

The Alliance

bulletin

Issue 154 : mid-January 2014

www.itwalliance.com

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

The International Travel Writers Alliance

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

Registering with the Alliance

To register with the Alliance visit : 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.

The Alliance published a monthly directory of opportunities for press card holders, which is also available at www.itwalliance.com

Join and follow



http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=2978414&trk=hb_side_g



@writersalliance

The Alliance bulletin

The Alliance Opinion Forum

The Alliance Opinion Forum

With the International Travel Writers Alliance's *LinkedIn* group now well exceeding 2000 members, it gives us the opportunity to use this professional networking site to real effect.

In addition to generating general discussions within the group, the Alliance will use *LinkedIn* to harness the professional skill and expertise that now exists within the group.

The Alliance Opinion Forum (AOF) will give our journalists and travel industry partners and their agencies, the opportunity to initiate and/or respond to *LinkedIn* discussions on subjects of genuine interest and relevance.

The AOF Briefing

If a particular discussion 'takes off', the Alliance will incorporate the contributions into an AOF briefing, which will then be :

- included as a lead item in the Alliance's fortnightly bulletin and, if appropriate,
- published as a briefing in its own right.

Either way, this will see the information getting to the Alliance's :

- 9,990 professional travel journalists
- 3,600 travel industry partners, and
- 1,600 representatives of agencies with travel related clients.

In this way, we believe the *Alliance Opinion Forum* will help to influence an awareness and understanding of the issues facing the travel and tourism industries worldwide.

Generating discussions

In the weeks and months to come, the International Travel Writers Alliance will be posting AOF discussions and inviting your contributions.

We will also welcome you posting an AOF discussion whenever you would welcome feedback from the professionals in the *LinkedIn* group.

Joining the Alliance LinkedIn group

Finally, if you have not yet done so please ask to join the International Travel Writers Alliance linked in group and we will be delighted to welcome you aboard.

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

Hedonistic Hiking (Australia)

Hedonistic Hiking offer all-inclusive guided gourmet walking holidays in Italy, Slovenia and Australia.

Small friendly groups, unique itineraries, delightful accommodation, outstanding food and wine. Exceptional personal service and attention to detail.

Visit : www.hedonistichiking.com. Contact : Jackie Parsons at jackie@hedonistichiking.com.

Imperial War Museums (UK)

Imperial War Museums (IWM) is a family of museums :

- IWM London
- IWM North in Trafford
- Greater Manchester
- IWM Duxford near Cambridge
- the Churchill War Rooms in Whitehall, London; and
- HMS Belfast, moored in the Pool of London on the River Thames.

IWM is unique in its coverage of conflicts, especially those involving Britain and the Commonwealth, from the First World War to the present day.

It seeks to provide for, and to encourage, the study and understanding of the history of modern war and 'wartime experience'.

Visit : www.iwm.org.uk. Contact : Michelle Wong at mwong@iwm.org.uk.

The History List (USA)

The History List was launched in 2012 as a way to help historic sites, historical societies, preservation organizations, history museums, house museums, living history sites, re-enactor groups, and other history organizations.

The List also promotes history-related exhibits and events, including re-enactments, walks and talks, author appearances and celebrations.

Introduced first in the Boston area, *The History List* has grown to be the largest list of history-related events taking place across the USA.

Organizations add their own events and there is no cost to participate.

Visit : www.TheHistoryList.com. Contact : Lee Wright at lee@thehistorylist.com.

English Heritage

English Heritage care for hundreds of England's most important historic places, including :

- Stonehenge
- Hadrian's Wall
- the Battle of Hastings battlefield
- Dover Castle, and
- Queen Victoria's retreat at Osborne on the Isle of Wight.

Visit : www.english-heritage.org.uk. Contact : PhillipHarper at phillip.harper@english-heritage.org.uk.

World Chess Hall of Fame, St Louis, MO

The World Chess Hall of Fame (WCHOF) educates visitors, fans, players, and scholars by preserving, exhibiting, and interpreting the game of chess and its continuing cultural and artistic significance.

Originally known as the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame, it was created in 1986 by the United States Chess Federation.

The World Chess Hall of Fame opened in 2011, in Saint Louis and features the U.S. and World Chess Halls of Fame, displays of artifacts from the permanent collection, and temporary exhibitions highlighting the great players, historic games, and rich cultural history of chess.

Visit : www.worldchesshof.org. Contact : Amanda Cook at amanada@amandacookpr.com

Innova Adventure Travel (Costa Rica)

Innova Adventure Travel is a boutique travel agency located in Costa Rica, Central America, which is dedicated to helping people plan activities such as: golf, business trips, weddings, honeymoons, student trips, family vacations, health wellness or yoga retreats, SUP yoga and adventure.

You can customize your travel package and select your destinations, activities, accommodations, and mode of transportation that best fits your interests, time and budget.

Visit : www.innovatraveler.com. Contact : Laura Barrantes at lrequeno@innovatraveler.com.

Queenies Food Tours (Australia)

Queenies Food Tours take visitors to Melbourne's best foodie locations. Operating walking tours and all-day mini-bus tours, all foodie locations are carefully researched and chosen for their quality produce and products and of course fantastic food!

The locations visited include dessert shops, food stores, producers and, on our all-day tours, top bistros or restaurants for lunch.

Walking tours include tastings and some of our tours include cooking demonstrations.

Visit : www.queeniesfoodtours.com. Contact : Andrew Prior at andrew@queeniesfoodtours.com.

Amanda Hotels (India)

Amanda have a portfolio of budget hotels in Agra, Delhi, Jaipur, Lucknow and Gurgaon

Visit : www.amandahotels.in. Contact : Vivek Grover at mail@amandahotels.in.

Cheli & Peacock (Kenya)

Established by Stefano Cheli and his wife, Liz Peacock in 1985, Cheli & Peacock has grown over the years to become one of Kenya's leading, and longest established, safari operators.

Cheli & Peacock operates upmarket, exclusive and bespoke safaris for clients that still want the 'real Africa' experience. It is completely independent, operating professional and seamless safaris throughout East Africa, choosing the best and most unique properties and locations.

Cheli & Peacock also represents an award-winning collection of eight boutique safari camps and lodges: The C&P Portfolio.

All are small, unique and elegant properties in extraordinary destinations, each with their own character and style.

Visit : www.chelipeacock.com. Contact : Rosie Kempson at rosie.kempson@live.co.uk.

News

In the Lion's Throat

Alliance journalist, Bob Marriott, has just published *In the Lion's Throat* which focuses on the drug trade in S E Asia

The book takes readers to New Zealand, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos and Sri Lanka and will be of interest purely for the travel knowledge involved. Robert has visited all these places and many of the characters are based on people that I have met.

In the Lion's Throat is available via Amazon / Kindle.

Contact : Bob Marriott at marriott.bob@xtra.co.nz.

Get Into London Theatre

Get Into London Theatre is offering discount tickets with savings of up to 60% to see some of the capital's best shows until 13 February 2014.

The annual promotion features over 55 musicals, plays, dance productions, entertainments and family shows all offering seats from £10.

There is a host of sensational shows to choose from including long-running West End hits Jersey Boys, Mamma Mia! and War Horse, alongside newcomers Stephen Ward, The Commitments and From Here To Eternity.

West End theatres and venues across the capital have signed up to the promotion.

Visit : www.getintolondontheatre.co.uk. Contact : Matthew Brown at matthewb@solttma.co.uk.

The North Brabant Museum, Holland

The North Brabant Museum (Het Noordbrabants Museum) will open its final and largest gallery on 18 January 2014 after a major refurbishment.

To mark the event, nine paintings by Vincent van Vogh (1853 – 1890), the Greatest artist to have come from Brabant have been brought together, including an early Paris self-portrait from the Van Gogh Museum's collection.

The Noordbrabants Museum is also known for its historic collections of Roman archaeology, Flemish paintings from 1500 – 1800 and art from 1800.

Visit : www.hetnoordbrabantsmuseum.nl. Contact : Simone Sagi at ssagi@holland.com.

Elan Valley, Wales, looks to become International Dark Sky Park

With some of the darkest skies in the UK, the Elan Valley estate near Rhayader, which includes around 18,000 hectares of land across Mid Wales and the Cambrian Mountains, is hoping to become a Dark Sky Park

International Dark Sky Parks are areas where the night sky is protected and lighting controls are in place to prevent light pollution.

Currently, the only International Dark Sky Designation in Wales is the Brecon Beacons, which was awarded this status in February.

Over 90 per cent of the UK population lives under a severely light polluted sky, according to the 2012 British Astronomical Association survey.

Visit : www.elanvalley.org.uk. Contact : Duncan Foulkes at duncan.foulkes@btinternet.com.

Cape Town

Cape Town has been voted The (UK) Telegraph Travel Awards' Favourite City for 2013.

The UK daily newspaper asks readers annually to vote for their travel favourites in categories such as Best City Worldwide, Best Country Worldwide, Best Travel Website and Best Travel App.

Cape Town has also been designated World Design Capital 2014 and will also be celebrating twenty years of democracy with the rest of South Africa.

Visit : www.capetown.travel. Contact : Tammy White at tammy@rabbitinahat.co.za.

The Historic Dockyard Chatham, Kent UK

The Historic Dockyard Chatham has received a grant of £4.53m from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support its £8.75m Command of the Oceans project.

Command of the Oceans will see the repair and preservation of a range of the Historic Dockyard's Scheduled Ancient Monuments and its 18th Century Ship's Timbers Archaeological find. It will create galleries and interpretation and visitor facilities.

The Historic Dockyard Chatham is the world's best preserved example of a dockyard of the age of sail. During the 18th century the site played an instrumental role in supporting the Royal Navy secure worldwide supremacy at sea.

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

Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport, Shenzhen, China

The new terminal at Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport, Guangdong, China, has opened in Shenzhen - one of the fastest-growing cities in the world.

The terminal – the largest single public building to be built to date in Shenzhen - encompasses 63 contact gates, with a further 15 remote gates and significant retail space.

It will increase the capacity of the airport by 58%, allowing the airport to handle up to 45 million passengers per year.

Visit : www.eng.szairport.com. Contact : Antonia Hazlerigg at antonia@carocommunications.com.

The Lighthouse Restaurant, Europa Park, Germany

Ammolite - the Lighthouse Restaurant in the 4-star Superior Hotel Bell Rock in Europa-Park has been awarded a Michelin star a year after opening.

Europa-Park is the largest theme park in Germany and the second most popular theme park resort in Europe, following Disneyland Paris.

It is located in Rust, in south-western Germany, between Freiburg and Strasbourg, France.

Visit : www.europapark.de. Contact : Patricia Czarkowski at patricia.czarkowski@europapark.de.

New Marine Sanctuary at Gaya Island Resort, Borneo

The Gaya Island Resort has launched its new Marine Centre.

Located in a natural sanctuary located in the hillside of a rainforest, the centre carries out important work including turtle rescue.

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

Dukes St James, London

Dukes St James, London has been voted 2013 World's Leading Classic Hotel and 2013 England's Leading Hotel at the World Travel Awards in Doha.

The hotel is located in a cobbled court yard off St James' and is a member of the prestigious, Small Luxury Hotels of The World.

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

The National Restaurant Association Restaurant Finance Summit, Chicago

The National Restaurant Association will host its first Restaurant Finance Summit on 19 May 2014 during NRA Show at Chicago's McCormick Place.

The Summit will bring together restaurant financial executives and operators, Wall Street analysts, investment groups and lenders, and expert tax/accounting professionals to discuss issues related to the financial health of the restaurant, foodservice and hospitality industry.

The annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show is the largest annual gathering of restaurant, foodservice, and lodging professionals in the world.

It will be held from 17 to 20 May with the 2014 International Wine, Spirits & Beer Event, held in conjunction with NRA Show, taking place on 18 and 19 May.

Visit : www.restaurant.org. Contact : Christine Fernandez at Cfernandez@restaurant.org.

Heathrow Terminal 2, London

UK celebritychef, Heston Blumenthal is to open a new restaurant at Terminal 2 when The Queen's Terminal opens in June 2014.

The concept and menu, currently being developed, will showcase Heston's love for nostalgia and celebrate his pride of all things British, including its much loved and familiar dishes.

The new, £2.5bn Terminal 2 is the next major step in the transformation of Heathrow, and will continue the progress the airport has made in recent years with the opening of Terminal 5 and the refurbishment of Terminals 1, 3 and 4.

£11bn has been spent on the airport over the last decade and passenger satisfaction scores now rank Heathrow as among the world's very best large airports.

Visit : www.heathrow.com. Contact : Julia Gillam at julia_gillam@heathrow.com.

The Museum of the Second World War, Gdańsk, Poland

The Museum of the Second World War, which will open in Gdansk in 2015, will have 23,000 square metres of floor area, 7,000 square metres of this used for its permanent exhibition.

This exhibition will use the most modern methods to present the Second World War from the perspective of big-power politics and the fate of ordinary people.

Visit : www.gdansk.pl/en. Contact : gcit@gdansk4u.pl.

The Bucuti & Tara Beach Resorts, Aruba

The Bucuti & Tara Beach Resorts on the Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba has been ranked among the top 25 resorts in the Caribbean in the *Condé Nast Traveler 2013 Readers' Choice Awards*.

Aruba's only boutique-style resort catering exclusively for adults, Bucuti has claimed a number of recent accolades, including a listing on *Condé Nast Traveler's Gold List* and TripAdvisor's Top Ten Most Romantic Resorts in the World.

Visit : www.bucuti.com. Contact : Joanna Walding at j.walding@aruba.com.

Wild Planet Adventures'

Wild Planet Adventures' new TravelBuddies programme is a companion finder for single travelers seeking to travel together, share rooms or start a custom departure.

Single travelers willing to share a room can avoid paying "single supplements" which can equal up to 50% of the trip cost.

Visit : www.wildplanetadventures.com. Contact : Dave Wiggins at dave@travelnewssource.com.

Leads

Porto Carras Grand Resort, Greece

The Porto Carras Grand Resort has been voted Greece's Leading Family Resort in the World Travel Awards.

The resort, which is located on the western coast of Sithonia on Halkidiki's central Peninsula, is the most comprehensive resort in Greece.

Porto Carras features two 5 star Hotels, a Casino and two Thalassotherapy & Spa Centers. There is also an international 18-hole Golf course, a horse riding academy, a tennis club with nine courts, a diving centre and nautical club, plus Greece's largest organic vineyard.

The hotels 9km of beach has three Blue Flags and also organises international sports events including golf tournaments, boxing matches, international football matches, horse racing, tennis, basketball, volleyball, sailing, as well as chess and rally cars.

Porto Carras is surrounded by the rising slopes of Mt. Meliton and the Toroneos Gulf, and sits among 1,763 landscaped hectares and along 9 km of sandy beach with 25 coves.

Visit : www.portocarras.com. Contact : info@portocarras.com.

Minnesota Historical Society

Established in 1849, the Minnesota Historical Society collects, preserves and tells the story of Minnesota's past through museum exhibits, libraries and collections, historic sites, educational programs and book publishing.

Visit : www.mnhs.org. Contact : Jessica Kohen at jessica.kohen@mnhs.org.

Avalon Waterways

Avalon Waterways has named World Champion and London Gold medal Olympian, Dr Katherine Grainger CBE as 'godmother' to Avalon Poetry II, one of three new river cruise suite ships due to launch in the spring of 2014.

The new ships will bring the total of suite ships in the fleet to eight, each featuring two full decks of 'Panorama suites'.

Avalon Waterways cruises on the Danube, Main, Rhine, Moselle, Rhône, Seine, Dutch Waterways, Nile, Mississippi, Galápagos, Amazon, Mekong and Yangtze rivers between March and December.

Avalon cruises offer a luxurious on board experience with elegant dining, spacious suites and large outside staterooms with full-sized en suite bathrooms.

In addition, most staterooms on board our European Avalon cruises feature floor-to-ceiling panoramic windows (unique to Avalon Waterways), providing the best views of beautiful landscapes, famous landmarks and spectacular sights as you cruise.

Visit : www.avaloncruises.co.uk. Contact : Helen McNaught at hmcnaught@avaloncruises.co.uk.

HMS Belfast, London

HMS Belfast, the last surviving Second World War Royal Navy Cruiser of her type in the world (and now permanently moored on the Thames in central London) played a significant role in supporting the Normandy landings and reportedly fired one of the first shots on D-Day itself.

In May 2014 HMS Belfast will play a major role in marking the 70th anniversary of D-Day with major commemorative event.

Visit : www.iwm.org.uk. Contact : Kate Crowther at kcrowther@iwm.org.uk.

Bramble Ski and Haute Montagne, Switzerland and Austria

Bramble Ski and Haute Montagne are two collections of luxury chalets in Switzerland and Austria.

Bramble Ski offers a collection of chalet properties in Verbier, St. Anton, Villars and Lech, which are available on both a catered and self-catered basis.

Haute Montagne offers privately-owned chalets in Verbier and Gstaad, which are staffed with Michelin-trained chefs, hosts, housekeepers, sommeliers, drivers, a concierge service and a dedicated chalet manager.

Visit : www.brambleski.com and www.hautemontagne.com. Contact Charlotte Rous at Charlotte@grifcopr.com.

Arundel Castle, West Sussex, UK

One of the largest inhabited and complete castles in England, Arundel Castle is situated in grounds overlooking the River Arun in West Sussex.

It was founded at the end of the 11th century by Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Arundel and today is the family home of the 18th Duke of Norfolk.

Arundel Castle offers a full day out with guided and free-flow tours of the finely preserved castle rooms including the Baron's Hall, 14th Century Catholic Fitzalan Chapel, Regency Library and Victorian bedrooms.

There is also the opportunity to climb the Norman Motte and Keep and enjoy the Collector Earl's Garden that was opened by HRH The Prince of Wales in 2008.

The Castle also offers a calendar of historical events throughout the year from Jousting and Medieval Tournaments to Shakespeare plays.

The Castle will be open to visitors from 2 April to 2 November 2014.

Visit : www.arundelcastle.org. Contact : Flow Powell at flo@midnight.co.uk.

The Canal & River Trust (UK)

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales.

It is among the largest charities in the UK, maintaining the nation's third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, navigations and hundreds of important wildlife sites.

Visit : www.canalrivertrust.org.uk. Contact : Sarah Rudy at sarah.rudy@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Wynwood, Miami

Wynwood, once a low density warehouse district in downtown Miami, is now a thriving arts neighbourhood frequented by the trendy and bohemian.

The first phase was the establishment of NW 2nd Avenue, now home to restaurants, Joey's Italian Cafe and Wynwood Kitchen & Bar.

The Wynwood Walls, an outdoor art park that displays museum quality street art murals created by the world's most prominent graffiti artists is surrounded by Gallery Diet, Panther Coffee, Frangipani and Pan American Art Projects.

Currently undergoing renovation, when completed, the three story warehouse building located at 331 NW 26th Street will welcome its first tenants in October 2013.

Colourfully painted by international street artists Interesni Kazki in their inimitable whimsical style, it will add to one of the country's hippest neighborhoods.

Visit : www.miamiandbeaches.com. Contact : Juliet at juliet@Gmcbv.com.

Pittock Mansion, Portland, Maine

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.

Visit : www.pittockmansion.org. Contact: Angela Allee at aallee@pittockmansion.org.

Doddington Hall, Lincolnshire

Begun in 1595 by Robert Smythson, one of England's foremost Elizabethan Architects, Doddington Hall, a fine late Elizabethan Mansion, was completed in 1600.

Originally built for Thomas Tailor, the registrar to the Bishop of Lincoln, Doddington's mellow brick exterior with its walled courtyards has barely changed.

However, in 1749, the Hall was inherited by John Delaval of Seaton Delaval in Northumberland and he carried out an extensive internal re-decoration, incorporating the light and elegant Georgian style still seen today.

Over 400 years of unbroken family occupation has resulted in fascinating collections of furniture, weaponry, paintings, ceramics, textiles, household objects and porcelain.

Extensive gardens and woodland trails complete a visit.

Visit : www.doddingtonhall.com. Contact : Charlotte Goy at Charlotte.Goy@Lincs-Chamber.co.uk.

The Connecticut Historical Society

The Connecticut Historical Society is a private, not-for-profit museum, library, research and educational center.

Its mission is to inspire and foster a life-long interest in history through exhibitions, programs, and Connecticut-related collections, because improving knowledge of the past enhances understanding of the present and the ability to meet the challenges of the future.

Founded in 1825, the Connecticut Historical Society houses an extensive and comprehensive Connecticut-related collection of manuscripts, printed material, artefacts and images that document social, cultural, and family history.

Visit : www.chs.org. Contact : Ed Main at ed_main@chs.org.

Space Shuttle Atlantis at Kennedy Space Center

The \$100 million Space Shuttle AtlantisSM attraction at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is a 90,000-square-foot attraction featuring the Atlantis spacecraft.

The immersive experience invites guests to “be the astronaut” with never-before-seen, technologically sophisticated multimedia presentations and more than 60 interactive, touch-screen experiences and high-tech simulators.

Visit : www.KennedySpaceCenter.com. Contact : Alina Quintana at Alina@bitnergoodman.com.

Baby Friendly Boltholes

Baby Friendly Boltholes provides a platform for parents and carers of babies and pre-school aged children to search and book holidays and mini-breaks worldwide that are suitable for the entire family.

These range from ski breaks and beach holidays to farm stays with accommodation options including boutique hotels, cottages, chalets, villas and B&Bs.

Locations include Europe, the Middle East, South East Asia, USA and the Caribbean.

Visit : www.babyfriendlyboltholes.co.uk. Contact : Cass Helstrip at Cass.helstrip@whitetigerpr.com.

The South Florida Symphony Orchestra, Fort Lauderdale, Florida USA

The South Florida Symphony Orchestra stages its season of concerts and events between January and March with a Masterworks Concert Series throughout South Florida.

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

What's on in 2014

The Scottish Snowdrop Festival

1 February to 16 March 2014

One of the first key festivals in the Homecoming Scotland 2014 calendar, visitors can experience this delicate bloom in a variety of locations across the country.

Fifty-three gardens, including 8 new additions, will showcase snowdrops, some of which are open exclusively for the event. Properties taking part range from walled gardens, urban retreats, historic castles, churchyards and woodland walks.

Visit : www.visitscotland.com and www.homecomingscotland.com. Contact : Glenda Rohead at Glenda.Rohead@visitscotland.com.

Venice Carnival, Venice Italy

15 February to 4 March 2014

Venice during carnevale sees citizens, together with thousands of visitors from around the globe, take to the streets dressed in elaborate, fantastically masked costumes, providing one of Europe's most visually stunning event.

The Venice Carnival always takes place during the ten days leading up to Shrove Tuesday. Carnival, being a pre-Lent festival, means 'farewell to meat' and is celebrated throughout Italy.

It was first held in Venice in the 11th century and consisted of over two months of revelry, until it fell into decline during the 18th century.

It was revived in 1979 with great success and nowadays it is a great excuse to don a mask and costume, parade around the city and enjoy the live music in the main squares of the city.

Visit : www.venice-carnival-italy.com and www.venice-tourism.com. Contact : Alessandra Smith at alessandra.smith@enit.it.

Slaves and Slaveholders of Wessyngton Plantation, Tennessee State Museum in Nashville

11 February to 31 August 2014

An exhibit about the slaves and slaveholders who worked and resided at a distinctive plantation in Tennessee will open in February at the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville.

Slaves and Slaveholders of Wessyngton Plantation, looks at the lives of both the enslaved African Americans and their white owners on the 13,000 acre plantation in Robertson County, Tennessee.

Through first and third person accounts, the exhibit will reconstruct the lives of several enslaved people, giving them names, faces, and the details of what happened to them before, during, and after the Civil War.

The plantation was established in 1796 by Joseph Washington, who moved to Tennessee from Virginia, and was later inherited by his son, George A. Washington.

The Washingtons, through their business dealings, became incredibly wealthy, owning not only Wessyngton but also property and slaves in Kentucky.

Wessyngton was one of the largest plantations in Tennessee in 1860 and the largest producer of tobacco in the U.S. In 1860, the Washingtons were one of the wealthiest families in Tennessee.

The Tennessee State Museum currently occupies three floors, covering approximately 120,000 square feet with more than 60,000 square feet devoted to exhibits. It is located at Fifth and Deaderick in downtown Nashville, Tennessee.

Visit : www.tnmuseum.org. Contact : Mary Skinner at mary.skinner@tn.gov.

London Fashion Weekend, Somerset House, London UK

20 February 2014 to 23 February 2014

For four days the historic Somerset House is transformed into a fashion venue as big names from the beauty and style industries show off their creative work.

The fashion and designer shopping experience comprises catwalk shows, pop-up shops, hair and beauty products and educational panels from leading fashion experts, as over 100 of the nation's best designer brands (including Issa London, French Sole and Linda Farrow) display their wares.

Visit : www.londonfashionweekend.co.uk. Contact : Will Rowley at will.rowley@britishfashioncouncil.com.

Mazatlán's International Carnival, Sinaloa, Mexico

27 February to 14 March 2014

Mazatlán's International Carnival is a six-day, multi-event affair with parades, floats and fancy dress balls. Like many celebrations in Catholic countries, Mazatlán's carnival is held in the run-up to Lent and rivals the fiestas in Rio and Trinidad.

The carnival's official starting point is Paseo de las Olas Altas, that glitters with the hundreds of masks, costumes, parades and various artistic performances; all along the beachfront Malecón the festivities have been attracting celebrants for over 100 years.

Visit : www.visitmexico.com/en/carnaval-in-mazatlan-sinaloa-mexico. Contact : Manuel Diaz-Cebrian at gayala@visitmexico.com.

Rio Carnival, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

28 February to 4 March 2014

Regarded as the carnival capital of the World, Rio de Janeiro is home to world's biggest Carnival, involving four days of celebration.

During the month of February, it's the carnival all over Rio culminating in the Rio Carnival Parade also known as the Samba Parade.

Visit : www.rio-carnival.net. Contact : Enrico Antinoro at enrico.antinoro@embratur.gov.br

National Corndog Day

March 2014

National Corndog Day was founded by two friends in Corvallis, Oregon and has evolved into one of the fastest growing holidays in America, registering over 300 official parties.

Anyone can register an official party at Corndogday.com. Party Packs can be purchased on the site.

Visit : www.corndogday.com. Contact : Brady Sahnnow at corndogday@gmail.com.

Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, Victoria, Australia

28 February to 16 March 2014

The Melbourne Food and Wine Festival has 300 events in the city's network of restaurants, laneways, basements and rooftop.

There is fresh seasonal produce, bustling food markets, award-winning restaurants, expert winemakers and warm hospitality.

The festival's prestigious reputation attracts the world's biggest culinary and wine personalities to participate in the program along with Victoria's own celebrated chefs, restaurateurs, winemakers, sommeliers, producers and artisans.

Visit : www.melbournefoodandwine.com.au. Contact : Penny France at penny@foodfest.com.au

Monterey's Jazz Bash by the Bay, California USA

7 to 9 March 2014

Jazz Bash by the Bay, a three day celebration of the music of the 1920s and '30s, has been staged since 1980.

The festival brings together traditional jazz, swing, gypsy jazz, ragtime, blues, and big bands with eight ballrooms and cabaret venues under one roof.

Visit : www.jazzbashbythebay.com. Contact : Betsy Shea at betsy@shea-campbell.com.

Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

26 March to 20 April 2014

The Melbourne International Comedy Festival is one of the three largest comedy festivals in the world and the largest in the southern hemisphere.

For three and a half weeks each year, Melbourne becomes the centre of the comedy universe with an extensive program of stand-up comedy, cabaret, theatre, street performance, film, television, radio and visual arts.

With attendances of more than 600,000 people, it has grown to be one of Australia's largest cultural events.

Visit : www.comedyfestival.com.au. Contact : Tatia Sloley at tatia@tspublicity.com.au.

The 28th Annual Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, Louisiana USA

19 to 23 March 2014

Literary, theater and musical talent will gather in the historic French Quarter for the 2014 Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival.

The five-day fête honours Tennessee Williams, his works, and literary life in the adopted city he called his "spiritual home" and includes master classes, celebrity interviews, theatre, food and music events.

The riotous closing ceremony is the Stanley and Stella Shouting Contest, in playful homage to the bellowing mates in *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Visit : www.tennesseewilliams.net. Contact : ejjester@aol.com.

The 3rd Annual Healthy Living Festival, San Diego, California

23 March 2014

San Diego's largest health and fitness expo takes place at the Del Mar Fairgrounds with 30 free lectures and workshops and 200 exhibitors offering the latest in healthy living products and services.

Visit : www.healthylivingfestival.com. Contact : healthfest@yahoo.com.

The 31st Annual Gathering of Nations, Albuquerque, New Mexico USA

24 to 26 April 2014

The 31st Annual Gathering of Nations, considered the most prominent Native American powwow in the world, will host tens of thousands of people and more than 700 tribes from throughout the United States, Canada, and around the world.

The three-day event will include more than 3,000 traditional Native American singers and dancers competing, and more than 800 Native American artisans, craftsmen and traders displaying and selling their work.

In addition, dozens of contemporary indigenous bands will be performing a wide variety of musical genres.

Vendors in the Native Food Court will offer guests a large selection of food choices ranging between southwestern-style cuisine and traditional Native American fare.

As part of the Gathering of Nations, a young Native American woman will be crowned Miss Indian World and represent all native and indigenous people as a cultural goodwill ambassador.

Visit : www.gatheringofnations.com. Contact: Sarah Hattman at shattman@jameskorenchen.com.

Nottinghamshire County Show, Newark Showground, Nottinghamshire UK

10 and 11 May 2014

Set in the market town of Newark, the Nottinghamshire County Show is a traditional show promoting farming, food, rural life and heritage in Nottinghamshire and beyond.

There are dog displays and show jumping and the traditional equine and livestock showing classes.

Over 50,000 visitors attend annually.

Visit : www.nottinghamshirecountyshow.com. Contact : Linda Parker at linda.parker@experiencenottinghamshire.com.

The Dominican Republic Golf Open 2014

12 to 18 May 2014

The fifth annual Dominican Republic Professional Golf Tournament (DR OPEN 2014) will be held on the Teeth of the Dog golf course, in Casa de Campo, one of the Caribbean's most exclusive resorts.

The Teeth of the Dog course is ranked as the number one golf course in Latin America. The event will also include a ceremony for the induction of national players into the National Golf Hall of Fame.

Visit : www.casadecampo.com.do Contact : Esther Smith at pr.uk@godominicanrepublic.com.

The GVI Global Challenge 2014

August 2014

Volunteer organisation GVI is launching its new Global Challenge, a volunteer event across three continents set to take place in August 2014.

There are over 100,000,000 children worldwide without access to formal education and GVI is giving volunteers the chance to contribute.

Volunteers will sign up to join GVI either in Cape Town, South Africa; Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica, or Phang Nga, Thailand to take part in an international effort working towards improving educational facilities and infrastructure for hundreds of children.

Volunteers can expect 7 days of tough work whichever location they choose but, on completing their task, they then have the option to extend their trip for a week to explore their chosen area and make the most of GVI's excellent in-country experts.

Visit www.gvi.co.uk. Contact : Emma Powell at Emma@grifcopr.com.

Southport Flower Show

14-17 August 2014

The Southport Flower Show, the UK's largest independent flower show, is held in Victoria Park, Southport every summer.

Attracting around 70,000 visitors, the event will feature the very best in garden design, gourmet foods and entertainment. Visitors will be able to enjoy over a million blooms, with the Grand Floral Marquee hosting displays from some of the country's top independent growers.

Each day there are lectures, cookery presentations, and a programme of music performed at the bandstand.

Celebrity garden experts will also be on hand offering tips and guidance.

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

Burning Man, Nevada

25 August to 4 September 2014

Burning Man is a week-long annual event held in the Black Rock Desert in northern Nevada, USA.

Tens of thousands of participants gather to create Black Rock City, dedicated to community, art, self-expression, and self-reliance. They depart one week later, having left no trace whatsoever.

The event begins on the last Monday in August, and ends on the first Monday in September, which coincides with the American Labor Day holiday.

It takes its name from the ritual burning of a large wooden effigy, which is set alight on Saturday evening.

Visit : www.burningman.com. Contact : press@burningman.com.

Star-Spangled Spectacular 2014, Baltimore, Maryland

6 to 16 September 2014

A star-spangled commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Baltimore and "The Star-Spangled Banner," featuring Francis Scott Key's immortal manuscript, will take place in Baltimore.

Festivities start on 6 September with the annual Defenders' Day event at North Point.

A ten-day long celebration featuring re-enactments, fireworks, parades, maritime festival, the Blue Angels' airshow, will conclude with a televised event at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine.

Visit : www.starspangled200.org and www.baltimore.org. Contact : Sarah Straub at sarah.straub@finnpartners.com.

Steampunk, Lincoln UK

Annually September 2013

Weekend at the Asylum is the largest 'purely steampunk' event in Europe and attracts participants from around the world.

For three days each year the historic streets of Lincoln are thronged with splendidly dressed steampunks enjoying a festival which strives to combine art, literature, music, fashion, comedy and simple good fun.

The cobbled streets of the city become transformed with people wearing fantasy neo- Victorian costumes including top hats and flying goggles, to corset and flamboyant feathers.

The Asylum is organised and run by the Victorian Steampunk Society which is a voluntary not-for-profit organisation that exists to facilitate Steampunk.

Visit : www.steampunk.synthasite.com. Contact : Charlotte Goy at Charlotte.Goy@Lincs-Chamber.co.uk.

British Musical Fireworks Championship

3-5 October 2014

The British Musical Fireworks Championship sees seven of the county's top pyrotechnic companies go head to head over three nights.

The winner judged on fireworks-to-music synchronisation, range and choice of fireworks used – and of course – the all-important wow factor will be 'British Musical Fireworks Champion' for next 12 months.

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

L'Escalade Festival, Geneva

13 to 15 December (annually)

Geneva has been celebrating L'Escalade Festival every year from 13th – 15th December since 1926.

Attracting tens-of-thousands of spectators every year, the Fête de l'Escalade is a popular event held throughout Geneva's streets, as the city remembers and celebrates the anniversary of the city's defeat of troops sent by the Duke of Savoy in 1402.

Geneva's Old-Town is transformed as crowds dress in period costume and proceed through the streets in a spectacular parade, which sees the proclamation of victory read out by a herald on horseback followed with a large torch-bearing procession along both banks of the Rhone.

Visit : www.1602.ch. Contact : Clarissa Knox at cknox@thecommunicationgroup.co.uk.

Reasons to write about

The Tren Crucero railway, Ecuador

Ecuador's national railway company, Ferrocarriles del Ecuador, has reopened the 'Tren Crucero' railway project which links Quito in the high Andes with Guayaquil on Ecuador's Pacific seaboard.

The Tren Crucero project began with the \$250m refurbishment of the 105 year old railway line travels through a range of scenery such as the majestic Avenue of the Volcanoes', the Devil's Nose and the lush Cloud Forests of the Amazon.

Ferrocarriles del Ecuador has also introduced the 'Cruise Train' itself, based on four restored railway carriages built in Spanish Baroque style and capable of carrying up to 54 passengers in great comfort.

Wherever possible, these carriages are pulled by a reconditioned, historically authentic steam engine.

The final stage of the project has been the creation of a four-day, three-night itinerary for the train staying overnight in hacienda-type hotels and visiting local markets and cultural, historic and tourist attractions en-route.

Visit : www.trenecuador.com. Contact : Philip Cooke at philip@thedmg.co.uk.

Desert Rhino Camp, Namibia

The Desert Rhino Camp in Namibia has received the Authentic Travel Award at the inaugural Amadeus and WTM Travel Experience Awards.

Desert Rhino Camp offers the chance to view Africa's largest free-roaming black rhino population on foot and to help contribute to its conservation.

The camp lies in the 450 000-hectare Palmwag Concession in Damaraland – a region marked for its stark, minimalist beauty and surprising wealth of arid-adapted wildlife.

Desert Rhino Camp functions as a collaborative effort between Wilderness Safaris and the Save the Rhino Trust (SRT), an NGO responsible for the preservation of desert-adapted black rhino in the area.

Having barely survived the slaughter of '80s and '90s throughout other parts of Africa, the black rhino population has doubled since the formation of the SRT, which focuses on the protection, monitoring and understanding of the local black rhino population.

Desert Rhino Camp activities include rhino tracking on foot or by vehicle with SRT trackers and full-day outings birding and nature drives.

Visit : www.wilderness-safaris.com/namibia_kunene/desert_rhino_camp. Contact : Nadia Walford at nadia@grifopr.com.

Save the Rhino Trust

The desert-adapted black rhino (*Diceros bicornis bicornis*) living in the Kunene Region (former Damaraland and Kaokoland) in the arid north-west of Namibia is the only rhino population in the world that has survived on communal land with no formal conservation status.

In the early 1980s in this vast and spectacular desert scenery, a slaughter of desert wildlife took place.

As the rhino numbers shrank to near extinction, a group of concerned people (scientists, geologists, community leaders, nature conservation officials, journalists, housewives and businessmen) gathered together to form the Save the Rhino Trust, the aim of which was to stop the horrendous slaughter of rhino, elephant and other wildlife, which was taking place in the desert and high in the mountains of NW Namibia.

Since its founding 25 years ago poaching has drastically declined and the rhino population has more than trebled!

It has successfully collaborated with government, traditional leaders and local community with an aim to provide security for and monitor the rhino population in the region, as well as to benefit the community through conservation and tourism.

Previously convicted poachers were employed by the Save the Rhino Trust as guards - since they had extensive knowledge of the habits of rhino!

Local chiefs and headmen as well as neighbouring farming communities all enthusiastically support the halt the extermination of the endangered black rhino and other endangered wildlife on communal land.

The Save the Rhino Trust is represented at the international meetings of the African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG), which is a member of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Visit : www.savetherhino.org. Contact : Cathy Dean at cathy@savetherhino.org.

The Talylyn Railway, mid-Wales

The Talylyn Railway is a narrow gauge railway opened for goods traffic in 1865 and shortly after for passenger services, which have operated every year since between Tywyn on the west coast of Wales and Nant Gwernol just over seven miles inland.

In 1951 operation of the line was taken over by the Talylyn Railway Preservation Society and became the world's first preserved railway.

Operation of the line is primarily by volunteers from all walks of life, with a small paid staff.

It is now a major tourist attraction in the mid-Wales area, contributing significantly to the area's economy.

The 150th Anniversary will be celebrated on 2015 with the opening of the line to goods traffic.

Visit : www.talylyn.co.uk. Contact : I Drummond at I.drummond@holnepublishing.co.uk.

Golf in Bjorkliden, Swedish Lapland

With many active golfers in search of the next big challenge, a range of spectacular courses have been created across the globe aiming to deliver the ultimate golf experience, with none more extreme than the nine holes of snow covered golf in Bjorkliden, Swedish Lapland.

Situated 250 miles north of the Arctic Circle, Bjorkliden is also one of the best destinations for the northern lights, and there is the chance for you to ski, go dog sledding.

The golf course, which is the most northerly in Sweden, is located amongst the arctic mountains providing some shelter from the sub-zero winter.

The course plays as a more familiar grass covered round during the summer months, but is then buried under metres of Arctic snow during the winter.

The course can also be played with a guide at night under the splendour of the northern lights, with specially designed glowing golf balls.

Specialist soft adventure travel company, Off the Map Travel work in partnership with Bjorkkliden to organise tailor made trips to Northern Sweden.

Visit : www.offthemaptravel.co.uk. Contact : Mark Hayward at mark@swaycommunications.co.uk.

Sacred Rides

Sacred Rides has a winter collection for experts and beginners that combine mountain biking with non-bike activities, which includes :

Mexico : Yoga / Mountain Bike Retreat

The gateway is Puerto Vallarta for transfers to a private beach resort, Playa Escondida. Optional surf and salsa lessons are introduced early in the trip, as is daily yoga.

Rides including for beginners explore the Sierra de Vallajo mountain range with steep cobblestone climbs and fast fire road descents.

An ocean safari by panga provides snorkeling opportunities in Marietas Islands National Park.

Chile : Surf and SingleTrack

The gateway for more experienced riders is Santiago followed by a local two-hour climb on single track trail, a climb to the summit of the El Roble trail with views of Mt. Aconcagua - the continent's highest mountain - and the Pacific coastline.

The winding, technical descent on the Las Palmas trail through pine forest ends up in the town of Olmue, followed by Valparaiso for urban rides in this ocean-side home of famed Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

Chilean coastal jungle on the fast and smooth Quebrada Del Tigre trail leads to surfing in Maitencillo.

Patagonia : Pedal and Paddle

This multi-sport, end-of-the-earth program for the adventurous begins and ends in Bariloche.

Guests transfer to La Confluencia, an eco-lodge at the confluence of two rivers in the Patagonian Andes, enroute checking out jaw-dropping scenery in Nahuel Huapi National Park within the Rio Azul Wilderness Area.

Lago Escondido, part of a large 10,000 hectare estancia, provides the biking including kayaking or rafting whitewater on the Azul River.

Back country roads mingle with settlers' cabins and bonfires before riding to a worksite in the Rio Azul Protected Area to help the Land Ethic Action Foundation with its mountain bike trail building initiative.

Other winter programs are La Ruta de Maya in Guatemala with a ride and culture focus and Misty Mountain Hop in New Zealand that includes scenic singletrack and heli-biking.

Visit : www.sacredrides.com. Contact : Dave Wiggins at dave@travelnewssource.com.

Tobago cultural activities

Tobago is the smaller of the two main islands that make up the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

It is located in the southern Caribbean, northeast of the island of Trinidad and southeast of Grenada.

Tobago enjoys a rich Caribbean culture with the biggest influence coming from the island's African ancestry which permeates dance, song, folklore, superstitions, stories and community life.

Pulling Seine

This is the daily communal hauling in of fish. Traditionally a huge is cast close to shore and then it is pulled in by hand.

Fishermen and volunteers drag the net to shallow water, often heavy with small fish like sprats and jacks to larger fish like dolphin and tuna.

Anyone can help pull in the catch, part of which can be claimed as payment for the effort.

The number of nets used depends on the size of the bay and the size of the village. It is a regular feature in fishing villages like Castara, Charlotteville, Grafton and Black Rock.

Steel pan

Tobago's national instrument is the steel pan and nearly every village has a pan band. It is well worth attending their practice nights throughout the year to hear the instrument's evocative and distinct sound.

Its history can be traced back to the 1800s where freed slaves created their own instruments out of bamboo and performed in so-called "Tamboo Bamboo" bands.

Sunday School

This is a loud and vibrant street party held at Buccoo every Sunday. It starts at 9pm when the Buccooneers Steel Orchestra entertain the crowds with traditional steel pan. There are also dozens of craft, food and gambling stalls.

The party really comes alive after 11pm when the main sound system is cranked up, filling the night with Soca, Chutney, R&B and Jamaican dancehall.

Harvest and Fisherman's Fetes

These are at the core of community life in Tobago, where villages take turns throughout the year to come together and give thanks. Generally it begins with a church service before villagers go home to cook.

Each household in the village then throws open its doors and visitors and friends alike are urged to sample a delicious range of food from stewed chicken and curried crab to cassava, barbecue fish and macaroni pie.

Visit : www.tobagohoteltourism.com. Contact : Katy Young at katy@sbms.co.tt.

Aruba Carnival

The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba's carnival is one of the largest in the Caribbean, with the season running from January with the Torch Parade to midnight on the eve of Ash Wednesday. The 2014, 60th carnival season features parades of colourful floats, extravagant costumes and rolling sound trucks.

There is also jump-ups (street parties), impressive steel-pan drum performances, a tumba contest, calypso and roadmarch contests, a spectacular night-time Lighting Parade and the Grand Parade on Sunday 2 March.

The Torch Parade

11 January 2014

The official opening parade of the Aruba Carnival sees bright lights lead the way down the main streets of capital Oranjestad.

The parade begins at 8pm and sets the pace for the festivities to follow in the weeks ahead.

Grand Tumba Contest

1 February 2014

Originally from Africa with a Caribbean influence, tumba music is played throughout the island's carnival. This event features local bands and singers competing for the tumba king or queen title with their original musical compositions and lyrics.

Tivoli Lighting Parade

22 February 2014

Aruba's evening carnival parade sees thousands of tiny lights are incorporated into costumes and floats, heightening the dramatic effect of the parade. Live bands accompany the participating carnival groups in downtown Oranjestad.

60th Grand Carnival Parade

02 March 2014

The largest of all the carnival parades, the Grand Parade winds its way through Oranjestad, bringing with it distinctive music, spectacular floats, with original costumes decorated with colourful stones, sequins and feathers.

Visit : www.aruba.com. Contact : Joanna Walding at j.walding@aruba.com.

A place to stay

The Vineyard, Berkshire UK

The five star Vineyard hotel in Berkshire, is celebrating 'The Judgement of Paris', a story which shaped the wine world back in 1976.

An Englishman staged a competitive blind tasting of French & Californian wines in a small room in a Paris hotel.

Some of the leading French wine aficionados of the day chose not French wines but Californian as their favourite.

This was publicised widely and inspired The Vineyard's owner in Berkshire, who owns The Peter Michael Winery in California, to commission a vast painting called 'The Judgement of Paris'.

This is now on display at The Vineyard and Head Chef, Daniel Galmiche and Wine Director Alan Holmes have created 'Discovery Menus' that fuse each dish with two wines - one Californian and the other French.

Diners are then invited to state which is their preferred option.

The Vineyard also offers a selection of other menus and a 'cellar' of 30,000 bottles.

The Vineyard offers 49 rooms, over half of which are suites, and has a luxury spa.

Visit : www.the-vineyard.co.uk. Contact : Peter da Silva at peter@boutiquedasilva.com.

Raffles Praslin, Seychelles

The Raffles Praslin, Seychelles has been named the World's Leading Luxury Villa Resort at the 2013 World Travel Awards'.

Raffles Praslin, Seychelles is a luxury retreat featuring villas with private plunge pools, beaches, the largest spa in Seychelles and round-the-clock Raffles butler service.

Visit : www.affles.com/praslin. Contact : Marilyne Morin at marilyne.morin@affles.com.

Gangtey Goenpa, Bhutan

The new 12 bedroom Gangtey Goenpa lodge is located in the remote Bhutanese valley of Gangtey, allowing access to explore the undeveloped central and eastern part of the 'Dragon Kingdom'.

Gangtey Goenpa is owned and operated by husband and wife team Brett Melzer and Khin Omar Win.

The couple founded Eastern Safaris, which offers luxury adventure experiences in Bhutan.

In mid 2014, Brett and Omar will be launching Bhutan's first hot air ballooning operation in the valley.

Gangtey Lodge is situated above the Gangtey Monastery or 'Goenpa', and is inspired by the monastery itself as well as Bhutanese farmhouses dotted throughout the valley.

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

Anantara Bazaruto Island Resort & Spa, Mozambique

The Anantara Bazaruto Island Resort & Spa, Mozambique, the groups first Anantara in Africa, is located on a private white sand beach off the east coast of Africa.

It opened in December 2013 and is a boutique collection of 44 beach, sea view and pool villas, which have been designed to suit the unspoiled island surroundings.

Guests can explore lush tropical plants and exotic wildlife, traditional local villages and freshwater lakes, surrounded by the Indian Ocean.

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

The St. Regis Mauritius Resort

The St. Regis Mauritius Resort, which is located at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Le Morne, features 172 suites along with The St. Regis Villa– the largest and most exclusive private villa in Mauritius.

Centred around the Manor House, the resort resembles an historical estate and features six fine dining venues.

The St. Regis portfolio comprises 31 luxury hotels and resorts worldwide, since the opening of the first St. Regis Hotel in New York City over a century ago by John Jacob Astor IV. Plans for the brand to expand include the St. Regis Hotels & Resorts in the Riviera Maya.

In Asia, St. Regis has announced plans to open hotels in Changsha, Chengdu, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Lijiang, Nanjing, New Delhi, Qingshui Bay and Zhuhai.

In the Middle East, St. Regis Hotels and Resorts will continue to expand in Amman, Cairo, Istanbul and Dubai.

Visit www.stregis.com. Contact : Gail Palmer at gail@ktapr.com.

The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba

The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba, which has opened on Palm Beach, is the group's sixth property in the Caribbean and Mexico region.

All rooms have private, sea-view balconies and the hotel offers four restaurants. The Ritz-Carlton Spa is said to be the largest in the Caribbean, with its 15,000 square feet encompassing 134 treatment rooms, salon, boutique and a variety of naturally-influenced services.

Visit : www.ritzcarlton.com. Contact : Joanna Walding at j.walding@aruba.com.

Raffles Hainan, China

Raffles Hotels & Resorts has expanded its collection to 10 hotels with the opening of Raffles Hainan – their second property in China.

The luxury resort will open in Clearwater Bay, the new hotspot on the southeast coast of Hainan Island – China's answer to the French Riviera and a rising star in the luxury tourism market.

The resort enjoys a prime beachfront location with 299 rooms, all with private balconies and scenic views of the ocean or golf course.

A large Raffles Spa offering both Asian and Western treatments, seven restaurants and bars, and private events spaces will sit alongside Hainan's homage to the Long Bar at Raffles Singapore, in tribute to the Hainanese bartender who created the Singapore Sling.

Over 1,000 works of art will be showcased throughout the resort. Curated by Willow Gallery from Hong Kong, these include specially commissioned works from contemporary Chinese artists, sculptures, tribal ornaments and even multimedia art.

Visit : www.affles.com/hainan. Contact : Vivian Kohvivan.koh@affles.com

Park Hyatt Maldives Hadahaa

The Park Hyatt Maldives Hadahaa has achieved the 'Silver EarthCheck' certification for second year.

The resort is located 400 kilometres south of Malé, and 56 kilometres north of the Equator and is the Hyatt Group's first property in the Indian Ocean and one of the only luxury all-inclusives in the Maldives.

Hadahaa is surrounded by more than 150 uninhabited islands and subsequently has one of the most abundant and healthiest house reefs in the world.

The resort, which is committed to the environment, includes 50 contemporary villas; a 360-degree white beach; two restaurants and the Vidhun Spa, which uses the traditional Maldivian healing benefits of Dhivehibey.

EarthCheck is a leading benchmarking, certification and environmental management programme used by the travel and tourism industry, collecting data relating to the operational performance of more than 1300 travel and tourism organisations in over 84 countries.

This enables EarthCheck clients to benchmark the efficiency of their operations against internationally compliant standards of best practice.

Visit : www.maldives.hadahaa.park.hyatt.com and www.earthcheck.org. Contact : lk@verypcc.com.

Anantara Doha Island Resort & Spa, Qatar

Anantara's first opening in Qatar, the Anantara Doha Island Resort & Spa, which opens in early 2014, will be located 11 km from downtown Doha on an exclusive 13 hectare island that has its own marina and reefs.

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

Andaz Papagayo, Costa Rica

The first Andaz Resort in Latin America opened in December 2013 overlooking the bay of Culebra.

The resort features 153 guest rooms including 21 luxury suites with guests having access to two exclusive beaches and three pools.

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

Park Hyatt New York

The Park Hyatt New York, which opens in spring 2014, will be located in Midtown Manhattan's Plaza District at 157 West 57th Street.

The 210-room hotel has been designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Christian de Portzamparc and will feature 62 suites, a bar and a restaurant, a spa and fitness centre and indoor swimming pool in a three-story aerie.

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

The Waldorf Astoria Jerusalem

The Waldorf Astoria Jerusalem, which opened in December 2013, is an historic property with its 220 guest rooms and suites is situated at the intersection of King David, Agron and Mamila Streets, just steps from the Old City.

Built in 1929, the building has had an extensive renovation, with the historic facade of intricate stone carvings and decorative arches fully restored, as well as a complete rebuild of the interior.

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

The New Hampton Inn and Suites, Bradenton-Downtown, Florida

The New Hampton Inn and Suites Bradenton-Downtown Historic District, which opened on November 19 2013 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The property has 1920s décor including cathedral ceilings and 1920s glass windows, enjoys a riverfront destination and is a short walk from the lively Main Street.

The newly revamped Riverwalk along the Manatee River features art, an amphitheatre and a skatepark.

For nature lovers the Botanical Walk includes a Butterfly garden with unique plants native to Florida. The South Florida Museum, the largest natural and cultural history museum on Florida's Gulf Coast, is a short walk from the hotel.

Bradenton's Village of the Arts is also within walking distance and offers galleries, cafes, jewellery and fashion.

Visit : www.bradentongulfislands.com and www.hamptoninn3.hilton.com. Contact : Antonia at Antonia@goshpr.co.uk.

The Alexandra Barcelona, Spain

The Alexandra Barcelona, a DoubleTree by Hilton, has opened in the Paseo de Gracia area of the city.

The full-service hotel's opening marks the Barcelona debut for the DoubleTree by Hilton brand, and is within walking distance of the Rambla de Catalunya, as well as Gaudi's Casa Batlló and Casa Milá.

DoubleTree by Hilton has 46 hotels in Europe with a further 23 under development. Its eight hotels in Spain include the Hilton Diagonal Mar Barcelona, Hilton Buenavista Toledo and the recently opened Hilton Garden Inn Seville.

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

The Aman Canal Grande in Venice and the Aman'o'i in southern Vietnam

Architectural designer Jean-Michel Gathy's has unveiled his latest interiors in the Aman Canal Grande in Venice and the coastal retreat Aman'o'i in southern Vietnam.

Aman Canal Grande, San Polo, Venice Italy

Arriving via the waters of Venice's Grand Canal, guests enter the 16th century Palazzo Papadopoli, in which the hotel is housed.

Each of the 24 suites and communal areas are a combination of ornate cornicing, carved marble, intricate murals and wood panelling.

The interiors look to evoke a bygone style with soaring ceilings, sweeping staircases, a gilded ballroom, 300-year-old leather-walled library and original Murano chandeliers.

Aman'o'i, Vinh Hy Bay, Ninh Thuan Province, Vietnam

Translated as "peace place" Aman'o'i exudes is located in the fishing village of Vinh Hy within Nui Chua National Park – 29000 hectares of virtually untouched coastline and marine habitats.

The hotel occupies the hills and shore of one of the most picturesque bays in Vietnam.

Visit : www.denniston.com.my. Contact : Emma Powell at Emma@grifcopr.com.

Hilton Shenzhen Shekou Nanhai, Guangdong Province, China

Hilton Hotels & Resorts has opened the Hilton Shenzhen Shekou Nanhai in Guangdong province

The 16-story hotel, which is located in the business district, features 323 contemporary guestrooms, including 16 suites and six restaurants.

The hotel faces Shenzhen Bay on the west, Pearl River Estuary on the east and Hong Kong across the sea.

Visit : www.hilton.com/en/hotels/china/hilton-shenzhen-shekou-nanhai. Contact : www.hiltonglobalmediacenter.com.

The five-star deluxe Awasi Patagonia

The five-star deluxe Awasi Patagonia is a chic retreat located within a private reserve, with views of the Torres del Paine and Lake Sarmiento.

The 12 luxury villas, designed by Chilean architect Felipe Assadi, were inspired by old Patagonian shelters and are constructed from native wood to blend in with their natural surroundings.

Native fauna remains protected in the surrounding forests, where herds of guanaco, can be spotted in addition to nandu, foxes, condors and the occasional puma.

Awasi Patagonia, which is reached via Santiago de Chile or from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Visit : www.awasipatagonia.cl. Contact : Rob Bates at rob.bates@whitetigerpr.com.

The Oualie Beach Resort, Nevis, the Caribbean

The 3 star Beach Resort, on the Caribbean island of Nevis, is a spacious, ecologically sensitive 32 room hotel.

Nevis, a 36-square-mile island, lies near the top of the Lesser Antilles archipelago about 200 miles south of Puerto Rico, and just west of Antigua.

Visit : www.oualiebeach.com and www.nevisisland.com. Contact : Zarina McCulloch at Zarina@talktoriver.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. Katie Stephens at katie.stephens@theaa.com.

Anova Books

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

Berlitz

www.berlitzpublishing.com.

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. Contact : 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 furqan.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

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 Thery at alexandre@editionsjonglez.com.

Kuperard Publishers

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

Morris Communications

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

Odyssey Books & Guides

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

Oxygen Books city-lit

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

Rough Guides

www.roughguides.com. Contact : press@roughguides.com

Summersdale travel publications

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

Take two Books

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

Turnleft

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

Job shop

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

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

The Alliance's travel journalists can also :

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

Although in its infancy, we hope the **Job Shop** will become a valuable addition to the range of services offered by the [International Travel Writers Alliance](#).

Editor / Publicist (1180_0004329787-01)

Madison, Wisconsin
Wisconsin Public Television

<http://itwa-jobs.jobtarget.com/jobseeker/job/16094312/>

Technical Editor

Honolulu, Hawaii
AECOM

Visit : <http://itwa-jobs.jobtarget.com/jobseeker/job/16085623/>

Managing Editor - Peer Review

Virtual - Mid-Atlantic
Kaufman Wills Fusting Editorial Services

Visit : <http://itwa-jobs.jobtarget.com/jobseeker/job/16073001/>

Editor

Jeddah, Other / Non-US
KAUST (King Abdullah University of Science and Technology)

Visit : <http://itwa-jobs.jobtarget.com/jobseeker/job/16063385/>

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

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

[AllWays traveller](#) provides independent travellers with an equally independent view of the world from the professional travel journalists in the Alliance

www.allwaystraveller.com



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