

This month there are some excellent packages available for groups from the 007 mountain and cable car company Shilthorn. Combine with a stay at the 4 star Hotel Metropole which can cater for groups admirably.

See page 14.

The famous Albertina in Vienna has two master exhibitions this autumn.

Picasso - presenting over 150 of his works and intriguing documents – an insight into the political side of the artist.

Michelangelo over 100 of his drawings, brought together from worldwide collections. The exhibitions trace his progress from boy to iconic man. See page 15

This year Europa-Park celebrates its 35th birthday. They are making it a great excuse for major celebrations throughout the year. Together with an opportunity for readers to win a short break and experience the Park for yourself. See below and page 16

Win!win!

Readers, you can win a short break at Europa-Park Camp Resort in Rust in Germany for four people including one overnight stay, breakfast and two days entrance to Germany's biggest theme park. Just answer the question on the web link: www.europapark.de/ontheroad

The Camp Resort – just a few minutes' walk from the main entrance of Europa-Park – is the ideal place for adventurers of all ages. Enjoy the authentic Wild West atmosphere. Stay in your own log cabin. When the sun rises, you'll be ready to tackle the adventure of a brand new day, beginning with breakfast in the new Silver Lake Saloon.

Good luck and we look forward to welcome you soon at Europa-Park! All details on the web link above.



Europa-Park Camp Resort at night

APD to be replaced

Air Passenger Duty is to be replaced by a scheme that taxes airlines per plane as part of the UK's Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition agreement.

The parties agreed that a switch should be made to a per-plane, rather than per-passenger duty. A proportion of any increased revenues over time will be used to help fund increases in the personal allowance for income tax, details of

which the coalition will announce in its first budget.

The parties also plan to cancel the expansion of the third runway at Heathrow and will refuse any additional runways at Gatwick and Stansted. Instead, a high-speed rail network will be established.

This is likely to mean that full flights (often budget airlines) will get cheaper and poorly-used flights more expensive.

Versailles Announces Changes to Booking Processes

Chateau de Versailles is adapting its processes for group bookings. The changes will come into effect on 1st June 2010.

ETOA together with its members and other organisations have been lobbying for change. However, ETOA said that the new system remains complex and administratively cumbersome.

All feedback is welcome as to what effect it has on your operations - please send yours to info@etoa.org. Details in French at: http://www.chateauversailles.fr/resources/pdf/fr/newsletter/versailles_ficheres3.pdf Changes relate to the trial of an online reservation system; email booking protocol; online

information; requirements for paying deposits [arrhes] and full prepayment; buying reservations on the spot from three days prior to visit; methods of communication for 'grandes comptes' and other accredited clients; ability to consolidate two small groups providing the combined group size is not greater than 30. There is no change to the restriction on changing group size: group size may not be reduced; it can be increased by 10 for group sizes 11 to 20; by 3 for group sizes up to 7.

ETOA said it is seeking further clarification and will continue to push for clearer, simpler processes that match industry needs whilst respecting Versailles' need to minimise no-shows, and optimise capacity and related revenue.

Ash update

Although the disaster appears not to be over here are some recent industry reports so far:

- The EU has put figure lost by European businesses due to the crisis at €2.5bn (£2.1bn), whilst airlines are thought to have lost at least \$1.7bn (£1.15bn).
- Thomas Cook has issued a positive trading statement despite losing £70m to cover expenses

and repatriation fees of stranded passengers by the closure of airspace due to the volcanic ash cloud and the subsequent loss of bookings. Pretax losses in the six months to the end of March narrowed to £252m compared with £309m the year before.

- TUI reporting losses of £90m due to the ash cloud.



Tyrolean Evening with the Gundolf Family

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On The Road

May - June 2010

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A directory of Companies throughout Europe that specialise in working with leisure and business escorted groups

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Obituaries

John Boon

John was a vibrant product of an era when inbound tourism, and inbound group tourism in particular, dominated tourism. He was one of the major forces in that industry.

John started his career in Global Tours. In his mid-twenties he moved to American Express as a Regional Contracts Manager for UK and Ireland, his role was soon expanded to cover Scandinavia.

In the early seventies Amex, then the biggest deliverer of American clients in Europe, was as much a major tour operator and travel agency as it was a charge card. Here John developed a formidable reputation for companionable cunning in negotiations, a reputation that he carried with him throughout his career.



John Boon

John's ability to engage with people, and his detailed knowledge of the product, helped him in his subsequent position in charge of sales and operations for the entire inbound division of American Express UK. This role, which incorporated both corporate and leisure business, made him one of the leaders of tourism in Britain. He was thus a natural Chairman of the then British Incoming Tour Operators Association (now UKinbound).

The lure of being in charge of a business drew him to become Managing Director of Sovereign Tourism. This he led through the stormy business years between 1986 and 1991, before leaving for Anglo World (which he helped sell to Trina Tours) and subsequently Select Travel. It was during this period he was appointed as Chairman of the International Chapters of the American Society of

Travel Agents (ASTA). This was a role he relished: representing over 2,000 international ASTA members at conferences, he conducted seminars throughout the world. Subsequent to this, his career at JAC Travel saw him rise to become Head of Contracts and Operations in 2008.

At JAC, and throughout his career, John taught by example: there are hundreds of travel industry managers who learned from him how to cost, contract and operate tours.

In January 2010 John joined the European Tour Operators Association as Head of Membership Services, a role that was made for him. His unrivalled experience and range of contacts were put to hourly use. Each day he displayed a youthful zest that amazed his younger colleagues. In the three months he was at ETOA his bonhomie, stamina and edge made an enormous impact.

In February, John was delighted to receive a Lifetime Achievement award from UKinbound at their Annual Conference.

John was working hard on forging new alliances for ETOA when he was diagnosed with cancer in mid-April. Whilst seemingly recovering well from a subsequent operation, and in excellent spirits, he suffered a fatal heart attack.

He is survived by a daughter, Georgia, from his marriage to Vivienne which ended in divorce.

John Boon, Tour Operator, born 16th May 1943; died 22nd April 2010.

Eric Sutherland

Eric Sutherland passed away in mid May. He was President of ABTA from 1983-1986. Eric was also President of UFTAA [The United Federation of Travel Agents' Associations] in the 1970s and held senior positions at both Thomas Cook and Olympic Holidays.

In addition to holding the ABTA presidency Eric was Chairman of the Tour Operators Council from 1981-1983 and in his time at UFTAA he was instrumental in getting IATA to raise airline commission from 8% to 9%.

After retiring Eric remained actively involved in the trade in the Thomas Cook retiree club and was known for his affable, sociable nature and was still travelling widely. Eric leaves behind a daughter Chiara.

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Mair Mair

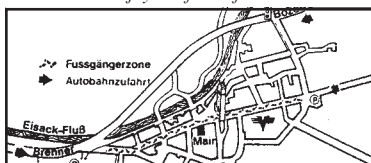
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PEOPLE UPDATE.....

TUI

TUI Travel's Activity Sector has strengthened its PR team to best service the growing Adventure and Sport Divisions. As part of the restructure, Suzanne Seyghal has been appointed to the newly created position of Adventure Division PR Manager - responsible for all PR activity across The Adventure Company, Headwater and Imaginative Traveller brands.

Brendan Vacations

Nico Zenner is the new President from June. Zenner takes over from Don Cooper, who since October of last year has been in a transition role and will return to Australia.

Zenner was recently President of Travel Bound and GTA North American Wholesale. He has also held executive level positions at Rail Europe Group, the Netherlands Board of Tourism and Sabena Airlines.

easyJet

The easyJet founder Stelios Haji-Ioannou resigned from the board in mid May, accusing the Chief Executive Andy Harrison of pursuing a reckless expansion programme and buying too many aircraft. "I have felt for a long time that the management is pursuing the wrong strategy for the expansion of the business. The share price has been flat for a decade and there have been no dividends. How can you buy 200 aircraft with shareholders' money and create no wealth for shareholders," Stelios said.

Stelios, who set up easyJet in 1995, still controls 38% of the group when his own shareholding is added to that of his family.

Carolyn McCall and Chris Kennedy are due to start as Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer in July.

Hall of Fame

On 12th May British Travel & Hospitality Industry Hall of Fame, founded in 1995 to honour outstanding personal achievement in the industry, welcomed four new Members.

They are: Ian Allan, Founder - Ian Allan Travel; John Hays, Managing Director - Hays Travel; Justin Fleming, former President of ABTA and Chairman of Panorama; and John McEwan, Chief Executive - Advantage Travel Centres.

Also the 2010 Business Achievement Award was presented to Lowcost Travel Group and its Chief Executive Paul Evans.

A new award, the Ambassador Award for The Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable Tourism, went to Dermot Blastland, Managing Director, TUI UK & Ireland.

The 2010 Young Manager of the Year Award was won by Melanie Bower, VP Travelzoo Network Entertainment and Destinations for Travelzoo Europe, and the 2010 Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award is Tom Marchant, co-Founder of online operator, Black Tomato.

It was also announced that the new Chairman of the Hall of Fame would be Manny Fontenla-Novoa, Group Chief Executive at Thomas Cook.

Costa Cruises

Costa Cruises UK Country Manager Marco Rosa is being moved back to Italy as part of a shake up of the line's operations in Britain.

The line said reorganisation was designed to create a "more efficient and flexible" organisation, but it will be seen as raising questions about its commitment to the UK market. Rosa moved to the UK for Costa in 2006 with a brief to build the Italian line's brand awareness in the country.

Costa said it would retain a dedicated UK sales team after the changes took place on May 1. Sales Managers in the UK would be supported by marketing and commercial teams at Costa's head office in Genoa.

Crystal Cruises

President Gregg Michel announces the promotion of Thomas Mazloum to Senior Vice President, Operations for Crystal Cruises. Mazloum, who has served as Crystal's Senior Vice President, Hotel Operations, since 2003 assumed the responsibilities for the fleets marine operations with the retirement of Joe Valenti, Crystal's Senior Vice President, Marine Operations.

And..

Crystal have enticed back Philip Ordever to the newly created position of Vice President, International Sales & Marketing. He will be directly responsible for the sales & marketing activities for Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

He was a key member of the sales team from 2003 - 2009 when he left Crystal. Ordever has an impressive career in the leisure travel industry. Prior to joining Crystal Cruises Ordever served as VP Passenger Logistics and General Manager, UK for Silversea Cruises and held positions with a number of leading tour companies in England, including First Choice Holidays Plc and International Leisure Group.

Inghams

Has employed Virgin Holidays' web guru Kevin Currie for the newly-created role of head of e-commerce. Currie will be responsible for enhancing the operator's online presence and developing the website to drive further online bookings. He will focus on search engine optimisation and online marketing activity.

SWISS

Rainer Hildebrand has succeeded Gaudenz Ambuhl as Swiss COO in May. Hildebrand formerly served as head of operations and a member of executive management for Flughafen Zurich AG, Zurich Airport's operating company. He also previously served as a Swissair pilot, chief flying instructor and chief pilot for Swiss.

Whitbread PLC

Andy Harrison has been appointed as its next Chief Executive to succeed Alan Parker who has decided to retire from the company on his 64th birthday, 25 November 2010. Andy will join the company on 1 September as

Chief Executive designate.

Andy Harrison, aged 52, is currently Chief Executive at easyJet PLC which he joined in 2005. Previously, he was 9 years as Chief Executive of RAC PLC.

P&O Cruises

The company's first female captain, Sarah Breton set sail at the end of April at the helm of its 1,200 passenger ship Artemis.

Captain Breton, 45 was first promoted to staff captain in 2001 on the original Pacific Princess and then went on to serve onboard Coral Princess, Tahitian Princess, the new Pacific Princess, Artemis and most recently Ocean Village.

Travelodge UK

Managing Director Guy Parsons has been promoted to Chief Executive as the budget hotel chain seeks to maximise growth. As part of a top level reshuffle former Chief Executive Grant Hearn has become Executive Chairman.

Travelodge UK is owned by Dubai International Capital (DIC), the investment arm of the Middle East state, but is considered by analysts to have fallen behind its business plan in the wake of the recession.

Cruise Europe

The organisation promoting Northern and Western Europe as a world-class cruise destination, has appointed a Managing Director for the first time. Jens Skrede will take up the role on July 1. He is currently MD for Destination Stryn & Nordfjord.

Working in close cooperation with the four regions represented - Europe West Coast; United Kingdom & Ireland; Iceland, Norway & Faroes; and the Baltic - to strengthen the understanding and coherence between them.

The positions of Executive Director and Marketing Director and Secretary/Treasurer will cease to exist as Jens will take those responsibilities on board. Dirk Moldenhauer will continue as chairman for two more years. The association now numbers 99 member ports and four associates. www.cruiseurope.com

Windstar Cruises

Hans Birkholz has been named President and CEO of Ambassadors International, parent of Windstar Cruises. Birkholz will also be Windstar's CEO. He replaces Art Rodney, Ambassadors' interim CEO.

Ambassadors CFO Mark Detillion and Windstar President Diane Moore will report to Birkholz. Birkholz most recently served as President and COO of Grand Expeditions, a division of tour conglomerate TUI Travel. Prior to Grand Expeditions, Birkholz was co-President of The Moorings, a yacht charter company.

UK

John Penrose has been appointed as Tourism Minister in the new UK coalition government. The Conservative MP should have a good understanding of the importance of tourism as his constituency is the resort of Weston-super-Mare one of the UK's rather tired seaside resorts.



The Pan European Advent and Christmas Markets website

Highlights details of 100's of Advent and Christmas markets and Festive events from Aarhus to Zurich and beyond

www.christmas-markets.org

You can also identify many benefits on offer during the festive season to make your itinerary even more appealing

Photo: Christmas Market - Tallinn Town Square by Toomas Volmer

PLACES...

Brussels

Shopaholics will be happy with the introduction of late night shopping on Thursdays from 3 June 2010 to Friday 31 December 2010. Shop 'till you drop in over a 1000 shops situated in Naamsepoort, Nieuwstraat, Grote Markt, Grasmarkt, Kleerkopersstraat and Gallery Anspach. For more info about individual stores and districts visit www.shopinbrussels.be

Berlin, Budapest and Prague

Berlin Tourismus Marketing GmbH (BTM) will engage in joint promotion activities with the Eastern European metropolis, Budapest, in order to develop overseas markets more effectively. The aim is to enter into a similar agreement with Prague.

"Each of the three cities has its own unique charm and they are all linked by their recent history", says Burkhard Kieker, CEO of BTM. "On the European markets we are competitors but in International markets we are the ideal partners. With our different profiles we complement each other perfectly. This cooperation is an investment in our future markets. Tourists from Brazil or China in particular are beginning to perceive Central and Eastern Europe as new, exciting travel regions.

With Budapest there are plans for joint presentations, workshops, road shows and press events in Brazil, Japan, India, China and Korea. The focus of tourist interest is increasingly shifting from Western Europe with the travel destinations London, Paris and Barcelona to Central and Eastern Europe with the cities Berlin, Budapest, Prague and Vienna. "We are responding to and strengthening this trend".

Guernsey

Love it or hate it, British yeast extract brand Marmite has launched a spoof election campaign featuring opposing 'Love' and 'Hate' parties – and if the Hate Party has its way, Guernsey is to become 'Marmiteland', a designated Marmite eating zone!

A Marmite spokesperson has been quoted as saying that "Guernsey is a beautiful island and the holiday destination of choice of Love Party leader Fay Freely, making it an obvious target for The Hate Party in their quest to stop the spread of Marmite".

Marmite's links with Guernsey don't end there: back in 2008, Guernsey-born artist Jeremy Fattorini was commissioned to make a Marmite coated replica sculpture of Rodin's The Kiss for the brand's 'Love Marmite' Valentines campaign.

VisitGuernsey has put together its own poll to find out what consumers think and already more than three quarters of voters (77%) are suggesting "Yes, bring it on... Guernsey will become Marmite nirvana!" as opposed to 23% who prefer "No!!! Banish Marmite from Guernsey forever..." www.visitguernsey.com/blog

Iceland

Ill timed pr

While billions of £'s are lost because of the cascading effect of ASH, we received what we thought was a rather insensitive press release from the Iceland Convention and Incentive Bureau, which included the following "Day-to-day life in Iceland goes on as usual, as the immediate effects of the volcanic eruption remain for the most part localized".....

Freiberg

Whenever Dresden tourists plan excursions, the Saxon Switzerland or the Meissen porcelain manufactory are usually top of their list. The 'silver town' Freiberg is often overlooked. The regional express from Dresden railway station takes just 39 minutes to the mediaeval town, which will be celebrating its 850th anniversary in 2012

Sights include:

The Terra Mineralia exhibitions in **Freudenstein Castle** - On a mineralogical journey around the world, visitors see over 5,000 minerals, precious stones and meteorites - natural beauty from the Earth's inner and the depths of space. A highlight on the ground floor, is a stunning treasure chamber presents some of the most amazing gems and rare meteorites.

Freudenstein Castle also accommodates the archives of the Freiberg University of Mining and Technology, the oldest mining university in the world. The collection comprises around 400,000 scientific and approx. 10,000 technical items.

The Cathedral of St. Mary, built 1180/1190 and preserved in excellent condition One of its treasures is a Silbermann organ with 2,574 pipes, which was installed in 1711. Another attraction of the Cathedral is the so-called 'Golden Gate' dating from 1230. The round-arched sandstone portal is one of the most acclaimed late Romanesque portals in Germany

The Local History and Mining Museum presents the exhibition 'Mining in Freiberg', as well as examples of late Gothic sacral art. Carved Christmas window decorations and tankards displaying masterful goldsmith's crafts.

Freiberg Theatre is considered the oldest town theatre in Germany. Behind the foyer from the 1950's, the historical auditorium has been preserved in its authentic style. This year special performances from April include the opera 'Resurrection' by Franco Alfano, who is known for his completion of Puccini's unfinished opera 'Turandot'

Spain

The Wine Routes of the Spanish Association of Wine-Producing Towns and Cities (ACEVIN) have produced an excellent web site detailing Spanish vineyard tours, tastings and wine routes. <http://www.spain.info/saborea/rutas-del-vino/index.html?l=en>

Go down to guided tasting sessions, click all routes. There is a short description of the vineyard tour, click on the name and you will have com-

Travellers best destinations

TripAdvisor®, has unveiled the winners of its 2010 Travellers' Choice® Destination Awards, honouring the world's top destinations based on the reviews and opinions of millions of travellers worldwide. The awards are spread across multiple categories.

Despite London being crowned the party capital of Europe, it fails to even finish as one of the world's top 25 destinations. Weymouth in Dorset is identified as an 'Emerging Hotspot', and Bath beats off exotic and tropical destinations in the best spa category.

Top 25 Global and European Destinations

Edinburgh, coming in at number 17 in Europe. Monte Carlo is the European destination most favoured, Heidelberg 2nd and Salzburg 3rd.

Top 25 UK Destinations

Scotland steals the show scooping 4 of the top 10 spots. In addition to the winning city of Edinburgh, the Isle of Skye comes 7th Loch Lomond 8th and the beautiful island of Islay 9th. Cosmopolitan Brighton is 2nd, York 3rd, and London 4th. England's smallest city, Wells in Somerset is 6th.

Culture Vultures

With its famous regal history, London is 6th in the European category and 10th in the world. Florence is 1st, Rome 3rd and Venice is 8th in the world.

Party Hard

European destinations for nightlife, London claiming the top honour, Berlin is 2nd, Newcastle 3rd and Dublin 4th. New Orleans has the best nightlife in the world, with New York coming 2nd and Las Vegas 3rd. London 5th and Newcastle 7th in the world.

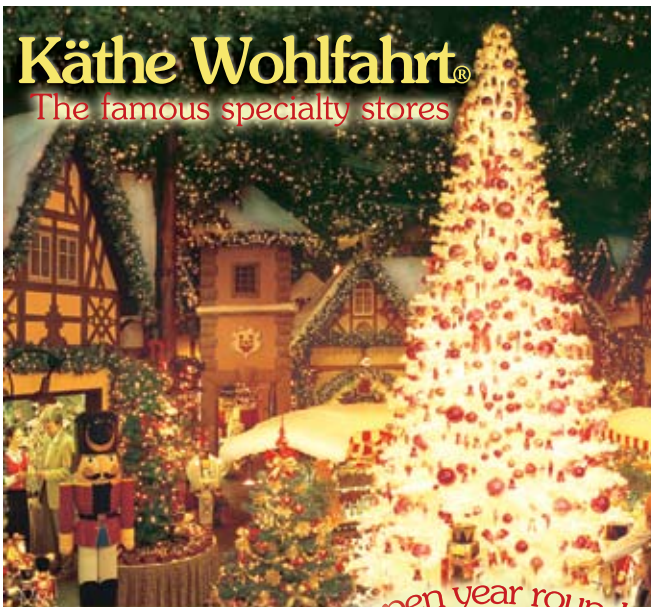
Bath – Bathe in Glory

The beautiful thermal spa city of Bath beats exotic destinations in the likes of Indonesia and Costa Rica to come in at number two in the category for best spa and relaxation in the world (beaten by Sedona, Arizona), and number 1 in Europe.

For full breakdown www.tripadvisor.co.uk/TCDestinations

plete contact details, timings etc La Rioja has launched a new website for booking visits to wineries. The website allows visitors to search by destination, winery or activity, show-

ing availability in real time. Visitors can choose from the suggested wineries, search for activities and book tours and tasting courses. www.lariojatourismo.com



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TRANSPORT

Aer Arann fees increase

Irish carrier Aer Arann has introduced a fee for hold baggage on all bookings. They have also increased its fees on amendments to bookings, such as route, time or date changes from £20 to £35, or £50 if made at the airport. The fee for changing the name on a ticket is increasing from £32 to £100.

Travellers on domestic flights (within Ireland) will still be entitled to 15kg free. But passengers on flights to the UK and France will be forced to pay £8 per bag, with a higher weight limit of 20kg, if booked online. Passengers arriving at the airport without pre-booking will pay £12 for each bag they want to check in.

The policy for hand baggage remains unchanged: One piece of cabin baggage per passenger, which must not weigh more than 7 Kg and comply with size restrictions. www.aerarann.com

Manchester Airport

Terminal 2 will become the first in Europe to replace hand searching with body scanners as part of the security process after airport bosses secured a unique agreement from the European Commission. The move follows a successful trial of a body scanner in Terminal 2 that began in October 2009 and which became a compulsory part of secondary security screening in February 2010. The scanners will now be deployed as part of a 12-month trial, replacing the second walk through metal detector. The airport is aiming to demonstrate to customers that they

need not remove their coats, jackets and shoes, thus improving their journey through the security process. The airport has been trialling a new SMART lane layout and this will complement the use of the scanners and hopefully improve the flow rate. www.manchesterairport.co.uk

Gatwick to Central London

easyBus has just launched a brand new 24 hour service between Gatwick Airport and Earl's Court/West Brompton. Departures run at 15 minute intervals round the clock and operate non-stop, journey time of just 1 hour and 5 minutes. The new service can be booked now for all travel dates throughout the summer. As with all easyBus London airport routes, prices start from just £2 one way for early bookers who buy online at easyBus.co.uk.

EU liquids ban

The European Union has confirmed restrictions preventing passengers from carrying liquids onto aircraft will be in place until 2013. After this time all European airports must be equipped with scanners able to monitor liquids carried by passengers.

Emirates - Good news

The 2009-10 Annual Report, for the financial year ended March 31, showed the Emirates airline alone made \$964m in profit. The Emirates Group saw a 248% rise in profit for the same period. Although a reduction in passenger yields of -16.9% overall, this was offset by increased traffic.

Dubrovnik - new cable car

1 June 2010 is the opening date for a new cable car up Mount Srđ, which towers behind the medieval walled city of Dubrovnik.

Two carriages, carrying 30 passengers each, make the ascent in just three minutes. The upper station is 405 metres above sea-level and offers incredible views over the city and beyond. On clear days the visibility from Mount Srđ is around 60 kilometres. There are telescopes on a viewing platform plus a bar, restaurant, 250-seat amphitheatre and shop.

The new cable car replaces a cable car that ran the same route from 1969 to the 1990s, and carried 2.5 million passengers each year. A winding walk known as 'The Serpentine' also climbs the sage-covered hillside where sheep graze; the views at the top are the reward. www.dubrovnikcablecar.com
www.croatia.hr



Dubrovnik new cable car

Flight plan

Air Astana - the flag carrier of the Republic of Kazakhstan announced plans to expand its Central Asia hub at Almaty, the country's largest city. New services will be launched to Urumchi in western China; Dushanbe, capital of Tajikistan and Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan, during the second half of 2010.

Additional new routes to other cities in southern Russia, including Omsk and Yekaterinburg, are also under consideration.

Air Berlin will operate twice-weekly service between Miami and Berlin from Nov. 1 to April 28 on Mondays and Thursdays. During that time, Air Berlin will continue to offer nonstop service to Dusseldorf from Miami three times per week.

British Airways' summer - only schedule from London City Airport to Barcelona will now operate all year-round, with 7 flights per week when its extra Saturday morning service is added this month.

Also, due to popular demand, BA has introduced new services to Mallorca and Ibiza.

Delta Airlines will add an extra daily flight between Heathrow and New York-JFK, from 20 September three daily flights on the route all year.

Emirates have added Baghdad as one of six new destinations launched by the airline this year including; Tokyo, Amsterdam, Prague, Madrid and Dakar.

Flybe Following the new service from Norwich, Flybe is launching three more new non-stop summer services to Guernsey, from Newcastle, Edinburgh and Belfast, for the summer period only. Flights twice weekly from Newcastle (on Tuesdays and Saturdays) and Belfast (on Wednesdays and Saturdays) and three times a week from Edinburgh (on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays). www.flybe.com

It has also launched its winter schedule 2010/2011 and opened bookings. These include 15 new city pairs plus ten seasonal European ski destinations. Edinburgh - Manston; Exeter to Bergerac, Faro, Hannover, Norwich and Rennes; Isle of Man - Bristol; Jersey to Cardiff, Newcastle and Norwich; Gatwick - Nantes; Manchester - Bournemouth; Newcastle - Hannover; Southampton to Brest and La Rochelle. Loganair now operates under the Flybe brand. www.flybe.com

Jet2.com has introduced five new routes connecting Spain and the UK with flights to Lanzarote and Tenerife from the airline's new base in the East Midlands, and to Gran Canary from Newcastle.

Kenya Airways has introduced flights from Nairobi to Muscat, Oman with initially three flights a week - Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

Monarch has introduced Birmingham to Dalaman with 3 flights per week. Luton to Dalaman with 2 flights per week. Luton to Bodrum with 2 flights per week. Manchester to Antalya with 2 flights per week.

Porter Airlines Flying out of Toronto's downtown city centre airport, now renamed Billy Bishop, continues. The airline has increased its Newark New York schedule to 9 roundtrips mid week 6 on a Saturday and 8 on Sunday. The carrier now operates 14 destinations in Canada and the United States. www.flyporter.com

Ryanair now flies from Bournemouth to Valencia airport, twice a week.

Air Southwest has lost its twice daily service from London City Airport to Plymouth and Newquay. The route has suffered this year from a combination of poor weather and problems associated with the Icelandic volcano eruptions.

Transaero - the Russian airline filed with the Transportation Department to start once weekly service in October between Moscow's Domodedovo Airport and Miami, with twice weekly service to New York Kennedy to follow in December.

US Airways have introduced a daily, year-round nonstop service to Rome from Charlotte, N.C.

The airline flew 27.5 million passengers between March 2009 and 2010, 4.7 million more than in the previous year.

Travel services provider Dnata and Emirates SkyCargo, also part of the Emirates Group, saw positive growth. Destination and Leisure Management, which includes Emirates Hotels & Resorts, saw a more "challenging" year. www.theemiratesgroup.com

Eurostar

From 1 September they are introducing Standard Premier - a 'mid-class' designed to appeal to the more cost-conscious business traveller, and leisure travellers who want that little bit extra space and service. This replaces Eurostar's existing Leisure Select class. www.eurostar.com

And...

Eurostar has become a tier three sponsor of London 2012, the 30th domestic sponsor. The high speed rail actually runs through the Stratford Olympic Park but does not stop. Stratford International, the station for the Olympic Stadium, lacks customs and immigration facilities. Passengers inbound from the Continent will either have to disembark at Ebbsfleet and transfer to the high speed Javelin service from Kent, or stay on to St Pancras and take the seven-minute ride back to the Olympic site. The cross-Channel rail operator has also acquired rights in France and Belgium and has become a partner of the National Olympic Committees. www.eurostar.com

continued on page 6...

...continued from page 5

Malaga Airport new Terminal

Malaga Airport is undergoing a which will double the airport's capacity. A new car park with 2,500 bays, a new General Aviation Terminal, expanding the airfield to include a second runway, the new Terminal (T3) and additional, improved accesses. Fifty shops and restaurants will be on offer.

Farnborough 2010

The show is completely sold out with 1,000 exhibitors, 166 chalets and 22 international pavilions. Bucking the trend the Farnborough event, from 19 to 25 July, has gone from strength to strength. Visitors will find new roadways both within the site and adjoining, a new travel terminal and major entrance at gate B (taxis will go to gate A) and a courtesy bus service from Farnborough railway station. Go-Ahead London is promoting its bus services from Victoria Coach Station

Renfe - new last generation train

Spain's State-owned train operator Renfe has completed the renovation of their train service connecting Asturias, Castilla and Leon, Rioja, Aragon and Catalonia by purchasing a fleet of 'hotel-trains'.

As part of the redesign of the product dedicated to overnight trips, the Spanish company has purchased 10 Talgo Bombardier trains, which can travel at 220 km per hour and accommodate up to 120 people. The new trains also offer a better service for disabled passengers. www.renfe.es

Overground rail opened

The new London Overground railway is open, with trains running every five minutes between Dalston Junction and Surrey Quays and every seven or eight minutes between Dalston Junction to Sydenham. By May 2011 the line will be extended to run to Clapham Junction, West Croydon, Highbury and Islington. www.tfl.gov.uk

London - new bus tour

Beginning 28th May, 'The Celebrity Tour of London' is a greatest hits whirlwind journey through London's pop culture history. Passengers visit the capital's greatest celebrity homes, famous film locations, music landmarks, celebrity hangouts, and tourist attractions. The 90 minute sightseeing tour departs 4 times a

day 10am/1pm/4pm/7pm . Meeting Point - In front of Park Plaza Sherlock Holmes Hotel, 108 Baker Street, London W1U 6LJ www.thecelebrityplanet.com

World's biggest airline

Loss making carriers United Airlines and Continental Airlines confirmed they would merge to become the world's biggest airline. The deal, which is subject to regulatory approval, would create an airline with the largest global market share and annual revenues in excess of \$29 billion. The companies' chief executives said they expected the merger to save \$1 billion a year.

The Continental name will disappear though its colours will be integrated into the new United Airlines' livery, and the company will be headquartered at United's Chicago offices.

Continental boss Jeff Smisek will become Chief Executive of the new company, while United's Glenn Tilton will be Non-Executive Chairman. Some job cuts to the 86,000-combined work force are to be expected, but both bosses said front-line staff would be "minimally affected."

More changes at Japan Airlines

JAL is undergoing further major restructuring after filing for bankruptcy protection on 19 January.

It is set to close 11 overseas bases and eight domestic offices and is to cut 15 more international routes, and suspend operations on 30 more domestic routes, as part of a reduction in its network.

This year JAL expects to reduce international and domestic passenger capacity by 40% and 30% respectively from 2008 levels.

The recent announcement of International routes to be closed is flights from Tokyo to Amsterdam, Milan, Rome and Sao Paulo.

"JAL has restructured its overall network with the clear objective of returning to profitability as swiftly as possible," the airline said in a statement.

Combined with previously announced route cuts, it means the airline will stop operating a total of 28 international routes, and 50 domestic routes will be shed.

JAL said it was now aiming to achieve in one year what it had originally planned to do in three.

Meanwhile, the Nikkei business daily newspaper said JAL planned to outsource a portion of its aircraft maintenance, to cope with a reduction in manpower as part of its restructuring.

The airline received 1,000 more requests for early retirement than the 2,700 that it had been looking for.

EUROPEAN ECCENTRICS

Dying penalty

A 32 year old defender Goran Tunjic who played for 5th division Croatian football team Mladost FC was given a yellow card for diving. Unfortunately when the referee checked, he discovered Goran was dead. He had collapsed and had a heart attack.

Top secret

Kirssan Ilyumzhinov - head of the Republic of Kalmykia said he had been standing on the balcony of his flat in Moscow when he had a visit from aliens. They showed him around their spaceship. They told him they were collecting samples. He is now under scrutiny from MP's who want to know what state secrets he might have given away.

Porky politics

Council Officers in Uckfield East Sussex sent a letter addressed to Blossom Grant of Pig Flats urging her to register to vote in the General Election. Unfortunately Blossom is a pig and her sty is Pig Flats.

Her owner Pauline Grant contacted the local offices "But no one listens. We also get lots of requests from the TV Licensing people which is a bit unfair as she doesn't watch TV"

A costly slip

Penguin publishers have had to destroy 7,000 copies of a cook book 'Pasta Bible' because a proof reader missed a typing error. The recipe

should have added 'freshly ground black pepper' in the tagliatelle recipe, but what was printed was 'freshly ground black people'.

Hospitalised by Goose

The chairman of a bird protection society in Holland, Anne Orsinga, was taken to hospital with concussion and a broken cheekbone after a dead goose fell from the sky and hit her on the head.

I don't believe it!

The Sydney Herald reported that a little while ago a Qantas flight was nearly grounded by confusion over names. Mr Gay, a Qantas employee, was taking advantage of the company's Free Flight programme when he found his seat occupied by a paying passenger. Unfazed, Mr Gay found another seat, unaware that all Free Flyers were being asked to get off due to overbooking. A stewardess approached the seat where Mr Gay was supposed to be, and asked the occupant, "Are you Gay?" The man shyly nodded that he was and was told to get off the plane. Mr Gay, overhearing the conversation, said: "You've got the wrong man. I'm Gay." This caused an angry third passenger to yell: "Hell, I'm gay too! They can't kick us all off." More passengers joined the fray, yelling that Qantas had no right to remove gays from their flights. Qantas apparently refused to comment on the incident.

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CRUISE NEWS

Compagnie du Ponant – new ships

French cruise line Compagnie du Ponant launched Le Boreal, its first new cruise ship in more than a decade. The ship is the first of two six-deck, 264-passenger ships being delivered over the next year. Le Boreal embarked on its maiden cruise in early May - sailing from Marseille to Nice.

L'Austral, the second new build, is due to take to the seas in May 2011. The ship is the fifth in Ponant's fleet, joining the 64-passenger sailing yacht Le Ponant, the 90-passenger yacht Le Levant and 226-passenger Le Diamant. Le Boreal fourth in the fleet, will spend its inaugural month sailing in the Mediterranean, before repositioning to Northern Europe. www.ponant.com

Open Dining

Crystal Cruises is to introduce their version of open dining from January 2011. Clients will choose one of the three dining arrangements (Classic Main, Classic Late or Open Dining by Reservation) at the time of booking. Taken together, the new programme is being called Perfect Choice Dining. Reservations can be made in advance for any time between 18:15 and 21:15. Announcing the arrangement Crystal President Gregg Michel stressed that for passengers who prefer Crystal's traditional fixed dinner seating system in the main dining room, nothing will change. "And that's still a significant group," he noted. Many Crystal regulars are fond of the "familiarity of the experience, the same table and same section of the dining room at night, the same senior waiter who knows their preferences."

Mini operator expands cruises

The Majestic Line a specialist operator, will add at least another two Skye and Inner Hebrides cruises for the 2011 season. The cruises will be aboard Majestic's two traditional vessels The Glen Massan and Glen Tarsan. Both boats share the same traditional construction and are designed to accommodate up to 11 people in 5-star comfort.

The layout of the vessels encourage informality and relaxation. They have been designed to allow guests to experience some of Scotland's most wonderful scenery and witness wildlife (including eagles, otters and seals) all from the comfort of a matchless vantage point. There will be ample opportunity to experience some of the unique culture and

heritage of the West Coast and Inner Hebrides such as Eilean Donan Castle, The Clan Donald Centre and Invererie the UK's largest community not connected to the road network.

DFDS – watch and sail

DFDS Seaways has appointed the expertise of two Wildlife Officers on board cruise ferry King of Scandinavia which sails from Newcastle to Amsterdam.

The Wildlife Officers, from whale and dolphin charity ORCA, will give presentations to passengers, organise deck watches and point out the exciting inhabitants of the North Sea, as well as running fun and educational children's activities. Common wildlife to spot en route includes dolphin, harbour porpoise, gannet, great skua, fulmar, kittiwake, and if you're lucky, even minke whales.

The North Sea DFDS service is daily to September. The courtesy facility is also offered on the special ORCA Wildlife Watching Mini Cruise to Amsterdam which includes two nights on ship, coach transfers to Amsterdam and the best part of the day in this beautiful capital city. www.dfds.co.uk/Orca

EW adds new barge

European Waterways has announced that La Bella Vita, a luxury 20-passenger hotel barge, is joining their fleet this year to offer a very special cruise along some of Italy's most charming waterways between Venice and the Renaissance city of Mantua. After she has been refitted, La Bella Vita makes her inaugural voyage on 5th September 2010.

Cruise Highlights:

- Guided tour of historic Venice – hidden gardens, Pavilion of the Gondolas
 - Tour of the colourful port of Chioggia and its famous red fish market
 - Private wine tastings at renowned local producers
 - Tour of ancient Adria, including the opera house and cathedral
 - Visits to the Ducal Palace in Mantua and Estense Castle in Ferrara
- T+44 (0) 1784 482439

I want to be alone

Those who snore, live with a snorer, or simply prefer to sleep or travel alone will be cheered by Star Clippers' offer of no single supplements for solo occupancy of cabins on board the Star Clipper and Star Flyer

on dates throughout summer 2010, usually sold at a 50% supplement, saving up to £1,627.50 per person off a 14 night cruise.

The offer is for summer 2010 Mediterranean sailing itineraries that include the Greek islands and Turkey on board both Star Clipper and Star Flyer, and Riviera cruises from the Cote d'Azur to Corsica, Sardinia and the Italian coast on Star Flyer. T 0845 200 6145, www.starclippers.co.uk.

And...

Star Clippers have introduced a new 'rail and sail' holiday enabling guests to take the train direct to the South of France and join a tall ship sailing from Cannes or Monaco without the worry of flight delays, airport taxes or baggage fees.

Departing throughout May, June and September Star Clippers has 3 and 4 night tall ship 'mini-cruises' from Monaco and Cannes along the French and Italian Riviera, including return rail travel from London to the Cote d'Azur:- Tel UK 0845 200 6145 www.starclippers.co.uk

The power of publicity?

Celebrity Cruises new ship Eclipse dedicated to the UK market by being based in Southampton, is the best selling in the Celebrity fleet (although pricing remains low) according to its bosses.

In April the ship began its commercial life, it was sent to Spain to collect over 1,000 stranded Brits who had fallen foul of the Ash disaster.

Stena's superferries

The two largest Superferries in the world costing over £375 million will sail the North Sea between Harwich and Hook of Holland this year, following their launch by Stena Line. Stena Hollandica launched on 16 May 2010 and the Stena Britannica following in autumn 2010.

Each will be capable of transporting 230 cars, 300 freight vehicles and have 1,376 beds on board. The 538 cabins have wider beds and larger windows than the norm. All cabins have a modern en suite bathrooms.

Onboard services including buffet and a la carte restaurants, cinema,

bar, lounge, media room and internet corner, free wi-fi for all, mobile reception throughout the crossing and satellite television in lounges and cabins. There will be children and teenager zones, 12 kennels for dogs and a sundeck to allow passengers to relax outdoors during their journey.

Departing twice daily from Harwich, the crossing takes approx 6.5 hours. Leave at 09:00 and around 23:45 each day, and at 14.30 and around 22:00 from the Hook of Holland. www.stenaline.co.uk

Rotterdam - festival option

A unique experience during Rotterdam's World Port Days on 4 and 5 September, P&O Ferries is organising an exclusive day trip to the centre of Rotterdam. Day-trippers board the 12-deck Cruise Ferries at the Europoort terminal and enjoy a day sailing straight through the port of Rotterdam.

The guests can view the interior of the ship throughout the day. The outdoor decks offer a great view of all the spectacular festivities along the waterfront in the heart of Rotterdam, during one of the city's most famous events.

Besides day tickets for individuals, P&O Ferries is offering a package deal for groups. This special day programme for an exclusive group of 50 to 100 people includes an à la carte lunch and access to the Business Lounge. www.poferries.nl/minicruises

New Cadiz excursion

The new boat excursions introduced in March 2010 bring a different approach to excursions in Cadiz. The Andalusian city can now be appreciated in its full splendour from the sea, sailing past castles Santa Catalina and San Sebastian and arriving at La Caleta beach.

Excursions leave at 12pm every day and cost €12 per person (children €6). Saturdays will be 'sailors' day' and prices will drop to €8 per adult, €6 for children aged 5-12 and free for children under 5 years old. The boat excursions are run by AlBarco, which also offers the option of renting the boats for special occasions such as lunches, group trips or parties. www.albarco.com

ETOA....

ETOA visa survey

ETOA, (European Tour Operators Association), is to launch a survey in June about Schengen and UK visas for tourists visiting Europe. This follows concerns about the uneven nature of the handling of visa requests depending on the country of origin and the destination in Europe. ETOA has long argued that Europe shouldn't take for granted its position as the world's number one tourist destination and unnecessary barriers such as over-complicated or inadequately managed visa process hurts incoming tourism. The Chair of the Transport and Tourism Committee in the European Parliament,

Brian Simpson, recently responded to this point at ETOA's Group Tourism event in Brussels, noting that procedures needed to be streamlined. The survey will be run by Consumerdata and will gather experiences from origin markets across the world. As well as highlighting problem areas, it is hoped that the results will provide examples of good practice that can be followed. If your business is affected, please ensure your organisation completes the survey. The results will carry significant weight and will be presented at an event in October in Brussels at which ETOA will also highlight the opportunities for tourism from specific origin markets.

For more information please either e-mail nrgreenfield@etoa.org or call +44 20 7499 4412.

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GROUP OPTIONS/ ATTRACTIONS

Cuxhaven

In addition to BallinStadt in Hamburg and the German Emigration Centre in Bremerhaven, North Germany offers another highlight for American travellers who are looking to trace their German roots: The Hapag Terminal in Cuxhaven - once the sailing hub for the HAPAG/Hamburg America Line - portrays the history of its emigrating passengers in the permanent exhibit 'Departure to America'.

Visitors can enjoy this year-round exhibition free of charge and use the multimedia data base for research. With the only original historic European passenger terminal that is still in use, Cuxhaven offers its passengers cruises in the North Sea and Mediterranean.

Art Natura Málaga

Cultural tourism in Málaga is set to increase with the advent of an impressive new leisure complex by Autumn 2010. Art Natura Málaga will combine science, art, and gastronomy.

Art Natura Málaga is centrally located in the city, just ten minutes from Málaga International airport and five minutes from the high-speed AVE train station. Its flagship attrac-

tion will be The Royal Collections - housing the largest collection of coloured stones in the world.

In addition visitors will be offered gemstone workshops and craftsmen will who cut gemstones to fit pieces of jewelry. The centre will contain two science museums: The Museum of Earth Sciences and The Museum of Life Sciences, both with highly original content including theme areas and state of the art technology.

Art Natura Málaga will offer champagne and wine tastings; a number of restaurants and bars. www.art-natura.es/ T+34 952 33 7700

Belleek offers new tour

In response to a demand from the tour operator and incentive travel market, Belleek Pottery has launched a premium guided pottery tour product for small, pre-booked tour groups. Called the 'Hand Crafted In Belleek Experience', this programme focuses on giving visitors 'hands on' understanding of Ireland's oldest pottery.

Practical demonstration of 'the art of Belleek' by a Master Craftsman followed by the opportunity for tour members to try their hand at creating their own unique piece - from the modelling of a parian china flower, to putting the finishing touches to

Gustav Mahler and Vienna

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) was one of the great pioneers of 20th century music. The composer's 150th birthday celebrations take place this year, followed by the 100th anniversary of his death a year later.

Mahler headed the Vienna State Opera for 10 years. Gustav Mahler first visited Vienna in 1875, the highly talented 15-year-old studied composition and piano at the Vienna Conservatoire, graduating with a diploma three years later. After several years spent travelling, Gustav Mahler was offered a post at the prestigious Vienna State Opera House. He began as Kapellmeister before ultimately being appointed Artistic Director of the Court Opera, as it was then known, by Emperor Franz Joseph I.

Around 1900 Vienna was the cultural hub of Central Europe. The age of the coffee house literati, the Vienna Secession and elegant salons. The spirit of optimism at the turn of the century also ushered in a new era for the Vienna Court Opera. The institution underwent a decade of intense artistic accomplishment under Mahler's directorship between 1897 and 1907.

Mahler's compositions enjoyed greater popularity abroad and his frequent concert tours increasingly came under fire, eventually culminating in a stinging criticism from the press. In 1907 Mahler tendered his resignation and accepted the New York Metropolitan Opera's invitation to serve as Principal Conductor. That year his and his wife Alma's first daughter Maria Anna died of diphtheria and he was diagnosed with a heart condition. Mahler spent the following years travelling between two continents. He died on May 18, 1911 in Vienna. He is buried in Grinzing cemetery, which is also the final resting place of his daughter Maria and wife Alma. To - Oct 3, 2010: Gustav Mahler and Vienna Austrian Theater Museum, Palais Lobkowitz, www.khm.at/de/oesterreichisches-theatermuseum



Gustav Mahler

Historical and folklore celebrations

Within the CZ Republic UNESCO cities, here are a few to consider.

Princely indulgence and folk crafts fair, Krom iž, 4-5 June 2010

Visitor witness a parade of historic costumes, watch archers and falconers show off their skills, behold a fireworks show, shop at the fair, and much more. Once in Krom iž, take a tour of the UNESCO-listed chateau and gardens complex. www.mesto-kromeriz.cz info@krominfo.cz

Five-Petalled Rose Celebrations, eský Krumlov, 18-20 June 2010

Back into the time of the Lords of Rožmberk. Visitors see a procession in historic costumes, circus performers, musicians, dancers and swordsmen, shop at the market. www.ckrumlov.cz

The Royal Silvering of Kutná Hora, 19-20 June 2010

Thanks to its silver mines, Kutná Hora was once among the richest Czech cities. The Royal Silvering is a Gothic festival that returns the city to the time when King Wenceslaus IV lived here. Visitors will see the ceremonial arrival of the monarch and his cortège as proud miners welcome him and the fair begins. The festival programme will feature music, dance, jousting tournaments. www.stribreni.cz and <http://guide.kh.cz/>

City celebrations, Olomouc, 24-27 June 2010

Visitors will see a parade in historic costumes, shop at a genuine Haná crafts fair, and taste local specialties made with Olomoucké tvar žky (a traditional cheese with a strong taste and smell). Home to the local UNESCO-listed monument, the Baroque Holy Trinity Column. www.tourism.olomouc.eu

Historic Celebrations of Zachariáš of Hradec and Kateřina of Wallenstein, Telč, 13-14 August 2010

The city Telč historic centre and chateau and also comes to life with celebrations that recall times past. Audiences have performances by swordsmen, musicians and dancers as well as theatre presentations and a country fair. www.telc.eu

Třebíč Medieval Celebrations, 20-21 August 2010

A medieval village, period market hall, military encampment, historic procession, music and dance... The city's historic monuments (the Jewish town, St Procopius Basilica and the Jewish cemetery) are the UNESCO list. www.trebic.cz

Pražský jarmark International Folklore Festival, Prague, 26-31 August 2010

One of the largest folklore festivals in the Czech Republic and Europe and featuring international performances. An old Czech fair, specialties of Czech cuisine www.pjarmark.cz or www.prague-info.cz

the painting of a plate or the fixing of a handle to a Belleek tea-cup. Following the tour, Belleek will fire the visitors' handicraft and ship the finished items with any purchases to their home. Tour comprises of - Audio Visual Presentation, guided tour, guest participation, paint your own piece. The tour lasts approx 2 hours. www.belleek.ie

Building a bright future for Burns

Construction is well underway for the new Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, Scotland. From November this year groups can experience a brand new international 'hub' for Burns heritage. A pleasant, landscaped park will link various Burns-themed destinations. Visitors will be able to:

- View the world's most important Burns collection
- Experience Burns's life and his rise to fame through a new, vibrant audio-visual exhibition
- Visit the 18th-century thatched cottage where Burns was born
- Climb Burns Monument and take a stroll in the pretty gardens
- Cross the picturesque Brig o' Doon (which features in the epic poem, Tam o' Shanter)
- Explore the atmospheric Alloway Auld Kirk where Burns's father is buried

The new park will also feature improved signage, more parking

space, a larger restaurant (overlooking the gardens), shopping facilities and easier access for coaches and groups. Prices from £5.25 per group member (minimum 12 people). Or why not take your group on our Burns 7-Day Trail with our flexible Travel Trade Discover Tickets?

Please note: the current Burns National Heritage Park will remain open until the new museum is complete. traveltrade@nts.org.uk T 0844 493 2104 (+44 131 243 9304 outside UK).

New French theme park

TERRA BOTANICA - Europe's first horticultural theme park, devoted entirely to the understanding and discovery of plant life, has just opened in France. Located near Angers, Pays De La Loire France's leading horticultural region,

TERRA BOTANICA is bringing a new concept to the leisure market by inviting visitors to discover the universe of plants through highly original interactive activities which are both fun and educational. Visitors will set off on a journey to explore 4 universes structured around the following themes: Coveted, Generous, Mysterious and Tamed plants. In a single location, it will now be possible to discover all aspects of plant life (historical, geographical, economic, symbolic, scientific, aesthetic) in all its shapes and forms.

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Bicycles - the Hoge Veluwe National Park

The Hoge Veluwe National Park is the second oldest national park in the Netherlands and, with its diverse landscape, possibly the most enchanting. The Park is known for its huge assortment of fauna and flora, mainly plants and animals that thrive in a combination of woodlands, moorland and sand drifts. A few notable examples of the wildlife in the Park are red deer, wild boar, pine martens and mouffons. There are more than 40 kilometres of paved cycle paths and 20 different footpaths. The famous White Bicycles are available free of charge at the Park entrances.

Located in the park, visitors feel the Kröller-Müller Museum is a continuation of their walk in the scenic woodlands. The Kröller-Müller Museum is amongst the five most visited museums in the Netherlands. The focal point of the museum is the extensive range of works by Vincent van Gogh (over 275 paintings and drawings): a true pilgrimage for Van Gogh lovers. But the collection also shows works by Picasso, Mondrian and Seurat. The museum is surrounded by one of the largest sculpture gardens in Europe. Visitors praise the display of works by Barbara Hepworth, Henri Moore, Rodin and many others. The garden is open all year round and each season brings its own charm.

Located just 85 kilometres from Amsterdam and 115 from Rotterdam the combined attractions make an excellent addition to an itinerary. www.kmm.nl



White bicycles at the Hoge Veluwe National Park

...continued from page 8

www.terraborotanica.fr T+33 (0) 2 41 25 48 74

Rome openings

The opening of the New MACRO at the end of May 2010 will see the debut of an important centre for artistic and cultural activities. Constructed next to the original building it will mark the completion of the restyling of the Museum, which aims to be a centre of reference and debate for contemporary international art. The entire complex will house the permanent collection, artist workshops and residence, teaching space, exhibition rooms, the bookshop and the Art Café and restaurant. www.macro.roma.museum

The MAXXI is a large centre dedicated to culture but also a workshop for experimentation, study and research the futuristic and revolutionary Museum of Twenty-First Century Art will make its debut among international museum and exhibition institutions concerned with architectural issues on 30 May 2010. www.maxxi.beniculturali.it

Culinaria Square – Brussels

Delectable dining on show
3-6 June

Brussels' exhibition venue Tours and Taxis plays host to the Capital's top food show, dedicated entirely to culinary arts. Over 14,000 visitors are expected at this extravaganza, in which 16 national chefs and 50 exhibitors proudly prepare innovative and original cuisine. The chefs represent a total of 26 Michelin stars between them. Chefs are presented in four different groups, devising four menus with each preparing one special dish. Opportunities for the public to taste the various dishes are available at a fraction of the cost of dining in the individual chef's restaurants. There will be plenty of fascinating workshops to tantalise the taste buds.

Hospital in the rock

The Secret Military Hospital and Nuclear Bunker beneath the Buda Castle in Budapest, offers an interesting tour which includes parts

that were built and extensively used during the Second World War and the siege of Budapest. Thousands of soldiers and civilians were treated here. During the cold war the hospital was extended and upgraded to a nuclear bunker and was classified as 'Top Secret' under the codename LOSK 0101/1. It was also used during the 1956 revolution and later as a civilian defence installation. Tours every hour. T+36 70 701 0101 www.sziklakorhaz.hu

Line up North Sea Jazz

Claiming to be the largest indoor jazz festival in the world, North Sea Jazz is held on 9, 10 and 11 July in Ahoy Rotterdam. The 2010 edition has a diverse and interesting line-up with over 150 acts. So far the following names have been added to the program: Stevie Wonder, Chick Corea, Roy Haynes, José James, Macy Gray, Pat Metheny Group, Norah Jones, Ryan Shaw, Joshua Redman, Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings, The Roots, Sonny Rollins, Diana Krall, Joss Stone, McCoy Tyner Trio & Joe Lovano. www.northseajazz.com

Paris Monopoly Rides

4 roues sous un parapluie is making Hasbro (creators of Monopoly, Trivial Pursuits, Cluedo) its partner to offer 2CV rides in the streets of the most famous board game. Driving through the avenue des Champs-Élysées, boulevard Malesherbes or even place Paigalle, passengers will discover Paris as the theatre of the game. A driver will tell guests many anecdotes about the streets and the games history. Monopoly ride (1h30) Monopoly Tour (3h) Email: info@4roues-sous-1parapluie.com

Tel: +33 (0)1 58 59 27 82

Rotterdam offer

Rotterdam Zoo is offering special packages for tour operators. Exclusively for you it is possible to visit the Zoo for only € 9.00 (tariff for max. 4 hours). Visits can extend with a coffee break, sandwich lunch, a ride with the Jungle Express. Located close to the city centre of Rotterdam. Rotterdam Zoo has almost 800 species of rare, exotic and endangered wildlife and an extensive indigenous and exotic plant and tree collection. A relaxing alternative to the bustle of the City. www.diergaardeblijdorp.nl/touroperator

Turandot

The Polish city of Wroclaw will stage an open-air opera extravaganza next month as Puccini's Turandot rolls into town from the 18th – 20th June in the south western city's Olympic Stadium.

Organisers promise an interactive performance packed with multimedia, special effects, hundreds of extras and a huge, specially-designed set – the stage will be a massive 100m by 150m.

Unfinished at the time of the composer's death in 1924, Puccini's masterpiece, set in Persia, was completed by fellow Italian Franco Alfano before debuting in 1926. The title role of Turandot will be sung by the world-class soprano Georgina Lukacs, a regular performer at the Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera House in London's Covent Garden, the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, Berlin's Deutsche Oper and La Scala. Info/tickets www.VisitPoland.com/Turandot

continued on page 10...

Be prepared

Here Come The Girl Guides: 100 years of Guiding in London

To celebrate 100 years of guiding, the Museum of London Docklands will open, 'Here Come The Girl Guides' on 26 June until 31 October 2010, an exhibition exploring London's historic role in the largest voluntary organisation for girls and young women.

The exhibition will focus on the guiding movement in London since the Girl Guides Association was created in 1910. Developed in partnership with Girlguiding London and South East England, the exhibition forms part of the year long centenary celebrations. The exhibition will include photographs, film footage, objects and ephemera including a 1910 electrician's badge and a limited edition Kodak Girl Guide Camera from the 1930s and personal stories.

The organisers say that alongside a colourful account of guiding history, old-fashioned stereotypes of cake baking and below the knee skirts will be dispelled as the exhibition highlights the relevance of guiding in today's contemporary society. Members of the guiding community will be able to earn a unique and specially designed limited edition badge by visiting the show. Entry is free. www.museumoflondon.org.uk



1st Walworth Troop Girl Scouts saluting at Southwark c1908 c.The Scout Association Trustees

...continued from page 9

Westminster Abbey tribute to the queen of nurses

Florence Nightingale is the first commoner to have a chapel in Westminster Abbey named after her.

The tribute to the "Lady with the Lamp" and heroine of the Crimean War is one of the highest honours in the Anglican Church. The Nurses' Chapel, was already dedicated to the memory of more than 3,000 nurses from Britain and the Commonwealth who died in WWII, was renamed the Nightingale Chapel with a simple prayer of dedication on May 12, the anniversary of the nurse's birth.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the South African Nobel Peace Prize winner, preached at the service to commemorate the life of Nightingale, who died in 1910, aged 90.

More than 3,300 people are buried in Westminster Abbey and its cloisters and there are more than 600 monuments and memorials, but the

dedication will be the first time that a chapel is named after an individual who is not a saint or member of the Royal Family.

Nightingale is also the only nurse and one of relatively few women to be commemorated at the Abbey.

The 16thC chapel is near the Abbey's High Altar, and overlooks the tombs of Edward the Confessor, Richard II and Henry V.

After a bomb shattered the windows in the Blitz, the chapel was renamed the Nurses' Memorial Chapel in 1950 and given a stained-glass window of a nurse, St Luke and the Virgin Mary and featuring a Nightingale-style lamp on a red cross.

The Florence Nightingale Foundation had originally asked if an icon of the nurse could be placed in the Abbey. But were told they could have a whole chapel dedicated instead, which was fantastic, the charity told The Times.

Nightingale has already been named an "exemplary Christian", and since 1997 has had an official commemorative day in the Anglican calendar on the day she died August 13,

FAITH BASED TOURISM

El Rocio Pilgrimage (Huelva)

24 May 2010 , 13 June 2011 , 28 May 2012

This festival is little known outside Spain yet it is the country's biggest pilgrimage (romeria) in which over a million people make their way on foot and on horseback to the shrine of 'La Virgen del Rocio' which lies on the edge of the Doñana national park in the province of Huelva. The festival lasts for three days. In one of the local bars there's a sign on the wall showing how many days it is until the beginning of El Rocio which is counted down every day of the year. It's sad the day the pilgrimage ends and the counter goes back to 364 days to go!

Pope's blessing

Cardigan's 900th anniversary celebrations are set to receive the blessing of the Pope when he visits the UK in September.

A party of pilgrims will be travelling from the town to London and will take with them the statue of Our Lady of the Taper, which usually resides in the Catholic National Shrine of Wales in Cardigan. Pope Benedict XVI will bless and light a candle in the hand of the Virgin Mother.

The group, led by local priest Father Jason Jones, will also take with them the logo of the Cardigan 900 celebration year to receive the Papal blessing at a mass held at Westminster. "This will be a very important boost for the town in this very special year of anniversary celebrations," said Father Jason.

Armchair pilgrims

It is the most famous and arduous Christian pilgrimage in Europe, but those without the time or energy to traipse all the way to the Spanish city of Santiago de Compostela

now need only a credit card and an internet connection to light a candle at the shrine of St James, reports the Guardian.

A new service available to armchair pilgrims has been set up by the cathedral with the help of an internet start-up called mivela.com literally mycandle.com.

The digital candle operator has been given permission to set up its own virtual, electronic candles at the shrine in the 12th century cathedral that can be lit with internet micro-offerings.

Worshippers can visit the website and, for €1.39, light a candle on the electronic board beside the shrine. They can also send text offerings via mobile phone.

Those who book the first 20 candles on the board get 31 minutes of candle time in which to say their prayers, while late-comers get just 11 minutes. "That is enough to say a prayer," said David Doñas of mivela.com.

The cash-strapped cathedral also hoped to create a new digital income stream with half a million payments a year.

Noah's arc claim

In early May a group of Hong Kong and Turkish evangelical explorers said they believed they might have found Noah's Ark at the top of Turkey's legendary Mount Ararat. The team said they recovered wooden specimens from a structure on the eastern Turkish mountain that carbon dating indicated was 4,800 years old - from roughly the same time period the ark was said to have been in use.

"We think it is 99.9% that this is the Noah's Ark," said a member of the 15-member team from Noah's Ark Ministries International. This find would greatly contribute to faith tourism in this mountainous region.

MICE NEWS....

Spring MIF

Meeting and Incentive Forums, the intensive trade shows for Meetings and Incentives buyers and suppliers have announced they will hold their Spring event at the recently opened Eurostars Madrid Tower Hotel, from 15 - 19 June.

The new luxurious 474-room hotel, one of the newest members of Great Hotels of the World, has an impressive 2,500 sq m of meeting space, a gourmet restaurant with panoramic views of the city and a state-of-the-art Well Health Club.

The M&I Forums, which bring together corporate and agency buyers and suppliers in the MICE industries in Europe, the USA and Asia, have experienced significant growth over the past year with over 280 exhibitors and 380 buyers taking part in 2009.

NTS - new ideas

The National Trust for Scotland has a host of historic venues across Scotland that are perfect for corporate dinners, meetings and incentives, with capacities for up to 160 and scope for marquees for larger scale events.

From Fyvie Castle (Aberdeenshire) and Mar Lodge Estate (Braemar) to Hill of Tarvit (Cupar) and Culzean Castle (Ayrshire), activities can include whisky tasting, golf, cookery classes, horse riding, deer stalking and clay pigeon shooting. Luxury accommodation can also be arranged. T: 0844 493 2104, outside UK +44 131 243 9304

Capital of Culture - Pecs

The OPUS 2010 Pécs Conference and Concert Centre will open by the end of the year. The multifunctional facility will have a floor area of 11,000 sqm, the main hall will host 1000 guests, and the five section rooms combined will be able to cater

IATM NEWS

IATM Britain

After five years as Chairman of the British Region of the International Association of Tour Managers (IATM), Mimi Greger is to step down and hand over to Colleen Main, although Mimi will remain on the Committee, "dedicated to the eternal quest of supporting benefits for IATM members!"

On introducing Colleen the incorrigible Mimi said, "I am more than confident that Colleen will be cool, although I should say hot as it is the new cool!! My thanks throughout my five years go to Maggie (IATM Secretary), who is our 'rock' and to Ron Julian (IATM General Manager), who is the 'roll' that encourages me. So that's the rock n' roll of it for now from me!"

IATM International Weekend Sorrento

IATM have announced they are now

to the same number of people.

Meet for free

Following a successful pilot in Lisbon, hospitality brand, Corinthia Hotels, has launched a "Meet for Free" business package for the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events market, offering completely free meeting space for groups of ten rooms or more - booked before December 31, 2010 and valid for meetings up till the end of December 2011. The offer is available for all Corinthia hotels in Budapest, Lisbon, Malta, Prague, St. Petersburg, and Tripoli.

Besides a daily theatre-style meeting room, the well-priced "Meet for Free" delegate package also includes single accommodation with American buffet breakfast, free in-room Internet, a buffet lunch with two soft drinks, and two coffee breaks.

Additionally groups of 25 paying guests receive one free standard room and one upgrade to an executive floor, while the meeting organizer is supplied with a pre-programmed mobile phone and free local calls, use of an office for private meetings, and a complimentary upgrade to a special "Five Senses" room. www.corinthia.com/meetforfree

New for Budapest

Boscolo Hotels has opened a conference centre at Budapest's 5-star New York Palace Hotel. The Boscolo Conference Centre wing has a sleek Italian design and several atrium piazzas serving as a skating ring in winter and a lake garden café in summer.

The Centre features seven event rooms accommodating from 20 to 600 attendees. Situated right next to it, the New York Palace Hotel has 112 guest rooms and suites. Event facilities include eight function rooms catering for 12 to 150 attendees. www.boscoloconferencecentre.hu

accepting bookings for the 49th International Meeting of IATM in Sorrento, Italy.

IATM said that since the first of their International Weekends in Antwerp in 2004 they have stuck to the principle that these meetings should be, "Fun, Educational and Affordable and Sorrento will definitely be all three!" 21-24th January 2011.

The hotel will be the scenic Hilton Sorrento Palace, Via S. Antonio 13, 80067 Sorrento, Italy (Tel: +39-081-878 4141, Fax: +39-081-878 3933, web: www.sorrento.hilton.com)

IATM Regional AGMs

The Nordic AGM will be held at the Kosta Boda Art Hotel, Sweden 15 to 17 October, 2010

The CER (Central European Region) AGM will be held from 19 to 22 November 2010 in Krakow, in the Hotel Radisson. Sunday afternoon till Monday noon the attendants will be in Wroclaw (Breslau). For details of all IATM activity: www.iamt.co.uk

HOSPITALITY

Bratislava

Slovakia's first five-star - Sheraton has opened in Bratislava, adjacent to the exclusive Eurovea Galeria shopping centre near the bank of the Danube and close to the new wing of the Slovak National Theatre. The old town is just a ten-minute stroll from the hotel, which is part of the Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide.

The Sheraton offers 186 guest rooms and 23 suites, fitness and wellness area, cafés, restaurants and winter garden. www.starwoodhotels.com.

And...

Kempinski Hotel River Park Bratislava opens in June. The 231-room luxury property will be situated beside the Danube, in the River Park complex near Bratislava's Old Town.

It will offer 11 conference rooms. Some of the conference rooms will have floor-to-ceiling windows and terraces with river views. The hotel's leisure facilities will include a rooftop Zion Spa and Fitness Centre, the Arte Restaurant with views of the Danube, and the Churchill Cigar Club.

Budapest

The former Continental Hotel in Budapest's 7th district will reopen in June 2010 as Continental Hotel Zara, following a renovation project costing €45 million. The 280-room, 4-star superior hotel aims to become a centre of Budapest's social and cultural life. The venue also has the Galéria Café and Bar, and the roof garden taking 150 guests. A meeting room for 230 persons, section rooms and a business & corporate club.

www.continentalhotelzara.com

Croatia

Sol Meliá reopens two luxury resorts in Croatia. The new Meliá Coral and Meliá Istrian Villas on the Umag coast, both previously operated under the Sol Hotels brand.

The new Meliá Coral provides 244 rooms, 6 luxury suites, a spa, swimming pool, solarium, tapas bar and Mediterranean tavern. Its multi-purpose outdoor areas are also perfect for social events along with the creation of two new leisure areas for fun and relaxation: the Club Elite Automat and the Beach Club.

The Meliá Istrian Villas is an oasis of apartments alongside the sea yet only two kilometres from the centre of Umag, which combines traditional architecture with modern design. The hotel also inaugurates a new restaurant named O Grill.

Copenhagen

The city is now home to the 'Best Restaurant in the World', according to the UK's Restaurant Magazine. Noma restaurant won for its reinvention and interpretation of the Nordic cuisine. The restaurant is located in an old warehouse on the waterfront of the Christianshavn area of central Copenhagen. www.noma.dk

Datça - Turkey

A hotel that will only serve nudists in the Aegean resort town of Datça has received the support of locals.

Open exclusively to foreigners, the beachfront nudist-only hotel Adaburnu Gölmar, located 15 kilometres from Datça's town centre opened at the beginning of May. It will be Turkey's first hotel to serve nudists.

Puglia

Puglia's new luxury resort Borgo Egnazia Hotel Villa Spa Golf Resort opened its first phase in mid May. By summer 2010 the entire Resort will be open. Borgo Egnazia features 28 three-bedroom pool villas; 72 townhouses in the Village (91 suites made up of 37 junior suites, and 3 single floor suites, plus 12 one-bedroom and 39 two-bedroom split level suites); and 63 rooms and suites in the hotel.

The large, 1,800m² Spa will include a modern interpretation of an ancient Roman bathhouse. There are 12 treatment rooms and a Thai massage room. There will be a large wet area offering a Tepidarium (warm room), Caldarium (hot room) and Fridgarium (cold room), as well as two Roman bath scrub rooms. T +39 080-225-50-00 www.borgoegnazia.com



Borgo Egnazia Hotel Villa Spa Golf Resort

Dresden

Sol Meliá has opened a new four star hotel, the Innside Dresden. The hotel is close to Dresden's attractions, including the Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) Semper Oper (Opera Theatre), and only 11 kilometres from Dresden airport.

The Innside Dresden Hotel is built within a historic building with a baroque façade, thoroughly renovated internally. The hotel provides 180 rooms and suites, all equipped with the latest technology open-plan bathrooms. The hotel also has a relaxation and wellness area with a solarium, steam bath and designer sauna, as well as a fully equipped gym. Business events are catered for including three meeting rooms offering a total surface area of 285 square metres.

Oslo

The first Doubletree by Hilton in Scandinavia is opening at the end of May, in the heart of the city centre on the historic Stortingsgata, next to the city's famed Christiania Teater. The property is within walking distance of the city's business and financial districts and surrounded by historic buildings including the Royal Palace, National Theatre, Town Hall and Parliament. The first phase is of 59 rooms opens with another 44 added by the end of the year. www.doubletree1.hilton.com

Madrid

The Catalan hotel chain Chic&Basic, has opened two new hotels in Madrid, bringing it up to five properties

continued on page 12...

A winning formula

When we published the story and image pictures of the first Dinner in the Sky in May 2006, many assumed that they were a hoax. It seemed more likely that the 22 diners at a linen-covered table hovering above Brussels were created by a computer whiz than actually suspended in midair by a giant crane.

Now the airborne dinner party-cum-promotional event has moved around the world, the images of Champagne being sipped next to the minarets of Istanbul or the facade of the cathedral in Amiens, France, still provoke a double take.

Guests are strapped into leather seats at the 130 feet long and whizzed into the air by cranes, waiters serve from an aisle at the centre of the table. The company arranges for access to on-ground facilities and handles any necessary permits.

David Ghysels, 44, a Belgian marketing executive originated the concept. By the end of last year, Ghysels had sold rights to stage the event to 28 companies around the world, including Italy, Turkey, Dubai and South Africa. The parent company, which is privately owned, is projected to bring in €1 million in revenue this year from rights and fees.



Dinner in the sky - Lisbon

Group news

Travelodge

The budget hotel chain owned by Dubai International Capital, will open 26 new hotels this year adding 2,000 rooms to the portfolio. The programme represents an investment of £115m and includes new properties in Aberdeen, Chichester, Edinburgh and London. Travelodge says that the recession has been to its advantage with a desire by businesses to reduce travel expenditure. It expects to be the biggest hotel brand in the capital by the 2012 Olympics. www.travelodge.co.uk

Tunes Hotels

London will have 15 examples of what is claimed to be "A 5-star sleeping experience at a 1-star price" by 2017 according to Mark Lankester, of Tunes Hotels. He has unveiled the latest travel project spearheaded by Tony Fernandes, founder and Group CEO of low cost airline AirAsia and Team Principal of the Lotus F1 racing team.

Tunes has entered into a strategic partnership with London-based Queensway Group Ltd to invest in, develop and operate properties across Greater London. 1,500 hotel rooms will be rolled out at a cost of £150m. August will see the first completion at 118 Westminster Bridge Road.

The concept of Tune is to supply a quality bed and power shower and that is about it. Since Tune Hotels.com was first launched in Kuala Lumpur in 2007, there are currently 9 hotels in Southeast Asian. The chain is expected to expand significantly in the next few years. www.tunehotels.com

...continued from page 11

in total – two more in Barcelona and one in Amsterdam.

Chic&Basic Atocha has 36 rooms and is located minutes away from Madrid's most important station, and Chic&Basic Mayerling has 22 rooms is located in the Asturias neighbourhood, occupying what used to be an old textile depot. www.chicandbasic.com

Portugal

Portugal's weekly the Expresso has come out with its Golden Bed and Fork Awards, recognizing the best places to eat and stay in the Country. A Platinum Fork went to the famed, and ancient 18 Century Tavares Rico Restaurant in Lisbon. The platinum honours went to the new Pousada do Porto, set on the River Douro in a charming palace, and the next door former biscuit factory as a one-of-a kind place to stay.

The top 10 restaurant list

- 1 - Amadeus, Amancil, Algarve;
- 2 - Arcadas, Coimbra, Centro;
- 3 - Bocca, Lisbon;
- 4 - Casa da Comida, Lisbon;
- 5 - Cozinha da Terra, Paredes, Porto;
- 6 - DOC, Armamar, Douro;
- 7 - Degust'AR, Evora, Alentejo;
- 8 - Eleven, Lisbon;
- 9 - Fialho, Evora, Alentejo;
- 10 - Flor de Sal, Mirandela, Norte.

The top hotels

- Altis Belem Hotel and Spa, Lisbon;
- Aquapura Douro Valley; Casa da Calçada, Amarante; Choupana Hills Resort and Spa, Madeira; Convento de Espinheiro, Evora; Grande Real Santa Eulalia Resort and Spa, Albufeira, Algarve; Grande Real Santa Villa Italia Hotel & Spa, Cascais; H2otel Congress Hotel and Medi-

cal Spa, Covilha, Centro; Herdade da Malhadinha Nova country inn, Beja, Alentejo; Hotel Quinta das Lagrimas, Coimbra, Centro.

Schiphol Airport

Park Plaza Hotels has acquired one of the largest Conference Hotels in the Netherlands, located near Amsterdam Schiphol Airport. The property, currently operating as the 'Holiday Inn Amsterdam Schiphol', opened in 2007 and offers 342 contemporary guestrooms.

The hotel's main attraction however is the wealth of Meeting & Events facilities on offer and the spacious and tranquil setting in which it is located. With over 1,800 square metres of flexible meeting space, all 19 meeting rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows, and can house up to 1,700 delegates. In addition, the hotel has 6 business units which are ideal for small meetings. Other key destinations such as Amsterdam, Haarlem and Hoofddorp are also within easy reach.

Tenerife

Vincci Selección Buenavista has opened in Tenerife. The five-star hotel is located by Buenavista Golf Club, northeast of Tenerife and has 115 rooms. It also offers a children's club, a spa, six meeting rooms and free wifi.

Zaragoza

The fourth property from hotel chain Palafox, Hotel Reina Petronila has opened in Zaragoza. The hotel has 185 rooms, a spa and gym. The hotel is the only one in Zaragoza with its own auditorium – which holds up to 600 people.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY NEWS

Expedia

Expedia Inc has extended to its pan-European contract with Trade Doubler for two years after seeing a 60% increase in affiliate business transactions during the first two years of their partnership. The deal covers 12 Expedia points-of-sale in Europe as well as 16 local sites for hotels.com.

Expedia will gain access to Trade Doubler's affiliate marketing services through its TD Affiliate tool while also being able to monitor other partner activity using TD Integral.

Alex Gisbert, EMEA Online Partner Marketing Director at Expedia, said "By renewing our agreement, we will be able to leverage TradeDoubler's local expertise in our European markets to double the size of our network affiliate business across the region. TradeDoubler's publishing network covers more than three-quarters of the total European online population. It is listed on the Swedish stock exchange.

New tours – Belgium

Specialist tour operator Simply Groups will be offering two differently themed tours to Brussels and the South of Belgium in summer 2010, taking in some of the best attractions the destination has to offer.

The Brussels and Wallonia Beer and History tours will combine tastings at some of the finest breweries in the region - such as the artisan La Caracole with its beers still brewed in copper vats on wooden fires, or the Cantillon brewery in Brussels who make spontaneous fermented lambic, or the Marckloff micro-brewery in the "smallest town in the world", Durbuy - with visits to some of the most interesting historical sites in the South of Belgium.

The Ardenne Locomotion tours will include journeys by steam train, visits of railway museums and lovely chateaux and gardens, as well as beer and chocolate tastings and a trip to La-Roche-en-Ardenne and its museum of the Battle of the Bulge. Simply Groups have been specialising in tailor-made tours for private groups, clubs and associations, as well as corporate and wholesale packages, for over 9 years. T01943 605999 or www.simplygroups.co.uk

Shearing developments

During 2009, escorted tours and hotels group Shearings sold two million bed-nights and achieved an average occupancy rate of 83% following a £10 million improvement programme.

They have promised to launch "new and innovative" products aimed at younger holidaymakers as it reported profits increased by 8% to £4.1 million in 2009. The group said the relaunch of its 49-strong portfolio

of UK hotels under the Coach and Country, and Bay Hotel brands was largely responsible for the enhanced performance of the group.

In the group's holidays division, which includes the Shearings, National and Caledonian brands, sales were similar to 2008 but escorted tours to UK locations recorded double-digit growth.

Sales of its recently launched river and ocean cruise programme are reportedly going well with new product launches planned for the coming year in new European locations.

In total, the group sold 640,000 holidays during the 12-month period. Revenue was £180.4 million, down from £183.7 million in 2008. The group recently denied reports that its owners private equity firm 3i were considering putting it up for sale.

Frommers report

Images have become one of the most important factors in influencing travel purchasing behaviour according to research from Frommers Unlimited.

The research, which was unveiled at the Travolution Summit in late April, showed 78% of consumers felt images were the most important factor when planning a trip followed by maps.

Video of destinations was not deemed as influential with only 26% saying it influenced their purchasing decisions rising to 29% for video of accommodation. The findings of the research were supported by Bing Director of Product Management for EMEA Jim Cruikshank who said consumers are confused by reviews, rating schemes on websites and the lack of transparency in pricing. "They don't believe the written word but they do believe images," he said.

Volcano tours

Tour operator and retailer, Travelmood Adventures is anticipating a spike in enquiries and bookings for its volcano-inspired tours, following the Icelandic ash cloud chaos.

The travel company has briefed its team of expert Travel Advisors to brush up on their volcanic knowledge and to keep the volcano-themed tours on offer, such as "Surf & Volcanoes", "Sicilian Volcanoes" and the "Volcano Trail", at the forefront of their minds, ahead of an expected increase in customer enquiries. www.travelmoodadventures.com

UNWTO

International tourist arrivals grew by 7% in the first two months of 2010 worldwide, according to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Growth was particularly strong in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to grow by 3% to 4% in 2010 – that was prior to ash.

This follows the upturn already registered in the last quarter of 2009 when arrivals grew by 2% after 14 consecutive months of negative results.

Willi's Ubrenspiel

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Schilthorn – Best view of Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau!



Unique 360° panoramic views of over 200 mountain peaks and Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, UNESCO World Heritage.

Nowhere is the magnificent Bernese Oberland mountain world seen to better advantage than from the 2971 m high Schilthorn summit. The panorama cabins mean that the 32-minute aerial cableway ride alone is an exceptional experience, soaring past thundering waterfalls and rugged cliffs. On arrival on the Schilthorn summit, you are greeted by the most stunning 360° panoramic spectacle in the entire Alpine region!

And while your clients relax in the world's first

revolving mountain restaurant, a breathtaking high-Alpine panorama of over 200 summits glides majestically past. The Touristorama screens a panorama video with superb sequences from the Mürren-Schilthorn region and visitors can follow the footsteps of Agent 007 with excerpts from the James Bond film 'On Her Majesty's Secret Service', which was shot on the Schilthorn. A large vantage terrace, Top Shop for souvenirs, James Bond bar round off the summit attractions.

The Schilthorn half a day excursion from Interlaken

Safe time and money, visit the Schilthorn – Piz Gloria in a couple of hours and combine it with an exciting shopping tour in Interlaken, the Trümmelbach glacier waterfalls or with a boat cruise on the lake of Thun or Brienz.

Secret hint: James Bond 007 photo exhibition on the top of the Schilthorn

Discover how the film was shot and how James Bond and the film crew fascinated the inhabitants of the whole valley.

Allmendhubel – the paradise for families and hikers

The Allmendhubel, 1907m, is reached from Mürren in only 4 minutes by funicular. Numerous hiking paths pass the panorama restaurant, a great place to savour delicious Swiss specialities in the rustic interior or on the spacious sun terrace with stunning scenic views. In need of relaxation? Then the Kneipp path on Allmendhubel is just the thing for your clients: perfect to refresh body and soul after a hike. A wonderful feeling that will revive the spirits! Our smaller guests don't miss out either! The large outdoor playground in front of the restaurant will make every youngster's heart jump for joy. Our tip: a hike with the whole family on the Children's Adventure Trail. An afternoon packed with fun and action is guaranteed!

Outdoor adventure

- Climbing garden Riggli
- Fixed rope route Via Ferrata
- Paragliding tandem flights from the Schilthorn or Mürren
- Follow our interesting theme trails
- **New highlight: Allmendhubel Flower Trail**

Hotel Metropole

Glorious Views

The Hotel Metropole - a 4 star hotel right in the centre of Interlaken, offers outstanding views of the Jungfrau range.

Accommodation

The hotel has 96 fashionably furnished rooms and thanks to the unique architecture 84 of them provide a balcony and views onto the Jungfrau. All rooms are equipped with cable TV, direct dialling telephone, radio, mini bar, safe, internet access, and W-LAN telephone line.

Wine, dine and dance

The Metro Bar awaits its guests every evening with exotic cocktails. Our 'chef de bar', Angela, will amaze your clients with her cocktail skills. Our Chef and our Restaurant Manager and their team are looking forward to pampering your clients with fresh produce direct from our local producers. The Panoramic Restaurant Top of Met on the 18th floor with its wonderful view of the mountain panorama. The Specialty Restaurant Bellini, which offers home-style cooking. Guests with energy left in the late evening can then take to the floor in the discothèque Black and White open from Wednesday to Sunday incl.

Meetings and conferences

The hotel offers 8 air-conditioned meeting rooms for up to 200 people all with natural daylight. Only 5 minutes walk from the Metropole Hotel is the Congress Center Casino Interlaken (CCCI) which is one of the biggest and most modern conference centres in Switzerland with a capacity of 2000 people. The new Convention Hall - the Auditorium opened its doors 1st May 2010 and Interlaken will be taking its historical role as a congress destination into the 21st century and is offering the most attractive conference venues in the Swiss Alps – combining tradition with the modern age.

What else is on offer

The Hotel Metropole offers an indoor pool, large terrace and a sauna, massage, shopping at the Metropole gallery and a hairdresser.



Hotel Metropole

Höheweg 37

CH – 3800 Interlaken

Phone: +41 (0)33 828 66 66

Fax: +41 (0)33 828 66 33

www.metropole-interlaken.ch

mail@metropole-interlaken.ch

Coach parking is provided and the main rail station is a short 10-minute walk away. The hotel is ISO 9001 certified.

Various Group Specials

Valid from 10 persons, with groups of 15 or more clients one tour guide free of charge

Schilthorn all inclusive- – the incredible bargain!

Valid until 7th November 2010

Cable car Stechelberg – Schilthorn round trip
3-course lunch at the revolving restaurant Piz Gloria

For only CHF 88.00 per person net

Idyllic Switzerland for groups – The alpine excursion for nature lovers

Valid from 5th June – 17th October 2010

Cable car Stechelberg – Mürren / round trip
Funicular Mürren – Allmendhubel / round trip
Barbecue-Party at panorama restaurant Allmendhubel

For only CHF 48.20 per person net

The Swiss Nature Day Offer

Valid from 5th June – 17th October 2010

Cable car Stechelberg – Schilthorn / round trip
Funicular Mürren – Allmendhubel / round trip
Coffee / tea at the revolving restaurant Piz Gloria / Schilthorn

Barbecue – party at panorama restaurant Allmendhubel

Including 1 beverage (mineral, soft drink, beer, coffee, tea)

For only CHF 101.60 per person net

Information & Reservation:

SCHILTHORN CABLEWAY LTD.

Hoeheweg 2 / CH – 3800 Interlaken

Phone +41 33 82 60 007

Fax +41 33 82 60 009

info@schilthorn.ch / www.schilthorn.ch

Masters on show this autumn at the Albertina - Vienna

Daily from 10am to 6pm,
Wednesdays from 10am to 9pm
Admission: regular: € 9.50
Groups of 10 plus: € 7.00
Albertina, Albertinaplatz 1, 1010
Vienna
tourism@albertina.at
www.albertina.at

Located in the heart of Vienna, the Albertina is the largest of the Habsburg residential palaces in the city. The Albertina blends an imperial flair with unrivalled masterpieces of art.

The combination of Austrian history and an ultramodern museum of international standing make the Albertina a unique experience.

There are twenty-one imperial staterooms that have been renovated and newly furnished in keeping with their original splendor for the visitor to explore. The Albertina also offers first-class special exhibitions as well as impressive works of art in the permanent exhibition, 'Masterworks of Modern Art'.

Advance Ticket Sales - ONLINE BOOKING - www.albertina.at/ticketshop/en

Picasso. Peace and Freedom

22 September 2010 - 16 January 2011



Pablo Picasso
Still Life with Guitar, 1942
Albertina, Vienna - Batliner Collection ©
Succession Picasso / VBK, Wien 2009.
Photo: © Fotostudio Heinz Preute, Vaduz

In 1944, Picasso became a member of the French Communist Party, whose figurehead he remained until the end of his life. Yet his political thinking was entirely molded by his desire for peace and freedom. During those years, he painted, drew, and lithographed his famous image of the white dove, which turned into a global symbol of freedom and a human society that did not only look back on two World Wars, but was also confronted with such imminent catastrophes as the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Fifty paintings and one hundred drawings, as well as numerous historical documents, will highlight Picasso as a political figure and thus present a hitherto neglected, but

nevertheless crucial chapter in the life of this exceptional artist. This exhibition has been curated by Tate Liverpool, with the Albertina acting as a co-organizer.



Pablo Picasso
La famille du Jardinier,
1965
Dusseldorf, B Two
Collection; © Succession
Picasso / VBK, Vienna 2010

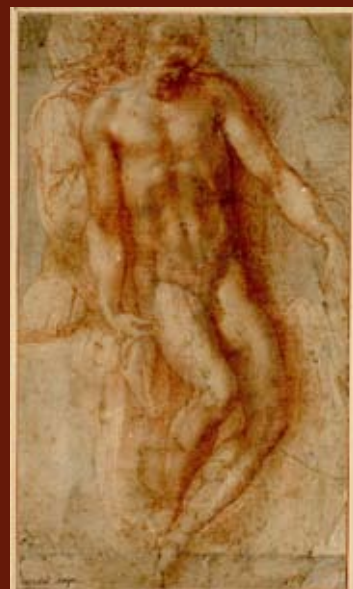


Pablo Picasso
Naked woman with bird and flute player, 1967
Albertina, Vienna - Batliner Collection © Succession Picasso / VBK, Wien
2009. Photo: © Fotostudio Heinz Preute, Vaduz

Michelangelo

8 October 2010 - 9 January 2011

In a major exhibition scheduled for autumn and winter 2010, the Albertina will present around one hundred of the most beautiful drawings by Michelangelo. Precious works from the Graphic Arts Collection of the Albertina, as well as important loans from museums and private collections in Europe and the United States, will offer a hitherto unparalleled overview of the great Florentine's entire oeuvre. The focus will be on the figural drawings by Michelangelo, who will be introduced here as the genius of a period of change, with his versatile talents as a draftsman, painter, architect, and sculptor. The



Michelangelo Buonarroti
Pietà, around 1530-36
© Albertina, Vienna



Michelangelo Buonarroti
Madonna with child, 1520-25
© Casa Buonarroti, Florence

show traces Michelangelo's career from the artist's juvenile works and designs for The Battle of Cascina to the world-famous frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. Projections of the monumental ceiling frescoes, the incorporation of plaster casts of Michelangelo's sculptures, as well as paintings by other artists based on the master's designs are meant to illustrate the dimensions and impact of his art. New paths of didactic presentation will be forged through a documentation of contemporary history and the artist's environment.



Michelangelo Buonarroti
Male Nude Seen From the Back With a Flag Staff, around 1504
© Albertina, Vienna

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All those wanting a slower pace should watch the brand new show programme: in the Spanish Arena, a fearless fight rages on for 'King Arthur's Sword', while the ice-show in Greece stays true to its new motto 'Pure Ice'.

Happy Birthday Europa-Park!

In 2010, Germany's biggest theme park celebrates its 35th Anniversary, an excuse for more than 300 special events this year. For

example, typical themed festivals will take guests to Russia, Iceland and Italy. During the South African Weeks from 31 July to 15 August, culinary delights from the Cape of Good Hope are offered for all gourmets. This year's party-highlights will be the big Birthday Week from 12 to 18 July as well as the Birthday Party with midnight-opening on 31 July.

Special Moments at Europa-Park!

Each season brings a special atmosphere and theme to Europa-Park. For example in autumn, it becomes a privileged meeting point for all scary figures and offers numerous Halloween-specials like the Halloween Festival with the spectacular show 'DJ BoBo's Fantasy goes Halloween' or the Terenzi Horror Nights. In winter, the time of the magic moments begins and Europa-Park turns into a winter wonder world with thousands of decorated Christmas trees, sparkling Christmas lights, a charming Christmas market and plenty of exclusive winter attractions.

Ship ahoy! – News in 2010!

An exciting trip through the seas around the volcanic island Iceland awaits visitors this year.

The new family attraction 'Whale Adventures – Splash Tours' offers splashy fun for all! From a distance, a colourful lighthouse indicates the way to volcanic Iceland where seagulls announce the forthcoming appearance of the sea giants. In colourful fishing boats, the adventurous expedition begins and the sailors get ready for action. Each boat is equipped with eight water cannons for a water battle with the other sea adventurers. Caution is advised, the audience ashore can join in the splashy action!

Dreamy moments

For the ultimate ending to an exciting day, the Europa-Park Hotel Resort promises a Mediterranean atmosphere. In the 4-star superior hotels 'Colosseo' and 'Santa Isabel' as well as the 4-star themed hotels 'Castillo Alcazar' and 'El Andaluz', guests will appreciate the comfy beds, and Italian dolce vita, Spanish temperament or monastic Portuguese charm. Outdoor types will love the Camp Resort with its Native American tents, log cabins and chuck wagons, along with a campsite right next to the main entrance.

Whatever you wish for – Europa-Park guarantees unforgettable moments.

Experience Europa-Park yourself, take part in our competition shown on the front page!

Opening times: Summer season 2010: until 7 November, daily from 9 am to 6 pm (longer opening hours during peak season). Winter season 2010/11: 27 November 2010 until 9 January 2011 (except 24/25 December), daily from 11 am to 7 pm. Info-line: +49 (0) 1805 / 77 66 88 (14 cent/min. from the German landline network, prices for mobile and international calls may differ). Further information also on www.europa-park.co.uk.

by Patrick Vickers



AUSTRIA

Concerts

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Fax: +43 662 826 617-1
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www.soundofsalzburgshow.com
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