

The Alliance

bulletin

Issue 159: April 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

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.

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

Join and follow



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



[@writersalliance](https://twitter.com/writersalliance)

The Alliance bulletin

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

Holkham Hall, Norfolk

Thomas Coke, the first Earl of Leicester, conceived the Palladian Hall as his vision of an Italian villa on the windswept north Norfolk coast.

The Coke family has lived at the hall continuously since the 1750s and welcomes thousands of visitors every year to see the house and its treasures, the deer park and Holkham Beach.

Still privately owned by the family, Holkham is the centre of a thriving 25,000-acre agricultural estate, providing resources to maintain the house and to ensure that the social fabric of rural life remains intact.

A busy programme of events takes place throughout the year which includes :

outdoor and indoor concerts covering a wide genre of music, tours and workshops in the park and walled gardens

- outdoor theatre productions throughout the summer
- special Easter and Christmas event
- the Pedal Norfolk Cycle Festival, and
- the North Norfolk Food and Drink Festival.

Open to visitors from April 1 to October 31, the magnificent will stage an exhibition throughout the 2014 season which will reflect upon the impact of the First World War on the family and village.

There is also a Bygones museum which incorporates the 'History of Farming exhibition', as well as the park which is home to several different species of deer.

Visit : www.holkham.co.uk. Contact : Mary Rudd at mail@maryruddpr.co.uk.

Blenheim Palace

Blenheim Palace is home to the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough and birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. A true masterpiece of 18th Century Baroque architecture, Blenheim Palace delivers an awe-inspiring experience for visitors.

Discover the beauty of this World Heritage Site amongst over 2000 acres of 'Capability' Brown parkland and Formal Gardens.

Ride the miniature train to The Pleasure Gardens, a dedicated family area that offers a giant hedge maze, butterfly house and adventure playground.

Tours, exhibitions and events reveal the sheer splendour of Britain's Greatest Palace. Buy one day, get 12 months free so you can keep coming back to explore all that there is on offer.

Contact : www.blenheimpalace.com. Stephanie Hendley at shendley@blenheimpalace.com.

GOLF 20/20

GOLF 20/20 is a USA based collaboration of all segments of the golf industry, from associations and manufacturers to golf course owners/operators and the media.

It was launched in 2000 and is designed to unite and activate the industry around key strategic initiatives that increase participation and retention, involvement and interest in the game.

Visit : www.golf2020.com. Contact : Glenn Gray at ggray@buffalocommunications.com.

Downtown Disney Resort Area Hotels

Downtown Disney Resort Area Hotels is a consortium of seven Official Walt Disney World Resort hotels that includes:

B Resort, opening in Spring 2014 with 394 newly renovated guest rooms and suites, a renovated pool and full-service spa

the 18-story Best Western Lake Buena Vista Resort Hotel, surrounded by 12 acres of landscaping, and offering 325 rooms and suites

the newly renovated and sophisticated Buena Vista Palace Hotel & Spa, featuring 1,014 guest rooms and suites, a 10,000-square-foot spa, and seven restaurants and lounges

the 229-suite Doubletree Suites by Hilton, the only all-suite resort hotel in the Downtown Disney Resort Area

the deluxe 814-room, full-service Hilton Orlando Resort, featuring seven on-site restaurants and lounges and the new Hilton Fitness by Life Fitness Center

the Holiday Inn Orlando – Lake Buena Vista, the only Holiday Inn located in the Walt Disney World Resort Area; and

Wyndham Lake Buena Vista, featuring 626 guest rooms and the Oasis Aquatic Playground with two pools and interactive water features.

In addition to being an easy walk to the shopping, dining and entertainment venues at the Downtown Disney area, these seven Hotels also provide complimentary shuttle transportation every 30 minutes to all four Walt Disney World Theme Parks and its two water parks.

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

TravelJunction.com

Traveljunction.com allows customers to research, plan, book and review holidays around the world.

It launched in January with 135,000 hotels from a head office in Dubai and teams located around the world.

Visit : www.Traveljunction.com. Contact : Sarah Rathbone at sarah.rathbone@sirencomms.com.

The Hudson's Heritage Explorer Pass, UK

The Hudson's Heritage Explorer Pass, operated by Hudson's Media, is a one- off pass giving visitors free entry to 150 heritage attractions.

The attractions include a collection of heritage sites, specialist museums, independent historic houses across England.

Visit : www.hudsons-explorer.com. Contact : Tanya Aspinwall at Tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk.

News

LocalGuiding and Rent-a-guide

Rent-a-guide has purchased *LocalGuiding.com* to provide one of Europe's largest range of sightseeing tours, excursions, transfers and local activities.

The new operation has over 15,000 products in more than 130 countries.

Rent-a guide.net

Rent-a guide.net, founded 3 years ago, is already the largest tour booking website in the German market with more than 8,000 listings that have been booked by more than 100,000 tour participants.

LocalGuiding.com

LocalGuiding.com focused on the English-Speaking market and grew until today to over 7,000 unique tour listings provided by more than 3,500 local guides around the world.

Visit : www.rent-a-guide.net. Contact : Robert Blessing at robert.blessing@rent-a-guide.net.

L'Eroica Britannia, UK

June 2014

L'Eroica, the historic Tuscan bike tour dubbed 'the most handsome bike race in the world' is coming to England in June 2014.

The tour will travel through the Peak District National Park on a three day festival, known as 'The Great British Adventure', celebrating heritage, well-being and local food and drink, as well as cycling.

Cyclists can choose a 30, 50 or 100 mile route to ride on classic, pre-1987 bikes.

Visit : www.eroicabritannia.co.uk. Contact : Rishika Sharma at Rishika.Sharma@visitengland.org.

The Schlitterbahn Kansas City Waterpark, Kansas

Verruckt, the world's tallest, fastest, steepest water slide will opened at the Schlitterbahn Kansas City Waterpark, in Kansas City, in late May 2014.

Verruckt (which translates from German as 'Insane' in English) is approximately 17 storeys high and boasts a descent speed of 65mph following a 264 step climb.

Visit : www.theverruckt.com. Contact : Siobhan Burke at sburke@thebrandusa.co.uk.

Austin Adventures' : World's Best Guide

Kasey Austin, trip leader of Austin Adventures, has been named one of the world's best guides for 2014 by the editors of OUTSIDE Magazine.

Austin Adventures provides adult adventure (multi-sport), family, biking, hiking and small ship cruising adventures. For the full list of Outside travel awards visit : www.outsideonline.com/travelawards.

Visit : www.austinadventures.com. Contact : Sara Widness at sara@widnesspr.com.

Which? Travel

Which? Travel has begun to send out its stories by email.

As well as summarising the main stories of its Which? Travel magazine each month, its content can also still be accessed via the Which? website.

Visit : www.which.co.uk. Contact : Lloyd Purnell at lloyd.purnell@which.co.uk

Europa Park, Germany

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.

When the park opens for the season on 5 April 2014 it will unveil its new themed area : Arthur - In the Minimoys Kingdom, situated on a 10,000 square metre island.

Visit : www.europapark.de. Contact : Patricia Czarkowski atbpatricia.czarkowski@europapark.de.

Top Luxury Hotel & Brand Report

ReviewPro, the leading provider of online reputation and social media analytics for the hospitality industry, has released its first annual Top Luxury Hotel & Brand Report.

It is a landmark study on the luxury hotels and brands with the best online reputation according to ReviewPro's online reputation score: the Global Review Index.

The research is based on the analysis of 839,593 online guest reviews published during 2013 for the hotels that industry tracker STR Global classified as 'luxury'. A total of 1,692 properties and 84 brands in all five continents were analysed.

Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, with properties in India, Indonesia, Dubai, Mauritius, Egypt and Saudi Arabia took the #1 spot for large brands, with a 94.7% GRI score.

Four Seasons and Orient Express, scored 92.3% and 92.1% respectively.

For small brands, Constance Hotels and Resorts, with seven properties in Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives and Madagascar took the top spot with a score of 93.7% GRI ahead of Capella Hotels, with 93.6% and Montage and Firmdale Hotels tied at 93%.

In the individual hotel ranking, Orient-Express Hotels Palacio Nazarenas boutique hotel in Cusco (Peru) scored 99.2% GRI, while its luxury train Northern Belle came in second place.

ReviewPro's report also shows that TripAdvisor was the #1 review source for luxury hotels in 2013, followed by Booking.com and Ctrip.

English was the preferred language in luxury hotel reviews, with Chinese, German, French and Japanese completing the Top 5.

2013 Top 5 large luxury hotel brands (according to their Global Review Index)

1. Oberoi Hotels	94.7%	3. Orient Express	92.1%	5. Taj Hotels	91.0%
2. Four Seasons	92.3%	4. Park Hyatt	91.3%		

2013 Top 5 small luxury hotel brands

1. Constance Hotels	93.7%	3. Montage Hotels	93.0%	4. Andaz Hotels	92.8%
2. Capella Hotels	93.6%	3. Firmdale Hotels	93.0%	5. Raffles Hotels	92.6%

2013 Top 5 individual hotels

1.	Palacio Nazarenas, Orient-Express, Cusco	99.2%
2.	Northern Belle, Orient-Express	98.4%
3.	A Rosewood Resort, Jumby Bay	98.2%
3.	The Oberoi Vanyavilas, Ranthambhore	98.2%
5.	Four Seasons Tented Camp, Golden Triangle	98.0%

Visit : www.reviewpro.ro/1foNsuT. Contact : Iván Carballido at pr@reviewpro.com.

Elephantourism

Elephantourism is a newly released web documentary by independent film-maker, Louisa Smith that highlights the issues behind the tourism trade in Asia and it's effects on the endangered Asian Elephant.

The Asian elephant is an endangered animal that is largely populated in captivity.

It is estimated that there are as few as 32,000 Asian elephants remaining, with, 40% of these living in captivity. The majority of these captive elephants are living in tourist camps or used for tourism.

In just 7-minutes, key issues such as animal welfare, chaining of an elephant and elephant trafficking are discussed by elephant experts Dan Bucknell of the Elephant Family Charity and John Hutchinson, Professor and Biologist at the Royal Veterinary College in London.

Elephantourism is a documentary made for tourists travelling to Asia, to learn more about the history behind these animals and their lives in captivity.

The aim is to inspire travellers to be wary about the conditions in which these animals are kept and of how these animals came to be in captivity.

Watch the Documentary on: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCdO9kCwMSQ

Visit : www.elephantfamily.org. Contact : Louisa Smith at Louisa@herhorizon.co.uk.

GREAT China Welcome

Hospitality businesses throughout Britain are starting to use a new mark to show that they are ready for China.

'GREAT China Welcome' is VisitBritain's initiative geared to making Britain the most welcoming destination in Europe for Chinese visitors.

China is now the world's largest outbound tourism market and provisional data for 2013 suggests that the number of visitors to Britain from China hit 200,000 for the first time.

Spend figures are even more remarkable, with Chinese visitors parting with over £400 million during the first nine months of 2013 alone.

The new GREAT China Welcome Chartermark will help Chinese visitors to easily find hotels, attractions and tour operators which offer information in mandarin and other tailored services. The first GREAT China Welcome Charter members include:

Abbey Hotel, Bath	Hilton London	Association	Manchester Marriott
Apex Hotels	Metropole Hotel	National Trust for	Hotels
Balmoral Hotel	Hilton London Canary	Scotland	National Museum
Birmingham Airport	Wharf hotel	Pullman London St	Wales
Blenheim Palace	London Hilton on Park	Pancras	The Knight Residence,
British Airways	Lane hotel	Rabbies Small Group	Edinburgh
British Museum	The Waldorf Hilton,	Tours	Virgin Atlantic
Café Royal Hotel	London	Regent Street	Warner Bros Studio
Cardiff Castle	Leisure Pass Group	Association	Tour London
Direct Ferries	London Dungeon	SEALIFE London	Warwick Castle
London Eye	London Lodge Hotel	Aquarium	Westminster Abbey
EasyJet	Madame Tussauds,	Selfridges & Co	Wimbledon Lawn
Edinburgh Woollen Mill	London	Scotch Whisky	Tennis Museum
Fortnum & Mason	Manchester Airport	Experience	Windermere Lake
Harrods	Guild of Registered	Shakespeare's	Cruises
Celtic Manor Resort	Blue Badge Guides	England	
Chatsworth			

Visit : www.VisitBritain.com. Contact : Sarah Runnacles at sarah.Runnacles@visitbritain.org.

The Waldorf Astoria Bali

Hilton Worldwide will open the Waldorf Astoria Bali, its first property in Indonesia in 2017.

Located in the Bukit Pandawa precinct in the south of Bali, the 96-villa hotel will be the first of four hotels planned for Indonesia.

The new hotel will be located 40 meters above sea level on a prime cliff-front land of Bali's southernmost peninsula with panoramic views of the Indian Ocean.

Bali, promoted as the Island of the Gods, is for its pristine beaches and clear waters. Other key attractions on the island include :

- some of the most impressive temples in Southeast Asia including Uluwatu, Tanah Lot and Tirtha
- Empul temples the paddy fields of central Ubud, and the cliff fronts of Ungasan and Uluwatu.

Visit : www.waldorfastoria.com. Contact : Nicole Lovett at nicole@grifcopr.com.

The Venice Simplon-Orient-Express

The Venice Simplon-Orient-Express is adding Brussels to its regular schedule with departures to and from Brussels available from Venice, Vienna and Budapest.

The concept of luxury train travel has its roots in Belgium with Belgian Georges Nagelmackers creating the original 'Orient Express' train service in 1883 that ran from Paris to Vienna and on to Constantinople.

Made up of beautifully restored carriages from various luxury train services of the 1920s and 1930s, including the legendary Orient-Express, the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express evokes looks to evoke the golden age of travel.

The new Belgium routes take the train through the German, Austrian and Swiss countryside.

Visit www.vsoe.com. Contact : Samantha Strawford at samantha.strawford@belmond.com.

Bollywood in Britain

As part of its efforts to attract a record number of Indian visitors, VisitBritain has today launched a Bollywood in Britain (BiB) Destination Movie Map.

Britain remains one of the most featured locations among the mega popular world of Bollywood productions and VisitBritain's BiB app for Android and iOS includes the information a Bollywood fan needs to create their own blockbuster-themed holiday in Britain.

Visit : www.media.visitbritain.com. Contact : David Leslie at pressandpr@visitbritain.org.

Sea to Sky Gondola, Squamish, British Columbia

The Sea to Sky Gondola in Squamish, which opens in May 2014, is an eight passenger lift that will take travellers between Shannon Falls and the cliffs of Stawamus Chief.

Visit : www.seatoskygondola.com and www.BritishColumbia.travel.

For additional story ideas visit Destination British Columbia's media site at www.travelmedia.helloBC.com. Contact : Antonia Robinson at Antonia@goshpr.co.uk.

For more information, or to arrange a review, please contact me on 0191 2656111 or Claire@sortedpr.com.

Step Out, Macau app

The Macau Government Tourist Office has launched an iOS app designed to complement four recently created walking tours that take visitors off the beaten tourist trail.

Intended to be leisurely strolls, the shortest of the four walks takes approximately 90 minutes to complete while the longest takes approximately 130 minutes.

The tourist office is currently designing further walking tours, including an island tour, as well as an Android version of the app to be made available soon.

Located 40 miles from Hong Kong, Macau is on China's south coast and has a Portuguese-Chinese.

Visit : www.macautourism.gov.mo. Contact : Lucy Whitehead at lucy@humewhitehead.co.uk.

JetBlue flies to Hilton Head Golf Island, South Carolina

JetBlue is now flying from Boston and New York to Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport.

Hilton Head Golf Island itself is a collection of 28 premier golf courses with course designers including Pete Dye, Jack Nicklaus, Robert Trent Jones, Gary Player and Davis Love III represented.

The region also features an unspoiled natural environment, luxury resorts and inns and Southern culture.

The Lowcountry Golf Course Owners Association, in conjunction with the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Visitor and Conventions Bureau and Chamber of Commerce, launched Hilton Head Golf Island to support the island's thriving golf market through promotion of golf rounds and packages.

Visit : www.HiltonHeadGolfIsland.com. Contact : Glenn Gray at ggray@buffalocommunications.com.

The Hudson's Heritage Explorer Pass, UK

The Hudson's Heritage Explorer Pass, operated by Hudson's Media, is a one- off pass giving visitors free entry to 150 heritage attractions.

The attractions include a collection of heritage sites, specialist museums, independent historic houses across England.

Visit : www.hudsons-explorer.com. Contact : Tanya Aspinwall at Tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk.

The British Columbia Association of Travel Writers

The British Columbia Association of Travel Writers will hold its 2014 Symposium on Saturday, May 17, 2014 at the River Rock Casino Resort, Richmond B.C. Canada

The focus of the symposium will be the Taste of Travel: Fulfilling the Appetite for Culinary Content & Food And Drink Photography

The keynote speaker is Lauren Mowery, a wine, coffee, and tea writer from New York City who is a contributor to Fodor's and the Village Voice.

Visit : www.bcatw.org/bcatw2014. Contact : Contact: Mari Kane at info@passionatetravel.com.

Leads

Liberty Trails, Dartmoor, UK

Liberty Trails specialises in providing a range of horse riding and other experiences within the UK's Dartmoor National Park.

The company is striving to put Dartmoor on the map as one of the premier destinations for horse riding, adventure activities and fine dining and has been helped by part funding from the Dartmoor National Park, Dartmoor Partnership and West Devon Borough Council through the EU.

Liberty Trails has five very different horse riding packages that highlight the wild beauty of Dartmoor, with two of these offering alternative activities like vintage car tours, deer stalking, guided walking, archery and champagne balloon rides to enjoy.

Accommodation can be in a luxury cottage, with catering provided if required, or a hotel including the renowned Gidleigh Park.

In addition there are a number of other offerings which enable people to experience the best Dartmoor has to offer such as galloping, golf and gourmets where one partner prefers to play golf while the other rides.

Visit : www.libertytrails.co.uk. Contact : Lucy Johnson at lucyjohansonpr@gmail.com.

Pula, Croatia

Pula is the largest city within the Istrian peninsula, the most western point of the Republic of Croatia on the Adriatic coast.

Pula is located on an unspoilt coastline and boasts many nearby beaches and coves, excellent for diving. There are local farmers markets and a quaint, cobbled Medieval old town.

Dominating Pula, is *The Arena*, a fully preserved 1st century Roman amphitheatre.

Istria is home to two of Europe's biggest music festivals :

Outlook, a drum & bass and dance festival (3-7 September), and
Dimensions, underground electronic festival (27-31 September)

Istria itself is known for its white truffles, olive oil, Malvasia and Teran wines and seafood.

The Park Plaza Histria Pula

The Park Plaza Histria Pula has 368 guest rooms with private balconies offering sea views across the Adriatic Sea.

Visit : www.istra.hr/en and www.parkplaza.com. Contact : prteam@pphe.com.

Ceredigion Coast Path, Cardigan Bay, Wales

The Ceredigion Coast Path follows the coastline of Cardigan Bay on the west coast of Wales.

It offers stunning scenery, picturesque villages and a wealth of wildlife - including the highest numbers of dolphin sightings in the UK.

The website for the 60 mile / 96km long trail contains downloadable maps which can help walkers to create your own selection of short walks.

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

Tanjong Jara Resort, Tenggol Island

Pulau Tenggol or Tenggol Island is an island off the coast of Terengganu, Malaysia, which is less than three kilometres long and two kilometres wide

It is the last island in a string that include Pulau Perhentian and Pulau Redang. It is connected by ferry to Dungun on the mainland.

The Tanjong Jara Resort is located in Terengganu Marine Park and provides access to over 20 diving and snorkelling sites.

Visit : www.tanjongjararesort.com. Contact : Lallie Fraser at lallie@grifcopr.com.

The new Mary Rose Museum, Portsmouth UK

The new Mary Rose Museum, which opened in May 2013 at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard has won the Civic Trust Award and the Michael Middleton Special Award, awarded to a restoration project or new build within a conservation area.

The Mary Rose Museum houses the hull of the Mary Rose warship, commissioned by Henry VIII in 1510, as well as many thousands of the artefacts that were retrieved from the Solent's seabed 437 years after she sank.

The original hull is contained within a carefully controlled environment alongside a virtual port-side hull created on three levels exhibiting the largest hoard of Tudor artefacts in the world.

The ship, Henry VIII's favourite warship, was constructed in Portsmouth in 1510, not far from its current location of No.3 Dock in Portsmouth's Naval Base.

It tragically sank in the Battle of the Solent against the French in 1545, where only 35 of over 500 crew were known to survive.

In 1982 she was brought to the surface after 400 years on the sea bed and has been undergoing extensive conservation ever since.

Visit : www.maryrose.org. Contact : Claire Owen at muse@gongmuse.com.

Oregon Wine Adventures

The Travel Channel International is showing "Jeni and Olly's West Coast Wine Adventure", a four-part television series showcasing Portland, the Willamette Valley and Southern Oregon.

The series encourages viewers to experience the cuisine of the area with its world-class wine, locally-grown food and tasty adventures.

Visit : www.traveloregon.com. Contact : Lisa Chamberlain at Lisa.chamberlain@btinternet.com.

In The Saddle Unearths - the Mysteries Of Morocco

In The Saddle, which provides riding holidays on six continents, has introduced rides in Morocco.

Horseback vacations in Morocco offers an insight into the unique culture which has Berber, Arab, African and European influences.

Rides can take in the sands of the Sahara with its date palm oases and Berber communities, to the High Atlas mountains, in the middle of the country, where riders get the chance to view peaks rising to over 4,000m and ride through woodlands of pine, oak and cedar.

Visit : www.inthesaddle.com. Contact : Lauren Barber at lauren@g-gee.com.

Blair Castle and Gardens, Perthshire, Scotland

Blair Castle near the village of Blair Atholl in Perthshire is the ancestral home of the Clan Murray.

The castle is a category A listed building with its gardens and grounds included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland, the national listing of significant gardens.

New Blair Castle Family at War Exhibition April 2014

To commemorate the centenary of WWI and Scotland's Year of Homecoming, a new exhibition charting the involvement of the 7th Duke of Atholl and his family in the war has been added to the castle tour.

It explains how the Duke's sons were sent off to battle with the eldest son, future 8th Duke, commanding the Scottish Horse Regiment; Lord George of the Black Watch being posted missing in 1914 and Lord James of the Cameron Highlanders, being taken prisoner in Germany.

The exhibition includes letters, photos and documents of the Duke's sons; a section on the ballroom as a hospital and information about the fundraising effort for the National War Memorial.

Visit : www.blair-castle.co.uk. Contact : Kate at kateh@blair-castle-co.ccsend.com.

Travel Indochina

Asia specialist Travel Indochina is launch river cruises and a collection of exclusive charters along the Irrawaddy and Ganges for 2014-16.

Launching in September 2014, the Irrawaddy Explorer will sail on Burma's Irrawaddy River.

Inspired by Burma's rich British-colonial era, the vessel will offer 28 suites with floor-to-ceiling glass doors that open onto private balconies for panoramic views of the river.

The new Ganges Voyager I will launch in January 2015 will offer 28 spacious suites with private balconies.

Travel Indochina offers cruises in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Burma, China and Tibet, India, Japan, Bhutan, Mongolia and Sri Lanka.

The company limits its group size to a maximum of 16 people.

Visit: www.travelindochina.co.uk. Contact : Sarah Habicht at sarah@humewhitehead.co.uk.

Lalibela Game Reserve, South Africa

Lalibela is a Big 5 game reserve on the Eastern Cape coast of South Africa, 90km east of Port Elizabeth.

In addition to lion, rhino, elephant, leopard & buffalo, the 7 500 ha reserve is home to other predators such as cheetah, hyena, jackal and lynx, as well as numerous plains animals including giraffe, zebra, warthog, impala, wildebeest, blesbok and various other antelope species.

Overlooking indigenous bush and watering holes, accommodation is in a luxury tented camp and cosy safari lodges.

The reserve is known for its relaxed informality and warm hospitality, with buffet meals enjoyed at communal tables or under the stars in an outside dining boma.

Visit : www.lalibela.net. Contact : Gail Davis at webadmin@lalibela.co.za.

Hiking the Dolomites, Italy

Dolomite Mountains Ltd, Italy's active guided mountain travel company, will lead three scheduled departures and arrange custom tours that retrace impressions made in World War I (WWI) on the formidable collection of mountain peaks known as the Dolomites.

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

Aurora Expeditions' New Kimberley Wilderness Walk, Western Australia

Expedition cruise company, Aurora Expeditions, is inviting guests to take part in a special mission in the Kimberley to uncover a lost historical track once used by early missionaries nearly 100 hundred years ago.

The search will take part on a dedicated, 9.5 kilometre, 'Wilderness Walk', a highlight on the company's 2014 Kimberley Coast cruise itinerary.

The lost track, dubbed the 'Three Mile Road' was built in 1916 to assist with the relocation of a Presbyterian Aboriginal mission to a site named Kunmunya.

Used to transport building materials by donkey cart and enable regular incoming supplies, the road linked a landing site at Nhorgor Inlet along the Kimberley coastline with the Kunmunya site in the south-east.

Visit www.auroraexpeditions.com.au. Contact : Emma Savage at emma@auroraexpeditions.com.au.

Amazona Zoo, Cromer, Norfolk UK

Amazona Zoo in Cromer is a 15 acre home to over 200 tropical animals, including jaguars, monkeys, snakes, flamingos and tapirs.

The zoo is committed to helping visitors discover nature and provide education on conservation issues

Visit : www.amazonazoo.co.uk. contact Danielle Howard at danielle@junglepr.com.

The Gambia, Africa

Located on the West Coast of Africa, The Gambia is being promoted as an attractive alternative to destinations such as the Canary Islands, Cape Verde and Northern Africa.

The country offers 80km the coastline with a variety of beach resorts and fishing villages.

The smallest country on mainland Africa, The Gambia also attracts visitors to its estuary and meandering waterways, a natural habitat to hippos and over 500 species of birds.

River cruises are one of the most effective ways of exploring the country and offer visitors the chance to observe wildlife, explore the mangroves and visit river villages.

Visit : www.visitthegambia.gm. Contact : Jo Hartley at joh@hillsbalfour.com.

Vancouver in Spring, Canada

Spring is one of the best times of year to enjoy a city break in Vancouver; the days are warmer, the nights are longer and the city comes alive with colour at the peak of cherry blossom season.

Each year, more than 40,000 cherry trees spring to life, decorating Vancouver's streets and parks with a canopy of white and pink blossoms.

The annual Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival (April 3 to 28) celebrates the sakura (cherry blossoms in Japanese) with traditional Japanese food, live music, events and workshops including Haiku readings and origami making.

Visit : www.BritishColumbia.travel. Contact : Antonia Robinson at Antonia@goshpr.co.uk.

What's on in 2014

Holkham Hall during the First World War, Norfolk UK

1 April to 31 October 2014

Holkham Hall, ancestral home the Earl of Leicester, is staging a 2014 exhibition that will highlight the many poignant memories of the families experiences during the First World War.

Arthur Coke, grandfather of the present Earl of Leicester, spent his early service days in the Royal Navy before moving to the Horse Guards and seeing action in Flanders in the first Battle of Ypres which lasted for three months in 1914.

The exhibition will feature poignant extracts from letters that Arthur wrote at the front and which take the reader from the build up to war, his reaction to war once action starts and his very early realisation that the war in Europe was set to be a static war in the trenches.

The exhibition will also feature details of Arthur's two brothers, Tom and Roger, who were also involved in the First World War and the impact the war had on the family.

Personal letters, archives, books, photographs and artefacts will all be on display and the exhibition will also aim to show the impact of the war for the families of over 90 Holkham men who are mentioned on the Roll of Honour.

Visit : www.holkham.co.uk. Contact : Mary Rudd at mail@maryruddpr.co.uk.

Dutch Design at the Paleis Het Loo, Apeldoorn, the Netherlands

To 29 June 2014

Paleis Het Loo is presenting the work of Dutch designers in five historic interiors of the palace in an exhibition entitled 'Royal Showpieces, a royal encounter with Dutch design'.

Since the opening of Paleis Het Loo to the public in 1984 the forty interiors have reflected the way in which the royal family of the House of Orange lived in the palace over a period of three centuries.

They acquired works, employed designers and acted as patrons of the art and crafts in Holland. Uniquole extrapolates this line through to 2014.

Visit : www.paleishetloo.nl. Contact : Patricia Stanco at pstanco@holland.com.

The Seabreeze Jazz Festival, Panama City Beach, Florida

23 to 27 April 2014

The 16th Seabreeze Jazz Festival, held on the beach, is one of the fastest growing Smooth Jazz Festivals in the USA.

Visit : www.seabreezejazzfestival.com and www.visitpanamacitybeach.com. Contact : Hannah Mulvey at hannah@goshpr.co.uk.

Alkmaar Cheese Market, Noord Holland

April to September (annually)

Alkmaar in the province of Noord Holland in the north of the Netherlands is well known for its traditional cheese market, which is the number one tourist attraction in the city.

Every Friday from 10:00, from April until September, visitors can watch cheese being traded in the same time-honoured way as it has been for centuries.

This colourful and folkloric spectacle takes place on the Waagplein ('weighing square'), where cheese has been traded since 1365.

About 2,200 cheeses – 30,000 kilograms worth of cheese! – are lined up, waiting for the buyers.

Visit : www.kaasmarkt.nl. Contact : Patricia Stanco at pstanco@holland.com.

Arts in April, Napa Valley, California

Arts in April 2014 is an annual celebration of the best Napa Valley art collections, art education, art and wine pairings and a number of art-themed festivities.

Napa Valley Arts in April also features historic winery architecture tours and the performing arts.

Participating wineries include :

- Beaulieu Vineyard
- HALL Wines
- The Hess Collection
- Long Meadow Ranch Winery
- Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley
- Peju Province Winery
- Robert Mondavi Winery
- St. Supéry Estate
- Vineyards and Winery
- Sterling Vineyards, and
- Viader Vineyards.

Visit : www.visitnapavalley.com/artsinapril. Contact : Margaux Lushing at margaux@visitnapavalley.com.

Memphis in May, Tennessee

Memphis in May is a month-long festival with major events each weekend such as the Beale Street Music Festival, the BBQ Festival and the Sunset Symphony on the banks of the Mississippi River.

The Beale Street Music Festival takes place from the 2-4 May and is frequently included in top 20 U.S. festival lists.

Visit : www.memphisinmay.com. Contact : Siobhan Burke at sburke@thebrandusa.co.uk.

The Classic Car & Transport Show, Ragley, Warwickshire

Sunday 25 & Monday 26 May 2014

The 22nd Classic Car & Transport Show will offer a display of over 600 vintage, classic, American, kit and custom cars as well as motorcycles and commercial vehicles.

There will be a special display of American cars on the grassed area leading up to the Hall on the Monday.

In addition there will be club and trade stands and an Auto-jumble along with arena events.

Visit : www.transtarpromotions.com. Contact : Tanya Aspinwall at Tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk.

Atlanta Food and Wine Festival, Georgia

29 May to 1 June 2014

The Atlanta Food and Wine Festival sees chefs, sommeliers, beverage innovators involved in a range of events including the 'Pig out party' promising part oyster roast, part fish fry, part Florabama and the Conch Republic.

This year's event will also celebrate the female culinary experts of the South.

Visit : www.atlfoodandwinefestival.com. Contact : Siobhan Burke at sburke@thebrandusa.co.uk.

Hangout Music Fest, Alabama

May (annually)

The Hangout is a music festival that takes place on the beaches of Gulf Shores, Alabama each May.

The 32 miles of white sand on Alabama's Gulf Coast attracts over 35,000 music lovers for a beach party atmosphere featuring over 70 bands across six stages.

Visit : www.hangoutmusicfest.com. Contact : Siobhan Burke at sburke@thebrandusa.co.uk.

BottleRock Napa Valley, California USA

30 May to 1 June 2014

BottleRock, Napa Valley Napa's premier annual music festival offers the very best in music, food and wine with 50 bands on four stages, dozens of top wineries from Napa Valley and beyond, and the very best eats from Napa Valley restaurants.

Visit : www.bottlerocknapavalley.com. Contact : Tom Fuller at tom@fullerandsander.com.

The London Festival of Architecture

1 to 31 June 2014

The London Festival of Architecture, now in its 10th year, celebrates London as a global hub of architectural practice, discussion and debate.

Taking place throughout June, this year's festival takes the theme of 'capital' and will take a broader examination of London's role as a cultural capital and the ways in which human, natural, social and digital capital shape London architecture and its public spaces.

The full programme of LFA events will be listed on the London Architecture Diary from May.

Visit : www.londonarchitecturediary.com. Contact : Marta Bogna at marta@carocommunications.com.

Red Rooster Festival and Rural Pastimes, Euston Hall, Suffolk UK

7 and 8 June 2014

The grounds of Euston Hall, Suffolk will stage the new Red Rooster festival on Saturday 7 June, with the long-established Rural Pastimes event taking place on Sunday 8 June.

Embracing the sounds and lifestyle of the American Deep South, Red Rooster aims to become the premier boutique festival for Rhythm and Blues, Americana, Soul, Roots and Country music.

Rural Pastimes is the East of England's leading countryside event featuring the Knights of the Damned jousting display, the air displays of Wildcat Aeronautics, the Heavy Horse Show, sheepdog trials and terrier racing.

There is also a vintage and classic car display featuring over 300 pristine cars from years gone by alongside motorcycles, tractors and engines.

Visit : www.redrooster.org.uk. Contact : Karen Johnson at karen@orbitpr.net.

Secret Solstice, Reykjavik, Iceland

20 to 22 June 2014

With 72-hours of daylight, an impressive line-up and a natural hot spring on site,

Iceland's new music festival, Secret Solstice, will be held during 72-hours of daylight in Reykjavik the world's most northerly capital city. The weekend will feature 150 established and up-and-coming international acts from a range of genres.

Located in Laugardalur in central Reykjavik, the festival site will offer various outdoor and indoor stages as well as the largest thermal pool in Iceland.

Visit : www.secretsolstice.is.

WOW air

WOW air, Iceland's only low-cost airline, flies to London, Paris, Berlin and Copenhagen from Reykjavik all year-round and offers additional winter and summer destinations.

Visit : www.wowair.co.uk.

Contact : Laura Jackson at teamwow@rooster.co.uk.

St. Kitts Music Festival

26 to 28 June 2014

Beenie Man, will be one of the headline acts at the 18th annual St Kitts Music Festival. The musician from the heartland of Jamaica continues to be one of Dancehall's most successful dancehall artists.

Throughout the three-night event, attendees will enjoy main stage performances, authentic West Indian cuisine and cultural and folkloric performances.

The St. Kitts Music Festival features a wide range of musical styles on the popular market, including R&B, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Reggae, Soca, Calypso, Gospel and Contemporary music.

Located in the northern Leeward Islands of the Caribbean, St. Kitts offers a diverse tourism product developed from the destination's natural beauty, cultural heritage and rich history.

The island's offering includes :

- hiking through the tropical rainforest
- riding the region's only scenic railway touring Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park, and
- the only man-made UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Eastern Caribbean.

Visit : www.stkittsmusicfestival.com. Visit : Zarina McCulloch at zarina@talktoriver.com.

Newcastle Pride, UK

18 to 20 July 2014

A North East English festival celebrating the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community (LGBT) could attract up to 65,000 visitors after organisers announced it is tripling in size.

Newcastle Pride, now in its seventh year, annually attracts thousands of music lovers and members of the LGBT community from across the UK and further afield.

This year, to meet growing demand, it is being extended from one to three days – making it the biggest free event of its kind to be held in the North East and the second largest in the UK.

Newcastle Pride 2014 will be based primarily at the Town Moor, Newcastle, where live music will be staged across the three days.

Visit : www.northern-pride.com. Contact : Claire Buchan at claire@sortedpr.com.

The 35th Warwick Folk Festival, Warwick UK

24 to 27 July 2014

The Warwick Folk Festival is an event for dedicated folk fans and music lovers who are discovering that 'folk' covers a wide range of tastes and styles including blues, rock, country and funk.

The programme includes over 130 events including concerts, ceilidhs, workshops, a crafts and music fair and the return of Panic Circus.

Visit : www.warwickfolkfestival.co.uk. Contact : Tanya Aspinwall at Tanya@marketingaloud.co.uk.

STEPtember 2014, the Cambrian Mountains, Wales

STEPtember 2014 is a Cambrian Mountains partnership of 17 communities that are either geographically located in the Cambrian Mountains region or that are close enough to afford great views of this open expanse of high moorland and cairn-capped peaks.

STEPtember 2014 is 30 individual walks across the 30 days of the month that focus on the heritage of the region, historical events and characters, mining industry and local wildlife.

Visit : www.walkcambrianmountains.co.uk. Contact : Duncan Foulkes at duncan.foulkes@btinternet.com.

An Alliance feature : England's annual social scene

Crabbie's Grand National, Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool

5 April 2014

The Grand National is a National Hunt horse race held annually at Aintree Racecourse in Liverpool, England.

First run officially in 1839, it is a handicap steeplechase over 4 miles 3½ furlongs with horses jumping 30 fences over two circuits.

The Grand National is the most valuable jump race in Europe, with a prize fund of £975,000 in 2013. It is followed by many thousands of people who do not normally watch or bet on horse racing at other times of the year.

The three day Aintree meet event attracts 154,000 people with an estimated 500 to 600 million people watching the Grand National itself on TV in over 140 countries

Visit : www.aintree.co.uk

160th Anniversary of the Boat Race, between Putney and Mortlake, London

6 April 2014

This year will see the 160th Boat Race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

First raced in 1829, The Boat Race is one of the oldest sporting events in the world.

Watched by thousands along the banks of The Tideway, between Putney and Mortlake in London, and by millions more on TV around the world, The Boat Race is a unique sporting event.

To date, Cambridge leads the series with 81 victories to Oxford's 77, with one dead-heat in 1877.

Visit : www.theboatrace.org.

200th Anniversary of Lords, London

Various fixtures May – July 2014

Located in St John's Wood, north-west London, Lord's the spiritual home of Cricket.

Thomas Lord established his original eponymous cricket field at nearby Dorset Square in 1787. This year, Lord's will host two Test matches and a One Day International in 2014, with India and Sri Lanka both touring England.

The Bicentenary of the Ground will also be celebrated with MCC's fixture against Rest of the World.

Visit : www.lords.org.

80th Anniversary of Glyndebourne, East Sussex

17 May – 24 August 2014

Glyndebourne, the quintessentially English opera house, sits in the rolling green hills of East Sussex, surrounded by gardens and a lily pad-topped lake.

Seventy performances are held during the annual Glyndebourne Festival between May and July.

Visit : www.glyndebourne.com.

Goodwood, West Sussex

June – September 2014

The Goodwood Estate stages two motor racing events with the Festival of Speed (26 – 29 June 2014) and the Goodwood Revival (12 – 14 September 2014) which celebrate the golden age of motor racing.

Glorious Goodwood from late July to mid-August sees five days of fine horse racing - along with dining, champagne and elaborate ladies hats.

The Goodwood Hotel, is the estate's four-star hotel with its 91 bedrooms and a luxurious spa.

Visit : www.goodwood.co.uk

Audi International Polo Series

Various locations June – September 2014

The Audi International Polo Series offers some of the world's greatest spectator polo.

The highlight of the season will see two of polo's world powerhouses, England and Argentina, compete for the Coronation Cup at Windsor Great Park on 26 July 2014.

Visit : www.hpa-polo.co.uk.

Investec Derby Festival (Epsom Derby), Epsom Downs Racecourse, Surrey

6 & 7 June 2014

The Investec Ladies' Day on Friday 6 June 2014, combines high style with some of the best flat races in the world.

Elegant, fashionable racegoers gather for a classic day's racing at Epsom.

The Derby, taking place on Saturday 7 June 2014, dates back to 1780, and is still ranked the greatest flat race in the world.

Visit : www.epsomdowns.co.uk

Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London

9 June – 17 August 2014

Held without interruption since 1769, the Summer Exhibition is the largest open submission exhibition in the world, displaying works in a variety of mediums and genres by emerging and established artists.

The works are selected and hung by Royal Academicians and entry is open to all artists. In 2013, nearly seventy per cent of the exhibits were by non-Academicians, seventy thousand pounds' worth of prizes were awarded and over five thousand works were sold.

Visit : www.royalacademy.org.uk

Royal Ascot, Berkshire

17 – 21 June 2014

Along with Wimbledon and the Henley Royal Regatta, this has to be one of the most quintessentially English sporting days out. It's probably also the poshest.

Dating back to 1711, this five-day race meeting is steeped in tradition – with a strict dress code for those able to get access to the Royal Enclosure.

For the gents this means morning suits, while ladies are encouraged to go all out with glamorous dresses and ostentatious hats.

Visit : www.ascot.co.uk.

Wimbledon, London

23 June – 6 July 2014

Late June sees a fortnight of world-class tennis played out in South West London on 19 grass courts.

Visit : www.wimbledon.com

175th Anniversary of the Henley Royal Regatta, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire

2 July – 6 July 2014

Every first weekend of July, a mixture of rowers and socialites gather on the banks of the River Thames in Berkshire for five days of racing.

In all there are 19 Cups to be won, with teams travelling from across the world to compete.

Now in its 175th year, Henley is steeped in tradition, having been an established part of the social calendar since 1839.

And while the Regatta is in full swing, Henley Festival offers five days of art, fine dining and big name acts performing on a floating stage.

Visit : www.hrr.co.uk and www.henley-festival.co.uk.

BBC proms, various locations

18 July – 13 September 2014

The BBC Proms is one of the world's greatest classical music festivals, with the finest musicians performing everything from classical and opera, to jazz and modern experimental works.

The Royal Albert Hall is the heart of proms, holding the majority of concerts.

This includes the raucous Last Night, which spills out onto Hyde Park with many thousands of people armed with flags and picnic hampers soaking up a mix of classical and modern sounds from high-profile orchestras and musicians.

Visit : www.bbc.co.uk/proms.

Aberdeen Asset Management Cowes Week, Cowes, the Isle of Wight, UK

2 – 9 August 2014

Cowes Week is the world's premier sailing regatta, with almost 1,000 yachts and 8,000 competitors taking part in some top-class sailing. Sailing takes place on the Solent (the area of water between southern England and the Isle of Wight made tricky by strong double tides).

Cowes Week has a rich heritage and attracts a wide range of competitors from amateurs to Olympic and World champions.

Visit : www.cowes.co.uk.

Visit : www.visitengland.com. Contact : Mark McCulloch at Mark.McCulloch@visitengland.org.

Reasons to write about

Yukon, Canada - midnight sun

Yukon is the land of the midnight sun with the best time to visit between May and August.

Life flourishes under hours of intense sunlight as the land hosts millions of migratory birds and explodes in wildflower blooms.

On summer solstice, 21 June the sun doesn't set at the Arctic Circle—the further north one travels, the higher the sun and the longer the season of the midnight sun.

All over the Yukon, summer is a time of festivals and outdoor activities.

There is also the chance to take the road trip at the height of the northern summer and see Yukon's memorable places by connecting the North Klondike, Top of the World, and Alaska highways.

Situated in the upper Northwest corner of Canada, next to Alaska, the Yukon is Canada's most accessible northern destination.

Home to Canada's highest mountain (Mount Logan) and one of the largest non-polar icefields located in Kluane National Park - a UNESCO World Heritage site - breathtaking doesn't describe the vastness, or the beauty!

Visit : www.travelyukon.com. Contact : Lisa Chamberlain at Lisa.chamberlain@btinternet.com.

The Birthplace of Country Music Museum, Virginia

The Birthplace of Country Music Museum opens in August 2014 in Bristol, Virginia, known for being the location that spawned the country music movement.

The museum celebrates the roots of old time, country and bluegrass music, and has displays and memorabilia honouring music pioneers like The Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, Tennessee Ernie Ford and Kenny Chesney.

In 1927, Ralph Peer from the Victor Talking Machine Company travelled to Bristol on the advice of recording artist Ernest "Pop" Stoneman.

During his stay in Bristol, Peer recorded 76 songs by 19 artists in one of the most significant field recordings of early country music.

These historic "Bristol Sessions" launched the careers of the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, the Stoneman Family, and other pioneers of the modern country music movement.

In 1998, the U.S. Congress officially recognized Bristol as the official Birthplace of Country Music.

This centre, which will have its own radio station and a 100-seat theatre for live performances, will be housed in a 24,000 square foot facility. Annual events and festivals that celebrate downtown Bristol's southern hospitality are scheduled for the summer months.

Food City Race nights occur twice a year and attract 50,000 people to downtown Bristol as part of the race weekend in August.

Live entertainment, food and races are held in conjunction with NASCAR, at the Bristol Motor Speedway, which has one of the largest spectator facilities in the world.

Bristol is located along The Crooked Road, Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, a driving route through the Appalachian Mountains that links musical venues showcasing old time, country and bluegrass music.

Visit : www.thecrookedroad.org, www.visitbristoltnva.org and www.CapitalRegionUSA.co.uk. Contact : Jo Thomas at jo.thomas@kbctravelgroup.com.

Wild Jordan

Wild Jordan, a division of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) in Jordan, is celebrating 20 years of eco-tourism and socio-economic projects across the country.

Situated in the heart of the Arabian Desert, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is held up as the safest in all of the Middle East. From the hustle and bustle of the capital Amman to southern desert, Jordan is of great biblical, historical and cultural significance.

Its landmarks include the views from Mount Nebo, the therapeutic waters of the Dead Sea, and Wadi Rum – a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Wild Jordan is responsible for projects which support the rural communities living around RSCN's nature reserves and have created hundreds of jobs via eco-tourism projects including :

Dana Guesthouse, Dana Nature Reserve

Sitting at the edge of a traditional stone village, high on the cliffs overlooking the Dana nature reserve in the southern Rift Valley, the Dana Guesthouse is run by Bedouin and offers nine rooms – many with views over the Wadi Dana.

Guests can enjoy guided tours of the reserve from the local Bedouin where they point out a huge array of plants, birds of prey and the site of 5,000 year-old copper mines.

Visit : www.rscn.org.jo

Feynan Ecolodge

The Feynan Lodge lies in the heart of the mountainous Dana Biosphere Reserve in Wadi Feynan.

The 26-room solar-powered lodge offers the most developed eco-experience in Jordan. Guests can sip mint tea with the native Bedouin or spend a day with a shepherd. The panoramic rooftop terrace offers a 360 degree view of the desert reserve by day and a vista of stars by night.

Visit : www.feynan.com.

Azraq Lodge

This former 1940s British field hospital has been restored into a lodge, decorated with period trunks, black and white photographs of Bedouin, plus a 1956 Land Rover. The barracks contain bedrooms with flagstone floors and cacti-studded desert views.

Visit : www.rscn.org.jo.

Visit : www.visitjordan.com. Contact : Jenny Groutage at jenny.groutage@brightergroup.com.

New England food tours

New England is a region offering a wide range of food tours, some focusing on specific types of produce, others on the ethnic traditions behind local culinary spots.

Boston, Massachusetts

Michele Topor was one of America's first food guides. Resident in Boston's North End for more than 40 years and designed her 'North End Market Tour' to help visitors appreciate the traditions of the city's de facto Little Italy district.

On the tour visitors learn more about America's oldest Italian community and how its classic dishes have been adapted to a new country.

Visit : www.bostonfoodtours.com/north-end.

New Haven, Connecticut

New Haven, New England's sixth-largest city is located on the shore of Long Island Sound and has become a gourmet getaway for many New Yorkers.

Historian Colin M. Caplan leads a range of culinary walking tours such as the 'On 9' Tour.

Based around the city's Ninth Square, participants get an introduction to local produce at the co-operative Elm City Market before some heading to a number of different local eateries to experience amazing Italian, Indian and Malaysia food tastings paired with wine, beer and cocktails.

Visit : www.tasteofnewhaven.com.

Bar Harbour, Maine

The town of Bar Harbor is perhaps best known as the gateway to the Acadia National Park, but it's also among Maine's top food hotspots.

On a 'Savor Bar Harbor' those taking the Maine Foodie Tours, walking tours, visit seven different local establishments renowned for their unique offerings.

It's the chance to sample Maine mini-lobster rolls and lobster bisque, as well as artisan cheeses, home-made blueberry muffins, and farm ice cream.

Maine Foodie Tours, who also run dedicated food tours in Kennebunkport and Portland.

Visit : www.mainefoodietours.com.

Seaport, New Hampshire :

The seaport of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, has one of the highest concentrations of restaurants per capita in the whole of the US.

Portsmouth Eats offers a 'Best of Portsmouth' walking and tasting tour that visits five top local establishments, where participants meet with the owner or chef to learn more about the history and inspiration behind their success.

Visit : www.portsmouth-eats.com

Providence, Rhode Island

Rhody Food Tours' new 'Immigrant Cuisines of Providence' tour takes visitors to four immigrant-owned restaurants, where they will meet the owners and learn more about the ingredients and cooking methods used in authentic Japanese, Bolivian, Mexican and Indian dishes.

Burlington, Vermont

In Burlington, local food and wine expert Chris Howell hosts a range of driving tours including a 'Vermont Farm Tour' which explores the connection between taste and place.

Over the course of a day participants visit three different farms, enjoying tastings of local bread, cheese, vegetables and wine.

Visit : www.vermontfarmtours.com.

Visit : www.discovernewengland.co.uk. Contact : David Ezra at David.Ezra@kbc-pr.com.

England's Hall of Fame

Since launching its campaign to establish England's Hall of Fame, VisitEngland has laid claim to a number of things closely associated with other countries including :

Haggis

Haggis – a mix of sheep or calf offal, suet, oatmeal and seasoning – is traditionally celebrated as the national dish of Scotland.

However, the first known written recipe for a haggis-like dish of offal and herbs actually originated from Lancashire in northwest England.

This recipe for a dish called 'hagese' was included in the verse cookbook Liber Cure Cocorum, back in 1430.

Champagne

The French have long fought to ensure that only sparkling wine from a particular region of France is called Champagne.

But it was Christopher Merret, a scientist and physician from Gloucestershire, who first recorded the recipe.

In 1662, Merret presented the Royal Society with a paper on how sugar and molasses could be added to wine to give it a 'brisk and sparkling' quality.

Baseball

It's hailed as the United States' national sport, yet historians believe that baseball evolved from one of our most popular children's summer sports... rounders!

Records show that some form of the bat-and-ball game was being played in England by the mid-1700s, some 40 years before it was adopted by the States.

There is a reference in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, written in 1778, where her heroine, Catherine Morland, prefers 'cricket, base-ball, riding on horseback, and running about the country, to books.'

The modern Olympic Games

The modern Olympics Games were born not in Athens but in the tiny medieval village of Much Wenlock in Shropshire, where, in 1850, the first Wenlock Olympic Games took place.

Encouraged by their success, the English surgeon and educationalist, William Penny Brookes, founded the Wenlock Olympian Society in 1860 and later, in 1865, the National Olympian Association, which organised the first national Olympics a year later in London.

Apparently, when Baron Pierre de Coubertin visited England in 1890 he was so impressed with Brookes' efforts that he returned to Paris with visions of an international Olympic Games.

Visit : www.englishshalloffame.com. Contact : Mark Anthony McCulloch at Mark.McCulloch@visitengland.org.

A place to stay

Ballygally Castle, Ireland

Ballygally Castle, located on the Causeway Coastal Route, reopens in April after a major refurbishment.

Ballygally Castle is just 45 minutes from the Giants Causeway & Bushmills Distillery, Ireland's oldest working distillery.

Visit : www.rebuildingballygallycastle.com. Contact : Jonathan Williams at jonathan@ophirpr.co.uk

New Pullman Hotels

The Pullman hotel network expanded at an unprecedented pace in 2012 and 2013, with properties opened in London, Brussels, Bangkok, Jakarta and Sydney.

In Asia, the brand opened 15 including :

- the Pullman Kuala Lumpur Bangsar (Malaysia)
- the Pullman Saigon Centre and Pullman Danang Beach Resort (Vietnam)
- the Pullman Phuket Arcadia (Thailand), and
- the Pullman Shanghai South

Visit : www.pullmanhotels.com. Contact : Melissa Levine at Melissa.Levine@accor.com.

Blue Haven Resort, Turks and Caicos

The Blue Haven Resort and Marina, which opened in December 2013 is a premier adventure resort in Turks and Caicos Islands.

The waterfront resort is located just minutes away by boat from the world's third largest barrier reef. The resort also has its own marina.

Other resort amenities include a spa, complimentary 24-hour fitness center, oceanfront infinity pool with swim-up bar and a stretch of serviced white sand beach.

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

Highlands Country House, Cape Town, South Africa

Highlands Country House, which is located in Cape Town's southern suburbs, was built in 1900.

Highlands' enjoys close proximity to attractions including Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and the Wine Farms in Constantia Valley.

The beaches and Cape Town itself are a 20 minutes drive away.

Visit : www.highlands.co.za. Contact : Carole Armstrong-Hooper at carole@highlands.co.za.

The Mayflower Grace, Washington, Connecticut

Grace Hotels has opened the Mayflower Grace, a 30-room property that has been granted both Forbes five-star and AAA five-diamond status.

Visit : www.gracehotels.com/mayflower. Contact : Siobhan Burke at sburke@thebrandusa.co.uk.

The Marbella Beach Hotel Corfu, Greece

The Marbella Beach Hotel Corfu is staging "Trip2Taste Festival" between 13 and 15 June 2014 that will encompass Greek cooking classes, a special grey mullet botarga tasting, Olive oil tasting, wine sampling and a Greek coffee making course.

The hotel is also sponsoring the Classic Yacht Race 2014 over the same weekend.

Visit : www.marbella.gr soon. contact : Kathryn Peel at Kathryn@ophirpr.co.uk.

Coombe Abbey, Warwickshire

Coombe Abbey country house hotel, just outside Coventry, has been named as one of the country's 10 most surprising stays by travel website Booking.com.

Coombe Abbey, which was built as a Cistercian Abbey in 1150AD, was also commended for its distinctive events programme, which includes regular murder mystery evenings and ghost hunts.

Visit : www.coombeabbey.com. Contact : Claire Buchan at claire@sortedpr.com.

Aussie Farmstay & Bush Adventures

Aussie Farmstay & Bush Adventures offers guests the chance to stay with a farm family in the bush while introducing them to this country's historic, culture.

This stay introduces guests to genuine Australian bush characters while experiencing an authentic Australian country lifestyle.

Guests eat traditional Aussie bush tucker (foods such as fresh damper, Anzac biscuits, Bar-B-Queed lamb chops and kangaroo meat) and try their hands at Australian farm and bush crafts.

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

The Asia Gardens Hotel & Thai Spa, Costa Blanca, Spain

The Asia Gardens Hotel & Thai Spa is to stage its inaugural Spring Golf Tournament at the Villaitana Levante Golf Course on 31 May 2014.

Set in the hills beside Asia Gardens with views of the Mediterranean, the Jack Nicklaus-designed Villaitana Levante is an 18-hole, par 72 Championship course.

At 6,612 metres long with narrow fairways, strategically placed bunkers and well protected but receptive greens, the course promises an enjoyably challenging and strikingly picturesque experience for players of all levels.

Located 150 metres above sea level on the slopes of the Sierra Cortina, the Asia Gardens Hotel & Thai Spa combines contemporary luxury with the opulence of Indian and Thai palaces gone by.

There are over 160 different botanical species and rambling water features throughout the resort.

Visit : www.asiagardens.es/en. Contact : Ros Boycott at ros@masonrose.com.

The Águamel Sintra boutique guest house, Sintra near Lisbon

The new Boutique Guest House Águamel Sintra has been started by Christina Valente in her family home dating back to 1885. A Unesco World Heritage site, Sintra is one of the oldest historical Portuguese towns.

Visit : www.AguamelSintra.com. Contact : Christina Mitchell at christina.mitchell@azurpr.com.

Cheval Three Quays, London UK

The new Cheval Three Quays offers 97 serviced and 62 extended stay luxury apartments next to the Tower of London alongside the River Thames.

Cheval Three Quays is the latest development from luxury apartment specialists Cheval Residences, which already offers seven residences in London.

Visit : www.chevalresidences.com. Contact : Angela Maini at angela.maini@fourbgb.com.

White Pearl Resorts, Mozambique

The White Pearl Resorts is located within easy access of both the Kruger National Park and the game reserves of northern Zululand.

The resort offers some of the finest diving in Mozambique, horse-riding on the beach and the chance to swim with dolphins.

Visit : www.whitepearlresorts.com. Contact : Suzanne Bayly-Coupe at info@classic-portfolio.com.

Hobby related camping in the UK

Outdoor accommodation specialist Pitchup.com has an extensive range of over 5,000 holiday parks and campsites, many of which are ideally suited for people who want to combine a break with their favourite pursuit.

Fishing : Loch Tay Highland Lodges, Perthshire, Scotland

Fishing enthusiasts can hire a boat on Loch Tay to catch trout or salmon to cook at camp later. The site can arrange fishing permits and accommodation is in a choice of cabins, wigwams and yurts.

Visit : www.pitchup.com/campsites/-/fishing-nearby and www.pitchup.com/campsites/-/fishing.

Cycling : West Stow Pods, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

West Stow Pods are well situated for scenic cycle paths for long-distance bike routes around King's Forest or Newmarket, as well as mountain biking around Thetford or Brandon Country Park.

Visit : www.pitchup.com/campsites/-/cycle-hire.

Bird watching : Higher Moor Farm Campsite, Weymouth, Dorset

Higher Moor Farm Campsite is a short distance from the RSPB reserve Radipole Lake, which has regular events, family activities and a visitor centre. The site is home to many bird species including bittern, bearded tit, little egret, pochard and sedge warbler.

There's also the popular Studland Beach & Nature Reserve along the coast at Swanage where visitors can spot birds, wildlife and wild flowers and a mute swan colony at Abbotsbury Swannery.

Visit : www.pitchup.com/campsites/-/birdwatching.

Astronomy : PoSHHuts, Hexham, Northumberland

Northumberland National Park was awarded Dark Sky Park status in December 2013 and is now Europe's largest. Nearby Kielder Observatory has regular events for the astronomically inclined.

PoSHHuts, Hexham, are posh shepherd's huts offering a prime stargazing spot right outside the door.

Visit : www.pitchup.com/campsites/England/North_East/Northumberland/Hexham/poshhuts/.

Walking : The Quiet Site, Penrith, Cumbria

The Quiet Site has pods and pitches with views of Ullswater, which is popular among hikers and walkers. The site is within easy reach of some of the Lake District's most famous fells including Skiddaw, Helvelyn and Scafell Pike.

Visit : www.pitchup.com/campsites/-/walkers-paradise.

Adrenaline/outdoor adventure : North Lodge, Pembrokeshire

The 186-mile Pembrokeshire Coastal Path has plenty to tempt adrenaline junkies, including walking and hiking, clifftop expeditions, golfing, sailing, windsurfing, coasteering, sea kayaking, sea fishing and horse riding.

Visit : www.pitchup.com/campsites/-/walkers-paradise.

Pitchup.com is a free guide to all types of outdoor accommodation in the UK, Ireland and France.

Visit : www.pitchup.com. Contact : Cass Helstrip at Cass.helstrip@whitetigerpr.com.

The Hotel Royal, Evian-les-Bains, France

The Hotel Royal will open early July 2014 following a major refurbishment.

Known for its stunning Belle Epoque style and decadent interiors the major refurbishment will see a makeover that will provide the best of modern-day comfort with the traditional spirit of a place visited by famous personalities.

Vist : www.evianresort.com. Contact : li Storrington at li@storringtoncommunications.com.

Island House Key West, Florida

The 34-room Island House Key West is the longest continuously operated gay guesthouse and a destination unto itself, with a poolside Café and Bar open 24/7, an on-site gym and spa area and two Jacuzzis.

The property celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2011.

Visit : www.IslandHouseKeyWest.com. Contact : Jeffrey Smead at marketing@islandhousekeywest.com.

21 Broad, Nantucket New England

Lark Hotels will open 21 Broad, its second Nantucket property, in July 2014.

It will be a totally renovated 27-room boutique hotel, dating from 1876 and located a minute's walk from the Steamship Authority and island restaurants.

21 Broad will be Lark Hotels' seventh coastal New England boutique hotel

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

The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi, Maldives

The new Sun Siyam Iru Fushi, which is located in the Noonu Atoll Maldives, has 221 luxury ocean-front villas, including 70 over-water bungalows, 11 bar and restaurant choices, a 20-room tropical spa, and range of activities and local explorations.

Visit : www.thesunsiyam.com. Contact : Kathryn Peel at Kathryn@ophirpr.co.uk.

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 furgan.syed@fisherstravelsos.com.

Global Travel Publishers

www.africa-adventure.com. Kate Bandos at kate@ksbpromotions.com.

Globetrotters LogBook

www.globetrotterslogbook.com. Giedo Claes at giedo@globetrotterslogbook.com

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.

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