



The Alliance

Bulletin

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

August 2015

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www.itwalliance.com

The Alliance Bulletin

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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

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

Addition services through Job shop

The Alliance's travel journalists can also :

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

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

Kissimmee, Florida

Experience Kissimmee is the travel and tourism authority for the Kissimmee destination, Florida.

Kissimmee attracts 6.5 million overnight guests each year who enjoy easy access to Orlando's theme parks, as well as a host of amusement parks and dinner shows, natural adventures, dining and shopping options and golf courses.

Kissimmee has more than 50,000 accommodation options including luxury resorts, hotels and motels, vacation rental homes, condos, villas, and campgrounds.

Visit : www.experiencekissimmee.com. Contact : Kirsty Dillury at kirsty@vvglobal.com.

Fermanagh, Northern Ireland

Fermanagh is situated in the South West of Northern Ireland and is known as Ireland's Lakeland paradise. A popular destination for cruising and angling holidays, the area boasts a wealth of attractions including the Belleek Pottery (Ireland's oldest working pottery).

Visit : www.fermanaghlakelands.com Contact : tanya@fermanaghlakelands.com.

The Oneida County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Oneida County is a county located in the New York State, named after the Oneida, an Iroquoian tribe that formerly occupied the region.

The Oneida County Convention & Visitors Bureau is the County's official tourism marketing organization dedicated to building Oneida County's economy and positive image through tourism development, events, and the marketing of the county on a global basis.

Contact : www.oneidacountytourism.com. Contact : Kelly Blazosky at Oneida@TheCHTGroup.com.

East Lothian, Scotland

East Lothian is Scotland's Golf Coast, with 22 courses along 30 miles of stunning coastline. We are very proud to be hosting this year's Open Championship at Muirfield.

Just a short drive from Edinburgh, we have beautiful countryside and coastlines plus five star tourist attractions including the National Museum of Flight (home of Concorde) and the Seabird Centre perched on the cliffs in North Berwick, where you can see the rich wildlife including gannets, puffins and seals.

The area has local festivals including *Lennoxlove Book Festival* and *Fringe by the Sea* and local food and drink.

Visit : www.visiteastlothian.org. Contact : Pauline Bristow at pbristow@eastlothian.gov.uk.

Connecticut

New England's southern-most state, Connecticut is easily accessible from New York and Boston.

Its coastline and countryside offers history, culture, active adventure and family fun.

Lighthouse, culinary and agriculture tours and self-guided trails featuring vineyards, breweries, antiques and chocolatiers accommodate group and individual travellers.

Visit : www.ctvisit.com. Contact : susanh@ctcsb.org.

The Alliance for Downtown New York

The Alliance for Downtown New York manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street.

As such it provides Lower Manhattan's historic financial district with a premier physical and economic environment, advocates for businesses and property owners and promotes the area as a world-class destination for companies, workers, residents and visitors. Lower Manhattan is New York City's hottest location to live, work, stay and play.

Visit : www.downtownny.com. Contact : Sarita Dan at sdan@downtownny.com.

Agencies

P1 Communications (UK)

P1 Communications is a boutique travel and property PR agency representing a host of international and UK based clients

Visit : www.p1communications.com. Contact : Laura Bardell at laura.bardell@p1communications.com.

Grayling (UK)

Grayling is a team of more than 150 experts delivering data-driven creative strategies in Public Relations, Public Affairs, Digital & Social Media and Event Management.

Visit : www.grayling.com. Contact : Sarah Zezulka at sarah.zezulka@grayling.com.

The Beenders Walker Group (USA)

The Beenders Walker Group is a boutique marketing agency specializing in travel destination and promotion.

Public Relations and Media Relations are both important services provided by TBWG. We host familiarization tours, conduct media blitzes, make media pitches to generate interest in our client destinations.

In addition, the agency participates in travel media marketplaces to make new media contacts and to nurture existing media relationships. We have expertise in still photography as well as video/film production.

Visit : www.tbwgroup.net. Contact : Marjorie Beenders at marjorie@tbwgroup.net

News

New Orleans marks 10 years since Katrina

The City of New Orleans has launched an online resource to mark the tenth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina hitting the city.

The anniversary of the devastating event is on 29 August 2015, and the new site details recovery data, factsheets on New Orleans' industries and information about commemoration events.

On 29 August 2005 Hurricane Katrina, America's largest and third strongest hurricane, hit southeast America with a dramatic effect.

Ten years on the city has many achievements including visitor expenditure reaching the highest in the city's history in 2014 when the city welcomed 9.785 million visitors, who spent a record-breaking \$9.733 billion.

The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival welcomed a record-breaking 460,000 attendees in May 2015.

Visit : www.Neworleanscvb.com. Contact : Christine DeCuir at cdecur@neworleanscvb.com.

The Beatles at the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan

28 April and 18 September 2016

The Beatles exhibit will be staged in The Henry Ford Museum as its first stop in the United States.

The Magical History Tour: A Beatles Memorabilia Exhibition will take pride of place in museum, which welcomes 1.6 million visitors each year.

Visit : www.thehenryford.org. Contact : Georgina Evans-Phillips at georgina@cellet.co.uk.

Go City Card, Las Vegas

Go City Card has launched the Go Las Vegas Card multi-attraction pass as its tenth destination in the USA.

The Go Las Vegas Card - Explorer provides the opportunity to save up to 55% by bundling 3 or 5 attractions for one price.

Other Go City Card destinations include Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, Oahu, Orlando, San Diego and San Francisco.

Visit : www.GoLasVegasCard.com and www.GoCityCard.com. Contact : Jane Coloccia at Jane@JCCommunicationsllc.com.

The Guide to Better Airfares

L.A. based travel startup, Time Travel Plans has launched the Guide to Better Airfares, an online video mini course that teaches travelers how to find and book the best airfares.

The 5-module course that covers the airfare search and booking process from every angle including:

- how to find the lowest airfares
- tips to put airfare searches on auto pilot tools to predict the future of airfare costs including the optimal times to buy and fly
- legit and legal airfare hacks, and
- tips to quickly earn airfare miles and effectively track them.

The Guide to Better Airfares is priced at \$49.

Visit : www.ClockIntoLife.com. Contact : Dana Bell at support@clockintolife.com.

Eden Project Hotel, Cornwall, UK

A £6 million hotel is set to open at the Eden Project in Cornwall in 2016.

The hotel will have 115 bedrooms and has been designed to 'blend into the countryside'.

It will have access to the main site, as well as being close to the perimeter of Eden's outer estate.

Visit : www.edenproject.com. Contact : Sophie Lemagnen at Sophie.Lemagnen@visitengland.org.

Stoke-on-Trent is European Capital of Sport, UK

Stoke-on-Trent has been named the European Capital of Sport for 2016.

The designation presents an opportunity for the city to raise its profile, as well as make a significant impact on levels of participation in sport, public health and the city's ongoing regeneration.

Visit : www.visitstoke.co.uk. Contact : Sophie Lemagnen at Sophie.Lemagnen@visitengland.org.

Hi and Lo Ropes Aerial Adventure, Leicestershire, UK

Hi and Lo Ropes Aerial Adventure at CONKERS, in the heart of the National Forest, is set to be one of the most physically-challenging outdoor adventure courses in the country.

Within the 15 aerial sections will be climbing nets and high level walkways, all around 30 feet above the ground. The fast and furious 110 metre Zip Wire finishes off the course.

Visit : www.visitconkers.com/thingstodo/hiropes. Contact : Sophie Lemagnen at Sophie.Lemagnen@visitengland.org.

The London Theatre Travel Guide

The Official London Theatre and Transport for London have partnered to produce the London Theatre Travel Guide.

Available as an interactive printable PDF, the travel guide includes tips on planning a journey ahead using TfL's Journey Planner to checking show information at officiallondontheatre.co.uk and exploring those theatres outside of the West End.

Official London Theatre, which is run by the not-for-profit organisation Society of London Theatre (SOLT), is the capital's leading theatre website.

Visit : www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk/theatregoers-guide. Contacts : Anthony McNeill at Anthony@soltukt.co.uk.

What's on, Macau mobile app

Macau Government Tourist Office has launched a mobile app to help visitors keep up-to-date with all the going on in Macau.

What's On, Macau, the app contains the destination's monthly highlights, including local events, festivals, exhibitions and shows.

Visit : www.macaotourism.gov.mo. Contact : Tom Panagos at tom@humewhitehead.co.uk.

Leads

Cardigan Bay Marine Wildlife Centre, Wales

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales has opened Cardigan Bay Sea Quest, which is a 360 degree virtual reality experience using Oculus Rift technology.

The aim of the game is to explore, locate and photograph 20 marine mission items before the tank runs out of air, allowing users to get up close to a basking shark, friendly bottlenose dolphins and other rare wildlife.

Visit : www.cbmwc.org. Contact : Bethan Smyth at Bethan.Smyth@fourbgb.com.

AdventureSmith Explorations : New Zealand

Small ship cruise expert AdventureSmith Explorations is showcasing three new vessels and four new cruise itineraries in New Zealand.

Those cruising the coastline of this two-island country that the indigenous Maori call Aotearoa, or "Land of the Long White Cloud," can select environments ranging from sub Antarctic to temperate.

In the colder south where temperatures may hover at 50 degrees, small ships access the remote wilderness of the Fiordlands; on a northern circuit, guests can bask through the Bay of Islands surrounded by an abundance of tropical foliage.

The three ships that have been purpose-built for cruising New Zealand waters are the Affinity, Island Passage and Milford Wanderer.

Visit : www.adventuresmithexplorations.com. Contact : Sara Widness at sara@witnesspr.com.

Road Biking the Ho Chi Minh Highway, Vietnam

SpiceRoads has introduced Road Biking the Ho Chi Minh Highway, a new tour which rides along the former supply route used by the Vietnamese during the American War.

The roads are in good condition, smoothly undulating with some decent climbs, making it a perfect ride for any enthusiastic road cyclist.

The tour starts in the bustling city of Hanoi and heads into the lush countryside along the Song Ma River, between limestone karst peaks surrounded by paddy fields, impressive mountain passes and into national parks.

The route passes many significant sites from the American War including Khe Sanh, the location of the longest and most controversial battle, and a cave which was used as a hospital and ammunition depot during the war.

The tour ends with a beautiful downhill ride into the magnificent imperial city of Hue.

SpiceRoads is a specialist bicycle tour operator based in Bangkok that offers a range of two-wheel tours in 28 destinations worldwide.

Visit : www.spiceroads.com. Contact: Sally Hoare at sally@spiceroads.com.

Governors Island, New York

Governors Island will be the next area featured in the NYC & Company's Insider Guide.

The island was previously a military base for the US army and the coastguard and is located just a short ferry ride from Manhattan or Brooklyn, the island is now a hub of artistic, cultural and educational offerings.

Known as New York City's 'playground for the arts', Governors Island is now a popular picnic place, with attractions including two 19th century forts, music festivals, public art displays and 'Open Studio' events.

Those wishing to visit the island can stay in Lower Manhattan or near Brooklyn Bridge Park. Both areas offers a range of accommodation options and are just a short connection to the island via ferry.

Visit : www.nycgo.com. Contact : Britt Hijkoop at bhijkoop@nycgo.com.

Satpura National Park, India

Gane And Marshall has announced a new tour to India, offering a chance to explore, trek and camp in the Satpura National Park and Tiger Reserve.

The 'Satpura Under Canvas' itinerary covers the Pachmarhi Trail, 32kms of varying habitat in Satpura National Park, cradled in the Mahadeo Hills of the Satpura range.

Believed to be a bridge between the Eastern Himalayas and the Western Ghats, the area is known for its rugged terrain that undulates from meadows to deep valleys, sandstone peaks, narrow gorges, cascading waterfalls and dense green forests, offering a home to unique central Indian flora and fauna.

Satpura is the only tiger reserve in central India where comfortable mobile camping is possible, with trekking on foot offered in the core area of the reserve.

Some of the animals that can be viewed in Satpura National Park include Indian bison, leopards, sloth bear, black buck, wild boar, porcupine, sambhar, four-horned antelopes, smooth otter, Pangolin, marsh crocodile, Indian giant squirrel and if guests are lucky, Bengal tigers.

A myriad of bird species can be spotted in Satpura.

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

Mystery Plays at York Minster, York

The 800 year-old Gothic cathedral of York Minster will become an auditorium for a much anticipated month-long staging of the York Minster Mystery Plays in June 2016.

The Mystery Plays will return to the Minster for the first time since the Millennium production in 2000 when over 28,000 people attended the sell-out performances which had an ensemble cast of more than 200 local amateur actors and, in keeping with the tradition of the Mystery Plays, just one professional actor.

Visit : www.yorkminster.org. Contact : Sophie Lemagnen at Sophie.Lemagnen@visitengland.org.

ITC Luxury Travel acquires Western & Oriental

Luxury tour operator ITC Luxury Travel has acquired Western and Oriental's four travel businesses, which are Rainbow Tours, Regent Holidays, Villa Select, and Western & Oriental.

Specialists in tailor-made travel, Western & Oriental offer holidays to 75 global destinations including Europe, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Far East and India.

Visit : www.itcluxurytravel.co.uk. Contact : Lallie Fraser at Lallie@grifcopr.com.

Turkey's coast by Luxury Catamaran

Journey Anatolia offers a seven-night catamaran sailing holiday around the coast near Bodrum in Turkey's southwest.

The catamaran is hired with or without a skipper so that travellers have the choice of sailing the vessel themselves, and takes in secluded bays, fishing hamlets and colourful coastal towns and villages.

Guests can also visit Greek islands as part of their itinerary, including Kos, Nisiros and Symi.

Visit : www.journeyanatolia.com. Contact : journeyanatolia@redmintcomms.co.uk.

G Adventures'

G Adventures' has expanded its Colombia programme with nine new trips in 2015 with itineraries including :

Colombia – Lost City Trekking

A seven-day trip climbing 1,200 steps to reach the Lost City of Teyuna enjoying spectacular jungle scenery along the way.

Caribbean Colombia Express

An eight-day trip hiking through lush jungle with an indigenous guide, meeting locals and learning about coffee in Minca, indulging in fresh seafood and Colombian specialties.

Classic Colombia

A 16-day trip experiencing the meld of Latin-Caribbean flavours with Colombia's world-famous cuisine, getting familiar with Colombian coffee in Calarcá and Minca, hiking through lush jungle with an indigenous guide and indulging in fresh seafood on the beaches of Cartagena.

Visit : www.gadventures.co.uk. Contact : Casey Mead at caseym@gadventures.com.

What's on

Mob movies in the summer, Las Vegas

Las Vegas's Mob Museum, the National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, is to host 'Speakeasy Cinema', a summertime early-evening film series featuring classic mobster noir movies and complimentary alcoholic beverages in the museum's historic courtroom.

Films include The Captive City (1952); Dark City (1950); 711 Ocean Drive (1950) and Hoodlum Empire (1952).

Visit : www.TheMobMuseum.org. Contact : Brenda Hengel at bhengel@themobmuseum.org.

Summer events in Michigan

Summer in Michigan offers a range of festivals and events including :

National Blueberry Festival, South Haven

6 to 9 August 2015

This annual four-day festival will be held in various locations in and out of doors in the Lake Michigan Beach town community of South Haven, Michigan.

Many events take place overlooking South Havens harbour, its 110 year old lighthouse and Lake Michigan.

Visit : www.blueberryfestival.com

Detroit Jazz Festival Detroit

4 to 7 September 2015

The 35th annual Detroit Jazz Festival occupies two million square feet of downtown Detroit from Hart Plaza on the riverfront, three blocks north to beautiful Campus Martius Park.

Visit : www.detroitjazzfest.com.

Labor Day Mackinac Bridge Walk, Saint Ignace

7 September 2015

This annual trek across the 5-mile long Mackinac Bridge occurs on Labor Day, the only day of the year pedestrians are allowed on the bridge. Walkers begin in St. Ignace at the north end of the Bridge and walk south. No fees or registration required.

Visit : www.mackinacbridge.org/annual-bridge-walk

The State of Michigan has the world's longest freshwater coastline and is home to :

- more than 100 public beaches
- some of the highest freshwater sand dunes in the world
- multi-colored sandstone cliffs
- two National Lakeshores, and
- the only national marine sanctuary in the Great Lakes, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in Lake Huron.

The state also has more than 100 lighthouses, numerous maritime museums, ten shipwreck-diving preserves and historic military fortifications rim Michigan's Great Lakes shoreline.

Visit : www.michigan.org. Contact : Georgina Evans-Phillips at georgina@cellet.co.uk.

New York City Restaurant Week

20 July to 14 August 2015

NYC Restaurant Week Summer 2015 offers diners deals on meals at almost 300 participating restaurants.

During the annual Restaurant Week, three-course prix-fixe meals are priced at \$25 for lunch or \$38 for dinner excluding beverages, gratuities and taxes.

Visit : www.nycgo.com/restaurantweek. Contact : Caroline Peck at cpeck@nycgo.com.

Tall ships at Greenwich, London UK

27 to 30 August, 2015

Two tall ships, the Santa Maria Manuela from Portugal and the Dar Mlodziezy from Poland will be docking at to Greenwich over the August bank holiday.

MBNA Thames Clippers is offering package tickets to enjoy a trip along the Thames to explore the ships.

Day trippers will be able to explore the decks and rigging of the ships with guides offering stories about life at sea and the history of the imposing ships.

Visit : www.thamesclippers.com. Contact : Stacey Stockwell at stacey.stockwell@sirencomms.com.

Events in Macau, China

27th Macau International Fireworks Display Contest

5, 12, 19, 27 September and 1 October 2015

The Macau International Fireworks Display Contest is considered the largest competitive fireworks event in the world. This colourful event, which takes place in front of the Macau Tower and overlooking the Nam Van Lake, will see a total of ten teams competing this year – including Portugal, Italy and France – to produce the most dramatic and colourful show possible.

Visit : www.fireworks.macautourism.gov.mo.

Mid-Autumn Festival

27 September 2015

This popular Chinese festival of abundance and togetherness dates back over 3,000 years to China's Zhou dynasty. Held during the full moon of the eighth month in the lunar calendar, the festival is very popular for families, who come together to make and eat mooncakes – a pastry filled with sweet lotus paste.

As the event is also known as the “Lantern Festival”, visitors will see thousands of lanterns hung from Macau's trees and main buildings.

29th Macau International Music Festival

4 October to 1 November 2015

A variety of local and internationally-acclaimed artists will head to Macau in October to take part in the 29th edition of the Macau International Music Festival.

During this popular event, visitors will be able to see an array of performances from the world's finest singers, choirs, orchestras and musicians. Acts usually perform in some of Macau's stunning World Heritage sites including St. Dominic's Church, Dom Pedro V Theatre and Mount Fortress.

Visit : www.icm.gov.mo.

18th Lusofonia Festival

23 to 25 October 2015

Chinese and Portuguese cultures get even closer at the annual Lusofonia Festival.

This event brings together live musical performances, traditional games, handmade products, art collections and snacks from a variety of Portuguese-speaking territories, including Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Goa, Daman and Diu, Guinea-Bissau, Macau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé e Príncipe and East Timor.

Visit : www.macautourism.gov.mo. Tom Panagos at tom@humewhitehead.co.uk.

Navajo Nation Fair, USA

6 to 13 September 2015 (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

6 September 2015

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.

Euphoria 2015, South Carolina

17 to 20 September 2015

Euphoria is a weekend-long festival held in Greenville, South Carolina, which combines exclusive tastings, cooking demonstrations and wine seminars, as well as multi-course dinners and live musical performances.

Joined by chefs from local Greenville restaurants, as well as some from Charleston (South Carolina), Atlanta (Georgia) and Asheville (North Carolina), Euphoria features domestic and international wines, celebrity chefs, master sommeliers and local musicians.

Visit : www.euphoriagreenville.com and www.DiscoverAmerica.com. Contact : Sarah Barnett at sbarnett@thebrandusa.co.uk.

The first Astonishing Family Science Weekend, Butlin's, Minehead UK

18 to the 21 September 2015

Butlin's has joined forces with the Science Museum, Aardman Animations and the National Space Centre to create the first Astonishing Family Science Weekend

The break, designed for families with children aged between 6 and 14 years, promises thrilling science entertainment with live shows and hands-on interactive sessions, thrilling experiments and an array of 'weird and wonderful' workshops.

Live shows from Aardman Animations will give a 'behind the scenes' look at how much-loved characters like Wallace & Gromit are modelled and brought to life, and children will have the chance to create their very own animated movies.

The Science Museum and the scientists behind TV's Brainiac will demonstrate explosive experiments, while BBC TV's Gastronomer Stefan Gates will take the audience on a journey of flavour to discover what is inside the food we eat.

Visit : www.butlins.com/science. Contact : Mariana Hamel-Smith at butlins@hellounity.com.

Blenheim Palace Festival of Literature, Film and Music, UK

24 to 27 September 2015

Blenheim Palace Festival of Literature, Film and will see acclaimed speakers from a range of creative fields including literature, fashion, food, film and music.

Other high profile speakers this year also include the great nephew of the Emperor of Ethiopia, His Imperial Highness Prince Asfa-Wossen Asserate, launching his new biography 'King of Kings.

Visit : www.blenheimpalace.com. Contact: Melodie Manners at melodie@flamingo-marketing.co.uk.

Wellfleet OysterFest, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

17 and 18 October 2015

The fifteenth annual Wellfleet OysterFest will take place the weekend after Columbus Day in Wellfleet, Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

This two-day family festival celebrates the town's famous oysters, clams and shellfishing traditions.

Visit : www.wellfleetoysterfest.org. Contact : Doug Bennett at info@wellfleetoysterfest.org.

The Urbanna Oyster Festival, Virginia, USA

6 and 7 November 2015

Virginia is known as the Oyster Capital of the East Coast and the state is now the largest producer of fresh, farm-raised oysters in America.

And 75,000 visitors are expected to go to the quiet tidewater town of Urbanna in Virginia, one of the oldest and smallest towns in America for its oyster festival.

The Urbanna Oyster Festival is Virginia's official oyster festival and one of the largest and oldest festivals of its kind in the USA.

Located along the Rappahannock River, Urbanna is a rural community with a land mass of less than half a square mile and a quiet way of life in a sheltered deep-water creek on a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay.

Virginia has seven different oyster regions.

Visit : www.urbannaoysterfestival.com and www.virginia.org/oysters. Contact : Jo Thomas at jo.thomas@kbc-pr.com.

Reasons to write about

Acacia Africa

Acacia Africa has selected its top six pick of the best safari's with exceptional wildlife sightings.

Swaziland

The Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary offers 4,560 hectares of grassland plains and granite peaks. The safari is on foot or by mountain bike with an optional overnight hack on horseback and sleep in a cave complete with San Bushman paintings.

Expect to find some exotic species in this conservation hotspot, such as the honey badger, dwarf mongoose, aardwolf and striped polecat, along with the more common hippo, ostrich, kudu, zebra and baboon.

Zimbabwe

The Motobo Hills National Park has one of the highest concentrations of leopard (estimated at five for every 16 square kilometres) in the world and it's a location for white rhino.

There are roughly 200 breeding pairs of black eagles in the park, compared to only 23 breeding pairs in the whole of South Africa.

Botswana

The award winning Moremi Game Reserve is located on the eastern side of the Okavango Delta.

It offers lagoons, floodplains and islands and its 4,871 square kilometres is the last major stronghold for the endangered wild dog, with around 30% of Africa's population residing here.

South Africa

The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is located between Botswana and Namibia in South Africa's Northern Cape province. The park is relatively undiscovered and generally crowd free year round.

Cheetah and leopard thrive, hunting in the fossil river valleys and the surrounding Kalahari dunes.

Zambia

Zambia's South Luangwa National Park is one of the best places to go wildlife viewing on foot.

Those travelling by 4X4 can also stay out in the park for a couple of hours after sundown to spot bushbabies and porcupines.

Uganda

The Queen Elizabeth National offers chimpanzee trekking in the Kyambura Gorge, where vervet and black-and-white colobus monkeys are also easily spotted in the trees.

Visit : www.acacia-africa.com. Siobhan Erum-Credo at siobhan@tionlondon.co.uk.

The District Detroit, Michigan

Detroit, is investing two billion dollars in a world-class sports and entertainment centre and an arts district.

The District Detroit, a centre midtown and downtown will be completed in 2017 and will include an ice-rink, shopping centre, housing and casinos.

The Detroit Institute of Arts and the surrounding area is being established as the city's home of fine artists, muralists and musicians. A development of the arts in the city will be further enhanced when the Galapagos Art Space moves to Detroit in 2016.

The project will create 50,000 square feet of space for artists to create and display their work. The space will also include a 10,000 square foot lake in the centre of the venue.

Visit : www.visitdetroit.com. Contact : Deanna Majchrzak at dmajchrzak@visitdetroit.com.

Black rhinos in Africa

Wilderness Safaris, in partnership with the Botswana, South African and Zimbabwean Governments, has successfully completed the largest ever cross-border translocation of critically-endangered black rhino.

The latest phase in a collaborative project that spans over 15 years and has grown to become one of the most important rhino translocations ever undertaken in the history of conservation.

Over the past 12 months, the partnership has managed to move 1% of the total global population of this highly threatened species into a safe haven in Botswana's Okavango Delta.

The last in a series eight international relocations took place during May and June this year, with rhino sourced from five locations in South Africa and Zimbabwe safely transported to Botswana in a Hercules C130 aircraft.

Wilderness Safaris is an ecotourism company that specialises in wildlife experiences in some of the most remote and pristine areas in Africa.

The Wilderness Safaris Wildlife Trust supports a wide variety of approximately 30 projects annually in southern Africa, within the categories of wildlife management, research and monitoring, and community empowerment and education.

The Rhino Conservation Botswana (RCB) was formed in 2014 to train, equip and coordinate rhino monitoring teams to ensure that all wild rhinos are regularly sighted, identified and monitored.

Visit : www.wilderness-safaris.com, www.wildernesstrust.com and www.rhinoconservationbotswana.com. Contact : Charlotte Rous at charlotte@grifcopr.com.

Taiwan on two Wheels

The 19-mile perimeter around the picturesque Sun Moon Lake offers beginners a relaxing cycle.

Looping Taiwan's largest alpine lake, the trail was named one of the world's *10 Breathtaking Cycling Routes* by CNN Travel.

The *Come! Bikeday* held each November is a scenic, family-friendly bicycle ride around Sun Moon Lake. Participants can choose from an array of events from the tannan challenge, the bikeday carnival, classical or fun rides.

For cyclists preferring more urban surrounds, the YouBike bike hire scheme is a way to get around Taipei City, New Taipei City, Taichung City, and Changhua County.

Visit : www.i.youbike.com.tw/en.

Taiwan on two wheels for cycling enthusiasts

The enchanting scenery and stunning vistas ensure Taiwan has the most electrifying trails in Asia.

More adventurous cyclists should head for the mountains for routes which are challenging and beautiful in equal measure.

The East Rift Valley is framed by the majestic Central and Coastal Mountain ranges and welcome cyclists with endless side roads and bike paths.

The Formosa 900 race, held in November, is a round island tour and takes in the best of the Rift Valley and pristine Hualien and Taitung counties.

The centre and south of Taiwan in particular is home to a maze of spectacular trails while the very south of Taiwan contains some of the best cross-country riding on the island. Hidden in the hills of Northern Taiwan, the La La Shan trail is an unrelenting 18km through pristine forest.

The Taiwan King of the Mountain challenge, held in November, starts with a 105 kilometre mountain ascent starting from sea level, climbs through scenic valleys to the finish at the summit of Hehuan Mountain in Huling at 10,700 feet.

The route takes in a variety of breath taking scenery, showcasing the diversity of Taiwan's terrain.

Visit : www.theme.taiwanbike.tw/event/2015/en.

Taiwan Cycling Ambassador competition

The Taiwan Tourism Bureau has launched a European-wide search for a young cycling enthusiast to become an ambassador at one of Taiwan's biggest cycling events, the Formosa 900. Sporty students are invited to submit creative and innovative ideas on how to promote Taiwan's cycling to his/her peers for a chance to become the Taiwan Cycling Ambassador.

Visit www.eng.taiwan.net.tw.

Contact : Laoise Collins at Laoise.collins@brightergroup.com.

The Corris Craft Centre, mid-Wales

The Corris Craft Centre, located in mid-Wales at the foothills of the southern Snowdonia, is a small shopping village with 9 individual craft studios and a diverse range of attractions and experiences including :

Corris Mine Explorers

This rare opportunity allows you to discover the virtually untouched, abandoned workings of the old Braich Goch slate mine. The mine was first worked in 1836 and finally closed in the early 1970s, and everything was left behind. It's like a virtual time capsule with everything in place as the miners left it.

www.corrismineexplorers.co.uk

King Arthur's Labyrinth

Best described as an underground storytelling adventure, this attraction takes visitors underground and deep beneath the mountains of southern Snowdonia.

www.kingarthurslabyrinth.co.uk

Lost Legends of the Stone Circle

This attraction comprises a simple maze where mythical stories and intriguing characters can be found. At its centre is the stone circle. Some of the stories told are taken from the ancient Welsh book of tales *The Mabinogian*.

www.stonecirclelegends.co.uk

Corris Craft Centre Studios

There are nine craft studios where a diverse range of products are designed and handmade. Items include traditional wooden toys, jewellery, pottery, chocolates, truffles and fudges, candles, hand-printed t-shirts and gifts, glassware, rustic furniture and herbal lotions and remedies.

Visit : www.corriscraftcentre.co.uk. Contact : Shirley Owen at shirleyowen06@aol.com.

A place to stay

Anguilla

Anguilla, a British overseas territory in the Caribbean, is one of the most northerly of the Leeward Islands.

It is located east of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands and directly north of Saint Martin.

The territory consists of the main island of Anguilla itself, whose capital is The Valley, together with a number of much smaller islands and cays with no permanent population.

Paradise Cove, Anguilla

Four nights for the price of three, breakfast included

Set in a tropical garden just a short stroll from the beach, Paradise Cove has Anguilla's 18-hole championship golf course at its back door and two of Anguilla's favorite beaches in front.

Visit : www.paradisecoveanguilla.com.

Shoal Bay Villas

Located in the middle of Shoal Bay East, and one of the world's best beaches, the Shoal Bay Villas comprises 23 apartments with full kitchens, balcony or porch with views of the pool or the white sand beach and turquoise waters.

Visit www.sbvillas.ai.

Spyglass Hill Villa

Located on the ridge at North Hill overlooking Road Bay Harbor, Spyglass offers stunning views of the Caribbean Sea, the surrounding islands, nightly tropical sunsets and the village of Sandy Ground below.

Visit www.spyglasshillanguilla.com.

Little Butterfly

Little Butterfly is a private one-bedroom luxury apartment looking out onto the turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea and the mountains of neighboring St. Martin.

Visit : www.littlebutterflyanguilla.com.

Contact : Claire Kunzman at Claire@cam-pr.com.

The Park Bosphorus Hotel, Istanbul

The Park Bosphorus Hotel Istanbul is housed in the city's Taksim Gümüssuyu district, is housed in a building that formerly served as the Foreign Affairs Palace 120 years ago.

The hotel offers Turkey's largest presidential suite and is recognised as one of the finest hotels in Istanbul.

Visit : www.cvkhotelsandresorts.com. Contact : pr@masonrose.com.

Hyatt Place Hotel, Taghazout, Morocco

The Hyatt Place Taghazout Bay, which is located 10 miles (17 kilometers) north of the Moroccan coastal town of Agadir, is the first Hyatt Place hotel to open in Africa.

Hyatt Place Taghazout Bay is part of Morocco's new sustainable and luxury development Taghazout Bay Resort, which is situated in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains and overlooks the Atlantic coastline.

It offers a range of activities at the on-site surf camp, tennis club and a new 18-hole golf course, as well as hang-gliding, hiking and mountain biking.

Visit : www.HyattPlace.com. Contact : Charlotte Rous at charlotte@grifcopr.com.

Paradise Beach, Nevis

Nevis is a small island in the Caribbean Sea that forms part of the inner arc of the Leeward Islands chain of the West Indies.

Nevis and the island of Saint Kitts to the northwest form the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The two islands are separated by a shallow two-mile channel known as The Narrows.

Paradise Beach, the newest Oceanside luxury villa development on Nevis, is located on a private beachfront with views of the ocean, the island of St Kitts and Mount Nevis.

Visit : www.nevisisland.com and www.paradisebeachnevis.com. Contact : Claire Kunzman at Claire@cam-pr.com.

Hotels in Alabama

Grand Bohemian Hotel, Mountain Brook, Alabama

Grand Bohemian Hotel, Mountain Brook, is set to open this autumn and will be The Kessler Collection's first property in Alabama.

The 100-room luxury hotel is designed to 'celebrate creativity' and is adjacent to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Located in the city's Lane Park development, the hotel will cater for both business and leisure stays.

On-site, the hotel will host the Grand Bohemian Gallery, which features national, international and local artists.

Other experiences within the hotel will include interactive wine blending, a cooking school and the Poseidon Spa.

Visit : www.grandbohemianmountainbrook.com.

Also in Alabama

Two Marriott hotels will open in downtown Birmingham in 2016.

The first will be the Empire Hotel with a restaurant, gym, meeting space and rooftop bar. The second will be a limited service Marriott Hotel with 120 rooms.

The *AllWays traveller* series to Alabama are now available on the *AllWays traveller* website and in a PDF format for tablets and iPhones :

- ***AllWays traveller to North Alabama :***
http://www.allwaystraveller.com/AllWaysOnline/ao_an_USA_Alabama_NorthAlabama.html.
- ***AllWays traveller to Gulf Shores Alabama :***
http://www.allwaystraveller.com/AllWaysOnline/ao_an_USA_Alabama_GulfShores.html
- ***AllWays traveller to Mobile Bay, Alabama :***
http://www.allwaystraveller.com/AllWaysOnline/ao_an_USA_Alabama_MobileBay.html
- ***AllWays traveller to Montgomery, Alabama :***
http://www.allwaystraveller.com/AllWaysOnline/ao_an_USA_Alabama_Montgomery.html
- ***AllWays traveller to Birmingham, Alabama :***
http://www.allwaystraveller.com/AllWaysOnline/ao_an_USA_Alabama_Bham.html

Visit : www.alabama.travel.

For more information on and press trips to Alabama contact : Della Tully at della@globaltravelmarketing.org.

The Leeu Collection, South Africa

The newly-created Leeu Collection is to open two boutique luxury properties – Leeu House and Leeu Estates – in the Western Cape winelands, just under an hour's drive from Cape Town.

Leeu House

Leeu House, opening in the last quarter of 2015, will be a five-star, 12-room boutique hotel on the main road in Franschhoek, and within walking distance of restaurants, art galleries and boutiques.

Leeu Estates

Leeu Estates, which will open shortly after Leeu House, will be a bijou 20-room five-star boutique hotel set in 68 hectares of vineyards, landscaped gardens and fynbos (indigenous) vegetation.

It will be located in the valley of Franschoek, between the mountain and river, a 5-minute drive from Franschoek village.

At the heart of the Estates will be the refurbished 19th century Manor House with six suites.

The other 14 guest rooms will be located close by, adjacent to the Amala Spa, and in cottages dotted throughout the gardens.

The Leeu Collection portfolio contains seven luxury resorts around the world, including Mauritius, Mexico and Morocco, with all the hotels being members of the Leading Hotels of the World or Relais & Châteaux portfolios.

Visit : www.leeucollection.com. Contact : Sue Heady at sue@headycommunications.com.

The Peninsula Beverly Hills

The Peninsula Beverly Hills, the only AAA Five Diamond and Forbes Five Star-rated hotel in Southern California, offers 194 guest rooms, including 38 suites and 17 private villas, among lush tropical gardens in the heart of Beverly Hills.

The hotel also features The Living Room, where the celebrated Peninsula Afternoon Tea is served daily.

The Peninsula Hotels portfolio comprises the :

Peninsula Hong Kong	Peninsula Manila
Peninsula Shanghai	Peninsula New York
Peninsula Beijing	Peninsula Chicago
Peninsula Tokyo	Peninsula Beverly Hills,
Peninsula Bangkok	Peninsula Paris.

Projects under development include The Peninsula London and The Peninsula Yangon.

Visit : www.peninsula.com/beverlyhills. Contact : Maria Pajares at maria@masonrose.com.

The Skeabost, Skye, Scotland

Former Scottish Hoteliers of the Year Anne Gracie and Ken Gunn have opened Skeabost House, their third boutique hotel on Skye.

The 14 bedroom hotel, built in 1870 as a hunting lodge, is on the edge of Loch Snizort with views over the sea and to the surrounding crofting townships of Bernisdale and Tote.

Guests can enjoy sailing trips offered by the owners of the hotel on their luxury yacht, the 50' Solus a Chuain (Light of the Ocean) sailing daily out of Armadale.

Skeabost, set in 23 acres of woodland, is the only hotel on Skye with its own golf course - a nine hole, 18 tee shoreline challenge. Fishing is available on Skye's best salmon river, which runs through the hotel grounds.

The couples other hotels are the Duisdale House and Toravaig House Hotels in the south of the island.

Visit : www.skeabosthotel.com. Contact : info@hotelpr.co.uk.

Abaco Beach Resort, the Bahamas

Widely regarded as the boating capital of the Bahamas, the Abaco Beach Resort and Boat Harbour Marina is a gateway to exploring its surrounding islands and cays.

Visit : www.abacobeachresort.com. Contact : Claire Kunzman at Claire@cam-pr.com.

The Westin Jekyll Island, Georgia

Starwood Hotels & Resorts has opened the Westin Jekyll Island on this Georgia barrier island.

Part of the Island Beach Village Project, the 200-room, convention-class, beachfront hotel joins an oceanfront promenade, village green, restaurants, upscale boutiques, Great Dunes Park and 128,000-square-foot Jekyll Island Convention Center.

The hotel is located close to the island's National Historic Landmark District and its four golf courses.

There are 10 miles of barrier island beaches and a variety of outdoor recreation options including marsh eco-tours, the Georgia Sea Turtle Center and over 20 miles of cycle paths and kayaking waterways.

Visit : www.westin.com. Contact : Katie Cline at Katie.Cline@starwoodhotels.com.

Bloomington, Minnesota

Six new hotels are due to open in the Bloomington, Minnesota, between autumn 2015 and late 2016, bringing the total number of hotels in the city to over 40.

Properties to open include a \$15 million Marriott TownePlace Suites hotel ; a 110-room Hampton Inn in West Bloomington and a Home2 Suites by Hilton, an all-suite extended-stay hotel.

JW Marriott's first property in Minnesota, the JW Marriott Minneapolis Mall of America is scheduled to open in late autumn 2015.

In addition, the \$25 million 148-room AC Hotel by Marriott will be located next to Mall of America.

A new 302-room Hyatt Regency hotel will open in spring 2016 as the centrepiece of the Bloomington Central Station – a mixed-use urban village.

The station will be connected via light rail to the Mall of America, Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and Downtown Minneapolis.

Visit : www.bloomingtonmn.gov. Contact : Janine Hill at jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov.

The Farmhouse, Suffolk, UK

The Farmhouse, which is located within a vast private estate of 4,500 acres in Suffolk, is an oak-framed farmhouse with 17th Century origins.

The building has been extended and improved using local materials and traditional construction methods. The house has been re-thatched using locally cut long-straw and reed and the timber frame meticulously repaired.

Additional accommodation has been created in a new timber frame wing with a double height entrance hall.

Visit : www.wildernessreserve.com. Contact : Yael Roth at yael@purplepr.com.

Machangulo Beach Lodge, Mozambique

Machangulo Beach Lodge in Mozambique, is located alongside the channel between Inhaca Island and the dunes of the Santa Maria Peninsula in Maputo Bay.

It comprises 15 private luxury chalets, with boardwalks to the beach and with their own private pool and deck.

Machangulo offers :

- diving and snorkelling in the Inhaca Marine Reserve and fishing (on and off shore)
- cruises and Dhow sailing safaris
- bird and whale watching and visits to turtle nesting sites (seasonal)
- tours of the Hell's Gate bay
- Inhaca island and Portuguese islands tours, and
- Maputo City tours

Visit : www.machangulobeachlodge.com. Contact : Claire at claire@ethosmarketing.co.uk.

The Inn at Willow Grove, Virginia

The Inn at Willow Grove is a 37-acre plantation located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and 90 minutes from Washington, DC, is a base for touring Virginia's wine, horse and Civil War heritage.

Nearby activities include wine tastings at local vineyards, antiquing, horseback riding, hot air ballooning, hiking, fishing, steeplechase races and tours of historic sites.

Visit : www.innatwillowgrove.com. Contact: Rebecca Widness at rebecca@widness-co-pr.com.

The Hotel d'Inghilterra, Rome

The Hotel d'Inghilterra is part of the Royal Demeure luxury hotel chain, a collection of historic palazzi in some of Italy's most important cities.

Privately owned by an Italian family, the boutique Hotel D'Inghilterra, or 'the English hotel', has long had ties to Britain. The luxury property was a firm favourite of the poet Keats, and Elizabeth Taylor, Gregory Peck, Mark Twain and Ernest Hemingway during the Dolce Vita years of the early 1900s.

Travellers looking for hospitality more like that of a private luxury home can also choose other Royal Demeure hotels including :

- in Rome the Residenza di Ripetta and the Hotel Beverly Hills Rome
- in Florence the Hotel Helvetia & Bristol
- in Siena the Grand Hotel Continental, and
- in Vicenza the Hotel Villa Michelangelo.

Visit : www.RoyalDemeure.com. Contact : Liam Colman at Liam.Colman@brightergroup.com.

Marriott Hotels, Bolivia

Marriott Hotels, announced plans to open the 174-room Marriott Hotel in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in 2016, its first hotel in Bolivia.

Situated on the 4th Anillo (roundabout) in the heart of the Equipetrol neighbourhood.

Visit : www.MarriottHotels.com. Contact : Laurier Goldstein at laurie.goldstein@marriott.com.

Eccentric events in Ireland

Tourism Ireland has picked its top 10 quirky festivals :

Puck Fair, Killorglin 10 to 12 August 2015

The Puck Fair is one of Ireland's most unusual street festivals; where a wild mountain goat is crowned King of the town for three days and nights - it's a 'see it to believe it' moment!

At 400 years old, Puck Fair is one of Ireland's oldest festivals and stages parades and ceremonies, providing free concerts, dance workshops, storytelling, fireworks, pet shows and puppet theatres – all part of the 36 hours of free entertainment.

Visit : www.puckfair.ie

The Big Grill, Herbert Park, Ballsbridge 13 to 16 August 2015

The Big Grill food festival is dedicated solely to the art of BBQ cooking. Some of the world's best BBQ stars and pitmasters are involved with a highlight the USA style 'Low 'N' Slow' BBQ competition.

Visit : www.biggrillfestival.com.

Charlie Chaplin Comedy Film Festival, Waterville 20 to 23 August 2015

Not just for Chaplin enthusiasts, this four-day festival has Laurel and Hardy exhibitions, vintage cars, animation and comedy workshops to discos and judged film competitions.

There will be an attempt to break the world record for the largest gathering of people dressed as Charlie Chaplin.

Visit : www.chaplinfilmfestival.com.

Ukulele Hooley 2015, Dun Laoghaire 22 and 23 August 2015

The Ukulele Hooley in the seaside town of Dun Laoghaire is in its sixth year, and is one of Europe's most popular ukulele festivals.

Ukulele players from around the world gather to stage musical performances – with workshops on offer for those keen to improve their ukulele prowess!

Visit : www.ukulelehooley.com.

Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival, Lisdoonvarna 28 August to 4 October 2015

The Matchmaking festival in Lisdoonvarna has been a tradition since 1887 when people flocked to the area during holiday seasons, and bachelor farmers would go in search of a wife.

Over a century later, the annual festival has evolved into Europe's largest singles event.

Even for those not looking for their other half, thousands of people come for a good time, dancing from noon until the early hours of the morning. With the world's first LGBT matchmaking festival, The Outing; the world's first LGBT matchmaking and music festival at Lisdoonvarna takes place between 2 and 4 October.

Visit : www.matchmakerireland.com and www.theouting.ie.

Dalkey Lobster Fest, Dalkey 8 and 30 August 2015

Dalkey's annual lobster festival tickles taste buds with delectable local lobster, and soothes ears with silky smooth jazz music.

Visit : www.facebook.com/DalkeyLobsterFest.



(cont)

Bushmills Salmon and Whiskey Festival, Bushmills

18 to 20 September 2015

The fourth annual Bushmills Salmon and Whiskey Festival celebrates local culture, heritage and produce.

Visit : www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com.

International Clown Festival, Downpatrick

24 to 27 September 2015

Ireland's first ever International Clown Festival rolls up in Downpatrick has a line up with acrobats, stilt walkers, pantomimes, and clown shows all putting on performances over the four-day festival. All activities are free with street shows taking place all over town.

Visit : www.discovernorthernireland.com/International-Clown-Festival-Downpatrick-P51883.

Visit : www.ireland.com. Contact : Klara Zakis at tourismireland@verypcc.com.

Dublin Beatles Festival, Dublin

6 to 8 November 2015

The three-day Dublin Beatles Festival celebrates the achievements of one of the biggest boy bands in history.

For the third year running, Beatles fanatics can immerse themselves in all things Fab Four related; from reliving the best Beatles tunes to fun quizzes, art and memorabilia.

Visit : www.dublinbeatlesfestival.com.

The Bard of Armagh, Armagh

20 November 2015

The Festival of Humorous verse is staged in Armagh for the 21st year running.

Applicants can take part with a poem up to 650 words, before finalists are selected to compete with their creative, entertaining and engaging performances. All previous finals have been a sell-out, with 2015 promising to be an evening filled with talent and hilarity.

Visit : www.bardofarmagh.com.

The International Travel Writers Alliance



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www.itwalliance.com

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