

Travel **bulletin**

Giving agents the edge

Australasia & Pacific Islands

The other side of the world brought closer than ever before.

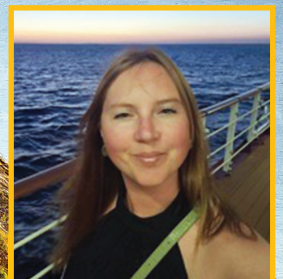
MORE IN...

Agent Bulletin

The latest incentives and training opportunities to help you sell **Pg. 7**

Africa

Indulgent escapes and sought-after safaris **Pg. 13**



A look into the rise of experimental travel with a trusted PTC. **(Pg. 10)**



TIME TO TRANSFER YOUR



BUSINESS TO JETSET



PART 1 - Free transfers in Vegas as standard!

PART 2 - Now LIVE! All Maldives accommodation includes land, sea, or air transfers !

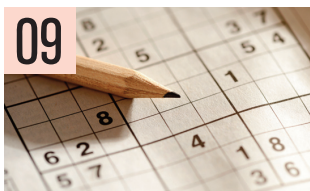




NEWS
A round-up of news from across the sector.



AGENT BULLETIN
Training opportunities and incentives galore.



PUZZLE BULLETIN
Be in it to win it!



AFRICA
New openings, luxury experiences and more across the world's oldest continent.



AUSTRALASIA & PACIFIC ISLANDS
Everything you need to know about the other side of the world.



BOOKING BOOM

The Advantage Travel Partnership reports a booking boom across the industry in latest trends report.

FOLLOWING A busy summer of travel across the sector, The Advantage Travel Partnership has revealed the latest data and booking trends seen across its partners.

Thus far throughout the year there has been a significant capacity uplift across air, tour operations and cruise which is expected to continue on this positive trajectory into 2025. The cruise industry in particular is a high growth area with global passengers expected to grow by 15% in the UK market, and 10% overall.

To date, bookings throughout the year have increased by 6% compared to 2023, with the top destinations being Spain, Greece and Türkiye. Long haul has also increased its share of bookings up to 12%, with the top destinations the US, Caribbean, Australia, Dubai and Thailand.

August 2024 has been reported as a strong month for the industry, with travel spend up 6.8% compared to last year, and travel agents have outperformed this figure at 7.2%. The summer school holiday period

saw a strong performance across Advantage's partners with overall departures up by 5%. The most popular short haul destinations this year were Majorca, Tenerife, Costa Blanca, Antalya and the Algarve, while Orlando, New York and Mexico were the top long haul picks.

Looking ahead to 2025, the high demand for travel continues with departures scheduled for next year so far rising by 10%. There are a number of trends looking to shape the next year of travel. As long haul bookings are on the rise, travellers are looking to go a little more further afield to destinations such as Thailand, Australia, Japan and Vietnam. There is also the rise of ultra-all-inclusive, with consumers opting to upgrade packages to get the most for their money. Other trends continuing into the next year is the rise of multigenerational travel, longer stays in one place, travelling to lesser-known alternatives of popular hotspots, and increased demand for a wider range of travel types.

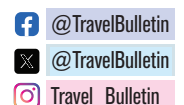


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7th Oct
Family Holidays Showcase
Woking



14th Oct
Airline Showcase
Bristol



17th Oct
Train & Gain Day
Oxford



8th Oct
Family Holidays Showcase
Salisbury

Pandaw launches new Kerala itinerary

IN RESPONSE to increased demand for river cruising in India, Pandaw has announced details for its new ship and itinerary which will take to the Kerala Backwaters in October 2025.

The 10 cabin *Kochi Pandaw* will be the cruise line's fourth ship in the subcontinent, and has been specifically designed for sailing through the Kerala Backwaters.

The ship will operate weekly on a seven-night roundtrip itinerary from Kochi visiting the main towns and remote areas, including Thanneermukkom, Nattakam, Kavalam, Allapuzha, Thottapalli and Perumpalam.

Departures are available from October 2025 to March 2026, with prices leading in from £4,999 per person. www.pandaw.com



Virgin Voyages teases wedding packages

RICHARD BRANSON can add wedding officiant to his CV after helping three couples tie the knot during Virgin Voyages' Celebration Sailings.

For those who also wish to take their nuptials to the high seas, Virgin Voyages will launch three bespoke wedding

packages for April 2025 and beyond this autumn. Couples can say 'I do' in the middle of the ocean, or choose to celebrate their honeymoon in style.

Sailors can register their interest in a Virgin Voyages' wedding on its website. www.virginvoyages.com

Just Go! Holidays adds more departures for 2025 river cruises

JUST GO! Holidays has launched its summer 2025 river cruise programme, featuring more departures than ever before across four of its popular Douro, Rhone, Danube and Rhine itineraries. There will be five 'Great Capitals of the Danube' departures between April and September 2025 – three more than last year. In addition, departures have been doubled on both the Rhone's 'Journey Through Beautiful Provence' itinerary (from two to four), and the 'Romantic Rhine' sailing has increased from one to two. An extra departure date has also been added on the popular 'Discover the Douro' cruise, bringing the total to six. Excursions will also be included for the first time for 2025, as well as the introduction of a dedicated JG cruise escort who will join each journey.

www.justgoholidays.com

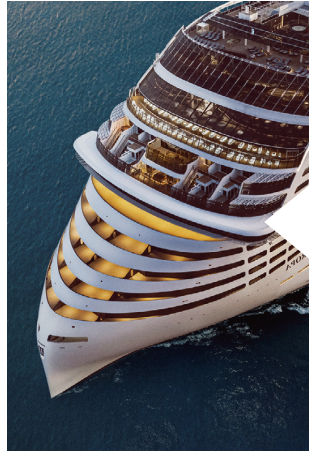
Newmarket unveils new India tour

NEWMARKET HOLIDAYS has launched a new version of one of its India tours for 2026. The 13-day 'India – Tigers &



the Taj Mahal with Goa' is priced from £2,977 per person, with savings of £200 when booked before October 31st, 2024. www.newmarketholidays.co.uk

Image Credits: Left: Newmarket Holidays, Middle: MSC Cruises



Splash the cash with MSC's new promotion

MSC CRUISES has launched a pre-WAVE promotion offering passengers up to £500 in onboard credit per cabin on selected 2025 summer sailings.

The promotion is available now until November 2024, applying to all new bookings made on the valid sailings. Passengers can enjoy their onboard credit on select sailings in the Mediterranean, Caribbean and Northern Europe where they can spend it on dining and entertainment facilities as well as excursions. www.msccruises.co.uk

Regent announces Arctic Collection for winter 2024/2025

REGENT HOLIDAYS has launched its Arctic Collection for winter 2024/2025. The brochure showcases the best of Regent's winter portfolio in Iceland, Greenland, Norway, Finland and Sweden, including options for Lapland, and brings together a host of experiences from dog-sledding to ice caving and Northern Lights hunting.

The collection features new trips in each of the countries featured in the brochure, including the four-

night 'Highland Winter Adventure' in Iceland from £1,470 per person and the eight-day 'Greenland Winter Wonders' itinerary from £3,095 per person.

The brochure comes a new direct airlift from Gatwick, Heathrow, Bristol and Manchester is set to make the Arctic more accessible for the UK market. Flights will land in Tromsø and Ivalo from December 3rd, 2024. www.regent-holidays.co.uk

Shearings

Let's enjoy the journey together.

For fully escorted festive breaks, look no further...

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- ✓ Expertly-planned itineraries and excursions, so your customers won't have to plan a thing
- ✓ Local joining points, ensuring a smooth start to their holiday
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- Germany • Italy • Austria • Switzerland



01709 249 680
shearings.com/festive



To find out more about festive breaks, scan the QR code



First Class unlocks Japan with Wendy Wu partnership

FIRST CLASS Holiday's has partnered with Wendy Wu Tours to launch the operator's first-ever Asia touring programme, offering a variety of fully inclusive, expertly crafted tours to Japan through its travel agent network.

The new partnership enables



First Class to provide agents with a wide range of specialist Japan tours that cater to travellers' desires to explore not only iconic landmarks like Mount Fuji and Tokyo, but also off-the-beaten path locations.

Lorna Curry, head of product at First Class Holidays, said, "Japan is a natural fit for our portfolio, and the demand for travel to Japan is at an all-time high. Partnering with Wendy Wu Tours allows us to provide our agents with the best Japan itineraries available. With peak seasons like cherry blossom and autumn foliage selling fast, we encourage agents to book early to secure the best availability for their clients."

The packages on offer will cover flights, accommodation, guided tours and authentic culinary experiences. The tours, set for 2025 and 2026, offer an in-depth look into Japan's vibrant culture, history and natural beauty. www.fcholiday.com



KUONI HAS expanded its Caribbean offering with more options now available in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica. The collection offers a solid base for travellers looking for a multi-centre trip. Customers can combine stays with a city break in the US, or an island-hopping experience through the Caribbean. www.kuoni.co.uk

Jet2.com kicks off new footy flight schedule

FANS OF Manchester City, Manchester United and Liverpool have a greater choice of flights to Champions League and Europa League fixtures this season.

Jet2.com has enhanced capacity from Manchester Airport, timed around select European fixtures.

An extra flight has been added for Manchester City's fixture against Bratislava

(flying to Vienna on October 1st), Liverpool's clash with Girona (flying to Barcelona on December 9th), and Manchester United's matches against Porto (flying on October 2nd to Porto) and FC Viktoria Plzen (flying to Prague on December 11th).

All flights depart the day before the fixture, with extra return options the day after matches. www.jet2.com

AmaWaterways reports Seine surge

AMAWATERWAYS HAS reported a remarkable surge in French river cruise bookings from the UK, predominantly driven by the Paris Olympics held earlier this year. The cruise line witnessed a dramatic 125% increase in bookings for Seine river cruises alone. Overall, the company's French programme includes the Seine, Rhone, Saone and Dordogne rivers and has experienced a 28% increase in bookings. The rise in reservations is mirrored by a significant 47% uptick in the number of travel agencies making these bookings compared to last year.

www.amawaterways.co.uk



Save 25% with Expedia TAAP's Sale

AGENTS CAN Secure at least 25% off thousands of hotels worldwide as part of Expedia TAAP's Autumn Sale, offering an ideal opportunity to drive bookings and boost sales. The deal is available on bookings made by October 13th, 2024 for travel until March 31st, 2025. www.expediataap.co.uk

AGENT INCENTIVES

- 'GRAB THE Cash' sees any agents booking an Ambassador Cruise Line sailing entered into a daily prize draw for a £300 Love2shop voucher until September 29th, 2024, with one final draw wrapping up proceedings on September 30th; any agents booking between September 2nd and 29th, 2024 will be entered to win one final prize of a £1,500 Love2shop voucher. www.ambassadorcruiseline.com
- YOU CAN earn a £50 Lifestyle voucher for every A-ROSA package booked throughout the remainder of the month. The incentive is valid on all departure dates and durations across the entire A-ROSA portfolio. www.arosa-cruises.co.uk
- AVALON WATERWAYS is currently offering any agents who book a 2025 sailing by October 31st, 2024 the chance to win a seven-night cruise of their own in a Panorama Suite with flights for two next year. www.avalonwaterways.co.uk
- SELECT DOMES Resorts bookings made by the end of the month include a free night for agents. The free stay vouchers are subject to availability and will be awarded once bookings have materialised. A maximum of seven free stays can be redeemed. www.domesresorts.com
- BOOK 2025 and earn big with APT. Any 2025 river cruises, small ship cruises, yacht cruises, escorted tours and small group journeys booked by September 30th, 2024 include a £25 Love2shop voucher. Booking five or more of any of the above qualify agents for entries into a prize draw for a £500 voucher. www.APTAgentClub.co.uk



EIGHT 'MILLIONAIRE' Fred. Olsen travel agents, who achieved over £1 million in sales in 2023, headed aboard Silversea's new ship, Silver Ray. On return from the trip, Paul Hardwick said, "It was amazing to take our 2023 Million Pound sellers away on such a special cruise. To see our top agents from all across the country come together and spend time celebrating their mutual success was so gratifying and I know it benefited them massively."

Travel bulletin

COMPETITION

Discover the delights of AIUIa and win M&S vouchers worth up to £100!

Find out more at
www.travelbulletin.co.uk/alula-competition



AGENT TRAINING

- 'ALL IN Türkiye' strives to educate agents about Türkiye's storied history, iconic culture and tourism attractions throughout the nation. Thirty courses comprise the programme, with the number expected to grow to 40 by the end of next year. You earn certified 'Türkiye Tourism Specialist' status by scoring 70% or more on each course's quiz. www.allinturkiye.com
- THE ST. Kitts Tourism Authority's online training programme has recently been enhanced to include a new nine-minute video showcasing the five-star accommodation, dining and overall offering of one of the island's premier resorts, Park Hyatt St. Kitts; special accommodation rates for travel agents allowing them to experience the destination first-hand; and an updated Agent Toolbox where agents can access destination guides, hotel facts sheets, links to images and video galleries, and trade contacts for each of the hotels. www.stkittsspecialist.com
- EXPLORE BRAND USA's refreshed USA Discovery Programme and be in with a chance of winning a selection of prizes. Agents need to complete as many badges as they can for a chance to win, with each badge completion registering as a new entry. The competition ends on September 30th. www.usadiscoveryprogram.co.uk
- THE MIRAGGIO B2B learning course is designed to provide agents with incentives and deeper knowledge about Miraggio Thermal SPA resort in Halkidiki, Greece. Agents can complete the training course, learn the latest news and offers and earn a complimentary stay at the luxurious five-star resort. www.miraggiob2b.com
- THE SPAIN Specialist course offers a comprehensive training course for agents looking to broaden their knowledge and obtain the Spain Specialist Certificate. www.spainspecialistprogram.com/en/



Japan Showcase

A BIG thank you to those who joined us earlier this year for our Japan Showcase in Birmingham where we were joined by a wonderful guest list of agents!

Joining us were Ponant, Wendy Wu Tours, Glamping Villa Hanz, Hankyu Travel, Inside Japan, Explore Worldwide, Seibu Prince Hotels & Resorts, Okinawa, Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo, All Nippon Airways, Okura Nikko Hotels, Japan National Tourism Organisation & Tokyo Tourism.



Want to get in on the [#TBShowcases](https://twitter.com/TravelBulletin) action? Our next event will be the Luxury Holidays Showcase taking place in Exeter on September 23rd and Bristol on September 24th. To confirm your place or find out when we will be hosting our next event near you contact events@travelbulletin.co.uk

SUDOKU

WIN A £20 M&S VOUCHER IN THE *Travel* bulletin SUDOKU PRIZE PUZZLE

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3 x 3 squares contains the digits 1-9. Once you have completed the puzzle, simply identify the numbers that relate to the letters, A, B, C and D then e-mail the solution, with your name, company name, and full postal address plus phone and ABTA number if applicable to:

competition@travelbulletin.co.uk

Closing date for entries is Thursday, October 3rd. Solution and new puzzle will appear in the next issue.

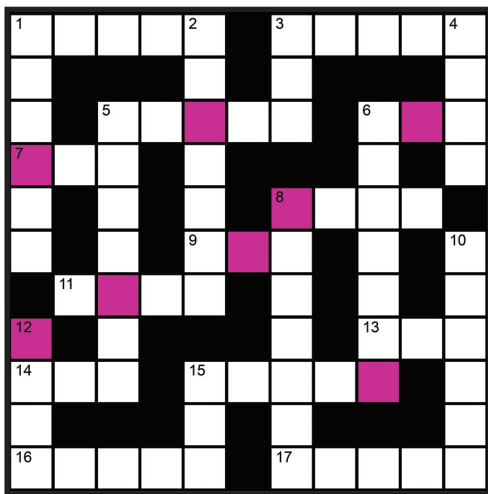
September 9th Solution: A=4 B=7 C=9 D=8

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



ONE OF three South African capitals, this city boasts the National Botanical Garden, the Union Buildings and the historic Voortrekker Monument.

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



Across

- 1 Family-run company specialising in luxury travel to Africa and South Asia (5)
- 3 The Royal Yacht Britannia is berthed here (5)
- 5 American singer/songwriter and now a coach on The Voice, LeAnn ____ (5)
- 6 Flag carrier of Japan (3)
- 7 African country, initially (3)
- 8 Capital of Azerbaijan (4)
- 9 Kate Winslet plays the title role in this movie release (3)
- 11 Mediterranean island in Tuscany (4)
- 13 Australian state, in short (3)
- 14 Airport code for KLM's Schiphol hub (3)
- 15 Mandarin is the main language in this country (5)
- 16 Singer/songwriter Will, currently touring the UK (5)
- 17 One of the five Great Lakes (5)

Down

- 1 Dame Sarah, who recently won a record-breaking 19th Paralympic gold medal (6)
- 2 Capital of Uganda (7)
- 3 Lisbon international airport code (3)
- 4 Northumberland island, also known as Lindisfarne (4)
- 5 Iconic hotel famous for its Singapore Sling (7)
- 6 Capital of Indonesia (7)
- 8 Popular tourist attraction known as The Living Museum of the North (7)
- 10 State capital of Texas (6)
- 12 Virgin's cruise ships all share this name (4)
- 15 Paris Charles de Gaulle international airport code (3)

CROSSWORD

Across: 1 SOMAK, 3 LETTH, 5 RIMES, 6 JAL, 7 RSA, 8 BAKU, 9 LEE, 11 ELBA, 13 TAS, 14 AMS, 15 CHINA, 16 YOUNG, 17 HURON
 Down: 1 STOREY, 2 KAMPALA, 3 LIS, 4 HOLY, 5 RAFFLES, 6 JAKARTA, 8 BEAMISH, 10 AUSTIN, 12 LADY, 15 CDG.
 Mystery Word: MARBELLA



AGENT INSIGHT

CARLY COCKBURN

PERSONAL TRAVEL CONSULTANT

AT PERSONAL Travel Consultants, we're currently witnessing an influx of exceptional offers from The Maldives. This surge in deals is primarily due to the comprehensive packages we provide, and the added value we have in the deal, which stand in contrast to destinations like Greece, where accommodation and extras are often separate expenses. With the cost of travel in Europe escalating, many are finding that investing slightly more in The Maldives offers significantly greater benefits. The demand we're observing is the key driver of these enticing offers and given The Maldives remain a 'bucket list' for many, we make it achievable.

For a truly satisfying holiday, I often suggest a blend of city, beaches, and activities. Upon returning home, you feel a sense of fulfilment, having not just rested but also gained new experiences. Nowadays, our travellers seek more than just relaxation; they desire immersive adventures that enrich their journey. Typically, I recommend multi-destination trips or self-drive tours, which allow for a comprehensive trip. Many clients prefer to enhance their holidays by adding a stopover in cities like Dubai or Singapore en route to the Maldives, providing a delightful contrast to their getaway.

On another note, cruising diversifies its demographic whilst offering exceptional value. Over the past twelve years, there's been a noticeable shift in the customer base. Seeking affordability, the £699 deals from Southampton are particularly appealing to the older demographic, who appreciate the convenience of embarking from a local port. But for families and some of our younger customers the allure of spending a few nights in New York before cruising to the Caribbean is exciting - it's shifted in popularity overall with a surge of interest from younger people.



Last call for super savings from Finnair's September sale

THERE IS still time to grab your clients a high-flying bargain for holidays across Europe and Asia as part Finnair's September sale. Fares to the Finnish capital of Helsinki lead in from £84 for a departure from Edinburgh, and £94 for London and Manchester departures.

For those looking for a magical trip to Finnish Lapland, travellers can fly to Santa's hometown of Rovaniemi from £124 one way from London. Alternatively, those looking for a getaway a little further from home can fly to Delhi from £519 return, or Tokyo from £710 return. The sale ends September 30th. www.finnair.com

News Bites

- PLAY HAS announced a record-breaking August as the airline witnessed a load factor of 91.8%, setting the record for the highest number in a single month.
- WIZZ AIR has announced London Gatwick will be the base for the airline's first Airbus A321XLR which will offer a direct service to Jeddah from March 2025



MANCHESTER AIRPORT has beaten its previous monthly record from 2019 as August 2024 was the busiest month the airport has ever seen with 3.36 million passengers using the UK's Northern gateway. August 23rd was the single busiest day in the airport's history, with 113,000 passengers taking to the skies. Combined, July and August 2024 saw 6.48 million passengers use the airport – beating its previous summer record in 2019.

Classic Collection welcomes Ryanair

CLASSIC COLLECTION has confirmed that Ryanair flights will be available on package options for its 3,000+ agent



network in the coming weeks.

Fares are expected to be in line with Ryanair's competitive pricing mode and flights will be available through the operator's trade portal.

www.classic-collection.co.uk

Image Credits: Left: Ryanair, Middle: Azamara



Azamara announces 2026 summer sailings

AZAMARA HAS unveiled its 2026 programme which will feature 77 new itineraries through the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, with three exclusive solar eclipse sailings, five maiden ports and two new post- and pre-cruise land programmes available.

To celebrate the launch, Azamara guests can enjoy an Early Booking bonus where they will receive 20% off all summer 2026 cruises booked before October 31st, 2024.

www.azamara.com

Philly flights to the Scottish shores with American Airlines' new service

AMERICAN AIRLINES is bringing back its service to the Scottish shores with the introduction of a seasonal service between Edinburgh and Philadelphia from May 24th, 2025. As travel to North America from Europe continues to grow throughout the summer, the introduction of American's first route to Scotland since 2019 ensures even greater adventure opportunities for those travelling from 'Britain's other eye'.

"Edinburgh was a key dot on the map for American Airlines when we first launched our Scottish service back in 2015 and we are excited to return in summer 2025. With this route, our customers in Scotland will have access to one of our fastest growing US hubs in Philadelphia," said vice president of International Operation, José Freig.

www.aa.com



DISCOVERY PROGRAM
UK & Ireland

WIN

with Brand USA's

Big Badge Bonanza!

COMPETITION ENDS
30 SEPTEMBER

Register or log-in to USADiscoveryProgram.co.uk and complete as many badges as you can to be in with a chance to win the following prizes:

- **Minimum of 4 badges completed:**
Champagne afternoon tea for two at The Ivy (locations across the U.K. and Ireland)
- **Minimum of 6 badges completed:**
Apple Watch
- **Minimum of 8 badges completed:**
Antler Luggage set
- **The agent who completes the most badges will win the Grand Prize!**
2 x tickets with Delta Airlines from LHR - MCO (Orlando, Florida)

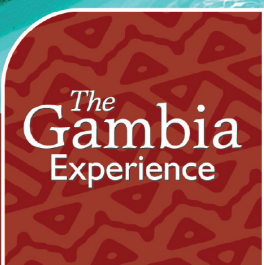
Terms and conditions can be found [here](#). Each agent is eligible for one prize only.

Discover the ultimate West African itinerary with *twin-centre* holidays

FROM THE GAMBIA EXPERIENCE

Start your stay with four nights at the luxurious Ngala Lodge, a charming adult-only beachfront hotel perfect for finding tranquility. From The Penthouse to a suite with a private plunge pool, the relaxing atmosphere and warm hospitality will ensure an unforgettable start to your holiday.

After some beachside bliss, cross into Senegal to visit the remarkable Fathala Wildlife Reserve. Spend three nights in luxury wrapped in canvas and embark on a safari to see some of Africa's iconic wildlife, including giraffes, zebras, warthogs, and monkeys.



Talk to our experts today:

01489 866 939 | enquiries@gambia.co.uk

SAFARI SURGE

Discover Africa has witnessed a 38% rise in safari bookings as experiential travel continues to rise in demand.



AS INTEREST in Safari adventures continues to boom across the industry, Discover Africa offers a wide array of experiences suitable for any traveller who wants to cross the Big Five off their bucket list after reporting a 38% year-on-year increase for safari holidays.

An adventure of a lifetime in Sierra Leone

GUESTS WILL travel into the heart of Sierra Leone with KE Adventure's new 14-night 'Ultimate Sierra Leone' itinerary. The trip will combine adventure with pure relaxation as guests will ascend 1,945 metres to the summit of Mount Bintumani and trek through the rainforests on Tiwai Island to search for pygmy hippos before hitting the River No. 2 Beach at Tokeh to sit back and take in the tranquil side of the country.

Prices lead in from £4,695 per person, including flights, B&B accommodation, most meals and all listed transfers and excursions.

www.keadventure.com

Stepping back into what is referred to as the 'golden age of travel', the eight-day 'Luxury Train Journey to Victoria Falls and Okavango Delta Safari' takes travellers on a luxurious rail journey aboard the Rovos Rail from South Africa's Pretoria to Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. Guests will stay at the Victoria Falls hotel before exploring the Okavango Delta and staying at the Ker & Downey Shinde camp. Prices lead in from £5,829.

For those looking for an ultra-luxe experience, the eight-day 'Giraffe Manor and Luxury Mara Wildlife Discovery' safari pairs a stay at the renowned

Giraffe Manor with six nights between the Mara Plains Camp in the Northern Masai Mara Conservancy and Mara Nyika Camp in Naboisho Conservancy. Prices lead in from £15,399.

The seven-day 'Unplugged Safari in the Mara' offers an immersive authentic safari in the Mara North Conservancy with no Wi-Fi. Guests will have access to a safari vehicle for night drives and walks, offering the chance to fully disconnect from the outside world and reconnect with nature. Prices lead in from £6,639.

www.discoverafrica.com

Inclusive Morocco puts families first

MOROCCO'S FIRST LGBTQ+ founded luxury travel company, Inclusive Morocco, offers an array of family-friendly itineraries to showcase the best of the country. The 'Morocco with Kids' trip which takes families from Marrakech to Essaouira and the Agafay Desert, promising a rich introduction into the variety of activities the country has to offer, including hiking, hot air balloon rides and quad biking. Prices lead in from £3,500 per person based on a family of four. www.inclusivemorocco.com





Sleep in the heart of the safari

FAMILY-OWNED SAFARI operator Desert & Delta Safaris has unveiled a sleep-out camp in the Tsodilo Hills. The camp sits in the heart of the UNESCO-recognised African bush, where the Male Hill turns a deep purple at sunset and unique spiritual rituals showcase the heart and history of the area. The experience comes at no extra charge to guests staying three or more nights at Nxamaseri Island Lodge.

www.desertdelta.com



Delving below the surface of Sierra Leone

RAINBOW TOURS' discovery of Sierra Leone invites guests to uncover the lesser-visited nation's history, ecology and culture.

The 10-night 'Sierra Leone Discovery' tour leads in at £3,992 per person, including flights, accommodation, meals, transfers, select excursions and a private guide.

www.rainbowtours.co.uk

Solo safaris and Nile river romps

JULES VERNE'S managing director, Debbie O'Neill, has noted that "People choose to travel solo for a number of reasons, whether it's a desire for personal growth or the simple fact that their partner, family, or friends don't want the same experiences as them."

Those factors still apply when guests are considering the safari of a lifetime or a bucket-list Nile river cruise and, fittingly, Jules Verne's 'Wild Maasai Mara' and '600-Mile Nile' itineraries fit the bill for agents looking to satiate that demand.

The former, a six-night exploration of the vast national park, includes a riverside stay at the first permanent tent camp in the Maasai Mara, Governors' Camp, and excursions from a Big Five-searching game drive and sunset balloon ride. Dedicated solo departures are available on November 7th, 2024 and November 6th, 2025, with prices from £4,445 per person.



The continent's north awaits on the '600-Mile Nile' itinerary, which centres around a 12-night cruise aboard *MS Darakum* which sails past ancient Egypt's iconic sites with calls at the Great Pyramids and Sphinx. Solo departures on March 5th and 31st, 2025 lead in at £4,995 per person. www.vjv.com

Kenya and Tanzania with Titan

TITAN TRAVEL'S flagship brochure, *Worldwide 2025/26*, collates its latest and greatest small group tours, solo holidays, cruise & tour and stay & explore options, and rail tours, as chief commercial officer Andy Squirrel notes "travellers [are] planning further ahead than ever before."

Among 10 new tours and returning classics, the brochure features a 13-day 'Best of Kenya and Tanzania - Great

Migration and Big Game Safari' option.

Beginning and ending in Nairobi, this itinerary ticks off the Amboseli National Park, Ngorongoro Highlands, Serengeti National Park and Maasai Mara National Reserve, with game drives in each boosting guests' odds of catching the sometimes elusive Big Five.

The tour, which includes 11 breakfasts and lunches and nine dinners; 11 nights' hotel and lodge accommodation; flights from London Heathrow with British Airways; Titan Travel's signature VIP door-to-door travel services; and 15 excursions with 10 game drives, leads in from £5,595 per person based on a May 13th, 2025 departure.

The full *Worldwide 2025/26* brochure is available to order via Tradegate by emailing agentadmin@titantravel.co.uk.

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Indulge in adventure at Kruger Gate Hotel

THIS JANUARY, couples can experience a romantic getaway with a difference at the Kruger Gate Hotel in South Africa.

Waking up to the sounds of the Africa bush, the Couples African Safari & Spa package blends luxury, adventure and pampering, promising an ideal getaway for all.

The package includes a half-day guided game drive for two people in a shared open vehicle for a chance to spot the abundance of wildlife living on the reserve, as well the chance to see the Big Five in person. Guests will also be treated to a Couple's Indulgence Spa treatment after the action-packed day at the hotel's tree-top spa.

Guests can choose if they would prefer a morning or afternoon spent in the game-rich southern Kruger, with the other half the day spent indulging in the spa set in the canopy of the Sabie riverine woodland.

Prices for the package are available upon request.

www.krugergatehotel.com

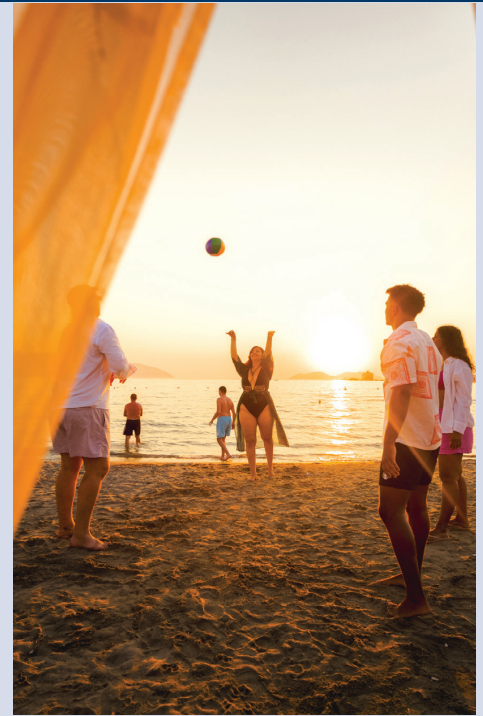
Contiki heads to Morocco and Egypt

CONTIKI HAS announced its largest-ever European launch, featuring 10 new itineraries as well as new tours in neighbouring countries Egypt and Morocco.

The five-day 'Cultures and Coastlines in Morocco' itinerary takes guests from the bustling streets of Marrakesh to the red panorama of the Agafay Desert. Prices lead in from £715 per person, including accommodation for a departure on May 26th, 2025.

On a two-week odyssey, the 14-day 'Best of Morocco' will take guests to the hotspots and hidden gems of the country, including bazaars in Marrakesh, iconic architecture in Casablanca, and breath-taking views throughout. Prices lead in from £2,615 per person including accommodation for a departure on May 17th, 2025.

Travellers will pay a visit to some of the world's most renowned ancient civilisations



and ruins, including the Great Pyramid of Giza, in the 10-day 'Ancient Wonders: Rome, Athens, Cairo' from £1,931 per person including accommodation and internal flights for a departure on May 17th, 2025.

www.contiki.com

Aqua Expeditions sets sail for the Seychelles

KNOWN FOR offering luxury voyages across the world's most remote locations, Aqua Expeditions is set to expand its fleet in 2025 with the addition of a new explorer yacht for four East African itineraries.

The new voyages in the Seychelles, Tanzania and Zanzibar are penned to set sail from December 2025. Expeditions will range from five- to nine-night itineraries exploring the Seychelles' inner and outer islands. These sailings may also be combined with a complete 14-night

exploration of the Seychelles archipelago.

The itineraries will rotate with comprehensive 10- and 11-night sailings to explore both the Seychelles and Tanzanian islands.

Francesco Galli Zugaro, founder and CEO of Aqua Expedition, said, "At Aqua, we've always been inspired to visit destinations that are off-the-beaten-track. It was inevitable that our journey would eventually bring us to the African shores. We are pleased to bring our unique brand of small-ship expeditions to a third continent, with a focus on travel that is both luxurious and sustainable."

Since 2007, the brand has expanded to sail in eight destinations across the globe with three river ships and two superyachts, with the new addition bringing the total to six vessels in its portfolio.

www.aquaexpeditions.com



WIN YOUR WAY TO WA

The closing date for ANZCRO's Western Australia FAM incentive has limited time remaining.



LIMITED TIME remains to book an ANZCRO tour including a two-night or longer stay in Western Australia and earn a chance to win a FAM trip to the region in November.

The FAM will see two groups of UK agents experience the vast and diverse

region. One will explore the unique landscape of the Pinnacles, Kalbarri and Monkey Mia on a road trip north of Perth, while one heads to the coast to the Margaret River Region's wineries, wildlife and waves. Both groups will get up-close with quokkas at Rottnest Island and get a taste of Perth and Fremantle's food and wine offering.

Andrew Guthrey, ANZCRO UK general manager, said, "Western Australia offers an unparalleled experience, blending ancient landscapes with vibrant culture and adventure. This FAM trip is a unique opportunity for travel agents to immerse themselves in this extraordinary

destination and bring those experiences back to their clients."

ANZCRO sales director Shubra Halliday said the FAM trip is "a chance for travel agents to see and feel the magic of Western Australia, from the breathtaking natural wonders to the rich cultural heritage."

Western Australia offers the shortest flight to Australia from London (to Perth), with Qantas offering a direct flight leaving London at lunchtime for an overnight flight to Australia's sunniest city.

Bookings must be made by September 30th, 2024 to qualify.

www.anzcro.co.uk

Australia stars in Fred. Olsen's 2025 short sailings

FRED. OLSEN has introduced three shorter sailings as part of its 2025 world cruise offering, including the 29-night 'Australian and South African Discovery' voyage. Guests cruise from Sydney where they will explore iconic sites such as the Opera House, Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef before searching for the Big Five in South Africa. Prices lead in from £3,699 per person for the cruise-only option. Head of itinerary product development Martin Lister promised that every port offers "an incredible insight into culture, history, art or the chance to seek out native wildlife."

www.fredolsencruises.com

Cirque du Soleil set to celebrate Hawai'i

'AUANA, A brand new show from the Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group, marks the group's first-ever residency in Hawai'i, kicking off on December 15th, 2024 at the OUTRIGGER Waikiki Beachcomber resort. The show celebrates the iconic spirit of the island with acrobats, musicians, singers, and hula dancers. Tickets are now on sale.

www.gohawaii.com/uk / www.cirquedusoleil.com



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AAT Kings launches 2025/2026 itineraries

UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES await as AAT Kings has launched its 2025/2026 season itineraries alongside discounts of up to 15% available for bookings made before December 6th, 2024 on selected departures.

The programme features a new 10-day Tropical Queensland tour, including a trip to the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics of Queensland, as well as a two-night stay on Magnetic Island, marking an itinerary first for the operator. Prices for this tour lead in from £3,531 per person including the discount and excluding flights.

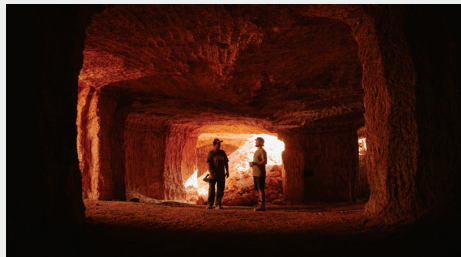
Other new experiences on offer include the Wildflower Guided Walk in Kings Park, Western Australia; a visit to the Mimbi Caves, Western Australia; a cruise of New Zealand’s Lake Manapouri; and a visit to Iron Creek Bay Farm Estate in Tasmania.

The new season also includes an array of ‘Make Travel Matter Experiences’ such as

tours of Devils @ Cradle Tasmanian conservation sanctuary and the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Port Arthur Historic Site. The tours aim to provide an in-depth insight into the local communities and projects that have a positive impact within the destination.

Ben Hall, CEO, said, “The new experiences in the 2025/26 programme really do enhance our itineraries, taking them to the next level with more variety, more culture and heritage, more excitement and more discovery.”

www.aatkings.com



Riviera is in it for the long haul

RIVIERA TRAVEL’S 2026 long haul escorted tour programme is now on sale, featuring 50 tours with departures ranging from six to 21 days to destinations including Australia, Canada, Malaysia, the US and more.

One of the tour highlights includes the 21-day ‘New Zealand – Land of the Long White Cloud’ itinerary which allows guests to explore Christchurch, Auckland and Queenstown from £6,199 per person.

www.rivieratravel.co.uk



Sofitel unveils \$60 million update

SOFITEL SYDNEY Wentworth has unveiled the first glimpse into its AUD\$60 million refurbishment, with doors expected to open in October 2024. The transformation includes a new Health & Wellness Studio complete with a fully equipped gym, and a dining precinct which features two restaurants and bars alongside the iconic rooftop terrace.

www.sofitel.accor.com



Two more Australian icons join CAO A portfolio

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS of Australia has added two prestigious Canberra-based institutions to its 19-strong portfolio – the National Portrait Gallery and the Australia Institute of Sport.

National Portrait Gallery director, Bree Pickering, said, “Through portraiture, the Gallery encourages conversation about who

we are, where we’ve come from and who we want to be as a nation.”

Australian Sports Commission CEO, Kieren Perkins, said, “The AIS has played an incredibly important role in Australia’s sporting success on the international sporting stage over the past four decades.”

www.culturalattractionsofaustralia.com

Image Credits: Top: AAT Kings, Top Right: Adobe Stock, Bottom Right: Sofitel, Bottom: Cultural Attractions of Australia



Wine and wildlife: the best of NSW

DESTINATION NSW has highlighted a new 11-day road trip that begins and ends in Sydney which combines some of the state's most entrancing regions for wine, dining and wildlife.

Travellers will stay overnight at the Taronga Zoo, spot wildlife in the Blue Mountains, enjoy a hot-air balloon over Hunter Valley, cruise with dolphins and whales in Port Stephens, and have a breakfast with alpacas along the Central Coast.

www.destinationnsw.com.au



Save 15% on New Zealand's Northern Explorer

IT IS the last chance for travellers to save up to 15% on Great Journeys New Zealand Rail's Northern Explorer package.

Travellers will head northbound from Wellington or Palmerston North to experience the peaks and ravines of the famous Volcanic Plateau. The offer ends on September 30th, 2024.

www.greatjourneysnz.com

Azamara offers £500 in onboard credit

TRAVELLERS CAN enjoy US\$500 in onboard credit as well as complimentary Wi-Fi and a Premium Beverage Package as part of Azamara Cruises' Hidden Gems Sale.

Every sailor can enjoy the extra onboard spending, however those who book a veranda or a suite will also be entitled to additional benefits. Bookings must be made by October 30th, 2024.

Travellers can take advantage of the extra onboard credit to enjoy some of the line's curated shore excursions on a host of its worldwide itineraries. Azamara's Extended Destination Days provide 10 or more hours in port, providing ample time for guests to enjoy the destination from the shore.

One of the sample excursions is a whale watching safari by helicopter in Kaikoura, New Zealand, as part of the 14-night 'New Zealand Intensive Voyage' aboard *Azamara Pursuit*. Guests will fly above Kaikoura's



Whale Sanctuary to take in the views of the majestic mammals in their natural habitat.

Guests will also be able to experience a scenic coastal landing, taking in the impressive vistas and capturing photos to make the memories last a lifetime.

www.azamara.com

From land to the sea: Audley launches ocean cruising programme

AUDLEY TRAVEL has announced the launch of a new ocean cruising programme with itineraries that will be available to book through agents later this year. Customers can curate their own hybrid trip to maximise the time they spend in a destination, exploring both the land and surrounding seas. The new programme will see Audley work with ocean cruise lines Azamara, Aranui, Celebrity Cruises, Cunard, Holland America, Paul Gauguin, Ponant, Regent Seven Seas, Seabourn, Silversea Cruises

and Star Clippers on a full host of voyages around the globe.

One of the sample itineraries is the 27-day tailor-made 'Australia & New Zealand by Train and Luxury Cruise' package which includes 12 nights spent aboard a Silversea cruise sailing between Auckland and Melbourne. While sailing, guests will enjoy a suite experience with butler service before enjoying wildlife tours on the Otago Peninsula and spending time in five New Zealand and Tasmania ports.

On land, guests will spend a full day on Rottneest Island and be treated to an exclusive behind the scenes look at Sydney Opera House before indulging in a five-day luxury train journey between Perth and Sydney. Prices for the package lead in from £16,975 per person including flights, transfers and excursions.

www.audleytravel.com



Windstar Cruises to be joined by Marquesas mayors for destination debut

2024 MARKS the debut of the Marquesas Islands on Windstar Cruises itineraries. The remote South Pacific paradise welcomes just a few thousands visitors a year, and has only recently earned UNESCO World Heritage designation.

A celebratory sailing will mark Windstar’s arrival in the destination on September 26th, 2024 and March 27th, 2025, where guests will be joined by three Marquesas Islands mayors.

Activities, including traditional Marquesas lei crafting and culinary demonstrations, will bring the unique islands’ spirit on board.

Stijn Creupelandt, vice president of hotel operations at Windstar Cruises, said, “We are honoured to host the mayors of these incredible islands on board *Star Breeze* for this celebration of the UNESCO World

Heritage status.”

Both ‘Tahitian Treasures & Magnificent Marquesas’ departures sail round trip from Papeete, calling in Fakarava, Fatu Hiva, Hiva Oa, Nuku Hiva, Rangiroa, Tahaa, Bora Bora and Moorea en route. Prices lead in from £6,598 per person for the March 27th, 2025 departure, including all meals and drinks, gratuities, Wi-Fi and port fees.

www.windstarcruises.com



Family-owned luxury forays

ADELAIDE HILLS’ family-owned Bird in Hand vineyard has introduced its first private accommodation at the Woodsuite estate, with Garden Suites leading in from £229 per night, exclusively available to guests dining at the fine dining LVN Restaurant.

www.birdinhand.com.au

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VIA TRAVEL offers unique, carefully-curated small group tours through Australia, offering guests a diverse range of tour options along the East and West Coasts as well as Tasmania, suitable for any type of traveller.

Along the East Coast, travellers can embark on the 10-day 'Brisbane to Daintree Rainforest' itinerary promising popular attractions and off-the-beaten-track gems. Some of the highlights include a Great Barrier Reef day cruise aboard a glass bottom boat and a chance to snorkel in the waters; a gondola ride over the oldest rainforest in the world; and a two-hour wetland experience with a local first nations family. Prices lead in from AUS\$5,850 per person.

Over on the West Coast, the eight-day 'Perth to Exmouth' boutique tour

features a journey across western Australia, with visits to the region's largest dunes, a walk through the alien-esque Pinnacles towers in Nambung National Park, and the chance to get up close and personal with whale sharks. Prices lead in from AUD\$3,895 per person. www.viatravel.com.au



Turkish Airlines introduces Sydney service

TURKISH AIRLINES is heading back Down Under as the airline has announced it will launch flights to Sydney from December 4th, 2024, adding a second Australian destination to the carrier's global network. The service will be operated four times per week from Australia's largest city via Kuala Lumpur, but will eventually become a direct service from Istanbul. The flights will operate between December 4th, 2024, and May 31st, 2025.

www.turkishairlines.com

What day in your life would you like to relive?

Jeanette Ratcliffe
Publisher
 jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk
 My 21st Birthday.



Simon Eddolls
Sales Director
 simon.eddolls@travelbulletin.co.uk
 The day I answered the staff question on time.



Sarah Terry
Senior Account Manager
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 The day I joined Travel Bulletin!



Tim Podger
Account Manager - Far East
 tim@travelbulletin.co.uk
 European Cup final 1999



Matthew Hayhoe
Editor
 matthew.hayhoe@travelbulletin.co.uk
 The day I saw Joni Mitchell in concert!



Melissa Paddock
Events Coordinator
 melissa.paddock@travelbulletin.co.uk
 When I got engaged.



Holly Brown
Events Coordinator
 holly.brown@travelbulletin.co.uk
 When I moved in with my friend.



Leah Kelly
Acting Deputy Editor
 leah.kelly@travelbulletin.co.uk
 When I went to the Eras Tour and heard my favourite song live!



Areti Sarafidou
Events Coordinator
 areti.sarafidou@travelbulletin.co.uk
 The day I got my dog.



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