



# The Alliance

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# Bulletin

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

July 2015

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## The Alliance press card



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

Contact Ashley Gibbins at [Ashley@itwalliance.com](mailto:Ashley@itwalliance.com).

## Job shop

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

### Addition services through Job shop

The Alliance's travel journalists can also :

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

Visit : [www.jobtarget.com/home/home.cfm?site\\_id=14773](http://www.jobtarget.com/home/home.cfm?site_id=14773)

## Working with the Alliance

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

**Other Alliance partners and agencies can be found at [www.itwalliance.com](http://www.itwalliance.com).**

## Partners

### Tino Villas, Greece

Tino Villas is a boutique hotel of villas in Tinos, Cyclades with eight eco-friendly villas with swimming pool. The architectural design respects the nature and the local colours while the decoration follows a simple Mediterranean style.

Tinos, which is part of the Cyclades islands, is 20 minutes by boat from Mykonos and a beautiful unspoiled island with 45 little villages.

Visit : [www.tinosvillas.com](http://www.tinosvillas.com). Contact : Panos Kaliabetsos at [kaliabetsos.panos@gmail.com](mailto:kaliabetsos.panos@gmail.com)

## City Cruises, London UK

City Cruises is a leading operator of tourism and leisure passenger services on the River Thames, carrying in excess of four million passengers annually.

Its routes pass through the heart of London between Westminster and Tower of London, and then through Tower Bridge and down river to Greenwich.

The company operates a fleet of 17 passenger boats with cruises including :

- Westminster River Cruise
- Greenwich River Cruise
- London Eye River Cruise
- Thames River Cruise
- River Thames Party Boat
- London Night River Cruise
- London Sightseeing Afternoon Tea Cruise
- Thames Lunch Cruise Thames.

There is the chance to enjoy an afternoon tea or lunch on the river, dance the night away with a 4 course meal on the Showboat, or relax as the sun goes down on the Sundowner.

Its *Elvis tribute river dinner cruise* has a performance by Ben Thompson, who won First Prize in the USA in the *2015 Branson Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contest*

City Cruises also offer a river adventure by RIB

## Poole, Dorset

City Cruises also operate in Poole, Dorset, with its two vessels, Solent Scene and Island Scene, sailing from Poole Quay.

It offers cruises across the sea to Swanage, along the Jurassic Coast, a World Heritage Site, and around Europe's largest natural harbour which includes Brownsea Island.

Visit : [www.citycruises.com](http://www.citycruises.com). Contact : Clare Newman at [ClareN@citycruises.com](mailto:ClareN@citycruises.com).

## Exmoor National Park, UK

Exmoor National Park, in England's West Country, has open moorland, ancient wooded valleys and an impressive coastline.

Exmoor's villages and environment is totally unspoilt, offering peace and tranquillity. But it also offers a wide range of activities, the most popular being walking with some of the best walking and some long distance walks.

The South west Coast Path starts on the edge of Exmoor.

The Coleridge Way goes from the Quantock Hills to Exmoor. The Two Moors Way also starts/ends in Exmoor.

There is an annual Walking Festival. It also offers challenges for cyclists, horse riders, runners, climbers including coasteering. There is a wide choice of good accommodation to choose from.

Visit : [www.visit-exmoor.co.uk](http://www.visit-exmoor.co.uk). Contact : Bryan Cath at [webmaster@exmoor.com](mailto:webmaster@exmoor.com).

## Kitchens of Distinction (Canada)

Kitchens of Distinction offer luxury farm, artisan, wineries and brewery culinary tours in Victoria BC Canada.

Visit : [www.kitchensofdistinction.ca](http://www.kitchensofdistinction.ca). Contact : Shirley Lang at [Chef@kitchensofdistinction.ca](mailto:Chef@kitchensofdistinction.ca).

## Auchrannie Resort, Isle of Aaron, Scotland

The Auchrannie Resort, which is one of Scotland's leading destinations, comprises two hotels and 30 luxury lodges complemented by three restaurants and bars, two leisure centres, destination spa, adventure centre and children's playbarn.

Visit : [www.auchrannie.co.uk](http://www.auchrannie.co.uk). Contact : Gordon Hay at [ghay@auchrannie.co.uk](mailto:ghay@auchrannie.co.uk)

## News

### Travel Photographer of the Year 2015

The 2015 international Travel Photographer of the Year awards (TPOTY) is open for entries.

One of the world's biggest travel photography awards, TPOTY attracts entries from over 100 countries each year, with amateur and professional photographers competing for a coveted TPOTY title.

The 2015 awards have :

- three portfolio categories
- three single-image awards
- a New Talent category for aspiring professional photographers
- an HD video category
- Young Travel Photographer of the Year (for photographers aged 18 and under), and
- the new Smart Shot category (for images shot on a mobile phone or tablet).

TPOTY sponsors, Direct Photographic, Genesis Imaging, Plastic Sandwich, Photo Iconic, Railbookers and British lifestyle brand StaaG.

The awards are judged by an international panel of judges, which includes Catherine Capon (adventurer, naturalist, wildlife filmmaker & environmental activist); Daria Bonera (Photo Agency Director & Photo Editor for National Geographic Traveler Italy); Brigitte Lardinois (wildlife photographer) and Caroline Metcalfe (former Director of Photography, Conde Nast Traveller).

Travel Photographer of the Year is open to photographers of all ages and all nationalities.

Images can be submitted online via [www.tpoty.com](http://www.tpoty.com) or as prints. Entry fees start at £7.50 and entry for Young TPOTY is free.

Entries close on 1 October 2015.

Contact : Karen Coe at [press@tpoty.com](mailto:press@tpoty.com).

### The Aranui 5

The Aranui 5, currently being built will be making its maiden voyage from Tahiti to the Marquesas Islands in the South Pacific Ocean in November 2015.

To celebrate its launch the Aranui 5 will be offering a ten per cent discount on the first five 14-day departures of 2016 booked by 31 August 2015.

The cargo ship dubbed 'The Freightner to Paradise' is a lifeline transporting goods to the remote islanders of Papeete, Takapoto and Rangiroa in the Tuamotu Archipelago and Bora Bora on the Society Islands.

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### **Whaleboat transfers to shore**

Passengers take whaleboat transfers to shore to picnic on white sand beaches, swim and snorkel in translucent lagoons, listen to the hypnotic strains of Polynesian music and meet local artists and craftspeople.

There are hikes, excursions, jeep safaris and optional trips of riding Marquesan horses, scuba diving and fishing.

On the Aranui 5, fully air-conditioned accommodation including private bathroom with shower will be available in 32 suites and 31 superior deluxe cabins, the majority with balconies, plus 40 staterooms. The ship sleeps 254 passengers in total.

Visit : [www.aranui.com](http://www.aranui.com). Contact :Debra Taylor at [debra@toucanmoon.com](mailto:debra@toucanmoon.com).

### **Dino Park Rasnov, Brasov, Romania**

Dino Park Rasnov, a Dinosaur-themed park, which opened in 2015, is located 30 minute drive from the Transylvanian town of Brasov, and close to the Rasnov Medieval Citadel.

The Dino Park Rasnov comprises an open air museum with 45 life-size dinosaurs, tree houses, zip-wires and a cinema that highlight the evolution of dinosaurs.

The park is located in a forest in the Carpathian Mountains quite close to Bran Castle, largely known as Dracula's Castle.

Visit : [www.dinoparc.ro](http://www.dinoparc.ro) and [www.visit-romania.org.uk](http://www.visit-romania.org.uk). Contact : Maria Iordiche [info@visit-romania.org.uk](mailto:info@visit-romania.org.uk).

### **Tops International Arena, Valkenswaard, The Netherlands**

Longines Global Champions Tour is inviting accredited media to an exclusive first look, pre-launch press conference at the new Tops International Arena in Valkenswaard, The Netherlands, on Tuesday 4 August 2015.

Tops International Arena will be officially launched to coincide with the annual leg of the Longines Global Champions Tour in Valkenswaard, the international show jumping circuit.

From 13 to 16 August 2015, hundreds of international riders will descend on the new facility for the twelfth round of the Tour.

Valkenswaard is located at the heart of the European show jumping circuit, some 20 minutes outside of Eindhoven.

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

### **Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines sail from Falmouth in Spring 2016**

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' 880-guest cruise ship, Boudicca, will be operating her first cruise season from the Port of Falmouth in Spring 2016.

The cruise line will offer a 12-night 'Canaries & Portugal' cruise, for adults only, and a 10-night 'Around the UK' sailing.

Visit : [www.fredolsencruises.com](http://www.fredolsencruises.com). Contact : Rachael Jackson at [rachael.jackson@fredolsen.co.uk](mailto:rachael.jackson@fredolsen.co.uk).

## Mercury Holidays

Mercury Holidays has added Barbados, Antigua and Majorca to its portfolio along with a new selection of tours to some of the world's most exotic and interesting places.

These new tours include: America's Deep South, Tibet (China) and a grand tour of Rajasthan (India).

Visit : [www.mercuryholidays.co.uk](http://www.mercuryholidays.co.uk). Contact : Matthew Kaye [aybpress@kudos-pr.co.uk](mailto:aybpress@kudos-pr.co.uk).

## MBNA Thames Clippers, London

MBNA Thames Clippers has added two new vessels joining its fleet of 12 high speed catamarans operating across London.

Launching in September 2015, Galaxy Clipper and Neptune Clipper will provide additional capacity across the Thames river network.

The new boats are the first new additions to the popular fleet since 2008.

An investment of £6.5 million by MBNA Thames Clippers, the new boats will be among the most technically advanced inland river and harbour fast ferries in the world.

The MBNA Thames Clippers river bus operation carried over 3.8 million passengers in 2014.

Visit [www.thamesclippers.com](http://www.thamesclippers.com). Contact : Stacey Stockwell at [mbnathamesclippers@sirencomms.com](mailto:mbnathamesclippers@sirencomms.com).

## Maldives

The Maldives Marketing and PR Corporation (MMPRC) has launched : 'Visit Maldives Year 2016'.

The main objective of the campaign is to position the Maldives as an exclusive tourist destination by showcasing the islands' diversified tourism product and, in doing so, increase visitor arrivals by 1.5 million.

During 2015, the Maldives will also be celebrating its 50th Anniversary of Independence on 26 July with a number of major events including the construction of an ancient Maldivian village built on the island of Male.

Visit : [www.visitmaldives.com/vmy](http://www.visitmaldives.com/vmy). Contat : Christina Vasileiou at [christina@mccluskey.co.uk](mailto:christina@mccluskey.co.uk).

## Hilton Head Golf Island, South Carolina

Hilton Head Golf Island (HHGI), which is a collection of premier resorts and courses, has been named a "Top 10 Most Dreamed About U.S. Golf Destination" in GOLF.com's inaugural "Golfers' Choice Awards."

Hilton Head Golf Island features more than 30 member courses on Hilton Head and Fripp Islands, as well as Bluffton, Beaufort and Jasper counties.

Golf enthusiasts can enjoy Hilton Head's Southern hospitality and world-class public and private designs sculpted by architects Pete Dye, Jack Nicklaus and Robert Trent Jones.

Hilton Head Golf Island is accessible from numerous Southeast, Midwest and East Coast cities.

Visit : [www.hiltonheadgolfisland.com](http://www.hiltonheadgolfisland.com). Contact : Robert Rodriguez at [rrodriguez@buffalobig.com](mailto:rrodriguez@buffalobig.com).

### **Sani Resort, Thessaloniki, Greece**

Sunny Halkidiki's five-star Sani Resort has launched the Optimist Sailing Academy, offering Sani's young guests an introduction to sailing in Sani's sheltered bay.

A collaboration between Sani and the Nautical Club of Thessaloniki, these 10-hour intensive classes are for beginners, making the most of the resort's calm, clean waters and ideal weather conditions.

Children as young as six can learn to sail with a mixture of dryland and off shore classes, conducted by highly trained experts in a fun and safe environment.

Located among the pine forests of the Kassandra Peninsula, Sani Bay offers calm seas and views across the water to Mount Olympus.

All of Sani's beaches, including the Marina, are Blue Flag.

Sani also has its own 110 hectare wetlands reserve, home to over 200 different species of bird, where children and adults alike can take part in conservation projects.

Visit : [www.saniresort.gr](http://www.saniresort.gr). Contact : Charlotte Rous at [Charlotte@grifcopr.com](mailto:Charlotte@grifcopr.com).

### **Best Western Plus Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgefield. UK**

Best Western Plus Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgefield has been awarded the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for the fifth consecutive year.

The four star hotel, is located next to Hardwick Country Park.

It also plays host to the North East Oyster Festival, as well as, which returns to the grounds on Saturday August 22.

Visit : [www.hardwickhallhotel.co.uk](http://www.hardwickhallhotel.co.uk). Contact : Claire at [claire@sortedpr.com](mailto:claire@sortedpr.com).

### **The 2016 Fringe World Congress, Montreal, Canada**

16 to 18 November 2016

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society and Canadian Association of Fringe Festivals (CAFF) have announced that the 2016 Fringe World Congress will take place in Montreal.

It will be hosted by the Festival St-Ambroise Fringe de Montreal, in November of 2016.

The Fringe World Congress is the only formal gathering of international Fringe representatives and brings together directors and organisers of Fringes from across the globe to share ideas and form lasting networks.

### **The Edinburgh Fringe**

7 to 31 August 2015

Each year, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe – the largest arts festival in the world – hosts over 2,500 shows with more than 40,000 performances featuring more than 20,000 performers from over 40 countries in around 250 venues.

Visit : [www.fringeworldcongress.com](http://www.fringeworldcongress.com) and [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com). Contact : [media@edfringe.com](mailto:media@edfringe.com).

## Longleat Safari Park, UK

Longleat Safari Park, in Wiltshire, has seen the birth of two strapping six-foot baby giraffes, named Perseus and Tara.

The new arrivals are the latest success in an ongoing breeding programme for Rothschild's giraffes at the attraction.

Giraffes are the tallest animals in the world and, after 15 month pregnancies mothers Gertie and Jemima gave birth standing up, leaving the babies to negotiate a tricky six-foot drop to the ground.

Far from harming the calves however, this undignified entrance into the world actually helps stimulate the newborn babies to start breathing on their own.

A rare southern three-banded armadillo has also been born at Longleat.

Visit : [www.longleaf.co.uk](http://www.longleaf.co.uk). Contact : Ellie Dewdney at [ellie.dewdney@longleat.co.uk](mailto:ellie.dewdney@longleat.co.uk).

## UK visitors take 60 million trips abroad every year

New analysis by Centrip1, which offers the first prepaid MasterCard with 14 currencies on a single card at 'spread free' exchange rates, reveals that UK citizens took over 60 million trips abroad in 2014, an increase of 8.1% (4.5 million trips) on 2010.

### The key findings show :

- Spain is number one overseas destination
- Romania sees 113% increase in the number of visits from UK residents over the past five years
- Finland was second with an increase of 87% while Lithuania, Russia and Morocco saw increases of 76%, 51% and 49% respectively.

### The top 10 countries as visited by UK residents (2013) :

- |                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Spain : 12.24 million         | • Germany : 2.32 million     |
| • France : 8.78 million         | • Portugal : 2.19 million    |
| • USA : 3.26 million            | • Netherlands : 2.11 million |
| • Irish Republic : 3.10 million | • Greece : 1.93 million      |
| • Italy : 2.95 million          | • Belgium : 1.74 million     |

Centrip is a Prepaid MasterCard, which allows customers to use Sterling or Euros to load their account via their debit cards or by making a bank transfer. They can then convert across the 14 currencies free of any spread.

Visit : [www.centrip.com](http://www.centrip.com). Contact : Phil Anderson [Phil.anderson@citigatedr.co.uk](mailto:Phil.anderson@citigatedr.co.uk)

## Leads

### Run Around London

Run Around London has launched early-morning running tours of the UK Capital ranging from 5 to 10k. The hourly runs will take place throughout the week starting at 6:30am. Runners get the experience of touring the city as it wakes up.

Visit : [www.runaroundlondon.com](http://www.runaroundlondon.com). Contact : Gary Hawke at [runaroundlondon@gmail.com](mailto:runaroundlondon@gmail.com).



## **Mkombe's House', Lamai, Tanzania**

Adventure and wildlife specialist Gane and Marshall has a new safari to 'Mkombe's House', Lamai.

This is the only private house for rent within the Serengeti National Park, Tanzania.

Mkombe's House is due to open just in time for the very best game-viewing season. The house is located close to the Mara River where millions of wildebeest make their famous river crossings every year between July and October.

The 'Big Five' are also a constant fixture, with the Serengeti having the greatest concentration of plains game anywhere in the world, half a million gazelle and 250,000 zebra.

Among the other species seen are eland, impala, waterbuck, baboon, monkey, warthog and topi.

Visit : [www.ganeandmarshall.com](http://www.ganeandmarshall.com). Contact : Anita Clements at [anita@hamilton-pr.com](mailto:anita@hamilton-pr.com).

## **SpiceRoads Cycle Tours, Bali**

SpiceRoads Cycle Tours is offering a 7-day Bali Mountain Biking Adventure tour and a 3-day Bali Explorer tour before December 31, 2015.

The Republic of Indonesia has also officially granted visa-free entry to citizens of 30 countries including the UK, US, Canada and New Zealand.

### **Bali Mountain Bike Adventures**

This tour takes guests to the Batur Crater, the island's two highest volcanoes and various canyons.

The ride goes along dirt tracks, through gravelly lava deposits to sandy tracks and tarmac roads.

The diversity of the area ranges from volcanic craters to rice paddies and beaches.

### **Bali Explorer**

This tour takes cyclists along the tracks and trails that link villages to each other.

### **About SpiceRoads**

SpiceRoads is a specialist bicycle tour operator based in Bangkok offering a range of two-wheel tours in over 25 destinations worldwide.

SpiceRoads tours cater for every level of cyclist and range from day trips to complete country explorations.

Visit : [www.spiceroads.com](http://www.spiceroads.com). Contact : Sally Sharp at [Sally@spiceroads.com](mailto:Sally@spiceroads.com).

## **Zip Below Xtreme, Snowdonia, Wales**

Five years in the making, this new underground adventure takes a five kilometre route underground through some of the world's most spectacular mine workings.

The route, the world's longest and deepest underground zip line, runs under the mountains of Snowdonia and has nine underground zip lines which take a day to get around.

The trip includes a free fall down a 70 foot abyss and visitors will be faced with the challenge of inching along a 150 year old timber beam with an 80 foot chasm below.

Visit : [www.go-below.co.uk/zip-below.asp](http://www.go-below.co.uk/zip-below.asp). Contact : Felicity Thompson at [Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com](mailto:Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com).

## Sheep trekking in the Brecon Beacons, Wales

Welsh outdoor company *Good Day Out* has teamed up with Aberhyddnant Farm to offer sheep trekking.

Each sheep is fitted with a soft rope halter, and guests can choose their own sheep from a small flock of especially trained Jacobs. The sheep will then lead guests along a scenic trek that leads towards the Black Mountain, with views towards Pen y Fan.

Visit : [www.gooddayout.co.uk/sheep trekking brecon beacons long](http://www.gooddayout.co.uk/sheep trekking brecon beacons long). Contact : Felicity Thompson at [Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com](mailto:Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com).

## Austin Adventures adds Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka

Austin Adventures is now offering small group adventure tours in Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

### Sri Lanka : Silk Road Adventure

This 12-day island adventure begins with looking for leopards, water buffalo and sloth bears on a safari in Wilpattu National Park.

Other trip highlights include watching the sun rise from atop 7,360-ft-tall Adam's Peak, rafting the Kelani Ganga, dining on the beach at Trincomalee and taking in a traditional dance performance.

### Adventurous Bali

This 13-day adventure provides a range of options for the active explorer. Including biking the backroads of Bali's cultural center, Ubud, hiking above the clove plantations in Munduk and paddleboarding on the waters of Bedugul.

### Thailand : Bangkok to Krabi

A foodie tour in the Chinatown district of Bangkok starts this 12-day vacation which ends in Krabi where travellers can explore the coastline by mountain biking, kayaking or snorkeling. The itinerary also includes a visit to Patara Elephant Camp and a hike in Khao Yai National Park.

Visit : [www.austinadventures.com](http://www.austinadventures.com). Contact: Katie Jackson at [katie@austinadventures.com](mailto:katie@austinadventures.com).

## Sarasota, Florida

Located on Southwest Florida's Gulf Coast, Sarasota County offers a vibrant art and cultural scene, culinary experiences and an opportunity to take advantage of the clear waters and the great outdoors.

Sarasota County includes Siesta Key Beach, named the top beach in America by TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice™ in 2015 and "America's Best Beach" in 2011 by Stephen Leatherman, aka, Dr. Beach.

Dubbed "Home of the American Circus," Sarasota County served as the headquarters for the Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus for 75 years, and visitors can experience its unique circus heritage first-hand by following the circus trail or catching a performance by one of two local circus companies.

Sarasota's tennis offerings can be found both on the barrier island of Longboat Key or back on the mainland, with professional tennis matches held throughout the year.

Recognised as one of the nation's top ten tennis resorts, the Tennis Gardens at the Longboat Key Club offer 20 Har-Tru courts along with stadium seating for up to 3,500 people, set among tropical waterfront gardens.

Visit : [www.visitsarasota.org](http://www.visitsarasota.org). Contact : Hannah Mulvey at [hannah@goshpr.co.uk](mailto:hannah@goshpr.co.uk).

## Hornblower Cruises, San Diego, California

Hornblower Cruises is running its seasonal Blue Whale Watching Adventures cruises to 6 September 2015.

This specialty cruise is designed to spot whales, dolphins, sea lions and sea birds.

During the four-hour tour, passengers will be treated to a live narration by an experienced captain and an on-board naturalist (from the San Diego Natural History Museum).

Visit : [www.sandiegowhalewatching.com](http://www.sandiegowhalewatching.com). Contact : Molly Blaisdell at [molly@hooklineandthinker.com](mailto:molly@hooklineandthinker.com).

## What's on

### Summer Events in the Jungfrau Region of Switzerland

From June until September, the mountain villages Grindelwald, Wengen, Mürren, Lauterbrunnen and Meiringen-Hasliberg are hubs for a variety of sports and cultural events.

Some highlights of the 2015 summer season.

#### Sports Events

##### **Eiger Ultra Trail, Grindelwald**

18 and 19 July 2015

The Eiger Ultra Trail is part of the renowned Ultra-Trail World Tour Series.

Three routes with varying degrees of difficulty (101km, 51km and 16km) provide a challenge for novices and professionals alike.

The panoramic views along some of the staging locations are so vast and impressive that their energy alone will carry you along.

Visit : [www.eigerultratrail.ch/en/home](http://www.eigerultratrail.ch/en/home).

##### **Eiger Bike Challenge, Grindelwald**

16 August 2015

A mountain biking event in the shadow of the magnificent Eiger.

Short, mid or long track routes, 22km, 55km and 88km respectively, starting and ending in the charming Alpine village of Grindelwald.

Visit : [www.eigerbike.ch/info](http://www.eigerbike.ch/info).

##### **Inferno Triathlon, Jungfrau Region**

21 and 22 August 2015

One of the most spectacular endurance events in the Swiss Alps, the grueling route of the original Inferno Triathlon is for solo athletes and there's also a team trophy, half-marathon and fun triathlon.

Visit : [www.inferno.ch/en/Welcome](http://www.inferno.ch/en/Welcome).

##### **Alpenbrevet (Road bike challenge), start and finish in Meiringen**

29 August 2015

A cycling adventure over Swiss mountain passes with hairpin bends, breathtaking views and downhill sections.

Visit : [www.alpenbrevet.ch](http://www.alpenbrevet.ch).

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**Jungfrau Marathon, Jungfrau Region**

12 September 2015

This marathon through stunning mountain scenery starts in Interlaken and finishes on Kleine Scheidegg.

The Alpine peaks Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau loom majestically over the course.

Visit : [www.jungfrau-marathon.ch/en](http://www.jungfrau-marathon.ch/en).

**Cultural Events****Grand Mountain Spring Festival, Männlichen**

28 June 2015

Swiss tradition and folklore on Männlichen as the locals celebrate the arrival of Spring in the mountains and enjoy entertainment by various folklore groups.

Visit : [www.maennlichen.ch/en/mountain-spring-festival.html](http://www.maennlichen.ch/en/mountain-spring-festival.html).

**Brünigschwinget (Swiss Wrestling), Brünig Pass - Haslital**

26 July 2015

Switzerland's most historic and prestigious wrestling event takes place every other year in an open-air arena on the summit of the Brünig Pass.

Around 130 competitors fight it out to be crowned Schwinger-König with 6000 spectators looking on.

**Swiss Costume Festival, Männlichen**

26 July 2015

The National Costume Festival on Männlichen sees residents dressed in traditional costumes from the various cantons, accompanied by authentic folklore music.

Cultural performances include dancing in national costume, yodeling duets, an alphorn trio, traditional Swiss flag throwing and whip cracking!

Visit : [www.maennlichen.ch/en/national-costume-festival.html](http://www.maennlichen.ch/en/national-costume-festival.html).

**Cheese Festival, Hasliberg Mägisalp**

12 September 2015

Every September, at the end of the Alpine summer, the local population celebrates the traditional "Chästeilet".

The cheese produced by the Alpine dairies is distributed among the farmers according to old customs.

The "Chästeilet" has long been part of the traditional Hasliberg Mountain Festival. This annual event features live music, a "homecoming" cattle procession and a big party with regional specialties. It's a memorable event for locals and visitors alike.

Visit : [www.jungfrauregion.ch](http://www.jungfrauregion.ch). Contact : Maria Adrianzén at [maria@ferretti-tourism.com](mailto:maria@ferretti-tourism.com).

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## Summer music festivals in Lisbon

The Portuguese city of Lisbon stages a summer programme of music festivals featuring fado, pop, rock, jazz, classical and reggae.

### **Musa Cascais**

3 and 4 July 2015

Reggae is the main musical genre at this festival that celebrates its 15th instalment this year.

Taking place in Cascais, near Carcavelos Beach, Musa Cascais will be featuring well-known acts from the international reggae scene.

Visit : [www.festivalmusa.org](http://www.festivalmusa.org)

### **Festival ao Largo Millennium bcp, Lisbon**

7 to 25 July 2015

Launched in 2009, the open air Festival ao Largo Millennium bcp is one of the biggest outdoor celebrations of opera in Lisbon with free entry.

Held in the plaza in front of the central Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, the Festival will feature a variety of opera, ballet and classical music concerts throughout the month of July.

Visit : [www.festivalaolargo.pt](http://www.festivalaolargo.pt).

### **Nos Alive, Algés Promenade (close to Belém Tower)**

9 to 11 July 2015

Nos Alive, formerly known as 'Optimus Alive', is one of the leading music festivals in Portugal.

A total of 130 acts will perform over six stages during the three-day event, which will be held at Algés Promenade near the Belém Tower, one of the city's UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

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

### **Super Bock Super Rock, Parque das Nações**

16 to 18 July 2015

Located in Lisbon's modern Parque das Nações, the 21st edition of the Super Bock Super Rock festival is featuring some of the big international names in rock including Sting, Blur, Florence & the Machine and The Vaccines.

Visit : [www.superbocksuperrock.pt](http://www.superbocksuperrock.pt).

### **EDPCoolJazz, Oeiras**

19 to 31 July 2015

EDPCoolJazz is a festival of music fusion in Oeiras, in western Lisbon, incorporating blues, soul, jazz and funk.

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

### **O Sol da Caparica, Costa da Caparica (Almada)**

13 to 16 August 2015

O Sol da Caparica celebrates the art and culture of the Portuguese-speaking countries around the world. A total of 30 music performances, including Carlão, Miguel Araújo, Dj Marfox and The Legendary Tigerman, will be taking place during the four-day event.

Visit : [www.osoldacaparica-festival.pt](http://www.osoldacaparica-festival.pt)

## **MEO Outjazz, Lisbon**

To end September 2015

For its ninth year running, MEO Outjazz sees a variety of jazz groups and DJ performances taking over Lisbon's streets and squares every weekend for five consecutive months.

Until the end of September, jazz bands will be playing on Saturdays from 5pm, while DJs will be livening up Sunday evenings in a wide array of 'stages', including Belém, Lisbon's Japanese Garden and even on the steep stairs of Bica district. Price: Free entry.

Visit : [www.ncs.pt/outjazz.php](http://www.ncs.pt/outjazz.php).

## **About Lisbon**

Lisbon, Portugal's national capital, is located along seven hills overlooking the river Tagus and the country's west coast.

It is known for its year-round sunshine and grand architecture.

Visit : [www.visitlisboa.com](http://www.visitlisboa.com). Contact: Tom Panagos at [tom@humewhitehead.co.uk](mailto:tom@humewhitehead.co.uk).

## **Sedona Hummingbird Festival, Arizona**

31 July and 1 and 2 August 2015

The 4th Annual Sedona Hummingbird Festival provides three days of hummingbird presentations, banding demonstrations, sunrise breakfasts with the hummingbirds, shopping at the Hummingbird Marketplace, a hummingbird art exhibit, as well as hummingbird garden tours and birding trips.

There will be presentations and discussions by world recognized hummingbird and conservation experts on a variety of topics: how to attract them, how to garden for them and efforts to protect endangered hummingbirds.

The festival is timed to coincide with the presence of large numbers of southbound migrating hummingbirds which pass through Sedona on their way to wintering grounds in southern Mexico.

The influx raises the local hummingbird population 500-2,000 hummingbirds in the area every day.

Visit : [www.hummingbirdsociety.org/hummingbird-festival](http://www.hummingbirdsociety.org/hummingbird-festival). Contact : Ross Hawkins at [ross@hummingbirdsociety.org](mailto:ross@hummingbirdsociety.org).

## **Twins Days Festival, Twinsburg, Ohio**

8 and 9 August 2015

This annual international event is recorded as the "Largest Annual Gathering of Twins in the World" by the Guinness Book of World Records.

Visit : [www.twinsdays.org](http://www.twinsdays.org). Contact : Mary DaRif at [media@twinsdays.org](mailto:media@twinsdays.org).

## **Race the Train, Abergynolwyn, Wales**

15 August 2015

The narrow-gauge Talylyn steam train is the pace-maker, on its journey to Abergynolwyn and back, during this multi-terrain race in Tywyn.

There are several options, from the Toddlers Trot (a lap of the field) to the full race, which the train can usually manage in about one hour 48 minutes.

Visit : [www.racethetrain.com](http://www.racethetrain.com). Contact : Felicity Thompson at [Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com](mailto:Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com).

## **25th Annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival, Queens, New York**

8 and 9 August

The annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in New York is the oldest, largest, most traditional dragon boat festival in the US.

The Festival keeps up the tradition of Dragon Boat Racing in colorful, custom made teak boats, which are custom-made by a small coterie of craftsmen in Hong Kong.

Weighing one ton each is painted with a Dragon head at the front and Dragon tail at the rear and have a crew 20 crewmen, including 18 paddlers, a drummer and navigator.

The festival's 25th Anniversary will see a record number of over 200+ teams involving more than 2,500 participants. competing from across the U.S. and Canada.

With cash and prizes at stake for the US Dragon Boat Open Championships, the festival takes place over two days on the site of the 1964 World's Fair.

Visit : [www.hkdbf-ny.org](http://www.hkdbf-ny.org). Contact : David Archer at [david@daassociatespr.com](mailto:david@daassociatespr.com).

## **Southbank Centre's annual Meltdown, London**

17 to 30 August 2015

Southbank Centre's annual Meltdown festival has been running since 1993 and each year invites a different cultural figure to act as director of the event and pick the performers of their choosing.

Previous directors include Elvis Costello, David Bowie, Patti Smith, Scott Walker and Yoko Ono.

This year the musician David Byrne, known for his eclectic collaborations and as a co-founder of the seminal new-wave band Talking Heads curates the festival, offering fans unique insight into artists and ideas that influence and inspire Byrne today.

The 2015 Meltdown will span a range of musical genres, from afro-funk to flamenco and spoken word and into dance and theatre.

Visit : [www.southbankcentre.co.uk/meltdown](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/meltdown). Contact : Hugo Mintz at [hugo.mintz@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:hugo.mintz@southbankcentre.co.uk).

## **World Bog Snorkelling Championship, Llanwrtyd Wells, Wales**

29 August 2015

Now in its 30th year, daring competitors battle it out in a 60-metre trench cut into a peat bog in Llanwrtyd Wells for the coveted title of World Champion Bog Snorkeller.

In 2014 the bog snorkellers included participants from France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Eire, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Hong Kong and Mali.

Visit : [www.green-events.co.uk](http://www.green-events.co.uk). Contact : Felicity Thompson at [Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com](mailto:Felicity.Thompson@fourbgb.com).

## **SAIL Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

19 to 23 August 2015

SAIL Amsterdam, now the largest free nautical event in the world, takes place every five year and sees 600 ships navigating along the North Sea Canal before mooring around the IJ-haven in Amsterdam.

This year will mark the 9th festival, which will comprise a flotilla of Tall Ships, maritime heritage, naval ships and impressive replicas.

Amsterdam will be hosting a range of nautical activities, concerts and an opportunity to visit the ships.

## **The Dylan Amsterdam**

The Dylan Amsterdam is celebrating the festival by offer a VIP package to guests.

The Dylan Amsterdam is located in a 17th-century building on the Keizersgracht, one of Amsterdam's most famous canals and is placed for guests wanting to explore the chic shopping district as well as some the city's best museums including the Van Gogh Museum, the Rijksmuseum and the Hermitage.

Visit : [www.sail.nl](http://www.sail.nl) and [www.dylanamsterdam.com](http://www.dylanamsterdam.com). Contact : Natasha Berg at [Natasha@masonrose.com](mailto:Natasha@masonrose.com).

## **The 22nd George Enescu International Classical Music Festival and Competition, Bucharest, Romania**

30 August to 20 September 2015

The annual George Enescu" International Classical Music Festival and Competition celebrates Romania's most famous composer and musician.

Some of the world's premier conductors, soloists, symphonic orchestras and chamber ensembles will perform in Bucharest.

Visit : [www.visit-romania.org.uk](http://www.visit-romania.org.uk). Contact : Maria Lordiche at [info@visit-romania.org.uk](mailto:info@visit-romania.org.uk).

## **Great Yarmouth Maritime Festival, UK**

5 and 6 September 2015

The Götheburg, the world's largest wooden sailing ship, will visit the 16th Great Yarmouth Maritime Festival

It's the first time that the Swedish tall ship will be seen at a UK Maritime Festival.

The Götheburg, which completed its maiden voyage in 2005-07, is a replica of the original Götheborg, which was built in 1738 at Terra Nova ship yard, in Stockholm, for the Swedish East India Company (Svenska Ostindiska Companiet), and was used for three lucrative voyages between Sweden and China.

The ship sank on 12 September 1745, in Gothenburg harbour, returning from her third China voyage. The Jubilee Sailing Trust's Lord Nelson is also visiting the festival.

Visit : [www.maritime-festival.co.uk](http://www.maritime-festival.co.uk). Contact : Paul Dickson at [paul-dickson@btconnect.com](mailto:paul-dickson@btconnect.com).

## **LGBT Las Vegas**

As one of the top LGBT-friendly travel destinations worldwide, Las Vegas hosts a vast array of events for LGBT visitors to enjoy, including :

Gay Days Las Vegas :	8 to 14 September 2015
Las Vegas PRIDE :	18 and 19 September 2015
Shedonism the Lesbian-centered event :	17 to 21 September 2015
the World Gay Rodeo Finals at South Point Casino & Spa	9 to 11 October 2015

Visit : [www.LasVegas.com/GayTravel](http://www.LasVegas.com/GayTravel). Contact : Merideth Hagerty at [merideth.hagerty@rrpartners.com](mailto:merideth.hagerty@rrpartners.com).



## Reasons to write about

### British Polo Day

Britannia Elevation officially founded The British Polo Day, a global platform for elite engagement in emerging and interesting markets, in 2011.

Its annual series of ten polo events act as global 'lily-pads or stepping stones' into emerging markets.

British Polo Days are a celebration of luxury and heritage in a polo events network that spans the World.

Having held over 40 events in 15 countries since 2009, the British Polo Day Global Series has grown to encapsulate 10 annual events, spanning Abu Dhabi, Australia, China, Dubai, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, Singapore, Sumba Island (Indonesia), Thailand and the USA.

The aim of a British Polo Day is to continue the tradition of playing high quality polo against friends in host countries, while also acting as a platform for businesses in emerging and growth markets.

Although the ancient sport of polo began in Persia and China many centuries ago, the British reinvented the modern game in the nineteenth century and spread it globally.

Sir Winston Churchill, one of the greatest proponents of the game, once famously said "a polo handicap is a passport to the world" and polo is still thriving everywhere it is played.

British Polo Days have hosted members of 12 royal families, 100 independent billionaires and leaders in world innovation including Sir Richard Branson and Elon Musk among others.

Visit : [www.britishpoloday.com](http://www.britishpoloday.com). Contact : Sophie Rawe at [sophie.rawe@britishpoloday.com](mailto:sophie.rawe@britishpoloday.com).

### Alpine Pearls

Alpine Pearls is a network of 27 destinations across the Alps, each committed to promoting environmentally-conscious, sustainable tourism and car-free access to Europe's most diverse mountain region.

With member destinations in Italy, France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Slovenia, Alpine Pearls is a pan-European organisation and the largest tourism cooperation of its kind.

Through environmentally-friendly transport concepts ("Soft Mobility"), tourist programmes, as well as support for traditional Alpine lifestyles, products and culture, Alpine Pearls makes it easier to plan and enjoy sustainable, greener holidays in the Alps.

The association celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2016.

**Some further examples of how Alpine Pearls communities are making Alpine tourism greener include:**

#### **Bled, Slovenia**

In Bled, in the Julian Alps, visitors are offered transport options in traditional horse-drawn carriages, by cycle or with e-bikes – all CO<sub>2</sub> -free.

Motorboats are banned from the town's lake, where traditional, locally-built "Pletna" row-boats are the preferred means of getting around.

### **The Triglav National Park**

A new hop-on, hop-off bus service has also recently been started for the surrounding areas and for the Triglav National Park, while a new tourist information centre informs visitors of the sustainable tourism activities and services on offer.

Bled has also just seen the opening of its first green, luxury resort, "Garden Village" .

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

### **Les Gets, France**

Les Gets is a village in the French Alps, some 60km east of Geneva in the Haute Savoie region.

Known as a ski destination in winter, in summer the resort is becoming popular for cyclists and mountain-bikers.

In winter, skiers arriving by electric car automatically receive VIP parking spaces as well as a 20% discount on lift passes.

Summer guests can enjoy e-bike hire and special mountain bike routes throughout the whole "Portes du Soleil" region.

All guests to Les Gets profit from the range of free and low-cost public transport options throughout the area, such as village shuttles and a special nighttime minibus shuttle, allowing guests to enjoy the nightlife and restaurants of the region without having to take a car or taxi.

### **Interlaken, Switzerland**

Interlaken's Jungfrau region of Switzerland is an example of integrated, sustainable transport, combining 25 different modes of transport from trains, trams, cable cars and hybrid buses, all running on low or CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral levels.

Interlaken offers various incentives for visitors arriving by public transport.

### **Termignon, France**

Located at 1300m above sea level, close to the Italian border in the Savoie Mont Blanc region of France, Termignon is protecting the Alpine environment while sharing it with guests and visitors.

From the "Trottibus des neiges", a free horse-drawn carriage shuttle service in winter, or the year-round hop-on, hop-off bus services to the villages of the Haute Maurienne Vanoise valley, visitors to Termignon can enjoy. Car free vacation.

A new and fully-flexible scheme the village has also begun is "controlled hitchhiking" where participants receive an identity card.

Over forty official stopping points have been created within the region, alongside a registration system for local drivers taking part in the scheme.

Visit : [www.alpine-pearls.com](http://www.alpine-pearls.com). Contact : Alice Light at [alice@lotus-uk.co.uk](mailto:alice@lotus-uk.co.uk).

## Hiking Zagori, Epirus, Greece

Located in west Zagori, Epirus in north-western Greece, Aristi Mountain Resort & Villas offer luxury accommodation in a wild and rugged landscape.

Zagori is also currently under consideration for the UNESCO World Heritage List.

### Hiking in Zagori

The imposing rock towers of Astraka and the mythical Drakolimni Lake are fine hiking destinations where visitors can experience old arched stone bridges, cobbled streets, picturesque village squares, gorges and alpine altitude lakes.

The Steps of Vradeto is a 200 year old cobbled path with 1000 steps, taking in views of the Vikos Gorge, the deepest gorge in the world.

### Spiliotissa Monastery – Kleidona Bridge

One of the best hiking trails in Greece, this route starts off a few kilometres from the hotel on a stone bridge crossing the Voidomatis River.

Hugging the north bank of the river, the route passes by the 17th Century chapel of Agioi Anargiri before climbing steadily to reach the ancient bridge at Kleidona.

### Vikos Village to the Voidomatis Springs or Mikro Papigo

The path from Vikos village (5km from Aristi) leads hikers into the depths of the gorge.

Starting just outside the village, the path is clearly signposted with duration (not distance) and a 30 minute downhill hike along stone, gravel and sometimes cobbled paths.

### Vikos Village

The most popular hike in West Zagori takes in the full stretch of the Vikos Gorge and leads guests from the village of Vikos (5km from Aristi) to the town of Monodendri (15km hike).

This route begins with a steep descent into the gorge before winding along the riverbed and occasionally crossing from one side to the other passing little chapels, the Voidomatis Springs and panoramic views, finally ascending to Monodendri (1.5hrs).

Transport to and from all the hikes can be arranged with the hotel to ensure the right starting point and safe return to the hotel.

A member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World and Zagori Excellence Network (ZEN), Aristi Mountain Resort & Villas has three new 2-storey villas and 24 rooms and suites.

Visit : [www.aristi.eu/en](http://www.aristi.eu/en). Contact : Melissa Dive at [Melissa@ophirpr.co.uk](mailto:Melissa@ophirpr.co.uk).

## Shakespeare in the Garden, UK

Fuller Inns stages its annual Shakespeare in the Garden, in association with Permanently Bard, which this year sees the theatre company perform Romeo and Juliet.

Twelve of Fuller's UK inns will transform their pub gardens into the setting of Shakespeare's legendary story of two young star-crossed lovers, whose relationship is no less than a tragic romance.

The official charity benefitting from this year's production is the children's hospice charity Shooting Star Chase.

Visit : [www.shootingstarchase.org.uk](http://www.shootingstarchase.org.uk).

## Shakespeare in the Garden 2015

3-4 August 2015 The Boater, Bath, Somerset	15-16 August 2015 The Links Tavern, Liphook, Hampshire	3-5 September 2015 The Red Lion, Barnes, London
5-6 August 2015 The White Buck, Burley, Hampshire	26-28 August 2015 The Rose & Crown, Ealing, London	8-9 September 2015 The Turk's Head, Twickenham, Middlesex
7-8 August 2015 The New Forest Hotel, Ashurst, Hampshire	29-30 August 2015 The King's Head, Wickham, Hampshire	10-12 September 2015 The Duke of Kent, Ealing, London
11-12 August 2015 The Castle, Harrow, Middlesex	2 September 2015 The King & Queen, Caterham, Surrey	
13-14 August 2015 The Pilot, Greenwich, London		

Visit : [www.fullers.co.uk/pubs/shakespeare-in-the-garden](http://www.fullers.co.uk/pubs/shakespeare-in-the-garden).

Fuller, Smith and Turner P.L.C. is an independent traditional family brewer founded in 1845 and is based at the historic Griffin Brewery in Chiswick, London, where brewing has taken place continuously since 1654.

Visit : [www.fullers.co.uk](http://www.fullers.co.uk). Contact : Georgina Wald at [georgina.wald@fullers.co.uk](mailto:georgina.wald@fullers.co.uk).

## The Royal Roads, La Gomera, The Canary Islands, Spain

La Gomera is one of Spain's Canary Islands, located off the coast of Africa, which is reached by a short ferry ride from Tenerife.

La Gomera is a picturesque, tranquil island within the Canaries, known for its greenery and natural life.

The island provides a holiday re-treat for tourists looking to enjoy the botanical landscape and scenic views on rural hiking tours.

Until the middle of the last century, the crisscrossed network of trails throughout the island, were known as the 'Royal Roads'.

A highlight for visitors is the walk from San Sebastian, (the capital) to El Cabrito, known as "the little billy-goat", found at the south east of the island.

Hikers will experience rocky mountain groves, wildlife and fine views as they venture down the path, before reaching the Playa del Cabrito, a beach of black sands, clear waters and the best view of the islands sunrise.

Hermigua, a luscious wide valley within the island, is situated between two high mountain ranges in a region, due to its water-filled ravines, that is home to one of the largest banana harvests.

The Garajonay National Park, named after the legend of two lovers, who sacrificed their lives for not being permitted to love, comprises dense forest and two thousand species of plant along with vertebrates, amphibians and exotic birds.

visit : [www.lagomera.travel](http://www.lagomera.travel). Contact : Phoebe at [phoebe@prmediaco.com](mailto:phoebe@prmediaco.com)

## A place to stay

### The Gilded, Newport, Rhode Island and the Whitehall, Camden, Maine

Boutique brand Lark Hotels has added the Gilded, Newport, Rhode Island and the Whitehall, Camden, Maine to its portfolio.

#### The Gilded

The Gilded, located in the village of Newport, Rhode Island, has interiors by Boston-based interior designer Rachel Reider. The hotel is within walking distance of top beaches, shops and restaurants.

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

#### The Whitehall

The Whitehall is located in the coastal Maine town of Camden where the “Mountains meet the Sea.”

This 'newly defined', historic property, formerly the Whitehall Inn (which opened in 1901) houses 36 guestrooms and suites.

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

#### Future properties

Later in 2015, Lark Hotels will open the Narragansett, RI; Stowe, VT and Salem, MA. In 2016 the group will expand into Martha's Vineyard, Nashville and Napa.

Visit : [www.larkhotels.com](http://www.larkhotels.com). Contact : Rebecca Widness at [rebecca@widnesscopr.com](mailto:rebecca@widnesscopr.com).

### Deer Park Country House Hotel, Honiton, Devon UK

Built between two trees in the grounds of the Deer Park Country House Hotel, is Devon's first luxury thatched tree house.

It offers views overlooking acres of gardens and woodland, with deer grazing.

The treehouse has been designed and constructed by Blue Forest who specialise in luxury treehouse properties.

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

The Deer Park Country House Hotel, itself, is an 18th Century Georgian mansion located in 80 acres of grounds.

Visit : [www.deerparkcountryhotel.co.uk](http://www.deerparkcountryhotel.co.uk). Contact : Frankie@rawprandmarketing.co.uk.

### Hotel Sant Francesc, Palma de Mallorca

The Hotel Sant Francesc, which will open in March 2015, is a conversion of an old manor house into a luxury boutique hotel in the historic centre of Palma de Mallorca.

The 43-room chic urban bolthole, which will form part of Small Luxury Hotels of the World sets out to retain the beauty of the former building and blends graceful simplicity with a distinctly Spanish style.

Its five-star facilities comprise rooftop terrace with a pool, patio bar, garden restaurant, gym and spa.

Visit : [www.hotelsantfrancesc.com](http://www.hotelsantfrancesc.com) and [www.slh.com](http://www.slh.com). Contact : Maria Costa Lobo at [maria@lotus-uk.co.uk](mailto:maria@lotus-uk.co.uk).

## Glamping at Warwick Castle, UK

The Warwick Castle Mediaeval Glamping Village is until 31 August 2015.

Set in a woodland grove in the grounds of the historic castle, Mediaeval Glamping is an exclusive fully set-up, ready-to-sleep experience, including evening entertainment and breakfast along with two day priority entrance to Warwick Castle.

All 41 Tents are roomy enough to walk about and stand up inside, feature electric lighting, and are furnished with waterproof wooden flooring, scatter cushions and throws, ample storage and a mirror.

They all come with wooden-framed beds and bed linen, in-tent power and free Wi-Fi.

Warwick Castle has provided accommodation to generations of aristocracy, adventurers and their admirers – including the wife of Richard III and the earls of Warwick, while other notable guests over the centuries include Elizabeth I, Queen Anne and Queen Victoria.

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

## The Puente Romano Beach Resort, Marbella

The Puente Romano Beach Resort, is Marbella, a member of The Leading Hotels of the World, is located on the 'Golden Mile' between the centre of Marbella and Puerto Banus.

The property is situated in landscape subtropical gardens next to the Mediterranean Sea. The resort has recently undergone a multi-million Euro refurbishment and rebranding.

Visit : [www.puenteromano.com](http://www.puenteromano.com). Contact : Claire Mans at [claire@masonrose.com](mailto:claire@masonrose.com).

## Half Moon, Montego Bay, Jamaica

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

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

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

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

Visit : [www.halfmoon.rockresorts.com](http://www.halfmoon.rockresorts.com). Contact : David Barber at [dbarber@halfmoon.com](mailto:dbarber@halfmoon.com)

## Tiara Yaktsa, Theoule-Sur-Mer, France

Tiara Yaktsa, a boutique hotel in Theoule-Sur-Mer, in Southeast France, is a member of the Relais & Chateaux group.

Located on the Mediterranean a short walk away from the village of Théoule-sur-Mer, Tiara Yaktsa enjoys a setting on the French Riviera, 16 km from Cannes and 40 km from Nice

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

Visit : [www.relaischateaux.com/yaktsa](http://www.relaischateaux.com/yaktsa). Contact Lallie Fraser at [Lallie@grifcopr.com](mailto:Lallie@grifcopr.com).

## Summer experiences in the Palm Beaches, Florida

**The Palm Beaches, Florida is a collection of 38 cities and towns and 15 tourism districts including Jupiter, Boca Raton and West Palm Beach..**

The area also includes the Florida Everglades and the Loxahatchee River, the Intracoastal Waterway and Atlantic Ocean.

### **Summer natural experiences in The Palm Beaches include :**

#### **Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, Boynton Beach**

In the northern part of the Everglades there is a native sawgrass marsh refuge, which is a local favourite for birding and for wildlife watching.

#### **Busch Wildlife Sanctuary, Jupiter**

The Busch Wildlife Sanctuary offers the chance to discover Florida's native flora and fauna via nature trails, which wind through pine flatwoods, oak hammocks and cypress wetlands.

#### **Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Boca Raton**

The Center hosts environmental programmes and sea turtle-themed activities including summer camps, turtle walks, hatchling release observations and free outdoor marine feedings.

#### **John D. Macarthur Beach State Park, North Palm Beach**

The park offers the chance to paddle around the estuary or under Burnt Bridge into the Lake Worth Lagoon and to spot manatees, dolphins, mullet, snook, rays and birdlife.

#### **Lion Country Safari, West Palm Beach**

More than 900 wild animals, including lions, giraffe, zebras, ostrich and rhinos are found in this South Florida Safari.

Visitors can see large free-roaming herds of animals from six continents.

#### **Loggerhead Marineline Center, Juno Beach**

Loggerhead Marineline Center is an ocean conservation organization and sea turtle hospital located adjacent to Juno Beach, and is one of the most important sea turtle nesting beaches in the world.

The Center serves as a sea turtle rehabilitation hospital, with staff leading specialty tours to see these gentle giants coming to nest between April and October each year.

#### **McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary, West Palm Beach**

McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary has treated hundreds of native animals that were sick or injured.

From foxes and bobcats, to sandhill cranes to pelicans, local wildlife has received veterinarian care by staff and then released back into their native habitat.

#### **Palm Beach Zoo & Conservation Society, West Palm Beach**

This zoo houses over 1,400 animals from Florida, North, South and Central America, Australia, and Madagascar, within 23-acres of lush tropical habitat.

#### **Panther Ridge Conservation, West Palm Beach**

Panther Ridge's custom-built facilities provide its resident cats with native-like habitats.

**Visit : [www.palmbeachfl.com](http://www.palmbeachfl.com). Contact : Ashley Svarney at [asvarney@palmbeachfl.com](mailto:asvarney@palmbeachfl.com).**



# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

## Southbank Centre Festival of Love, London UK

**London's Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, comprising the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Hayward Gallery) and occupying a 21-acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames.**

The site has history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain and offers an extensive artistic and cultural programme including annual and one-off themed festivals and classical and contemporary music, performance, dance, visual art and literature and spoken word events throughout the year.

### Southbank Festival of Love

Southbank Centre has opened its second summer-long *Festival of Love*, featuring a wide-ranging programme of performances, music, differently-themed weekends, exhibitions and installations across the site.

This year's festival takes its inspiration from Nelson Mandela, the South African leader who died in 2013, and his 67 years of campaigning for civil rights - 40 years as a campaigner and 27 as a prisoner.

Throughout the Festival of Love, the site will showcase more than 20 love-themed installations and exhibitions.

### Themed weekends

Themed weekends include :

- **the Mandela Weekend** (18 – 19 July)
- **the Urban Weekend** (8 – 9 August), celebrating street culture such as parkour, street art, BMXing and music
- **Refugee Week** (18 – 21 June), which will highlight the contribution of refugees to the UK with music and art; and
- **the return of the Big Wedding Weekend** (29 – 30 August), the climax to the Festival of Love.

### The Big Wedding Weekend

Launched last summer, Southbank Centre created the *Big Wedding Weekend* to celebrate the change in law in England and Wales enabling everyone to marry their partner of choice.

To date, 40 couples have signed up to take part and couples interested in joining them have until 28th July to register for this very different and affordable take on getting married.

South bank Centre is able to welcome up to 100 couples to wed, renew their vows or convert their civil partnership into marriage in a number of communal ceremonies.

There will be up to 20 couples each ceremony across the two days in the Royal Festival Hall, in front of their guests.

The mass ceremonies will be followed by an option for all couples and their parties to eat together at a large wedding breakfast, before the celebratory evening entertainment on *The Clore Ballroom* begins.





**Other Festival of Love programme highlights include:**

**The pop-up theatre Roundabout** (7 June – 18 July) by Paines Plough – named Theatre Building of the Year at The Stage Awards 2015.

The theatre is hosting a number of shows including :

- **Every Brilliant Thing**, about depression and the lengths people go to for those they love (7 – 11 July), and
- **Lungs by Duncan Macmillan**, which explores different types of love when a couple want a child but are running out of time in an age of global anxiety, erratic weather and political unrest.
- **Garsington Opera and the Royal Shakespeare Company** presenting their first-ever collaboration, a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, over three nights (22 – 24 July)
- **Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet** brought to life by 200-voice indie choir Some Voices, b-boys and actors in an immersive theatre experience (11 July)

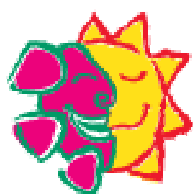
**Visit : [www.southbankcentre.co.uk/love](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/love). Contact : Patricia O'Connor at [patricia.oconnor@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:patricia.oconnor@southbankcentre.co.uk).**

- **Folk with Altitude** (22 July – 29 August), a new season of exclusive gigs on the Queen Elizabeth Hall Roof Garden, presented with Nest Collective, and
- **Baila Brazil by Bale de Rua**, a show inspired by South-American street dance, capoeira and samba, comprising 13 male dancers, one female dancer, a singer and a band, many of whom grew up in the favelas of Brazil (5 – 15 August).

**Free artist-led activities**

Free artist-led activities, including craft, poetry and dance workshops, will take place every day throughout the festival from 11am – 4pm in Royal Festival Hall.

Festival of Love food pop-ups on site this summer (until 27 September) include Bleeker St. Burger, featured in TimeOut as one of the top 10 street food stalls in London and SNOG serving frozen yoghurt from a restored pink 1967 Routemaster bus.



## Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean

Rated the “happiest” Caribbean nation for the second time by the World Happiness Report, the two sister islands are gearing up for summer with a selection of new restaurants, hotels and festivals.

### Shaw Park Complex, Tobago

Set to officially open in July 2015, Tobago's Shaw Park Complex, situated in Scarborough, is a multi-functional facility with theater, indoor sport, conference and convention amenities designed to cater to the needs of international, regional and local event organizers.

Visit : [www.shaw-park.org](http://www.shaw-park.org).

### Bacolet Beach Club, Tobago

Bacolet Beach Club, one of Tobago's premier boutique hotels, has completed expansions that include the addition of the "West Wing" with 15 luxury, marble tiled suites and an infinity pool overlooking the hotel's private bay.

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

### Buccaneers Beach Bar & Grill, Tobago

Situated on the shores of Stonehaven Bay at Grafton Beach Hotel, Buccaneers is the only restaurant and “liming spot” on the beach in Tobago.

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

### Zoe Snorkeling Tours, Tobago

Owned and operated by popular Tobago waterman Duane Kenny, Zoe Snorkeling Tours offer a three hour tour with snorkeling gear in a 140 horsepower jet boat, complete with a swim platform on the back.

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

### Festivals

#### Tobago Heritage Festival

16 July to 11 August

Tobago Heritage Festival is one of the most important festivals of the year for the island.

Trinidad and Tobago both have extensive cultural backgrounds, from European to African to Amerindian, creating a very unique and diverse culture.

The Tobago Heritage Festival celebrates traditions that are mostly African, with eclectic events and dances hosted in various villages throughout the island.

Tobagonians from various communities have used this celebration of culture to educate and entertain both visitors and local youth.

The main event each year is the traditional “Ole Time Wedding,” held in the village of Moriah.

This mock marriage ceremony highlights the influences of European culture on the local population featuring a colorful procession of the satin-garbed bride and top-hatted groom while guests dance in the streets. For more detailed information, visit

The Tobago Heritage Festival opens on 16 July and reaches a climax in a J'ouvert and street parade on Emancipation Day (1 August).

[www.visittobago.gov.tt/festivals](http://www.visittobago.gov.tt/festivals).



### **Tobago Blue Food Festival**

18 October 2015

The Blue Food Festival is an annual festival where local chefs come together to share their knowledge, cooking with commonly-used local ingredients.

Visitors will experience cooking demonstrations and competitions, samples of local chefs' creations, and entertainment by popular local performers.

### **Divali - Hindu Festival of Lights**

11 November 2015

A large percentage of Trinidad & Tobago's population consists of East Indians and a significant number are Hindus.

The nation's Hindu festivals, customs and traditions form an integral part of society.

The celebration of Divali, also called Hindu Festival of Lights, is the perfect time for travelers to immerse themselves in Hindu religion and culture. Its formal event, Yagna, showcases a traditional ambiance of Indian décor, film, music and food.

The highlight is Divali night, November 11 this year, when earthen lamps made of artistically designed bamboo arches and plantain trees, called deeyas, are lit across the country.

Visit : [www.visittobago.gov.tt/festivals](http://www.visittobago.gov.tt/festivals).

### **About Trinidad & Tobago**

Trinidad & Tobago is located in the south-eastern region of the Caribbean.

The dual-island nation offers a distinct blend of culture, eclectic cuisine and an assortment of eco-adventure activities.

Trinidad, the 'cultural capital of the Caribbean,' is home to the world famous Carnival.

Sister island Tobago offers secluded beaches, quaint villages, private villas and award-winning eco-attractions that include the Main Ridge Rainforest, the oldest protected reserve in the western hemisphere and the six-time award winner for World's Leading Ecotourism Destination by the World Travel Awards.

**Visit : [www.goTrinidadandTobago.com](http://www.goTrinidadandTobago.com) or [www.visittobago.gov.tt](http://www.visittobago.gov.tt). Contact : Cherise Stevens at [Cherise@cam-pr.com](mailto:Cherise@cam-pr.com).**

## Registering with the Alliance

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



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