

# travelbulletin

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Giving agents the edge

## AGENT INSIGHT

Andy la Gette on “the new normal” for travel

## AGENT BULLETIN

Online training and incentives for motivated agents

## PUZZLE BULLETIN

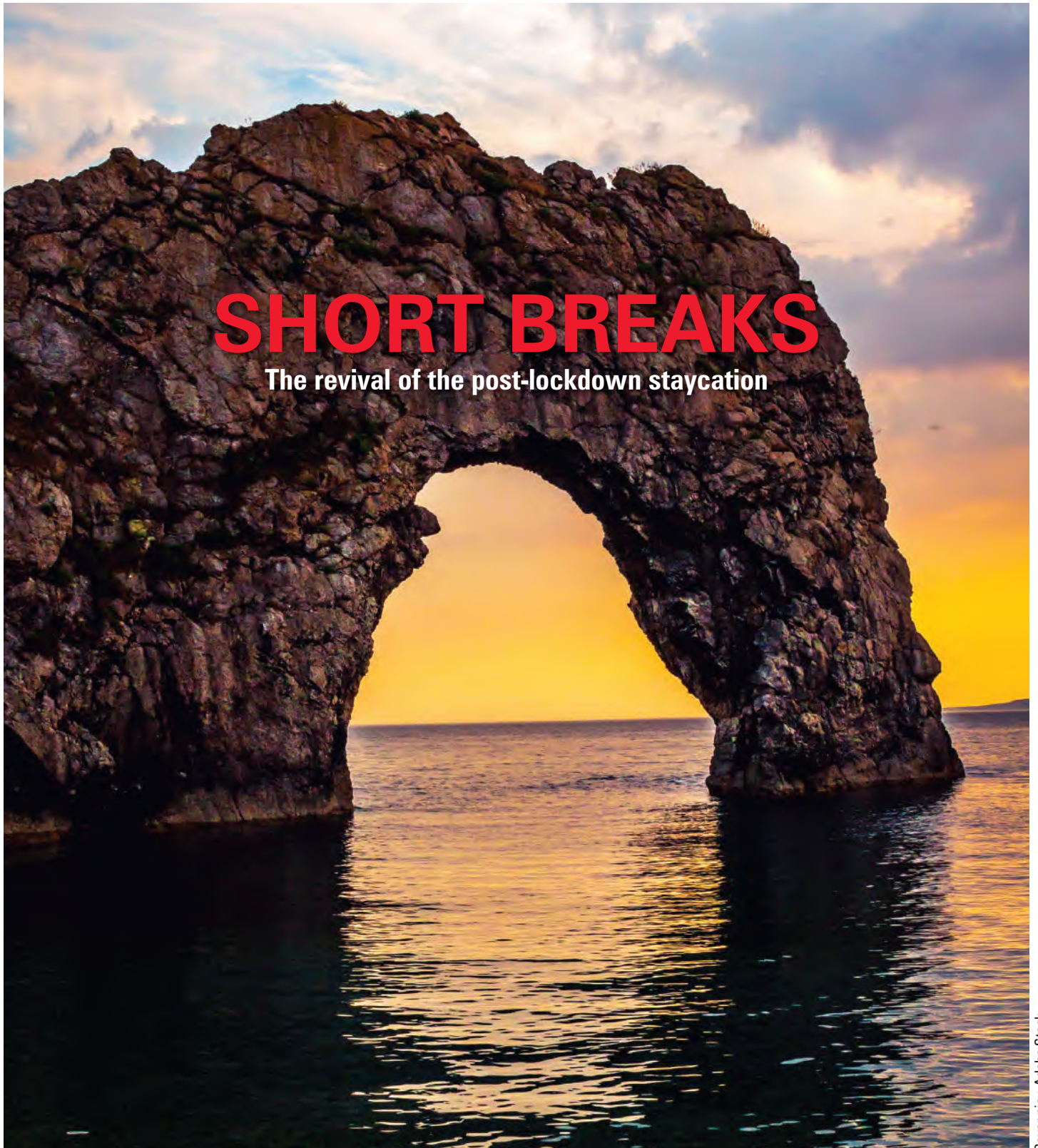
Win a £50 M&S voucher in our Su Doku competition

## SPAIN & ISLANDS

Spain reopens for late summer 2020 season

# SHORT BREAKS

The revival of the post-lockdown staycation





# SHARM EL SHEIKH

SUMMER WHEN YOU CHOOSE IT

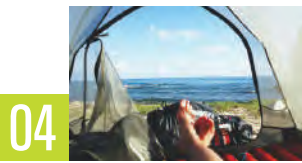


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Summer 2020 starts late for Spain but tourism companies are hopeful

# RETURN TO THE ROAD

Two post-COVID-19 trends – staycations and road trips – can represent opportunities for travel agents who are prepared to get creative when they sell holidays.



Road trips can be sold as COVID-19-safe way for cautious clients to travel.

THE TWIN trends of staycations and road trips, a result of more cautious travellers in a post-pandemic world, do not need to spell the end of opportunities for travel agents. Indeed, by booking hire cars or campervans via trade-friendly rental companies, agents could find a new way to appeal to clients who are still nervous about flying or using public transport.

A RAC Breakdown survey found that 68% of respondents who have cancelled, or expect to cancel, their holidays still want to have a break – of these, a staycation in the UK by car is favoured by 59%, with 13% holding out for a trip abroad by plane. A

further 7% are keen to take their car across the Channel.

To help reassure travellers seeking to hire a car, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) released guidelines to enable rental businesses to operate safely. The recommendations include: Pre-arrival health declarations via email; Enhance cleaning to all offices, especially high-frequency touch points; Kerbside pick-up and drop off; Moving to a fully digital process including payments and limit physical interaction with staff; Temperature checks, if recommended by legislation, and sanitation stations for customers; Limit the number of people allowed per vehicle

collection; and all cars to be cleaned with a focus on high-frequency touch points such as keys, steering wheels, gear sticks, cup holders and seat belts.

“Worldwide attractions, car hire and short-term rentals, all represent key components of many family holidays, so it’s vital we establish measures which allow safe travels to take place for holidaymakers and travellers,” said Gloria Guevara, WTTC president & CEO. “Consumer confidence is crucial to create a climate in which travel and tourism can resume.”

For more information on staycations, turn to our Short Breaks feature on page 9.

travelbulletin

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## This is in-tents – rise in camping is tipped for the UK

ACCORDING TO the booking platform Pitchup.com, it recorded the highest number of bookings in a day when more than 8,200 British holidaymakers booked accommodations within 24 hours of Boris Johnson announcing an easing of some of the lockdown restrictions.

Of all the places searched by the British travellers, the top 50 destinations were within the UK and more than 98% of bookings were for holidays in the UK.

Last year Pitchup sent almost 800,000 UK holidaymakers on a staycation in July and August, while this year, more than 2,903 bookings relating to 8,291 holidaymakers, have been registered in England over a day. It is likely that camping and caravanning will



see a longer season this year, as half-term holidaymakers may look closer to home.

The current health and safety measures have led to the rise in demand for secluded destinations, such as the Scottish highlands, West Devon and remote parts of the Suffolk coast.

The VisitBritain kitemark

scheme, which Pitchup.com is developing with Visit Britain, will provide guidance on cleaning, guest capacity and social distancing for campsite businesses. These businesses will need time to adapt and train staff so they can reopen safely.

*Report by Vinita Tiwari*

## Haven and Warner make plans to reopen

TWO OF Bourne Leisure Group's brands are planning to reopen.

Warner Leisure Hotels will open all properties in England from July 27, in line with the specified guidelines. There is still some guidance required from the Welsh government on the opening of the Bodelwyddan Castle property. The July 27 date will give staff at the Warner hotels time to ensure food supplies are restocked and furniture is arranged for social distancing.

Haven will go ahead with the reopening of

Haven Hideaway products from July 6 in England, which is the accommodation-only proposition. Haven Hideaway offers caravan accommodation with facilities such as takeaway food options so that guests can head to the coast and enjoy the beach under socially distanced circumstances.

For guests who were due to arrive at Haven's Welsh or Scottish parks in early July the following options will be available – either rebooking for a later date in 2020 or 2021, or a full refund.

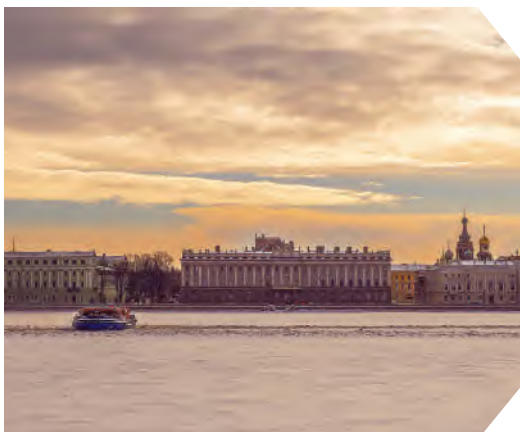
## Agents take G Adventures Inca Trail steps challenge

AGENTS FROM across the UK and Ireland took the Inca Trail Steps Challenge with G Adventures. Each agent was tasked with clocking up the 55,000 steps it takes to hike the Inca Trail. More than 140 agents did the challenge solo or with a team and collectively tracked more than 5 million steps in four days.

Designed to educate agents and cater to traveller demand for Peru, the challenge saw agents receive daily videos, training, maps and collateral to increase their knowledge of the trek. The percentage of agents taking part who stated they were 'extremely' or 'very confident' in selling the Inca Trail increased from 20% to 87% over the week.



"The Inca Trail is one of G Adventures' most sought-after trips, and we designed this challenge to be a fun way for our agents to learn more about the trek," said Stu Darnley, national sales manager for G Adventures.



## TTC brands get in early with 2021 holidays for sale

IN RESPONSE to travel agent demand for 2021 holidays, TTC's leading guided holiday brands, Trafalgar, Cost saver, Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold, have released a selection of their most popular 2021 Europe & Britain departures for sale. This is the first time the brands have released holidays for the following year so far in advance, giving agents the opportunity to book 2021 holidays now. Past guests can save an extra 5% on certain trips. For more information agents can visit [www.trafalgar.com](http://www.trafalgar.com), [www.costsavertour.com](http://www.costsavertour.com), [www.insightvacations.com](http://www.insightvacations.com) and [www.luxurygold.com](http://www.luxurygold.com), or contact their local sales manager.



**MADEIRA MAGIC...** Madeira, along with nearby Porto Santo, is open to international travellers. The two islands have been commended for their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic with just 92 reported cases and no deaths. All tourists must present a negative test within 72 hours prior to departure or be tested upon arrival. Tests on arrival are covered by the Madeira government, along with care, meals or accommodation.

## Eurostar offers flexibility as rail travel gets back on track

EUROSTAR IS offering travellers more flexibility on their bookings, with all fares now available to exchange with no fee, up to 14 days before departure. The new flexible fares will start at £39 each way and apply to all bookings made from July 1 until December 31. They are valid for any dates of travel available at the time of purchase. The increased flexibility comes in addition to options for those with existing bookings who may want to change their travel plans.

Eurostar will reinstate its service direct from London to Rotterdam and Amsterdam from July 9. The route will restart with one train a day departing London St Pancras at 11:04am, arriving in Amsterdam Central at 16:11pm. Fares are available from £40 one way. The return journey continues to be a connecting service through Brussels, where passport controls and security screening are carried out.



Disneyland Paris will be more accessible by rail from August 2.

Families planning trips to Disneyland Paris over the summer will soon be able to take advantage of Eurostar's direct service from London to Marne-la-Vallée, on the doorstep of the Disneyland Park, in just over two-and-a-half hours. The route will restart from August 2 with fares from £39.



**AGENT INSIGHT**

**ANDY LA GETTE**  
**TRAVEL COUNSELLORS**

COMING OUT the other side of the pandemic is going to prove as complex and demanding as the way into it. It is hard to navigate and interpret the rules and regulations. We have had a challenging time, and need to get back to earning a living. But we must be sensitive to the customers who are torn between the desire to get away and the need to stay safe.

How and what should we promote in the coming weeks and months? Should we focus on markets closer to home or indeed at home? The lifting of FCO travel advisories for travel out of the UK, combined with the reciprocal quarantine-free arrangements with European nations, gives us the short-term answer.

UK cottage companies and Eurostar were among the flight-free options to report an explosion in demand at the first sign of loosened shackles. Flying has extra uncertainty for a skittish public, but there's a palpable buzz suggesting that a gently increasing flow of enquiries for Mediterranean sun will become a flood.

Time will tell if we're doing too much too soon, but it is probable a restless public will submit to holiday urges. Pandora's Box is opening, and a surge of bookings to short-haul favourites seems inevitable.

So what of the rest of the world? We need to see how summer pans out, to understand the "new normal" with socially distanced resorts. Is it still good value? Will people endure masks, early check-ins and limited dining – or will just getting away be enough?

We simply do not know. Travel restrictions need to be lifted before we can do anything – and as the pandemic moves into South and Central America, Asia and Africa, we must respectfully let those countries fight their fight before we visit. When the time is right, they will need tourism, but we can't go too soon. It is a tough balancing act. For now, we can make tentative plans with flexible policies, holding refundable options for 2021 that hopefully become viable in time.

The future is uncertain, and we're adapting our strategies, but as people turn to us, we need to show sensible, justifiable optimism and confidence that small step by small step, tourism is on its way back.



## Airline update: Upgraded safety and more routes

MORE AIRLINES are seeking to return to pre-lockdown schedules, while upgrading their cleaning and disinfection procedures.

Korean Air has upgraded its sanitation protocols; carries out disinfection more often than the legal requirements; checks the temperature of all passengers before boarding; requires all crew and passengers to wear masks on board; maintains a continuous cabin airflow from outside the plane; and has introduced a back-to-front zone boarding system in which passengers seated at the back are boarded first to minimise interaction between passengers.

KLM, meanwhile, is set to resume operations between



Korean Air chairman Walter Cho joins the disinfection team.

London City Airport and Schiphol from July 13. The Dutch airline has been adapting its network and flight schedule in line with travel restrictions and demand since the COVID-19 outbreak. Over summer, passengers will be able to connect to more than 100 destinations via Schiphol.

Emirates continues to reopen routes apace, restarting flights to Amman from July 5, Osaka from July 7, Narita from July 8, Athens, Larnaca, Rome and Glasgow from July 15, and Malé from July 16. Emirates will be flying to 52 cities by mid-July, although flights to Pakistan remain suspended.

## RARE India invites agent partners to sell eco-luxury trips

RARE INDIA, a collection of sustainable luxury boutique hotels, palace stays, wildlife lodges, homestays and retreats in India and the subcontinent, has launched an initiative to work with agents. RARE Travel Agency Network (RATAN) is directed towards inviting partnerships from travel agents to promote conscious luxury travel. Under RATAN, RARE India is inviting travel agencies that believe in responsible tourism to be a part of the network. Agency partners will have preferred access to the RARE India Community, RARE India events, fam trips and knowledge sessions.

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

**BELLEAIR** 50<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
HOLIDAYS

## CHEERIO LOCKDOWN - VIVA MALTA

### Welcome to Safe Malta

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

To learn more: [www.visitmalta.com](http://www.visitmalta.com)

### EARN LOVE2SHOP VOUCHERS FOR EVERY BOOKING

Simply book a Belleair package or cruise holiday, between July & August 2020, to earn Love2shop vouchers! [www.belleair.co.uk/incentive](http://www.belleair.co.uk/incentive)

Booking Value	£500 - £999	£1000 or MORE
Love2Shop Vouchers	<b>£40</b>	<b>£100</b>

Malta International Airport opens to UK visitors on 15th July 2020.  
Air Malta, British Airways, easyJet, Jet2 and Ryanair aim to resume services from 18 UK airports.



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**SHEENA SUMNER, MD of Wonderluxe Travel and a member of Protected Trust Services, has won the award for Best Bespoke Luxury Travel Agency in The Midlands, in the 2020 UK Enterprise Awards.**

## AGENT TRAINING

- ALL FIVE modules of the Queensland training programme are now available on *Travel Bulletin's* TravelGym portal. As well as learning about the variety of holidays available in Australia's Sunshine State, including beaches, islands, rainforests and the city of Brisbane, there are opportunities for agents to win prizes of John Lewis/Waitrose gift cards as they learn. To find out more and undertake the training modules, go to [www.travelbulletin.co.uk/travelgym](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/travelgym)
- DESTINATION CANADA is launching a new Canada Specialist training portal. Pulling together the training schemes of commercial, provincial, city and territory partners, agents can now go to one website to find these Canada training programmes in one hub: [www.canadaspecialist.co.uk](http://www.canadaspecialist.co.uk). Initially, agents will find training programmes from Air Canada, Rocky Mountaineer, Vancouver, Montreal, Ontario and Alberta. The site also has links to virtual Canada, so agents can experience attractions, landmarks and festivals online, plus videos.
- AGENTS CAN win a five-star holiday to Abu Dhabi if they complete the online training course to become an Abu Dhabi specialist. The programme is designed to provide agents with the knowledge and resources required to sell more holidays to UAE capital. As well as being in with a chance to win a holiday, there are 100 £50 Love2Shop vouchers to be won by graduates of the programme. Go to [www.travelbulletin.co.uk/travelgym](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/travelgym) to take the course.
- THE SRI Lanka High Commission is conducting a series of webinars for Sri Lanka Wellness Week, as the Indian Ocean destination reopens for tourism. On July 7 at 10:30am BST, the topic will be "How can we position Sri Lanka as the next global wellness destination?" and on July 10, at the same time, the topic will be "Beyond COVID-19: Creating an action plan". More information about the webinars can be found at [www.slwta.com/wellnessweek/](http://www.slwta.com/wellnessweek/) or [www.srilankabusiness.com/announcements/#sri-lankas-wellness-sector-three-part-webinar-series](http://www.srilankabusiness.com/announcements/#sri-lankas-wellness-sector-three-part-webinar-series)

## AGENT INCENTIVES

AGENTS who complete all five modules of 'Arizona from A-Z', which is run by the Arizona Office of Tourism, will be entered into the prize draw to win one of nine bottles of wine from Dos Cabezas WineWorks, which is located in the US state. The winery features in the training modules. For more information and to take the course, log on to [www.arizonafromatoz.co.uk/win](http://www.arizonafromatoz.co.uk/win)

CRYSTAL RIVER Cruises is extending the Advance Purchase Savings programme to its travel partners around the world. Travel agents will receive a \$250 gift card for each booking made on the cruise operator's programme up until December 31, 2020. For more information about the offers on the Advance Purchase Savings programme and to make reservations call 020 7399 7604 or visit [www.crystalcruises.co.uk](http://www.crystalcruises.co.uk)

US-BASED luxury tour operator Culture Holidays is offering travel agents around the world reward points for fam trips when they make bookings. Agents who register will automatically be enrolled in the CultureAdvantage Programme which allows agents to collect reward points, starting with 500 points on registration. To register and find out more, go to [www.cultureholidays.com/agent-registration-form.html](http://www.cultureholidays.com/agent-registration-form.html)

Light Blue Travel, which represents Nicko Cruises in the UK for trade sales, is offering travel agents up to 12% commission on river cruise bookings. Managing director Rupert Thomson said of river cruises, "Smaller vessels with fewer passengers on board and never far from dry land are some of the post COVID-19 advantages." For more information on the cruises, go to [www.lightbluetravel.co.uk](http://www.lightbluetravel.co.uk)

## travelbulletin WEBINARS

Watch the first in a series of themed webinars launched by Travel Bulletin this week.

View the on demand version of our Far East webcast featuring Amazing Thailand, the Japan National Tourism Organization and Visit Fiji.

[www.travelbulletin.co.uk/webinar-video](http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/webinar-video)



SUDOKU

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

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3 x 3 squares contains the digits 1-9.

Once you have completed the puzzle, simply identify the numbers that relate to the letters, A, B, C and D then e-mail the solution, with your name, company name, and full postal address plus phone and ABTA number if applicable to:

**competition@travelbulletin.co.uk**

Closing date for entries is Thursday, July 16th. Solution and new puzzle will appear in our next issue.

**The winner for June 19th is  
Stuart Pritchard from Sterling Travel Management.**

**June 19th Solution: A=2 B=4 C=3 D=8**

	3			5		6	2	1
		9		7	4	8		
	2		6				4	
<b>B</b>			5					9
		6	1		2	4		
<b>C</b>	4					3		
		6			7		9	
		1	9	2		7		
<b>D</b>	9	4	7		1			2



## WHERE AM I?

This port city was first settled by a Celtic tribe around 567 BC and, in the 18th century, it was rebuilt after centuries of occupation and conflict. It is close to the Atlantic coast and is very well-known for its nearby wine region.

CROSSWORD

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

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

**Across**

- Ship operated by Cruise & Maritime Voyages, sounds like an Italian explorer (5,4)
- Famous luxury Singapore hotel (7)
- London City airport code (3)
- Capital of Fiji (4)
- Empire that built Machu Picchu (4)
- One of the Channel Isles (4)
- Tremezzo is a popular resort on this lake (4)
- Avignon Provence airport code (3)
- Recently named as Britain's favourite flavour of ice cream (7)
- Cruise company with HQ in Miami (9)

**Down**

- Actor who plays Inspector George Gently and Judge John Deed (6,4)
- Siberian city (4)
- Popular Florida destination (7)
- Musical based on the play Pygmalion (2,4,4)
- Dating reality show \_\_\_ Island (4)
- Aegina is part of this island group (7)
- German city (4)
- Famously shaped cricket ground in South London (4)

Solution:  
Across: 1. MARCO POLO, 5. RAFFLES, 7. LCY, 8. SUVA, 9. INCA, 11. SARK, 12. COMO, 14. AVN, 15. VANILLA, 16. CELEBRITY.  
Down: 1. MARTIN SHAW, 2. OMSK, 3. ORLANDO, 4. MY FAIR LADY, 6. LOVE, 8. SARONIC, 10. BONN, 13. OVAL.

Mystery Word: OSTEND Where am I? - Bordeaux, France



## SHORT AND SWEET

**While there has been an influx of holiday bookings as international travel restrictions are lifted, the short break market has potential, especially within the UK. Georgia Lewis reports.**

THE UK is coming out of lockdown and while there are encouraging reports of customers keen to book longer holidays, for many people, the short break is tempting, particularly as a cautious re-entry into travelling after a long period of limited activity.

For many, a staycation will be their first foray into post-lockdown travel, especially if they are still not confident about air travel. Journeys to areas where social distancing is easier, such as the Scottish highlands, Snowdonia and the Yorkshire Dales, reachable by car or train, may be preferable for many to travelling by plane in the coming months.

Web traffic statistics

following Prime Minister Boris Johnson's announcement of this month's reopening of the hospitality sector indicate there is strong interest in taking UK-based breaks.

BVA BDRC, a consumer insights agency, released survey results which found that the momentum for domestic travel is building in the wake of the government announcement. The post-announcement survey found a growing number of people planning to take a trip in the UK in the next three months, corresponding with a reopening of British tourist attractions. The survey found that 27% of respondents plan to visit a UK-based attraction in the

next three months, the highest proportion since the lockdown started in March.

In contrast, survey respondents were more cautious about overseas travel with about 20% of respondents contemplating an international holiday before the end of the year.

Holiday rental marketplace Snaptrip, which aggregates more than 35 UK suppliers, experienced a 172% increase in bookings (50% of these were for this month) and a total increase of 400% in revenue compared to June last year on the day after Mr Johnson's announcement.

Luxury lodge specialist Hoseasons recorded one booking every 11 seconds

in the hours after Boris Johnson's announcement. Year-on-year sales were up 270% for Hoseasons by the end of the day.

"We were expecting greater levels of interest, but the surge in demand was still surprising and we certainly hadn't expected a record day," said Simon Altham, Chief Commercial Officer of Awaze UK, the parent company of Hoseasons. "Over the last few weeks we've seen volumes of enquiries and bookings increase on a daily basis, as people begin to become more confident about booking a UK holiday. Government confirmation seems to have just given people an extra level of certainty."



# ROYAL APPROVAL

**Warwick Castle is welcoming visitors on short breaks in upgraded accommodation facilities after reopening the grounds and gardens last month.**



WARWICK CASTLE is welcoming its first overnight guests since lockdown this month. This follows on from a reopening of the castle's grounds and gardens on June 6.

On July 4, the on-site accommodation at Knight's Village will reopen. The accommodation comprises overnight stays in woodland lodges with medieval styling. Lodges sleep between five and seven people, all with self-contained bathrooms and toilets.

As well as the grounds and gardens, visitors will be able to go inside the castle to view such attractions as the armoury collection in the Great Hall, as well as climbing the towers and ramparts for views across the grounds and beyond.

Character performers will return to entertain visitors, including knights and princesses, as well as the Birds of Prey shows in The Falconer's Quest. The collection of more than 60 birds of prey have remained on

site throughout lockdown, cared for by falconers who have been flying them daily.

A number of processes have been implemented to ensure visitor safety including: enhanced cleaning of all areas including toilets and seating, introduction of one-way systems supported by clear wayfinding, social distancing markers and sanitiser stations; entry will be dependent on advance online booking only, with availability subject to new daily maximum capacities to ensure allowance for social distancing; temperature spot-checks may be carried out; guests are encouraged to bring face coverings with them for use if necessary; contactless payment for food and drink payment; toilets will be available to guests on a one-in-one-out basis.

All tickets and stays must be booked in advance online at [www.warwick-castle.com](http://www.warwick-castle.com) and new daily capacity limits have been put in place to ensure social distancing.

## Visit England keen to promote COVID-safe short breaks

AS THE tourism industry reopens in England, Visit England has partnered with national tourist organisations to launch industry standards for the whole UK.

The 'We're Good To Go' industry standard and supporting mark means businesses can demonstrate that they are adhering to government and public health guidance, have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and have the required processes in place. An alert system has been set up so that businesses are notified of any changes to the official guidance. A call-handling service provides support, and assessors will carry out random spot-checks to ensure adherence.

The scheme has been developed with Tourism Northern Ireland, VisitScotland and Visit Wales, with input from more than 40 industry bodies including UKHospitality, the Association of



Leading Visitor Attractions, the British Holiday & Home Parks Association, the British Beer and Pub Association and the National Caravan Council, as well as destination management organisations.



## A ferry good way to stay safe on a short break

DISCOVER FERRIES has created a list of destinations to promote the benefits of ferry travel in the age of social distancing and encourage confident booking over the summer months. The destinations are ideal for short breaks and include the Scilly Isles, where travellers can take the Scillonian ferry to enjoy puffin-spotting. Stargazing clients might be keen on some of the remote parts of the British Isles, where clear night skies are perfect for perusing the constellations. Recommended destinations include the Isle of Wight, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. Wightlink, Red Funnel and Hovertravel offer services to the Isle of Wight; Isle of Man Steam Packet Company runs routes from Heysham, Liverpool, Belfast and Dublin to Douglas; and Condor Ferries sails to Jersey and Guernsey.



## Agent commission for electric adventures on wheels

AGENTS CAN earn commission on Cycling for Softies' self-guided high-end e-bike trips through the UK and Europe. The company has launched short break itineraries for the UK in Sussex and the Cotswolds.

Harvey Downard, Cycling for Softies' head of cycling, commented, "We've had brilliant feedback from customers who have enjoyed our e-bike tours in France and Italy, so now seemed the perfect time to offer the same experience in the UK. Many people have been taking a closer look at the destinations on their doorstep over the past few months, and these tours offer an extension of that by providing the opportunity and means to discover some of the UK's



Cycling through the Cotswolds is made easy on an e-bike.

most beautiful regions on two wheels, without requiring too much physical exertion.

In Sussex, the Ockenden Manor tour runs for two or three nights, starting at the Elizabethan country house which has been converted into a hotel with spa. Guests can choose from routes that take in the scenic villages of West Sussex and local wineries, or swap your bike

saddle for a seat on the Bluebell Railway steam train before returning to the hotel to dine in the award-winning restaurant. Priced from £585 per person for two nights, including e-bike hire and accommodation on half-board basis, midweek.

The Cotswolds In Comfort E-bike Tour takes in many of the region's highlights on a four-night short break with

accommodation shared across two boutique hotels. Recommended routes cover Bourton-on-the-Water, with its model village as well as Burford and its plentiful antique shops. Cycling on to Cirencester allows for a trip to the Corinium museum, which documents the town's Roman heritage. Priced from £1,245 per person for four nights, it includes e-bike hire and accommodation on half-board basis.

*To find more about these and other tours in the UK and Europe, go to [www.cycling-for-softies.co.uk](http://www.cycling-for-softies.co.uk). Agents who would like to find out more about earning commission can email [info@cyclingforsofties.com](mailto:info@cyclingforsofties.com) or call 020 3944 5216.*



# Spitsbergen Snowmobile Expedition

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**For more info about our tours visit [www.scandinaviaonly.co.uk](http://www.scandinaviaonly.co.uk) or call our reservation team on 01274 875199**

# LAKESIDE LIFE

The Swiss city of Geneva is being promoted as a destination where visitors can safely enjoy a range of experiences, including wine tasting, art and wild swimming.



Chillon Castle on the shores of Lake Geneva

GENEVA TOURISM is promoting the Swiss city as a safe short break destination.

The Open Cellars programme returns with adjustments for preventing the spread of coronavirus. Geneva has the third largest winegrowing region in Switzerland and the programme will run every Saturday until early September. The wineries have increased opening hours and are open to small groups for wine tasting.

As well as the wineries,

Geneva is welcoming back the Sculpture Garden biennale until September 10. Taking place in three open green spaces (Parc des Eaux-Vives, Parc La Grange, and Quai Gustave-Ador), the biennale will host 30 large-format sculptures, many created by young artists.

Lake Geneva, one of the largest lakes in Europe, is a prime attraction during the summer, and now visitors can try wild swimming at Bains des Paquis. The lake

also offers sporting activities including sailing, canoeing, paddleboarding and windsurfing at Tropical Corner. For a more sedate experience, visitors can take a dip at Geneva's new public Eaux Vives beach.

Across all of Switzerland, the government has introduced the Clean & Safe campaign to ensure high standards of hygiene in hotels, bars, cafes, restaurants and tourist attractions.

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

## Blackpool is ready for summer short break visitors

MANY OF Blackpool's major attractions, hotels, restaurants and bars will be allowed to reopen on July 4. This follows on from Blackpool Zoo reopening on June 29. Among the attractions reopening are Blackpool Pleasure Beach, part of Blackpool Tower, the SEA LIFE Centre, Madame Tussauds, amusement centres and piers on the Golden Mile.

The "Know Before You Go" guidance includes advice on safety measures taken by attractions, hotels, bars and restaurants, litter prevention and contactless payment.

Cllr Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Tourism & Culture on Blackpool Council, said that



during lockdown, businesses have been preparing to reopen: "We need to give our visitors the confidence to return, knowing that our priority is their health and safety."

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



## Roam around Rome on a luxury mini-break

WITH ITALY again opening up for tourists, tourist businesses in Rome are hoping for an influx of short break visitors from the UK, as well as its European neighbours. Luxury hotels are popular for short Roman holidays and, with this in mind, the five-star Palazzo Naiadi, a Dedic Anthology property, has created a series of initiatives to allow guests to discover the secrets of the Italian capital within this new post-COVID-19 normality. These include: The Open Road to Rome, a golf cart tour for four people, showcasing the major sights of Rome; a three-hour tour of Rome's most romantic sights, such as Villa Borghese and the Giardino degli Aranci sull'Aventino, and an "artist for a day" experience.

[www.dahotels.com/palazzo-naiadi-roma](http://www.dahotels.com/palazzo-naiadi-roma)



## NO SIESTA FOR SPAIN

**After imposing a strict lockdown to deal with COVID-19, Spain is keen to reopen for business and tourism leaders are optimistic despite new safety protocols. Georgia Lewis reports.**

SPAIN'S TOURISM boards are optimistic about a successful summer 2020, despite a later-than-usual start to the season thanks to global travel restrictions.

"This is the most difficult situation the Spanish tourism sector has faced that anyone can remember," said Jose Luis Zoreda, vice-president of the Spanish tourism lobby group Exceltur.

Free mobility throughout the territory and travel between provinces has been allowed but since June 21, a series of new tourism regulations has been put in place for the whole country. These include the mandatory face masks for people over six years of age on public roads, outdoors and in

enclosed spaces for public use, when it is not possible to maintain a social distance of at least 1.5 metres. Mask use is also mandatory on public transport, by air, sea and rail, and in private vehicles if the occupants do not live at the same address; as well as tourist accommodation, restaurants, shops and cultural, entertainment, recreational and sports centres.

The Spanish government wants to ensure that crowds are avoided in common areas, and guarantee that customers and workers maintain a minimum interpersonal distance of 1.5 metres.

On La Gomera, one of the

Canary islands, a track and trace app is being tested by the Spanish government. The island's popularity with tourists was one of the reasons it was selected for the pilot programme and, with residents reportedly keen to participate, expectations are high that this trial will prove successful in monitoring the virus across Spain, especially in areas that rely heavily on international tourism.

Turespaña, a body attached to the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, released a video on social media as part of the campaign 'Spain is waiting for you', to attract inbound tourists from July onwards.

"Spain is ready to receive foreign tourists

under safe conditions as from July 1, and it will do this with its customary warmth and hospitality. Through this video, we want to encourage you to plan your holidays to our country now, where you will be able to find a broad and diverse tourism offer that will live up to any expectations," explained Isabel Oliver, state secretary for tourism and chair of Turespaña.

However, tourists seeking to party in Spain this summer may have a difference experience to previous years. The Balearic islands have banned dancing at clubs and beach bars. Some superclubs are not reopening this year because they are only allowed to host up to 100 people outdoors – these clubs usually host thousands of people on a nightly basis. Small clubs are required to cover dance floors with tables and chairs.



## Rural escapes on offer in Murcia go beyond the hustle and bustle

SPAIN MAY be best known for beach holidays and city breaks, but the Murcia region is keen to promote an alternative type of Spanish holiday – the relaxed luxury rural break.

The Spanish government has announced that paradors can reopen, subject to strict safety guidelines to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19. A parador is a type of luxury hotel – usually located in a converted historic building,



or a modern building with a panoramic view – usually featuring impressive

architecture, with an aim of protecting Spanish heritage and culture. Murcia’s Costa

Cálida is home to paradors such as the inland Parador de Lorca (pictured), within the Lorca Castle estate.

As well as rural retreats, Lorca features free museums, squares, palaces, fine architecture, walking and cycling hotspots and activities such as kayaking, scuba diving and cliff jumping.

For more information: [www.murciaturistica.es/en/home/](http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/home/)

## Where do you hope to take your next short break?



**Jeanette Ratcliffe**  
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 I'm going to Cornwall next week.



**Matt Gill**  
 Senior Account Manager  
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 Lake District this weekend.



**Georgia Lewis**  
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 To the north-east of England to see friends and family.



**Bill Coad**  
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**Simon Eddolls**  
 Sales Director  
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 A pub in Buckinghamshire on cricket tour, if we're allowed...



**Hannah Carter**  
 Events Coordinator  
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 I'm planning to go to Devon for a long weekend at the start of September.



**Tim Podger**  
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# SPAIN & ISLANDS



## READY TO CHECK IN

**Hotels across Spain are opening as July heralds a delayed start to the summer season. With limited occupancy and safety protocols, hotel companies are still looking forward to welcoming guests.**

JULY WILL see hotels open across mainland Spain and the islands. Lower occupancy and safety protocols will change the experience, but the industry is optimistic.

RIU Hotels is opening 15 hotels by the first week of July, across Madrid, Mallorca, Cadiz, Formentera, Málaga, Gran Canaria, Tenerife (pictured), Fuerteventura and Lanzarote. For all RIU properties, hotel occupancy will be limited to 50% or 60%, unless the country's legal limit is lower.

The Palladium Hotel Group is reopening all Spanish properties throughout July. Seven of its hotels in Ibiza (Grand Palladium Palace Ibiza Resort & Spa and Grand Palladium White Island Resort and Spa), Tenerife and Málaga are open from July 3. Hard Rock Hotel Ibiza will reopen on July 10. Bless



Grand Palladium White Island Resort & Spa in Ibiza.

Hotel Ibiza will also welcome clients from July 10. From July 8, Agroturismo Sa Talaia, on Ibiza, will reopen. Hard Rock Hotel Tenerife will reopen on July 30.

On the mainland, Palladium Hotel Costa del Sol in Benalmádena, Málaga, reopens on July 9.

Meliá Hotels is reopening more than 60 Spanish hotels by the end of July. June has already seen the group reopen Gran Meliá Sancti

Petri (Cadiz), Meliá Villaitana (Alicante), Meliá Lebreros (Seville) and Meliá Atlanterra (Cadiz) in Andalusia, Hotel Valencia Oceanic and TRYP Ciudad de Alicante in the Valencia region, and the Tryp Santiago and Tryp Vigo in Galicia.

For July, the group will welcome guests back to all their properties across Andalusia, the Valencia region, the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands.

### Two-pronged policy for Spanish tourism

SPAIN'S SECRETARY of State for Tourism and the Autonomous Communities has agreed to submit plans for a sustainable reopening of the country's tourism industry following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The sustainability plans take two different lines based on the requirements of different regions.

One plan is aimed at helping Spain's pioneering destinations, which have specific needs for renewal and repositioning in the international tourism market.

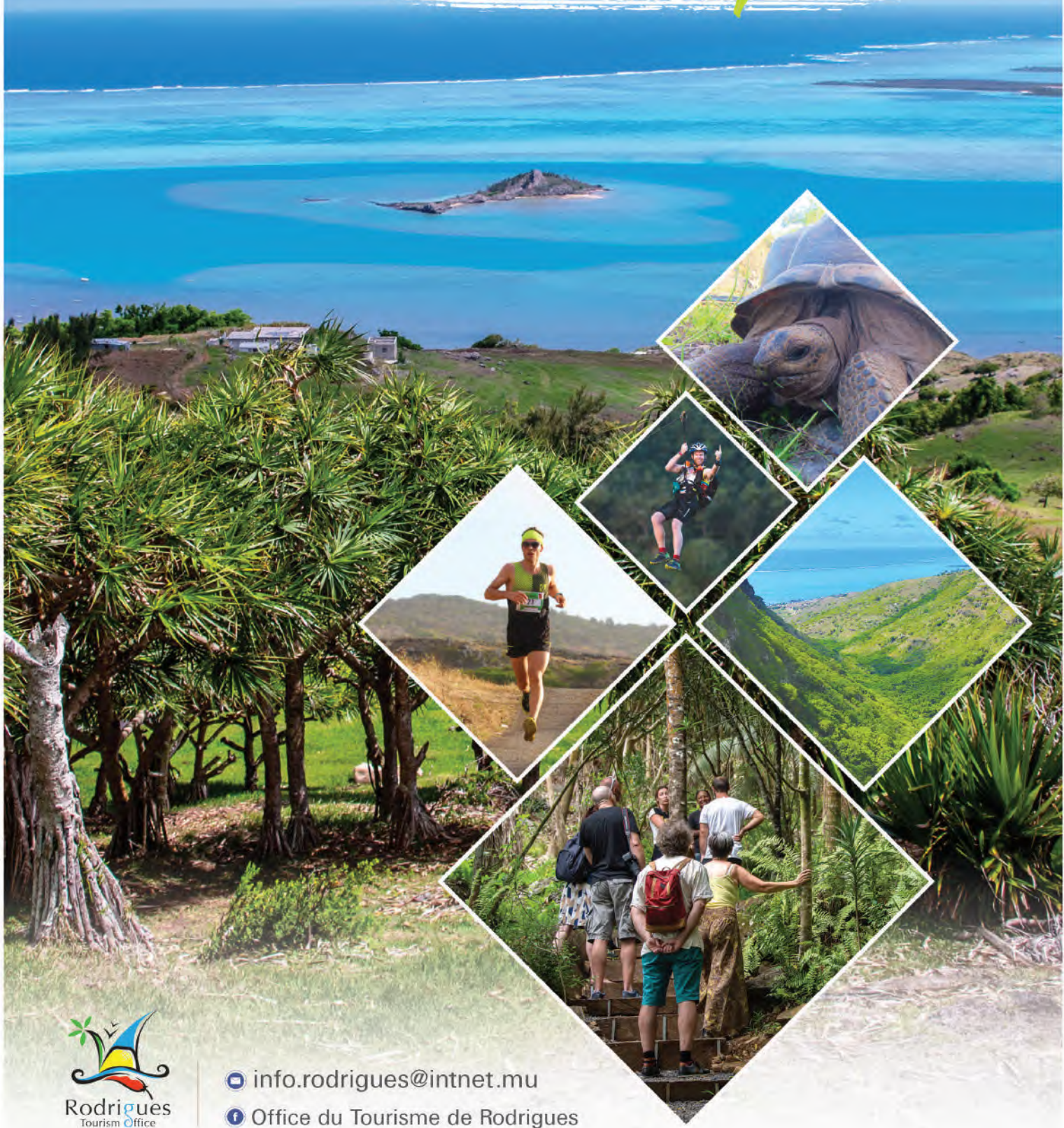
The other plan will focus on destinations located in rural and inland areas. This plan aims to help these often lesser-visited areas create appealing tourism products based on their unique selling points. It is hoped that plans to revive tourism in these areas will help fight against depopulation.

Tourism Minister Isabel Oliver said, "The application of these sustainability plans will contribute to the recovery of the tourism sector after the coronavirus crisis and will allow it to strengthen its competitiveness, accelerating its transformation towards a model based on sustainability and digitisation."



# Rodrigues Island

*naturally...*



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