

Travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

Single Travellers

Embark on the ultimate journey of freedom and connection.

MORE IN...

Latin America

It is set to be a big year for the destination, from new openings to bespoke experiences. (Pg. 18)

Spa & Wellness

Help your clients relax and rejuvenate while on their holidays. (Pg. 20)



There is no 'right' way to sell solo, according to this Travel Counsellor. (Pg. 10)



*Book your seats and attend the
party of the year !*

TUESDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2026

**Sheraton Grand London
Park Lane, Piccadilly,
London W1J 7BX**

To book your tickets call Jeanette on T: +44 20 7973 0136
or email: jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk

THIS
WEEK

04

**NEWS**

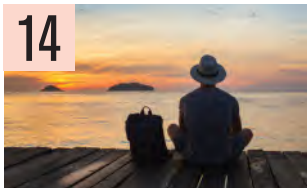
Stay ahead of the summer trends with the latest updates across the industry.

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**IN THE HOT SEAT**

Jetset's BDM sheds light on how the company is navigating geopolitical turmoil.

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**SINGLE TRAVELLERS**

There has never been a better time for your clients to go solo.

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**LATIN AMERICA**

Immerse in one of the world's most diverse regions.

20

**SPA & WELLNESS**

Our top recommendations to help your clients feel relaxed and rejuvenated.



TRAVELLERS OPT FOR AGENTS

ABTA's new research reveals how the conflict in the Middle East has re-shaped the travel landscape, with more UK holidaymakers seeking the help of agents.

BOOKING PATTERNS have been reshaped over the last six months as more UK travellers are looking towards travel professionals to help with holiday planning following the conflict in the Middle East and other various geopolitical factors.

According to new research from ABTA, nearly one third (31%) of UK adults said they are more likely to book with a travel agent now than before the conflict. The most common reasons for this change in behaviour is down to agents' knowledge (53%), expertise (44%), and the travellers' desire for security (41%). 27% of holidaymakers are also more inclined to book a package holiday than before the Middle East conflict, due to their 'everything is taken care of' nature (52%), the right to a refund if the holiday can no longer be provided (48%), and the value for money (38%).

The conflict has changed demand for destinations – due to the FCDO's updated advice, travel to the Gulf can resume, however it is still set to be a short-haul summer for Brits. Of those planning to take a holiday abroad over the next year, 84% said they will be staying in Europe.

Spain currently leads the way as the top holiday destination for 38% of those travelling abroad this summer. Italy and France round out the top three, with 23% and 19% of holidaymakers respectively expecting to travel there.

The impact of the conflict and wider cost of living factors have also influenced booking habits, with more travellers opting for last-minute bookings. Of those looking for a 2026 summer holiday, 30% are leaving booking until two-to-four weeks prior to departure. A further 10% intend to book with less than two weeks to go.

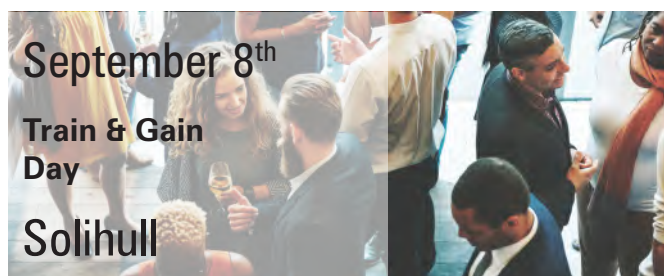
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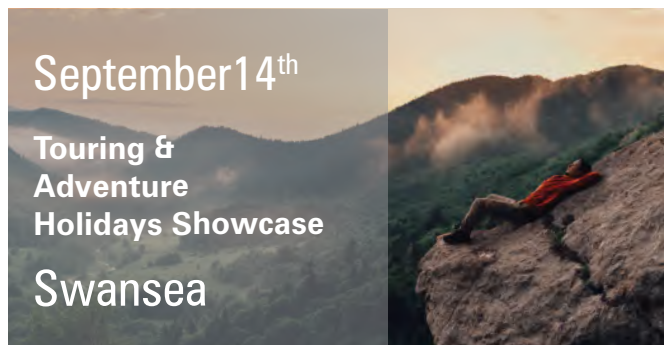




September 8th

Train & Gain
Day

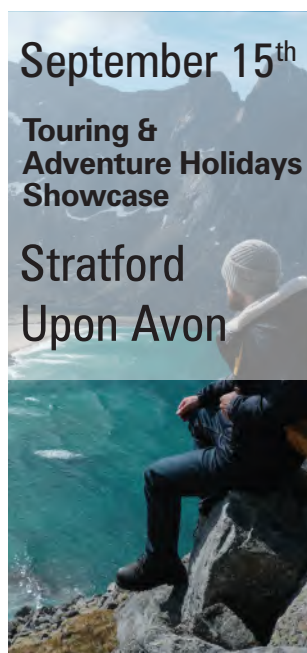
Solihull



September 14th

Touring &
Adventure
Holidays Showcase

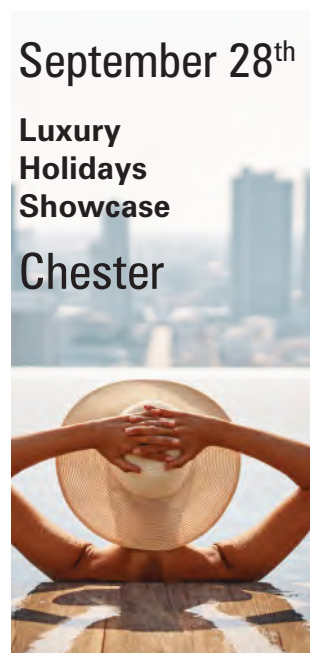
Swansea



September 15th

Touring &
Adventure Holidays
Showcase

Stratford
Upon Avon



September 28th

Luxury
Holidays
Showcase

Chester

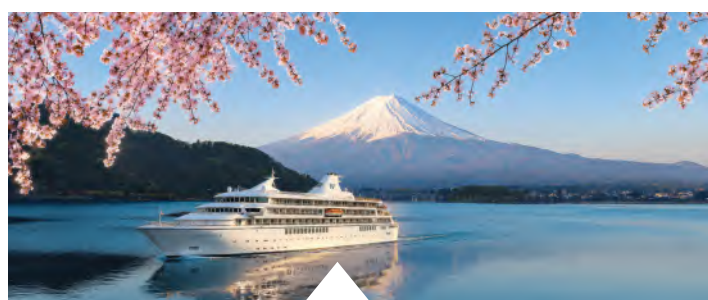
New micro-cruises to the Arctic

SECRET ATLAS has unveiled two exclusive Northern Lights photography tours to the Arctic this September, offering 12 guests the opportunity to experience one of nature's most spectacular phenomenon.

Secret Atlas voyages are limited to small groups for an intimate experience, and each guest is offered one-to-one photography tuition, rare wildlife encounters, and expert-

led explorations in one of the world's most remote destinations.

'Scoresbysund Northern Lights Photo Tour with Virgil Regioni' is a nine-day fly-cruise which departs on September 28th, 2026, with prices leading in from £12,800 per person. The trip will offer numerous opportunities to capture East Greenland's dramatic wilderness.



Windstar opens Asia 2028/2029 season

WINDSTAR HAS expanded its presence in the region with the launch of its 2028/2029 Asia season.

The season will sail upon the 112-suite *Star Seeker* through Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

For a limited time, guests who book before July 31st, 2026, can have the best stateroom selection alongside a complimentary all-inclusive package, \$100 onboard credit and 5% savings on cruise fares when paid in full at the time of booking.

Booking boom for last minute villas

OLIVER'S TRAVELS, a leader in luxury villa rentals, has shared new data exhibiting a rise in affluent, last-minute group villa bookings.

From April to June, bookings over £25,000 increased by 33%, whilst bookings made within 60 days of departure rose by 45% year-on-year. In addition, the demand for larger properties is also growing, with bookings for properties that can house up to 10 guests are up by 51%.

The company itself has seen a 22% year-on-year increase in trade bookings, which highlights the growing role of advisors in securing complex, high-value villa stays at short notice.

Newmarket adds four new European breaks

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS has announced it will be expanding its European programme with the launch of four brand-new tours.

The new trips feature regional fly options, pre-packaged inclusions, and destinations that either complement existing bestsellers in the current Newmarket Holidays portfolio, or respond directly to customer demand.

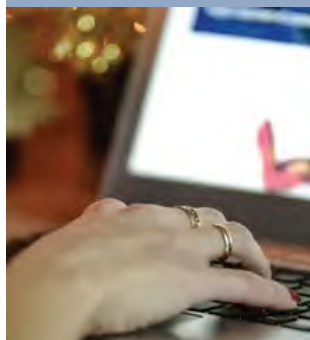
Hayley Morris, head of trade sales & partnerships, said, "These four new tours give

travel agents a strong and varied set of options for customers looking at Europe across 2027. From a four-night city break in Budapest to eight days across Transylvania, from Colditz Castle to an Austrian all-inclusive with no single supplement, there's something here for a wide range of customers. These are destinations customers are asking for, and the itineraries are built to make them easy to recommend."



AGENTS CAN stay up to date with the latest Copa Airlines updates through its exclusive Agency Portal, which has received new features in its latest update.

The Agency Portal is designed to support agents' day-to-day operations with quick access to service requests, policies, procedures, and comprehensive product and services information.



Involved Holidays offers autumnal savings

Specialist walking tour operator, Involved Holidays, is supporting September and October departures with the launch of a brand-new savings initiative.

UK agents can provide significant client savings of up to £150 per holiday, when they confirm a booking before July 31st, 2026. This offer is applicable when agents use promo code 'SAVE150' at the time of booking.

In addition to the monetary discount, Involved Holidays is also giving away free, all-weather, rucksacks – the perfect companion for a walking holiday exploring any destination.

Sovereign launches luxury trade brochure

SOVEREIGN LUXURY Travel has launched a new dedicated 90-page brochure in response to strong demand from travel agents for a premium print resource that customers can browse and take inspiration from when planning their next luxury holiday.

The brochure will be distributed to key agency



partners across the UK, providing agents with an additional sales tool to showcase Sovereign's offering to clients.



VIVA Cruises offers free cabin upgrade

FREE CABIN upgrades are valid on new bookings made by August 15th, 2026, on a range of three- and four-night voyages departing from January 2027 to March 2027. Some of the itineraries highlighted in the offer include the four-night 'Rhine Romance and Canal Charm' sailing priced from £625 per person, and the four-night 'Winter Trip through Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany' priced from £695.

Upgrades will be applied to the next higher cabin category. Junior Suites and Suites are excluded from the promotion.



Vietnam Airlines enhances network

VIETNAM AIRLINES is expanding its services to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan as demand for travel to Northeast Asia continues to grow.

The airline will now serve 11 weekly flights to Taipei from Hanoi. The Hanoi-Osaka route will be expanded to 11 weekly flights until December 1st, 2026, when it will increase further to 14. From Da Nang, the Seoul route will increase to 14 weekly flights, with services to Tokyo and Osaka increasing to 11 and five weekly flights respectively.

New 2029 Caribbean voyages

SEADREAM YACHT Club has announced its January through April 2029 Caribbean season, which introduces 30 new voyages around the region and two transatlantic crossings.

The season features 24 roundtrip sailings departing primarily from San Juan, St. Thomas, and Palm Beach, making it easier than ever for guests to begin their Caribbean voyage from convenient embarkation ports.



MOVERS & SHAKERS



SIMON BINGLEY has been promoted to Commercial Director at Leger Shearings Group where he will be responsible for the group's

commercial performance, financial planning and analysis, business performance, and the delivery of key programmes.



SOLMAR VILLAS has appointed Lewis Cooper into the newly created role of Head of Distribution where he will work across all

distribution channels, supporting wholesale, trade and OTA teams and partners.



NORWEGIAN IS expanding its winter programme in northern Norway with the launch of a new direct service between Glasgow Airport and Tromsø. The new route will launch on December 11th, 2026, and operate twice weekly on Mondays and Fridays. The route will operate until March 22nd, 2027.

Riviera's new regional departures

RIVIERA TRAVEL is making it even easier for guests to start their worldwide holiday with the introduction of regional flights from Aberdeen and Inverness.

Following feedback from travel agents, Riviera has introduced the new flight options with convenience in mind and allow guests to start their journey closer to home, with seamless connection through major international hubs.

Itineraries now available from Aberdeen include: 'Gastronomy of the Seine River Cruise', 'Rhine Cruise to Switzerland', 'The Blue Danube River Cruise' and 'Magical Paris & Festive Seine River Cruise'.

Newly available itineraries from Inverness include: 'Lyon, Provencal Rhone & the Camargue River Cruise', and the 'Burgundy, the River Rhone and Provence River Cruise'.

A pledge to make booking easier

SPECIALIST HOLIDAYS Group has announced three significant trade-focused initiatives as it continues to strengthen its commitment to travel agent partners and deliver on its promise to make working with SHG easy and enjoyable.

The three new initiatives include a dedicated trade bookings team, a new self-service trade booking portal, and a trade loyalty programme, which is all due to launch in Q4 2026.

The new self-service booking portal will include American Holidays for the first time.



UCLH offers late bookings for Jamaica

UNIQUE CARIBBEAN Holidays Ltd. (UCLH), is offering late availability seven-night all-inclusive package holidays to select Sandals Resorts in Jamaica, such as Sandals Ochi, with roundtrip flights provided by Virgin Atlantic.

AGENT INCENTIVES

- **CRYSTAL CRUISES'** 'Sell Three, Sail Free' booking incentive for the UK trade is back and ready to reward agents throughout the summer. To take advantage of the limited-time offer, agents must make any three qualifying bookings before September 30th, 2026, to receive a complimentary cruise for themselves and a guest. The offer is valid for new bookings only and applies to 27 sailings across Europe, the Americas, and the Caribbean departing between August and December 2026.
- **THERE IS** still time to earn a £10 voucher for every Universal Orlando booking made through DoSomethingDifferent.com. Bookings can be submitted to WIN@dosomethingdifferent.com with the code 'EPICSUMMER' to claim the vouchers before July 31st, 2026.
- **FOR ONE** more week, agents can earn double cash rewards with Royalton Hotels & Resorts. Aiming to supercharge earning potential, Royalton is offering £20 per room for the first 10 bookings made at the Royalton Vessence Barbados property, and £40 per room from number 11 onwards. Bookings must be a minimum of seven nights but there is no cap on the number of multi-room bookings an individual agent can log, which means plenty of opportunity to reap significant cash benefits. The offer will end on July 31st, 2026.
- **RIVIERA TRAVEL'S** new trade incentive is offering agents the chance to win their own Riviera holiday for two worth up to £10,000. Any Riviera booking is valid for an entry, with 2026 River Cruise bookings to receive double entries. The incentive is valid until July 31st, 2026.

AGENT BULLETIN



ST. KITTS Tourism Authority hosted agents at the Taste of London Food Festival in The Regent's Park last month. Agents enjoyed a cooking demonstration by Caribbean chef Kerth Gumbs, known for his TV appearances on the Great British Menu and Young Masterchef. Kerth served up some Kittian specialities, including coconut dumplings with stewed saltfish.

Travel **bulletin**

COMPETITION

Win a five-star escape to Cyprus at the new Imperial Island Resort in Paphos with Louis Hotels!

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

AGENT TRAINING

- A **NEW** video-led training platform is coming to VIVA Cruises' travel agent portal. The programme will comprise five modules covering an introduction to the operator, the ship fleet, the onboard experiences and shore excursions, and two destination sessions. Each module includes a quiz to help grow agents' knowledge of the river cruise line, with more modules to be added in due course. Agents who complete the course will become a 'VIVA Cruises Specialist' and will be automatically entered into a prize draw to win a cruise for two.
- **VISIT FLORIDA** Keys & Key West has launched its reimagined Key Lime Academy training tool for agents in the UK and Ireland. The platform explores the sub-tropical archipelago's five regions: Key Largo, Islamorada, Marathon, the Lower Keys, and Key West. Through the training module, travel professionals can learn about the character of each distinct district and embrace the knowledge and confidence they need to match the right client to the right experience.
- **UPSKILL IN** selling Australia with the Aussie Specialist Program, designed to help you attract more clients and sell higher value holidays. The Program has enabled agents to sell 35% higher value bookings to Australia, with 62% of leisure travellers returning to the destination within five years, making it easier for a double sale. The Program is easy to complete, with one 90-minute introduction session. Once qualified, the programme offers several ways to continue your learning, from self-paced learning resources to instructor-led face-to-face sessions and short product training videos.

Why The Palm Beaches should be on your radar

THE PALM Beaches is seeing strong momentum from the UK market, with double-digit visitor growth compared to 2025. Erick Garnica, vice president of global leisure sales for Discover The Palm Beaches, sat down with *Travel Bulletin* and stated that UK



visitor numbers have increased by 12.4% during Q1 2026. The destination welcomed 14,500 UK visitors in the first quarter of the year.

"Historically, our numbers have always been strong [from the UK]. As we don't have a direct flight into our destination, we rely heavily on Miami and Orlando lift because they're so close to our destination."

Education remains a top priority for the destination's UK strategy following the launch of its own travel advisor platform in April 2024. The platform currently offers nine modules covering The Palm Beaches' history, regions, and tourism products, to help agents fully understand the destination.

Read the full interview at <https://travelbulletin.co.uk/news/the-original-the-one-the-only-why-the-palm-beaches-should-be-on-your-radar>



EASYJET HOLIDAYS' inaugural Homeworke Orange PowWow, hosted earlier this month, provided industry insights, expert panel discussions and supplier engagement, along with a host of holiday giveaways. 150 homeworkers from across the UK joined the easyJet Holidays team, along with more than 20 hotel partners at St. George's Park.

Save up to 30% off with TTC Tour Brands

TTC TOUR Brands has unveiled its 2027 Early Booking Advantage campaign as travellers increasingly plan further ahead to secure sought-after destinations, preferred departure dates and the best value for their holidays.

Available across Trafalgar, Insight Vacations and Costsaver, the initiative gives travel agents and their clients access to savings of up to 30% on selected 2027 departures when booked by September 30th, 2026.

The launch comes as TTC Tour Brands sees continued demand for bucket-list destinations, immersive travel experiences and premium touring, with Japan, USA and Canada, Vietnam, Scandinavia and European river cruising among the experiences already generating strong interest for 2027.

TTC Tour Brands have also launched a new sales incentive across Trafalgar, Insight Vacations and Costsaver.

Pandaw expands Hooghly River options

PANDAW HAS expanded its Hooghly river cruise offerings with a series of new itineraries. The new series compiles a selection of new three- and four-night Hooghly River itineraries, which is designed for travellers who may not have the time for a week-long river expedition.

The new itineraries begin and end in Kolkata, and can be seamlessly combined with popular destinations such as Delhi, Agra, Rajasthan, Darjeeling, Assam, and Kerala.

The launch reflects a growing trend towards multi-centre holidays, where travellers seek a greater variety of experiences within a single trip.



Wizz Air expands Spanish network

WIZZ AIR customers flying from London Luton Airport will now be able to reach Málaga, Granada, and Asturias. The new connections from London Luton build on Wizz Air's extensive Spanish network to destinations including Bilbao, Barcelona and Seville.

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 Thursday, August 20th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.
July 10th 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



WHERE AM I?

THIS COLOMBIAN capital ranks as the third-highest in the world at 8,660ft above sea level, and has been nicknamed the 'Athens of South America'.

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							18			
19					20					

- Across**
- 1 The Airline of Indonesia (6)
 - 4 Budget hotel brand identified by a pillow logo (4)
 - 8 4 Across is part of this hotel group (5)
 - 9 French city with a Eurostar station (5)
 - 10 England's largest county (9)
 - 13 US state known as: America's Dairyland (9)
 - 17 He was the primary architect of Barcelona's iconic Sagrada Família cathedral (5)
 - 18 Roman god of love, counterpart to the Greek god Eros (5)
 - 19 Major car rental company (4)
 - 20 Currency of Australia (6)

- Down**
- 1 City hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games (7)
 - 2 Popular Canadian tourist train, Mountaineer (5)
 - 3 Durban King Shaka international airport code (3)
 - 5 This curry was invented in Birmingham (5)
 - 6 Johnny Cash famously sang about a boy named ____ (3)
 - 7 Mont Blanc dominates this mountain range (4)
 - 11 Barbie's boyfriend (3)
 - 12 Quito is the capital (7)
 - 14 Major Middle East country, ____ Arabia (5)
 - 15 Columbus is the state capital (4)
 - 16 Landlocked country mainly in the Himalayas (5)
 - 17 International airport code for 1 Down (3)
 - 18 Chief Executive Officer, initially (3)

CROSSWORD

Mystery Word: GENEVA
Across: 1 GARUDA, 4 IBIS, 8 ACCOR, 9 LILLE, 10 YORKSHIRE, 13 WISCONSIN, 17 GAUDI, 18 CUPID, 19 AVIS, 20 DOLLAR.
Down: 1 GLASGOW, 2 ROCKY, 3 DUR, 5 BALTI, 6 SUE, 7 ALPS, 11 KEN, 12 ECUADOR, 14 SAUDI, 15 OHIO, 16 NEPAL, 17 GLA, 18 CEO.



AGENT INSIGHT

MEGAN O'LEARY TRAVEL COUNSELLOR

WE SPECIALISE in solo travel that feels human, honest and deeply personal, not just Instagram-ready. Our view is simple: solo travel does not have to be extravagant, “transformational” or halfway around the world to be valid. What matters is that it fits the traveller in front of you.

For many women and gender-diverse travellers, booking a solo trip comes with extra mental load: safety, money, confidence, health, family expectations, sexuality, and gender identity.

As travel professionals, if we only sell the “quit your job and find yourself in Bali” narrative, we risk alienating those who actually need us most. Meeting clients where they are is key.

Sometimes empowerment looks like a two-night city break to prove they can check in alone. Sometimes it is a carefully chosen retreat, or a gentle first step after a breakup, bereavement or major life shift. Sometimes it is simply carving out space to hear their own thoughts between work, caregiving and everyone else's demands.

Our approach at Voyage-Her is practical and feminist: we talk honestly about risk without scaremongering, suggest destinations and hotels that match each client's comfort level, and design itineraries that allow them to opt in and out of social contact as much as they like.

If you are selling solo travel, remember there is no single “right” way to do it. There is only their way.

Your role is to back that up with thoughtful planning, genuine care and a willingness to take their safety, identity and comfort as seriously as you take their budget.



Last-minute savings on 2026 cruises

UNFORGETTABLE CROATIA has launched a selection of last-minute deals for its 2026 season, with savings of up to £584 per person.

The offer comprises of five seven-night October sailings, which call at ports such as Dubrovnik and Split.

The ‘Dubrovnik to Split (Omis) Deluxe Cruise’ departs on October 10th onboard *MV Aretis*, and calls at Slano, Mljet, Korcula, Hvar, Vis, Trogir and Split. Prices lead in from £1,926 per person with savings applied.

All itineraries include luxury transfers, breakfast, three-course lunches and select dinners.



News Bites

JUST GO! Holidays is offering trips to see the sold-out Bayeux Tapestry exhibition at the London British Museum.

AUDLEY TRAVEL has launched its Odyssey-inspired itinerary for fans of the legendary story: ‘Inspired by The Odyssey: an epic journey across Italy & Greece’.



KANIKA HOTELS & Resorts has announced the completion of a comprehensive renovation at Olympic Lagoon Resort Paphos. The resort has been upgraded with a new 3D ceiling screen in the lobby, and a new adults-only bar for a mature, intimate guest experience featuring signature cocktails and an outdoor veranda. Additionally, the Serenity Spa & Wellness has been graded to offer more intense relaxation.

Singapore Airlines doubles London frequency

THE AIRLINE is offering more choice and flexibility for travellers by doubling flight frequency from London Gatwick to Singapore.

A service will now operate twice-daily until August 21st, 2026, when it will revert back to once per day. Between September 1st, and October 24th, the airline will revert back to three weekly flights, before doubling operations again from October 26th, 2026.

Mohamed Rafi Mar, Singapore Airlines General Manager UK & Ireland, commented, "We're excited to launch our double daily service from London Gatwick this summer, offering customers more choice of flights to Singapore and seamless connections from our hub at Changi Airport."

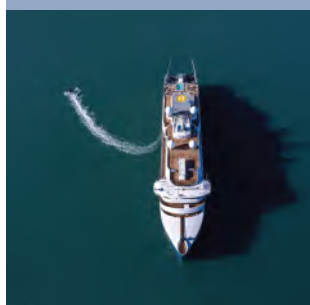
Singapore Airport acts as a seamless connection hub to popular destinations such as Bali, Thailand, New Zealand, and Australia.



FOLLOWING THE roaring success of its debut Asia-Pacific season, Swan Hellenic is back for more, bringing a hugely enriched 2027 line-up to the table.

Running from March to October 2027, the bolstered season promises bucket-list exploration, including two brand new New Zealand voyages, along with immersive sailings through Japan and South Korea.

The cruise line has also launched the limited-time 'Asia Unlocked' offer, where guests will secure a free upgrade to a balcony stateroom alongside complimentary Gold Wi-Fi.



Government guidance for Gibraltar

UK TRAVELLERS heading to Gibraltar will need to familiarise themselves with the new entry conditions for short-stay visits in respect of the new UK-EU agreement that is now in play.

Gibraltar's entry conditions will now align with Schengen rules for all British travellers who are not residents of Gibraltar and who travel on a full British citizen passport.

Travellers will not require a visa for visits up to 90 days, applying to any 180-day period. Gibraltar International Airport will now also host a two-check process: an immigration check and a Schengen check, which will include the new EES system.

Explore celebrates turning 45 with special offer

THE ADVENTURE specialist is celebrating its 45th birthday, and is inviting everyone else born in 1981 to celebrate the same milestone with up to 45% off trips across the world.

Some of the operator's best bucket-list adventures include the 15-day 'Canadian Rockies and Pacific Coast' from £4,495 per person; the



10-day 'Simply Vietnam' itinerary from £1,010 per person; and the seven-day 'Adventure Holiday to Sri Lanka' from £960 per person.



'See Before You Sail' guide to Southampton

THE NEW agent-focused guide provides essential tips for travel advisors to share with their clients before they set sail from Southampton.

Launched at the CLIA Conference last month, the 'See Before You Sail' guide provides information on arriving at the terminal, car-parking and must-see attractions to ensure passengers make the most of their time in the city before departing on their voyage. The port currently welcomes more than three million cruise passengers annually.



Celestyal heads west for the winter

CELESTYAL IS heading west, unveiling its very first dedicated Western Mediterranean programme for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 winter seasons.

Sailing onboard the 1,360-guest *Celestyal Discovery*, this brand-new deployment marks a huge milestone for the cruise line, boasting 14 maiden calls across the region. The schedule replaces the previously planned Arabian Gulf season.



Japan Showcase

WE BROUGHT Japanese hospitality to Edinburgh and Newcastle earlier this month to educate agents on the many wonders the destination offers.

A big thank you as always to our supplier partners for making these events possible: Abercrombie & Kent, Explore Worldwide, Hankyu Travel International Europe UK, Japan National Tourism Organisation, Riviera Travel, Seibu Prince Hotels & Resorts, Travelpack, Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo, and Wendy Wu Tours.



Want to get in on the [#TBShowcases](https://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/showcases) action? Our next event will be the Train & Gain Day taking place on September 8th in Solihull. To confirm your place or find out when we will be hosting our next event near you contact events@travelbulletin.co.uk



IN THE HOTSEAT WITH...

Karen Milward



Following a year of travel disruption and changing market conditions, *Travel Bulletin* caught up with Jetset's business development manager, Karen Milward, to discuss how the company has navigated the impact in the Middle East, the enduring success of its agent initiatives, and what's next for the ever-evolving JETS platform.

How has 2026 shaped up for you thus far? Has the Middle East conflict had an impact on your service standards?

It's sadly a tale of what could have been. Boosted by the constant developments around technology, processes and incentives, we raced into a terrific position through January and February and then we all woke up on that Saturday morning! Emirates are our largest airline in revenue terms and the other two major carriers also carry significant volumes of our passengers in to the Middle East and beyond... as you can imagine we were busy and I deliberately stayed out of the call centre in those early days!.

However, the team worked amazingly well and the cross training that had been ramped up in the last 12 months paid massive dividends. Within seven-eight days the call centre was back delivering a service performance, not too far away from their usual award winning levels. I think Jetset also showed how we are here to help our trade partners with the Refund pledge that went beyond the PTR requirement on a package and saw us delivering

Flight Only refunds within 14 days too!

Your popular Lotto incentive is back! Does it remain a popular choice with agents even after 20 years?

OK, its not actually back because it never went away, but what is amazing about it is that we keep pushing the boundaries and in June we launched World Cup Wipeout with each week one jackpot of £966 which is paying homage to a certain footballing feat! Agents get Lotto tickets for every booking and can keep check of the current Lotto campaign and their lotto tickets in Incentive Manager in the JETS Toolbox.

What other incentives/developments can agents get excited about?

I did say our trading had been boosted by a few things and incentives are a key reason. Highfliers was launched before I joined Jetset and initially this was just SpintoWin which I did think was excellent with instant rewards on every Flight Only booking but packages were still being left unloved! All that changed on July 4th, 2025

when we launched Magnificent 7, I took on the Alter Ego of Marshall Milward and Jetset started to reward agents with the most generous, flexible and immediate incentive programme in the trade. Each month there is even a Bonus Tier that pays out even more than the standard Mag7 payouts. Next month Marshall Milward, Sherriff Smyth, Kwik Fire Katus and Marshall Molyneux will be promoting Texas as the Bonus Tier destination with a minimum payout of £175 for any package involving Texas.

Any plans on the horizon that we can get a sneak preview of?

Well don't tell anyone but we have tons happening! Jetset now have six dedicated Jetset developers and we have to keep them busy! The big news is that very soon we will be detailing how the appeal of Magnificent 7 will see us galloping past all other trade incentives. We also have more villa product about to hit HomefromHome and finally, given how Eurostar is so successful for Jetset, keep your eyes peeled to see if anything else turns up on the JETS platform.

CONNECTION MATTERS

Just You and Travelsphere's trade sales director, Tom Morgan, reflects on the importance of connection for solo travellers.



"FOR MANY years, solo travel was sold as the ultimate act of independence. That still matters, of course, but in today's travel landscape solo travellers are frequently looking for something else alongside that freedom: connection.

There's often a misconception that solo touring means travelling alone. In reality, it's usually the opposite. Guests arrive solo but they spend their time surrounded by people who have chosen the same style of trip, often for similar reasons. There's instant common ground.

We know from experience that guests have often taken it upon themselves to start adhoc groups on various social media

platforms. Whether it's apps, forums or group chats, people are looking for ways to connect and share, creating small moments of community.

In fact, many travellers stay in touch after they return home; some might even go as far as to book future holidays together. But what is the next natural evolution of this? Enter Kindred, Just You's new dedicated community platform, introduced to connect travellers, provide reassurance and support those making the decision to travel solo for the first time. It can be accessed by current, future and past guests.

For travel agents, selling solo travel

purely around independence and freedom only tells part of the story. Many clients, particularly those who are first timers, are reassured by the social side of escorted touring. The idea of joining a ready-made community can be a powerful motivator."

Read the full opinion piece on the *Travel Bulletin* website.

Autumnal solo savings with Riviera

RIVIERA TRAVEL'S new trade-exclusive campaign will see savings of up to £450 per person on select Autumn 2026 European River Cruises.

The offer is valid for new bookings made until August 26th, 2026, and includes eight of the operator's solo sailings, including the 'Rhine Cruise to Switzerland for Solo Travellers', 'The Blue Danube for Solo Travellers', and 'The Douro, Porto & Salamanca for Solo Travellers' itineraries. The 'Make 2026 One to Remember' campaign allows guests to save money on cruises departing between October 3rd and November 12th, 2026.

Involved Holidays offers select solo dates

HELP YOUR customers get their steps in this autumn as Involved Holidays is offering 13 itineraries with solo dates available. Some of the solo options include the new eight-day 'Walking in Gran Canaria' and 'Walking in Fuerteventura' itineraries, as well as the bestselling 'Walking in Andalucia's Eastern Coast' tour.



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'Solo' doesn't mean 'alone'

TYPICALLY HOLIDAYS offers a 'Travel Companion' Service to give travellers the confidence needed to explore the world.

Travel companions will accompany guests throughout their journey, and provide friendly assistance and peace of mind. They offer practical help, reassurance, and companionship to compliment your client's independence.

The service is designed for anxious solo travellers, older travellers, and those who would appreciate a helping hand.



Engage in local life

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS is offering solo travellers the chance to engage with the local communities of Vietnam and Cambodia in its 'The Heritage of Vietnam & Cambodia' tour.

Leading in from £3,872 per person, the tour begins in Hanoi, Vietnam, and ends in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Tours are led by local residents, dinner is hosted by the community, and guests can explore villages by cyclo.

Solo travel rises in interest

SOLO TRAVEL is becoming more popular than ever, as evident in a recent study by Go2Africa.

2026 has seen the largest increase in solo travel ever, with 1.6 million searches of the term in January alone. Data from Google Trends and Glimpse reveal that searches for solo travel have increased year-on-year since 2004, with only a brief dip in 2020.

Other popular search terms included 'female solo travel', highlighting the strong presence of women within the solo travel market and 'group solo travel', which points to a more nuanced traveller mindset.

On a per-person basis, solo travellers actually outspend couples, spending 42.8% more on average. This highlights not only their willingness to invest in higher-end experiences, but also their growing importance as a high-value segment within the luxury travel market.

Solo travelers are a highly decisive group,



with 81.18% having a clear idea of where they want to go before booking a trip. This is up from 72.83% in 2024, highlighting a steady shift toward more informed and intentional planning among independent travellers.

The over-50s beach boom

SOLOS IS experiencing a surge of demand for over-50s solo beach holidays. Its latest data reveals a significant year-on-year increase in bookings and departures for 2026. The findings point to a growing appetite among mature travellers for sun-soaked, hassle-free solo experiences, with sun and beach departures up 15% year-on-year and a demand for Solos Exclusives rising by 20%.

Solos attribute this shift in demand to a combination of lifestyle and travel trends

among the age group, which includes increased disposable income, greater flexibility in retirement, and a continued drive to escape the unpredictable weather of the UK.

The growth is being led by male solo travellers, who lead the surge with bookings up to 16%, which reflects a greater confidence among men over 50 to travel independently.

Greece and Croatia remain the most popular destinations for solo beach holidays, driven by strong demand across the Solos Exclusives collection and classic island escapes. Other destinations such as Santorini, Corfu and Crete are also emerging as key favourites.

A seven-night 'Lefkada Solos Exclusive Trip' is priced from £1,375 per person, and allows solo travellers to explore the Greek gem in the Ionian Sea.



Swan Hellenic calls to solo adventurers

FOR A limited time, Swan Hellenic is offering zero single supplements on ocean-view fares for solo travellers on the 10-night 'Western Europe Cruise from Ireland to Portugal' itinerary.

The journey begins in Dublin before sailing south to Waterford and Kinsale, where guests will explore the medieval landmarks.

The cruise will then cross into France, where guests will experience the natural beauty of Brittany's Batz Island and Belle-Île, home to the Citadelle Vauban. Continuing along the Atlantic, guests will experience Royan, Santander, Gijón, and Ferrol, where they will sample local ciders and take in the vast maritime history.

The voyage will culminate in Portugal, with calls into Porto and Lisbon, allowing guests to explore the azulejo-clad churches and old quarters, before sampling world-

class gastronomy.

The 10-night itinerary will depart on August 28th, 2026, aboard *SH Diana*.

Prices lead in from £4,335 per person on a Cruise Only basis, including a selected stateroom, all meals, complimentary beverages, access to the gym, sauna and pool, one selected shore excursion per point of call, onboard lectures, Wi-Fi and gratuities.



Solo female travel reimagined in Poland

POLAND HAS been named one of the safest destinations for women travelling alone, ranking 25th in the Global Peace Index.

Dorota Wojciechowska, director at the Polish National Tourist Office, said, "Poland offers everything a solo female traveller is looking for: safety, culture, incredible food, stunning landscapes, and a warmth that surprises people."

Image Credits: Middle: Swan Hellenic. Right: Polish National Tourist Office

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8 DAYS FROM £1,549* | Apr 2026 – Nov 2027



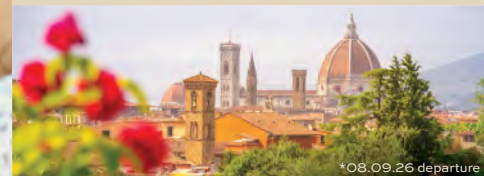
*05.11.26 departure

- 7 nights half-board in a 4-star hotel | 14 meals
- Welcome drink & farewell get-together
- Flying from London Gatwick, Manchester and multiple regional airports



WALKING IN TUSCANY

8 DAYS FROM £1,799* | Sep 2026 – Sep 2027



*08.09.26 departure

- 7 nights in a 3-star hotel | 15 meals
- Flying from London Heathrow and Manchester airports

NORTHERN CYPRUS HIDDEN HISTORY

8 DAYS FROM £1,449* | Sep 2026 – Nov 2027



*06.11.26 departure

- 7 nights half-board in a 4-star hotel | 15 meals
- Flying from Heathrow, Gatwick, Manchester, Newcastle and East Midlands airports

COME ONE, COME ALL!

Velas Resort in Mexico is hosting an array of summer promotions perfect for everyone.



THIS SUMMER, Velas Resorts is offering a range of promotions and programmes across its luxury properties on Mexico's Pacific and Caribbean coasts.

At Grand Velas Los Cabos, the summer season brings a lineup of new family-focused experiences. Guests can take part in a Summer Olympics event featuring team-based games and physical challenges, a mini Velas City role-play environment, and a daily Science Lab Hour. For families staying in the new Family Duplex Series, themed movie nights bring a multi-course theme-appropriate meal. The property's summer promotions include \$50 spa

credit per adult per night, kids stay free, 50% off teens, and 50% off roundtrip airport transfers.

Velas Vallarta offers a new golf programme designed to teach children the fundamentals of the sport. The resort also offers a complimentary room upgrade from One Bedroom Suite to One Bedroom Deluxe Suite. The resort also offers the Kawitu Experience, which is a guided tour through Puerto Vallarta with stops at a chocolate factory, a jewellery gallery, a tequila tasting session, and a ritual with a Huichol shaman.

Casa Velas is the only adults-only all-

inclusive in Marina Vallarta, and has recently introduced a multi-sensory experience honing cacao's place in Mexican heritage. The resort offers complimentary golf, a guaranteed upgraded suite, spa credit, 20% boutique discount, and a dinner for two at any Grand Velas Riviera restaurant.

Restore balance and peace in Los Cabos

LOS CABOS offers a wellness experience rooted in moments of restoration, mindfulness, and rejuvenation.

At One&Only Palmilla, guests can cultivate mindfulness through the Sunrise Ceremony, which is a guided meditation using medicinal herbs and the sound of drums by the ocean.

Hacienda Encantada Resort and Spa offers one of Mexico's oldest wellness traditions. The temazcal combines medicinal steam, heat, and intention-setting to cleanse the body. A Temazcal ceremony is led by a local, experienced shaman.

A new dimension of luxury hospitality

FAIRMONT GOLD is designed for guests seeking privacy, highly personalised service, and tailor-made experiences. Based in Rio de Janeiro, the hotel offers only 69 Gold accommodations, which includes guestrooms, family suites, and signature suites. The lounge offers a series of unique culinary experiences, and guests can benefit from private check-ins.



New LATAM options from Contiki

FROM THE Carnival in Brazil to the ancient Mayan ruins, Contiki is bringing the very best of Latin America to its customers with the launch of four new itineraries for 2027, covering the region's most sought-after destinations. Available to book now for departures in January 2027, the new trips are designed for travellers who want more from every journey.

The new nine-day 'Carnival in Brazil' takes guest to three cities and one of the world's most famous festivals. The itinerary takes travellers from São Paulo to a coastal escape in Paraty before heading to Rio de Janeiro during Carnival season. The itinerary leads in from £1,449 per person for departures on January 31st and February 3rd, 2027.

The brand's longest Latin America launch, the 46-day 'Mexico City to San Jose' itinerary, offers agents a perfect option for

clients looking for an extended, multi-country adventure. The tour will kick off in Mexico City before wrapping up in Costa Rica, allowing travellers to wander through ancient ruins, experience Caribbean Island life, and bask in the beauty of coastlines lining the Pacific. The itinerary leads in from £4,155 per person, including accommodation, and experiences.

Departures are scheduled throughout January 2027.



A sizzling summer with Wendy Wu

AS PART of Wendy Wu Tours' Summer Sizzler Sale, travellers can save up to £600 per person on select fully-inclusive escorted tours when booked before July 31st. One of the tours included in the sale is the 24-day 'Grand Impressions of Mexico' where guests will discover the soul of the country on a journey through ancient civilisations, hidden gems, and Indigenous traditions. Prices lead in from £6,990 per person, including return flights, all hotels, all meals, all excursions, and all transfers.



Expedition excellence through South America

ARE YOUR clients looking for an unforgettable high-end experience in two of South America's most biodiverse regions?

Aqua Expeditions offers journeys through the Peruvian Amazon and the Galápagos Islands, combining expert-led exploration with a deep commitment to sustainability to set a benchmark for luxury expedition travel.



Two Brazil destinations awarded LGBTQ+ accolade

RIO DE Janeiro and São Paulo have earned a place among the world's most special LGBTQ+ venues list that was curated to celebrate Pride month. In São Paul, highlights include Bandeira Bandeira bar, where patrons fill the pavements, and the Museu da Diversidade Sexual, the first

museum in Latin America dedicated to the history of sexuality diversity. São Paulo also is home to the largest Pride Parade in the world. In Rio, the spotlight shone on the Pink Flamingo and Novooeste Bar, both highlighting the community with song, dance, and unforgettable performances.

DIVE INTO THE BLUE

Iceland's forever-healing Blue Lagoon offers visitors a place to ease their mind and body.



THE BLUE Lagoon in Iceland isn't just iconic for its bright colour, but also its healing properties.

'Water of Wonder' is Blue Lagoon's campaign to illustrate the unique power of sustainability at the heart of the destination.

The water itself is a miracle of nature, with geothermal seawater from 2,000 metres below Iceland collecting minerals, silica, and microalgae, all of which eventually come to the surface and give the Lagoon its identifiable blue. The lagoon comprises of 30% freshwater and 70% seawater.

The lagoon absorbs a unique species

of microalgae, creating a bioactive system with nourishing properties, which in turn strengthens and heals the skin barrier, which is reflected in the lagoon's skincare line. The water is also proven to have a positive effect on long-term conditions such as psoriasis.

Wellbeing activities within the pool itself range from in-water massages to float therapy experiences.

The destination blends traditional Icelandic bathing tradition with modern science, and visitors experience not only relaxation but a source of community and healing, which is a mark of Icelandic culture recognised on the

UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The on-site hotel, Silica, was intentionally designed to minimise architectural disturbances and has been certified under Vakinn, Iceland's official quality and environmental certification system.

The wellness lighthouse

ON THE southernmost tip of Giglio, set within the Tuscan Archipelago National Park, lays Faro Capel Rosso, which is a lighthouse guest residence.

The lighthouse offers ways to connect with the destination, and enjoy the authentic soul of Giglio.

Wellness experiences include bath meditations, barefoot guided walks along the Italian Navy jetty, and individual meditation on the lighthouse terrace at sunset.

The experience leaves guests with inner peace, and prices lead in from €800 per night for two guests.

A longevity programme in the Maldives

SUN SIYAM Iru Fushi in the Maldives is offering a new comprehensive multi-day Longevity Programme at The Spa by Thalga designed to support healthy aging, detoxification, stress reduction, immunity, and overall wellbeing through therapies such as Shirodhara, Marma Massage, Pizhichil, and Herbal bolus treatments.



MSC redefines wellness at sea

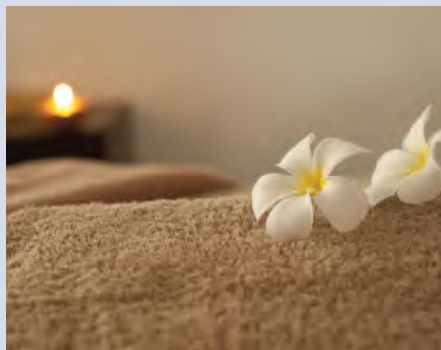
AS TRAVELLERS continue to prioritise self-care and personal wellbeing, MSC Cruises is ready to meet that demand by launching a new era of wellness at sea.

Launching across the fleet throughout 2026, the enhanced MSC Aurea Spa experience will transform the traditional cruise spa into a comprehensive wellness and beauty destination, bringing together luxury spa rituals, advanced skincare technologies, medical wellness services, and personalised treatments. The new offering will also include IV therapies, AI-powered skin diagnostics and innovative treatments.

Georg Schmickler, senior vice president of onboard revenues, said, "Today's travellers are looking for more than a vacation—they want to return home feeling better than when they left. Our vision is to create the most complete wellness

experience at sea, combining relaxation, beauty, recovery and self-care in one destination. Whether a guest is seeking rejuvenation, advanced skincare, restorative therapies or simply a moment of calm, MSC Aurea Spa now offers an experience comparable to the world's leading wellness retreats."

The spa expansion reflects the growing shift across the industry as wellness tourism has become one of the fastest-growing sectors.



Relax in the heart of Bourges

RADISSON HAS strengthened its presence in France with the opening of Hotel & Spa des Beaux-Arts in the centre of Bourges.

The 52-room property, situated five minutes away from the UNESCO-listed Cathédrale Saint-Étienne de Bourges, features a dedicated wellness area including a heated whirlpool, a traditional sauna, massage treatments, and beauty therapies, promising to provide a relaxing retreat after a full day exploring the city.



Waldorf Astoria to debut in Miami Beach

HILTON'S LATEST signing will bring timeless elegance to Miami Beach with the newly refurbished Waldorf Astoria Miami Beach set to open in winter 2027.

The property will feature 348 suites along with a newly curated spa and wellness experience with an enhanced fitness centre. Enhancements will also be made to the pool deck and private cabanas.



Capella brings wellness-integrated residences to Bangkok

CAPELLA HOTEL Group has launched Capella Residences Bangkok, marking the brand's first entry into wellness-integrated branded residences.

Residents will have a wellness concierge on hand, personalised health protocols, wellness specialists on

demand, and a vitality checkpoint, as well as around-the-clock access to a resident's lounge, and dedicated social wellness and recreation floors overlooking the Bangkok skyline complete with an infinity pool, plunge pool, spa suite and mindfulness studios.

A new ocean-front retreat

MGALLERY COLLECTION has unveiled its newest property, Bel Hotel Oleron Thalasso & Spa.

The retreat is nestled between forestas and the Atlantic’s horizon, as it graces the storied Plage de Gatseau on Île d’Oléron.

The hotel boasts 102 rooms and eight suites which all access the beautiful views of the idyllic island with furnished balconies and terraces.

Alongside esteemed gastronomy by Pierre Gagnaire, the hotel offers beach service for a more relaxed mood, with aperitifs enjoyed from loungers beside the blue waters.

Wellness at the hotel focuses on self-reconnection, and living life slowly. The hotel offers 27 treatment cabins, an indoor swimming pool,

hammam, glass-walled saunas, and a herbal tearoom.

Guests can also partake in yoga with a sea-view, where they can find peace within nature.

Prices lead in from £390 per night for a Junior Suite, and guests can take advantage of Accor’s loyalty programme and booking platform.



Wellness and gastronomy comes to life

CHIVA-SOM Hua Hin brings its 2026 wellness concept to life through a culinary collaboration with Bo.lan, one of Thailand’s most celebrated fine dining restaurants. On August 7th, guests will enjoy a six-course dinner menu showcasing the chefs’ shared interpretation of elemental balance through Thai cuisine, followed by a live-station lunch experience on August 8th highlighting seasonal Thai ingredients and traditional culinary wisdom. The collaboration is rooted in the philosophy that food can be medicine to the body and soul.

What is your favourite weird food combo?

Jeanette Ratcliffe
Publisher
jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk
Not a combo but I eat raw bacon!



Simon Eddolls
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Pickles and vanilla ice cream.



Sarah Terry
Account Manager
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Tuna mayo, cheese and beans jacket potato.



Tim Podger
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Chicken tikka pasties.



Leah Kelly
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Twiglets dipped in coca cola.



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Warm cottage cheese on salad.



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TRAIN & GAIN DAYS 2026

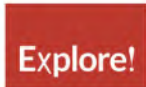
We are delighted to bring you the next instalment of our highly popular Train & Gain events programme on



Tuesday 8th September - Crowne Plaza Solihull by IHG, Solihull

Inspired with the needs of the busy home based agent in mind, this event will run between 9:30am - 3pm. Involving in-depth presentations from leading industry suppliers, this day-time training opportunity will offer additional time for Q&A sessions and informal networking.

SUPPLIER PARTNERS



TIMINGS

9.30am Agent registration, coffee and pastries	9.30am - 10.15am Marketplace networking	10.15am - 11.15am Presentations from 3 leading suppliers	11.15am - 12noon Marketplace networking	12noon - 1pm Presentations from 3 leading suppliers
	1pm Lunch	1.45pm - 2.45pm Presentations from 3 leading suppliers	2.45pm - 3pm Free Prize Draw	

#TBSHOWCASES

To confirm your place at this amazing event, email your name, company, and contact details by **Thursday 3rd September 2026** to events@travelbulletin.co.uk or telephone:

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