

# The Alliance

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# bulletin

Providing key information on a no-frills format for professional who travel to write, edit, broadcast or create images. Editor : Ashley Gibbins : [Ashley@itwalliance.com](mailto:Ashley@itwalliance.com)

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[www.itwalliance.com](http://www.itwalliance.com)

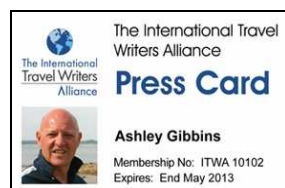
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## Registering with the Alliance

To register with the Alliance visit : [www.itwalliance.com](http://www.itwalliance.com), and register as a :

- **Member** : travel writers, broadcasters and photographers
- **Editor** : commissioning editors
- **Partner** : travel and tourism industry organisations, or
- **Agency** : agency representatives with travel or tourism clients

## The Alliance press card



**The International Travel Writers Alliance Press Card now** provides Alliance journalists with formal recognition of their status and standing – and a roving ambassador's role - in the profession.

See Appendix one for the directory of opportunities for press card holders.

## Join and follow



[http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=2978414&trk=hb\\_side\\_g](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=2978414&trk=hb_side_g)



@writersalliance

# The Alliance bulletin

## The Alliance Opinion Forum : Essential apps

Travel professionals who spend much time 'on the road', in the air or 'all at sea' will likely have a veritable arsenal of 'apps' to make trips that little bit easier and enjoyable.

But which one's are really worth downloading?

The International Travel Writers Alliance is looking to get your opinion on the app's - on your iPad, iPhone or android cell phones and tablets - that really are worth their place there and in your heart.

If you let us know the apps you use on a regular basis with a brief explanation as to why, we will be delighted to add these to an Alliance's Opinion Forum (AOF) briefing on *Essential travel apps*.

We will by-line you to the entry.

This briefing will be published in a future issue of the Alliance's bulletin and published as a dossier in its own right.

This will see the *Essential travel apps* information getting to the Alliance's :

- 10,100 professional travel journalists
- 3,600 travel industry partners, and
- 1,600 representatives of agencies with travel related clients.

You can contribute to the *Essential travel apps* briefing via the International Travel Writers Alliance *Linkedin* group discussion or by emailing Ashley Gibbins at [Ashley@itwalliance.com](mailto:Ashley@itwalliance.com).

## 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](http://www.itwalliance.com).**

### Partners

#### Terme Krka, Slovenia

Terme Krka, which is a Relais Chateaux Castle, is one of the biggest resorts in Slovenia.

It offers three spa centres, three medical centres, sport facilities (tennis, golf, cycling, nordic walking and martial arts).

Situated on the coast in Southeast Slovenia, Terme Krka also offers great connections for touring Italy, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Montenegro.

Visit : [www.terme-krka.si](http://www.terme-krka.si). Contact : Petra Florjancic at [petra.florjancic@terme-krka.si](mailto:petra.florjancic@terme-krka.si).

#### Ullswater 'Steamers' (UK)

Award winning Ullswater 'Steamers' have been sailing on England's most beautiful lake since 1859, providing the perfect opportunity to combine a cruise with some of the most famous and spectacular walks in the Lake District National Park. Open all year.

Visit : [www.ullswater-steamers.co.uk](http://www.ullswater-steamers.co.uk). Contact Rachel Bell at [rachel@lakedistrictstates.co.uk](mailto:rachel@lakedistrictstates.co.uk).

## **The British Golf Museum, Scotland**

The British Golf Museum, Scotland

The British Golf Museum is located opposite the clubhouse of the famous 'Old Course' of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club in St Andrews, Scotland.

The 5 Star British Golf Museum displays over 500 years of golf history, with visitors able to watch footage from every Open Championship to the present day, as well as archive film of the oldest known footage of a golf match played in 1898.

Other features include touch screen interactives and a putting green, where visitors can attempt to sink their putt.

The British Golf Museum continues to consolidate its reputation as a world heritage centre for golf and the home of a Recognised Collection of National Significance.

Visit : [www.britishgolfmuseum.co.uk](http://www.britishgolfmuseum.co.uk). Contact : Judy Chance at [judyhance@randa.org](mailto:judyhance@randa.org)

## **Visit Cornwall**

Visit Cornwall is the official tourist board for Cornwall offering a destination PR service including :

- bespoke itinerary planning
- copyright free copy and images
- feature ideas
- filming liaison and location advice
- fact checking
- stats and facts

Visit : [www.visitcornwall.com](http://www.visitcornwall.com). Contact : Julia Hughes at [julia.hughes@visitcornwall.com](mailto:julia.hughes@visitcornwall.com).

## **StressFreeParking (UK)**

StressFreeParking is one of the UK's leading meet and greet airport parking providers at 15 UK airports, including Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted and Malaga.

Clients drive to the airport drop off departure. When you're 20 minutes away from the airport, they call the chauffeur hotline number and a chauffeur will be dispatched to meet them on arrival to sort out everything quickly and efficiently.

Visit : [www.stressfreeairportparking.com](http://www.stressfreeairportparking.com). Contact : Tom Scott at [tom@umpf.co.uk](mailto:tom@umpf.co.uk)

## **Talout (Morocco)**

Talout organise and run trips with accommodation and transportation throughout Morocco.

Visit : [www.talout.com](http://www.talout.com). Contact : Fawz Soufiane at [taloutabde@yahoo.fr](mailto:taloutabde@yahoo.fr).

## **Brad and Sofies Scandinavia (USA)**

Brad and Sofies Scandinavia is dedicated to bringing the world the Scandinavian Heritage through movies, a cultural monthly newsletter, blog and social media.

Visit : [www.bradandsofiesscandinavia.com](http://www.bradandsofiesscandinavia.com). Bradley Thornton at [bradleyjthornton@yahoo.com](mailto:bradleyjthornton@yahoo.com).

## **The Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway (UK)**

The Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway is the oldest and longest narrow gauge railways in the Lake District, known affectionately as La'al Ratty meaning " little railway ".

Its heritage steam engines journey from the coast to Dalegarth for Boot some 210ft above sea level within sight of England's highest mountains.

Visit : [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk). Contact : Alex Tilsley at [alex@lakedistrictstates.co.uk](mailto:alex@lakedistrictstates.co.uk).

## Agencies

### AboveWater Public Relations and Marketing (USA)

AboveWater Public Relations and Marketing is an established full-service agency with offices in Naples, St. Petersburg, and New Smyrna Beach, FL.

AboveWater provides professional marketing and public relations consulting services to a variety of industries, helping large and small businesses achieve their marketing communication goals.

Visit : [www.abovewater.com](http://www.abovewater.com). Contact : Mary Jane Kolassa at [mjkolassa@abovewater.com](mailto:mjkolassa@abovewater.com).

### ATC (Austria)

ATC was founded as a tourism knowledge provider (Austrian Tourism Consultants), a field in which ATC has been a leading international player for the last 20 years.

It develops long-term sustainable solutions taking into account regional features, future trends and the carrying capacities of the natural and cultural resources used in tourism.

In a holistic approach, ATC draws on the experience of specialists covering all fields related to the tourism and leisure industries.

Visit : [www.atc-consultants.com](http://www.atc-consultants.com). Contact : Heinz Patzak at [hpatzak@hotmail.com](mailto:hpatzak@hotmail.com).

## News

### Aruba enhances green credentials

The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba has further enhanced its green credentials with the introduction of electric, zero-emission buses – the first in the Caribbean.

With a target of becoming emissions-free by 2020, Aruba hopes to convert all public and private vehicles into electrified alternatives.

The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba is located 27 km (17 mi) north of the coast of Venezuela.

Together with Bonaire and Curaçao, it forms a group referred to as the ABC islands of the Leeward Antilles, the southern island chain of the Lesser Antilles.

Unlike much of the Caribbean region, Aruba has a dry climate and an arid, cactus-strewn landscape.

Visit : [www.aruba.com](http://www.aruba.com). Contact : Joanna Walding at [j.walding@aruba.com](mailto:j.walding@aruba.com).

### The Lanesborough, Knightsbridge, London

The Lanesborough Hotel, one of London's iconic five-star hotels has closed for renovations and will reopen in September 2013.

The new designs by interior designer, Alberto Pinto, will enhance all guest rooms and public areas while honouring the building's architectural heritage.

Visit : [www.lanesborough.com](http://www.lanesborough.com). Contact: Clare Gillespie at [Clare.Gillespie@luchfordapm.com](mailto:Clare.Gillespie@luchfordapm.com).

## World Around Me

World Around Me (WAM) is an app that allows visitors in an unfamiliar city to quickly and easily find the facilities they need.

WAM is the creation of Lancaster based start-up WT InfoTech and gives business tourists, holiday makers and other travellers the opportunity to quickly and easily overlay their physical surroundings with digitally generated information about near-by facilities.

The user inputs their own search term or select one of 14 pre-defined categories, hold up their smartphone and follow digitally generated signposts, which is updated in real time.

Searchable categories include restaurants, bars and pubs, doctor's surgeries, gas stations, hotels and museums.

WAM is currently available across 140 different countries.

Visit : [www.worldaroundmeapp.com](http://www.worldaroundmeapp.com). Contact : Kirsten Pettigrew at [Kirsten.Pettigrew@skvcommunications.co.uk](mailto:Kirsten.Pettigrew@skvcommunications.co.uk).

## DC Cool, Washington, DC

Washington, DC has launched DC Cool a new marketing campaign and website encouraging travellers in 2014 to delve deeper into the capital's neighbourhoods.

The website also provides information on the capital's art, dining, hotels, nightlife, shopping and sport, including the recent "Anchorman" exhibit at the Newseum, the "Van Gogh" exhibit at the Phillips Collection, and the upcoming "America Cool" exhibit at the National Portrait Gallery.

Visit : [www.DCcool.com](http://www.DCcool.com). Contact : Lisa Cooper at [lisa.cooper@kbc-pr.com](mailto:lisa.cooper@kbc-pr.com).

## Exbury Gardens, the New Forest, Hampshire UK

Visitors to Exbury Gardens in the New Forest will be in for a special treat from March 2014, when

The 'Gilbury Lane Garden' will open at Exbury Gardens for the first time in March 2014, showcasing hundreds of camellias, including over 200 named varieties from the Trehane Collection.

The camellias were donated seven years ago by horticulturalist and camellia expert Jennifer Trehane, and - having reached a height of approx 6ft – promise a spectacular display of early spring colour.

Exbury is know as a Spring Woodland Garden and particularly for the Rothschild Collection of rhododendrons and azaleas.

The Gilbury Lane Garden, which was replanted after the Great Storm of 1987, covers between 2-3 acres.

Visit : [www.exbury.co.uk](http://www.exbury.co.uk). Contact : Vicky Scott at [Vicky.scott@exbury.co.uk](mailto:Vicky.scott@exbury.co.uk).

## Botel Marina opens in Rijeka, Croatia

The first Croatian boat hotel (botel) is docked at Adamić Pier, in the heart of Rijeka.

Built in Denmark in 1935, Botel Marina has now been transformed into a hotel with 35 cabins, lobby, reception, coffee and wine bar.

Visit : [www.botel-marina.com/en](http://www.botel-marina.com/en). Contact : Tim Thackray at [Tim.Thackray@Rooster.co.uk](mailto:Tim.Thackray@Rooster.co.uk).

## European Festival Awards

Presented in association with YOUROPE and Eurosonic Noorderslag the European Festival Awards are the only pan-European body dedicated to recognising the contributions and achievements of the event organisers and performing artists.

The 2013 awards feature over 360 festivals from 34 different countries.

Among the award categories :

### Best New Festival

B.my.Lake (Hungary)	Metal Hammer Festival (Germany)
Burning Eagle Festival (Germany)	Snowboxx (Andorra)
First We Take Berlin Festival (Germany)	Solar Ibiza (Spain)
Groove Music Festival (Ireland)	WeitjeRock (Netherlands)
Last Summer Dance (Luxembourg)	Your'in (Belgium)

### Best Indoor Festival

Blues in Hell (Norway)	I Love Techno (Belgium)
Camden Crawl Dublin 2013 (Ireland)	MAYDAY (Germany)
Doomsday Festival (Belgium)	Metal Hammer Festival (Germany)
Eurosonic Noorderslag (Netherlands)	Rolling Stone Weekender (Germany)
First We Take Berlin Festival (Germany)	Waves Vienna (Austria)

### Artist's Favourite European Festival

Glastonbury (UK)	Pukkelpop (Belgium)
Lowlands (Netherlands)	Rock Werchter (Belgium)
Paleo Festival (Switzerland)	Roskilde (Denmark)
Park Live Moscow (Russia)	Sziget (Hungary)
Primavera (Spain)	Woodstock (Poland)

### Best Major Festival

Dour Festival (Belgium)	Rock Werchter (Belgium)
EXIT Festival (Serbia)	Sziget (Hungary)
Hurricane/Southside (Germany)	Tomorrowland (Belgium)
Open'er Festival (Poland)	Wacken Open Air (Germany)
Pukkelpop (Belgium)	Woodstock Festival (Poland)

Visit : [www.eu.festivalawards.com](http://www.eu.festivalawards.com). Contact : Nikki McNeill at [nikki@globalpublicity.co.uk](mailto:nikki@globalpublicity.co.uk).

## Wet'n' Wild, Sydney, Australia

The new \$120 million waterpark Wet'n'Wild Sydney has opened in Western Sydney, New South Wales.

The attraction features over 40 slides and attractions including a giant tornado ride, the world's tallest looping tube complex and a 150-metre surf pool, 70-metre wave pool and a new action river.

Visit : [www.wetnwildsydney.com.au](http://www.wetnwildsydney.com.au). Contact : [press@wetnwildsydney.com.au](mailto:press@wetnwildsydney.com.au).

## Leads

### Pittock Mansion, Portland, Oregon

Pittock Mansion, a historic Portland landmark, will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2014 with special events and exhibits throughout the year.

Considered a city treasure for its history and architectural beauty, the mansion has just completed a one-million-dollar renovation in preparation for its centennial.

Built for former Oregonian newspaper owner Henry Pittock and his wife Georgiana Pittock, the West Hills mansion overlooks the city and offers a spectacular view of rivers, forests, bridges and mountains.

Today, the mansion is open to the public for guided and self-guided tours that provide a revealing glimpse of Portland's past.

Located with Mount Hood as a backdrop, Portland is a sophisticated, cosmopolitan city with a small-town feel.

Portland is known for hosting a number of festivals throughout the year in celebration of beer and brewing, including the Oregon Brewers Festival.

Held each summer during the last full weekend of July, it is the largest outdoor craft beer festival in North America.

Other major beer festivals throughout the calendar year include the Spring Beer and Wine Festival in April, the North American Organic Brewers Festival in June, the Portland International Beerfest in July and the Holiday Ale Festival in December.

Visit : [www.pittockmansion.org](http://www.pittockmansion.org) and [www.travelportland.com](http://www.travelportland.com). Contact: Angela Allee at [aallee@pittockmansion.org](mailto:aallee@pittockmansion.org).

### Greece's new seaplanes

Hellenic Seaplanes will launch a network of seaplanes in 2014 to offer Greek island hopping.

Hellenic Seaplanes will operate its first ten routes in 19-seater Canadian-made Twin Otter Series 400 aircraft, from mainland hubs in Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras and Volos – with further island hubs in Crete, Santorini, Kos and Mylos.

Suited to rugged coasts and islands, they operate from port to port, in meltemi winds, when ferries links are often cancelled.

By the end of 2014, Hellenic Seaplanes plan to establish a hundred hydrodromes, or floating piers, around the coastlines of Greece.

Visit : [www.hellenic-seaplanes.com](http://www.hellenic-seaplanes.com). Contact : June Field at [jfield@threesixtydegrees.net](mailto:jfield@threesixtydegrees.net).

### New Atrium at Imperial War Museum London

The Imperial War Museum (IWM) London will unveil its new atrium space, designed by Foster + Partners, in summer 2014.

On entering the museum, visitors will be presented with iconic objects including a Harrier, Spitfire and V2 rocket suspended from above as well as a T34 tank and a rocket damaged Landrover used by press.

Level 1 presents stories from the key turning points of the Second World War such as the role of strategic bombing, the fronts in Russia and Africa and the D-Day landings through curated displays

focusing on both our large objects alongside other materials from our collections including film and artworks.

Level 2 will explore more contemporary conflicts from 1945 through to today, from how Britain and Europe re-built itself after the Second World War through to the way conflicts have been fought and communities have been divided in the Cold War and places such as Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Visit : [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk). Contact : Kate Crowther at [kcrowther@iwm.org.uk](mailto:kcrowther@iwm.org.uk).

### **Grape Escapes**

Specialist wine tour operator Grape Escapes offer a 'Source of the Sauce' Tour, where visitors are invited to discover the tastes, nuances and history of different champagnes.

Legend has it that Benedictine Monk, Dom Perignon, first came across Champagne by accident when one of his barrels of fermented wine exploded at his Abbey in Hautvillers.

Upon tasting this concoction he is thought to have proclaimed, 'Come quickly, I'm tasting stars!'

Madame Clicquot reportedly took the process one step further by devising the process of riddling using her kitchen table and it is thanks to her dedication that the champagne we drink today is clear and not cloudy.

The 'Source of the Sauce' tours takes in the Ruinart caves, the oldest of the commercial estates in Champagne.

Visit [www.grapeescapes.net](http://www.grapeescapes.net). Contact : Edith Meyer at [edith@representationplus.co.uk](mailto:edith@representationplus.co.uk).

### **AdventureSmith Explorations, Alaska**

AdventureSmith Explorations has introduced Gold Rush Legacy and Alaska's Golden History tours for the 2014 season aboard the 88-guest S.S. Legacy.

Alaska's Golden History is an eight-day cruise traveling Alaska's Inside Passage from Ketchikan to Juneau or reverse.

Gold Rush Legacy follows a route from Seattle to Juneau or reverse.

The fully refurbished S.S. Legacy has the feel of an historic steamer that matches the turn-of-century feel of the Alaskan ports of Juneau, Skagway and Haines.

Costumed crew help to give a sense of history on board and Alaska's natural wonders are showcased in Glacier Bay National Park, whale watching in Icy Strait and wildlife of Frederick Sound.

Visit : [www.adventuresmithexplorations.com](http://www.adventuresmithexplorations.com). Contact : Sara Widness at [sara@widnesspr.com](mailto:sara@widnesspr.com).

### **Ragley Hall, Warwickshire UK**

Ragley, the family home of the 9th Marquess and Marchioness of Hertford, is launching a series of special Garden Open Day's throughout 2014.

Visitors can attend five different Open Days which include an opportunity to meet with the Head Gardener plus learn about specific plants throughout the seasons.

In addition visitors can see how Ragley works to optimise habitats and food resources for insects, birds and small mammals.

The Gardens occupy 10 hectares and surround the Hall which dates back to 1680.

Visit : [www.ragleyhall.com](http://www.ragleyhall.com). Contact : Tanya Aspinwall at [Tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk](mailto:Tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk).



## **Wine Tours to Europe and South America**

Wine Lovers Tours has added new wine tours for 2014 including :

- Italy's Lake Country
- the gardens and wineries of England, and
- Brazil during the extended Mardi Gras festivities.

The all-inclusive wine tours feature VIP winery visits, cuisine & culture.

Wine Lovers Tours has over 30 years' experience organizing and leading wine tours to the world's most popular wine destinations.

Visit : [www.wineloverstours.com](http://www.wineloverstours.com). Contact : Vin Marottoli at [info@wineloverstours.com](mailto:info@wineloverstours.com).

## **RED Mountain Resort, British Columbia, Canada**

RED Mountain Resort, in British Columbia's Kootenay Rockies region, has been voted Most Improved North American Resort and Best Upcoming Resort in the World Snow Awards.

The resort, which is located 10 kms north of the Canada/US border, opened for the season in mid-December with the unveiling of Grey Mountain.

In addition to the ski area's Red and Granite peaks, skiers can now access Grey Mountain by chair lift with 360-degree skiing off the top!

This development of Grey Mountain places RED Mountain Resort firmly in the scale of resorts such as Breckenridge, Colorado or Jackson Hole, Wyoming in terms of skiable acreage.

Visit : [www.BritishColumbia.travel/ski](http://www.BritishColumbia.travel/ski). Contact : Claire Barrett at [Claire@goshpr.co.uk](mailto:Claire@goshpr.co.uk).

## **Mt. Hlíðarfjall, Iceland**

Mt. Hlíðarfjall has been one of Iceland's prime skiing areas for nearly 40 years.

It is known for its high quality snow, extensive cross country trails and downhill slopes which offer views of the surrounding area.

The site is equipped with 24 marked pistes and seven ski lifts and for evening skiing, with all the main slopes are floodlit.

The Icelandair Hotel Akureyri is in the centre of the ski area.

Visit : [www.icelandairhotels.com](http://www.icelandairhotels.com). Contact : Antonia Robinson at [antonia@goshpr.co.uk](mailto:antonia@goshpr.co.uk).

## **Lee Valley VeloPark, London**

Opening 4 March 2014

Lee Valley VeloPark, the cycling venue and home to the London 2012 Velodrome and Olympic BMX track, will open on 4 March 2014.

As part of the opening programme, the Velodrome will welcome back the heroes of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games on 14 and 15 March for the grand finale of Britain's top annual track cycling series – Revolution – the first major event to take place there after the Games.

The venue will then feature :

- learn-to-ride programmes for children who have never been on a bike before
- major championships bringing the world's best riders back to the venue
- all ability sessions for people with additional needs, and
- programmes for schools, clubs and leagues.

Visit : [www.visitleevalley.org.uk](http://www.visitleevalley.org.uk). Contact Si-Ling Pang at [spang@leevalleypark.org.uk](mailto:spang@leevalleypark.org.uk).

## What's on in 2014

### **Bailey's Stardust, National Portrait Gallery, London**

6 February - 1 June 2014

An exhibition of the work of David Bailey will include a new portrait of Kate Moss, exhibited for the first time, together with previously unseen work including images from his 2012 travels to the Naga Hills in India.

Selected by the photographer, Bailey's Stardust will be one of the Gallery's largest scale photography exhibitions, with over 250 portraits occupying most of its ground floor.

Visit : [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk). Contact : Neil Evans at [nevans@npg.org.uk](mailto:nevans@npg.org.uk)

### **Events in Aruba, the Caribbean**

The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba stages an annual programme of events – covering music, sport and culture.

#### **Carnival season**

Carnival season, which is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014, runs from January to March and, this year, reaches its finale on 2 March with the Grand Carnival Parade through the streets of capital Oranjestad.

The parade comprises music, floats and colourful original costumes, decorated with sparkling stones, sequins and feathers.

#### **The Aruba Soul Beach Music Festival**

21 to 26 May 2014

The annual Aruba Soul Beach Music Festival is a two-night concert series featuring such top names as Chaka Khan, Alicia Keys, Estelle and Jennifer Hudson.

#### **The Aruba International Film Festival**

May

The Aruba International Film Festival. Actors sees premieres and screenings of an eclectic collection of international and Caribbean films. The festival attracts also helps to develop and support local talent.

#### **The 28 Annual Aruba Hi-Winds**

3 to 7 July 2014

Aruba's prevailing trade winds provide the conditions for the Caribbean's largest amateur windsurfing event.

#### **The Aruba Regatta**

15 to 17 August 2014

Yachtsmen head to Aruba for the annual Aruba Regatta, where competitions for yachts, catamarans, sunfish and windsurfers combine with music, parties and dinners.

#### **The Electric Festival**

September

The two-day Electric Festival features internationally known DJs.

### **The Aruba Food, Wine & Art Festival**

12 and 13 September 2014

The annual Aruba Food, Wine & Art Festival showcases the island's culinary best.

### **The 21st Annual Reef Care Project**

September 2014

The Annual Reef Care Project sees more than 800 volunteers, including holidaymakers, help clean dive and snorkel sites, as well as raising awareness of marine ecology.

### **The 8th Annual Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival**

3 and 4 October 2014

The annual Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival, features a line-up of international and local jazz, Latin, soul and funk musicians. In addition to the music, there's food stands and numerous bars around the key venue, Renaissance Market Place in Oranjestad.

### **The Divi Aruba International Beach Tennis Tournament**

10 to 16 November 2014

The Divi Aruba International Beach Tennis Tournament is the premier tournament of its type in the Caribbean, attracting amateurs and pros from around the world.

Eagle Beach is the venue and spectators can enjoy a festive chic beach atmosphere with music and refreshment throughout each day.

Visit : [www.aruba.com](http://www.aruba.com). Contact: Joanna Walding at [j.walding@aruba.com](mailto:j.walding@aruba.com).

### **Britain: One Million Years of the Human Story, the Natural History Museum**

13 February to 28 September 2014

Britain: One Million Years of the Human Story is the Natural History Museum's 2014 exhibition.

Drawing on 12 years of research, the exhibition is an enchanting exploration of the changing faces and spaces of our island – which surprisingly wasn't even an island for most of the last million years.

Using all the latest scientific gizmos and gadgets, scientists have created life sized models to bring rarely seen specimens to life, allowing visitors to catch a glimpse of how things were many years before even the Romans, Saxons and Vikings had wandered around this ancient land.

Visit : [www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk). Contact : [press@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:press@nhm.ac.uk)

### **Flamenco Festival London, Sadler's Wells**

1 to 15 March 2014

The annual Flamenco Festival returns to Sadler's Wells for the 11th year, representing the varied styles of the celebrated art-form with performances from some of the world's finest flamenco dancers and musicians.

Visit : [www.sadlerswells.com](http://www.sadlerswells.com). Contact Jolene Dyke at [jolene.dyke@sadlerswells.com](mailto:jolene.dyke@sadlerswells.com).

### **Aruba National Anthem and Flag Day**

18 March 2014

The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba celebrates its independent status within the Kingdom of the Netherlands and their Flag and Anthem Day.

This official holiday also features cultural events, showcasing Aruba gastronomy, as well as sports and games for children and adults around the island.

Visit : [www.aruba.com](http://www.aruba.com). Contact : Joanna Walding at [j.walding@aruba.com](mailto:j.walding@aruba.com).

## **The Head of the River Race, London**

29 March 2014

The Head of the River Race is one of the London's longest running sporting traditions.

Every spring, 400 crews from around the globe take to the waters of London's famous river Thames to compete in this historic boating event.

The race was started in 1926 by Cambridge and Tideway oarsman Steve Fairbairn. It was conceived as a way for crews to practice long rows during winter, in preparation for the summer regatta.

The annual event now sees hundreds of boats, each manned by eight men, row over the 4.25 mile (6.8km) championship course from Mortlake to Putney. It is customary for the previous year's winner to start first. They are followed at 10-second intervals by other crews in finishing order and finally, the new entries start in alphabetical order.

The race sees crews from all over the world competing.

Visit : [www.horr.co.uk](http://www.horr.co.uk). Contact : [secretary@horr.co.uk](mailto:secretary@horr.co.uk).

## **Sydney Royal Easter Show**

10 to 23 April 2014

The Sydney Royal Easter Show is Australia's largest annual event and an iconic showcase of Australian culture, heritage and agricultural excellence.

It combines competitions and educational activities with carnival rides, entertainment and great food and wine.

Country and city combine in this tribute to Australia's agricultural heritage with an Australian themed night time main arena entertainment and international rodeo series through to high dive and unicyclist shows and circus workshops.

Visit : [www.eastershow.com.au](http://www.eastershow.com.au) and [www.australia.com](http://www.australia.com). Contact Amy Wadwell at [awadwell@rasnsw.com.au](mailto:awadwell@rasnsw.com.au)

## **The Florida Blueberry Festival, Brookville, Florida**

12 and 13 April 2014

The City of Brooksville is located in the heart of the central blueberry growing region in the sunshine state of Florida.

Florida's blueberry harvest lasts for three months from March until May, with Florida the only American state producing blueberries during these months.

The 2013 harvest reaped approximately 20 million pounds of the plumiest, sweetest blueberries found anywhere.

The festival celebration attracts 50,000 visitors with the downtown venue shaded by the mystic iconic live oaks, brick streets adorned with flowers and colorful umbrellas.

Spanning 10 city blocks there is arts & crafts, live music, street entertainment and the Blueberry Patch kids zone.

Visit : [www.floridablueberryfestival.org](http://www.floridablueberryfestival.org). Contact: Michael Heard at [general.mail@floridablueberryfestival.org](mailto:general.mail@floridablueberryfestival.org).

### **The Wonder of Birds, Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, UK**

24 May to 14 September 2014

The Wonder of Birds will explore the cultural impact of birds upon mankind.

With loans from local and national collections, the exhibition will span the centuries and include works by major artists and illustrators, historical and contemporary, natural history, archaeology, fashion and social history.

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery is part of the county-wide Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service, which comprises ten museums and a study centre.

Visit : [www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk). Contact : Sue Bond at [info@suebond.co.uk](mailto:info@suebond.co.uk).

### **PinkPop Festival, Landgraaf Netherlands**

7 to 9 June 2014

The Pinkpop Festival is promoted as Netherlands most famous open-air festival and Europe's longest-running uninterrupted outdoor pop festival.

The three-day provides live music and fun with dominance of pink color.

The Pinkpop festival, which began in 1970, gets its name from the English word pink and the Dutch word 'pop', which means doll.

Visit : [www.pinkpop.nl](http://www.pinkpop.nl). Contact : [info@pinkpop.nl](mailto:info@pinkpop.nl).

### **Southwell Folk Festival, Southwell, Nottinghamshire UK**

5 to 8 June 2014

The town of Southwell stages the annual Folk Festival with three stages holding concerts and dance displays from internationally-renowned folk artists.

The festival will also be home to a Real Ale & Cider Festival, craft and trade stalls and workshops.

Visit : [www.southwellfolkfestival.org.uk](http://www.southwellfolkfestival.org.uk). Contact : Linda Parker at [linda.parker@experiencenottinghamshire.com](mailto:linda.parker@experiencenottinghamshire.com).

### **The 117th Strawberry Days Festival, Glenwood Springs, Colorado USA**

20 to 22 June 2014

The Strawberry Days Festival sees visitors enjoying free strawberries and ice cream, an old-fashioned parade down the town's main street, a fine art and handmade crafts fair, live music on the main stage, a beer garden, food court and carnival.

In addition, events like the Miss Strawberry Days contest, Little Miss Strawberry Princesses and Glenwood Idol Talent Show give the festival hometown flair.

Glenwood Springs, located between Aspen and Vail, 165 miles west of Denver has a number of attractions including Hanging Lake, Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park, Glenwood Hot Springs, Yampah Vapor Caves and Sunlight Mountain Resort.

Visit : [www.strawberrydays.com](http://www.strawberrydays.com) and [www.visitglenwood.com](http://www.visitglenwood.com). Contact : Vicky Nash at [vicky@resorttrends.com](mailto:vicky@resorttrends.com).

### **Montreal Jazz Festival, Montreal, Canada**

26 June to 6 July 2014

This International Jazz Festival has over 500 concerts performed in a wide variety of venues, from relatively small jazz clubs to the large halls of Place des Arts.

Some of the outdoor shows are held on cordoned-off streets while others are on terraced park, with about 350 of which are outdoors and free to the public.

Montreal's link with jazz goes back to segregation in the United States when many artists would venture north to the city to play.

Visit : [www.montrealjazzfest.com](http://www.montrealjazzfest.com). Contact : [media\\_jazz@equipespectra.ca](mailto:media_jazz@equipespectra.ca)

### **Gay Pride Parade — San Francisco**

28 and 29 June 2014

The Pride Celebration & Parade will be held over the weekend of 28 and 29 June with over 200 parade contingents, 300 exhibitors and more than twenty community-run stages and venues.

The two-day celebration, which is free and open to all, is the largest annual gathering of LGBT people and allies in the nation.

Visit : [www.sfpride.org](http://www.sfpride.org). Contact : Brendan Behan at [media@sfpride.org](mailto:media@sfpride.org)

### **Montreux Jazz Festival, Switzerland**

4 – 19 July 2014

The Montreux Jazz Festival, one of the most prestigious music festivals in Europe, is held on the shores of Lake Geneva.

The event originally started as a pure jazz festival, but it opened up in the 1970s to include all musical styles. The city's Convention Centre hosts two main stages and the smaller Montreux Jazz Cafe, and there are several open-air stages around the Centre.

Additional themed shows are held on boats cruising the lake and train cars traveling the region.

Visit : [www.montreuxjazz.com](http://www.montreuxjazz.com). Contact : [presse@mjf.ch](mailto:presse@mjf.ch).

### **The Henley-On-Todd Regatta, Alice Springs, Australia**

16 August 2014

The Henley-On-Todd Regatta, with a typically Aussie reference to Henly-on-Thames, stages its regatta where competitors race boats by carrying them down the dry river. And while the UK event is one of pomp and tradition, this even is anything but.

During the day 20 events are held including :

- Anchor the Boat: A tug of war competition between 8-person teams.
- Bathtub Derby: Four people carry a fifth in a tub. When they reach the halfway point, a bucket of water is dumped on the person in the tub (adding more weight), then the team races back to the starting point.
- Boogie Board: Teams of four pull a fifth teammate sitting on a boogie board across the sandy bed to the finish line.
- Bring Your Own Boat: The most creative of the races, teams of four assemble their own craft, that must look like a boat, holding it up as they race.
- Oxford Tubs: One of the more challenging events, tin boats with 2-man crews are propelled along rails by members paddling with shovels in the sand.

Visit : [www.henleyontodd.com.au](http://www.henleyontodd.com.au). Contact : [alicesprings@henleyontodd.com.au](mailto:alicesprings@henleyontodd.com.au)

## **The Great American Beer Festival, Denver, Colorado**

2 to 4 October

The Great American Beer Festival is hosted by the Brewers Association of Denver, Colorado.

There are more than 2,000 different American beers, entered by almost 500 domestic breweries across 78 categories.

International beers are also available.

Visit : [www.greatamericanbeerfestival.com](http://www.greatamericanbeerfestival.com). Contact : Raquel Hochroth at [Raquel@rosengroupr.com](mailto:Raquel@rosengroupr.com).

## **Floriade, Australian Capital Territory**

Annually September - October

For 30 days in September and October, Canberra comes alive with a million spring blooms during Floriade, Australia biggest flower festival.

It is a colourful seasonal addition to Canberra's green parks and native gardens with markets and gourmet stalls, exhibitions and live concerts.

Floriade welcomes more than 400,000 local, interstate and international visitors each year.

Contact : [www.floriadeaustralia.com](http://www.floriadeaustralia.com). Contact : Lisa Ridgley at [Iridgley@morriswalker.com.au](mailto:Iridgley@morriswalker.com.au).

## **Key West Fantasy Fest, Key West, Florida**

October

The Fantasy Fest is held during the third week in October and is a ten day long gay celebration of parties and parades.

The top attractions of Key West Fantasy Fest includes a good Dungeons & Dragons fetish party, the annual Headress Ball, Danceapalooza, celebrity look-a-like competition, wet t-shirt competition and toga parties.

A key event is the Masquerade March through the streets on the second Friday and the Captain Morgan's street parade on the second Saturday.

Over 80,000 people participate in this walking fetish party and anything goes.

Visit : [www.fantasyfest.net](http://www.fantasyfest.net). Nick Facchin at [nick@newmanpr.com](mailto:nick@newmanpr.com).

## **World's best bartender, Sorrento's Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria**

Colin Peter Field, at the Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria, is the world's best bartender according to Forbes and Travel & Leisure Magazines.

The hotel, which celebrates its 180th anniversary in 2014, also offers Mediterranean and regional cuisine served in the Michelin starred Terrazza Bosquet Restaurant with views over the Bay of Naples to Mount Vesuvius.

Pompeii, Herculaneum and Capri are also close by.

Visit : [www.exvitt.it](http://www.exvitt.it). Contact : [media@exvitt.it](mailto:media@exvitt.it).

## Miraviva, Latin America

Established in 2013 by Marc Eschauzier and Charles Tyler, Miraviva is a high-end Latin America specialist operator that creates exclusive travel experiences with accommodation personally visited and vetted by the founders.

Trips are organised across the eight Latin American countries of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Panama and Peru and include boutique hotels, eco-lodges, converted historic properties, design hotels, private estancias, luxury villas and expedition cruises.

Visit : [www.miravivatravel.com](http://www.miravivatravel.com). Contact : Rob Bates at [rob.bates@whitetigerpr.com](mailto:rob.bates@whitetigerpr.com).

## Whales, dolphins and diving in the Azores

The year 2014 marks the 30th anniversary of the end of whaling in the Azores, a move which changed the islands fortunes from a tradition of whale hunting to a thriving tourism industry with whale conservation at its core.

The islands are now a scuba diving and whale watching destination with 25 migratory species, and the only place in Europe where travellers can swim with wild dolphin species such as the spotted, striped and bottlenose dolphin in their natural habitat.

Diving sites provide access to a colourful underwater world with creatures such as manta rays, morays, stingrays, dusky groupers, comb groupers, wrasses, parrot fishes, trigger fishes, breams and damselfishes.

Spring and summer are best for spotting underwater wildlife, and the Blue Whale can be seen in April on its migration route.

Sunvil offers seven night whale and dolphin watching vacations for the Blue Whale Migration.

Visit : [www.sunvil.co.uk](http://www.sunvil.co.uk).

Wildlife World has a new 5-night 'Sperm Whale and Bottlenose Dolphin' holiday with the chance to help a team of scientists with a study of sperm whales and bottlenose dolphins in the waters surrounding Faial Island.

Visit : [www.wildlifeworldwide.com](http://www.wildlifeworldwide.com).

Visit : [www.visitazores.com](http://www.visitazores.com). Contact : David Wilson at [david.wilson@kbc-pr.com](mailto:david.wilson@kbc-pr.com).

## Reasons to write about

### Swaziland

This tiny nation of Swaziland, one of Africa's last monarchies, is a landlocked country in southern Africa, bordered to the north, south and west by South Africa, and to the east by Mozambique.

The kingdom offers a range of visitor opportunities :

Wildlife enthusiasts can track down protected rhinos in the wild lowveld or seek out rare birds in the rugged highveld.

History buffs can visit the world's oldest known mine at Ngwenya or follow the colonial trail of the early settlers.

For the active there is horse riding and river rafting or golf and thermal spas.

Swaziland also stages a number of annual festivals including :



### **The Incwala Festival**

December and January

The religious 'Festival of First Fruits' celebrates the beginning of the harvest season.

### **The Marula Festival**

March

A royal tribute to the riches of Mother Nature, where local Marula fruit is harvested and used to make beer to a traditional recipe and celebrated with song and dance.

### **Bushfire Festival**

May

This festival sees some of Africa's best artists performing.

### **Reed Dance**

August

The coming together of the nations women to cut new reeds to present to the Queen mother. Over 60,000 young women take part in this visual spectacle, at the royal residence.

Visit : [www.thekingdomofswaziland.com](http://www.thekingdomofswaziland.com). Contact : Adele Cutler [info@thekingdomofswaziland.com](mailto:info@thekingdomofswaziland.com).

## **Healthy stays on Aruba, Dutch Caribbean**

The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba has a programme of healthy living for the local population, which it is now using to support its tourism industry.

Initiatives for Aruba residents includes a health bus which visits all parts of the island promoting fitness and offering health screenings.

Other projects target schools to reduce levels of obesity in the next decade and encouraging the business sector to stage fitness activities, including walkathons and cycling events.

The island's government is also helping to promote a healthy lifestyle to help visitors keep in trim.

Many resorts have fitness centres and offer group activities and spas offer mud wraps, hot stone massages, soothing scrubs, aromatherapy baths and refreshing facials and masks await holidaymakers.

Treatments feature local aloe and cactus preparations, desert mud, essential oils, plant extracts, sea salts and fruits.

Slow Food International is highly active in Aruba, promoting locally produced food, helping to support local farmers and also ensuring consumers have access to 'good, clean and fair' food.

The Hyatt Regency is one of the first to support the idea, embracing it under the company's 'Food, Thoughtfully Sourced, Carefully Served' international programme.

Local restaurants, too, are targets and they have the scope to buy even more local food and give tourists an authentic taste of Aruban cuisine.

Fish is, naturally, an abundant and healthy option, while locally-produced fruit and vegetables include papaya, rich in minerals and vitamins.

Goat, locally-known as cabrito, is used in soups, stews and also grilled, and is said to be the healthiest of red meats being low in fat, high in nutrients and is easy to digest.

Visit : [www.aruba.com](http://www.aruba.com). Contact : Joanna Walding at [j.walding@aruba.com](mailto:j.walding@aruba.com).

## Slow Food International

Slow Food International is an organisation working towards 'a world in which all people can access and enjoy food that is good for them, good for those who grow it and good for the planet'.

Its approach is based on a concept of food quality that is defined by three interconnected principles: good, clean and fair :

**good** : a fresh and flavorsome seasonal diet that satisfies the senses and is part of the local culture

**clean** : food production and consumption that does not harm the environment, animal welfare or human health, and

**fair** : accessible prices for consumers and fair conditions and pay for producers.

Slow Food International believes food is tied to many other aspects of life, including culture, politics, agriculture and the environment.

Visit : [www.slowfood.com](http://www.slowfood.com). Contact : Paola Nano at [p.nano@slowfood.it](mailto:p.nano@slowfood.it).

## Soma Bay, Egypt

Soma Bay is an exclusive Red Sea resort in Egypt, which offers year round sunshine and mild temperatures.

The destination offers some of the sandiest beaches of the Red Sea and panoramic views of desert mountains.

There are a range of luxury hotels, a Gary Player championship golf course, a Holistic Spa & Thalasso centre and a diving and kite surfing centre.

### The Sheraton Soma Bay Resort

The 5 star Sheraton Soma Bay is a flagship resort with architecture inspired by Luxor's Karnak Temple situated directly on 800 meters of beachfront.

Visit : [www.sheraton-somabay.com](http://www.sheraton-somabay.com).

### The Cascades Championship Golf Course

The Gary Player designed Cascades Championship Golf Course is included in CNN's top golfing destinations worldwide.

Visit : [www.thecascades.com](http://www.thecascades.com).

### La Résidence des Cascades

La Residence des Cascades, located at the highest point of the peninsula is surrounded by the Cascades Championship Golf Course.

It is a member of the Leading Hotels of the World and has been awarded with the Golf Travelife Award for environmental protection. The Cascades Spa has the only thalasso spa in Egypt.

Visit : [www.residencedescascades.com](http://www.residencedescascades.com).

### Kempinski Hotel Soma Bay and Laguna Club

The Kempinski Hotel Soma Bay is located among pools, lagoons and waterfalls flowing down to a 400 meter sandy beach. Its designed by the mystique of ancient Moorish fortresses.

Visit : [www.kempinski.com/en/soma-bay](http://www.kempinski.com/en/soma-bay).

## **The Breakers Diving & Surfing Lodge**

The Breakers Diving & Surfing Lodge is Egypt's first water sports lifestyle hotel and has been designed for water sports enthusiasts seeking reasonably priced accommodation in one of the Red Sea's finest water sport locations.

Visit : [www.thebreakers-somabay.com](http://www.thebreakers-somabay.com).

Contact : Louisa Levison at [llevison@thecommunicationgroup.co.uk](mailto:llevison@thecommunicationgroup.co.uk).

## **Turtle conservation on North Island, Seychelles**

North Island, one of the world's most exclusive private islands in the Seychelles, has made an ongoing contribution to both green and hawksbill turtle conservation over the past 10 years.

North Island itself is one of Africa's most exclusive private islands, situated 30km from the main island of Mahé, Seychelles.

Extremely isolated with only 11 spacious guest villas, North Island is renowned for its white beaches, filigree reefs and azure Indian Ocean.

North Island is also a sanctuary where endangered Seychelles fauna and flora could be reintroduced and given a place to grow and thrive. The Island's environmental team has been dedicated to monitoring the turtles since 2004.

Approximately 30 to 100 hawksbill and green turtle nests are laid on the Island each year and all data is collected by the team and sent to Jeanne Mortimer, a reptile specialist in Seychelles who studies turtle migration around the Seychelles, for further analysis.

Guests are able to join the team as they monitor the various nesting sites and, if they are lucky, get the chance to watch a turtle lay its eggs.

Unique to Seychelles, hawksbill turtles nest during the day and can be seen emerging from the ocean and laying eggs on North Island's beaches from September to January.

The green turtles have been recorded nesting in every month of the year but show a peak period from January to September. This species nests at night and guests are encouraged to join patrols with the environmental team during the peak nesting season.

Visit : [www.north-island.com](http://www.north-island.com) and [www.wilderness-collection.com](http://www.wilderness-collection.com). Contact : Charlotte Rous at [charlotte@grifcopr.com](mailto:charlotte@grifcopr.com).

## **Winter in Idaho, Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming**

Idaho, Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming offers adventurous travellers snow-capped mountains and adrenaline winter activity with top natural wonders, resorts, hotels and winter attractions.

Top resorts include Sun Valley, Whitefish, Big Sky and Jackson Hole – all offering skiing, skating, dog sledging, climbing and tubing to fly fishing, paragliding, ziplining, climbing and wildlife spotting.

### **New for 2014**

#### **The Springs at Hot Springs Resort reopens in Idaho City**

Dating back to the late 1800's, The Springs was once known as Warm Springs Resort and was discovered by the early settlers.

After serving as a post office, police station, saloon and overnight stage stop for weary travellers, it has since undergone acts of reforestation and rehabilitation.

The resort has now reopened to travellers and offers natural hot mineral waters, a 40' x 80' geothermal pool and 16' hot tub with water at 104 F.

Visit : [www.thespringsid.com](http://www.thespringsid.com).

## **Helena, Montana declared one of the world's top mountain biking destinations**

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) has given the mountain bike trails in Helena and the surrounding area their highest trail rating by designating Montana City a 'Ride Center'.

The designation represents IMBA's Model Trail recognition of a large-scale mountain bike destination.

Helena offers a wide range of great trails for every riding style from backcountry adventures to shuttle-served gravity trails, and from expert-only to family-friendly.

Visit : [www.bikehelena.com](http://www.bikehelena.com)

## **Yellowstone National Park's Wyoming**

the historic Lake Yellowstone Hotel, the oldest hotel in Yellowstone National Park (the first National Park in the world), has received a multi-million dollar refurbishment that includes the renovation of 43 guest rooms, dining room, lobby and front desk area.

The second phase of the renovation is now underway and includes restoration of the remaining guest rooms, the Lake Deli and public spaces.

Visit [www.yellowstonenationalparklodges.com](http://www.yellowstonenationalparklodges.com)

## **South Dakota's Deadwood Mountain Grand**

The Deadwood Mountain Grand has re-launched as a new contemporary 98-room hotel and casino. It overlooks the heart of the old gold mining camp of Deadwood.

Visit : [www.deadwoodmountaingrand.com](http://www.deadwoodmountaingrand.com)

Visit : [www.RMI-RealAmerica.com](http://www.RMI-RealAmerica.com). Contact : Lisa Cooper at [Lisa.Cooper@kbc-pr.com](mailto:Lisa.Cooper@kbc-pr.com).

## **Walking safaris in Kenya**

Kenya safari operator Cheli & Peacock offers walking safaris to some of Kenya's most remote destinations.

The C&P Portfolio has open savannah, river gorge and forest walks across all its eight properties.

Local warrior guides lead guests that bit closer to the wildlife, sharing their tracking techniques and local traditions.

### **Kitich Camp**

Cheli & Peacock's Kitich Camp is an authentic 'bush camp' that shuns traditional game drives in favour of on-foot adventure.

Located in the heart of the remote Mathews Mountain Range, the camp offers a forest wildlife experience, led the local Ndorobo Samburu, with the chance to enjoy close encounters with an array of indigenous species, ranging from elephant and buffalo to over 150 species of spectacular butterfly and birdlife.

### **Elephant Pepper Camp**

In the private and protected Mara North Conservancy, guests at Elephant Pepper Camp are among the very few permitted to explore the rolling plains of the Mara on foot.

Led by local Maasai warriors, walkers learn how best to track and approach wildlife, identifying the behavioural patterns of the Mara's spectacular array of species.

Visit : [www.chelipeacock.com](http://www.chelipeacock.com). Contact Rosie Kempson at [rosie.kempson@live.co.uk](mailto:rosie.kempson@live.co.uk).

## Cumberland Island, Georgia USA

Cumberland Island, Georgia has been included in Lonely Planet's Top US Destinations List for 2014.

Lonely Planet, describes Cumberland Island as a magical island and one of the most underdeveloped places in the United States.

It says the island has 'landscapes that include virgin beaches, windswept dunes, mossy oaks and breathtaking sunrises and an untamed island that supports wildlife such as, feral horses, wild turkeys, tiny fiddler crabs, beautiful butterflies and skittering armadillos'.

Getting to Cumberland will require a ferry ride across the St. Marys River.

Once on the island visitors can enjoy an abundance of outdoor activities such as bird watching, beach combing for seashells, swimming, wildlife viewing, hiking and biking.

The complete Lonely Planet Top US Destinations List is:

- Grand Rapids & the Gold Coast, MI
- Yosemite National Park, CA
- Boston, MA
- Central Coast, CA
- Jersey Shore, NJ
- Kansas City, MO
- Cumberland Island, GA
- Las Vegas, NV
- Sun Valley, ID
- Lana'i, HI

Visit : [www.visitstmarys.com](http://www.visitstmarys.com) and [www.LonelyPlanet.com](http://www.LonelyPlanet.com). Contact : Angela Wigger at [angela.wigger@stmaryswelcome.com](mailto:angela.wigger@stmaryswelcome.com).

## Wildlife viewing in Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a country in Central America, bordered by Nicaragua to the north, Panama to the southeast, the Pacific Ocean to the west, and the Caribbean Sea to the east.

Wild Planet Adventures provides tips on how best to appreciate Costa Rica's exotic wildlife, visitors have to go where humans don't usually venture.

### Visit different eco-systems

Costa Rica has a wide variety of eco-systems that are relatively close together, with each enjoying its own unique wildlife is best explored through different activities.

The most comprehensive itineraries will include lowlands rainforests on both Caribbean and Pacific coasts, mid-elevation forests, gallery forests, rivers, high elevation cloud forests, volcanoes, hot-springs and beaches.

Allow enough days so you can circle around the continental divide without retracing your steps.

### Consider traveling during July's "Veranito" phenomenon

The early rains of late May and early June yield flowering trees and fruits, which attract a lot of wildlife.

In July a break in the rainy season occurs, which in recent years has expanded from two to over five weeks, and brings with it near-ideal viewing conditions.

## **Think dawn, dusk and night**

A large percentage of Costa Rica's wildlife is both diurnal and nocturnal and the animals can be most active at dawn, dusk and especially at night.

## **Organise rainforest hikes to take advantage of all three peak daily times**

Wild Planet Adventures provide tours that explore remote wildlife habitat and study wildlife patterns in destinations not often accessible to the general public in Africa, Baja, Belize, Borneo, Brazil, Costa Rica, Galapagos, India, Laos, Nepal, Panama, Peru, Thailand and Zambia.

Visit : [www.wildplanetadventures.com](http://www.wildplanetadventures.com). Contact : Dave Wiggins at [dave@travelnewssource.com](mailto:dave@travelnewssource.com).

## **A place to stay**

### **Hotel Shangri-la at the Ocean in Santa Monica, California, USA**

The Hotel Shangri-la at the Ocean in Santa Monica, which has been overlooking the Pacific since 1939, the hotel is a striking beacon of Art Deco elegance, a chronicle of the golden era of Hollywood and a quintessential nexus of culture.

Hidden away on a high Santa Monica bluff overlooking the ocean and historic Santa Monica Pier, this luxury boutique hotel offers guests brilliant views of the Pacific Ocean, a celebrated history and a cultural connection during their stay.

Visit [www.Shangrila-Hotel.com](http://www.Shangrila-Hotel.com). Contact: Agnes Huff at [ahuff@ahuffgroup.com](mailto:ahuff@ahuffgroup.com).

### **Blue Residences, Aruba**

Travellers will have even more choice of where to stay in Aruba with the opening on March 1 of an upmarket

The Blue Residences condominium resort opens on the Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba from March 2014.

Located on Eagle Beach, Blue Residences will consist of three towers to open in March, May and January 2015.

ON-site amenities will include a private beach, protected by a jetty, two infinity swimming pools , full service spa, fitness centre, restaurant and bar, mini-market, deli and sundeck.

Visit : [www.bluearuba.com](http://www.bluearuba.com). Contact : Joanna Walding at [j.walding@aruba.com](mailto:j.walding@aruba.com).

### **DoubleTree by Hilton Seychelles-Allamanda Resort & Spa**

Hilton Worldwide has opened the 30-room DoubleTree by Hilton Seychelles-Allamanda Resort & Spa, its third resort in the Republic of The Seychelles Islands.

The hotel has a prime beach-facing location on the South East coast of Mahe, Seychelles largest and best known island and is surrounded by 2.5 hectares of indigenous landscaped gardens and views of the Indian Ocean.

Guests can enjoy snorkelling and scuba diving and explore Seychelles' mountain via the nearby nature walks.

The resort joins the Hilton Seychelles Labriz Resort & Spa and Hilton Seychelles Northolme Resort & Spa.

The Seychelles archipelago of 115 islands is known for their unspoiled tranquility, textbook pristine beaches, extraordinary national parks and authentic and unique eco-tourism.

## **About DoubleTree by Hilton**

DoubleTree by Hilton has a global collection of more than 360 upscale hotels in gateway cities, metropolitan areas and vacation destinations.

Visit : [www.doubletreebyhiltonglobalmediacenter.com](http://www.doubletreebyhiltonglobalmediacenter.com). Contact : Elaine Reed at [elaine.reed@hilton.com](mailto:elaine.reed@hilton.com).

## **Getaway destinations in Scotland**

Cottages & Castles has highlights Perthshire, Argyll, Sutherland, Wester Ross and Speyside for getaway destinations in Scotland.

### **Miss Ballantines Cottage, Highland Perthshire**

A stone built cottage on the banks of the River Tay that has been recently renovated.

### **Achnasmeorach House, Loch Awe, Argyll**

Achnasmeorach House enjoys a loch side position with its own private shoreline, jetty, boathouse and slipway.

### **Balnakeil House, Scourie, North West Sutherland**

Located above Balnakeil Bay near Durness, Balnakeil House is an A listed nine bedroom highland lodge which sleeps up to 17.

### **Beul na Mara, Gairloch Ullapool And Wester Ross**

This cottage is couple of minutes from the village centre with the sea on its door step.

### **Lower Burnside, Aviemore Speyside and The Cairngorms**

The house stands on the Ballindalloch Castle beat of the River Spey.

Cottages & Castles, is a Scottish holiday lettings company with over 500 properties in its portfolio and is the official letting agents for The National Trust of Scotland.

It offers a range of holiday cottages exclusive large houses, holiday castles, Scottish mansions and country lodges.

Visit : [www.cottages-and-castles.co.uk](http://www.cottages-and-castles.co.uk). Contact : Ramsay Smith at [ramsay@mediahouse.co.uk](mailto:ramsay@mediahouse.co.uk).

## **Rancho Valencia, Southern California, USA**

The five star Rancho Valencia Resort & Spa reopened in October 2012 following a \$30 million property-wide renovation.

Located in 45 acres of gardens, trails, olive groves, casitas the Mediterranean inspired, all-suite property has a spa, fine dining restaurant and award-winning tennis program.

Rancho Valencia was featured in Condé Nast Traveler's 2013 Hot List as one of the 154 best new hotels in the world.

The property is located in Rancho Santa Fe a 30 minute car journey from San Diego International Airport.

Visit : [www.ranchovalencia.com](http://www.ranchovalencia.com). Contact : Katie O'Lone at [katie@masonrose.com](mailto:katie@masonrose.com).

## **Grand Hotel Kronenhof, Switzerland**

The Grand Hotel Kronenhof, located in Pontresina, six miles from St. Moritz, offers the chance to enjoy the glitz of St. Moritz, while staying in a peaceful mountain village.

While the hotel originally opened in the first half of the 19th century, as a guesthouse, the main part of the current building, which is a registered historical landmark, was built at the end of the 19th century in Neo-Baroque style.

The latest addition, completed in 2007 at a cost of £24 million, consists of 28 new guest rooms and a spa complex covering more than 2000 square metres.

The Grand Hotel Kronenhof and its sister property, the Kulm Hotel St. Moritz are owned by the Niarchos family.

Visit : [www.kronenhof.com](http://www.kronenhof.com). Contact : Sue Heady at [sue@headycommunications.com](mailto:sue@headycommunications.com).

## **New Gaya Island Resort Marine Centre, Borneo**

The 121-villa Gaya Island Resort is situated along the coast of Malohom Bay, a natural sanctuary in the hillside of an ancient rainforest, with views of Mount Kinabalu.

The resort, which opened in July 2013, marked the beginning of a marine conservation project in Borneo by YTL Hotels. The group has now opened the Gaya Island Resort Marine Centre, the first turtle rehabilitation centre in the country, complete with turtle rescue hotline.

YTL Hotels owns and manages a collection of hotels, boutique experiences and Spa Villages in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, China, Japan, France and the UK.

Visit : [www.ytlhotels.com](http://www.ytlhotels.com). Contact : Hannah Summers at [hannah@grifcopr.com](mailto:hannah@grifcopr.com).

## **Chiesa del Carmine, Umbria, Italy**

Chiesa del Carmine, a 13th Century church located at the foot of Monte Tezio in a protected valley in the Umbrian countryside, has been restored along with its adjoining 18th century farmhouse.

Visit [www.chiesadelcarmine.com](http://www.chiesadelcarmine.com). Contact : Emma Powell at [Emma@grifcopr.com](mailto:Emma@grifcopr.com).

## **Brenners Park-Hotel & Spa, Baden Baden, Germany**

Brenners Park-Hotel & Spa, Baden-Baden – the flagship property of the Oetker Collection - will have a spring 2014 opening of its new spa in the historic Villa Stéphanie adjacent to the hotel.

Villa Stéphanie is made up over five floors and will comprise a 500 sqm sauna, kneipping baths, plunge pool for recovery, private fitness center, physio and spinal treatments, hammam, Ladies Spa, private park and sunken garden.

Originally erected in 1890, Villa Stéphanie was created as a residence for Stéphanie de Beauharnais, Grand Duchess of Baden and adoptive daughter of Napoleon I.

Visit : [www.brenners.com](http://www.brenners.com). Contact : Lizzie Morrison at [oetker@verypcc.com](mailto:oetker@verypcc.com).

## **Royal Mougins Golf Club & Resort, French Riviera**

Nestled in the heart of the French Riviera 30 minutes from Monaco,

The Royal Mougins Golf Club & Resort, which is located in the heart of the French Riviera 30 minutes from Monaco, has a 18 hole 71 par golf course stretching over 6,004m. Its hotel has 29 luxurious suites offering views of Provincial forest.

Visit : [www.royalmougins.fr/en](http://www.royalmougins.fr/en). Contact : Harry Padfield at [Harry@ldrlondon.com](mailto:Harry@ldrlondon.com).



## **The Royal Palm Marrakech**

Beachcomber Hotels is to open the Royal Palm Marrakech, its first hotel away from the Indian Ocean, in spring 2014.

The group currently owns and manages eight luxury hotels in Mauritius and the Sainte Anne Resort & Spa in the Seychelles.

The new 5 star hotel is located within a 231- hectare estate among age-old olive trees, and is 12 km from the bustling centre of Marrakech and eight km from the airport.

Its Par 72 golf course is set to be one of the best golf courses in Marrakech.

Visit : [www.beachcombortours.co.uk](http://www.beachcombortours.co.uk). Contact : Charlie Fox at [Charlie@grifcopr.com](mailto:Charlie@grifcopr.com).

## **The Sandi Phala, Bali, Indonesia**

The Sandi Phala, an 11-suite luxury boutique property in Bali, Indonesia, won the Blissful Beach Category of the 2013 World Boutique Hotel Awards.

The Sandi Pala hotel is a couples-only, boutique hotel, located on one the most pristine beaches in Bali.

The World Boutique Hotel Awards is dedicated exclusively to luxury boutique properties, providing a global arena in which hotels can showcase their excellence.

Visit : [www.thesandiphala.com](http://www.thesandiphala.com) and [www.boutiquehotelawards.com](http://www.boutiquehotelawards.com). Contact : Leila Stocker at [leila@turtle-pr.com](mailto:leila@turtle-pr.com).

## **Hotel Rex, San Francisco**

Hotel Rex, a boutique hotel in the heart of Union Square in San Francisco takes its inspiration from European art and literary salons of the 1920s and 30s.

Each week the hotel presents a Salon Series of intimate events designed to encourage dialogue and appreciation of art, literature and music.

It might be from a book launch, a reading by an author, cabaret music or an entertaining magic show paired with food and wine.

Visit : [www.thehotelrex.com](http://www.thehotelrex.com). Contact : Anne Abrams at [Anne\\_Abrams@mail.vresp.com](mailto:Anne_Abrams@mail.vresp.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 neighborhood, the Marriott Santa Cruz de la Sierra Hotel will be located in one of city's most desirable areas, surrounded by the highest concentration of office buildings and close to a new shopping center currently under construction.

Visit : [www.MarriottHotels.com](http://www.MarriottHotels.com). Contact : Laurier Goldstein at [laurie.goldstein@marriott.com](mailto:laurie.goldstein@marriott.com).

## Travel guides

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

### AA Travel Guides

Visit : [www.shop.theaa.com/store/travel-guides](http://www.shop.theaa.com/store/travel-guides). Katie Stephens at [katie.stephens@theaa.com](mailto:katie.stephens@theaa.com).

### Anova Books

[www.anovabooks.com](http://www.anovabooks.com). Helen Ponting at [hponting@anovabooks.co](mailto:hponting@anovabooks.co)

### Berlitz

[www.berlitzpublishing.com](http://www.berlitzpublishing.com).

### Bradt Travel

[www.bradtguides.com](http://www.bradtguides.com). Rachel Fielding at [rachel.fielding@bradtguides.com](mailto:rachel.fielding@bradtguides.com)

### Brit's Guide

[www.foulsham.com](http://www.foulsham.com). Margaret Lashbrook at [margaret.lashbrook@lineone.net](mailto:margaret.lashbrook@lineone.net) or Sue Wilkins at [wilkins@foulsham.com](mailto:wilkins@foulsham.com).

### Cicerone

[www.cicerone.co.uk](http://www.cicerone.co.uk). Contact : Sarah Spencer at [sarah@cicerone.co.uk](mailto:sarah@cicerone.co.uk)

### Eland Publishing

[www.travelbooks.co.uk](http://www.travelbooks.co.uk). Barnaby Rogerson at [barnaby@travelbooks.co.uk](mailto:barnaby@travelbooks.co.uk).

### Fisher's Travel SOS

[www.fisherstravelsos.com](http://www.fisherstravelsos.com). Furgan Syed at [furqan.syed@fisherstravelsos.com](mailto:furqan.syed@fisherstravelsos.com).

### Global Travel Publishers

[www.africa-adventure.com](http://www.africa-adventure.com). Kate Bandos at [kate@ksbpromotions.com](mailto:kate@ksbpromotions.com).

### Globetrotters LogBook

[www.globetrotterslogbook.com](http://www.globetrotterslogbook.com). Giedo Claes at [giedo@globetrotterslogbook.com](mailto:giedo@globetrotterslogbook.com)

### Inn House Publishing

[www.innhousepublishing.com](http://www.innhousepublishing.com). Kathryn McWhirter at [kathrynmcwhirter@btopenworld.com](mailto:kathrynmcwhirter@btopenworld.com).

### Insight

[www.insightguides.com](http://www.insightguides.com). Julia Spence at [julia.spence@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:julia.spence@ukonline.co.uk).

### In your pocket guides

[www.inyourpocket.com](http://www.inyourpocket.com). Craig Turp at [editor@inyourpocket.com](mailto:editor@inyourpocket.com).

### Jane's Smart Art Guides

[www.JanesSmartArt.com](http://www.JanesSmartArt.com). Jane McIntosh at [MJM@JanesSmartArt.com](mailto:MJM@JanesSmartArt.com)

### Jonglez Publishing

[www.jonglezpublishing.com](http://www.jonglezpublishing.com). Alexandre Thery at [alexandre@editionsjonglez.com](mailto:alexandre@editionsjonglez.com).

### Kuperard Publishers

[www.kuperard.co.uk](http://www.kuperard.co.uk). Contact : Geoffrey Chesler at [geoffreychesler@btinternet.com](mailto:geoffreychesler@btinternet.com).

### Morris Communications

[www.themilepost.com](http://www.themilepost.com). Contact Kate Bandos at [kate@ksbpromotions.com](mailto:kate@ksbpromotions.com).

### Odyssey Books & Guides

[www.odysseypublications.com](http://www.odysseypublications.com). Contact : Caroline Eden at [caroline@odysseypublications.com](mailto:caroline@odysseypublications.com)

### Oxygen Books city-lit

[www.oxygenbooks.co.uk](http://www.oxygenbooks.co.uk) Malcom Burgess at [malcolm@oxygenbooks.co.uk](mailto:malcolm@oxygenbooks.co.uk)

### Rough Guides

[www.roughguides.com](http://www.roughguides.com). Contact : [press@roughguides.com](mailto:press@roughguides.com)

### Summersdale travel publications

[www.summersdale.com](http://www.summersdale.com). Contact : Dean at [dean@summersdale.com](mailto:dean@summersdale.com).

### Take two Books

[www.taketwobooks.com](http://www.taketwobooks.com) Sarah Duvall at [Sarah@taketwobooks.com](mailto:Sarah@taketwobooks.com).

### Turnleft

[www.turnleftguides.com](http://www.turnleftguides.com) Contact: Nick Buteau at [nick@turnleftguides.com](mailto:nick@turnleftguides.com)

## The International Travel Writers Alliance

## AllWays traveller



The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel writers, editors, broadcasters and photographers.

[www.itwalliance.com](http://www.itwalliance.com)

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[www.allwaystraveller.com](http://www.allwaystraveller.com)



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