

# Travel bulletin

Giving agents the edge

## Far East

A destination reopening to the world and rising up clients' bucket list.

### MORE IN...

#### Agent Bulletin

The latest chances to learn and earn, with a Qatar Formula 1® stay up for grabs. **Pg. 7**

#### Yorkshire Ball

A recap of the Ball's 24th iteration, which raised over £7,000. **Pg. 12**

#### City Breaks

Staycations, short breaks or metropolis mega-trips. **Pg. 19**

visit  
QATAR



#### Star Awards Sponsor

Visit Qatar combines affordable luxury with traditional practices. (Pg 4)



Travel **bulletin**  
SHOWCASES

INVITES YOU TO A

# JAPAN showcase

Join leading, regional representatives, airlines and operators to learn everything this stunning destination has to offer you and your customers. Whether you're interested in heritage, attractions, island hopping, beaches, volcanoes, gastronomy, nature or adventure.....Japan has it all!

WEDNESDAY **6<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER** LONDON

THURSDAY **7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON MANCHESTER PICCADILLY

THESE EVENTS ARE BY INVITATION ONLY  
and will be booked on a first come first served  
basis with limited space available.

### Timings

Registration

6:00<sup>PM</sup>

Travel Bulletin

Welcome

6:25<sup>PM</sup>

Client

Presentations

6:30<sup>PM</sup>

Hot Dinner

7:30<sup>PM</sup>

Client

Presentations

8:15<sup>PM</sup>

Product Quiz &

Free Prize Draw

9:15 - 9.45<sup>PM</sup>

### FEATURING



To confirm your place at one of these amazing events, email the name, company and contact details by August 30th 2023 to: [events@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:events@travelbulletin.co.uk) or Telephone: 020 7973 0136



04



**Star Awards Sponsor**  
Visit Qatar is the latest in a shining lineup of Star Awards sponsors!

05



**News**  
Keeping you in the know with the latest updates.

10



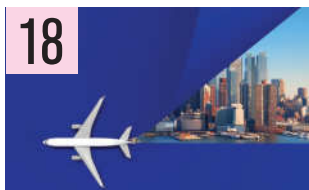
**Yorkshire Ball**  
Moments captured from the best ball in the Dales.

15



**Far East**  
Far-flung itineraries, new accommodation options and much more from a dream destination.

18



**City Breaks**  
Immerse your guests into the stunning skylines and culture centres with our top city picks.



# PLAN OF ATTACK

**Research by Expedia Group has found that UK travellers spend longer than average choosing their holiday destination, and even longer planning it.**

CHOOSING THE right holiday for your client can be a timely process, and research by the Expedia Group and Luth Research has found that UK travellers spend more than five hours on average seeking inspiration for their trip in the 45 days prior to booking.

The research aims to shed light on traveller preferences and consumption habits, illustrating where and how travellers plan and book their travel. Across the seven countries surveyed, travellers view, on average, 141 pages of travel content in the 45 days prior to booking. UK travellers in particular have been found to spend one month thinking about their initial trip, and more than one month planning it.

The majority of the surveyed travellers said they were unsure on where to go before they began planning, with nearly three in five disclosing they had no place in mind or had multiple destinations on their mind (59%). 86% of UK travellers said to have used online travel agencies in their path to purchase a holiday to help guide them to a decision.

When it comes to deciding where to take travel inspiration from during the planning stage, 77% of travellers said they turn to the guiding light of social media. Influencer power across multiple social platforms plays a pivotal role, with 22% of UK travellers stating that they especially look out for links and codes that high-profile users give away when it comes to booking a holiday.

Advertising is still a powerful tool, with nearly one in five travellers stating they have been influenced into a decision via advertisement schemes.

Cheryl Miller, SVP and CMO of Expedia for Business, said: "This research highlights just how much thought and consideration travellers put into planning a trip in the weeks leading up to booking, as they seek to niche and refine their choices. By providing actionable insights to help reach, inspire, and engage travellers during their path to purchase, we're pleased to provide B2B travel partners with the tools required to convert their guests and customers."



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







## Travel Bulletin is proud to present the latest STAR AWARDS SPONSOR

### Visit Qatar

VISIT QATAR is thrilled to be part of the *Travel Bulletin Star Awards 2023*, celebrating the successes and achievements of the UK travel trade and to share more about our destination with all the attendees.

Qatar is an undiscovered world that combines affordable luxury with middle eastern traditions. Merging rich culture, diverse landscapes and a cosmopolitan population, Qatar invites travellers to experience a world beyond.

With Qatar's popularity rising, agents need to know more about the destination and everything it offers. The Qatar Specialist Programme teaches all about the exciting new products and events within the destination and will help agents gain insider tips on the top things to do when planning a visit. The programme includes a wide range of content and engaging tools to support agents such as enhancing your destination knowledge of Qatar; ability to build tailored itineraries and therefore increasing the value of sales to Qatar.



The programme is made up of 10 modules and one final assessment where agents will receive a certificate after passing. There is also a range of downloadable material to make bookings easier.

It is an ever-increasingly popular destination that holds thrills and novel experiences for every type of traveller. With a thriving arts and culture scene, heart-warming hospitality, family-oriented activities and fun, thrilling adventures and sports, and pristine nature, Qatar makes a compelling destination. It is a country where tradition meets modernity; where the sand meets the sea; and where people come together to experience unique offerings. From five-star resorts and hotels to a diverse culinary scene, museums and cultural sights, Qatar truly offers something for everyone.

[www.visitqatar.com](http://www.visitqatar.com)



## Journey Beyond with new rail travel style

JOURNEY BEYOND is going for gold with its new travel style.

Gold Premium is now bookable on The Ghan and Great Southern for 2024, sitting between the Gold and Platinum categories.

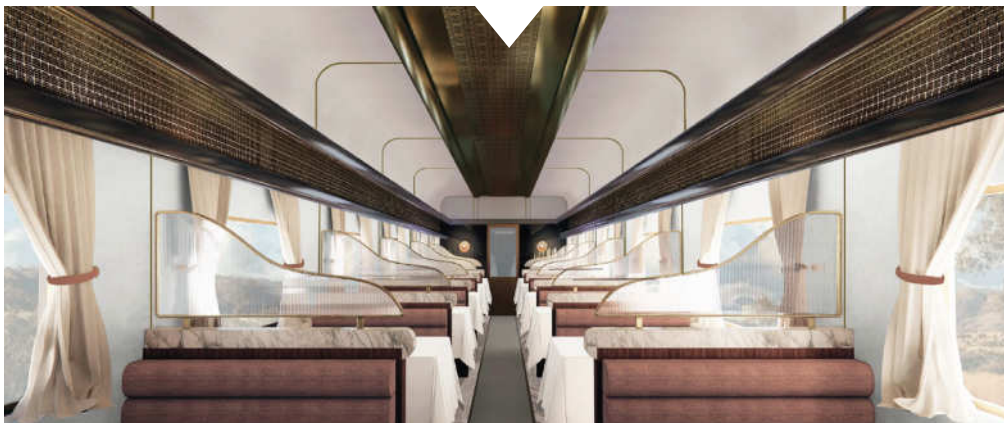
The new travel style elevates the classic cabin experience, with contemporary Australian design from global firm Woods Bagot, which recently upgraded the Platinum

class carriages across the fleet.

Currently, the upgraded category is on offer on both The Ghan and Great Southern rail-only journeys and a choice of package options.

Prices start from £1,797 per person for Gold Premium and £2,507 for Gold Premium Suite bookings.

[www.journeybeyondrail.com.au](http://www.journeybeyondrail.com.au)



## Travel Counsellors announces record-breaking business owner boom

SINCE JANUARY 2023, Travel Counsellors has recruited more new business owners than during the entirety of 2022, delivering a 25% increase year-on-year.

On top of the impressive recruitment boom, since the new financial year (beginning November 2022), over 200 business owners have joined the platform, with a third returning to the travel industry after the pandemic.

Matt Harding, general manager at Travel Counsellors, said: "It's brilliant to see the record number of new Travel Counsellors we have joining the community as travel continues to boom.

"We have a very scalable business model and to continue to achieve our record growth we need to ensure we are recruiting the highest calibre talent for both leisure and business travel who share our core values and culture."

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

## Etihad Airways bolsters US programme with Boston service

BOSTON MARKS Etihad Airways' fourth destination in the US, joining Chicago, New York and Washington.

Etihad Airways has announced the Boston service will commence from March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, further solidifying the connection between North America and Abu Dhabi. The service will operate four times per week, utilising the airline's Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner.

Chief executive officer of Etihad Airways, Antonioaldo Neves, said: "We are delighted to



introduce flights to Boston, which opens up Abu Dhabi to visitors. We eagerly await welcoming guests to our extraordinary home as well as offering them access to our growing global network."

[www.etihad.com](http://www.etihad.com)



## hoppaGo unveils new web portal

HOPAGO'S NEW digital portal offers agents updated information and solutions to develop and capitalise on more sustainable and repeatable revenue from ground transportation services.

Agents can build multiple touchpoints for customers to purchase ground transport add-ons, find out details on availability and the full scope of available services, access easy-to-use service channels, and find technology product documentation and resources.

[www.hoppa.com](http://www.hoppa.com)



## VIVA Cruises sails into CLIA

EUROPEAN RIVER cruise specialist Viva Cruises has been confirmed as a River Cruise Operator member of CLIA.

In joining CLIA, agents will enjoy wider visibility from VIVA across the network's platforms, including podcasts, online resources and flagship events.

Since being established in 2018, VIVA has expanded to an eight-ship fleet with one on the horizon.

[www.cruising.org](http://www.cruising.org)



## Walk your way to a Vietnam trip with Intrepid fundraiser

AS PART of its annual charity event, Intrepid Travel is giving away five trips to Vietnam to the top fundraisers.

Taking place on September 10<sup>th</sup>, the Blue Dragon Marathon Walk will raise funds for the Blue Dragon Children's Foundation, bringing together more than 300 people across 15 countries to support the cause.



This year, for the first time, the top two individual fundraisers and top three team fundraisers will win a spot on Intrepid's 10-day Vietnam Express Southbound itinerary. Vietnam is a key market for the operator, carrying close to 4,000 customers in 2022.

Intrepid Foundation general manager, Biheng Zhang, said: "A hugely popular international destination for Intrepid at large, Vietnamese communities have always welcomed us with open hearts and generous hospitality. Participating in or sponsoring the marathon walk is our chance as an industry and as travellers to give back."

The company is inviting trade partners to gather their teams, sign up for either a mini, half or full marathon on Intrepid's fundraiser page, and join the good cause. [www.intrepidtravel.com](http://www.intrepidtravel.com)



AMERICAN QUEEN is offering Love2Shop vouchers for any agents who register for its newly launched online training academy. By registering, agents will be awarded with A £10 voucher, £20 once they have successfully completed the course, and an extra £50 if they make a booking by September 30<sup>th</sup> – totalling £80 worth of vouchers all together.

## Virgin Hotels Collection forms global sales team

VIRGIN HOTELS Collection has announced the formation of a global sales team to continue carrying the brand's legacy worldwide and to enhance its commitment to its trade partners.

Executives from both Virgin Hotels and Virgin Limited Edition have been brought together to combine their breadth of brand experience with an integrated sales team to drive strategic growth across the globe.

Chief marketing officer Doug Carrillo said: "The global sales team is filled with a dynamic ensemble of proven leaders who exemplify Virgin's commitment to transforming the luxury lifestyle and ultra-luxury hotel industries for the better. I am confident they will continue to bring new ideas to the table and play pivotal roles in the brand's ongoing success and expansion."

[www.virginhotelscollection.com](http://www.virginhotelscollection.com)

## Polar Routes breaks records

THE BRITISH polar expedition cruise specialist has reason to celebrate this month as July 2023 was revealed as the biggest sales month in the company's seven-year history. The cruise line saw a 110% year-on-year increase in sales between July 2022 and 2023, with enquiries increasing by 181%.

"July and August are usually quiet months for interest in and bookings to the polar regions, but the autumnal weather in wash-out July has turned out to be a record-breaker for us," said Martin Johnson, director and co-founder of Polar Routes. [www.polarroutes.co.uk](http://www.polarroutes.co.uk)



## Thornybush launches Africology Spa Centre

The Game Lodge has launched the Africology Spa & Wellness Centre, where visitors will be offered a Wellness Experience that focuses on healthy living alongside once-in-a-lifetime wildlife encounters. Visitors will also be offered the chance to take part in Thornybush's exclusive wellness safari. [www.thornybush.com](http://www.thornybush.com)

## AGENT INCENTIVES

- RIVIERA TRAVEL is giving away Amazon vouchers worth £150 every week this month. The prize goes to the trade partner with the highest booking value each week. Winners will be announced on the *Riviera Travel Agents* Facebook page. [www.rivieratravel.co.uk](http://www.rivieratravel.co.uk)
- FIRST CLASS Holidays is offering agents the chance to win two flights to South Africa in partnership with Ethiopian Airlines. Agents earn points for every South Africa booking made, with the top-booking agent notified by w/c November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. [www.fcholidays.com](http://www.fcholidays.com)
- THE TOP bookers with If Only and its campaign partners by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 have the chance to win two-night stays at the Rixos Premium Dubai, Rixos Premium Saadiyat Island, Rixos The Palm Hotel & Suites, and three-night stays at the Westin Dubai Mina Seyahi and JA Palm Tree Court. Select blackout dates apply to prize stays. [www.ifonly.net](http://www.ifonly.net)
- PREMIER HOLIDAYS continues to offer £5 One4all vouchers with short-haul (Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Herm, Sark, Isle of Man, Isles of Scilly, Isle of Wight, Shetland and Orkney) bookings, and up to £150 vouchers for long-haul (Faraway, Australia, South Africa, Beaches, New Zealand, Canada, America and Cruise) bookings dependent on value. [www.premierholidays.co.uk](http://www.premierholidays.co.uk)
- AGENTS HAVE until September 25<sup>th</sup> to log bookings of five nights or more to Temptation Miches Resort for the chance to win a place on a VIP fam trip, taking place this December. [www.temptationrewards.com](http://www.temptationrewards.com)



**A HOST of happy Travel Counsellors headed aboard Virgin Voyages across the Mediterranean, immersing themselves in social media training to boost sales and grow business. Four social media-savvy Travel Counsellors showcased exactly how to gather and share great content and make their channels their own.**

*Travel* bulletin

# COMPETITION

**Win a fam trip place to Sun Siyam Resorts in the Maldives by answering four simple questions!**

**Find out more at [www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions)**



## AGENT TRAINING

- £100 IS up for grabs every month with AIUla's training course, which encapsulates Saudi Arabia's natural and cultural haven. Agents can learn all about the area's four heritage sites and hear the latest plans in store for the destination's future. [www.alulaspecialist.com](http://www.alulaspecialist.com)
- COMPLIMENTARY PASSES for the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex are available to agents completing the trade training programme, which covers the space-age attraction's offerings and everything you need to know to sell it. [www.onlinetraveltraining.com/free-courses/providers/KennedySpaceCenter](http://www.onlinetraveltraining.com/free-courses/providers/KennedySpaceCenter)
- THE CLOCK is ticking on your chance to win a five-night stay in a deluxe double room with a seaview at Miraggio Thermal Spa Resort. The prize will be given to one lucky agent completing the resort's trade training programme, which offers access to the latest news and offers. [www.miraggio2b.com](http://www.miraggio2b.com)
- EARN 15% off Newmarket itineraries for yourself and a plus-one, the opportunity to earn a fam trip spot and an Achievement Award certificate when completing Newmarket Holidays' training programme. You can learn on the go and join the operator's agent incentive programme upon completion. [www.training.newmarketholidays.co.uk](http://www.training.newmarketholidays.co.uk)
- FORT MYERS & Sanibel's trade portal covers the unspoilt Floridian hotspot, island-hopping itineraries, and all the latest on what the destination has to offer. Agents can sign up for webinars hosted by local partners, access a marketing tool kit, and communicate with in-destination partners directly. [www.island-findings.com](http://www.island-findings.com)
- THE SPAIN Specialist Program continues to be the one-stop shop for the latest destination knowledge and itinerary suggestions. [www.spainspecialistprogram.com/en/](http://www.spainspecialistprogram.com/en/)



## Superb summer savings with Sandals Resorts

AGENTS CAN bag their clients a great deal on a number of Caribbean holidays next summer with Sandals Resorts.

For June 2024, Unique Caribbean Holidays Ltd. (UCLH) is offering travellers a selection of great deals across Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Antigua and



Grenada accommodations, ranging from seven- to 10-night stays.

Some of the top holidays deals to ensure travellers start their Caribbean adventure on the right foot include a seven-night stay at Sandals Ochi Beach Resort in Jamaica for £1,799 per person, a seven-night stay at Sandals Grenada Resort & Spa in Saint Lucia for £2,275 per person, and a 10-night stay at Sandals Grande Antigua Resort & Spa for £2,745 per person.

All holiday packages include all-inclusive accommodation, resort transfers and return flights to London Heathrow with Virgin Atlantic.

Prices are valid for travel on select dates in June 2024.

Agents can either book their client's Caribbean haven through Sandals' agent portal or by phone to UCHL. [www.booking.sandals.co.uk](http://www.booking.sandals.co.uk)



EXPLORA JOURNEYS marked a new era of transformative luxury as its flagship, *EXPLORA*, set sail on her maiden voyage to Iceland earlier this month. The vessel will spend the summer sailing the waters of northern Europe before crossing the Atlantic to spend the winter months in North America and the Caribbean, before returning to Europe to complete a full roster of summer 2024 itineraries.

## MSC cruises into winter

MSC CRUISES has opened sales for its Winter 2024/2025 programme, offering a wide array of fan-favourite destinations, expedition voyages and a selection of new exclusive itineraries.

Voyages across North America, the Caribbean, the Arabian Sea, the Mediterranean, northern Europe and the Red Sea will be available for the season, promising something for every sailor.

The programme will further the cruise line's presence in North America, sailing past the iconic New York skyline and the white sandy Miami beaches, while the latest flagship, *MSC Euribia*, will mark its debut in the UAE.

*MSC World Europa* will continue her reign over the Mediterranean, washing away those winter blues in the basking sun, and *MSC Musica* will sail the Red Sea. [www.msccruises.co.uk](http://www.msccruises.co.uk)

## Singapore Airlines boosts Northern Summer services

SINGAPORE AIRLINES will ramp up services to destinations across its entire network during its Northern Summer 2024 season due to a surge in demand for air travel in its key markets. From March 31<sup>st</sup> to October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, services will increase to pre-pandemic volumes across multiple destinations, and the direct service from Singapore to Barcelona will be reinstated.

Destinations that will reach pre-pandemic service numbers include Beijing and Shanghai, Copenhagen, Melbourne and Perth, Dubai, and Seattle, among others. [www.singaporeair.com](http://www.singaporeair.com)



## Radisson RED makes eastern Europe debut

THE FIRST Radisson RED hotel has arrived in eastern Europe. Located in Tbilisi, Georgia, the hotel is situated on the site of a historic 100-year-old post office, blending together the 1920s with modern day luxury and gastronomy. [www.radissonhotels.com](http://www.radissonhotels.com)



SUDOKU

WIN A £20 M&S VOUCHER IN THE *Travel* bulletin 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 August 24<sup>th</sup>. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for July 28<sup>th</sup> is John Hall from Carrick Travel.

July 28<sup>th</sup> 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	1



THIS CITY, dubbed Music City, was home to some of the most iconic country artists of all time, and is home to a replica of the Parthenon, constructed in 1897.

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

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

Across

- 1 Cruise company, sounds fit for royalty (8)
- 6 This comic recently celebrated 85 years with a star-studded cartoon issue (5)
- 7 Small island in a river (3)
- 8 One of the Channel Isles (4)
- 9 Largest of the US states (6)
- 10 The annual Henley Royal Regatta is held on this river (6)
- 12 Holiday isle off the coast of Malta (4)
- 15 South American city, in short (3)
- 16 Flemish city (5)
- 17 South coast resort with an iconic Royal Pavilion (8)

Down

- 1 City hosting the 2024 Summer Olympics (5)
- 2 N'Djamena is the capital (4)
- 3 Gyeongbokgung Palace is a popular tourist attraction in this city (5)
- 4 Famous Jordan archaeological site (5)
- 5 If going abroad, don't leave home without this (8)
- 6 Virgin Holidays describe this Caribbean island as a tropical paradise (8)
- 9 Amsterdam Schiphol international airport code (3)
- 10 Kitzbuhel is a popular resort in this region of Austria (5)
- 11 Mount in the Bernese Alps (5)
- 13 Cinema chain (5)
- 14 Actor Simon, probably best known for his films: Shaun of the Dead and Paul (4)

CROSSWORD

W/Across: 1 PRINCESS, 6 BEANO, 7 AIT, 8 SARK, 9 ALASKA, 10 THAMES, 12 GOZO, 15 RIO, 16 GHENT, 17 BRIGHTON  
 Down: 1 PARIS, 2 CHAD, 3 SEOUL, 4 PETRA, 5 PASSPORT, 6 BARBADOS, 9 AMS, 10 TYROL, 11 EIGER, 13 ODEON, 14 PEGG  
 Mystery Word: CRETE. HERE AM I?: NASHVILLE

## Cunard sales director: agent feedback 'overwhelming' as trade push continues

TRAVEL BULLETIN'S Matt Hayhoe sat down with Tom Mahoney, Cunard's director of UK sales to discuss all things trade: a packed fam programme unravelling this year, a bolstered sales support team, and a new 2024 Event Voyage programme.

On last month's announcement of the 2024 Event Voyages programme, Tom explained: "We're looking to utilise the really strong brand partnerships we have to bring the voyages to life for our guests and to agents who are selling or on-board themselves.

"Four voyages will be on *Queen Mary 2*, with the standout being London Theatre at Sea, in partnership with the Olivier Awards."

The cruise line recently reinstated its trade team, comprised of Savannah Fryer (North) and John Garbutt (South). Tom praised the move: "We've had some really good feedback... what this facilitates is a greater Cunard presence at events, at conferences, at trade shows. It's really important that we get out there, have these conversations, and are ever present with our trade partners."

To hear more on the bolstered fam programme for 2024, Cunard's plans ahead of a new ship debut, and more, read the full interview at: [www.travelbulletin.co.uk/news-mainmenu](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/news-mainmenu)



**SOLO ESCAPES** are on the rise: one of Newmarket Holidays' Solo Traveller Collection itinerary cracked in to the operator's top 10 sellers for 2024 departures. Single traveller bookings have risen by 10% since five exclusive tours and the removal of single supplements were introduced in June. The operator has confirmed plans to unveil new solo escapes as part of the wider collection with new dates and destinations in response to the demand. [www.newmarketholidays.co.uk](http://www.newmarketholidays.co.uk)

## Cruise favourites revealed: Norway sails clear

NORWAY HAS sailed clear of the competition, averaging 130,000 searches for cruise holidays according to medical travel insurance specialist AllClear Travel.

Italy (29,889), Iceland (18,036) and Australia (10,921) comprised the rest of the top four-searched destinations.

Regional trends were also revealed: the Caribbean topped the list of regional cruise destinations (112,000 monthly), followed by

the Mediterranean (66,173), Scandinavia (13,610), Canary Islands (10,121) and the Baltics (6,043).

Close-to-home cruises remain by far the most popular searches for Brits, as European search terms held the top spot with over 25,000 average monthly searches.

Antarctica (14,398) and Asia (9,701) sailed in second and third, respectively.

## Below Deck stars confirmed as Celebrity godmothers

CELEBRITY CRUISES has unveiled *Below Deck's* Captain Sandy Yawn, and her sister Michelle Dunham (founder of the Jacksonville School for Autism), as co-Godmothers of the upcoming Celebrity Ascent ship.

"We are honoured to have Captain Sandy and her sister Michelle join the legacy of Celebrity's Godmothers, as they are both inspirational women who have dedicated their lives to making a positive impact in the world," explained Laura Hodges Bethge, Celebrity Cruises' President. "Captain Sandy's life story is one of resilience, leadership and strength... her sister Michelle is a tireless advocate for children with autism and shows us what is possible when you follow your vision for a better world."

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



## Record-breaking Ras Al Khaimah

RAS AL Khaimah has announced a 14.8% increase from H1 2022, welcoming over 600,000 visitors in the first six months of the year.

International tourism accounted for 52% of the year's visitors so far.

[www.visitrasalkhaimah.com](http://www.visitrasalkhaimah.com)



## Riviera cruises into the 2024 festive season

RIVIERA TRAVEL has launched its 2024 festive programme, featuring 26 voyages across six itineraries on the Rhine and the Danube rivers.

Guests can feel that Yuletide feeling with a selection of cruises over the Christmas week, or make New Year's one to remember with a cruise celebration.

Katja Hildebrandt, head of product River & Ocean Cruise at Riviera Travel, said: "These

itineraries are firm favourites with our guests and provide the perfect way to experience something different over Christmas and the New Year, while enjoying a restful holiday.

"We'll be marking the occasion in style, thanks to the magic of the yuletide markets and our own on-board festivities. A river cruise is a truly unforgettable way to celebrate, both on and off our ships."

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



## Jet2 expands Summer 2024 programme

JET2HOLIDAYS HAS expanded its Summer 2024 programme after responding to the strong demand posed by holidaymakers, adding an additional three routes.

The expansion will see two new services depart from Birmingham Airport – one to Tivat, Montenegro, and one to Lesvos – as well as a Glasgow route to Verona. All services will commence from May 2024.

Steve Heapy, CEO of Jet2Holidays and Jet2.com, said: As well as looking forward to a busy summer 2023, we are also seeing lots of customers want to book ahead for next summer which is great news. In response to that, we are moving to give customers and independent travel agents even more choice thanks to the launch of three brand new routes for summer 2024.

"This expansion further strengthens a programme which is already our biggest ever, and we know that it will be very popular with customers and independent travel agents right across each airport region."

[www.jet2holidays.com](http://www.jet2holidays.com)

## Wendy Wu launches Japan and South Korea joint tour

WENDY WU Tours has revealed details on its latest adventure itinerary, the 16-day 'Essence of South Korea & Japan' tour.

The tour promises an insightful journey into two of Asia's most renowned countries, seeing first-hand the distinct cultural differences and showing the range of diversity across Far East Asia.

Some of the tour highlights include a full day at Seoul, a morning visit to the DMZ between North and South Korea, the chance to visit a plethora of UNESCO World Heritage



Sites, a ride on the bullet train to Kurashiki, and much more.

Prices for the itinerary begin at £8,490 per person, with departures available from March 2024 to November 2025. Flights, accommodation, activities and entrance fees are all included.

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



## Guests give back at Fitzroy Island Resort

AUSTRALIA'S FITZROY Island Resort is now offering guests the experience of a lifetime by assisting with the monitoring of the Great Barrier Reef as part of a new citizen science programme.

Guests at the resort will have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience at Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre caring for the sea turtles before helping with the Reef Restoration Foundation's coral restoration work.

The resort is the first to offer this type of scheme, and actively encourages guests to deepen their understanding of the fragile ecosystem.

[www.fitzroyisland.com](http://www.fitzroyisland.com)



## Windstar extends Winter Sun Sale

WINDSTAR HAS extended its Winter Sun Sale until September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, offering 35% savings on its selection of more than 80 Caribbean and Middle Eastern itineraries.

Agents can still benefit from the cruise line's Sell Three, Sail Free' incentive, wherein agents can win a free cruise by booking three Winter Sun cruises by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

[www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com)









## Yorkshire Travel Ball

The 2023 Yorkshire Ball was held at the Village Hotel on July 20<sup>th</sup>: a great night which included generous donations of over £7,000 to animal charities across the world and over 20 amazing prizes up for grabs! 2023's iteration was the 24<sup>th</sup> in the Ball's history, with over £100,000 earned since its launch.

*Travel Bulletin* were there to capture the evening in pictures.





# One Stop,

**EVA AIR**   
A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 



*Your first step to Asia.*

# Endless Fun



# SENSATIONAL SINGAPORE

Gastronomy delights, high-stakes adrenaline and edu-tainment await travellers looking to get the most out of the City in Nature.



NAMED AS one of the world's greenest cities, Singapore is a buzzing haven of activity this summer, offering a little something for everyone. Whether a foodie is looking for the latest gastronomy delights, an explorer is eager to uncover the city's hidden gems, or a family is looking to entertain and educate their children, Singapore has options for all.

## Wendy Wu wows with Japan brochure

TRAVEL TO the land of the rising sun for less as Wendy Wu Tours has unveiled its latest Japan brochure, highlighting a selection of brand new 2024/2025 experiences and offering savings of up to £400 per person with its exclusive brochure launch offer, applicable for bookings made by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

Two new tours have been added to the 2024/2025 season, including 'Christmas in Japan' and 'Essence of South Korea & Japan', and additional dates have been added for the very popular cherry blossom departures throughout 2024.

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

A world of mouth-watering gastronomic wonders await visitors at the Sentosa Food Fest. Open until September 17<sup>th</sup>, the 10-week extravaganza will host an array of unique dining experiences that can teach visitors the importance of treating dining as a lifestyle in Sentosa. The festival combines Sentosa's rich history with local stories and shared moments that have a big impact on the food produced and shared throughout the 10-weeks, allowing visitors to see first-hand the heart that goes into turning simple dining into an experience.

Travellers can gear up for the Grand Prix 2023 season as Formula 1 returns to Singapore from September 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, bringing with it a weekend full of

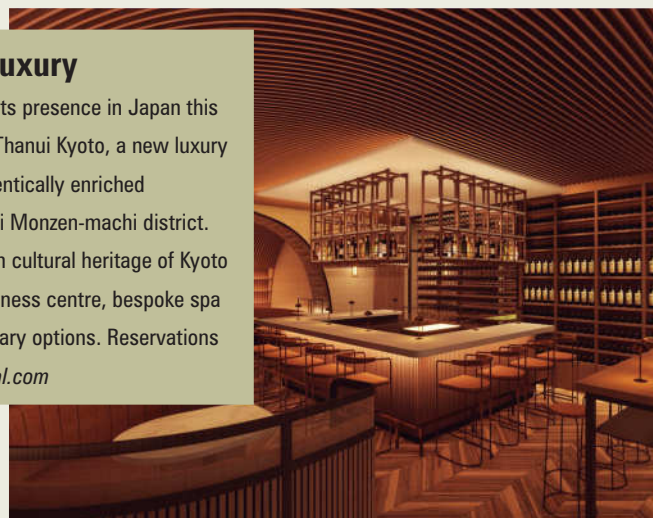
drama, flair, and high stakes. The Singapore Grand Prix Night Race offers a nocturnal addition of the high-speed tournament, promising to be the sporting event of the year, and this year, the event will hold several new features which will generate cleaner energy and reduce the event's carbon footprint.

Visitors have the choice to relax and unwind after a busy day of sightseeing at W Singapore - Sentosa Cove, a luxury Marriott hotel that is offering a wellness package that includes a range of exclusive services and activities. The 'Wellness Escape' package is priced from £530 per person per night and is valid until December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

[www.visitsingapore.com](http://www.visitsingapore.com)

## Kyoto's latest in lavish luxury

DUSIT INTERNATIONAL is expanding its presence in Japan this September with the opening of Dusit Thanui Kyoto, a new luxury hotel that promises travellers an authentically enriched experience in the heart of the Hanganji Monzen-machi district. The 147-room hotel will reflect the rich cultural heritage of Kyoto with a luxurious twist, boasting a wellness centre, bespoke spa treatment offerings, and enticing culinary options. Reservations are now open. [www.dusit-international.com](http://www.dusit-international.com)





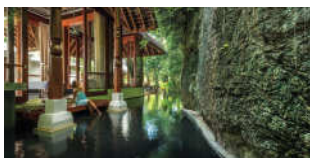
## Meliá Hotels heads for Ha Long

THE SPANISH hotel group has signed an agreement for a new hotel complex in Ha Long, further ensuring its position as the leading international hotel group in Vietnam.

Meliá Halong Bay will debut in 2027, with 270 guest rooms and 302 serviced apartments offering guests a perfect base while they navigate the iconic waters of Ha Long bay.

The hotel will feature four restaurants, an indoor swimming pool and the brand's signature YHI Spa.

[www.melia.com](http://www.melia.com)



## Be inspired by Langkawi's jungle retreat

STEP FOOT into Southeast Asia's first UNESCO Geopark as Inspiring Travel is offering a jungle retreat package to the Four Seasons Resort Langkawi.

The natural wonderland comprises wild adventure with uncompromising luxury, and Inspiring is offering a seven-night package from £7,280 per family, based on two adults and two children for a September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 departure.

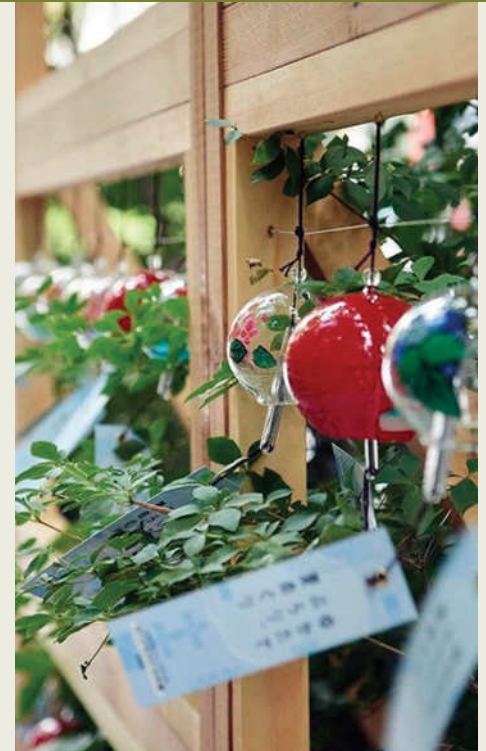
[www.inspiringtravel.co.uk](http://www.inspiringtravel.co.uk)

## Tokyo keeps it cool with legacy eco-event

TOKYO IS keeping it cool in its summer-only event, ECO EDO Nihonbashi, where visitors are encouraged to shake off the heat by stepping back in time. Running until September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, the event combines the traditional wisdoms and strategies used in the Edo period with modern sophistication to ensure both residents of Nihonbashi and visitors can enjoy the summer heat in a sustainable way.

The popular event is celebrating its 15th edition, and this year, wind chimes – a traditional summer symbol in Japan – will be displayed throughout the local region, as well as the 'Hidden Seven Gods of Good Fortune', which may lead those that find them to lucky prospects.

The event boasts several traditions to keep cool in the hot sun, including wearing yukata, eating shaved ice (named kakigori) and walking through the forest paths to locate and listen to the wind chimes. Yukata dressing



and rentals are available throughout the event, as well as a special ecoedo menu at the 160 eatery establishments located in Nihonbashi, offering refreshing pallet cleansers and delicious cuisine spanning Japan's long legacy.

[www.nihonbashi-tokyo.jp](http://www.nihonbashi-tokyo.jp)

## Travel through tradition

TRAVELLERS ARE urged to take a step back and emerge themselves into the Japan dynasty with numerous opportunities to experience the world of Japanese crafts.

The Tsugaru-han Neputa Village in Hirosaki City showcases the rich history and impact the Tsugaru Domain had on Japanese culture, with the Neputa Matsuri exhibition sitting centre stage after being named an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property. The Village offers multiple artisan workshops to give visitors an insight into

the Tsugaru style and allow them to immerse themselves into the Hirosaki culture.

Visitors can learn the ancient Japanese artistic technique of lacquering in Sabae City, an art form that dates back to the 300 BCE and is used in a variety of ceremonial and decorative items. Travellers can step into the home of the 1,500-year-old tradition and watch master artisans at work, before trying their own hand at it. Booking is required for these particular workshops.

One of the most globally-renowned techniques Japan is famous for is that of its traditional paper legacy. The Ino-cho Paper Museum is a great place for travellers to learn about the ancient art of 'Washi', and the museum hosts a full roster of workshops and exhibitions to showcase the skill and craftsmanship that still goes into creating the works of art.

[www.japan.travel](http://www.japan.travel)





# Experience Korea's winter wonderland

AS THE Korean wave continues to crash over the industry, The Dragon trip has introduced a new tour to its roster which promises to show travellers a new side to the popular destinations this winter.

The 10-day 'Korea Winter Tour' will take guests on an unmissable adventure through the bustling city streets of Seoul to the natural paradise of Nami Island, before spending a couple of days hitting the slopes at the Vivaldi Ski Resort and exploring the ancient wonders of Gyeongju.

Beginning the adventure in Seoul, travellers will explore the Namsan Mountain, lose themselves to history in the Bukchon Hanok Village, and take to the microphone at some of the best karaoke bars in the world.

Guests will then travel to Nami Island, before heading up the slopes at Vivaldi Ski Resort, complete with full access to lift

passes and clothing rental. Any experienced winter sports enthusiasts can test their nerve straight away, but introductory lessons will be available to those guests who need a helping hand.

Over in Gyeongju, travellers will explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bulguska Temple and take a tour of the Chunmachong Ancient Tombs, before sampling traditional tea and liquor-tastings in a 300-year-old hanok. Prices for the tour begin from £1,999 with departures from December 2023.

[www.thedragontrip.com](http://www.thedragontrip.com)



## Virtuoso heads to Thailand

PHUKET RESORT has become the first InterContinental branded property in Thailand to join the leading global luxury travel programme Virtuoso.

The partnership will further enhance the luxurious offering Phuket Resort currently boasts and better positions the resort as a premier luxury accommodation. The partnership will also ensure that Phuket Resort continues to strengthen its relationship with the world's leading travel agencies and travel advisors.

[www.phuket.intercontinental.com](http://www.phuket.intercontinental.com)



## Tokyo welcomes back age-old celebration

FOR THE first time in four years, the Tokyo Koenji Awa Odori festival returns bigger and better than ever. Awaodori is the traditional dance of Tokushima that dates back more than 400 years, and the festival acts as a celebration of its history.

Musicians and dancers parade through the street, attracting crowds of locals and tourists alike to rejoice in this age-old tradition. The festival this year will take place on August 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. [www.gotokyo.org](http://www.gotokyo.org)



## Shizuoka enhances ecotourism experiences

INTEREST IN sustainable travel is on the rise, and Shizuoka is enhancing its ecotourism offering with a launch of new experiences. The MachaSho experience is perfect for travellers wanting to challenge their inner calligrapher. For approximately £193 per person, visitors can learn to write their name using unique matcha ink.

The four-hour Wasabi fields and Tofu-

making workshop offers visitors the chance to take a deep dive into the nearly 270-year history of wasabi cultivation. Guests will visit the fields of Shuzenji to learn the history from local producers before receiving a hands-on tofu-making masterclass. Prices for this experience start at £55 per group.

[www.exploreshizuoka.jp](http://www.exploreshizuoka.jp)

## NEW IN NEW YORK

The iconic city break spot and its surrounding state is set to welcome a host of new attractions and experiences in 2024.



THE BIG Apple has long been a go-to city break for metropolitan musers, history buffs, and theatre lovers. The surrounding state is making the choice even easier with a host of experiences pushing the boat out of Manhattan and making the ever-popular city break an all-in New York experience.

Historic firsts are lined up for 2024 in the form of the American LGBTQ+ Museum and the Stonewall National Monument Visitor Center's openings next year, documenting the historic strides made in New York on the long

road to LGBTQ+ progress. The latter marks the first LGBTQ+ visitor centre in America's National Park system.

The Lake Placid Olympic Museum is commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Winter Olympic Games next year too, with one of the largest collections of artefacts from the Winter Games in the world.

A bucket list must-do for many, Niagara Falls in joining in the fun next year. Not only celebrating the centennial of New York State Parks (and commemorating its title as the nation's

oldest state park), the Niagara Falls Heritage Gateways Project (home to an observation deck) is penned for opening and the Niagara Gorge Discovery Center is set to reopen as Great Lakes 360 after a major refurbishment.

[www.iloveny.com](http://www.iloveny.com)

### Wine down in Geneva

GENEVA TOURISM has unveiled a 'Heritage and Wine' package, offering visitors a taste of the city's wine history and rich cultural past.

Positioned as one of the continent's leading wine and city break destinations, the two-and-a-half hour tour combines interactive fun and multi-sensory experiences, guaranteeing to go down a hit with culture vultures and wine lovers alike.

Prices start from £390 per person from the Geneva Tourism website.

[www.geneve.com](http://www.geneve.com)

### Avani makes its mark in Madrid

MARKING A Spanish debut for the modern millennial-minded brand, Avani Alonso Martinez is steps away from its eponymous square. The hotel has recently undergone an upscale renovation, inspired by Madrid's cultural history. 101 rooms offer modern technology with heritage-inspired interiors.

Rates start from £64 per night for October 2023 stays.

[www.avanihotels.com](http://www.avanihotels.com)



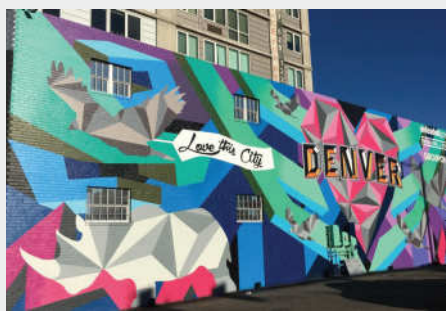


## Colorado capital kicks back: Denver doubles down on events and experiences

VISIT DENVER'S Jesse Davis gave *Travel Bulletin* the rundown on what awaits in the Colorado capital: a burgeoning stateside city break spot.

"The balance of all those city experiences that people are looking for, whether it's the culinary scene, the arts and culture scenes, the attractions, or the boutique accommodations, it's the balance of all those city experiences.

"We're very well known for being an outdoor festival destination... culture?"



Music? Wine? Food? If you can think of it's there's a festival for it in Denver. We even have a taco festival!"

This summer alone, Denver will live up to its reputation as an event city with the return of a packed schedule, with the likes of the Arctic Monkeys performing at the open air Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre.

"The fact that we're located right at the base of the Rocky Mountains makes Denver an ideal base camp for mountain trips but it's definitely a great option for city experiences."

Those experiences on offer include the Denver Graffiti Tour, a showcase of the most talented local street artists and guest spots from further afield. The RiNo district is well known for its colourful artsy streets that make for the most Instagrammable of backdrops.

[www.denver.org](http://www.denver.org)



## Finland's thrilling capital

WHILE FINLAND'S festive side has long been a family staple, a host of experiences in the nation's capital make it a curveball choice for families looking for an action-packed short break.

Finland's oldest theme park, Linnanmäki Amusement Park, is home to over 40 rides, with circus shows and street performers adorning the park during the summer.

Korkeasaari Zoo dates back to 1889 and is home to 150 different species, sure to dazzle animal lovers of all ages.

Finnair flights from London Heathrow to Helsinki start from £166 per person return.

[www.finnair.com](http://www.finnair.com)



## Portugal's picture-perfect capital

FOR A family-friendly short-haul city option, Lisbon offers a host of experiences sure to tick travellers' boxes.

São Jorge Castle, sitting atop a hill overlooking the city, guarantees panoramic views and experiences immersing the whole family in Moorish history.

Lisbon Oceanarium is home to one of the continent's largest indoor aquariums, with over 15,000 marine creatures making it a must-do.

TAP's service from Heathrow to Lisbon starts from £90 per person return. [www.flytap.com](http://www.flytap.com)



## Dublin: short-break favourite

A CEMENTED favourite for Brits, Dublin continues to surprise families and solo travellers with unique experiences.

Phoenix Park, the city's vast urban park, is home to Dublin Zoo, bike rentals to explore on two wheels, and the Victorian People's Flower Gardens.

Aer Lingus' Heathrow to Dublin service starts from £59 per person return.

[www.aerlingus.com](http://www.aerlingus.com)

# TikTok's #citiesofthesummer

HOLIDAYS TO Seoul have skyrocketed in popularity thanks to the abundance of love being shown to the destination on TikTok, and JeffBet has conducted research using the popularity of hashtags to find out which other cities are leading travellers to a city-fuelled wanderlust adventure this summer.

Seoul is miles ahead of the curve with more than one billion hashtag views on TikTok alone, further implementing the Korean wave that is taking over the industry. Following in second place with 481 million hashtags is the City of Love itself. Paris travel guides in particular have taken off, with viewers eager to see the 'real Paris' away from the tourist hotspots.

Coming in at third place is Barcelona. Spain's culture capital has really drawn attention to itself this summer, particularly surrounding the Sagrada Familia which has garnered 336.9 million hashtag views alone.

Other cities making up the top ten include Amsterdam, Singapore, Bangkok, Rome, Istanbul, New York and Tokyo.



## Step into a serene city experience

AS THE green capital of Europe, Valencia encourages travellers to ditch the vehicles and immerse into the history by foot. Rich in culture and botanical phenomena, Valencia offers a peaceful alternative to some of Europe's more bustling cityscapes, as well as provide a thriving gastronomy scene with Europe's biggest fresh produce market, Central Market.

It's avant-garde architecture, rich culture and deep history make it an ideal weekend getaway for those wanting to step back in time and appreciate the quieter break. [www.visitvalencia.com](http://www.visitvalencia.com)

## What skill would you love to learn?

**Jeanette Ratcliffe**  
Publisher

jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk  
Successful dieting!



**Simon Eddolls**  
Sales Director

simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk



**Sarah Terry**  
Account Manager

sarah.terry@travelbulletin.co.uk



**Tim Podger**  
Account Manager - Far East  
tim.podger@travelbulletin.co.uk  
Play the guitar.



**Matthew Hayhoe**  
Acting Editor  
matthew.hayhoe@travelbulletin.co.uk  
Sporting ability. Of any kind.



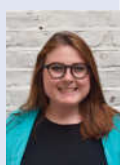
**Melissa Paddock**  
Events Coordinator  
melissa.paddock@travelbulletin.co.uk  
Learn how to play a musical instrument.



**Holly Brown**  
Events Coordinator  
holly.brown@travelbulletin.co.uk  
Synchronised swimming.



**Leah Kelly**  
Acting Deputy Editor  
leah.kelly@travelbulletin.co.uk  
Sing in tune!



### EVENTS

events@travelbulletin.co.uk

### PRODUCTION

production@travelbulletin.co.uk

### CIRCULATION

circulation@travelbulletin.co.uk



Travel **bulletin**  
SHOWCASES

INVITES YOU TO AN

# Adventure & Activity SHOWCASE



MONDAY **18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**  
HARROGATE

TUESDAY **19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**  
SHEFFIELD

Travel Bulletin is delighted to invite you to one of these fun and informative events. Enabling you to learn more about the diverse range of adventure and activity packages available to you and your clients. Discover the amazing landscapes of the world and the most exciting ways to explore them. You can look forward to delicious food and drinks, enjoyable entertainment and a fabulous free prize draw with a number of fantastic prizes to be won!



#### Timings

Registration  
5:45PM

Hot Dinner  
7:30PM

Travel Bulletin  
Welcome  
6:10PM

Client  
Presentations  
8:15PM

Client  
Presentations  
6:15PM

Product Quiz &  
Free Prize Draw  
9:15 - 9.30PM

**THESE EVENTS ARE BY INVITATION ONLY**  
and will be booked on a first come first served basis with limited space available.

Featuring



Abercrombie & Kent



Benidorm



VOYAGES



To confirm your place at one of these amazing events, email the name, company and contact details by  
Wednesday September 13th 2023 to: [events@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:events@travelbulletin.co.uk) or Telephone: 020 7973 0136



Star travel bulletin  
AWARDS  
2023



**30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023**  
**HILTON LONDON BANKSIDE**  
**LONDON, UK**

For more information call Jeanette on **T: +44 20 7973 0136**  
or email [jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk](mailto:jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk)

[www.travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/tickets](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/tickets)

[#TBStarAwards](https://twitter.com/TBStarAwards)

**PROUD SPONSORS**



**INGHAMS**

