



The Alliance

Bulletin

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

Mid-January 2015

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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

The International Travel Writers Alliance 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.

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 through
- 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.

European Waterways

Luxury hotel barge operator European Waterways has launched a new itinerary in Burgundy, France for Summer 2015.

The Savoir Faire will cruise in the Sancerre region (between 31 May and 22 August) and will be the only 12-passenger hotel barge operating the waterway between historic Rogny-les-Sept-Ecluses and Marseilles-les-Aubigny on the Canal de Briare and Canal Lateral à La Loire.

Each fully-crewed, 6-night cruise includes all gourmet meals prepared by the on-board chef, fine wines, an open bar, daily escorted excursions, admissions and local transfers.

Visit : www.gobarging.com. Contact : Chris Gant at chris@gobarging.com.

Ahoy New York Tours & Tasting's

Ahoy New York Tours & Tasting's food tours enable guests to experience off-the-beaten path NYC neighborhoods, while being led on a food tasting adventure.

On this walking tour, there is the chance to taste ethnic foods and to discover culture and history, in a fun, lighthearted manner.

Ahoy New York Tours & Tasting's signature tour focuses on two ethnic New York City neighborhoods, Little Italy and Chinatown. Each tour's duration is 3 hours and all food tastings, enough for a meal, are included in the ticket price.

Visit : www.ahoynewyorkfoodtours.com. Contact: Alana Hoye Barnaba at ahoyny@hotmail.com.

TripCreator.com

TripCreator.com is an Icelandic travel portal for Icelandic tourism. It is a new platform where visitors can list the interests you have with regards to travelling to Iceland and TripCreator will give a recommended travel itinerary with costs.

TripCreator works closely with the tourism providers in Iceland to offer best experience and price.

Visit : www.tripcreator.com. Contact : Ken Lanigan at ken@getfocused.ie

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.

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

The New York State Canal System's exceptional scenery, history, culture, and natural resources earned the 524-mile waterway and the communities along its shores Congressional designation as the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in 2000.

Many partners working together are preserving the best of the past, while ensuring a vibrant future along our canals and waterways.

Visit : www.eriecanalway.org Contact : Jean MacKay at jean_mackay@partner.nps.gov.

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.

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 Great River Road, Illinois National Scenic Byway

The Great River Road in Illinois National Scenic Byway, a 550-mile route along the Mississippi River on Illinois' western border, offers breath-taking views and majestic Midwestern landscapes with glimpses into Illinois' history. The towns and cities along offer attractions, local dining, shopping and outdoor recreation experiences.

Visit : www.greatriverroad-illinois.org. Contact : org baha@cellet.co.uk.

Anchorage, Alaska

Anchorage has 60 glaciers in a 50-mile radius, a salmon stream in the heart of downtown, six surrounding mountain ranges, 300 miles of wilderness trails and the third largest state park.

By day, dog sled across an icy glacier, spot copious wildlife, fly out to Mount McKinley and get to know Alaska's first people.

By night, enjoy metropolitan amenities, abundant fresh-caught seafood and the frontier spirit of Alaska's largest city.

Visit : www.anchorage.net. Contact : Jack Bonney at pr@anchorage.net.

Corsica

The French Mediterrean island of Corsica is located 170km south from the French Riviera and offers dramatic mountains overlooking the sea.

Corsica is the highest and greenest Mediterranean island.

Visit : www.visit-corsica.com. Contact : jpdigrazia@ctc-atc.com

Leuven, Brussels

Leuven is a medieval town, only 20 kilometers to the east of Brussels.

A town with allures the likes of Oxford, yet with an exuberant heart and a world university. Leuven is also a renowned beer city with a big collection of bars and beers.

Visit : www.visitleuven.be. Contact : nancy.brouwers@leuven.be.

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Montana, USA

Montana offers sweeping mountain vistas, spectacular golden sunsets and untamed wilderness. America's fourth largest state is called Big Sky Country.

Visit : www.visitmt.com. Contact : MLverson@MT.gov.

News

The Explorer

The Explorer by Jacada Travel is seeking article submissions from Alliance members, with a focus on Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia and the Polar regions.

The full list of countries currently covered can be found at <http://explorer.jacadatravel.com/>.

The Explorer aims to inspire readers in an honest, friendly and informative voice, while giving interesting factual insights into a particular place in a creative and personal way.

The site is looking for engaging real-life stories that inspire, including but not limited to tales of wildlife, culture and the local people - from stories behind traditional belief systems to interesting local characters you might encounter - and landscapes that while lacking a personal angle always have a story to tell, from how they were formed to how they became inhabited.

Articles should be generous with information, giving tips and advice. Aim for around 750 words.

The Explorer is able to offer \$25 per article, and can include a link to the authors own website or blog in their bio.

Visit : <http://explorer.jacadatravel.com/>. To pitch story ideas, please email an article outline to Lauren Hill at lauren@jacadatravel.com.

La Compagnie

La Compagnie, the new all-business-class French airline, is launching its inaugural London to New York route at the end of March 2015.

Operating between Paris and New York since July 2014, La Compagnie is a French boutique airline for people who like the freedom of business class travel without the business class price tag.

Visit : www.lacompagnie.com. Contact : Joanna Cadbury at Joanna@grifcopr.com.

Tunisia

Tunisia has been named the Economist's Country of Year 2014.

In reaching its decision the publication writes :

The idealism in gendered by the Arab Spring has mostly sunk in bloodshed and extremism, with a shining exception : Tunisia, which in 2014 adopted a new enlightened constitution and held both Parliamentary and presidential polls.

Its economy is struggling and its polity is fragile but Tunisia's pragmatism and moderation have nurtured hope in a wretched region and are troubled world.

Mabrouk (congratulations), Tunisia.

Visit : www.cometotunisia.co.uk. Contact : Moncef Battikh at Moncef.battikh@cometotunisia.co.UK.

Virgin Hotels Chicago

Virgin Hotels Chicago opened its doors last month in Chicago's historic Old Dearborn Bank Building.

The 26-storey Art Deco landmark building has 250 guest rooms - or as Virgin Hotels tags them, 'chambers' - including 40 one-bedroom suites and two penthouse suites.

At the heart of the hotel, *The Commons Club* is aiming for a 'members' club ambience' and a rooftop bar provides cityscape views.

Miss Ricky's street-level diner is open 23 hours every day while Two Zero Three serves coffee by day, wine by night. Upcoming in the spring is a spa.

The new brand plans to open a second location in Nashville in the of summer 2016 and a third property in New York City in autumn 2017.

Visit : [.www.virginhotels.com](http://www.virginhotels.com). Contact : Laura Kilroy at laura@virginhotels.com.

Friendly Planet Travel : Japan

Friendly Planet Travel is looking for a writer or writers, who has/have traveled to Japan or lived in the country, to write one 300-500 word blog post about the unexpected treasures of Japan - including some fascinating facts about the country and its people - and another about the culinary experiences and amazing food of Japan.

Friendly Planet Travel would also like quality images to accompany the posts, if possible.

Alliance members who are interested should contact Amanda Ciktor direct.

Visit : www.friendlyplanet.com. Contact : Amanda Ciktor at ACiktor@friendlyplanet.com.

Visit Britain

Visit Britain has announced that spending by tourists visiting the UK during 2015 will reach a record £22bn.

The number of overseas visits is expected to reach 35.1 million trips during 2015 with visitors keen to enjoy major London attractions, watch Premier League football matches and Stratford-upon-Avon.

The international popularity of television programmes like Downton Abbey and Sherlock Holmes also place a focus on Britain.

Visit : www.visitbritain.org. Contact : pressandpr@visitbritain.org.

The Virginia War Memorial

The Virginia War Memorial is planning a \$17 million expansion to honour service members who have died in the war on terrorism.

The memorial plans to build a 350-seat auditorium and an exhibit gallery.

Visit : www.vawarmemorial.org. Contact : Lisa Cooper at lisa.cooper@kbc-pr.com.

Paris

Representatives of the Paris tourist industry will set off on a world tour next month to reassure visitors that the French capital is safe the recent fatal shootings.

France attracts 85 million foreigners each year and is the world's most visited country.

In Ile-de-France, a region which includes Paris, had 47 million visitors in 2014, about half of them from abroad.

Representatives of the Comite Regional du Tourisme Paris Ile-de-France will visit the UK at the end of February, to Los Angeles in March, Italy, Spain and Germany in April, Hong Kong in May and Tokyo in June.

In 2013, the vast majority of visitors to France were from other European countries, but about 3.1 million came from the United States and 1.7 million from China.

Visit : www.parisinfo.com. Contact : Veronique Potelet at vpotelet@parisinfo.com.

The New Life Hiking Spa in Mendon, Vermont

The New Life Hiking Spa in Mendon, Vermont, has been named the USA's top spa in the annual ranking of the Top 100 Spas of 2014, by *Spas of America*.

The country inn's spa was recognised as a world-class weight loss retreat.

In addition, the property near Killington, one of Vermont's best-known ski areas, runs an extensive hiking programme and serves up health-conscious meals.

Visit : www.vermontvacation.com and www.newlifehikingspa.com. Contact : Laura Peterson at laura.peterson@state.vt.us

Kimpton Hotels

Hotel Monaco Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Kimpton Hotels Hotel Monaco in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and its Palladian Hotel, Seattle, Washington both opened in January 2015.

Visit : www.monaco-pittsburgh.com and www.palladianhotel.com.

Kimpton currently operates 62 hotels and over 70 restaurants, bars and lounges in 28 cities.

Visit www.KimptonHotels.com. Contact : Christina Vasileiou at christina@mccluskey.co.uk.

Tourbar.com

Tourbar.com is a website and app launched to match members across the globe with a partner to travel with - for business or pleasure.

The TourBar app can also be downloaded for free via iTunes Store, Google Play or the Windows Phone Store.

Visit : www.tourbar.com. Contact : Fiona Anderson at tourbar@mccluskey.co.uk.

Leads

First of its kind selfie kiosk, Lower Manhattan, New York

A first of its kind Selfie Kiosk has opened in Lower Manhattan, which enables visitors to create a new “Kodak moment” for the 21st Century and share their selfies across email, Twitter and Facebook.

Lower Manhattan’s Selfie Kiosk is located in Albany Plaza, which sets *One World Trade Center*, one of Lower Manhattan’s most visited landmarks, in the background of the photo.

The kiosk is designed to allow users to take instant selfie photos and then immediately share them via email and social media.

The photos are branded with #LowerManhattan and include a greeting message in the style of destination postcards.

The initiative has been developed by the Downtown Alliance with technology companies Zivelo and National Media Brands.

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

Exsus, Galapagos

Exsus the luxury tour operator has expanded its Galapagos offering to take in all the luxury yachts available in the region.

New hotels added to the Exsus portfolio for 2015 include retreat and wine spa, Vina Vik in Chile and boutique Hub Porteno in Buenos Aires.

Visit : www.exsus.com. Contact : Lara Perez at Lara.Perez@brightergroup.com.

Muyuna Lodge, Peru

Guests at the Muyuna Lodge spend one night in the San Juan de Yanayacu village, where they learn how the people of the jungle live.

The Lodge is located in the Tamshiyacu-Tahuayo Reserve, on the Amazon River, Peru.

Visit : www.muyuna.com. Contact : Lara Perez at Lara.Perez@brightergroup.com.

Say Hueque

Say Hueque creates customized tours for independent travelers throughout Argentina’s and Chile’s national parks and cities.

Popular destinations and experiences include Buenos Aires, Iguassu Falls, Perito Moreno Glacier, hiking in Patagonia, wine tasting in Mendoza, horseback riding at traditional estancias and glacier cruises.

Say Hueque adopted its name from the last tribal chief that surrendered to the Europeans in their conquest of the American lands, in 1885.

The Great Cacique Say Hueque was the leader of a powerful tribe that occupied the region of central Patagonia. Their cultural influence is still very strong at some locations close to the Andes Range.

Visit : www.sayhueque.com. Contact : Alexia Nestora at alexia@lassocommunications.com.

Oasis, Aspen, Colorado

Oasis, the world's first pop-up champagne and caviar bar, is operated by *The Little Nell* around Aspen Mountain via a snowcat, serving a regal combination of Veuve Clicquot and California Caviar.

The Little Nell is Aspen's only ski-in/ski-out, five star, five diamond hotel.

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

Scotland's Taste Our Best award

A food and drink award scheme, designed to raise quality standards and promote the use of Scottish produce within the tourism industry, has been awarded to over 500 tourism businesses in Scotland.

Taste Our Best, a joint initiative between *VisitScotland* and the Scottish Government, with support from Scotland Food and Drink, aims to form stronger links between the places people visit and the food and drink experiences on offer.

As part of the scheme, restaurants, hotels, B&Bs, takeaways, cafes, visitor attractions and pubs or bars are assessed on not just the quality of their food and drink offering but also how they include and promote Scottish produce on their menus to give consumers choice.

Visit : www.visitscotland.org/quality-foodanddrink.aspx. Contact : Louise Purves at Louise.purves@visitscotland.com.

Gane and Marshall, Namibia

Wildlife and adventure tour operator Gane and Marshall is the first UK travel company to launch a guided cycle tour of Namibia that features the Desert Knights Mountain Bike Ride (24 to 30 September 2015).

One of the country's most challenging sporting events, the bi-annual Desert Knights Mountain Bike Ride, now in its third year, takes place in the Ai-Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park in the far south.

Uniquely, much of the five-day, 180km cycle route is tackled in the early mornings, at sunset and at night, under a full moon, to avoid the intense desert heat.

There is also a day of kayaking along the Orange River at the end of the ride.

Visit : www.desertknights-mtb.com/tour-overview and www.ganeandmarshall.com. Contact : Contact: Anita Clements at anita@hamilton-pr.com.

The Luxembourg Card

The Luxembourg Card offers free entry or a concession price to more than 70 tourist attractions during 365 days.

In addition, cardholders can use the national rail and bus for free.

Visit : www.visitluxembourg.com. Contact : Lis Lorang at lis.lorang@ont.lu.

CNN and TripAdvisor

CNN International's global travel portal, CNNTravel.com, is now integrated with TripAdvisor reviews and ratings, enabling CNN readers to view them in real time.

Readers can book hotels mentioned in CNN Travel articles via TripAdvisor, or find TripAdvisor user reviews, photos and maps of featured restaurants, bars and other landmarks.

Visit : www.travel.cnn.com. Contact : Joel Brown at Joel.Brown@turner.com.

What's on

Universal Orlando Resort's 'N'awlins'

to 18 April

Universal Orlando Resort's 'N'awlins'-inspired 2015 Mardi Gras celebration will feature 16 nights of concerts by performers including Jessie J, American Idol winner Kelly Clarkson, Olivia Newton-John, Barenaked Ladies and the B-52s.

The Universal Orlando's Mardi Gras celebration is included with admission to Universal Studios Florida.

Visit : www.universalorlando.co.uk. Contact : Jonathan Sloan at Jonathans@hillsbalfour.com.

The first Bhutan International Festival

14 to 23 February 2015

Bhutan is a traditional nation set within the Himalayan Mountains, whose cultural heritage remains firmly intact and largely unexplored by the international community.

The first Bhutan International Festival (BhIF), which will become an annual event, will see 80 international artists and performers collaborating on a range of event including :

- masked traditional dancers performing alongside contemporary acts from the UK, continental Europe and the USA
- runners from across the globe competing in the Bhutan International Marathon
- traditional cookery demonstrations from the country's best chefs as well as guest international celebrity chefs
- celebrations for the 5th King of Bhutan's 35th birthday and Losar, the Buddhist New Year.

The Bhif will create a fund for the Arts in Bhutan, which will award grants and offer support to local arts-based programmes and schools, assist in building and expanding apprenticeship opportunities with local professional artists and strengthen the current economy.

Visit : www.bhif.org. Contact : Mary-Clare Gribbon at mc@gribbon.org.

The 250th Anniversary of the launch of HMS Victory, The Historic Dockyard Chatham, Kent UK

14 February to 31 May 2015

On 7 May 1765 HMS Victory was floated out of the Old Single Dock in Chatham's Royal Dockyard.

In the years to come, over an unusually long service, she would gain recognition, leading fleets in the American War of Independence (1775-1783), the French Revolutionary War (1793-1802) and the Napoleonic War (1803-1815).

In October 1805 she was the flagship of Vice-Admiral Nelson in Britain's defeat of the French and Spanish at the Battle of Trafalgar.

The exhibition at Chatham Historic Dockyard will have twenty two objects on loan from the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich including two models of Victory, a stunning decorative sword and original letters and plans.

The Historic Dockyard Chatham

The Historic Dockyard Chatham and its defences together form the most complete Dockyard of the Age of Sail to survive anywhere in the world.

For almost 400 years the Royal Dockyard at Chatham played a crucial role in supporting the Royal Navy, building over 400 ships - including HMS Victory, Vice-Admiral Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar.

Visit : www.thedockyard.co.uk. Contact : Gail Louise James at gjames@chdt.org.uk.

La Saharienne Dakhla, Morocco

17 to 25 February 2015

La Saharienne Dakhla, is an annual Women's Racing Exhibition in Dakhla, Morocco gives women an opportunity to show off their independence while raising funds for the K'D'Urgences foundation which helps single mothers.

Each team consists of two women competing in various athletic categories including trailing, biking, canoeing, and running. The women will also camp over night during their stay.

Founded four years ago, their primary goal is to help out "solo mothers" with finances, childcare, and employment. Contestants can also earn money for a charity of their choice.

Visit : www.lasaharienne.fr. Contact : Jerry Schranz at jschranz@beckermanpr.com.

London Beer Week

16 - 22 February 2015

The team behind the London Cocktail Week, now in its sixth year, and London Wine Week, which launched in 2014, will stage the first London Beer Week from 16 to 22 February 2015.

London Beer Week has partnered with city bars and restaurants including The Draft House, The Craft Beer Co, Whyte and Brown, Hops & Glory, Well and Bucket and Ask for Janice to offer more than 100 venues where wristband wearers will be offered £3 speciality beers and £5 Woodford Reserve boilermakers (AKA a beer and a bourbon) all week long.

Located in The Newburgh Quarter just off Carnaby Street, the central London wristband collection hub will be the home of the festival, where guests will be able to try brews, collect and buy wristbands and pick up the London Beer Week guide book.

Events are :

- London Beer Week – Monday 16 February – Sunday 22 February 2015
- London Wine Week – Monday 18 May – Sunday 24 May 2015
- London Wine Fair – Monday 18 May – Wednesday 20 May 2015
- London Cocktail Week – Monday 5 October – Sunday 11 October 2015.

Visit : www.londonbeerweek.com and www.abv.lobal.com. Contact : Siobhan Payne at siobhan@londonbeerweek.com.

The 2015 Los Angeles Travel & Adventure Show

21 and 22 February 2015

The 2015 Los Angeles Travel & Adventure Show will take place at the Long Beach Convention Center.

Visit : www.LAtravelshow.com. Contact : Ann Flower at Ann@AnnFlowerPR.com.

The Philadelphia Flower Show

28 February to 8 March 2015

The Philadelphia Flower Show is the world's longest-running and largest indoor flower show. It was first held in 1829.

Staged at the Convention Center in Pennsylvania's largest city, the show centres around a different theme each year and will this year celebrate the movies.

The show features landscape displays, horticultural and floral competitions, lectures and demonstrations.

The Philadelphia Flower Show is a citywide celebration with local shops and businesses also transforming their shop-fronts with beautiful, floral displays.

Visit : www.theflowershow.com and www.visitpa.com . Contact : Kelly Walker at kwalker@tierneyagency.com

The European Fine Art Fair, Maastricht, Holland

13 March - 22 March 2015

The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) is one of the world's leading art and antique fairs, attracting the best dealers, academics, art critics, and collectors.

Over 250 of the world's top antiques and art dealers bring medieval manuscripts, maps, coins, classical antiquities, silver, jewelry, porcelain, furniture, modern art and old masters.

Visit : www.tefaf.com. Contact : Simone Sagi at sSagi@holland.com.

Keukenhof Gardens, Lisse

20 March - 17 May 2015

Keukenhof is Holland's world renowned spring park with seven million flower bulbs in bloom.

The park's theme for 2015 will be Van Gogh, 125 years of inspiration.

Gardens and four pavilions will display tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, orchids, roses, carnations, irises and lilies.

Visit : www.keukenhof.nl/en. Contact : Simone Sagi at sSagi@holland.com.

Norfolk & Norwich Festival, UK

8 to 24 May 2015

The Norfolk & Norwich Festival is the flagship arts festival for the East of England with a reputation for innovative and inspirational programming and commissioning.

It is one of the big four UK international arts festivals, standing alongside Edinburgh International Festival, Manchester International Festival and Brighton Festival.

The 2015 festival will include theatre, contemporary circus, music, dance, visual art and 'live' cinema.

Visit : www.nnfestival.org.uk. Contact : Sara Hardman at sara.hardman@visitnorwich.co.uk.

The Gimli International Film Festival, Manitoba, Canada

22 to 26 July 2015

The "Little Iceland" region of the central Canadian province of Manitoba stages annual Gimli International Film Festival, which is known for its free nightly screenings on Gimli's lakefront beach.

Films are projected over the lake onto a 35-foot-by-35-foot screen erected offshore on a sandbar surrounded by water. The family-friendly screenings attract crowds averaging 500 moviegoers per night, who bring their own beach blankets, cushions, and folding chairs.

The celestial fireworks of the aurora borealis — the northern lights — sometimes appear in the night sky over the lake.

Visit : www.gimlifilm.com and www.travelmanitoba.com/media. Contact : angie@popsportsent.com.

Grizfest Music Festival, Northern British Columbia, Canada

31 July and 1 August 2015

The annual *Grizfest Music Festival* takes place in the Northern BC community of Tumbler Ridge, northeast of Prince George.

It focuses on Canadian talent and is a blend of various musical styles

Visit : www.grizfest.com. Contact : Carla Mont at Carla.Mont@gov.bc.ca.

Arts festivals in the UK

The Aberdeen International Youth Festival

24 July to 1 August 2015

The Aberdeen International Youth Festival is one of the world's largest multi-arts participatory festivals.

It attracts the most exciting young artists, performers and performing companies from across the globe.

Since it was established in 1973 AIYF has welcomed over 24,000 young artists from over 81 countries to North East Scotland.

Visit : www.aiyf.org. Contact : info@aiyf.org.

Wilderness, Cornbury Estate, Oxfordshire, UK

12 to 14 August 2011

Wilderness is a new festival of music, food, learning and literature held in the lakes, forests and parkland of Oxfordshire's Cornbury Estate.

Visit : www.wildernessfestival.com. Contact : juliebland@familypr.co.uk

FrightFest Vue West End Cinema, Leicester Square, London

21 to 25 August 2015

FrightFest is the UK's premiere fantasy and horror film festival. The festival attracts thousands of genre fans each August for five days of premieres, previews, personal appearances, signings and surprises.

Visit : www.frightfest.co.uk. Contact : Greg Day at greg@cloutcom.co.uk.

A Summer Squall, Ramsgate, Yorkshire

23 to 25 August 2015

A Summer Squall, in the Yorkshire seaside resort of Ramsgate, includes theatre, music, dance, literature, film and visual art.

Activities and performance take place indoors and outside in venues and spaces around the town, in order that the most numbers of people can participate and attend.

Most events are free of charge but some have a small ticket cost.

Visit : www.ramsgatearts.org. Contact : info@ramsgatearts.org.

London International Animation Festival

August 2015 (dates tbc)

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.

Portobello Film Festival, London

1 to 18 September 2011

The Portobello Film Festival is Europe's largest independent film festival, with 17 days of cutting edge cinema from the modern masters of the medium, with all events free.

At the heart of Portobello Film Festival are shorts and features that embody the state of cinematic art on digital formats, from international upcoming directors.

Evenings are programmed into drama, documentary, comedy, animation, music, art, sci-fi & horror and World.

They'll be non stop screenings at The Inn On The Green and Westbourne Studios, where there will also be a Video Cafe for films to be brought along on the night.

Visit : www.portobellofilmfestival.com. Contact : pff@btopenworld.com.

Cambridge Film Festival, UK

August/September 2015 (dates to be confirmed)

The Cambridge Film Festival has been committed to delivering the very best in independent international cinema for over 30 years.

Bold and imaginative in our presentation of films, what makes Cambridge different from other Festivals is that it attracts big names but is nonetheless intimate and approachable.

The chances are the acclaimed director of the much anticipated new film you're about to see is happily hanging out in the bar.

Visit : www.cambridgefilmfestival.org.uk. Contact : Sarah Bemand at sarah@margaretlondon.com

Falmouth Oyster Festival, Falmouth Cornwall, UK

8 to 11 October 2015

The Falmouth Oyster Festival celebrates the start of the oyster dredging season, the diversity and quality of Cornish Seafood and in particular, one of the last remaining traditional oyster fisheries, dredging by sail and hand punt.

Falmouth is Cornwall's leading south coast resort and home to the county's maritime heritage.

Visit : www.falmouthoysterfestival.co.uk and www.discoverfalmouth.co.uk. Contact : Gemma Teague at hello@gemmateaguemarketing.co.uk.

London Restaurant Festival

October 2015

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, including the world's first six-Michelin-star meal.

There will also be a small film festival Eat Film in hotels in Soho, Covent Garden and Charlotte Street. Cocktails will be served before a movie, and after it a three-course dinner will be served.

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

Panama City Beach, Florida

Panama City Beach Florida, offers 27 miles of white sand, the result of massive amounts of quartz crystals that washed down from the Appalachian Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico.

On the way those crystals were ground down to fine grain before being bleached by the sun.

And now Panama City Beach is using the beach to add the moniker 'music Mecca' to its list of reasons to visit: the town is drawing more acts down to the beach after the recent construction of an amphitheater, located just steps from the shores.

The Panama City Beach Mardi Gras and Music Festival during February will have free concerts by country musicians while the Seabreeze Jazz Festival attracts top smooth jazz musicians.

Visit : www.visitpanamacitybeach.com. David Demarest at David@visitpanamacitybeach.com.

Reasons to write about

Historical Regatta, Grand Canal, Venezia

The Regata Storica (6 September 2015) is the main event in the annual "Voga alla Veneta" rowing calendar.

This unique sport has been practised in the Venetian lagoon for thousands of years and today it is particularly well-known for the spectacular historical water pageant that precedes the race.

Scores of typically 16th century-style boats with gondoliers in period costume carry the Doge, the Doge's wife and all the highest ranking Venetian officials up the Grand Canal in a brightly coloured parade.

Today there are four races divided in terms of age and type of craft.

The best known and most exciting of these is the "Campioni su Gondolini" race, where a series of small, sporting gondolas fly down the Grand Canal to the finishing line at the famous "machina", the spectacular floating stage located in front of the Ca' Foscari palace.

Visit : www.comune.venezia.it. Contact : Stefania Gatta at stefania.gatta@enit.it.

New Mexico ghost towns

New Mexico's mining history and cowboy heritage has left over 400 ghost towns scattered across the state including :

Shakespeare

Shakespeare is located just outside the city of Lordsburg, near the Arizona border.

In addition to the town's regular tours there are seven living history re-enactment shows, including 'Death over an Egg' where Ross Woods was shot and killed in the dining room of the Stratford Hotel by Bean Belly Smith.

Dawson

In 1901 Dawson coal mine opened, but by 1950 the whole town was deserted due to several mining explosions that resulted in the death of over 350 miners. In its heyday Dawson, which is located in north east New Mexico, had its own newspaper, a theatre, hotel, hospital, golf course and bowling alley.

The town now stands empty and visitors are left with the memories of those who lost their lives and whose graves are marked by a single white cross.

Lake Valley

Lake Valley Ghost Town is located by the western side of Monument Peak, north west of Las Cruces. Once an old ore mining town with a reputation for being a tough cowboy haunt, today visitors can explore the old buildings and the restored school house.

Steins

Steins, an old railroad town, was named after Captain Enoch Stein, a US army officer. During the late 1800s and early 1900s a number of rail tracks were built through the town and today it is one of the most well preserved ghost towns.

Located in the south western corner of New Mexico, Steins still has its period furnishings so visitors really can take a step back in time and see how a western town really used to look.

Yeso

Yeso, which is located in the centre of El Grande, is an old trading centre for ranchers and farmers in the area. When it became clear that the land surrounding Yeso was no good to farmers many of them left, leaving behind the empty shells of family homes, a motel, garage and local shop.

Visit : www.newmexico.org. Contact: Rebecca Latham at rebecca.latham@state.nm.us.

Hastings and 1066 Country, Sussex UK

Hastings Pier to reopen Summer 2015

Hastings was once one of the country's most important resorts, and its 910ft-long pier – thought to be the first of the 99 in Britain that were built for entertainment, rather than as landing stages – was at the heart of its fortunes.

When it reopens in the summer of 2015, it will have a Jamie Oliver-style 'Fifteen' restaurant and stage circuses, plays, concerts, film festivals, farmers' markets and urban sports.

Visit : www.hpcharity.co.uk.

150th anniversary of Rudyard Kipling's birth

Bateman's, the home of Rudyard Kipling, is located in the rolling countryside and offers the chance to learn about his life and the story of his son Jack, whom he lost in the trenches of the Great War, aged 18. From November 2015, an exhibition of family photos will focus on Kipling's early life in India.

Visit : www.nationaltrust.org.uk/batemans.

Coastal Culture Trail - East Sussex: Eastbourne - Bexhill - Hastings

The Coastal Culture Trail has been created by the Jerwood Gallery in Hastings, De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill, and Towner in Eastbourne.

The three galleries share a 20 mile stretch of East Sussex coastline and the trail 'promises' a weekend of great art, great food and the great outdoors.

Visit : www.coastalculturetrail.wordpress.com.

The True Crime Museum, Hastings

The True Crime Museum on Hastings seafront, is housed in 3,000 sq/ft of seafront caves and hosts the largest collection of crime memorabilia in the UK. Displays give an insight into the world of serial killers, forensics, gangsters, prisoners and poisoners!

Visit : www.truecrimemuseum.co.uk.

Battle of Hastings 950th anniversary 2016

The towns of Hastings & Battle (the latter being where the battlefield lies) will be celebrating the 950th anniversary in 2016 with a programme of cultural events.

These will include a bigger than usual version of its annual re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings, which takes place every October on the battlefield lying behind Battle Abbey (English Heritage).

Visit : www.visit1066country.com. Contact : Jane Ellis at jmellis@hastings.gov.uk.

Tucson, Arizona

Tucson, Arizona, located in the heart of the biologically diverse Sonoran Desert, offers several 'outdoor classrooms' that provide visitors with a deeper understanding of the region's unique range of adapted plants and animals.

At Tohono Chul and at the Tucson Botanical Gardens, year-round guided hikes along nature trails offer insights into the complexity of life in the living desert surrounding Tucson.

Visitors can see and smell the pungent aromas of arid-adapted plants that are often spiny, mostly tiny-leaved, and usually coloured a 'sagey' shade of green.

Sharp-eyed visitors can spy camouflaged bird nests, burrows housing desert critters of all shapes and sizes (many a giant saguaro cactus serves as a 'cactus hotel' for bird and other desert critters), and brightly-hued flowers that adorn barrel and other cactus in the spring and summer months.

And expect the unexpected when exploring the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum's naturalistic zoo, botanical garden, and aquarium.

Behind-the-scenes tours with animal keepers include the museum's hummingbird aviary and also the reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates display.

The museum's seasonal

The museum's seasonal (October-April) animal presentation called Raptor Free Flight features trained Harris' Hawks, Gray Hawks, Barn Owls, Great Horned Owls and other birds-of-prey that soar and swoop over the heads of the audience.

During private guided tours of the museum's new Warden Aquarium, visitors can experience Sonoran Sea touch tanks with freshwater and marine invertebrates like sea stars, sea hares, turbo snails and hermit crabs.

Visit : www.visittucson.org , www.tohonochulpark.org/tours/, www.tucsonbotanical.org/about/about-us/garden-tours and www.desertmuseum.org/visit/keeperwalk. Contact : Jessica Stephens at jstephens@visittucson.org.

The World Land Trust and World Wildlife Day

International conservation charity, World Land Trust, is marking World Wildlife Day on 3 March 2015 by appealing to the public to rise to the challenge of protecting wildlife.

World Land Trust works with an international network of conservation partners to protect the world's most biologically important habitats and their species.

Founded in 1989, the Trust has active conservation projects in more than 20 countries across four continents.

The World Land Trust is urging the public to take action for wildlife on World Wildlife Day by supporting one of the following initiatives.

Protecting the world's big cats

Time is running out for big cats in the wild and species such as Bengal Tiger, Jaguar and Puma are at risk.

World Land Trust is currently putting the spotlight on feline predators with a major appeal to raise funds to save habitat for big cats.

Visit : www.worldlandtrust.org/projects/big-cat-appeal.

Save an acre of wilderness

World Land Trust funds land purchase to create nature reserves in areas where biodiversity is at risk.

Donations to WLT's Buy an Acre fund have helped save habitat in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico.

Visit : www.worldlandtrust.org/projects/buy-acre.

Tackling wildlife crime

World Land Trust raises funds for its network of conservation partners to employ and equip rangers to protect some of the most threatened habitats on Earth.

A ranger's work can be as dangerous as it is rewarding and rangers supported by WLT have found themselves confronting illegal loggers and armed poachers during their routine patrols through the reserves.

Visit : www.worldlandtrust.org/projects/keepers-of-the-wild

Visit : www.worldlandtrust.org. Contact : Jessica Meins at worldlandtrust@mcluskey.co.uk.

A place to stay

The Tideline Ocean Resort and Spa, Palm Beach, Florida

The Tideline Ocean Resort and Spa is the latest in Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants' stable of US hotels.

The property, with 134 guest rooms and two suites and which was formerly known as The Omphoy Ocean Resort, sits on the Atlantic Ocean's edge, along 6,900 sq ft of beachfront, and has 134 guest rooms and suites.

Kimpton now operates 60 hotels and nearly 70 restaurants, bars and lounges in 26 US cities.

Visit : www.tidelineresort.com and . Contact : www.KimptonHotels.com. Contact : kimpton@allisonpr.com.

Half Moon, Montego Bay, Jamaica

Situated on 400 acres with two miles of private white-sand beach, Half Moon is a full-service lifestyle resort.

Half Moon has been awarded four diamonds by AAA for over 35 consecutive years – the only resort in the Caribbean to have earned such an achievement.

In addition, Half Moon is the first hotel to be inducted into the Caribbean Hotel Association's Green Hotel Hall of Fame. Its preservation program includes recycling, waste management, composting and energy conservation.

The resort also maintains a 20-acre nature reserve and along with a vibrant herb and vegetable garden as well as an array of fruit trees.

Visit : www.halfmoon.rockresorts.com. Contact : David Barber at dbarber@halfmoon.com

Le Meridien New Orleans

Starwood Hotels & has unveiled Le Meridien New Orleans following a \$29 million overhaul.

The newly-renovated hotel features 410 fully redesigned guestrooms, including 22 suites, three new food and beverage outlets and LMNO, a new destination restaurant serving 'New American fare infused with global flavours'.

Centrally located on Poydras Street, Le Méridien New Orleans is adjacent to the Arts District and just a few blocks from the jazz clubs, restaurants and night clubs of the French Quarter.

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

Zone by The Park, India

The Park Hotels, pioneers of luxury boutique hotels in India, has opened the first property in its 'Zone by The Park' brand in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu region.

The second and third Zone by The Park properties will be Jaipur (Rajasthan) Mahabalipuram and in OMR, Chennai and Raipur (Chhattisgarh).

The new hotels will be the starting points to enjoy India's lesser known cities and become a hub of social interactivity for modern business and leisure travellers.

Visit : www.zonebythepark.com and www.theparkhotels.com. Contact : Mark Shand at mark.shand@luchfordapm.com.

Tiara Yaktsa, Theoule-Sur-Mer, France

Tiara Yaktsa, a boutique hotel in Theoule-Sur-Mer, in Southeast France, has joined the Relais & Chateaux group.

Located on the Mediterranean a short walk away from the village of Théoule-sur-Mer, Tiara Yaktsa enjoys a setting on the French Riviera.

It is 16 km from Cannes and 40 km from Nice and is surrounded by coffee shops and restaurants.

In the beachside village of Théoule-sur-Mer, guests can enjoy an authentic French village atmosphere and views over to the Lerins islands.

Relais & Chateaux has a portfolio of 500 properties in 60 countries and has 12 new boutique properties in 2015.

Visit : www.relaischateaux.com/yaktsa. Contact Lallie Fraser at Lallie@grifcopr.com.

The Kinloch Club, Lake Taupo, New Zealand

Set in over 600 acres on the shores of Lake Taupo, The Kinloch Club has expanded with *The Kinloch Club Villas* complementing an on-site 18-hole Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course.

The Kinloch Club Villas feature 26 one-bedroom apartments and luxurious two or three-bedroom villas in a landscaped setting on the shores of Lake Taupo, the heart-shaped lake at the scenic hub of New Zealand's North Island.

The Villas are the perfect base to discover the scenic diversity of New Zealand, from water sports on the lake to winter skiing in Tongariro Park or walking the Tongariro Crossing.

There's seasonal fly-fishing in some of the world's best trout streams, while gentle sightseeing includes the geysers and bubbling mud of Rotorua, heritage heartland of Maoridom.

Visit www.kinloch-golf.com. Contact : Sarah Rigler at sr@verypcc.com.

Downtown Disney Resort Hotels

The seven Downtown Disney Resort Hotels are offering "Escape From The Cold" rates from 1 February to 31 March 2015.

The hotels are :

- B Resort & Spa
- Best Western Lake Buena Vista Resort Hotel
- Buena Vista Palace Hotel & Spa
- DoubleTree Suites by Hilton
- Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista
- Holiday Inn Orlando – Lake Buena Vista, and
- Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Resort

Special events in Walt Disney World during this period include :

- The Walt Disney World Pro Soccer Classic at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex
1 February to 1 March 2015
- The 22nd Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival
4 March to 17 May 2015
- Garden Rocks Concert Series at Epcot
6 March to 17 May 2015
- Atlanta Braves Spring Training at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex
4 March to 4 April 2015 .

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

An Alliance focus on :

The Ramblers most inspiring routes, UK

To encourage people to enjoy the great outdoors in 2015, the Ramblers is sharing its top ten most inspirational walks to try during the year.

Rhossili, Gower, Swansea

Length: 4.3 miles

Rhossili offers some of the world's most beautiful coastal locations and this walk showcases sights from the Gower's most breathtaking viewpoints.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/rhossili.

Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, Edinburgh

Length: 2.7 miles

Arthur's Seat offers dramatic Scottish wilderness rising unexpectedly from the heart of Edinburgh.

It is a steep climb to the top, but on a clear day there are views over the entire Scottish capital.

visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/arthur.

Derwent Water, Cumbria

Length: 2.4 miles

This is a walk through woodland and fields, with views of two islands in Derwent Water: Lord's Island and Rampsholme Island and fells.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/derwent.

Harting Down, Hampshire

Length: 5.6 miles

Within the South Downs National Park, this circular walk starts and finishes at Harting Down – one of the National Trust's largest areas of ancient chalk downland, and a nature reserve.

Initially following the South Downs Way, the final stretch involves an ascent of Beacon Hill for a 360-degree view of the surrounding Downs.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/harting

Brimham Rocks, North Yorkshire

Length: 9.3 miles

This linear walk goes past the sandy beaches and dramatic cliffs with distinctive marine flora.

Long stretches of this coast remain wild and unspoilt with windswept headlands and old-fashioned holiday resorts.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/bedruthan.

Hadrians Wall, Northumberland

Length: 5.2 miles

This route takes in the most dramatic stretch of Hadrian's Wall and the chance to look around Housesteads Roman Fort.

The fort also offers stunning panoramic views from the top of its walls.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/hadrianswallroute.

Colleges and the Backs in Cambridge

Length: 3.1 miles

This circular walk provides a tour of some of Cambridge's most beautiful buildings and the area of the Backs, where several of Cambridge University's colleges back onto the River Cam.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/colleges.

Win Hill, Peak District

Length: 2.7 miles

Win Hill in the Peak District's hills is at the centre of a number of summits and ridges, such as Mam Tor, Derwent Edge and Kinder Scout.

Visit : www.ramblers.org.uk/longmynd

Visit : www.Ramblers.org.uk/ramblersroutes. Contact : Ellie Clewlow at Ellie.Clewlow@ramblers.org.uk.



An Alliance focus on :

Trinidad and Tobago

The dual-island nation of Trinidad & Tobago, in the south eastern region of the Caribbean, offers a blend of culture, eclectic cuisine and an assortment of eco-adventure activities.

Trinidad

Trinidad, the self-styled 'cultural capital of the Caribbean,' is home to the world famous Carnival and the birthplace of the steel pan drum.

Tobago

Tobago, sister island to Trinidad, is the quintessential Caribbean island with secluded beaches, quaint villages, private villas and award-winning eco-attractions.

These include the Main Ridge Rainforest, the oldest protected reserve in the western hemisphere and the six-time award winner for World's Leading Ecotourism Destination by the World Travel Awards.

Conservation and Preservation

Turtle Watching Season

With 80% of all leatherback nesting in the insular Caribbean, one of the world's most important leatherback turtle nesting locations, Trinidad offers a near guarantee to witness giant sea turtles on beaches.

Tobago has an important population of hawksbills living in its numerous coral reefs and many green turtles inhabit the seagrass beds off the coast.

The nesting population on these islands makes the conservation efforts critical.

The best time to spot a leatherback is on a beachwalk on Matura Beach or Grand Riviere during their nesting time from March through July.

The hawksbills, found in the coral reefs of Tobago, nest from May to September.

Visit : www.gotrinidadandtobago.com or www.visit TobAGO.gov.tt.

Blue Flag Certification

The Las Cuevas Beach in Trinidad has been selected as the pilot beach for the implementation of the Blue Flag Certification program.

This is a voluntary eco-initiative with a strict criteria dealing with environmental education management, water quality and safety.

Las Cuevas Beach, now the only certified beach in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Visit : www.blueflagtrinidadandtobago.com.

Cultural Celebrations and Festivals

Carnival

Monday 16 and Tuesday 17 February 2015

Trinidad Carnival is the Caribbean's largest and is a celebration of culture, calypso and cuisine.

Hotels on the island are at full capacity with thousands of masquerade (mas) band revelers and bystanders eagerly awaiting the highlight of the festival, the parade of the bands on Carnival.

Visit : www.goTrinidadandtobago.com.

Tobago Jazz Experience

18 to 26 April 2015

Tobago Jazz Experience highlights the culture, unique gastronomy and friendly residents of Tobago while enjoying the music by local and international talent.

This year's headlining superstars include Kool & the Gang, Jill Scott, and Jennifer Hudson.

All the events take place on the beaches of Tobago.

Visit : www.tobagojazzexperience.com.

Trinidad and Tobago

(cont)

The Goat Races

On Easter Tuesday, April 7, the coastal village of Buccoo stages the Buccoo Goat Races, an energetic event drawing in thousands of spectators every year.

Held annually since 1925, goat-handlers known as jockeys race specially trained goats for a year's worth of bragging rights while patrons have the opportunity to try their hand at crab racing.

The event starts with a street parade where booths offering crafts, t-shirts, food and drink line the streets.

Many residents open up their homes and provide delicious, authentic cuisine for those who have worked up an appetite after a day at the races.

Visit : www.visittobago.gov.tt.

New Hotels and Expansions

Radisson Hotel, Trinidad

The Radisson Trinidad, the newest hotel addition to Port of Spain, is best-known for its 360-degree revolving restaurant, which is situated on the 14th floor.

Visit : www.radisson.com/port-of-spain-hotel-tt/ttosptr.

Visit : www.goTrinidadandTobago.com or www.visittobago.gov.tt. Contact : Cherise Stevens at Cherise@cam-pr.com

Bacolet Beach Club, Tobago

Bacolet Beach Club, one of Tobago's premier boutique hotels, recently completed expansions that include the addition of the "West Wing" building.

The addition features 15 luxurious, marble tiled suites and an infinity pool overlooking the hotel's private bay.

Visit : www.bacoletbeachclub.com.

Chic, Tobago

Located three minutes from the A.N.R. Robinson International Airport, 'Chic' the boutique hotel and conference centre opened in December 2014.

The 40-bedroom hotel features a modern design in a relaxed atmosphere, a swimming pool, Tempo, the hotel's restaurant, a spa and Flip Flops Pool Bar.

Visit : www.chictobago.com.

Castara Retreats, Tobago

Castara Retreats, a family-run eco-resort, has almost doubled in size, over the past 18 months and now offers 14 lodges.

Visit : www.castararetreats.com. For reservations, call Kenny on 766-1010.



An Alliance focus on :

Annual cultural events in Italy

Verona in Love, Verona

12-15 February 2015

Verona in Love, which is dedicated to Love and to Lovers, takes place in the main squares of the city and it is a tribute to San Valentine and to the Shakespearian tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.

During the festival there are live concerts, tasting and handicrafts events and typical local markets.

There is also the "Romeo and Juliet" half marathon.

www.veronainlove.it

The Festival of San Remo, Sanremo, Liguria

10 to 14 February 2015

The Festival of San Remo, an annual event since 1951, is a singing competition begun as a way of revitalising the economy following WWII.

Over the years it has become a top Italian music contest broadcast on national TV and becoming the inspiration for the Eurovision Song Contest.

Performances take place at the Ariston Theatre.

Visit : www.sanremo.rai.it.

The Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Festival, Teatro Comunale, Florence

30 April to 27 June 2015

This is one of the oldest traditional cultural events in Florence.

The Stabile Orchestrale Fiorentina was created in 1928 and in 1933 organized the first edition of the Festival, which has grown to international fame.

The Festival has its own Ballet Company called Maggio Dance.

Visit : www.maggiofiorentino.com

Arena di Verona

19 June to 6 September 2015

This International Opera Festival has been held for 102 years and, in 2015, will : Aida, Romeo et Juliet, Nabucco, Tosca, Don Giovanni, Il Barbiere di Siviglia and Carmina Burana.

Visit : www.arena.it.

Ravello Concerts, Ravello, Amalfi Coast

3 April to 30 October 2015

In Spring and Autumn, Ravello stages concerts in the gardens and rooms of Villa Rufolo, which inspired Wagner for the setting of his Parsifal.

Visit : www.ravelloarts.org.

Classical Greek Theatre Festival, Siracusa, Sicily

15 May – 28 June 2015

An annual classical Greek theatrical programme in the Greek Theatre in Siracusa.

This year's programme includes: Le Supplici by Aeschylus, Medea by Seneca and Ifigenia in Aulide by Euripides..

Visit : www.indafondazione.org.

La Notte Rosa (Pink Night), Adriatic coast of Emilia Romagna

4-5 July 2015

For one night the Riviera turns pink, with each resort interpreting the theme in a creative and original way, through shows, events, theatre sets, and scenery.

La Notte Rosa takes place all along the coast, from the Lidos of Comacchio to Cattolica, but the heart of the event is the Riviera of Rimini.

Visit : www.lanotterosa.it.

Annual cultural events in Italy

(Cont)

61st Puccini Festival, Torre del Lago

24 July to 30 August 2015

Torre del Lago has been hosting the Festival Puccini, created by Puccini himself, since 1930.

The outdoor theatre, close to Villa Mausoleo where the Master's remains lie, is a fine setting to enjoy the music.

Operas to be performed in 2015 are: Madame Butterfly, Tosca, La Rondine and Turandot.

Visit : www.puccinifestival.it.

Estate Musicale Chigiana, Siena, Montalcino, Asciano

July and August 2015

The churches, abbeys and theatres of the province and city of Siena are the settings for the Chigiana Summer, featuring maestros of international music.

Visit : www.chigiana.it.

Sferisterio Opera Festival, Macerata

17 July to 9 August 2015

The 51st edition of the Festival will stage Rigoletto, Cavalleria Rusticana, I Pagliacci and La Boheme.

The Opera Festival is hosted almost entirely in the theatre-shaped Sferisterio, unique in its architectural genre.

Visit : www.sferisterio.it.

Rossini Opera Festival, Pesaro

10 to 22 August 2015

This festival is entirely dedicated to the music and operas of Gioacchino Rossini, who was born in the Marche city of Pesaro.

This year will be the 36th edition of the festival and the programme includes: La gazza ladra, L'inganno felice, La gazzetta, Viaggio a Reims.

Visit : www.rossinioperafestival.it.

Musica Riva Festival, Riva del Garda

19 July to 2 August 2015

This music festival showcases young musicians from around the world performing classical music and dance and including a competition dedicated to the musician Riccardo Zandonai.

Visit : www.musicarivafestival.com.

The Summer Jamboree, Senigallia, Marche

1 to 9 August 2015

This music Festival is dedicated to the music and culture in America in the '40s and '50s with live concerts of dj set swing, rock'n'roll, jive, doo-wop, rhythm'n'blues, hill-billy and western swing.

There is also a '40s and '50s classic cars show.

Visit : www.summerjamboree.com

Venice Film Festival, Venice

26 August to 5 Sept 2015

Venice hosts the 72nd edition of this film festival, one of the oldest and most famous.

Thousands of visitors, dozens of stars and hundreds of projections are crammed into ten days of festivities and parties.

The Festival is staged at the Lido Island in the Venice Lagoon.

Visit : www.labiennale.org.

Mito Settembre Musica, Turin and Milan

September 2015

This is a major festival developed from the thirty years experience of Settembre Musica which connects Turin and Milan.

The programme includes performances from the world's best orchestras and baroque opera, medieval and contemporary music and jazz at open-air shows and night-time concerts.

Visit : www.mitosettembremusica.it.

Festivaletteratura, Mantova

9 to 13 September 2015

This will be the 19th edition of the Festival of Literature and offers cultural events, readings, shows, concerts, all full of fun and originality.

Visit : www.festivaletteratura.it.

Visit : www.enit.it. Contact : Stefania Gatta at stefania.gatta@enit.it.

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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- **Agency** : agency representatives with travel or tourism clients



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