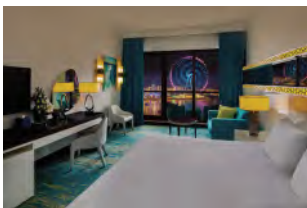




Rhodes' new launch in luxury

LOCATED IN the secluded peninsula of Rhodes, Amoh, a Luxury Collection Resort, is set to open its doors on July 28th, 2025, inviting travellers to indulge in a unique oceanfront retreat that blends boutique luxury with the island's rich heritage.

The property is situated on an ancient quarry, with the design paying homage to the island's stone craftsmanship history and mythological heritage. Prices lead in from around £315 per night.



Enjoy a two night Dubai stay for free

JA RESORTS & Hotels has launched a special two-stop package offering complimentary stays in Dubai before travellers' head on their onward journey to either the Maldives or the Seychelles.

Guests will stay in one of three luxurious Dubai JA properties when they book a seven-night stay at JA Enchanted Island Resort or JA Manafaru.

Final call for Rocky Mountaineer discounts

LUXURY RAIL operator Rocky Mountaineer has announced its 'Final Call' promotion which offers travellers discounts of up to \$1,000 per couple on select packages for the remainder of 2025.

Until May 15th, 2025, the Final Call promotion is valid for new bookings made on the luxury train operator's Canadian and US routes.

One of the itineraries included in the sale is the six-night 'First Passage to the West Excursions Banff' where guests will travel through the unique Spiral Tunnels and along the Continental Divide on a luxurious journey from Vancouver to Calgary with two days spent on the Rocky Mountaineer. Prices lead in from £2,343 per person, with savings of £275 per person, and includes six nights' accommodation and two days onboard the Rocky Mountaineer with SilverLeaf service.

Another option is the four-night 'Rockies



to the Red Rocks Moab Getaway' journey, building from Rocky Mountaineer's two-day train route connecting Moab, Utah, with Denver, Colorado. Prices lead in from £1,408 per person, including £400 per person in savings.

A jewel of the Aegean

DESIGNED WITH large gatherings and multi-generational travel in mind, Ajul Luxury Hotel & Spa offers a touch of escapism in the heart of Halkidiki.

Boasting over 10 types of suites, bungalows and villas, the resort embraces the charm and character of the local landscape while offering guests a premium stay for travellers looking to balance comfort with luxury.

The property is taking its gastronomy

scene to the next level with guests having full access to the three flagship restaurants which celebrate local traditions and produce. These culinary hotspots, offering vast options from an all-day buffet to traditional Grecian cuisine, provide breathtaking elevated views of the Aegean Sea, allowing guests to immerse in their surroundings while enjoying top-rated food.

The resort offers an array of facilities and activities for all the family to enjoy, from an adrenaline-filled waterpark with free-fall slides to a serene spa complete with atmospheric treatment rooms and revitalising massages. Guests can also spend a night under the stars at the outdoors cinema and embark on culturally enriching sightseeing tours in nearby villages.

Ajul is currently offering 25% off for stays between April 24th to October 31st, 2025.





ZEUS
INTERNATIONAL
HOTELS & RESORTS



📍 AJUL LUXURY HOTEL & SPA RESORT



Virtuoso grows portfolio by 100

OVER THE past year, luxury global network Virtuoso has welcomed more than 100 hotels and resorts into its portfolio, bringing its total collection up to over 1,800 preferred properties globally. According to data collected by the network group, suites and villas are a hot commodity with luxury travellers as 38% of global respondents have cited their intention to book a suite and 17% opting for villas.

All of the properties listed in the collection can be found at: www.virtuoso.com



The Adriatic is open for summer

THE DOORS have opened on nearly all of the properties in Adriatic Luxury Hotels' portfolio for the summer season, with Hotel Odisej Mljet set to welcome guests from May 29th. Whether travellers prefer city landscapes or island retreats, each of the seven properties along the Adriatic Coast offer a unique blend of style and service which continues to define luxury travel in Croatia.

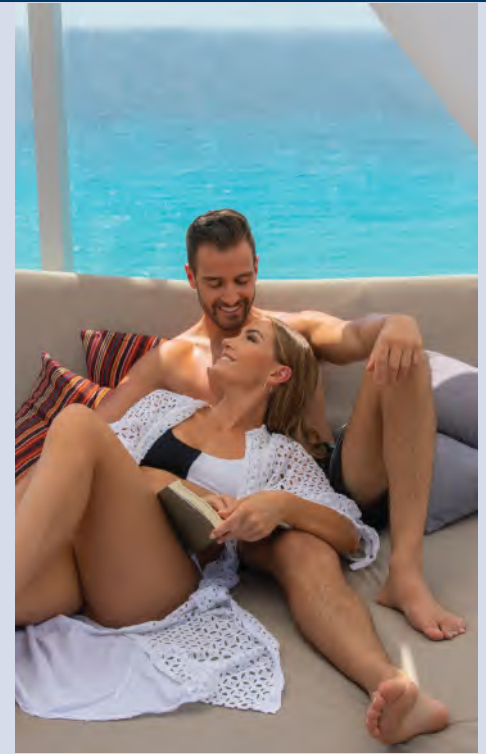
Jamaica turns CHIC with new luxury resort

JAMAICA WILL receive the royal treatment next year as Blue Diamond resorts is bringing its Royalton CHIC brand to the highly sought-after destination.

Royalton CHIC Jamaica Paradise Cove, An Autograph Collection All-Inclusive Resort – Adults Only property is penciled to open its doors in late 2026. Located in Runaway Bay, 40 minutes from Ocho Rios International Airport, the new 345-key resort offers an enhanced experience with premium locations, exclusive areas and its famous personalised butler service.

Guests can choose from four a la carte restaurants, including an international buffet and a Jerk Hut, offering delicacies to suit every pallet. A vast array of entertainment will also be available to guests, including performances led by the CHIC Angels.

Maria Moreno Contreras, partner market manager for Blue Diamond Resorts, said, "Taking luxury, comfort and all inclusivity to



the next level, this product offers guests an experience that is all about them."

Royalton CHIC Jamaica Paradise Cove will join the brand's expanding Caribbean portfolio with properties already established in Barbados, Antigua, and Punta Cana, as well as Cancun.

Maldivian opulence in Milaidhoo

BOASTING AN opulent escape with a prime focus on providing hyper-personalised experiences, Milaidhoo offers travellers a luxury escape unlike anywhere else.

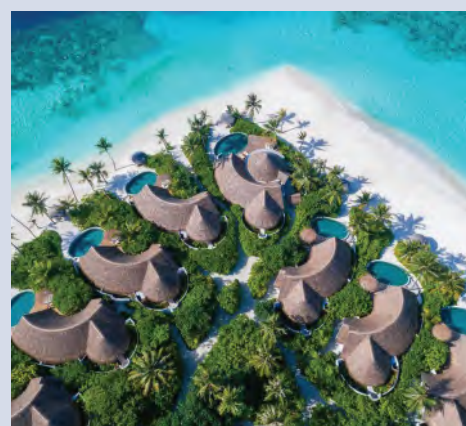
This Maldivian retreat, located in the Baa Atoll UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, combines wellness with gastronomy to take guests on a journey through self-fulfillment in an ultra-luxe atmosphere. The resort houses Ba'theli, a trio of decommissioned dhoni fishing boats which are used as the country's only Maldivian fine dining restaurant offering an elevated culinary

experience for all. The resort also offers four over-the-water treatment suites in the Serenity Spa to set the serene scene for an unforgettable wellness journey.

For those looking for a touch of adventure during their escape, guests can snorkel and dive through Milaidhoo's house reef which encircles the island.

The standout factor of Milaidhoo is the focus on providing hyper-personalised experiences that deeply resonate with each guest. The resort strives to go above and beyond a luxurious setting, having previously organised surprised starlit dinners with a personalised constellation guide narrated by an astronomer, and an underwater proposal with the all-important question revealed on a coral reef.

Kenwood Travel offers a seven-night half-board stay from £5,250 for a departure on July 1st, 2025.



BOOKING BASKET 2.0

Jetset unveiled its revamped multi-centre tool in March to “sensational” results.



SPIRITS ARE high at Jetset HQ: the platform provider just relaunched its tailored multi-centre tool, Booking Basket, and continues to reward flight-only bookings with a range of rewards from Air Transat tickets to Greggs sausage rolls.

The previous iteration of Booking Basket, sales director Adrian Smyth says, was “clunky to say the least.” Two of

Jetset’s six-person in-house development team were commissioned to revamp the tool, with final refinements throughout peaks made ahead of its launch on March 20th.

“What we have been left with is just sensational; anyone is going to say we are still short of where our competitors are, and we know that we have got features that they can’t match.... we know that it is going to gain more and more traction.”

Booking Basket 2.0 is not the only fuel on Jetset’s fire. It began posting average call waiting times towards the end of the pandemic, with averages then around six to seven minutes. In the first two months

of this year, that was down to 14 seconds, with bookings up double digit percentage points against 2024.

Last year’s evolution of the JETS booking system after 18 years and its revamp of Booking Basket earlier this year prove that Jetset is not resting on its laurels. With bookings slowing since Easter, Adrian acknowledges that “everyone in the industry is going to have to work harder for business and expect more from their suppliers... while budget appears to be inflexible, agent and operator support to spark the imagination in terms of destinations and dates remains critical.”

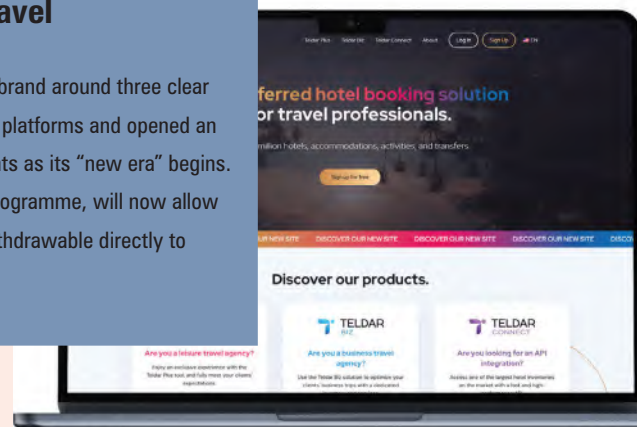
One in five HBX queries responded to by AI

IN THE areas where HBX Group has integrated it, 20% of customer service contacts have been exclusively handled with AI, reducing wait times substantially and “generating tangible results for our customers and partners,” according to COO Xabier Zabala.

Along with automated customer service, HBX Group has integrated AI into new hire training, using it to simulate various scenarios across degrees of difficulty; improving content, with translation to 18 languages; and detecting anomalies to identify phishing risks and cybersecurity breaches.

A new era for Teldar Travel

TELДАР TRAVEL has restructured its brand around three clear product pillars, unveiled new booking platforms and opened an enhanced loyalty programme for agents as its “new era” begins. Miles Attack, Teldar’s agent loyalty programme, will now allow agents to transfer miles into cash, withdrawable directly to agents’ bank accounts.



BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Wendy Wu Tours has launched a new Cruise & Tour holidays collection, curated from its most popular escorted tours.



TRAVELLERS CAN enjoy the best of both worlds with Wendy Wu Tours' latest launch – a host of brand-new Cruise & Tour holidays. Guests will embark on a fully inclusive tour over the land with an ocean voyage to round off the trip.

The new collection has been curated from a range of Wendy Wu's most popular tours across Japan, China, India and beyond, and have been combined with some of the world's leading cruise lines, allowing guests to explore the destination from all angles.

One of the new itineraries within the collection is the 23-day 'In Depth Japan' tour which offers holidaymakers a deep

exploration into Japanese culture.

Guests will explore the tranquil temples of Kyoto, the bright lights of the Tokyo and the majestic beauty of Mount Fuji before heading aboard *Norwegian Jade* to sail around Japan's main islands with stops in Kanazawa, Osaka, Koch and South Korea's Busan. Prices lead in from £9,890 per person.

Travellers can also choose to cross the last frontier on an expedition to Antarctica. First, guests will spend time in the bustling Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires before experiencing the power of Iguazu Falls. Next, guests will head south on a 10-night cruise with HX

Expeditions into the Antarctica wilderness to witness the beauty of the white continent and spot migrating whales, albatross and penguins. Prices lead in from £17,615 per person.

When booking a Cruise & Tour holiday by May 16th, 2025, guests can take advantage of the 'Partner Flies Free' offer of enjoy 50% solo airfares.

Phnom Penh welcomes European first

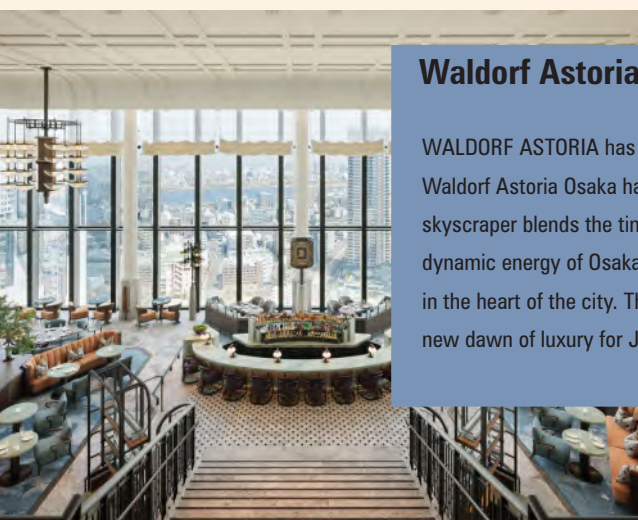
TURKISH AIRLINES will become the first European airline to fly to the Cambodian capital this winter.

Taking flight from December 10th, 2025, the service will operate between Istanbul and Phnom Penh three times per week via Bangkok. Travellers can book tickets until July 31st, 2025, for travel until June 30th, 2026. Fares lead in from £514.

The new Phnom Penh service brings Turkish Airlines' network in the Far East up to 20 cities and 21 airports, increasing passenger accessibility to key destinations within Southeast Asia and beyond.

Waldorf Astoria makes Japan debut

WALDORF ASTORIA has made its debut in Japan as the new Waldorf Astoria Osaka has opened its doors. The 252-room skyscraper blends the timeless design of New York with the dynamic energy of Osaka, promising guests an elegant retreat in the heart of the city. The opening of the property heralds a new dawn of luxury for Japan's hospitality sector.



Vietnam Airlines sets off for summer

VIETNAM AIRLINES has officially taken to the skies for its summer 2025 programme where the airline will operate three nonstop services per week to Hanoi and two per week to Ho Chi Minh City from London Heathrow.

The summer service will operate until October 26th, 2025, aboard Boeing B787-9 Dreamliners. Vietnam Airlines will also launch a nonstop service four times per week between Ho Chi Minh City and Denpasar, Bali in June, increasing to seven times per week in July; and a thrice-weekly service from Milan to Hanoi in July, further increasing connectivity between Europe and Vietnam. Once the summer season ends, flights to Vietnam from London will return to a daily schedule.

Vietnam Airlines offers the UK's only

nonstop flights to Vietnam, operating out of London Heathrow. Outbound flights from the London super-hub have been carefully scheduled to allow convenient connections for travellers taking the onward journey to multiple destinations including Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, South Korea, Japan and Australia.



Cross Hotels expands with Bali addition

CROSS HOTELS & Resorts has expanded its portfolio with the addition of Cross Bali Waluya, a new 115-key resort in the heart of Berawa, Bali. The property is penned to open in 2029, marking a key milestone in the brand's ongoing expansion across Indonesia.

Image Credits: Middle: Vietnam Airlines, Right: Cross Hotels & Resorts



Hunan Inspires UK Travel Industry at London Showcase

On 3rd April 2025, Hunan Province of China unveiled its cultural and tourism charm at a vibrant showcase held in central London, drawing the attention of UK travel professionals and media alike. The event was attended by Mao Weiming, Governor of Hunan Province; Zheng Zeguang, Chinese Ambassador to the UK; Rachael Farrington, Head of Tourism Affairs at VisitBritain; as well as leading UK travel agents and industry representatives.

With captivating performances, scenic imagery, and a taste of authentic Hunan cuisine, the event spotlighted the province's unique blend of natural beauty, heritage, and modern vitality—offering a fresh destination for UK travellers to discover.

For more information about travelling to Hunan, please feel free to contact Dennis at dennis@makeitchina.com.



Visit Gibraltar Showcase

SUTTON COLDFIELD played host to our Visit Gibraltar Showcase, where we were joined by a host of the island's finest attractions and operators, including Sunborn Yacht Hotel Resort, Dolphin Adventure, The Tunnels, MH Bland Travel Services, Gibraltar Distillery, The Elliott, easyJet Holidays and Blands Travel and Hollow Rock!

Want to get in on the [#TBShowcases](https://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/showcase) action? Our next event will be the Greece Showcase taking place in Marlow on May 7th. To confirm your place or find out when we will be hosting our next event near you contact events@travelbulletin.co.uk

Capella elevates Taipei's luxury landscape

LAST MONTH saw the opening of Capella Hotel Group's debut property in Taipei: Capella Taipei. Located in one of the city's most sought-after neighbourhoods, the Dunhua North Road district, the hotel connects guests to the city's dynamic business centre and artisanal shopping districts.

The urban retreat houses 86 rooms, including six exclusive accommodations with private pool terraces. The impressive 228-square-metre Capella Suite is the crowning jewel of the property, offering uninterrupted views of the Taipei 101 skyscraper.

The new property marks a significant milestone in Taipei's evolving luxury landscape. Capella Hotel Group president, Cristiano Rinaldi, said, "Our entrance into Taipei aligns with Taiwan's vision to elevate its

position as a premier destination for discerning global travellers. Capella Taipei stands as both a refined sanctuary and a stylish portal through which Taipei's year-round treasures can be meaningfully experienced."

Capella Taipei marks the brand's eighth property globally, joining those in Singapore, Sydney, Shanghai, Hainan, Hanoi, Ubud and Bangkok.



Finnair leads Europe in Japan offering

FINNAIR HAS reclaimed its title as Europe's leading airline to Japan this summer as its programme consists of 25 weekly flights to the country – more than any other European operator. Finnair offers direct flights to Tokyo-Haneda, Tokyo-Narita, Osaka and Nagoya.

Image Credits: Middle: Capella Hotel Group, Right: Finnair



On 11 April 2025, the 2025 Xuancheng Culture and Tourism (UK) Promotion and Communication Conference was successfully held in Bristol. Xuancheng's cultural and tourism resources garnered extensive attention from attendees. During official engagements, the delegation conducted in-depth discussions with Bristol Balloon Factory, Wendy Wu Tours (the UK's largest China-focused inbound tour operator) and Visit Peak District & Derbyshire, reaching multiple cooperative agreements. These efforts laid a solid foundation for Xuancheng's expansion into UK and European markets.

TRAVEL ROUTE RECOMMENDATIONS

Route 1: Wellness Theme



Day 1: Hangzhou West Lake -Xiling Seal Engravers' Society-Overnight stay in Hangzhou



Day 2: Dafo Mountain Mindfulness Valley-Yunjing Niushan Scenic Area-Overnight stay at Guangde Chengde Mountain Resort



Day 3: Jishan Bamboo Sea-Return journey

Route 2: Educational Theme



Day 1: Mount Huangshan-Overnight stay in Huizhou Ancient Town



Day 2: China Huizhou Ink Culture Park-Xuancheng Ink-stone Culture Park-Peach Blossom Pond-Overnight stay in Jing County



Day 3: Xuan Paper Culture Park-Santu Xuan Brush Factory-Zhaji Ancient Village

Route 3: Self-Drive Theme



Day 1: Oriental Pearl Tower -The Bund

Day 2: Jingting Mountain-China Alligator Lake-Ningguo Enlong World Wooden House Village



Day 3: Qinglong Bay Resort-Chuja Tan- Redwood Forest-Taoling Six Bends-Moon Bay Scenic Area

Hunan showcases trade-friendly tourism

THE HUNAN province invited agents and operator partners to Park Lane in London to ‘Meet in Hunan’ and immersve themselves in the region’s history, traditions and natural wonder.

Governor Mao Weiming, who led the delegation, said, “You may have never visited Hunan, but when it comes to the floating mountains in the movie Avatar, you'll know what it looks like: Zhangjiajie.”

The Hunan province was brought to life at the Four Seasons Park Lane, with live demonstrations of some of Hunan's iconic traditions (pyrography art and embroidery chief amongst them) and performances of eight centuries' old shadow puppetry and live music.

Zheng Zeguang, the Chinese ambassador to the UK, spoke at the event to iterate the importance of the cultural exchange between the UK and China – especially important in 2025 as VisitBritain anticipates a return to pre-pandemic levels of Chinese arrivals to the UK.



30 years of innovative Thai wellness

CHIVA-SOM, Thailand’s leading wellness brand, is celebrating its 30-year anniversary this year and to honour the occasion a host of new services will be unveiled at the flagship Hua Hin resort, including a Metabolic Reset, Weather-Responsive Wellness and tailored Men’s and Women’s Wellness Programmes.

In its 30-year history, Chiva-Som has continued to set a benchmark for new standards in sustainable and personalised care for all guests, ensuring their bodies and minds are looked after as well as their hospitality needs.

What is the most luxurious item you own?

Jeanette Ratcliffe
Publisher
jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk



Simon Eddolls
Sales Director
simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk



Sarah Terry
Senior Account Manager
sarah.terry@travelbulletin.co.uk
My health.



Tim Podger
Account Manager - Far East
tim@travelbulletin.co.uk
My house!



Matthew Hayhoe
Editor
matthew.hayhoe@travelbulletin.co.uk
My Marshall headphones.



Melissa Fox
Events Coordinator
melissa.paddock@travelbulletin.co.uk
My engagement ring!



Holly Brown
Events Coordinator
holly.brown@travelbulletin.co.uk
Marc Jacob’s glasses and sunglasses.



Leah Kelly
Acting Deputy Editor
leah.kelly@travelbulletin.co.uk
A Hotel Chocolat Velvetiser!



Areti Sarafidou
Events Coordinator
aret.sarafidou@travelbulletin.co.uk



EVENTS

events@travelbulletin.co.uk

PRODUCTION

production@travelbulletin.co.uk

CIRCULATION

circulation@travelbulletin.co.uk



Ever Upward, Day and Night

EVA Wins SKYTRAX 5-Star Airline Certification Ninth Year in a Row

Endlessly elevating flight experiences, forever our guiding star.
SKYTRAX has affirmed EVA's commitment to quality with the highest 5-Star rating.
Constantly pushing for perfection, EVA Air redefines world-class service.



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER



Stretch out under the sun on an extended getaway.

July is the month to sail! Virgin Voyages' award-winning Eat & Drink Festival creates buzzworthy moments for your Sailors, marrying Michelin Guide-recognized dining with immersive storytelling.

For a limited time they'll receive free balcony upgrades on select sailings.

LEARN MORE AT [FIRSTMATES.COM](https://firstmates.com)

FREE BALCONY
UPGRADES

ON SELECT EUROPEAN VOYAGES

Virgin
VOYAGES
BRILLIANT FOR YOU