



The Alliance

Bulletin

Providing key information in a no-frills format for professionals who travel to write, edit, broadcast or create images.

September 2014

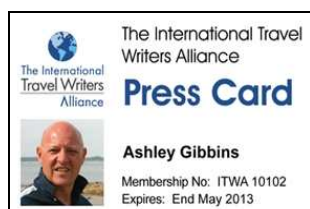
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www.itwalliance.com

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www.itwalliance.com

The Alliance press card



The International Travel Writers Alliance Press Card now provides Alliance journalists with formal recognition of their status and standing in the profession and a range of opportunities from Alliance travel partners.

Contact Ashley Gibbins at Ashley@itwalliance.com.

Job shop

Here are some of the professional opportunities available on [The International Travel Writers Alliance Job Shop](#).

The **Job Shop** has been created to enable the Alliance's partners to place - and journalists to receive - information on in-house jobs, special assignments or one-off projects.

The Alliance's travel journalists can also :

- set up **Job Alerts** so as to be notified if a job is posted that matches the journalists skills or interests
- create an anonymous job seeker profile or upload a CV for potential employers to search through, and
- access job searching tools and tips

Over 40 jobs based in the USA and UK are currently on the **JobShop** website including :

Assistant Editor

Washington, Dist. Columbia
American University

Part-Time Associate Editor

The American Institute of Chemical Engineers

Senior Editor

Washington, Dist. Columbia
American Academy of Actuaries

Senior Editor, Cancer Discovery

Boston, Massachusetts
American Association for Cancer Research

Visit : www.jobtarget.com/home/home.cfm?site_id=14773

Working with the Alliance

The following travel industry partners and agencies have registered with the Alliance and are keen to work with Alliance travel writers, editors, broadcasters and photographers.

Other Alliance partners and agencies can be found at www.itwalliance.com.

Partners

Handetour Vietnam

Handetour Vietnam is an inbound tour operator, based in the Vietnam capital of Hanoi and specialising in cultural and leisure tours within Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia

Visit : www.handetour.com. Contact : Nguyen Tuan Anh at tuananh@handetour.com.

Tatton Park (UK)

Tatton Park is an historic estate in Cheshire, with 2000 acres of parkland and four attractions to visit.

Deer have been present since the 13th century and the meres attract a variety of birds and wildlife.

The Neo-Classical Mansion features art and antiques from the Egerton family collections, and the 50 acres of Gardens with designs dating from 250 years ago, providing year-round colour.

The Gardens showcase different areas such as the Topiary, Rose Garden, Walled Kitchen Garden and the Japanese Garden which is considered one of the best in Europe. There is also a working historic Farm and Tudor Old Hall to visit.

Visit : www.tattonpark.org.uk. Contact : Eleanor Gorsuch at eleanor.gorsuch@cheshireeast.gov.uk.

Visit Raleigh (USA)

Dynamic, Unexpected, Smart and Celebratory – just a few of the words you might be surprised to hear when talking about Raleigh, North Carolina's Capital City.

Raleigh offers :

- world-class museums
- open-air amphitheatres and historic sites
- nationally recognized symphony
- opera and ballet companies
- professional and amateur sports
- golf courses, and
- vibrant festivals.

Visit : www.visitRaleigh.com Contact : Ryan Smith at rsmith@visitraleigh.com

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) is a conservation charity that saves wetlands, which are an essential source of drinking water for people and wildlife.

The WWT works with communities, businesses and governments to help people live sustainably alongside wetlands, benefitting from the water, food, materials, shelter, livelihoods and enjoyment a well-managed wetland can provide.

WWT is also one of the world's leading science and conservation institutions in its field.

Visit : www.wwt.org.uk. Contact : Peter Morris at peter.morris@wwt.org.uk.

The Quad Cities, Mississippi, USA

As the largest metropolitan area on the Mississippi River between Minneapolis and St. Louis, the Quad Cities is made up of the riverfront cities of Rock Island and Moline/East Moline in Illinois, and Davenport and Bettendorf in Iowa.

The Quad Cities--home to over 400,000 residents--is an easy 2½-hour drive from Chicago, Illinois, or Des Moines, Iowa, or flight in to the Quad City International Airport in Moline.

The Quad Cities is the only place where the mighty river runs east to west and the area offers affordable adventures, including:

- John Deere world headquarters
- gaming and non-gaming riverboats
- historical sites
- Native American sites
- Museums
- golf, bike paths
- dining, shopping, and exciting festivals and special events.

Visit : www.visitquadcities.com. Contact : Jessica Waytenick at jwaytenick@visitquadcities.com.

Melbourne and Victoria CVB

MCVB is a not-for-profit company that markets Melbourne and Victoria as a premier business events destination, identifies and bids for business events, and provides free assistance to associations to bid for national and international business events.

Melbourne has a long history in staging successful major events and conferences.

Visit : www.mcvb.com.au. Contact : Nicole Beasley at nicole.beasley@melbournecb.com.au.

News

Hyde Park Winter Wonderland, London

21 November 2014 to 4 January 2015

The Hyde Park Winter Wonderland returns for six weeks of winter festivities.

The event includes :

- the sub-zero Magical Ice Kingdom with more snow and ice sculptures
- the UK's largest outdoor Ice Rink stretching over 1,600m² will be located around the Victorian Bandstand, on which live music played throughout the day and night.
- over 200 chalets in the Angels Christmas & Yuletide Markets offering unusual and handmade gifts and crafts, including ceramics, candles, jewellery, wooden toys, nativity scenes and Christmas decorations.
- Zippos Circus performing *Zippos Christmas Circus*, their daytime family show, and *Cirque Berserk*, an evening show for older thrill seekers, in the Sky Dome, the biggest tented structure in London, and
- the Bavarian Village serving bratwurst and mulled wine while hosting live music throughout the day and evening.

Entrance to the Hyde Park Winter Wonderland with individual attractions making a charge.

Visit : www.hydeparkwinterwonderland.com. Contact : Anna Hope at anna@akhcommunications.com.

Stop taking 'selfies' with wild animals

Care for the Wild is calling on tourists to stop taking 'selfies' with wild animals.

There are many opportunities to do this including lion and tiger cubs available in Mexico, lion cubs a speciality in South Africa and Thailand hosting a range of tiger-petting facilities.

Care for the Wild is asking tourists to check :

- that the animal still has its teeth and claws and look at the conditions it sleeps in
- for marks where it's been beaten, and
- where it's going to end up when it's no longer cute enough for photos.

Care for the Wild is about to launch No Photos, Please!, a campaign asking tourists to say 'no' if offered the chance to have a photo with a wild animal, in Thailand.

The No Photos, Please! Campaign is part of their RIGHT-tourism.org project, which gives tourists advice on how to be animal-friendly in every country of the world.

In addition, guidelines from ABTA launched last year lists activities where people can have their photo taken with captive wild animals, or even free-roaming wild animals as 'unacceptable' and these should not be offered by British tour operators.

Visit : www.careforthewild.com. Contact : Chris Pitt at chris@Careforthewild.com.

ExploreGB

February 2015

Tourism Ireland has signed up as a key partner for ExploreGB, VisitBritain's new annual flagship international event, which will debut at Ascot Racecourse in February 2015.

The aim of ExploreGB is to showcase Britain and Ireland giving tourism suppliers and destinations the opportunity to meet and do business with up to 250 carefully selected international travel buyers from over 37 countries, including Germany, Brazil, China and the US.

ExploreGB is due to take place local to London in its first year and will then alternate annually between London and other regions within Britain.

ExploreGB 2015 will take place at Ascot Racecourse from 25-26 February 2015.

Visit : www.exploregb.org. Contact : Sarah Runnacles at Sarah.Runnacles@visitbritain.org.

European public art in Northamptonshire, UK

Visitors to the UK county of Northamptonshire will be able to see brand new public art installations in outdoor locations along disused railway lines in the Nene Valley.

Following successful European installations in Catalonia, Spain in June and Mayo, Ireland in July, the *CHANGING TRACKS* project will place the artworks in a non-traditional, outdoor exhibition spaces.

Covering more than 41,000 hectares, the Nene Valley extends for 35 miles between Northampton and Peterborough, incorporating the River Nene and bordering the ancient Rockingham Forest.

Northamptonshire is also known for historic homes such as Althorp, the resting place of Princess Diana, and Boughton House, which was a film set for the BAFTA and Oscar award-winning *Les Misérables*.

Visit : www.changingtracks.eu and www.visitnorthamptonshire.co.uk. Contact : Simon Gribbon at simon@sandstarcomms.com.

Tour de Turtles, Florida Keys

A loggerhead sea turtle, rehabilitated at the Florida Keys-based Turtle Hospital, was fitted with a satellite-tracking transmitter and released from a Florida Keys beach in August 2014.

It was the last sea turtle to join the *Tour de Turtles*, a three-month-long 'race' that features public online monitoring of the progress of 11 sea turtles, which is organized by the Sea Turtle Conservancy.

Tour de Turtles follows the long-distance migration of several different species of sea turtles from their nesting beaches to foraging grounds. The turtle that covers the most distance is declared the winner.

'Competitors' have been released off coastlines into the Atlantic Ocean as well as eastern and western Caribbean habitats.

The satellite transmitters eventually fall off of the turtles after their batteries are exhausted.

Visit : www.tourdeturtles.org, www.turtlehospital.org and www.fla-keys.co.uk. Contact : Jo Thomas at jo.thomas@kbctravelgroup.com.

French hotels get Palace status

The Shangri-La and Mandarin Oriental hotels in Paris and the K2 in Courchevel have been awarded the exclusive 'Palace' status.

Only 16 hotels in France carry the Palace label.

Established by the French Minister of Tourism in November 2010, the Distinction Palace is designed to award official recognition to the finest 5-star hotels.

They must have exceptional qualities that embody French standards of excellence and contribute to enhancing the image of France throughout the world.

The 16 "Palace" status hotels are :

- Hôtel du Palais – Biarritz
- Hôtel Les Airelles – Courchevel
- Hôtel Le Cheval Blanc – Courchevel
- Hôtel Le Bristol – Paris
- Four Seasons Hotel George V – Paris
- Hôtel Le Meurice – Paris
- Hôtel Le Park Hyatt Paris Vendôme – Paris
- Hôtel Le Plaza Athénée – Paris
- Hôtel Le Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat – Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat
- L'hôtel La Réserve - Ramatuelle
- L'hôtel Le Byblos - Saint-Tropez
- Le Château de La Messardière - Saint-Tropez
- Le Royal Monceau - Paris
- Shangri-La Hotel - Paris
- Mandarin Oriental – Paris
- Hôtel Le K2 - Courchevel

Visit : www.int.rendezvousenfrance.com/en/about-france/palace-status. Contact : Anne Pedersen at pressofficee.uk@atout-france.fr.

Ecoventura to introduce new ship to the Galapagos

Ecoventura, which operates an environmentally friendly fleet of small expedition yachts in the Galapagos Islands, plans to debut the region's newest ship in January 2016.

The MV Origin will be a 20-passenger yacht operating in Galapagos featuring 10 deluxe staterooms located on the main deck.

Visit : www.ecoventura.com. Contact : Sara Widness at sara@widnesspr.com.

The SS Shieldhall, Southampton UK

The SS Shieldhall, moored at Berth 48 in the Eastern Docks, Southampton, has officially been recognised as a passenger ship, some 59 years after coming into operation as a sludge carrier for the Glasgow Corporation.

In its early years Shieldhall was known as a 'Banana Boat' or 'Bovril Boat' due to its distinctive colour and even more distinctive cargo. Today it is a passenger vessel, carrying passengers on journeys in and around Southampton Water and The Solent.'

In April 2013 SS Shieldhall was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of some £1.4 million, to secure the future of the ship for the next 25 years.

www.ss-shieldhall.co.uk. Nigel Philpott at nigelpilpott@aol.com.

Silversea Cruises

Eleven new overland adventures in some of the world's most exotic locales are among 60 extended mid-voyage excursions that Silversea Cruises will be offering in 2015.

Visit : visit www.silversea.com. Contact : Paul Charles at Silversea@verypcc.com.

Quito, Ecuador

Quito, the capital of Ecuador, has been named South America's Leading Destination, for the second consecutive year, at the World Travel Awards.

Ecuador also won the "South America's Green Destination" award and the Ecuadorian Tourist Board was named the "Best Tourist Organization".

The Cruise Train, one of the most recent attractions in the country, won the "South America's Best Luxury Train" award.

Finally, Finch Bay Hotel was named the "Best Green Hotel" and the new airport of Quito, Mariscal Sucre International won the "South America's Best Airport".

Visit : www.quito.com.ec and www.worldtravelawards.com/winners2014-12. Contact : Tim Allen at tim@brandinglatinamerica.com.

Diamond Bar Road, Grand Canyon

The final nine-mile stretch of Diamond Bar Road to the Grand Canyon Skywalk has been paved.

The old gravel road was the main obstacle for tourists arriving in comfort to the Skywalk, a glass bridge that protrudes 70 feet from the canyon walls and 4,000 feet above the canyon floor.

The horseshoe-shaped, cantilevered glass structure was opened in 2007 and attracts 700,000 tourists a year to Grand Canyon West.

Visit : www.hualapaitourism.com. Contact : Karen Luard at kp@kpcommunications.co.uk.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has launched has published its 'Warmer Cruising' brochure, offering a selection of cruises, departing between October 2014 and March 2015, aboard the company's *Black Watch*, *Boudicca*, *Balmoral* and *Braemar* vessels.

Departures are from Southampton, London Tilbury, Liverpool and Newcastle, to destinations including the Caribbean, Canary Islands, Mediterranean, Northern Europe and the Baltic.

Visit : www.fredolsencruises.com. Contact : Ruth Ryland at ruth.ryland@fredolsen.co.uk.

Powder White

Independent ski-holiday provider Powder White is adding three new chalets in Meribel, Val d'Isere and St Anton to its portfolio.

The Patrice, in the Three Valleys resort of Meribel is a free-standing chalet accommodating up to 23 people in 12 bedrooms a short walk from the main square.

The Gerlinde is a traditionally decorated chalet in central St Anton, Austria, with easy access to the Dorfstrasse zone.

In Val d'Isere, the new freestanding Ananda chalet is located in the popular Hamlet of Laisinant, near to the high-speed chairlift access to the huge Espace Killy ski area.

Visit : www.powderwhite.com. Contact : sr@verypcc.com.

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge

Africa Albida Tourism has reopened its Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, following a three-month, \$1 million refurbishment programme.

Victoria Falls Safari Lodge enjoys panoramic views of the Zambezi National Park.

Visit : www.africaalbidatourism.com. Contact : Charlotte Rous at Charlotte@grifcopr.com.

Friend Compass

Friend Compass from travel search site momondo connects Facebook friends with flight searches to the places they live.

Turning a smart phone into a compass, reveals where friends live around the world, and how much it costs to go visit them.

The initiative is an integrated feature of the free momondo mobile app.

Visit : www.momondo.co.uk. Contact : Leila Stocker at leila@turtle-pr.com.

Minnesota to host Super Bowl LII

Minnesota will host the Super Bowl LII, in February 2018, at the new Minnesota Stadium, which itself is set to open in 2016.

Visit www.bloomingtonmn.org. Contact : Melissa at melissa@cellet.co.uk.

Leads

Nova Star connects Maine with Nova Scotia

The Nova Star is now making daily round-trips connecting Portland, Maine with Yarmouth in Nova Scotia.

The 10-hour voyage adopts a cruise experience approach dining options, a spa, casino and live entertainment.

Portland itself is marketing itself as a dining town, following it named 'America's Foodiest Small Town' by Bon Appetit and one of the Food Network's top five 'Delicious Destinations'.

Visit : www.novastarcruises.com and www.visitmaine.com. Contact : Ruth Mackenzie at Ruth.Mackenzie@kbctravelgroup.com.

On The Go Tours, Iceland

On The Go Tours has launched a new selection of tours to Iceland, taking in :

- the capital city of Reykjavik
- the national parks,
- the natural phenomenon of Aurora Borealis, or the Northern Lights. S

Visit : www.onthegotours.com. Contact : Pru Goldie at pru@onthegotours.com

Yukon : Aurora and Autumn at the Arctic Circle

Autumn in Yukon is a unique time of the year that brings together two of the most spectacular phenomena in nature: Aurora Borealis and the fiery autumn colours of the tundra.

Yukoners know that autumn can be the best time of year for viewing northern lights. There's also the chance to spend days strolling Whitehorse's riverside trails wrapped in fall colour.

Situated in the upper Northwest corner of Canada, next to Alaska, the Yukon is Canada's most accessible northern destination.

Home to Canada's highest mountain (Mount Logan) and one of the largest non-polar icefields located in Kluane National Park - a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Visit : www.travel yukon.com. Contact : Lisa Chamberlain
Lisa.chamberlain@btinternet.com

Vermont's Native American heritage

The Vermont Department of Tourism has teamed up with the state's Abenaki tribes to help visitors learn more about Vermont's first peoples.

A new website serves as a hub for events, exhibits and destinations, allowing visitors to explore the 12,000-year history of Native American peoples in Vermont.

Since the early Paleo-Indians first arrived, Native communities have lived in Vermont and their knowledge, experience and traditions have exerted a deep influence on many aspects of the state's history.

Visit : www.VermontVacation.com/Abenaki. Contact : Ruth Mackenzie at
Ruth.Mackenzie@kbctravelgroup.com.

Florida Keys Aquarium Encounters, Florida

The new Florida Keys Aquarium Encounters, in Marathon, has reef fish, invertebrates, stingrays and sharks.

The signature feature of the multimillion-dollar facility is a coral reef exhibit and shark habitat housed in a 200,000-gallon interconnected saltwater aquarium for viewing.

As a hands-on interactive learning centre, the attraction looks to inform visitors about the importance of marine conservation and the complex underwater habitats of the Florida Keys.

Other interactive aquarium encounters include shallow touch tanks that feature starfish, conchs and horseshoe crabs, and allow feeding de-barbed stingrays and docile baby nurse sharks. Visitors also can also snorkel in a shallow protected lagoon.

Visit : www.floridakeysaquariumencounters.com and www.fla-keys.com. Contact : Jo Thomas at
jo.thomas@kbctravelgroup.com.

The Vale of Rheidol Railway, Wales

Opened in 1902, the Vale of Rheidol Railway has been operating a passenger service for tourists for over a hundred years.

The line, which runs from Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge, is well known for its scenery, sharp curves and steep gradients. Many travel on the train to visit the famous Mynach waterfalls at Devil's Bridge.

Visit : www.rheidolrailway.co.uk. Contact : Duncan Foulkes at duncan.foulkes@btinternet.com.

Bill Dvorak's Rafting Expeditions, Colorado

Bill Dvorak, a fifth generation cousin of the composer Anton Dvorak, has been operating Dvorak Raft, Kayak and Fishing Expeditions, with wife Jacki since 1979.

As one of the early pioneers of white water river rafting in the Rocky Mountains, the Dvoraks own the first outfitter license issued by the state of Colorado.

They run river trips, white water skills camp and swift water training.

Visit : www.dvorakexpeditions.com. Contact : Jaci Dvorak at jaci@dvorakexpeditions.com.

Rude Leisure Group

Mountain holiday company rudechalets has merged with Bigfoot Travel to form the Rude Leisure Group.

The Group now operates over 80 properties (hotels, chalets, villas & apartments) in Morzine, Chamonix and Ibiza under the Rude brand.

Visit : www.rudechalets.com. Contact : Helen Lavender at helen@rudechalets.com.

Luxury Asia River Cruising

Asia specialist, Travel Indochina has published its 2014-16 Luxury Asia River Cruising brochure with the addition of four new river cruises sailing throughout Vietnam and Cambodia, Burma, and India.

The Aqua Mekong cruise will sail up and down the Mekong River between Vietnam and Cambodia, with sailings from bustling Saigon to Phnom Penh or Siem Reap.

The operator has also introduced two new river boats in Burma.

The Irrawaddy Explorer will sail the Irrawaddy River from September 2014 and the Sanctuary Ananda will take its first sailing in November 2014. Both vessels will sail between the regions of Mandalay and Yangon.

Travel Indochina's new India river cruise aboard the Ganges Voyager I will sail through through Calcutta and rural countryside villages on the lower Ganges.

Travel Indochina has itineraries and departures to Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos Thailand, Burma, China and Tibet, India, Japan, Bhutan, Mongolia and Sri Lanka.

Visit: www.travelindochina.co.uk. Contact Sarah Habicht at sarah@humewhitehead.co.uk.

Lee Valley White Water Centre, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire

The Lee Valley Regional Park is a 10,000-acre, 26 miles long linear park, much of it green spaces, running through the northeast of Greater London, Essex and Hertfordshire, in an area generally known as the Lea Valley.

Lee Valley White Water Centre, near Waltham Abbey, is heralded as the 'best white water course in the world'.

It provides an opportunity to ride the rapids on the same course that the world's best athletes faced during the London 2012 canoe slalom event.

The centre offers activities on the white water including rafting, kayaking and canoeing and Hydrospeeding, similar to bodyboarding.

Visit : www.gowhitewater.co.uk and www.visitleevalleypark.org. Contact : Contact : Joanne Curtis at joannecurtis@leevalleypark.org.uk.

The Cotswold Wildlife Park, Oxfordshire, UK

The Cotswold Wildlife Park is a wildlife attraction with a mix of animals, landscaped parkland and gardens.

Its animals include rhinos, lions, giraffes and anteaters, with many rare and endangered species.

Visitors can walk through the Madagascar enclosure with free-roaming lemurs and see meerkats, penguins and tropical birds in the landscaped Walled Gardens.

Indoor exhibits include the Reptile House, Invertebrate House, Tropical House and Farmyard Barn.

Visit : www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk. Contact : Diane Blackweell at Diane.Blackwell@westoxon.gov.uk.

What's on

Navajo Nation Fair, USA

1 to 7 September 2014 (annual)

The Navajo Nation Fair at Window Rock, Arizona takes place in the Navajo capital to showcase the work of the community. Aims to preserve the culture and heritage of the Navajo.

Highlights include the all-Indian Rodeo, the Miss Navajo Nation Competition, and the largest inter-tribal pow wow in North America. Over 100,000 visitors attend.

Visit : www.navajonationfair.com. Contact : Wanda Nelson at wanda@navajonationfair.com.

The World Bellyboard Championships, Cornwall UK

7 September 2014 (annually).

The annual World Bellyboard Championships organised by the National Trust showcases the very best in prone wooden construction surf craft, vintage swimwear, mastery and 'disastery' of wave riding prowess.

The event, held on one of the most beautiful beaches in Cornwall, is attended by enthusiasts and curious onlookers in their hundreds, as well as brave wave riders of all ages and abilities.

Visit : www.bellyboarding.co.uk. Contact : bellyboard@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Aloha Festivals, Hawaii, USA

6 to 27 September 2014 (annual)

The oldest and largest Hawaiian cultural statewide celebration in the USA and a celebration of Hawaii's music, dance and history.

Aloha Festivals was first held in 1946 as Aloha Week, and over the past six and a half decades has become a celebration of Hawaiian culture, integrating the traditions and cultures of the Islands through music, dance, cuisine and art.

All festivities are coordinated by a volunteer board of directors. Aloha Festivals is funded by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

Around 150,000 people attend. Over 33,000 people attend the floral parade and over 72,000 attend the Waikiki Hoolaulea, Honolulu's largest block party.

Visit : www.alohafestivals.com. Contact : Nicole Fuertes at nfuertes@commpac.com.

Newport International Boat Show, Newport, Rhode Island, USA

11 to 14 September 2014 (annual)

The annual Newport International Boat Show, which is one of the largest in-water boat shows in the USA, is held on 13 acres of Newport's waterfront.

Visit : www.newportboatshow.com. Contact : Nancy Piffard at npiffard@newportexhibition.com.

Autumn events in Southport, UK

The UK seaside resort of Southport is located 20 miles north of Liverpool and 30 miles from Manchester.

The resort offers one of the oldest piers in the UK, beaches and un-spoilt coastline

Southport Air Show, Southport Seafront

20 & 21 September 2014

A two day flying programme with an Air Show village with exhibitions, displays and food & drink stalls

Flying displays include the Red Arrows, a Typhoon and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight with the British & Canadian Lancasters (the only 2 airworthy Lancasters in the world)

British Musical Fireworks Championship

3 and 5 October, Victoria Park, Southport

Some of the country's top pyrotechnic teams compete to in the British Musical Fireworks Championship, with each competitor synchronising their display to music.

Visit : www.visitsouthport.com. Contact : Steve Christian at Steve.Christian@sefton.gov.uk.

London Restaurant Festival

8 to 22 October 2014

The London Restaurant Festival is a city-wide celebration of eating out in the capital, from Michelin-starred restaurants to neighbourhood bistros.

Some restaurants will offer festival menus, and there will be different events during the two weeks.

The London Restaurant Festival is designed to raise the profile of establishments involved and acknowledge the pleasure and sustenance given to all by London's diverse range of restaurants.

Visit : www.londonrestaurantfestival.com. Contacts: Catherine Donegan at Catherine@dundascommunications.com.

Forbidden City at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia, USA

18 October to 11 January 2014

Forbidden City at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA), will reveal rare and ancient artefacts drawn from the Palace Museum in Beijing.

It gives an insight into the hidden worlds of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties through their ancient, rich and elaborate artefacts.

Water and Shadow: Kawase Hasui and Japanese Landscape Prints

Water and Shadow: Kawase Hasui and Japanese Landscape Prints will also open at the VMFA on 15 November 2014 (until 29 March 2015), offering the opportunity to view Japanese woodblock prints, paintings and didactic material which explore the search for identity in Japan during the early Taisho period.

The exhibition includes the dynamic early work of Kawase Hasui (1883-1957), the Japanese master landscape artist.

Visit : www.vmfamuseum.com/exhibitions/forbidden-city. Contact : Jo Thomas at jo.thomas@kbctravelgroup.com.

London International Animation Festival

24 October to 2 November 2014

The London International Animation Festival showcases the whole spectrum of creative animation.

The 10-day Festival includes gala premieres, retrospectives, Q&A's with filmmakers, workshops, audience voting, and the Best of the Festival screening.

Visit : www.liaf.org.uk. Contact : info@liaf.org.uk.

The StarLite Film Festival, the Garden Theatre, Winter Garden, Florida USA

26 February to 1 March 2015

The fourth annual StarLite Film Festival will highlight micro-budget, feature-length (70-120 minutes) narrative films from across the globe that are produced, shot and completed for a total budget under \$200,000.

This year, the festival will also be accepting film shorts (total running time, including credits, must not exceed 10 minutes) from students that are produced, shot and completed for a total budget under \$10,000.

In 2014, StarLite welcomed over 900 filmmakers, special guests and moviegoers from across the country and as far as Germany for four days of screenings, panels and parties.

Visit : www.starlitefilmfest.com and www.gardentheatre.org. Contact: Matt Heim at matt@gardentheatre.org.

Annual events in Wales

The Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells

July

This agricultural show brings combines horses and livestock and agricultural machinery with live music, stunt displays and crafts stalls.

Visit : www.rwas.co.uk.

Big Cheese Festival, Caerphilly

July

A celebration of the history, heritage and culture of Caerphilly cheese with street entertainers, living history encampments, music, dance and falconry set around Caerphilly Castle, one of the largest in Europe.

Visit : www.caerphilly.gov.uk/bigcheese.

Brecon Jazz Festival, Brecon Beacons

August

The jazz festival set in the beautiful Brecon Beacons celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2014.

Visit : www.breconjazz.com.

Green Man festival, Brecon Beacons

August

A family friendly festival, located in the Black Mountains, Green Man offers four days of music, comedy, poetry, literature and art and science, as well as spas, therapies and luxury camping areas.

Visit : www.greenman.net.

Festival No.6, Portmeirion

September

Festival No.6 is a different take on the "city festival" with stages all over the Italian-inspired seaside town of Portmeirion. It is a weekend of music, arts and culture.

Visit : www.festivalnumber6.com.

Abergavenny Food Festival, Abergavenny

20-21 September 2014

One of the biggest events in the UK food calendar, this festival showcases local produce and international delicacies, celebrity chefs, master classes, tastings and street stalls.

Visit : www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com

Visit : www.visitwales.co.uk. Felicity Thompson at Felicity.Thompson@fourgbg.com.

The Ski and Snowboard Show, Earls Court Exhibition Centre, London

30 October to 2 November 2014

The Ski and Snowboard Show is the UK's largest consumer winter sports show.

Over 60 top winter destinations, including the resorts participating in the lift pass promotion, will be represented alongside tour operators, independent holiday companies and a variety of winter sports brands and retailers.

Visit : www.skiandsnowboard.co.uk. Contact :Carly Truss at carly@canoeinc.com

Reasons to write about

The Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, London

Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, which is located in Queen Mary's Gardens, on the Inner Circle of Regent's Park was founded in 1932 by Sydney Carroll and Robert Atkins.

It has been one of London's unique theatrical attractions ever since.

The theatre itself is surrounded by woodland, which is invariably used to great effect as a stage backdrop. It is the UK's largest permanent professional outdoor theatre and, during the summer months, stages a programme of drama, comedy and musicals.

And despite enjoying one of the largest audience auditoriums of any London theatre, the tiered seating and overall ambience gives the *Regent's Park Open Air Theatre* a real intimacy and special atmosphere.

The best way to make the most of a visit is to arrive early with a hamper and chilled wine (or opt for the theatre's selection of food and drinks). A pre-theatre picnic in the 'forest glade' foyer is an in its own right.

The Regents Park

The Regent's Park, designed by John Nash, covers 395 acres and includes Queen Mary's Gardens which features more than 12,000 roses of 400 varieties, and the restored William Andrews Nestfield's Avenue Gardens.

In addition to the Open Air Theatre, the Park also includes London Zoo.

Strolling through the park provides the UK's largest free to access to waterfowl and some 100 species of wild bird.

Visit : www.openairtheatre.com and www.royalparcs.org.uk/parks/the-regents-park. Contact : Jonathan Mountford at jonathan@made2010.com.

For the *AllWays traveller to the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre* visit :

http://www.allwaystraveller.com/AllWaysOnline/ao_eur_UK_OpenAirTheatre.html.

Cycling in Crillon le Brave, Provence, France

Crillon le Brave is located amongst some of the most stunning and challenging cycling routes in Provence.

The Gorge de la Nesque, the Dentelles de Montmirail and Mont Ventoux, are cycling highlights which guests will experience on two wheels over the one-off October cycling weekend from Thursday 16 to Sunday 19 October.

All levels of recreational riders are welcome to participate in the three day event, with the big challenge being Saturday's 1,600 metres of vertical climb over 22 kilometres up Mont Ventoux!

Located 25 miles north-east of Avignon at the foot of Mont Ventoux, the 34-bedroom Crillon le Brave hotel is surrounded by vineyards and olive groves.

A former country house to a Parisian family, the hotel has slowly expanded over the years to encompass six further village buildings and has been a member of the prestigious "Relais & Châteaux" group since 1995.

Visit : www.crillonlebrave.com. Charlotte Rous at charlotte@grifcopr.com.

Get Off My Back – tourists should avoid elephant trekking

Animal welfare charity, Care for the Wild International, says that increasing numbers of tourists and tour operators are saying 'no' to elephant trekking as they realise the suffering and cruelty involved in what has long been a 'Bucket List' favourite.

Riding on the back of an elephant in countries like Thailand and India has been seen as a way of getting close to both the elephants and the culture of those countries, but information about how these treks impact on the elephants has become more available.

These include:

- elephants must be 'tamed' before they can take part in treks – this almost inevitably involves beatings and being kept in small cages while young until they are broken
- young elephants are taken from the wild – often with the result of their mother being killed – to supply the tourist trade
- elephants, while strong, are not designed to carry heavy weights on their backs, so carrying tourists all day will be causing suffering, and
- conditions for many of these elephants will be hard and relentless, including long days, and being chained when they are not working.

Responsible Travel.com has announced that it would no longer supply tours which involved elephant treks or performances, joining STA Travel and Intrepid Travel who brought in similar bans in the last couple of months.

Visit : www.RIGHT-tourism.org. Contact : Chris Pitt at chris@Careforthewild.com.

The Wiener Library

The Wiener Library, the world's oldest library devoted to the study of the Holocaust is staging an exhibition that examines the contribution of Jewish soldiers to the German Army in the First World War (to October 2014).

The exhibition is part of London's commemorations for the centenary of the 1914-1918 war.

The Wiener Library is Britain's largest specialist collection of material on the Holocaust and genocide, with an archive going back 80 years.

It was founded by Dr Alfred Wiener, a German-Jewish who himself fought for the German Army in the First World War.

The library is located in the West End of London close to numerous museums and galleries. For more information on the library see [here](#).

Around 100,000 German Jews donned military uniform and approximately 12,000 died fighting for the German Army between 1914 and 1918.

For many Jews the experience of the First World War was defined by a profound sense of commitment to Germany.

The Jewish soldiers whose stories are told in the exhibition through the display of striking photographs, postcards, prints and books had remarkable experiences, performing surgery in Gallipoli, working with casualty dogs in the Ardennes, and setting up book stores on the Eastern Front.

Visit : www.wienerlibrary.co.uk. Contact : Matthew Nicholson at mnicholson@wienerlibrary.co.uk.

Oregon's Washington County, USA

Located near to Portland, many of Washington County's 727 square miles comprise rural wetlands, nature parks, wildlife refuges, forests, bodies of water and open fields.

These are fine for hiking and cycling, paddling, fishing, birding and wildlife-watching, and other outdoor pursuits.

The new Nature Passport features images, facts, detailed contact information and icons showing which amenities are available at a specific location.

These include :

- L.L. Stub Stewart State Park
- Jackson Bottom Wetland Preserve
- Tillamook Forest Center
- Tualatin Hills Nature Park
- Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
- Rice NW Museum of Rocks & Minerals
- Tualatin Heritage Center, and
- the Washington County Museum.

Passports can be picked up at the Washington County Visitor Information Center, or at staffed locations listed in the Nature Passport.

Visit : www.travelportland.com. Contact : Matthew Domingo at matthew@travelportland.com.

Four new private safaris available in 2015 through

The African Safari Company

The African Safari Company is offering four of our new private safaris in 2015 :

Highlights of Southern Africa embraces the culture of Cape Town and surrounding viticulture before moving into Sabi Sands, Victoria Falls and Chobe National Park, together spanning three countries and four eco-systems.

Wilds of Southern Tanzania: combines Ruaha National Park, Selous Game Reserve and Saadani National Park.

Wild Zimbabwe Safari begins in Victoria Falls with overnights at a brand-new (opened in 2014) Bedouin-style, luxury tented camp on the banks of the Zambezi River.

Guests visit the falls, Hwange National Park and Hwange the oldest and largest national park in Zimbabwe.

Here there are no natural watercourses, which means the game are reliant upon the park's network of artificially pumped waterholes when seasonal pans start to dry out.

Guests are invited to participate in pump runs, a monthly event which involves hitching a trailer behind a safari vehicle, loading it with diesel drums filled with water and visiting each watering hole to refill and check with the ranger who looks after that particular hole.

The African Safari Company specialises in small group travel and custom safaris for the independent ' in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda & Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Namibia.

Small Ship Safaris features similar experiences, on water instead of land, in remote areas of Alaska, Hawaii, Amazon, Polar Regions, Baja Sea of Cortez, Galapagos and Patagonia.

Visit : www.africansafarico.com and www.smallshipsafaris.com. Contact : Sara Widness at sara@widnesspr.com.

The tigers at Longleat Safari & Adventure Park, Wiltshire, UK

Longleat Safari & Adventure Park has a quartet of Amur tigers with a male Turlough and three females Svetli, Shouri and Soundari.

The Amur tiger is the largest of all the big cats and native to the far east of Russia.

In the 1940s the tigers had nearly died out, with only around 40 individuals left in the wild.

Although they are still listed as Critically Endangered, wildlife experts believe the current population of around 500 individuals is the highest for a century.

Longleat itself is an English stately home and the seat of the Marquesses of Bath located in near the towns of Warminster in Wiltshire and Frome in Somerset.

The house is set in over 1,000 acres of parkland landscaped by Capability Brown and 4,000 acres of woodland, which includes a Center Parcs holiday village.

It was the first stately home to open to the public, and also claims the first safari park outside Africa

Visit : www.longleat.co.uk. Contat : Steve Mytton at steve.mytton@longleat.co.uk.

Gane and Marshall, Namibia

Specialist tour operator Gane and Marshall is offering a new tour to Kaokoveld, the rugged coastal desert region of northern Namibia.

As part of the tour, travellers will spend three nights at Wilderness Safaris' new.

The tour takes travellers from the cosmopolitan city of Windhoek to Etosha National Park, one of Southern Africa's most important game reserves and home to over 100 mammal species, 100 reptile species and 340 bird species.

The Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp is situated among a ddiversity of wildlife and features some of the best desert mammal viewing opportunities in the region plus access to a vast, isolated wilderness.

Gane and Marshall is an adventure trekking company, specialising in Kilimanjaro climbs and wildlife and adventure holidays.

Visit : www.ganeandmarshall.com. Contact : Anita Clements at anita@hamilton-pr.com.

A place to stay

Cave Hotel Saksagan, Goreme, Cappadocia, Turkey

Cave Hotel Saksagan is an old house in Goreme, which has been completely restored as a boutique hotel.

Rooms are decorated in the Ottoman Style and located within fairy-chimneys and carved into the rocks.

With a history going back to Hittite times (+4000 years) and once a province of the Roman Empire, Cappadocia is now the area of central Turkey which lies between Aksaray in the west, Kayseri in the east and Nigde in the south.

It is criss-crossed with valleys and dotted with dramatic rock formations.

Visit : www.cavehotelsaksagan.net and www.goreme.com/cappadocia. Contact : Numan at info@cavehotelsaksagan.net.

Palmetto Dunes Oceanfront Resort, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

Palmetto Dunes Oceanfront Resort is a 2,000-acre resort destination located on Hilton Head Island, S.C., bounded by 3 miles of Atlantic Ocean beach on one side and a sheltered Intracoastal Waterway marina on the other.

The resort features three world-class golf courses, an award-winning tennis center, an 11-mile inland salt-water lagoon system for kayaking and fishing, and Hilton Head Outfitters for bike rentals, canoes, kayaks, fishing and much more.

The Mediterranean-style Shelter Cove Harbour, Hilton Head Island's largest deep-water marina, located right across from Palmetto Dunes, features waterfront shopping and dining and a wide variety of charters, including nature cruises, dolphin tours, sport crabbing and fishing.

Visit : www.palmettodunes.com. Contact : Glenn Gray at ggray@buffalocommunications.com.

The Asia Gardens Hotel & Thai Spa, Alicante, Spain

The Barceló Asia Gardens five star resort is situated on the slopes of Sierra Cortina, 150 metres above sea level, offering fantastic views of the Costa Blanca.

The hotel is next to two 18-hole golf courses and three theme parks: Terra Mítica, Terra Natura and Aqua Natura.

Alicante is a port city situated on the Mediterranean Costa Blanca (White Coast).

Its scenery is characterised by the sea and the mountains, which have turned it into a thriving tourist destination.

In addition to its long hours of sunshine, Alicante is also known for its cuisine, particularly rice dishes and the local seafood of this coastal region.

Visit : www.barcelo.com. Contact : Lindsay Bonsall at Lindsay@masonrose.com.

The Peninsula Paris

The Peninsula Paris is located in the heart of the 16th arrondissement just a few steps from the Arc de Triomphe and the Avenue des Champs Élysées.

The elegant 19th century property first opened in 1908 as one of Paris' most famous "grand hotels".

Following the wartime occupation of Paris, the hotel was then converted into the UNESCO headquarters and in 1958 became the conference centre for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 2009.

For the past six years it has undergone a complete renovation and now offers 200 rooms, rooftop terraces and six dining venues.

Visit : www.dorchestercollection.com/en/paris/hotel-plaza-athenee. Contact : Anne Pedersen at pressofficee.uk@atout-france.fr.

The Hôtel Plaza Athénée, Paris

The Hôtel Plaza Athénée has been closed for the past 10 months for extensive renovation work including an expansion into three adjacent buildings.

Fourteen new rooms have been added and the hotel now has a total of 208 rooms and suites. In addition, a new ballroom and further meeting space has been created.

The hotel is located on Avenue Montaigne near the Champs-Élysées and the Eiffel Tower. The Hôtel Plaza Anthénée is a member of the Dorchester Collection.

Visit : www.dorchestercollection.com. Contact : Anne Pedersen at pressofficee.uk@atout-france.fr.

Twr Y Felin Hotel, St Davids, West Wales

Twr Y Felin Hotel in St Davids will reopen in 2015 as a luxury boutique property.

The hotel, converted from a 200 year old windmill, is situated in the heart of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Wildlife enthusiasts can discover rare habitats and species, history buffs can explore prehistoric tombs and Iron Age Hill Forts and beach enthusiasts can relax on Wales' south western shore.

Visit : www.twryfelinhotel.com. Contact : Felicity Thompson at Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com.

KASARA Hotels

YTL Hotels has unveiled its new KASARA brand, a collection of exclusive luxurious hotels, resorts and residences in locations in Asia including :

Opening in December 2014 the brand's first property is KASARA Niseko Village Townhouse, located within the group's ski resort, Niseko Village, Japan.

Located in the south base of the 1308m Mount Annupuri, Niseko Village is Japan's premier year-round integrated mountain resort. Also in the pipeline are KASARA properties in Koh Samui, Thailand and Pulau Tiga, Borneo.

The KASARA brand joins YTL Hotels' collection of 24 resorts, hotels, and Spa Villages.

Visit : www.kasara.com. Contact : Hannah Summers at hannah@grifcopr.com.

The Canopy Camp, Darién province, Panama

The new Canopy Camp, located in the Darién province of Panama, compliments the Canopy Tower and the Canopy Lodge.

Canopy Camp has seven luxury safari-style tents in the middle of the forest, surrounded by wilderness.

The area is a birders location and is worth exploring with a knowledgeable guide to see the birds in the heart of the Panamanian jungle including Barred Puffbirds, Rufous-tailed Jacamars, and White-headed Wrens.

Harpy and Crested Eagles also nest in these rain forests.

Visit : www.canopytower.com/canopy-camp. Contact : Macarena Alvarez at macarena@brandinglatinamerica.com.

Winvian, Connecticut, USA

Winvian, is a Relais & Châteaux property in Connecticut's Litchfield Hills located two hours north of New York City.

It is a AAA "ten" Diamond resort (five for the restaurant and five for the accommodations).

The staff, who tend the resort's two-acre vegetable and berry garden, four greenhouses and apiary, are now tasked with tending the pigs, sheep and pullets.

Four pigs assist the resort's eco-friendly mandate, as well as five new sheep who frolic in the meadows. They feed on chemical-free, farm-harvested produce such as vegetable peelings and corn on the cob, supplemented by a daily diet of organic grains.

Sixty pullets, rapidly becoming laying hens, are on daily call to meet the demands of breakfast guests and, among other kitchen staff, the pastry chef.

In addition to the organic gardens, and menus that change nightly based on what is in season, the extensive wine cellar includes a selection of over 30 organic and or biodynamic wines.

Winvian comprises 18 luxe cottages and one suite on 113 acres of meadows and woodlands.

Visit : www.winvian.com. Contact : Rebecca Widness at rebecca@widnesscopr.com.

Ngoma Safari Lodge, Botswana

Africa Albida Tourism's luxurious Ngoma Safari Lodge, is located in Botswana's Chobe region, overlooking the Chobe River and floodplain.

Guided game drives through the Chobe National Park spots elephants, prides of lions, grazing buffalo and herds of zebra.

Chobe Forest Reserve has monkeys, warthog, impala, waterbuck and many birds.

Visit : www.africaalbidatourism.com. Contact : Emma Powell at Emma@grifcopr.com.

The Sarojin, Thailand

The Sarojin is a luxury boutique hotel located on an 11km stretch of secluded white sand beach in Khao Lak and a 55 minute drive north of Phuket Airport.

The property is surrounded by five national parks and the dive sites of the Similan and Surin Islands.

Visit: www.sarojin.com. Contact : Sarah Habicht at sarah@humewhitehead.co.uk.

Diamond Chateau on the Lake Resort & Spa, Branson, Missouri, USA

The AAA Four-Diamond Chateau on the Lake Resort & Spa enjoys views of Table Rock Lake, lush gardens, and the surrounding Ozark Mountains and is convenient for Branson.

Recognized as one of the finest resorts in the Midwest, Chateau on the Lake features a 14,000-square-foot Spa Chateau.

Promoted as the "Live Music Show Capital of America," Branson features more than 80 live shows a day during the season, and a range of attractions including Silver Dollar City, which features 30 rides and attractions, 40 live shows daily, and many unique shops and restaurants.

Branson also features the Titanic Museum Attraction, and The Branson Landing in the heart of downtown Branson on Lake Taneycomo, which features festivals, musical events, a variety of waterfront dining options, and 400,000 sq. ft. of shops, boutiques, galleries and specialty gift shops.

Chateau on the Lake Resort & Spa is part of John Q. Hammons Hotels & Resorts

Visit : www.chateauonthelake.com. Contact: Karen Lamonica at klamonica@chisano.com.

Grand Hotel to open in Punta del Este, Uruguay

The Grand Hotel - Punta del Este will open in September 2014.

The hotel is located in La Brava, in the beach resort of Punta del Este.

The property comprises 107 ocean view rooms and suites with garden views. It also has a Lobby Bar that offers views of the ocean and its own Mediterranean cuisine restaurant.

Visit : www.puntagrand.com. Contact : Tim Allen at tim@brandinglatinamerica.com.

The Royal Palm Mauritius

The Royal Palm Mauritius celebrates its 30th anniversary, when it reopens in October 2014.

The hotel is located on the island's sheltered north-west coast, stretching along a white sandy beach.

Beachcomber Hotels own and manage eight luxury hotels in Mauritius and Sainte Anne Resort & Spa in the Seychelles and has recently opened the Royal Palm Marrakech, their first hotel away from the Indian Ocean.

Visit : www.beachcombortours.co.uk. Contact : Nicole Lovett at Nicole@grifcopr.com.

Conrad Maldives Rangali Island

Conrad Maldives Rangali Island is an Indian Ocean resort set over two islands, and a 35-minute seaplane flight south west of Malé International Airport.

It is located in the heart of the Maldives' best diving and whale shark spotting area and activities include manta ray watching, dolphin spotting, kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkelling with whale sharks, sunset cruises aboard the resort's traditional wooden dhoni, and glass bottomed boat trips.

Visit : www.conradhotels.com/maldives. Conrad : Jess Heslop at Jess@grifcopr.com.



DENBIES WINE ESTATE

An Alliance focus on : The October Harvest at Denbies Wine Estate

Denbies Wine Estate is England's largest vineyard and one of the largest privately owned in Northern Europe.

The current owners acquired the then pig farm in 1985 but found that the estate had exactly the same soil composition as in the champagne region in France and revealed that the Dorking area had a history of wine making dating back to Roman times.

This led to the planting of 300,000 vines over 265 acres.

Denbies Wine Estate is also one of the first wine estates in the world to give visitors an insight into all aspects of the wine producing process, all year round.

Denbies Wine Estate has a range of 14 wines and produces over 450,000 bottles of wine per annum.

Denbies wine and dine

Denbies Vine & Dine grape picking day is the only experience of its kind in the UK.

Denbies Vine and Dine allows the public first-hand experience in the workings of the vineyard and winery.

The experience includes :

- tuition in grape picking
- harvesting the grapes
- a traditional rustic vineyard workers lunch accompanied with *Denbies* wine
- watching the picked grapes being pressed, and
- tasting the 'must' (grape juice).

The day concludes with wine tasting in the *Denbies* cellars, with all participants receive an estate grown vine to take away.

In October the foundations are laid for the wine production of the coming year.

The vineyard's most significant time of year

Harvest is the most significant time in the year of the vineyard.

Early reports indicate that 2014 is going to be a vintage year for both quality and quantity.

Denbies is therefore anticipating a record year, which is reflected in the energy, enthusiasm and celebration that surrounds the harvest.

Medal winning wines

Denbies was awarded two gold medals and a trophy in the 2013 Decanter World Wine Award and International Wine Challenge for their Noble Harvest Dessert wine 2011.

This year *Denbies* has rebranded the wine range to create a classic contemporary style.

Denbies then received the UKVA Trophy for Best presented wine.

Denbies Vine and Dine is available Monday – Saturday throughout October

Cost - £53.00 per person (group rate available)

Visit : www.denbies.co.uk. Contact : Jeannette Simpson at jsimpson@denbiesvineyard.co.uk.

An Alliance focus on : Autumn adventure activities in the Azores

The nine islands of the Azores are in the middle of the North Atlantic belong to Portugal and are known for their craters, beautiful lakes, stunning sea, thermal pools and mountain vistas and impressive flora and fauna and marine life.

With average highs of 23 °C during the autumn months, attracts an array of underwater wildlife.

Adventure activities include :

Autumn surfing

The Azores offer consistent conditions all year round, but in the autumn, ground and wind swells can reach 15 feet.

Santa Barbra Beach on Sao Miguel Island, one of the best surfing locations in the archipelago, offers surfing spots and conditions for all ability levels.

Other popular surfing beaches can be found on Santa Maria Island, and Sao Jorge Island, where reef breaks provide long and tube shaped waves.

Big game fishing

The archipelago's waters are home to some of the world's most impressive big pelagic fish, which can be found just a few miles from the coast.

These include the prized Atlantic Blue Marlin, the Atlantic Blue Fin Tuna, Dolphin-fishes, Blue & White Marlin and Yellow Fin and Swordfish.

In terms of size, these fish are giants and 6 out of 10 world records for the Atlantic Blue Marlin have been achieved here.

Diving

The Azores' deep oceans offer a vibrant underwater world for divers of all levels until the end of October.

Mild ocean temperatures and world-class diving sites provide up-close encounters with creatures including manta rays, morays, stingrays, dusky groupers, comb groupers, wrasses, parrot fishes, trigger fishes, breams and damselfishes.

Whales

It is 30 years since the last whaling factory closed on the islands, and this autumn travellers can go in search of the 25 cetacean species commonly seen in the Azores, one of the world's top whale watching destinations.

RIB boats depart from the islands of Sao Miguel, Pico and Faial, offering the chance to see these creatures play at the surface of the ocean.

The Loggerhead, Sperm, Fin and Atlantic Whales, as well as Bottlenose and Common Dolphin, are seen in September and October.

Special displays can also be found at the Lajes Whaling Museum on Pico Island and the Porto Pim Whaling Museum on Faial Island.

Canyoning

Until the end of October, the Azores enjoys ideal conditions for canyoning, which requires thrill-seekers to cascade down waterfalls, climb over volcanic rock formations, walk, run, wade, abseil, boulder hop and swim through volcanic landscapes, subtropical fauna, caves, lakes and waterfalls which tumble into the ocean.

Routes vary in difficulty, with the most advanced circuits on the island of Sao Miguel, and more relaxed routes on the islands of Sao Miguel and Sao Jorge.

Other active pursuits on offer during autumn in the Azores include golf, paragliding, mountain biking, hiking, trekking and walking, sailing, stand up paddle boarding and horse riding.

Visit : www.visitazores.com. Contact : David Wilson at david.wilson@kbctravelgroup.com.

Travel guides

The following travel publishers will provide review copies to Alliance members.

AA Travel Guides

www.shop.theaa.com/store/travel-guides. Katie Stephens at katie.stephens@theaa.com.

Anova Books

www.anovabooks.com. Helen Ponting at hponting@anovabooks.co

Bradt Travel

www.bradtguides.com. Rachel Fielding at rachel.fielding@bradtguides.com

Brit's Guide

www.foulsham.com. Margaret Lashbrook at margaret.lashbrook@lineone.net or Sue Wilkins at wilkins@foulsham.com.

Cicerone

www.cicerone.co.uk. Sarah Spencer at sarah@cicerone.co.uk

Eland Publishing

www.travelbooks.co.uk. Barnaby Rogerson at barnaby@travelbooks.co.uk.

Fisher's Travel SOS

www.fisherstravelsos.com. Furgan Syed at furgan.syed@fisherstravelsos.com.

Global Travel Publishers

www.africa-adventure.com. Kate Bandos at kate@ksbpromotions.com.

Globetrotters LogBook

www.globetrotterslogbook.com. Giedo Claes at giedo@globetrotterslogbook.com

Hudson's Historic Houses and Gardens

www.hudsonsheritage.com. Tanya Aspinwall at tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk

Inn House Publishing

www.innhousepublishing.com. Kathryn McWhirter at kathrynmcwhirter@btopenworld.com.

Insight

www.insightguides.com. Julia Spence at julia.spence@ukonline.co.uk.

In your pocket guides

www.inyourpocket.com. Craig Turp at editor@inyourpocket.com.

Jane's Smart Art Guides

www.JanesSmartArt.com. Jane McIntosh at MJM@JanesSmartArt.com

Jonglez Publishing

www.jonglezpublishing.com. Alexandre They at alexandre@editionsjonglez.com.

Kuperard Publishers

www.kuperard.co.uk. Geoffrey Chesler at geoffreychesler@btinternet.com.

Morris Communications

www.themilepost.com. Kate Bandos at kate@ksbpromotions.com.

Odyssey Books & Guides

www.odysseypublications.com. Caroline Eden at caroline@odysseypublications.com

The Official (UK) Tourist Board Guides

www.visitor-guides.co.uk. Tanya Aspinwall at tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk

Oxygen Books city-lit

www.oxygenbooks.co.uk Malcom Burgess at malcolm@oxygenbooks.co.uk

Rough Guides

www.roughguides.com. press@roughguides.com

The Signpost

www.signpost.co.uk. Tanya Aspinwall at tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk

Summersdale travel publications

www.summersdale.com. Dean at dean@summersdale.com.

Take two Books

www.taketwobooks.com. Sarah Duvalle at Sarah@taketwobooks.com.

Turnleft

www.turnleftguides.com. Nick Buteau at nick@turnleftguides.com

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