

# travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge

## AGENT INSIGHT

Sandra Murray on connecting with clients

## AGENT BULLETIN

Online training opportunities, including tempting Thailand

## SLOVENIA

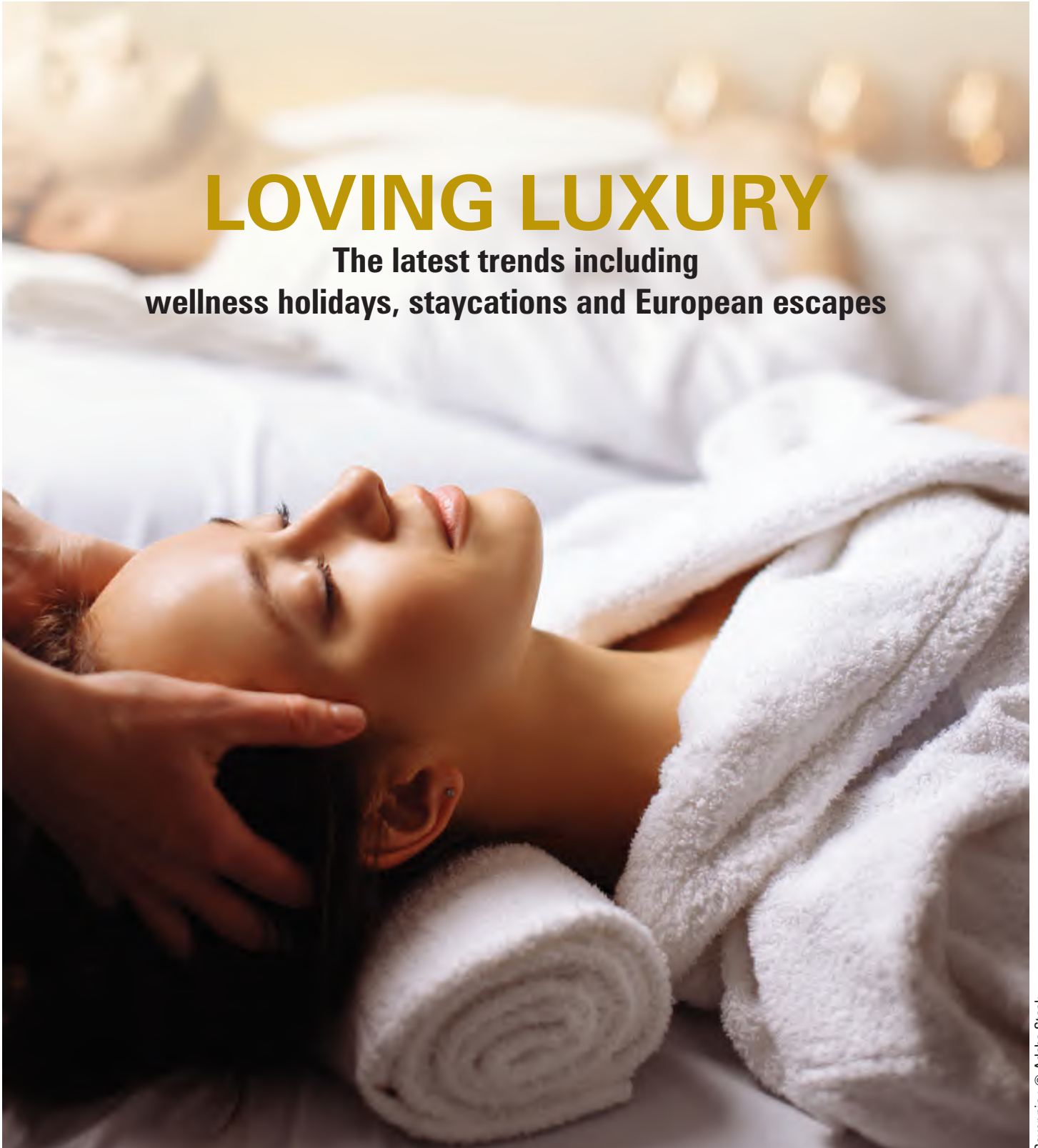
Setting a positive example for safe tourism across Europe

## GREECE

An exclusive interview with Greece's tourism minister

# LOVING LUXURY

The latest trends including wellness holidays, staycations and European escapes



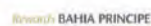
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# EAGER IN THE UK

Across Britain, people are keen to get travelling again, even with ongoing restrictions which will change the way we take holidays for the foreseeable future. Unique Pattnaik reports.



Nearly 40% of Brits are keen to book a holiday ASAP, according to a survey.

HOLIDAY HABITS will change, but it is not dampening the enthusiasm for many Brits keen to take a holiday post-lockdown. A survey by The Personal Travel Agents at Co-operative Travel found that Britons are eager to take a post-lockdown holiday as soon as they are able.

The survey of 1,600 customers shows a healthy appetite for holidaying, with 39% of respondents saying they would like to travel "ASAP" when travel restrictions are lifted. 8% said they would wait at least two months after destinations re-open, before taking a break, 11% said three months and 13% claimed they would wait at

least six months before travelling. Meanwhile, 29% said they plan to wait until 2021 to travel again.

The research revealed that Britons will be cautious when deciding where and how they holiday in the future. 62% selected Europe as the destination they would like to travel to next and 10% chose the UK. Of the long-haul holiday hotspots, the US was the most popular with 10% of respondents, followed by Mexico and the Caribbean at 9%.

It's the traditional beach break that holidaymakers are craving the most right now. 66% of respondents selected a beach holiday as their preferred post-lockdown escape, beating city breaks

(38%), UK staycations (15%), touring holidays (14%) and cruises (11%) hands-down.

With accommodation, the survey found that the pre-pandemic favourite of "all-inclusive" is likely to be rivalled by "self-catering" going forward. 40% people said they would still opt for all-inclusive but an equal number said they would choose self-catering, potentially due to concerns about shared spaces. B&B and half-board are the least popular choices, according to the poll.

Holidaying with family (51%), or partner/close friend (59%), are the most popular choices for the first getaway. After lockdown, 3% said they would travel solo.

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## Mixed industry response to UK quarantine rules

TRAVEL INDUSTRY leaders have given mixed responses about the new quarantine policy. All passengers arriving in the UK will have to stay in quarantine for 14 days after landing within the country borders, excluding arrivals from the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

"Another 14-day quarantine period for all travellers returning to the UK, will put off many people from travelling abroad, or visiting the UK. It will also have a damaging effect on the UK inbound and outbound tourism industries," said ABTA chief executive Mark Tanzer.

Joss Croft, CEO of UKinbound agreed: "While the health and safety of customers and staff remains our first priority, we implore



The quarantine-on-arrival policy has divided industry leaders.

the government to explore all options available, such as air bridges and extensive testing, so that international tourists can return as soon and as safely as possible, to their respective countries. If the 14-day quarantine is implemented, our industry will need significant and extended support."

But Steve Witt, co-founder of Not Just Travel, took a different view: "This may not be what the industry wants,

but it is probably what it needs. Travellers and holidaymakers want to get away and hotels, airlines and tour operators need customers; but the worst thing we could all do, is attempt to come out of this too quick. That risks a second peak and another lockdown, which could cause a further and deeper financial crisis."

*Report by Vinita Tiwari.*

## UNWTO launches guidelines to reopen tourism

THE WORLD Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has released a set of guidelines to help the tourism sector reopen safely and sustainably.

The guidelines highlight the importance of restoring the confidence of travellers through safety and security protocols designed to reduce risks. It includes checks where appropriate, including temperature scans, testing, physical distancing, enhanced frequency of cleaning and the provision of hygiene kits for safe air travel, hospitality services or safe events.

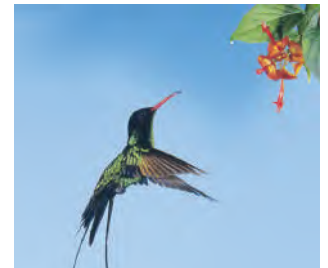
With UNWTO strengthening its partnership with Google, the UN agency will work with Google to promote digital learning and online skills training to provide new opportunities across the global tourism sector.

"The past weeks have highlighted the enhanced role technology plays in our lives and furthering the digital transformation of tourism will make the sector more resilient and create opportunities for people all around the world," said UNWTO secretary-general Zurab Pololikashvili.

## Agents rewarded by Jamaica Tourism Board in lockdown

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) trade sales team has devised initiatives to ensure agents are continuing to upskill themselves and stay motivated.

To provide trade partners with up-to-date destination information and to prepare them for future sales and the resumption of travel, the JTB has updated the Jamaica Rewards agent portal. The 'Lite Learning' section is a relaunch of the content with a new look and feel. The top 20 performing agents win a 'Taste of Jamaica' gift pack. The pack will include a selection of sauces, marinades, and herbs, giving agents an authentic taste of Jamaica from their own home.



JTB's UK trade sales team will utilise their social media channels to create virtual FAM trips. Agents will receive an itinerary in advance and will be taken on a virtual tour of Jamaica. A member of the sales team will be on hand to answer questions and provide additional information.

Agents who are not yet on the platform can register for Jamaica Rewards by visiting [www.jamaicarewards.co.uk](http://www.jamaicarewards.co.uk).



## West Midlands keen to test post-pandemic tourism

AS THE government seeks to open up UK tourist destinations, particularly to revive the staycation market, leaders in the West Midlands have offered the region as the national test bed for early reopening of tourism, hospitality and the cultural sector. Leaders including Fiona Allan, chair of the West Midlands Regional Board for Tourism sent a joint letter to culture secretary Oliver Dowden asking for the region to be used as a pilot area which would see the travel sector opening sooner than elsewhere in the country. The leaders believe that this would revive the region's tourism economy and help businesses, such as travel agents, reopen sooner.

## Airlines aiming to fly high again as borders reopen



easyJet is among the airlines keen to get back into business.

AIRLINES HAVE been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the gradual easing of travel restrictions has led to the reopening of the order books for tourists rather than cargo, which has become a major focus for many airlines during the lockdown period.

easyJet Holidays has launched flight-and-holiday packages for Egypt for the 2020 winter sun season. The beach break packages to Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada will include 23kg

of luggage and all transfers, starting in November.

LATAM will gradually increase its international and domestic operations during June and July, offering passengers more flexible options, lower fares and increased sanitation measures. This coincides with the company undergoing a restructuring to ensure stability.

Wizz Air has reopened its Belgrade base with routes to London Luton, as well as Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden,

Hanover, Memmingen/Munich West, Dortmund (Germany), Malmo, Stockholm Skavsta, Gothenburg Landvetter (Sweden), Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg (Switzerland), and Eindhoven (Netherlands).

Qatar Airways has resumed flights to Brisbane, which take off three times a week from Doha. The Middle Eastern carrier is looking to gradually resume services to all 80 of its destinations by the end of June.

## 'Plan de Desescalada' paves the way for Spain to open in July

SPAIN'S PRIME minister Pedro Sánchez announced that Spain will reopen to international tourists from July, pledging a safety guarantee for visitors and tourism employees. As of July, Mr Sánchez said that international tourism can resume and tourists can start planning their holidays to Spain. The prime minister emphasised that safety is paramount for tourism and the government will guarantee that tourists will not be exposed to any risks and will not bring any risk into the country.

He said that for Spain's phased reopening plan known as the 'Plan de Desescalada', the government worked with the tourism sector on measures for the reopening, coordinated by the Ministry of Industry, Business and Tourism collaborating with Spain's autonomous communities.

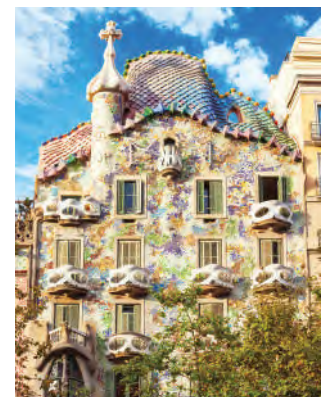
## VIVA to set sail in Germany for July and August

VIVA CRUISES has launched four-night river cruises in Germany for summer 2020. Throughout July and August, two of VIVA Cruises' ships, MS TREASURES and MS INSPIRE, will embark on short itineraries.

Departing and finishing in Frankfurt, MS TREASURES will be sailing along the Main River to explore some of its main attractions, such as the towns of Wertheim, famous for its magnificent half-timbered buildings; the Bavarian city of Würzburg, surrounded by vineyards; and historic Miltenberg with its old town.

All cruises will feature health and safety measures on board including screening of guests at the start of the cruise; temperature checks; reduced number of passengers on board; contactless check-in; compulsory masks when walking around the ship; table service for all meals; increased table distance; meals and activities arranged in time slots; increased disinfections of public areas and cabins; and a doctor on board.

For more information about the cruise, visit [www.viva-cruises.com/en](http://www.viva-cruises.com/en)



Going forward, the Prime Minister announced that Spanish tourism will be based on health, safety and sustainability.



## Wendy Wu woos agents with Japan savings

WITH ITS coronavirus state-of-emergency lifted after just seven weeks, Japan is preparing to open up to tourists again. Wendy Wu has launched an offer to encourage 2021 bookings with savings of up to £500 on all tours to Japan for next year. The company has 18 Japanese tours on offer, including the 13-day Discover Japan tour, which takes in Mount Fuji, the Japanese alps, Matsumoto Castle and the shrines of Kyoto; and the 11-day Sapporo & Snow Monkeys tour, which features the Sapporo Snow Festival, the lights of Tokyo, Kyoto and a chance to see snow monkeys.

[www.wendywutours.co.uk](http://www.wendywutours.co.uk)

## Agent INSIGHT



**SANDRA MURRAY**  
NORMANTON, YORKSHIRE

I DON'T sell a lot of luxury holidays, but I do have a particular customer who always wants to fly business class, stay in nice hotels, and use a private transfer – he knows what he likes and he's happy to pay for it. And the good news is that he has already booked two holidays for next year – an Alaska cruise and a journey on the Orient Express.

When it comes to selling luxury travel, I think the shop location makes a difference. If you're in an upmarket area, you need quite a few luxury bookings to help with the more expensive rates, so it's important to ensure your shop looks the part, with a good supply of luxury brochures and perhaps a screen showing high-end destinations. If you have space, have a nice seating area with a coffee table to create the right atmosphere.

Get into the habit of having coffee mornings where someone from a luxury travel company does a presentation.

When you go look around the hotels on fam trips, you can tell which ones offer that extra

service and look after their guests – the rooms have a few extras which guests love. The pool person will walk with them to the sunbed and put their towel out instead of just handing it over. They're made to feel important

I know its difficult to sell holidays at the moment but try ringing your customers to check in and let them know you can look out for holidays for them.

It's nice to remind your customers to have something to look forward to when we can travel again. A lot of people, including me, are missing going away even though the weather has been pleasant, so a cheerful phone call can put people in a good mood.

I read this the other day: "I remember an old man who commented to me on his deathbed, 'I've had a lot of trouble in my life, most of which never actually happened'". Likewise, Sir Winston Churchill thought we spend too much time thinking 'what if' instead of making the 'now' as good as we can. So, think happy positive things and stay safe.

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AGENTS CAN learn more about the destinations and attractions of Thailand with Tourism Thailand's interactive webinars. See below for more information. Pictured above: Wat Phra That Doi Suthep, a temple in Chiang Mai.

## AGENT INSPIRATION

EXPERIENCE THE luxury of Los Angeles with the Beverly Hills Home Hotelier video series. The seven videos, promoted by the Beverly Hills Conference and Visitors Bureau, include topics such as culinary exploration, wellness and self-care, interior design, and smoothie and cocktail crafting from the likes of The Beverly Hilton, Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills and Beverly Wilshire. For more, go to [www.lovebeverlyhills.com](http://www.lovebeverlyhills.com)

MALDIVES MARKETING and PR Corporation (MMPRC) invites agents to join a virtual journey to rediscover the memories of the beautiful islands in a Facebook Live event. You will be virtually transported to view some of the very best of Maldives and will learn how the tourism industry is preparing as we await your return To get involved, go to [www.facebook.com/events/586833138630960/](https://www.facebook.com/events/586833138630960/) on June 8 from 4pm-7pm BST.

TOURISM NEW Zealand has shared its new video with a reflection of what's important in life, showcasing the values that are integral to the New Zealand way of living. Despite borders remaining closed to international visitors for now, the team behind New Zealand's tourism efforts have shared a positive message as they begin to recover. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEGshu0HTlc&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEGshu0HTlc&feature=youtu.be)

BARBADOS IS rewarding Britain's NHS frontline staff by inviting people to nominate their NHS heroes and share their stories, in order to win an incredible holiday to the idyllic island, when travel resumes. Twenty NHS healthcare workers and their guests will be chosen to enjoy a truly memorable, seven-night trip to the island, as part of the Barbados Cares campaign. For more information, go to [www.BarbadosCares.com](http://www.BarbadosCares.com)

## AGENT TRAINING

- AGENTS CAN register to join one of Tourism Thailand's interactive training webinars to learn about Thailand's USPs, itinerary ideas and product updates. Agents who participate will have a chance to win £100 Love2shop vouchers. The available sessions are on June 10 from 10:30am-11:30am; and June 17 from 10:30am-11:30am. "We've seen a 900% increase in engagement with Thailand Expert recently with 325 new registrations in May alone, so it's really encouraging to see so many agents boosting their knowledge and confidence in selling Thailand," said Betsie Barr, trade marketing manager for TAT UK & Ireland. To register, go to [www.thailandexpert.co.uk/events](http://www.thailandexpert.co.uk/events)
- TO HELP furloughed workers during this time, Expedia Group has created a free travel industry training programme called Expedia Group Academy. It offers skill development through online learning modules and live content led by Expedia Group subject matter experts and travel industry leaders. It will feature training in diversity and inclusion, sales and business skills, and leadership. Interested individuals can connect with other participants on the Expedia Group Academy LinkedIn Group prior to the official programme launch in late June.
- ABTA HAS postponed all training seminars until the end of June but at this stage, there are still courses on offer for later in the year. These include a guide to VAT for travel (Manchester, September 30); Instagram for travel (London, October 13); data protection (London, October 20); business risk management (London, November 11); and excellence in customer service (London, December 1). For more information on the seminars, log on regularly to [www.abta.com/events/conferences-seminars-and-events](http://www.abta.com/events/conferences-seminars-and-events) or email [events@abta.co.uk](mailto:events@abta.co.uk)

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# COMPETITIONS

Win one of 3 bottles of Taittinger Champagne with Hummingbird.

A 7 night stay for 2 people at the Steingenberger Golf Resort El Gouna is up for grabs.

Test your travel knowledge in this week's Travel Bulletin Trivia Quiz to win £100 shopping voucher.

For all competitions visit [www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions)

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, June 18th. Solution and new puzzle will appear on June 19th.

The winner for May 22nd is **Alison Roffey, HPB Travel Club in Suffolk.**

May 22nd Solution: A=7 B=5 C=6 D=8

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

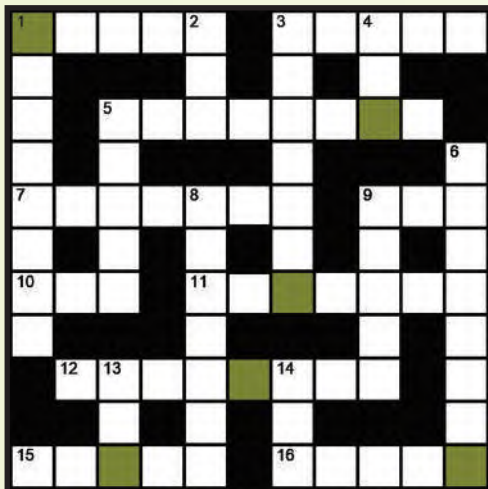


### WHERE AM I?

Known in Swahili as Mji Mkongwe, which means 'old town', this place is of significant cultural importance because of its fascinating architecture which reflects the diverse mix of cultures that have settled here, including Swahili, Arab, Persian, Indian and European elements.

CROSSWORD

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



Across

- Cruise ship, Norwegian \_\_\_\_ sounds like a gem (5)
- Family name of the sisters in the novel, Little Women (5)
- Capital of Paraguay (8)
- One of America's Great Lakes states (7)
- The wheels on this go round and round (3)
- Airport code for Lisbon international (3)
- Country famous for beer, waffles and chocolate (7)
- Hotel and Resorts chain owned by Marriott International (8)
- Capital of the Liguria region, sounds like a cake (5)
- Currency of Egypt (5)

Down

- Surname of former politician, often seen on TV with a copy of Bradshaw's Guide (8)
- Currency of Romania (3)
- First name of 1 Down (7)
- Rhodes international airport code (3)
- South American mountain chain (5)
- Famous 19th century engineer, \_\_\_\_ Kingdom Brunel (8)
- Banff National Park is located in this province (7)
- Queen guitarist, \_\_\_\_ May (5)
- A party for a bride to be (3)
- Carrier with hub at 10 Across (3)

Mystery Word: POLAND Where Am I? - Stone Town, Zanzibar

Solution:  
 Across: 1. PEARL, 3. MARCH, 5. ASUNCION, 7. INDIANA, 9. BUS, 10. LIS, 11. BELGIUM, 12. SHERATON, 15. GENOA, 16. POUND  
 Down: 1. PORTILLO, 2. LEU, 3. MICHAEL, 4. RHO, 5. ANDES, 6. ISAMBARD, 8. ALBERTA, 9. BRIAN, 13. HEN, 14. TAP



## RETHINKING LUXURY TRAVEL

**The whole travel industry has taken a hit in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, but if agents are aware of the latest trends in the luxury sector, this can help sell more high-end holidays. Georgia Lewis reports.**

LUXURY HOLIDAYS may seem like a far-off dream for many at the moment, but there will always be customers out there with healthy travel budgets and a love of the finer things in life. To effectively sell to these customers, it is smart to be aware of the travel trends in a post-pandemic world.

Demand for business class travel is expected to be lower and this will affect airline profitability, but there are still some bright lights on the horizon, such as a drive to embrace wellness tourism. This sector fits in well with luxury travel, with spa facilities being the obvious way to enjoy a relaxing, premium experience. However, while hotel and resort spas will need to work hard to demonstrate they are taking adequate safety precautions, a new drawcard for luxury wellness travel will be remote destinations which can still be easily accessed by car or in easy reach of airports and, ideally, in appealing natural surrounds.

Technology will play an important role too. To enhance customer safety, airlines and many hotels will be introducing sophisticated systems to minimise physical contact. Luxury

hotels in particular are expected to make these investments, and it means that they may become more attractive to clients who are keen to travel but still cautious about taking precautions against possible exposure to coronavirus.

Examples of technology that will change the face of luxury travel include more self-service options, especially at check-in, and digital meeting hubs to help with business trips where guests will be interacting with online AI technology – but there will be ways to personalise the experience, such as automated check-in facilities greeting customers by name and saving preferences from past stays.

A report on the luxury travel market, looking ahead to 2030, compiled by Amadeus, makes it clear that luxury travel means different things to different people.

“Luxury travel is subjective. For one traveller, it could be a private multimillion-dollar cruise around the Arctic on a famous yacht. For another, it could be the reassurance of having their dietary requirements automatically catered for throughout their entire

holiday and a bespoke designer wardrobe waiting for them in their hotel room – without them having to ask. For some, it could be having their favourite Michelin-starred chef flown in to prepare a meal in a Bedouin tent in the middle of the Sahara,” the report stated, before going on to define the three main types of luxury traveller.

These are reward hunters (those who focus on indulgence, often with a desire for wellness experiences or self-improvement); simplicity searchers (those who value ease when it comes to planning travel); and obligation meeters (those who want to add luxurious options to journeys they are obliged to take such as business trips, religious festivals or family occasions).

*To download the full report, go to: <https://amadeus.com/documents/en/travel-industry/report/shaping-the-future-of-luxury-travel-future-traveller-tribes-2030.pdf>*



# EGYPTIAN BLISS

**As Egypt seeks to reopen its tourism industry, there are opportunities for agents to capitalise on the wellness and honeymoon markets, which incorporate luxurious experiences.**



EGYPT IS by no means a new destination for wellness breaks, but with plenty of people seeking some post-pandemic pampering, it has plenty to offer clients who want to splash out on a luxurious, relaxing holiday.

The deserts of Egypt are ideal for treatments such as sand bathing and therapeutic dips in hot springs, while resorts near Cairo and along the Red Sea coast are popular for combining wellness breaks with a spot of sightseeing, all while staying in high-end accommodation.

Elsewhere in Egypt, Ras El Bar, is a resort city in the governorate of Damietta is another option. Located on the Mediterranean Sea at the mouth of the Damietta Nile branch, it offers a relaxing seaside vibe and the Steigenberger Hotel provides five-star luxury. Agents who are keen to earn commission from bookings with this hotel as well as others in the same group can register at: [www.deutskehospitality.com/en/company/sales/travel-agencies](http://www.deutskehospitality.com/en/company/sales/travel-agencies)

The Makadi Bay area, with its combination of Red Sea coastline, nearby desert and premium accommodation is another option for a relaxed luxury break in Egypt.

For agents with clients seeking to rebook a honeymoon or those who have been trying to plan a wedding since lockdown, the Egyptian tourism board is promoting Sahl Hasheesh, located 18km from the popular resort of Hurghada. It is designed in an arabesque style and offers high-end hotels and white sandy beaches. Oberoi, Iberotel, Steigenberger and Sentido are among the luxury hotel brands on offer in this romantic region.

With the cruise sector working hard to promote bookings in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are deals to be had on luxurious Nile River cruises. CroisiEurope is offering an eight-day voyage starting in Luxor and taking in Aswan, Karnak and the Valley of the Kings, starting from £1,364 per person.

[www.egypt.travel/en](http://www.egypt.travel/en)

## Mauritius gets the WTTC safety seal of approval

LUXURY HOLIDAY favourite Mauritius has been recognised by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) for its efforts to safely reopen to visitors.

At the time of writing, no local cases of COVID-19 had been reported in Mauritius since April 26 and lockdown was lifted on May 31. The WTTC has attributed the success of Mauritius to the Indian Ocean island country following strict measures since January. After a gradual closing of borders, the government applied strict containment measures, such as the isolation of the sick, followed by intensive tracking and tracing measures.



The private sector, including tourism businesses is now opening up, with social distancing measures still in place, as well as hand sanitising measures and the wearing of masks by hospitality staff as well as passengers in transfer vehicles and visitors on guided group tours.

For more information, go to [www.tourism-mauritius.mu](http://www.tourism-mauritius.mu)



## Crystal clear luxury sailings for 2023

CRYSTAL CRUISES has announced the complete 2023 deployment for the 980-guest Crystal Serenity, featuring 32 sailings ranging in length from seven to 23 nights – including the 140-night Wild Kingdoms & Exotic Discoveries World Cruise. The ship will sail to the South Pacific, Africa and Egypt, America, Canada, the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. Crystal Serenity's 2023 voyages are now available for booking with the Easy Book programme offering reduced deposits for all new bookings made until June 30, 2020. New safety measures will be announced soon and Crystal's voyages won't restart until global health authorities give the green light. For further information and reservations, call 020 7399 7601 or visit [www.crystalcruises.co.uk](http://www.crystalcruises.co.uk)

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# EUROPE AND UK STAY STRONG

**A survey of its customers by luxury travel sister companies Abercrombie & Kent and Cox & Kings found that demand for premium holidays in Europe and the UK remains strong.**



EUROPE AND the UK are the strong favourites for luxury holiday bookings, according to a customer survey undertaken by sister companies Abercrombie & Kent (A&K) and Cox & Kings.

Customers from both companies named Europe, followed by the UK as their top two preferred destinations for luxury holidays. For A&K customers, the top 10 list was then made up of North America; Africa; Far East; the Caribbean; South America; Australasia; Indian Ocean; and the Middle East. There was a slight variation among Cox & Kings customers, whose top 10 was rounded out with Far East; North America; South America /Africa; Indian Subcontinent; the Middle East; Australasia; the Caribbean; and Indian Ocean.

The luxury market is still a cautious one, the survey found, with most people looking to travel next autumn and winter at the earliest, followed by spring 2021. Summer 2020, however, is considered a "write-off" for most survey respondents.

However, the good news for agents is that while travellers are not keen to travel in the coming months, more than half are planning holidays or looking to start planning soon. Additionally, more than 70% of survey respondents said that their budget remains the same for the next 12 months.

For A&K, the top two holiday types were villa holidays (85%) and wildlife holidays (82.3%), while for Cox & Kings, the most popular choices are private tours (73.3%), small group holidays (73.1%), and arts and culture (76.4%). Hygiene, safety and reliability were big priorities, with 44% saying they would be more cautious about where and when they would next travel.

"What holidays look like has changed dramatically, this pandemic isn't going to be easily forgotten. Unsurprisingly, people want to work with a reputable company so that if something bad does happen, they can rely on their operator to get them home quickly," said Kerry Golds, managing director of A&K.

## French Polynesia lifts lockdown for domestic travel

FRENCH POLYNESIA has lifted its lockdown and is initially opening up travel to the domestic market. An announcement on the opening of borders for travellers from outside the region is expected by mid-June. The local lockdown was lifted on May 21 and domestic flights started the following day, with Air Tahiti resuming flights to the islands of Huahine, Raiatea, Bora Bora, Rangiroa, Tikehau, Fakarava, Rurutu, Tubuai, Nuku Hiva and Hiva Oa.

Sailing yachts which have been docked in busy marina areas during the lockdown will have to leave and resume their voyages.

All shops, restaurants, bars and nightclubs are open again. Sporting events, public gatherings and religious services are allowed to take place as normal.



However, the government has made some recommendations to prevent the virus from returning, such as maintaining social distancing and wearing masks in crowded areas.

[www.tahititourisme.com/en-us/](http://www.tahititourisme.com/en-us/)



## Optimism in Andalucía with solid summer bookings

WHILE UK tourists cannot yet visit Spain, the Andalucían tourism authorities are reporting solid forward bookings for this summer. The vice president of the tourism board and Andalucían tourism minister, Juan Marín told a press conference that July reservations are at 60% capacity and 75% for August, according to data from travel agencies and tour operators. The Costa del Sol has moved into the second phase of lifting its lockdown, and the minister said he expects the area to be declared virus-free by July so that normal tourism activities can fully resume. This includes the welcoming back of international tourists to Andalucía and a lifting of the 14-day quarantine period for arrivals from outside Spain.

For more information, go to [www.andalucia.org](http://www.andalucia.org)

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## Slovenia sets an example for European tourism

AFTER LOCKING down the country on March 12, making it the first European country to do so, Slovenia declared the end of the COVID-19 outbreak in mid-May, again a European first. While there will be some restrictions in place, such as social distancing, continued tracking and tracing measures and isolation of people in high-risk categories, the first steps towards reopening for tourism are being made. Slovenia is now allowing EU nationals to cross the border at



selected checkpoints, ending the seven-day quarantine policy. Third-country nationals will be subject to a two-week quarantine, with some

exceptions, so travel agents should check the Slovenian tourism board website for more details in regard to right of entry for UK citizens.

Hotels with 30 rooms or less and campsites are open, although wellness, spa, swimming pool and fitness facilities remain closed. Just in time for summer, restaurants will reopen with food service on terraces and in gardens. Tourist agencies and guided tours are back in business. However, masks will need to be worn by all people over the age of 12 on public transport.

*For the latest information on Slovenian tourism, go to [www.slovenia.info](http://www.slovenia.info)*

## Apart from travel agents, obviously, what shops are you looking forward to visiting again?



**Jeanette Ratcliffe**  
Publisher  
[jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
B&Q to buy turf, paint and plants!



**Matt Gill**  
Senior Account Manager  
[matt.gill@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:matt.gill@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
Rapha Cycling in Soho.



**Georgia Lewis**  
Managing Editor - News  
[news@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:news@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
Lakeland so I can replace tired bakeware!



**Bill Coad**  
Account Manager  
[bill.coad@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:bill.coad@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
The barbers!



**Mariam Ahmad**  
Assistant Editor - News  
[news@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:news@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
Columbia Road flower market



**Sarah Terry**  
Account Manager  
[sarah.terry@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:sarah.terry@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
I would trade any shop for a swimming pool opening up.



**Simon Eddolls**  
Sales Director  
[simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
Somewhere that sells sunglasses - I need a new pair before the cricket season starts.



**Hannah Carter**  
Events Operations Manager  
[hannah.carter@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:hannah.carter@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
Shoe Embassy.



**Tim Podger**  
Account Manager - Far East  
[tim.podger@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:tim.podger@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
DIY stores.



**Ashweene Beerjeraz**  
Events Assistant  
[ashweenee.beerjeraz@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:ashweenee.beerjeraz@travelbulletin.co.uk)  
Topshop.

### EVENTS

[events@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:events@travelbulletin.co.uk)

### PRODUCTION

[production@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:production@travelbulletin.co.uk)

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[circulation@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:circulation@travelbulletin.co.uk)

# Open for BUSINESS

**Harry Theoharis**  
Minister of Tourism, Greece



**After implementing a strict, early lockdown, Greece is ready to welcome tourists. Harry Theoharis, the tourism minister, talks about how your clients can enjoy Greece safely.**

#### **How has Greece limited the impact of COVID-19?**

We collectively followed the instructions of the scientists. In the early stages of the outbreak, we implemented a lockdown across the country very quickly. We've managed to get one of the best epidemiological records in Europe and the world. It looks easy, but that was not the case. The number of cases and deaths in many other countries, unfortunately, confirms this. Greece set as its top priority protecting people's health.

#### **How will Greece rebuild tourist confidence?**

We are inviting visitors from countries with good epidemiological characteristics, without quarantine. The main message is: Come to Greece. No danger, no fear, no anxiety. We follow international practices for dealing with any cases. But we can never eliminate the risk in the real world. We do our best to mitigate it.

#### **How will visitors to Greece be protected?**

The basic principle is the application of social distancing, as well as training of professionals and citizens to effectively implement hygiene measures. For air transport, sampling checks will be carried out on arrival. The European Aviation Safety Agency guide provides instructions for disinfecting public areas at airports. On transfers, there is a maximum number of passengers permitted to ensure social distancing. The use of masks is mandatory, drivers should wear gloves, avoid handshakes, keep antiseptic fluid and vehicles should be adequately ventilated. After each transfer, vehicles must be disinfected. Only outdoor swimming pools in hotels are allowed. There needs to be two metres between poolside seats in every direction. Hotels should disinfect sunbeds after use; remove fabric covers from sunbeds; and cover surfaces with materials that can be disinfected. At attractions, rules for social distancing, seating distribution and gathering size apply.

#### **What regions are being promoted to tourists?**

Greece is one whole country and there are no distinctions between the places that tourists will choose for their holidays.

Of course, we have developed an action plan depending on the infrastructure of each destination, health checks and access to healthcare. We are prepared to act immediately in emergencies, even in remote areas.

#### **How important is sustainability?**

Our care for environmentally friendly tourism is underlined by recent legislation. For the first time, the development of special forms of tourism, such as diving, which involves close interaction with nature, is clearly defined and institutionalised.

#### **What plans do you have to engage with travel agents?**

I am in continuous contact with our stakeholders in the tourism market. Let's not forget, after all, that travel to Greece, accommodation, food – the overall tourist package – from a purely economic point of view, is extremely attractive.

#### **What tips can you give agents to sell Greece?**

Greece's profile has not changed. However, after the exemplary management of COVID-19, the prestige of Greece shines even brighter. We have some of the most emblematic archaeological sites on the planet. It's ideal for holidays and activities of all kinds, a top destination in the Mediterranean, in a strategic location, within a few hours' reach.

#### **Are there any virtual tours available to inspire agents?**

The Hellenic Tourism Organization has a wonderful YouTube channel called Visit Greece. The videos take you on a trip to our country – it is not only the stunning landscapes, the history, or the important sites. It's the people, culture and flavours as well.

#### **What is a motivational message from Greece?**

Travel means the right to freedom and happiness. Greece is opening the most hospitable embrace in the Mediterranean, step by step, for the whole world.

*To read the full interview, go to [www.travelbulletin.co.uk](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk)*

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