# The second of th Giving agents the edge



The most star-studded show in travel returns for its 25<sup>th</sup> year!

#### MORE IN.

Star Awards 2024

As we begin the countdown for the 25th Star Awards, hear from our sponsors and get voting! Pg. 15

Theme Parks & Attractions

Thrills and spills from across the globe.

Pg. 23



The UK remains the USA's key international source market: where does the destination go from here? Hear from Brand **USA's VP of global trade** development. (Pg. 14)

# Jetset 9

# Enhance The Experience!

Being Enhanced even more...

(Update 1.1 on the way)









**NEWS BULLETIN APRIL 19 2024** travelbulletin.co.uk



#### **NEWS**

Everything you need to know from the travel trade world.



#### **BULLETIN BRIEFING**

Jackie Ennis, vice president for global trade development at Brand USA.



#### STAR AWARDS PREVIEW

Shining a spotlight on the most star-studded event in travel...



#### **MALTA & GOZO**

Whether your clients want a warm winter or a sizzling summer, Malta has great offers all year round.



#### **THEME PARKS & ATTRACTIONS**

The top thrills and spills from across the globe.



the cheaper term-time holiday deals? According to price comparison site TravelSupermarket, 30% of families in England are willing to take the risk.

Research found that on average, nearly a third of families across the UK are actively searching for holidays before the school term ends, with the majority of focus being placed on the week before the start of the school summer holidays.

The data shows that 41% of family holiday searches are for departures from Bristol Airport the week before the school term ends, followed by 34% from Liverpool and Manchester, 33% from Birmingham, 32% from London and 31% from Newcastle.

The new government policy states that fines will raise from £60 to £80 for children

who miss five days or more due to unauthorised absences, which included termtime holidays.

When the new policy comes into play in August this year, parents will not only be faced with increased penalties, but will have to deal with a less competitive holiday market with the risk of prices skyrocketing as more families are forced to compete for the limited supply of holidays.

Richard Singer, CEO of TravelSupermarket, shared his thoughts on the policy change, stating: "Families in the UK face a parent trap. Not only does supply and demand push up holiday prices during the school holiday times, but APD rises and the cost-of-living crisis are all compounding to punish families with school age children.

"Family holidays are a time to cherish and we urge the Government to do more to offer flexibility around school holidays to enable more families to travel together this summer."



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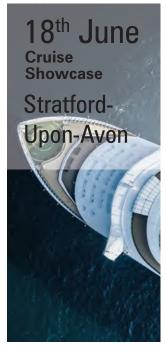


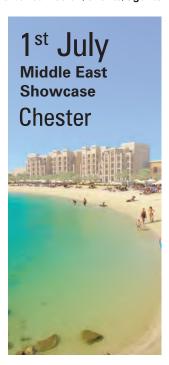
#### Showcase Calendar

Sign up to our showcases: www.travelbulletin.co.uk/events/agents









#### Riviera removes Rhine and Rhône solo supplements

A RANGE of Riviera's 2024 cruises have seen solo prices drop with the removal of the solo traveller supplement. 533 cabins are dedicated exclusively to solo travellers (now at no extra cost) between August and October this year, representing an almost 200% rise in solo occupancy availability.

Prices for a solo 'Rhine, Strasbourg & Heidelberg' option start from £2,749 per

person in August, with October options including the 'Burgundy, the River Rhône & Provence' departure from £2,199.

If that were not enough support for solo sailors, the operator confirmed in February that its upcoming season will almost double 2023's solo offering, with a whole host of dedicated options now on sale.

\*\*www.rivieratravel.co.uk\*\*





#### Louis Hotels adds four-star-plus property

THE LOUIS Apostolata Island Resort in Kefalonia will join the Louis Hotels Family Collection this summer.

On Kefalonia's south-eastern coast, the Louis Apostolata Island Resort sits on a hillside sloping into the sea, offering up impressive coastal views in some of the property's 166 rooms and suites.

Seven nights start from £572 per person, based on two adults sharing a sea-view Double Room on half-board with direct return flights from London Gatwick in May 2024. www.louishotels.com

## Railbookers reinstates New Zealand rail holidays

ALL ABOARD the Kiwi Express: Railbookers has reintroduced New Zealand to its portfolio, with six itineraries spanning eight to 19 days now on offer.

Fuelled by, as president & CEO Frank Marini described, "growing customer demand for independent rail holidays to the world's top bucket-list destinations," the New Zealand offerings include journeys aboard the Northern Explorer (between Auckland and Wellington), the Coastal Pacific (between Picton and Christchurch) and the Tranzalpine (between Picton and Christchurch). Alongside the rail adventures, excursions uncover natural wonders, cultural experiences and city/town tours.

Discounts of up to £500 per couple can be unlocked on all New Zealand trips in celebration of the launch. www.railbookers.co.uk

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#### NCLH announces ambitious eight-ship pipeline

EIGHT NEXT-GENERATION vessels have been ordered across the Norwegian Cruise Line, Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises brands, due for delivery between 2026 and 2036.

Norwegian will take delivery of four ships, each with an expected capacity of around 5,000 guests in 2030, 2032, 2034 and 2036.

Oceania Cruises will welcome two new ships in 2027 and 2029, building on the

success of its Allura Class ships: the final of which will be delivered next year.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises is set to host two new ships, with a circa 850-guest capacity on both, in 2026 and 2029.

Along with the new vessels, the group confirmed a new multi-ship pier at its private Bahamas island destination, Great Stirrup Cay.



#### Aer Lingus tops up transatlantic route



AER LINGUS has confirmed additions to its winter 2024 schedule from Manchester, with up to four weekly services to Orlando taking flight during the peak winter months.

The fourth flight will operate between December 18th, 2024 and January 8th, 2025: booking has opened with economy return fares from £439.

Joining winter services to Barbados and New York, the bolstered Orlando services hope to "make more dreams come true," according to CCO Susanne Carberry. www.aerlingus.com

#### APT launches 16-guest small group collection

INSPIRED BY new recruit Laura Hughes, who joined APT as the operator's first dedicated touring product manager in December 2023, three new itineraries have been launched in the new 'Small Group Journeys' collection. The new tours include the 14-day 'Northern India - Sensory Marvels of Rajasthan' itinerary from £3,995 per person, 15-day 'Southern India - Quest of the Senses' tour from £3,995 per person, and 16-day 'Northern India - West to East Odyssey' adventure from £4,495 per person.

Current departures span October 2024 to December 2025. Further additions have been promised in July 2024. www.aptouring.co.uk

#### The capital gets a Caribbean makeover

THE BAHAMAS Ministry of Tourism has kicked off a new 'Out-of-Home' ad campaign across the capital.

Visuals adorn London's black cabs and buses, hoping to inspire an even greater rise in British arrivals than the 58% increase in January and February 2024 against the same period in 2023.

Anthony A. Stuart, senior



director of emerging markets, said: "We look forward to welcoming more Brits to our shores." www.bahamas.com



#### Palladium's power goes 100% renewable

IN A recent roundup on the impact of Palladium Hotel Group's 'Palladium Cares' initiative, the hotel chain confirmed that 100% of its energy consumption in Europe, Mexico and Brazil comes from renewable sources.

Additionally, the group confirmed plans to launch a new educational and social centre in Mexico, joining the existing centres in Jamaica and Brazil which have benefitted 3,000 people through community projects and initiatives. www.palladiumhotelgroup.com



#### **Turkish Airlines sets** sky-high record

TÜRKIYE'S NATIONAL carrier has confirmed 2023 was a recordbreaking year: 84.3 million passengers took flight with the airline, representing a 23.5% domestic capacity rise and international growth of 16%.

The airline noted that while global international airline capacity remains 12% behind 2019, it managed to bolster capacity by 27% against the same year.

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#### Titan launches 2025 European brochure

ESCORTED TOUR operator Titan Travel has launched its 2025 European brochure featuring a host of new tours and river cruises.

The brochure features three new tours, three brand new river cruises and three extra itinerary-extension options. www.titantravel.co.uk



w Zealand and Jetsta



WINDSTAR CRUISES has launched its 'Sail Beyond Ordinary' promotion where guests can take advantage of a complimentary all-inclusive upgrade worth £1,825 per person. The promotion is available on all 2024 Windstar cruises when booked before June 30th, and includes beers, wines and cocktails as well as premium Wi-Fi on board. 

www.windstarcruises.com

# Sydney Australia and the Cook Islands Up to 4 flights per week from Sydney with Jetstar Auckland New Zealand Discover more at www.cookislands.travel Up to 2 flights per day from Auckland with Air

## It's a cool summer: Sweden expects booking boom

IT IS not just the hype of Eurovision that is drawing visitors to the birthplace of ABBA, but rather the rise in demand for 'coolcation' destinations – an alternative to the scorching summer holidays.

Analytics from Google have shown that there has been a 21% increase in UK search queries from 2019 to 2023 for holidays in Sweden, with the Nordic country offering moderate temperatures of around 25°C during the summer months and a laid-back holiday style. The data shows that British travellers are most interested in the region's islands and archipelagos, as well as the unique accommodation options such as tree houses and ice hotels. Searches for island getaways in Sweden have increased by 68% in 2023 compared to 2022, and beach holidays by 39.5%.

www.visitsweden.com

#### Finnair reaches new heights with 2025 expansion

FINNAIR IS continuing its bumper year of expansions for 2025 as it adds a new Nordic route to Kirkenes, the airline's most-northernly gateway.
Flights will operate thrice weekly during the 2025 summer season.

www.finnair.com



#### AGENT INCENTIVES

- TITAN TRAVEL'S head of trade sales Hayley Morris hopes "agent partners will really get behind" its new brochure: in celebration of the launch, two agents will earn themselves a place on one of two tours with a plus one when booking European tours this month. For those not lucky enough to win, every European/Worldwide tour booking made throughout the month includes a £20 voucher. www.titantravel.co.uk
- UNTIL MAY 20™, you will earn £10 Love2shop vouchers on every Club Med sun resort booking (doubled on Club Med Magna Marbella bookings). You will also earn entries to win a place on one of three fam trips to a Club Med resort with return flights included.
- LOG ALL Playa Hotels & Resorts bookings at Jewel Palm Beach, Hilton Rose Hall or Hilton La Romana made through TUI at www.playarewards.com by June 7th and you might find yourself winning one of 14 VIP tickets to Pub in the Park 2024 at London's Chiswick Gardens.
- EXCLUSIVE INCENTIVES are on offer across the Citalia, Sovereign Luxury Travel and American Holidays brands until May 5<sup>th</sup>. Via the Tailormade Trade Facebook channel, the incentive is running for two final weeks of prizes across all three brands consecutively.

   www.travelopia.com
- ANY ROYALTON Resorts bookings made by April 30<sup>th</sup> include entries into a prize draw for one of nine places on a Royalton CHIC Antigua fam trip, alongside £20 rewards for your first 10 bookings, after which value is bumped up to £40. www.royaltonrewards.com



CUNARD INVITED a group of agents to the Chewton Glen Hotel in Hampshire for an interactive cookery class with Michel Roux, a two-course lunch and Q&A session. Agents were selected from those who correctly answered a question about the chef's collaboration with Cunard via the Shine Rewards Club platform.



THREE SIMPLE questions stand between you and your chance to win a free three-night stay at a Domes resort!

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

#### AGENT TRAINING

#### CRUISE LINE TRAINING

- SET SAIL on a Disney cruise from the comfort of your office with Magic Ahoy!+. By completing level three of the training in-app, you can unlock the virtual cruise experience and begin building day-by-day itineraries for your guests. www.disneytravelagents.co.uk
- CRUISING POWER collates the training and rewards courses for Celebrity Cruises, Royal Caribbean International and Silversea. Graduating from the learning platform enables access to the points rewards programme plus invites to fams and exclusive events.

www.cruisingpower.com

#### **DESTINATION TRAINING**

- VISIT ORLANDO has added a Student and Youth Travel Specialisation module to the Orlando Travel Academy, with comprehensive destination information tailored specifically to the burgeoning youth and student traveller alongside insights, tips, guidance and interactive assessments.

   www.orlandotravelacademy.com
- THREE SHORT modules on the New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau's trade training platform earn you an entry into a monthly prize draw for a £50 shopping youcher.
  - www.travelbulletin.co.uk/travelgym/destination-training
- TAKE THE short Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex training course to win a £100 shopping voucher this month!
   www.travelbulletin.co.uk/kennedy

-space-center-travelgym

 THE MAGICAL Kenya Travel Specialist programme invites you to discover the authentic African destination, enhance your knowledge and skills, and hone in your selling skills to bolster sales. Modules cover general overviews, must-do experiences, and a dedicated itinerary-building course.

www.magicalkenyatravelspecialist.

#### Get in quick: Solmar Villas comps car hire on Cyprus stays

BOOKINGS THROUGHOUT April are eligible for a week's free car hire on villa holidays between July and September



2024. The offer, representing a saving of more than £160, is applicable on over 200 villas in Paphos and Larnaca.

www.solmarvillas.com





THE GLOBUS family of brands has enlisted Jayne Lambert as

key account manager across

Cosmos and Globus, Karen

Milward as BDM for the South, and

Ryan Readman as BDM for the

North.



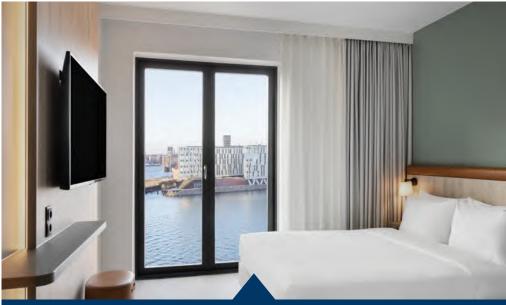
ANNA BORRER
has joined
AmaWaterways
as BDM for the

Southeast.



JO BROOKMAN and Dale Marriott have joined the

easyJet Holidays team as trade distribution managers.



THE FAIRFIELD by Marriott Copenhagen Nordhavn marks Marriott Bonvoy's second-largest brand debut in Europe, joining over 1,290 hotels worldwide with 450 in the pipeline across the globe. The property will host 222 guestrooms (20 with sea views), all hoping to capture the essence of the much-beloved sense of 'hygge'. www.fairfield.marriott.com

#### Newmarket launches festive brochure to the trade

YOU CAN get ahead of the Christmas curve following the launch of the escorted tour operator's festive brochure that is now available to the trade.

Presenting a gift-wrapped collection of seasonal short breaks, Newmarket is offering everything from once-in-a-lifetime adventures in Lapland to spending the festive period at sea.

Richard Forde, head of trade sales at

Newmarket Holidays, stated that the brochure will help agents "showcase [Newmarket's] wide range of travel options and start their Christmas gift giving right away" as demand for festive holidays continues to start early in the year, so much so that some of the operator's Lapland dates have already sold out.

Agents can download the full brochure at www.newmarketholidays.co.uk.

#### Late summer bargains from Balkan Holidays

BALKAN HOLIDAYS' late summer deals include fares to Bulgaria from £339 per person.

Offering a best-value package for all types of travellers, Balkan's late deals offer a variety of accommodation options ranging from two- to five-star self-catering apartments and all-inclusive hotels.

Balkan Holidays' national sales manager Lyndsey Jones stated that the operator's late deal packages are "priced to sell" and prove a popular option with its agent partners.

Free child places are also on offer alongside the late savings. www.balkanholidays.co.uk





#### Visit Gibraltar unveils new brand identity

VISIT GIBRALTAR'S new identity is rooted in Gibraltar's heritage and represents a move towards embracing the cultural heart of the destination, and forms part of a longer-term strategy to refresh product, infrastructure and eco approach. www.visitgibraltar.gi

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# WIN A \$20 M&S VOUCHER IN THE WOULE IN 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:

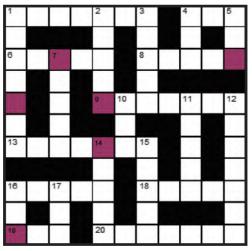
#### competition@travelbulletin.co.uk

Closing date for entries is Thursday, May 2nd. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

April 5th Solution: A=8 B=6 C=7 D=3

Once home to two Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, this Egyptian port city oozes legend and history through every street.		Wonders of the Ancient World, this Egyptian port city oozes legend and history
---	--	--

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



#### Across

- Ship named for Fred.Olsen's Great Grandmother (7)
- 4 First name of Mission Impossible star (3) 2
- 6 Canadian territory (5)
- 8 Well-known ferry line (5)
- 9 Jamaican operator of all-inclusive couples resorts (7)
- 3 A shade of green and a river cruise company (7)
- 6 Flows through the Scottish borders and gave its name to a type of cloth (5)
- 18 Hawaiian island owned by billionaire Larry Ellison (5)
- 19 Samos international airport code (3)
- 20 The Space Needle is an iconic landmark on the skyline of this city (7)

#### Down

- She's gone country with her latest album, Cowboy Carter (7)
- 2 Carthage international airport serves this capital (5)
- 3 German city (5)
- 4 Calabria is sometimes known as the \_\_\_\_\_ ltaly (3)
- 5 Flag carrier of Lebanon (3)
- 7 Unit of currency of Norway and Denmark (5)
- 10 Auckland international airport code (3)
- 11 Capital of Jordan (5)
- 12 Famous Vatican Chapel painted by Michelangelo (7)
- 14 South American mountain range (5)
- 15 Major US airline with HQ in Atlanta (5)
- 16 Hobart is the capital of this state, initially (3)
- 17 Edinburgh international airport code (3)

# CROSSWORD



#### LIBBY GRAY

#### HAYS TRAVEL, TEESSIDE PARK

I FELL in love with Malta during my very first agent fam trip 20 years ago. Assuming that it was a destination for the older generation, I was surprised when I arrived to see how much this beautiful island had to offer. Today, whenever I hear the word 'Malta' in branch, my ears instantly prick up, and I feel eager to share my experience and memories with customers and colleagues alike.

It seems that my passion for Malta is shared among customers in 2024. Compared to previous years, we have seen a notable increase in enquiries as Malta begins to receive more exposure. Many cruise companies are now including the city of Valetta in their itineraries, which is giving many customers a taste for this beautiful destination and a wish to return for a land-based holiday or to recommend it to their friends and family.

At 27 miles wide, travelling from one resort to another is easy, making Malta's many activities and features readily accessible. Valetta alone is full of charm and history, but the magic extends across the islands. Sliema is a great resort, where you can take fabulous boat trips. For me, though, I'm always drawn to St Julian's - it's the perfect base for exploring, with the audio-visual show 'The Malta Experience' chronicling a 7,000-year history. If you're after something less chilled, St Julian's Paceville party district is the place to try your hand at activities like salsa dancing - something I now realise is not one of my strengths!

Overall, I'd say the highlight of any Malta trip is the ferry to Gozo - the safe community feel, thanks to its close to negligible crime rate, is so strong that it's custom to leave your keys in the door! In a nutshell, Malta is certainly returning to the forefront of the holiday market. It's anticipated that customer interest will continue to grow as cruise lines introduce more customers to the islands, which will also encourage word of mouth recommendations. I'm so glad that more customers are set to learn about Malta, and hopefully fall in love with it like I have. To read more about Malta & Gozo, see our feature on page 20!



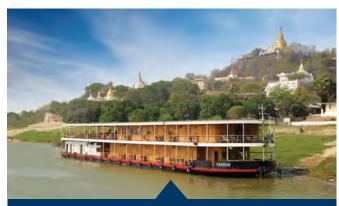
#### **Etihad Airways adds Al Qassim** route

TO ENHANCE connectivity and broaden its network, Etihad Airways has added Al Qassim to its growing portfolio of destinations. The new addition brings Etihad's total Saudi Arabia gateways to four with the new route scheduled to take to the skies from June 24th, 2024 from Abu Dhabi's Zayed International Airport four times per week.

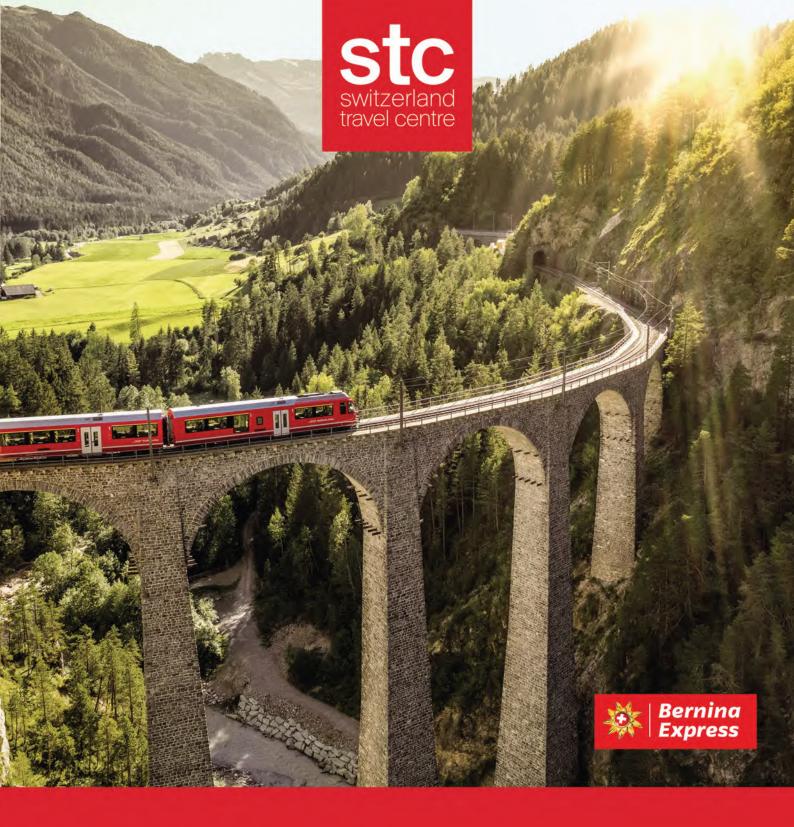
Arik De, chief revenue and commercial officer at Etihad Airways, stated the new route is a "celebration of Etihad's 20 years of connecting Abu Dhabi with the rich culture and economic opportunities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." www.etihad.com

# News Bites

- . CELEBRITY CRUISES unveils new brand identity 'Nothing Comes Close' to highlight the cruise line's unmatched offering.
- AMAWATERWAYS WILL now offer flight- and transfer-inclusive packages as standard across its departures.
- LEGER HAS recorded unprecedented demand for its Normandy tours, with 20 coaches expected to travel for the brand's 'D-Day Landings' tour on June 6th for the 80th anniversary.



PANDAW IS giving its Indian expeditions the all-inclusive treatment as all beverages, including soft drinks, mixers, spirits and beers, are included as part of the cruise fare. Wine will be available on board during lunch and dinner service only. Pandaw's India cruises takes guests along the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, offering an insight into the historic towns and cities that reside along the banks. www.pandaw.com

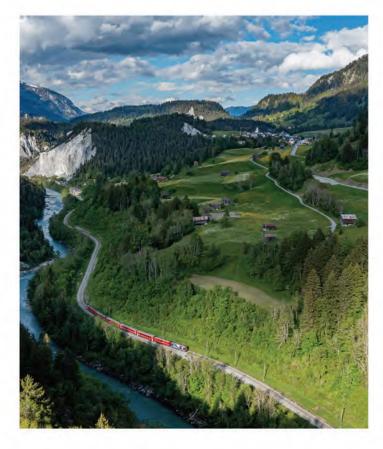


# Switzerland Travel Centre presents the Rhaetian Railway.

A favourite of our team and customers alike, a journey on the Rhaetian Railway network is arguably the best way to experience Switzerland's effortless, breath-taking beauty, whatever the season. From the alpine freshness of spring and summer to the magical colours of autumn or the romance of a white winter, our clients and in-house experts return time and again to take a journey that always exceeds expectations.



Railway enthusiasts consider the Albula line between Chur and St. Moritz to be the most picturesque mountain railway route in the world.







Alp Grum Station is one of my favourite spots in Switzerland. With its remote location at an elevation of more than 2000m and untouched natural beauty, Alp Grum is an oasis for outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers and the station is a remarkable starting point for scenic hikes and nature walks.



Jose Gomes - Sales & Operations

The Rhaetian Railway (RhB), the largest Alpine railway in Switzerland, is a network of 385 kilometres of high-performance tracks set amidst mountainous terrain.

Distinctive red trains take you through the majestic landscape of the Swiss Canton of Graubünden, travelling via numerous engineering structures, including 84 tunnels, 383 bridges and the world-famous Landwasser Viaduct.

RhB have been providing exciting rail travel experiences since 1889. In 2022, to celebrate the 175th anniversary of Switzerland's first railway, they ran the world's longest-ever passenger train, comprising 4 engines and 100 cars stretching over a mile long!

Since 2008, two of the lines have formed the 122 kilometre UNESCO World Heritage route known as the Rhaetian Railway in the Albula/Bernina Landscapes. Winding their way through lush green valleys alongside awe-inspiring mountain passes and shimmering lakes, the Albula and Bernina lines are a masterpiece of innovative construction technology and routing. An engineering marvel, considered to be one of the best ways to experience the majestic beauty of the Swiss Alps.



To book, order brochures or talk anything Switzerland

CALL: 020 7420 4900 sales@stc.co.uk switzerlandtravelcentre.com

BULLETIN BRIEFING

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14

# INDUSTRY by...



Jackie Ennis, Brand
USA's vice president of
global trade
development, on the
stateside state of affairs,
with peaks already
paying off and
impacting visitation.



At this current rate of recovery, projected arrivals... will return to pre-pandemic levels by 2025."

IN 2023, the UK remained the highest source of overseas arrivals, reaching almost 3.9 million<sup>1</sup> – more than double the figures from other European countries such as Germany and France.

This year, we're observing impressive visitation numbers already, with January 2024 recording an increase of +11.23% in UK arrivals to the US compared to January 2023<sup>2</sup>. At this current rate of recovery, projected arrivals from the UK to the US will return to pre-pandemic levels by 2025, with numbers set to reach 4.8 million<sup>3</sup>.

We're also seeing travellers respond to current trends dominating the travel industry. According to Brand USA Market Intelligence, 52% of UK travellers planning a trip to the USA hope to engage with cultural and historical attractions in their desired destination, and 25% plan to attend special events such as concerts, festivals or sporting events whilst on their trip<sup>4</sup>.

We expect this trend to continue to influence travel choices, particularly as the USA prepares for a range of exciting upcoming events and celebrations, such as the FIFA World Cup and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Route 66 in 2026, and the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

For agents wanting to learn more about the US, our Travel Trade

website offers a host of resources to support the trade, such as our Road Trip USA itineraries, with over 30 self-drive multi-state itineraries available to book or inspire trips to the USA. These include some of our newest additions; 'Historic Route 66 - Curios, Pit Stops and Diners' to explore one of the USA's most iconic roads, and 'At the Movies - Southern Sites' for a journey through beloved movie locations in the South.

Our USA Discovery Program is also a key tool for agents. The interactive online training platform is designed for members of the travel trade to explore the wealth and breadth of destinations and experiences that the US has to offer. We are excited to be revamping this in 2024 and agents should ensure they are registered to receive our monthly newsletters for the latest information on any incentives running.

www.traveltrade.visittheusa.co.uk

<sup>1,2</sup> NTTO Arrivals, <sup>3</sup> Tourism Economics, October 2023, <sup>4</sup> Brand USA Market Intelligence Survey

#### THE STAR AWARDS SHINE ON!

The shinest show in travel returns to the Hilton London Bankside for 2024: tickets, sponsorship opportunities and more are available now.



FOLLOWING LAST year's star-studded extravaganza, the *Travel Bulletin* Star Awards 2024 is back, even bigger and

#### **Dates for the Diary**

NOMINATIONS ARE now open: head to page 19 for your exclusive nominations form and get voting!

Nominations for our agent-voted categories close on **May 17**th.

The final shortlist is announced on May 24<sup>th</sup>, when the final round of voting opens.

June 21st sees the final round of voting close across both the agent-voted and expert-judged supplier categories.

The star-studded ceremony will take place on **October 24**th at the Hilton London Bankside before our souvenir issue arrives at your doorstep on **November 15**th.

better than before!

With 25 years of recognising the industry's star performers under our belt, the event continues to showcase the highest travel agency and supplier standards in the UK travel trade: 2024's iteration will be no different.

Voted for exclusively by proactive trade professionals, these trophies are not easy to come by and only the industry's star performers will prevail.

The 2024 glittering awards ceremony, honouring the travel industry's finest and announcing the winners in 33 highly competitive sectors of the industry, will take place at the Hilton London Bankside on Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>!

Don't miss out on the celebrations, the sumptuous dinner, live music and of course FUN.... book your tickets now! www.travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards

#### Doubling down on star-studded sustainable success

AFTER INTRODUCING our first-ever eco-themed Star Sustainability Initiative award last year, we are delighted to introduced two brand new awards to recognise the industry's strides towards sustainability: the *Star Sustainable Destination* and *Star Sustainable Company* (across hotel, cruise, and rail providers and tour operators).





# TEN REASONS TO LOVE RIVIERA TRÂVEL!

- 1. We absolutely love Travel Agents
- 2. We put your customers at the heart of everything we do
- 3. Travel industry experts for 40 years
- 4. Close to 200 holidays to choose from
- 5. Unbeatable value for money on all of our holidays

- 6. Wide range of regional airport departures at no supplement
- Easy booking via our agent portal or dedicated Trade Sales Team
- 8. Honest Pricing
- 9. Our Price Promise and Holiday Happiness Guarantee
- 10. We support YOU! marketing, training and customer events

Nominate us here



For more information and to book:

01283 901 098 rivieratravel.co.uk/agents







APRIL 19 2024 | travelbulletin.co.uk STAR AWARDS

# Travel Bulletin is proud to present some of this year's STAR AWARDS SPONSORS

#### **Riviera Travel**



AT RIVIERA Travel we believe that it is important to reflect on the achievements of the last year recognising the hard work put in by travel agents and tour operators.

We have always enjoyed working with *Travel Bulletin* and have a long history including supporting their agent roadshows allowing us to help train agents all over the country. Sponsoring these awards continues to show our long-term commitment to the trade and agent partners. Look out for the *Riviera Rose* and *Riviera Radiance* setting sail in 2025, plus our brand new combination cruises, themed cruises and grand tours.

www.rivieratravel.co.uk

#### **Gran Canaria**



GRAN CANARIA is proud to return as a Travel Bulletin Star Awards sponsor: the real celebration of the British travel trade! The island's UK tourism continues on a positive upward trend, increasing the UK's market share on the island with no seasonality and arrivals and expenditure continuing to grow.

British customers are loyal to our destination and love the four- and five-star hotels on the sandy beach resorts on the island's south, while showing growing interest in the capital city (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria) and our off-beach nature, culture and gastronomy.

www.grancanaria.com

#### **Jetset**



Jetset is once again delighted to be sponsoring the Travel Bulletin Star Awards. We believe in the philosophy of Credit where Credit is due and that those operators that truly stand out for their technology, service, support or basic product offering should be recognised as often as possible.

Jetset is looking forward to this event as much as any other as we truly are in celebratory mood; the JETS system turns 18 years old in 2024 and all year we will be celebrating and encouraging others to celebrate with us.

JETS turning 18 hasn't changed anything in terms of our determination to develop the #1 selling platform, available just to the trade. This year has seen us review and tweak every

background process to ensure speed is optimised to deliver not just the best results but the quickest results. Enhance The Experience dropped in on Valentines Day delivering the most user-friendly tool for upselling through airlines fare brands and cabins. During April we will have delivered the next stage of Value Add with every Maldives package including transfers and then there comes our Sandals connection that will ensure JETS delivers the best rates on those amazing properties in the Caribbean. JETS has just turned 18 but it is not suffering any morning hangover, instead it is truly at the peak of its powers.

Given JETS hitting such a milestone and Jetset once again being sponsor of the voting, we couldn't think of anything better than to theme our Voting prizes around 18. Jetset always encourages everyone to take a few minutes out and use their vote to truly single out those organisations whether whipper snappers, people coming of age or old hands that deserve to be recognised....plus you could win an amazing prize!

Have a great evening on 24th October! www.jetsetflights.co.uk

### **Explore!**

# love your vote



Explore would love your vote in the following categories: Star Touring and Adventure Operator and Star Family Holidays Operator



Here's why we deserve your vote:

- Price Parity
- Trade Friendly Offers and Campaigns
- Fully-funded Loyalty Discounts
- Agent concessions and exclusive last minute deals
- Annual brochures (digital and hard copies)
- 'The Explorer' lifestyle magazine shareable content with your CTA
- Marketing Hub for promotional sales tools and training videos
- 'Explore Agents' Facebook group -
- Incentives, Fam trips and Competitions
- 'Newly expanded agency sales support team' contact trade@explore.co.uk

Certified



Corporation

True small groups (average 11/max 16)

Named characterful accommodation
Expert local leaders | Unforgettable experiences
Guaranteed departures | Feefo platinum rated |
School holiday Family Adventures

Small group adventures

Don't just travel, Explore!



# **NOMINATION FORM 2024**

The Travel Bulletin Star Awards nominations are officially open!

Agents: Nominate your favourite suppliers in the first five awards sectors.

Suppliers: Nominate those agents that support you the most in the Star Agencies categories.

#### STARS IN THE SKY & AT SEA

Star Ocean Cruise Company

Star River Cruise Company

Star Airline

Star Flight Only Specialist

Star UK Airport

#### STARS OF LAND

Star Accommodation-Only Provider

Star Resort & Hotel Chain

Star Luxury Hotel Brand

Star Holiday Add-Ons Provider (Car Rental, Insurance, Airport parking etc)

Star Rail Company

#### STAR OPERATORS

Star Short Haul Operator

Star Long Haul Operator

Star Luxury Operator

Star Touring & Adventure Operator

Star Family Holidays Operator

#### STAR DESTINATIONS

Star Touring & Adventure Destination

Star Winter Sun Destination

Star LGBTQ+ Destination

Star Family Holidays Destination

Star City Breaks Destination

Star Luxury Destination

Star Agent Friendly Destination

#### STAR DREAM TEAMS

Star Hotel Sales Team

Star Tour Operator Sales Team

Star Cruise Company Sales Team

Star Tourist Office Team

Star PR & Representation Company

#### STAR AGENCIES

Star Homeworking Group

Star Travel Agency Group - Small

Star Travel Agency Group - Medium

Star Travel Agency Group - Large

#### THANK YOU FOR MAKING YOUR SELECTIONS!

NOW COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS AND RETURN THIS FORM TO
Travel Bulletin, University House, 11-13 Lower Grosvenor Place, London SW1W 0EX or email to jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk. You can also nominate online at www.travelbulletin.co.uk/starawards/voting.

Name:	Job Title:
Company:	Email:
Address:	Tel:
	ABTA No:

## MALTA & GOZO



# KM MALTA TAKES TO THE SKIES

KM Malta Airlines has replaced Air Malta as the island's flag carrier and will continue to operate across 17 European destinations this summer.

A NEW flagship carrier is taking to the European skies this summer as Visit Malta has announced KM Malta Airlines (KM) has replaced Air Malta after commencing operations on March 31st, 2024.

Placing a strategic focus on increasing connectivity across the continent and providing an outstanding service, KM's fleet is made up of eight Airbus aircrafts, boasting a two-class configuration and averaging 168 saleable seats per plane.

KM will serve 17 European bases during its operation, including Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Catania, Dusseldorf, London Gatwick, London Heathrow, Lyon, Madrid, Milan, Munich, Paris Charles de Gaulle, Paris Orly, Prague, Rome, Vienna and Zurich. In addition, KM will also provide connection across its European network through strategic agreements with alternative airlines, providing travellers with even more choice when it comes to holidaying throughout the continent and internationally.

Since the airline opened its bookings in December, there has been a robust demand for both its class fares and flexible rates from the UK market, demonstrating the demand for inbound travel to the island destination.

Tolene van der Merwe, director UK & Ireland for Visit Malta, shared her excitement over the "continuing airlift from the UK to the Maltese Islands" and that the new airline is not just about

connecting destinations, but rather "connecting people to experiences and culture."

KM Malta Airlines' summer schedule for 2024 will span from March 31st until October 26th, promising travellers an unmissable array of destinations and experiences across the European continent.

www.kmmaltaairlines.com/en

#### **BBC Concert Orchestra** brings Motown to Malta

FROM TINA Turner and Whitney Houston to Aretha Franklin. Malta is bringing the Queens of Soul back for the latest installment of the BBC Concert Orchestra set to hit The Granaries, Floriana on July 5th, 2024. The summer concert marks the fifth appearance by the world-famous orchestra on the Maltese Islands, bolstering the destination's already jampacked entertainment schedule. 70 musicians and six vocalists will cover hits such as 'I Wanna Dance with Somebody' and 'Respect' to get the party going. Tickets for the concert are now on sale. www.maltashows.com



**MALTA & GOZO APRIL 19 2024** travelbulletin.co.uk

#### Youtravel unveils new Maltese trade brochure

YOUTRAVEL.COM AND the Malta Tourism Authority have teamed up to produce a new brochure specially for the trade highlighting the very best the island destination has to offer.

Presented as a 'treasure trove of unforgettable experiences', the brochure features a wealth of information tailored to ensure agent partners have the ultimate Maltese handbook at their disposal to sell the destination to clients.

The brochure features key facts about the destination and provides information about the best beaches and diving locations, gastronomy experiences, the breadth of history and culture that seeps through the region, LGBTQ+ friendly activities and locations, the buzzing nightlife scene, the wide variety of sporting opportunities and activities, and a dedicated page to Gozo and Comino.

Also featured within the brochure is a list of key accommodations throughout the island destination, all presented with unique selling points, ratings and optional meal plans available. All of the properties are available through Youtravel.com, and include key brands such as Radisson and H Hotel. www.visitmalta.com www.youtravel.com





#### maltabiennale to transform Malta's historic sites

HERITAGE MALTA is hosting an unforgettable celebration of contemporary art mixed with heritage and creativity this year with the inaugural maltabiennale.art.

The celebration is already in full swing and will continue to shine a light on the profound artistic and heritage spectaculars that reside in the heart of the island until May 31st, 2024.

Transforming some of Malta's most beloved heritage sites into stages for artistic expressions, the maltabiennale.art is sure to promise an unmissable experience. www.maltabiennale.art



#### **Ruby Hotels heads** for Malta

**RUBY HOTELS** has announced the opening of its first luxury workspace in the vibrant district of St. Julians, Malta. Ruby Ninu is located in close proximity to the beach promenade, providing picturesque views and strong access to public transportation.

Membership prices for the workspace lead in from €60 per month, with day passes available from €30. Ruby Ninu is currently offering a special new opening discount of 20% over the next six months for all visitors. www.ruby-workspaces.com



#### **Holland America** honours a legacy

HOLLAND AMERICA is offering a 45-day 'Ultimate Mediterranean and Atlantic' roundtrip voyage as part of its Legendary collection for 2025/2026, paying homage to a 100-year-old itinerary from the cruise line. Guests will have the chance to take in the historic past of Malta before visiting other Europe hotspots such as Portugal, Spain, the Algarve, Greece and Türkiye. www.hollandamerica.com



We are delighted to bring our highly popular Train & Gain programme back on

#### **Thursday 2nd May**

Mercure Box Hill Burford Bridge Hotel Dorking, Surrey RH5 6BX

Inspired with the needs of the busy home based agent in mind, this event will run between 10am and 3pm.

Involving in-depth presentations from six leading industry suppliers, this day-time training opportunity will offer additional time for Q&A sessions and informal networking.



#### **SUPPLIER PARTNERS**















#### **TIMINGS**

10.00am Registration, coffee & biscuits 10.30am - 12.45pm Presentations from 4 leading suppliers

12.45pm Lunch **1.30pm - 2.30pm**Presentations from 2 leading suppliers

2.30pm - 3pm Free prize draw.

#### **#TBSHOWCASES**

To confirm your place at this amazing event, email your name, company, and contact details by **Thursday 25th April** to **events@travelbulletin.co.uk** or telephone:

0207 973 0136

This event is by invitation only and will be booked on a first come first served basis.

# THEME PARKS & ATTRACTIONS

## **ABU DHABI'S PLAYGROUND**

Darrin des Vignes, Miral Destinations' country director for the UK, showcased what Yas Island, the "playground" of Abu Dhabi, offers the trade and your clients.



FRESH OFF his appearance at Youtravel's roadshow in partnership with *Travel Bulletin*, Darrin dished the thrills and spills that await to those seeking them on Yas Island.

"Yas Island is the 'playground' of Abu Dhabi: it is where you go to have fun and create exciting memories of

#### A foodie's theme park paradise

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS' 'Highlights of Italy: Venice to Rome' tour, introduced at the turn of the year, includes a visit to the Italian-food theme park, FICO.

The unique theme park spans 15 hectares in Bologna, divided into seven areas inspired by the great Italian culinary exports: Cured Meats and Cheeses, Pasta, Games and Sports, Wine, Oil, and Sweets, featuring 30 attractions, 13 restaurants, 13 street food spots and a guided tour.

The tour leads in at £1,795 per person with departures between May and October 2024.

www.newmarketholidays.co.uk

stimulating experiences. It has some of the world's leading theme parks [Ferrari World, Warner Bros. World, Yas Waterworld and SeaWorld], which represent three days of activity at least."

Darrin spotlighted Warner Bros. World in particular as a multi-generational marvel, with characters like Scooby-Doo, the Jetsons and the Flintstones that parents are sure to be familiar with, and yet, for children, "represent a whole new world of discovery... and bridge the generations."

It is difficult to understate the connectivity and convenience of the island's experiences: free shuttles connect the airport to Yas Island and the four theme parks every half an hour. The recent addition of a kiosk at Yas Mall makes the experience all the more seamless by allowing guests to check-in their luggage up to 24 hours ahead of their flight for a luggage-free departure day.

All Yas Island properties offered by Youtravel include theme park tickets as part of Miral Destinations' ongoing campaign for 2024.

Trade rates are available via Miral

Destinations, with accommodation

including theme park tickets available at

www.youtravel.com

# Tram tour, glam tour at Universal UNIVERSAL STUDIOS Hollywood is reissuing its iconic 'Glamor

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS Hollywood is reissuing its iconic 'Glamor Trams' in celebration of the backlot tram tour's 60th anniversary.

The Sales

Between April 26<sup>th</sup> and August 11<sup>th</sup>, guests can experience the recently-reimagined Earthquake attraction, the return of the Runaway Train and a colossal T-Rex encounter inspired by Jurassic World. www.universalstudioshollywood.com





#### An American first in Arizona

THIS MAY will see the United States' first tribally-owned coaster open at the Sunrise Park Resort.

The 3,287-foot-long alpine coaster is owned and operated by the White Mountain Apache Tribe, which also operates the resort as a recreation hub during the summer and ski resort during the winter. Riders will experience speeds of up to 25 miles per hour during the coaster, controlled by a handbrake on each ride cart.

www.sunrise.ski



#### New South Wales' home of queer history

HAVING OPENED in February of this year, Otopia in Sydney has rapidly become one of the world's most welcoming, inclusive and educational spaces for the LGBOIA+ community. Spanning four distinct sites, Otopia sheds a light on HIV/AIDS, the battle for human rights, sexuality and identity, media representation and First Nation stories.

www.qtopiasydney.com.au

#### Merlin Entertainments' Year of the Coaster

SOMETIMES, ONE new rollercoaster isn't enough. For Merlin parks across the UK, two isn't, either: a new coaster will open in 2024 at three of the brand's theme parks: LEGOLAND Windsor, Thorpe Park and Alton Towers.

Already operating after a year-long refurbishment at Alton Towers is 'Nemesis Reborn'. The iconic 1994 rollercoaster has seen a near-complete overhaul, with new tracks across much of the ride and expansive new theming immersing riders in the story of the Phalanx and the Nemesis beast. One-day admission from starts from £36.99.

This month saw the opening of 'Minifigure Speedway' at LEGOLAND Windsor. The park's most thrilling coaster experience sees two tracks duel to see which wins, with guests teaming up as Legends or All-Stars and racing to the finish. Admission starts from £35.01.



2024's final coaster opening comes at Thorpe Park, where Hyperia, the UK's tallest and fastest rollercoaster is set to welcome guests for record-breaking thrills from May 24th, 2024. One day tickets start from £29 per person.

www.merlinentertainments.biz www.dosomethingdifferent.com

#### A sweet 60th anniversary celebration

CADBURY WORLD is the place to be to celebrate the chocolate brand's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Along with the iconic Bull Street, a replica of the Victorian high street where John Cadbury started the business, a new ride, 'Cadbury Chocolate Quest', invites guests to collect the ingredients to make their own bars on a dark-ride, shooter-style attraction. Guided by Freddo, guests traverse 3D sets



and screens to zap the ingredients aboard a Cadbury Car. Those ingredients might just combine to earn riders a sweet treat at the end of their quest!

If that weren't a sweet enough sell, guests can pay a visit to the world's largest Cadbury shop, the hands-on Have a Go zone where they can practise their chocolate piping skills and the Bournville Experience, tracing three centuries of chocolate making.

National Holidays' two-day 'Cadbury World & Safari Adventure' blends a visit to the sweet treat attraction with a trip to the West Midlands Safari Park from £159 per adult and £143.50 per child. Price includes return coach travel, one night's accommodation with breakfast and dinner, plus admission to the two attractions. Departure dates are on offer on July 20th and August 10th and 24th.

www.nationalholidays.com/agents

# SEAWORLD PARKS & ENTERTAINMENT.



# OCEANS OF FUN AWAITS AT SEAWORLD PARKS



AT SEAWORLD'S three Florida parks, a world of adventure and endless fun awaits. SeaWorld, Aquatica and Busch Gardens are the perfect destination for families looking to soak up the sunshine and catch some thrills.

SeaWorld Orlando will impress kids and adults alike with its exciting array of heart-pounding rides and child-friendly play areas to choose from. As SeaWorld turns 60 this year, 'there's so much more to sea' with yearlong anniversary celebrations that includes new presentations and a

brand-new attraction for 2024.

Penguin Trek, which launches this spring, joins SeaWorld's seven other award-winning rides including Pipeline: The Surf Coaster and Ice-Breaker. Based on an immersive snowmobile expedition that twists and turns through the icy landscape of Antarctica, Penguin Trek culminates in a visit to SeaWorld's very own colony of penguins, for a wildlife encounter families will never forget.

RISING FROM the ashes this spring, at Busch Gardens Tampa, is the new rollercoaster: Phoenix Rising.

The park's 10th coaster is the largest family-friendly addition to the park, inviting family members to soar above the Serengeti Plain before going on an exploratory journey over the Pantopia region, with its vibrant colours, thrilling attractions, and more. Phoenix Rising will be the first coaster to feature on-board audio, enhancing the ride experience with a one-of-a-kind soundtrack, integrated into an exhilarating array of twists, turns and surprises for families riding together.



THE BEST way for your clients to enjoy everything SeaWorld, Busch Gardens and Aquatica have to offer is with the 3-Visit Ticket.

For the same price as the 2-Visit Ticket, guests can enjoy a day at each park, and food with the three All-Day Dines that are included. Plus, the free Shuttle Express takes guests to Busch Gardens. Prices from below £179 per person when booked through Attraction World. Terms and conditions apply. For more information, or to book tickets, head to:

login.attractionworldportal.com or visit your preferred ticket provider.



AQUATICA ORLANDO is offering thrills with a twist on the world's most digitally immersive waterslide: Tassie's Underwater Twist which opened in March this year. This new slide transports guests all the way to Australia's Shark Bay through a vibrant digital underwater world. While twisting, turning, and swirling through a unique super-bowl element, guests will encounter incredible marine species such as manta rays, humpback whales, colourful schools of fish, a variety of plant life, sea turtles and even the occasional shark! The 129-foot-long slide, set to an orchestral score, allows guests to team up and ride in twos.

# Reimagined classics coming to Walt Disney World Resort

ORLANDO'S MAGIC Kingdom at the Walt Disney World Resort will welcome 'Tiana's Bayou Adventure' this summer. The newly-reimagined 'Splash Mountain' attraction will bring riders along a musical adventure inspired by *The Princess and the Frog*, heading down the bayou with Princess Tiana and the jazz-loving alligator Louis from the animated classic.

Another Disney classic will receive an upgrade this summer: the Country Bear Musical Jamboree will now feature renditions of classic Disney tunes in a country-inspired genre, with a whole host of Easter eggs for die-hard Disney fans.

At the fan-favourite 'Star Tours -The Adventures Continue' attraction in the neighbouring Disney's Hollywood Studios park, new tales, characters and locations from recent *Star Wars* stories have been added to the intergalactic experience.

A new live show inspired by The Little Mermaid will add another reimagined reason for return visits or bump up the magic for first-timers. www.disneytravelagents.co.uk





#### DoSomethingDifferent's deca-destination pass

DOSOMETHINGDIFFERENT.COM NOW sells the entire Go City pass portfolio across 10 destinations. Go City passes represent a high-potential ancillary product, allowing guests to venture beyond their accommodation while saving up to 50% on attractions along the way. 'Explore' passes offer a choice of two to seven attractions per pass, visitable over a 60-day period. 'All-Inclusive' option spans between one and 10 days to visit as many as they like across the number of consecutive days purchased. www.dosomethingdifferent.com

# Which show would you like to be a contestant on?

#### Jeanette Ratcliffe Publisher

jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk The 1% Club.



#### Simon Eddolls

Sales Director simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk Race Across the World.



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



#### Tim Podger Account Manager - Far East tim@travelbulletin.co.uk Bullseye, you can't beat a bit of bullv!



# Matthew Hayhoe Acting Editor matthew.hayhoe@travelbulletin.co.uk Taskmaster!



#### Melissa Paddock Events Coordinator melissa.paddock@travelbulletin.co.uk The Circle.



# Holly Brown Events Coordinator holly.brown@travelbulletin.co.uk Naked Attraction.



Leah Kelly
Acting Deputy Editor
leah.kelly@travelbulletin.co.uk
The Traitors.



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#### PRODUCTION

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#### **CIRCULATION**

circulation@travelbulletin.co.uk



# SAVE THE DATE

# Thursday 24th October 2024

Hilton London Bankside

# **GET READY TO PARTY!**

For more information call Jeanette on T: +44 20 7973 0136 or email jeanette@travelbulletin.co.uk



# Online quoting tool now available from Voyage Store

Prepare to be thrilled as we introduce our newest innovation: a cutting-edge online quoting tool designed to empower our partners with immediate access to bespoke Virgin Voyages package quotes.

#### Unlock a sea of benefits:

- ▼ Earn 16% commission on the Voyage fare and 10% on other package elements, terms apply
- Tailored itinerary options
- Exclusive promotions
- Marketing materials with regional depatures





