

Travel AND Tour™

Volume: 9, Issue: January 2017

WORLD

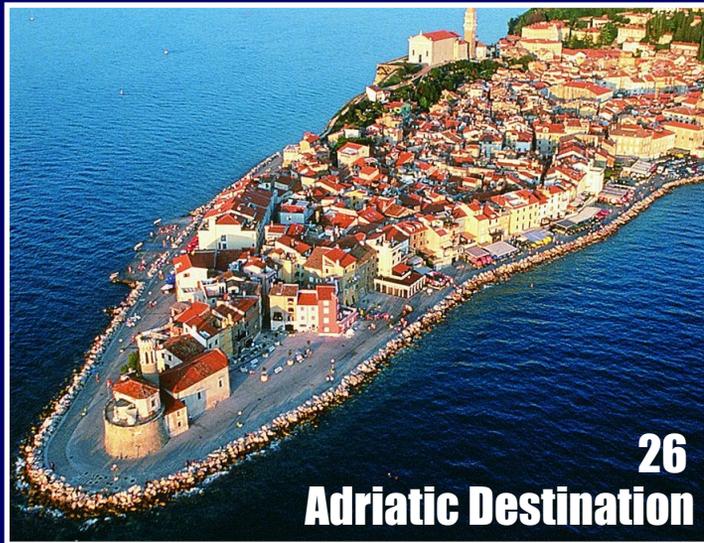
A New start for the

travel
industry
2017



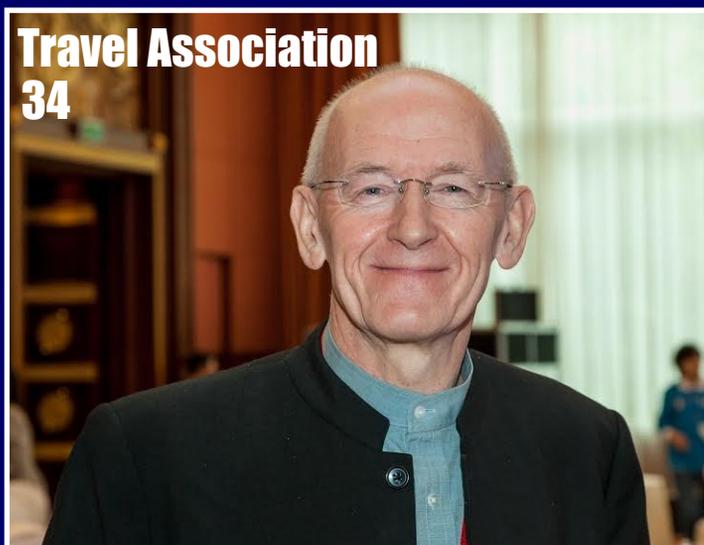


06- Meetings Point: Abu Dhabi, the capital city of the United Arab Emirates, is not only a leisure traveller's paradise, but also affluent business travellers' abode



23- Interview Zone: Travel And Tour World conducted an exclusive interview with **ibtm Arabia** which will be held in Abu Dhabi, UAE, from 7 – 9

26- Destination Diary: The **Adriatic Destinations** along the coastline of the Adriatic Sea, flaunts a series of fascinating locales that would never fail to enchant the ardent admirers of Mother Nature



34- Travel Association: In an exclusive interview with Travel And Tour World, **Mr. Andrew Jones, Chairman of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)** speaks about its contributions to 'Young Tourism Professional' initiative and how tourism professionals can succeed in the age of digitisation



38- Special Feature: Its all about how the implementation of the **Visa rules** affect the tourism sector of a country

41- Travel Tendency: Will the travelling cost witness a sharp growth or a negative impact following the **Brexit** result, only time shall stand as its testimony

45- Cover Story: Travel trends Industry in 2017 will see innovation in e-commerce travel technology which is one of the biggest leaps that will create the scope for growth for travellers

50- Tech iT: Travellers have long used the web as a guide when choosing a holiday destination, but recent additions to the **technological landscape** have made the world even smaller and more accessible



World Festivals: 57

Discussions: 13

Travel News:19

Show Highlight: 64

Show Review: 71

Calendar of Events: 74



**Special Feature
38**



**Travel Tendency
41**



**Tech iT
50**

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Happy Reading

With the leap into 2017, the travel industry segment is all geared up to welcome new changes and trends in its sector. Looking back at 2016, there has been a plethora of significant incidents, some of which are indicative enough of the bigger stories to follow in 2017.

Priceline Group CEO Darren Huston exited the company, Hilton came out with “Stop Clicking Around” campaign, American travel companies and carriers opened frontiers in Cuba, dynamic ads for travel in Facebook kicked off, Brexit and U.S. Presidential Election – were some of the highlights of the year of the travel industry.

We looked at Abu Dhabi as the preferred MICE destination for the affluent business travellers. Landmarks and high-rise skyscrapers is what describe the capital city of UAE. Exclusive insights from the travel industry experts shared highlights on what the major trends would be for the travel industry in 2017. For the leisure travellers, the Adriatic destinations are our choice of travel halt. Special feature spoke about the impacts of the visa rules and how their implementations affect the tourism industry in general. The Travel Tendency wrapped up the major events of the travel industry. How to make a fresh start and what needs to be focused for 2017 is our cover story in the first issue of the year.

Keep reading our magazine and follow our website to look beyond the headlines and be updated with the latest trends and tendency of the travel industry. We wish all our readers an amazing year ahead.

Editor-In-Chief

Mr. Anup Kumar Keshan

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> 7 BN. Euro
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buyers & visitors *

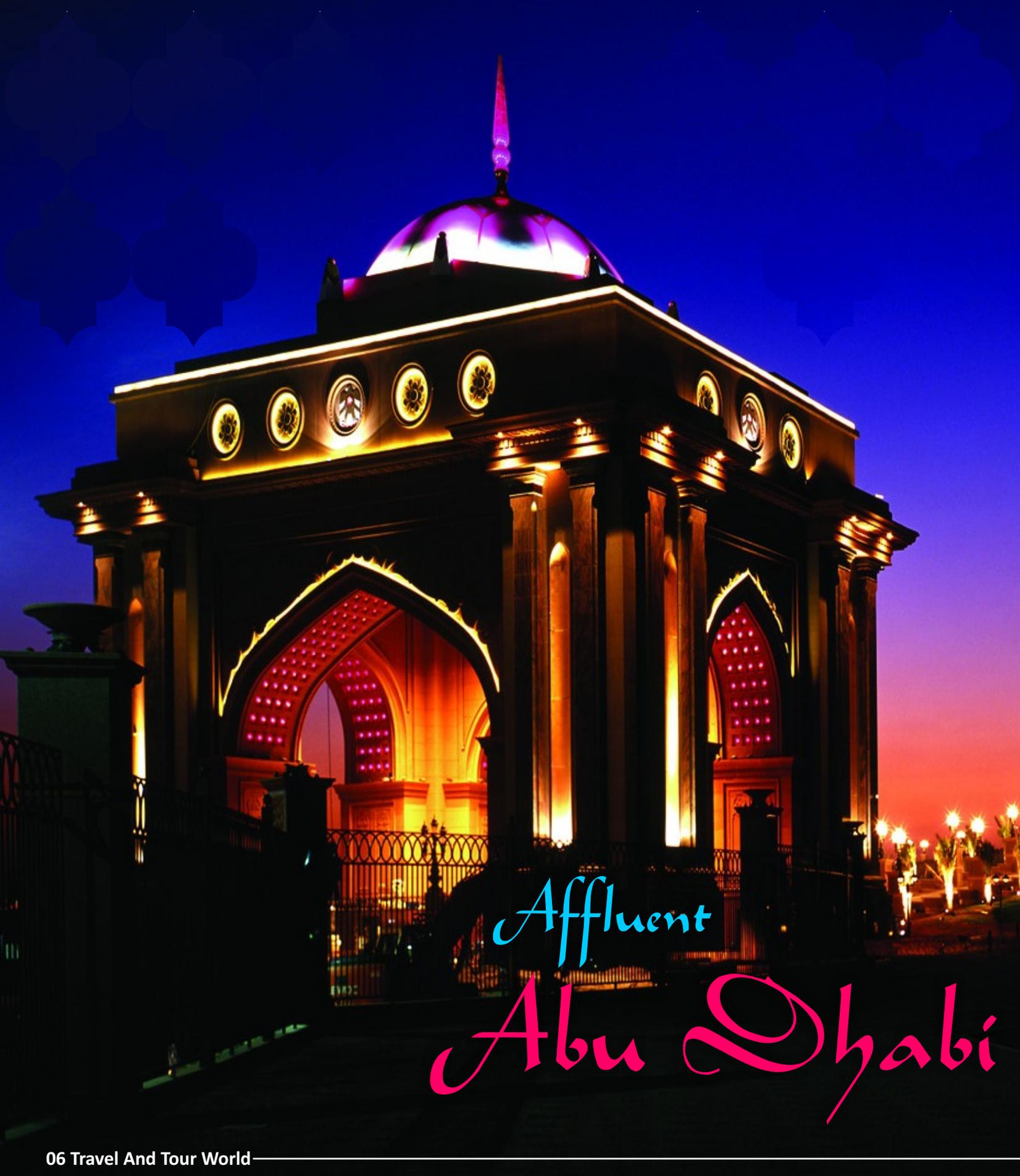


> 15,970
conference minutes *



> 12,000
exhibitors *

* as of December 2016



Affluent
Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi, the capital city of the United Arab Emirates, is not only a traveller's paradise, but also affluent business travellers' abode. The 'T' shaped island is decorated with plentiful towers, landmarks and high-rise skyscrapers equipped with world-class advance amenities. Clear blue sky and a hot desert climate of Abu Dhabi present the delegates with the perfect weather to conduct an extravagant outdoor business event or convention in the midst of the city. But the travellers might experience dense fog occasionally during the winter days, from November to March.

Conducting meetings in the thriving city: Abu Dhabi boasts of abundant outstanding hotels and event venues, which can meet the need of any business traveller. The business delegates from all around the globe can find it very difficult to pick just one venue from a long list of phenomenal options that the city possesses. To make it a little bit easy for the event organizers, here is a list consisting of some of the excellent venues to conduct small meetings to grand conferences.



Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi

The Emirates Palace is considered to be one of the most popular national landmarks in the United Arab Emirates. The luxury hotel offers a number of top-notch meeting venues to the business delegates, 40 meeting rooms to be precise. The business travellers can conduct their conference or grand event at the hotel while enjoying an outstanding view of the private sandy beach spread across 1.3 km beside the hotel. There are a total of 302 bed rooms and a meeting space of more than 10,000 sq.m. The business delegates can reach the elegant venue after driving for merely 30 minutes from the Abu Dhabi International Airport.

Hilton Abu Dhabi

The business professionals can opt for diversified meeting and event space of almost 25,000 sq. ft. at the phenomenal Hilton Abu Dhabi hotel. There are 14 state-of-the-art meeting rooms, which can accommodate at least 10 to 2,000 guests. There are two ballrooms and a number of outdoor meeting venues at the hotel as well. Apart from a phenomenal meeting facility, the Hilton Abu Dhabi also offers an outstanding catering service to the delegates.



Al Raha Beach Hotel

The Al Raha Beach Hotel is one of the most popular conference venues in Abu Dhabi. The hotel is equipped with world-class technology including WiFi, communication equipments and visual aids. Here the delegates can choose from any of the 10 meeting rooms, with the largest meeting room providing seating capacity for over 700 guests in theatre style. Apart from the special facilities, delegates can also enjoy an outstanding view of the blue ocean from the Al Raha Beach Hotel.

Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC)

The innovative Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre can be reached after crossing 14 kilometres from the airport. The venue offers 133,000 sq. m. of meeting space. Here one can also opt for an outdoor event as the exhibition centre offers 55,900 sq. m. of outdoor space to the business professionals. Travellers can choose from the 21 meeting rooms with seating capacity for 20 to 200 delegates. There are two conference halls in the exhibition centre, which provide seating for up to 1500 business delegates..



Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi

Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi is placed in the heart of the business and government district of Abu Dhabi. Business travellers can reach the five star event venue after taking a short ride from the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre. The hotel offers a total of 12 meeting rooms with 35,000 sq. ft of meeting space and 533 bed rooms with state of the art facilities. The savvy business delegates will be able to conduct their meeting or business event in the beautifully designed rooms, which also possess a tad bit of Thai influence.





Exploring Abu Dhabi

Apart from the majestic event venues spread throughout the city, Abu Dhabi offers quite a few picture-perfect tourist attractions, which can inspire any globetrotter. If you can manage to free some time from your busy schedule, then you must try and visit the Sheikh Zayed Mosque, the Ferrari World theme park, Emirates National Auto Museum, Louvre Abu Dhabi, Al Ain Zoo, the Al Ain National Museum and the Qasr al-Hosn. If you are a shopaholic traveller, then you are at the right place as Abu Dhabi offers some of the most exquisite shopping malls and shopping hubs spread across the city.



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Discussion

Travel trends of
2017



Craig Hewett
Co-founder Wego.com

“In terms of destinations, 2016 was the year of discovery and exploration. Millennials really drove this direction seeking destinations that were off the grid and outside of regular tourist haunts. This has also given rise to the experience economy gaining strength in the travel industry. People want the satisfaction of finding something new, experiencing the unique and exploring authentic local culture. They want to be travellers, not tourists. That thrill of discovery is increasingly shared on social media which provides bragging rights as well as the feeling that their trip was worthwhile and completely different from other people's travels. We'll see this continue in 2017 which will spread the economical benefits of tourism to local tours and activity operators throughout the world. To meet this need it's likely that we'll also see hotel operators link up with more local experience businesses and provide their

guests with additional value, although to be successful they must be authentic local experiences. For instance a five star property in Bali has recently provided an escorted walk through local markets where guests can shop for fresh produce then return to the resort to learn how to cook local delicacies. They also introduce local fishermen to guests who take them for sunrise fishing trips, with all fish that are caught given to families in a nearby village.

Travellers, and especially millennials, will continue to become more comfortable planning and booking their travel online. The spread of tech savvy travel shopping boomed in 2016 and on Wego, planning and booking travel on mobile has become the preferred method.”





Travel businesses who don't invest in their mobile product will be left behind. During the last year Wego has focussed heavily on incorporating the latest in tech innovations and applied it to our mobile product which has resonated extremely positively with travellers throughout our core markets. Technology is providing the opportunity to create a far greater personalised mobile experience which we've worked on adapting locally at Wego with great success. We can expect to see virtual reality and AI technology introduced in more travel related businesses, and advances in technology that will continue to drive additional developments in response.

Aviation will continue to become more competitive with so many low-cost carriers investing in long-haul aircraft driving down airfares from full service carriers in an effort to fill seats. 2016 saw an enormous number of new routes being introduced which will carry over into the next and coming years. Additional services between cities from one side of the world to the other will add to the strength of competition, which is all great news for the traveller. Airlines will fight harder to attract travellers with enticing discounts and value-added options. There's been a great deal of airport construction, extension and renovation taking place in many countries to accommodate the growing travel economy. We can expect to see additional services to these airports, especially in India and the Middle East.



Nico Nicholas

CEO and Co-Founder of
RentalsCombined.net

“I believe there will be two key trends for the travel industry next year. One will be greater consolidation of the major hotel groups, but the other – and potentially more game-changing one – will be greater regulation of the sharing economy. “As 2016 draws to a close, we've already seen tighter regulation happen in other sectors of the sharing economy. For example in the UK, Uber drivers are entitled to minimum wage and the taxi start-up is regularly subject to numerous battles and lawsuits concerning governance globally. As a result, consumers are beginning to expect tighter standards across all sectors of the sharing economy and this includes travel.

“In both the leisure and business market peer-to-peer access and on-demand services have opened up a whole new world of choice and opportunities for travellers, providing fast, easy access to a vast choice of accommodation to suit all budgets and personal needs. However, while some are happy to accept the risk that un-controlled accommodation models can present, such as Airbnb, others seek the protection, security, and regulations of traditional hotels. “In 2017 we'll see a solution to this – the new world of peer-to-peer rentals will meet the old world of traditional hotels. The rental market has already begun its evolution – transforming basic sharing economy solutions to more sophisticated offerings to meet consumer demand. We're at the forefront of this revolution by working to offer consumers the assurance of traditional hotel features such as financial protection, and guarantees, with the uniqueness, affordability, and variety of peer-to-peer rental accommodation. In fact, I think it is this bridging of the gap between traditional hotels and new peer-to-peer models that will be a really exciting development in the travel industry.”





Dr. Ankur Bhatia
Executive Director
Bird Group

“Tourism, hospitality and aviation have emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. In 2016 these industries experience a new era of expansion driven by strategic initiatives by the government and also attracted some of the highest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from investors.

The same trend is likely to continue in the coming year as businesses will focus on growth and expansion resulting in greater options, better connectivity and improved quality. The competitive landscape within the Indian hospitality industry has never been as dynamic as now and the coming year will witness a spike in demand from tier 2 and 3 cities. It is important to recognize the impact technology has had in increasing profitability for tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors. Going further as the industry grows steadily, Global Distribution Systems (GDS) will be an even more essential part of its success by

linking services across sectors and improving efficiencies.

For super-charging growth, the government and the industry need to work together to address the various opportunities and challenges in these sectors. It is imperative to aggressively market brand India globally to create a huge impact and attract high-end international tourists. With a relentless focus on quality and infrastructure, India would be well placed to achieve the potential of these industries.”





IHTIC

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7-8 February 2017 | Parsian Evin Hotel, Tehran, Iran

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The first Iran Hotel & Tourism Investment Conference (IHTIC) will be held at the Parsian Evin Hotel, Tehran in Iran on 7-8 February 2017.

IHTIC will attract an international audience of senior figures and decision-makers involved in all aspects of hotel and tourism investment in Iran. The conference will focus on hotel development and tourism attraction in the country. Join us in Tehran and hear from industry experts on the opportunities available in this region, find out what lessons they have learnt about doing business in Iran and how they have overcome development and operational challenges. Find out how government is stimulating foreign investment into the country, what incentives and projects are available.

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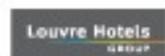
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TRAVEL NEWS

New York City welcomes over 60 million visitors in 2016

This year, New York City has lured in over 60 million tourists this year and this has happened for the very first time ever, as revealed by the industry officials on Monday. By the end of 2016, nearly 60.3 million tourists are expected to rush to the Big Apple. The Mayor, de Blasio said that 2016 witnessed the highest number of tourists to New York City in its history. Furthermore, it also completes seven long years of strong tourism growth. The mayor said that by a greater degree of tourism growth, they wish to imply that a larger number of people have started investing in New York City thereby creating an increased number of sustainable jobs for more people. The region of New York City is quite rich and diverse, mainly because it has so much to offer to its visitors. The record high number of tourist is a sharp increase from 58.5 million in 2015. The year 2016 marks the seventh year that has seen the positive growth in tourism potential in this part of the world. About 34.9 million nights inside hotel rooms had been sold that marks a jump of 1.2 million. In 2016, there were about 3,75,000 people who had been working in the travel and tourism industries that is a rise from 15,000 over the last year.

U.S. companies sees increased business travel in 2017

More than three-quarters of U.S. travel planners

are expecting higher business trips under their watches in 2017 according to a survey from AirPlus. Only one-quarter said the same thing a year earlier. More than 60% of the India-based travel managers expect that there will be an increased business and corporate travel, thanks to the improved economy and rising number of exports. The U.K. followed with 50 percent of travel managers expecting increased business travel. The AirPlus survey polled 983 travel managers from 24 countries between August and October. About 33% of the international travel managers expect there will be more travel in the next year, which will mark a slightly more increase from 31% at the present year. More than half of travel managers, 54 percent, expect the number of 2017 business trips to remain the same as in 2016. AirPlus also found in the survey that there would be neither major growth nor decline in the other countries.



Trump's Presidency might see a huge change in international travel

Six weeks after winning the polls, the US Electoral College has certified Donald Trump as the 45th president of the U.S. – which many took as the final effort to deny him to the White House. Following the win, the travel industry leaders faced the wrath of the question whether the U.S. president-elect have a swift impact on borders and tourism in the coming year? According to Henrietta Loyd of Cazenove & Loyd, Cuba is in the crosshairs.

President-Elect Trump has already threatened to terminate the U.S.-Cuba deal despite Cuba being one of the major leisure destinations. Loyd said that following the statement by Trump, there has already been an increased number of inquiries from the U.S. clients who are keen to book and go while relations have eased.

Gary Leff of Book Your Award said that at a top level, President-Elect Trump ran on limiting the movement of people and goods that are definitely not good for travel. In the short-term, the world sees the U.S. as less open to tourism and immigration. Meanwhile United, American, and Delta [could] capitalize on Trump's protectionism [if the government] limits flights to the U.S. by Emirates, Etihad, and Qatar—reducing consumer choice and raising airfares.

According to other travel industry specialists, the travel agents should begin to promote tourism ideas only to the U.S. clients rather than targeting the international ones.

Travel disruption hits 10,000 passengers during busiest winter holiday week

With the approach of the busiest travel week of the winter, travellers by air and rail are facing cancellations, disruptions and delays. More than 80 outbound flights from the UK have been cancelled because of the weekend fog and more than 10,000 airline travellers are facing the wrath of the schedule. In addition, severe weather in the northeast US and a scattering of technical issues have delayed transatlantic flights. The busiest day for the pre-Christmas getaway is Friday 23 December for many of the British airports.

However, the Unite union called on a 48-hour strike by 1,500 Swissport ground staff starting from that day across 18 airports in the UK. Unite's national officer for civil air transport Oliver Richardson said that their members are only taking this industrial action as a last resort in a bid to reach a fair settlement as they did not get any pay rise since 2014. Talks are due to take place at the conciliation service, Acas. If the strike goes ahead, the main impact is likely to be on airports in the Midlands, north of England and Scotland, as well as Belfast International. Stansted, the biggest base for Ryanair will also be impacted, as Swissport is the ground handler of it. Ryanair has insisted its passengers to take hand baggage only in the earlier ground-handling disputes.

Priceline launched features for easier road trips for travellers

It's been a record year for road trips fueled by low gas prices, consumer confidence, and access to evolving mobile technology. According to AAA, more travellers hit the road on Memorial Day, July 4th and Thanksgiving than in the year prior and the numbers continue to rise as consumers increasingly rely on and trust mobile tools to empower them to travel for work, fun, and family. Leading online and mobile travel company priceline.com announced the in-app launch of Road DealsSM, a new feature that replaces the need to plan hotel stops on-the-go. This feature is exclusively available in priceline.com's free iPhone app. What makes this road trip feature so unique is that travellers can get

in their cars, enter a destination, and immediately see one-of-a-kind deals and deep discounts in real time along their route. As the user travels, hotels are automatically refreshed on the route ahead of them and can be booked within seconds.

The Road Deals feature enables app users to set preferences based on budget and star-level, receive hotel recommendations, and book same-day accommodations en route to their final destination. The new feature is prominently displayed on the home screen with the question "On the Road? Find a hotel for tonight on your route." Users can input the start and end points of their journey and scan their mapped route for hotels available that day while the map continuously updates hotel availability in real-time.

The screenshot displays the priceline.com website interface. At the top, the priceline.com logo is on the left, and navigation links for sign in, my profile, my trips, check your request, and help are on the right. Below the logo, there are links for flights, hotels, cars, vacation packages, cruises, activities, pricebreaker deals, hotel guides, rewards, and groups. The main content area is titled "shop for discount travel" and includes a "new to priceline?" badge with a +1 icon and 1.4k reviews. The search section is divided into tabs for flights, hotels, cars, vacations, and cruises. The "hotels" tab is active, showing a search for "search over 165,000 hotels". The search form includes fields for "city or airport", "check-in" (mm/dd/yyyy), "check-out" (mm/dd/yyyy), and "rooms" (1 Room). A "search now!" button is prominently displayed. To the right of the search form, there is a promotional banner for "EXPRESS DEALS" with "up to 45% OFF HOTELS" and a "SEARCH DEALS NOW" button. Below the search form, there is a "name your own price" section with a "Big Deal Guarantee" and three icons representing flights, hotels, and cars, each with a "save up to" percentage. At the bottom right, there is a "travel deals for you" section with links for "my deals" and "my rewards", and a "Hotel winning bids you might like:" section.



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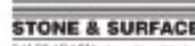
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Shinu Pillai
Exhibition Director
ibtm arabia

Travel And Tour World conducted an exclusive interview with ibtm Arabia which will be held in Abu Dhabi, UAE, from 7 – 9 February, 2017.

Travel And Tour World: What are the primary changes in the format of ibtm arabia this year compared to the previous ones? What is the pod show format?

Shinu Pillai: Our innovative 'pod' format is, in essence, a one-to-one meetings format. Rather than large stands, each exhibitor has a 'pod' of an equal size which can be branded in line with their requirements. We have a 1:1 ratio of exhibitors to Hosted Buyers and we use ibtm events' bespoke 'matchmaking' software to create a personalised diary of 100% mutually matched pre-scheduled appointments for each attendee. This means that time is focused on meeting with people with whom there is a very high chance of doing business. The format is such a success for us that there are no changes for this year; the change comes in the form of the itinerary for each of our attendees for the duration of the three-day event.

Travel And Tour World: Despite a late start, UAE has outpaced every other destination in the world in terms of infrastructure, commerce and tourism. How do you think development of infrastructure

evolves a destination as a premium MICE destination?

Shinu Pillai: Abu Dhabi is a destination which is constantly evolving, with a huge level of ongoing investment and development meaning that new venues launch every year. For event organisers and meeting planners, there is always a new and exciting venue to consider. The world is intrigued to see the Middle East with their own eyes - no other destination on earth has been built from scratch in 50 years – with 80% of the region's infrastructure less than two decades old. A major benefit to Abu Dhabi as a location is that it is extremely well connected globally, via Etihad and other premium airlines, and has world-class airport facilities which makes the beginning and the end of a delegate experience in Abu Dhabi second to none.

In such a dynamic industry, it's essential that we keep things fresh and exciting for our attendees. Abu Dhabi's ever evolving offer ensures we are able to do just that, resulting in the long term success of the event.



Travel And Tour World: Networking is a major segment in any travel event and trade show. How different is ibtm arabia from the rest of its sister shows?

Shinu Pillai: The overall agenda of ibtm arabia is deliberately structured to facilitate relationship building, with nine networking events held over the three-day-event, kicking off with a 'Discovery Day', which allows our Hosted Buyers and exhibitors to get to know each other whilst exploring the local culture in an informal environment before meetings commence. The day begins with a keynote educational session which acts as a forum for attendees to debate and discuss key industry issues, innovations and themes.

Travel And Tour World: How has been the response been from the hosted buyers and exhibitors?

Shinu Pillai: We have consistently high satisfaction ratings from exhibitors and Hosted Buyers – in 2016 ibtm arabia achieved a 100% satisfaction rating from Hosted Buyers and 96% satisfaction rating from exhibitors.

Testament to this is the fact that once again this year we've had some extremely high profile brands sign up as exhibitors for the first time, including, amongst others, Millennium Hotels & Resorts, Jumeirah, The Rezidor Hotel Group and IMG Worlds of Adventure. Returning exhibitor numbers are also growing year-on-year, in part given the extremely high calibre of new Hosted Buyers our event attracts each year.

Travel And Tour World: What new for this year's ibtm arabia?

Shinu Pillai: Whilst the format of the event itself remains the same, the itinerary is completely fresh and has been designed to facilitate relationship building for the duration of the event, whilst giving attendees a real insight into the best Abu Dhabi has to offer. Some highlights of a wonderful agenda are a fascinating keynote speech, a tour of Abu Dhabi's best known cultural sights, delicious local cuisine and traditional Arabian hospitality as well as an evening spent under the stars in the desert.

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Dream destinations

Adriatic Coast

Fairytale destinations do exist! And once globetrotters find themselves in such dreamy landscapes, they cannot wait to keep on exploring their evergreen charm. The Adriatic coastline, embracing the Adriatic Sea, for instance flaunts a series of fascinating locales that would never fail to enchant the ardent admirers of Mother Nature. And, the Adriatic Sea is a vast stretch of water body that separates the Balkan peninsula from the Italian Peninsula on one hand, and Dinaric Alps and Apennine Mountains on the other.

Destination Diary

Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Croatia and Italy are some of the beautiful countries that overlap the unique Adriatic coastline.

There are more than 1,300 islands that are connected to this part of the world, and they are based mostly along its eastern coast, close to the Croatian coast. Ulcinj, Dubrovnik, Primosten, Rovinj and Venice are just a few of the exotic Adriatic destinations that attract every tourists.

The 'Adriatic jewels'

Tourists looking for an interesting trip should make it a point to visit the following places along the coastline of Adriatic Sea:



Ulcinj

Based in the Balkan country of Montenegro, Ulcinj is a delight for tourists, particularly for bird enthusiasts. This region is well reputed as one of the best tourist destinations across the world, especially in the summer season. It is a favourite among the tourists mainly for its Ada Bojana Island, Lake Sas, Long Beach and of course, for its millennia-old Ulcinj Castle.



Sveti Stefan

Sveti Stefan is a marvellous little islet in Montenegro that is also known for its hotel resorts. It is located at a distance of nearly 6 kms from the south-eastern part of Budva. This area is believed to be a wonderland for the rich and elite, who might have lived in the 1960s and 1980s.



Dubrovnik

Touring along the Adriatic coast would be incomplete if tourists miss out on Dubrovnik that is a city in Croatia. It is positioned at the end of the Isthmus of Dubrovnik. The best part about this region is that Dubrovnik has been declared as one of the World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.



Primosten

Situated on the Adriatic coast between Trogir and Sibenik city and a part of the Šibenik-Knin County, this is yet another magnificent destination in Croatia. Primosten is quite popular on account of its beaches and vineyards. Mala Raduča is one of iconic beaches of this area.



Portoroz

Portoroz is based in the country of Slovenia. It is known as the country's largest tourist region and is a spectacular coastal town of the Adriatic coast. The term Portoroz literally implies, 'Port of Roses'. Portoroz International Airport serves this town.

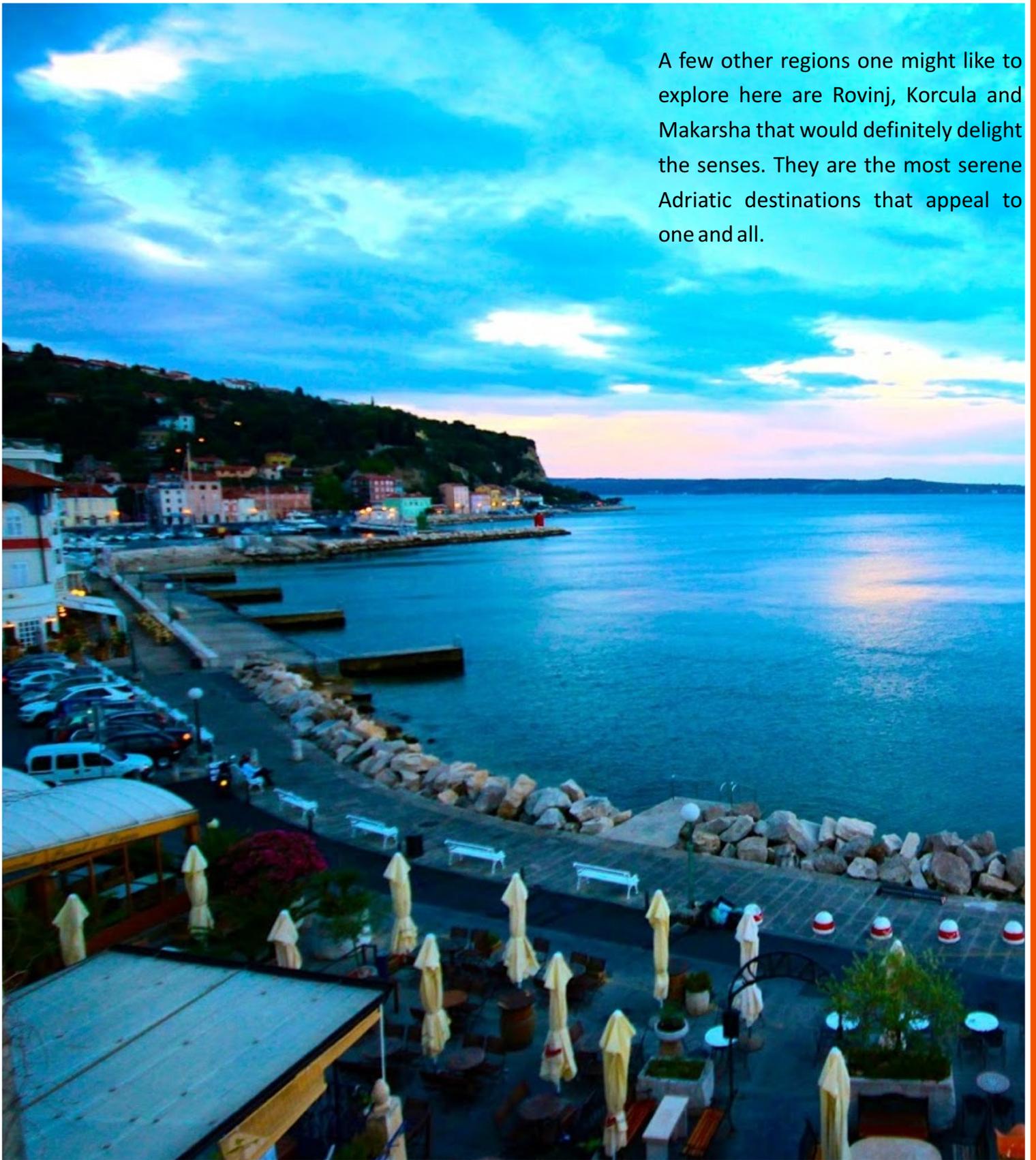


Piran

Slovenia is also home to another splendid destination, known as Piran. Piran is a town that is a part of the southwestern portion of Slovenia. It is among the three major towns of Slovenian Istria. This town is similar to a large open-air museum in appearance, enriched with a rich cultural heritage as well as a stunning medieval architecture. Compact houses and narrow streets impart a fabulous look and feel to this locale.



A few other regions one might like to explore here are Rovinj, Korcula and Makarsha that would definitely delight the senses. They are the most serene Adriatic destinations that appeal to one and all.





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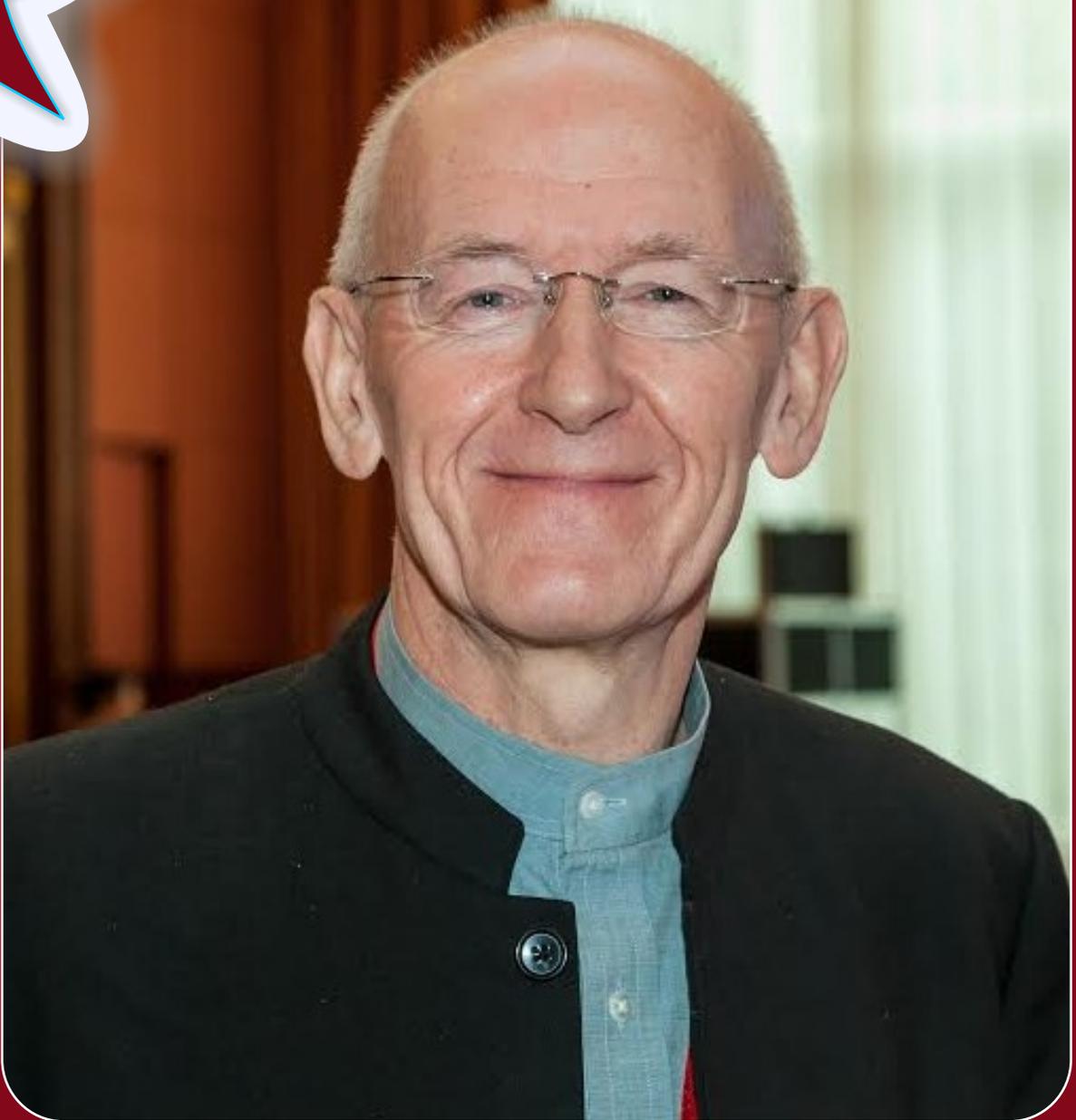


AIME is part of



Mr. Andrew Jones
Chairman

**Pacific Asia Travel
Association**



In an exclusive interview with Travel And Tour World, Mr. Andrew Jones, Chairman of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) speaks about its contributions to 'Young Tourism Professional' initiative and how tourism professionals can succeed in the age of digitization. PATA is a non-profit travel association that was founded in 1951 and is internationally acclaimed for its contribution towards the responsible development of the tourism industry within the Asia-Pacific region. This association provides research and exciting events to its member organizations comprising government bodies, international airports, cruise lines, educational institutions and travel industry companies in Asia-Pacific and beyond.

Travel And Tour World: How would PATA support the 'Young Tourism Professional' initiative?

Andrew Jones: PATA has recently announced that it will focus on Youth Engagement in 2017. The first initiative was the recent launch of the Global Travel Entrepreneur Challenge (GTEC), a competition helping young people develop their entrepreneurship skillset. The winner, a young man living in the Republic of Korea, won the challenge for his creative and authentic photography tour of the city of Seoul. PATA's second initiative was the appointment of Miss JC Wong as our Young Tourism Professional Ambassador. Miss Wong, a 24 year old Malaysian based at PATA's headquarter office in Bangkok, will be responsible for creating a series of programmes and activities in 2017 and beyond to further the organisations engagement with youth.

Travel And Tour World: What kind of skills do tourism professionals require to succeed and what are the challenges they are likely to face?

Andrew Jones: The travel industry is a service industry and therefore having a great and positive personality is key to success. The industry also

requires young people that are creative and agile enough to adapt to the fast changing world we live in.

Travel And Tour World: How can tourism professionals support the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

Andrew Jones: We all know that in order to support our world, our environment and our people we need to change our habits and the way we interact with our planet. Each one of us can probably think of little things we could do at home or at work that could make a difference. Changes starts with you, lead by example and others will follow.





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International tourists are always a major source of revenue generator when it comes to the travel industry. It is thus, much obvious that any country's visa laws if made difficult will impact negatively for hotels, restaurants, and small businesses that thrive on tourism. Restrictive visa policies cost much for the big businesses of the travel sector.

Visa rules affecting tourism

Since the implementation of South Africa's new visa regulations in July 2014, the country's tourism industry has been left reeling. Southern Africa Tourism Services Association said that the industry

lost direct spend of up to R886 million due to the changed immigration regulations. Southern Africa Tourism Services Association for instance, saw that the industry lost direct spend of up to R886 million due to the changed immigration regulations. Now the sector associations said in 2015, the number of foreign tourists the industry was losing was likely to increase to 100 000, with an estimated direct tourism spend of R1.4 billion. Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) has discussed the negative impact of the new immigration regulations. However, neither of these reports is conclusive in nature; although negative consequences once faced makes it difficult for the boards and tourism authorities to revive the previous stature.

●The UK government planned to change its visa policy for non-EU nationals aiming to curb the soaring immigration figures. Under this new rule, anyone applying after November 24, 2016 under the Tier 2 intra-company transfer (ICT) category would be required to meet a higher salary threshold requirement of 30,000 pounds from the earlier 20,800 pounds. Nationals outside the European Union, will also be affected by new English language requirements when applying for settlement as a family member after two and a half years in the UK on a five-year route to residency settlement in the UK.

●It was seen that out of 90 million tourists expected to travel to ASEAN destinations, 9.7% would need to obtain a traditional visa. It has been seen that with improved visa related policies and their procedure to procure them, it is definitively easier to increase visitations from international tourists. There has been successful collaboration among different governmental branches within each country and across the ASEAN region to facilitate visas, including

progressive approaches to implement new visa policies.

The increase in tourism receipts resulting from visa facilitation is the product of the increased international tourist arrivals and the average spending per tourist derived from Tourism Economics' forecast of international tourism arrivals and receipts in each ASEAN member state.

Travellers see visas mainly as a formality that imposes a cost. If the cost of obtaining a visa - either the direct monetary cost imposed in the form of fees or the indirect costs, which can include distance, time spent waiting in lines, and the complexity of the process - exceeds a threshold, potential travellers are simply deterred from making a particular journey or choose an alternative destination with less hassle.

The number of jobs directly created in the travel and tourism sector from the additional tourism receipts would range from 187,000 to 367,000, gaining between 1.6% and 3.1% more jobs than the baseline forecast by 2016.





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travel trends

In certain aspects, the Brexit fog is gradually in the process of being cleared. After all, the people of United Kingdom would start quitting from the region of European Union early during the next year, after which, there would be two more years that would witness some negotiations. Having said that, the decision of Brexit would continue to make its impact felt on the travellers who wish to travel to and within the region of Europe. And of course, the issue of Brexit is quite far from being resolved.

For instance, the cost of travelling would rise sharply in the short to medium term. This is due to the fact that the pound has slumped to a considerable extent, against the Euro and the dollar. And it seems that it shall continue to remain weak in the near future as well.

Let us look at some the some crucial travel trends that are likely to be observed post Brexit:

Borderless travel:

Once Britain has undergone the leaving arrangements, the British citizens would not require visas in order to travel into European Union for vacationing. However, they would still have to go through the passport control when they first enter the region. But then, in the long-term, if Brexit paves the way for a radical disintegration of European Union, border checks might be re-introduced for those who wish to travel within this country, thereby putting an end to the Schengen arrangement.

Higher airfares:

Now when Britain is preparing to leave the EU, there would have to be arrangements for new air service agreements. This would be necessary if British airlines companies including easyJet continue to function freely all across the EU, and German Airlines like German Wings and Irish Airlines like Ryanair

continue to fly in and out of the United Kingdom without restrictions.

Lower compensation for delayed flights:

Experts have been predicting that after Brexit, the airline passengers are likely to get lesser or no compensation at all for flights that are delayed. Furthermore, they might also lose their entitlements to drinks and food, alongside overnight accommodation in the case of long delays.

Poorer quality of holiday protection:

After the Brexit comes into effect, British holidaymakers might not be capable of enjoying the consumer protection benefits that has been established under the new EU new Package Travel Directive that was about to be implemented in the year 2018.



Uncertainty about the fate of beaches:

Over the last 25 years, Britain has been a spectator to a dramatic reduction in the number of beaches that have been polluted with raw sewage wastes. And, with the passage of time, a great deal of constructive work has been accomplished on the beaches of this part of the world. Having said that, there continues to be a few regions that are in an urgent requirement of revival. Now, whether the modifications would be induced at the earliest or whether it would be a while before they are introduced, is debatable.

Freedom of work in EU:

Before Brexit, it was relatively simpler for youngsters

and adults to work in beach and ski resorts without a work permit. Travellers were even capable of enjoying a trip around Europe by taking casual jobs. But then, with Brexit coming into effect, things do appear to be slightly dicey. For, the government is likely to introduce certain restrictions upon the freedom of travelling across the region of the European Union and working here. So Britons might be facing issues if they wish to travel and work freely in the EU.

These are some of the travel trends ushered in by Brexit. However, one needs to be patient and keep their fingers crossed as it finally comes into effect and observe the modifications in the travel industry.





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A New start for the

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To discover the upcoming trend of the travel industry, traveller endorsements, reviews, preferences and insights are the general inspirations from wherein the industry leaders draw their predictions. Be it corporate travel, family vacationers, backpackers, travel is a multi-dimensional field which demands its own scope of growth. Innovation in e-commerce travel technology is one of the biggest leaps that created the scope for growth in the travel industry.

Easy and instant appeasement

Statistics show 44% of travellers expect to be able to plan their holiday in a few simple taps of their smart phone and over half (52%) expect their use of travel apps to increase in 2017. Therefore, gratification is a major chunk of the trend that will be prevalent in 2017 and beyond. Meaningful functionality in palm-based technology is probably what the millennials demand. Travellers appreciate smart, instant message technology with real-time assessment and responses and 2017 will gush up this drift even more.



Rise of bleisure

Blurring lines between leisure and business travel, 2017 will make corporate travel the cynosure of the tourism industry. Data shows 40% of global travellers who journeyed for business this year, 46% think they will travel even more for business in 2017. In fact, 30% of travellers would even accept a lower paid job if it meant they could travel more for work as a statistics revealed.

Vacation is all about relaxing

Millennials are living a very busy life in the corporate age. Travel is therefore seen as a way to bring balance back into their lives. 48% of travellers love to take a vacation for better lifestyle choices. Travellers particularly from India, China and Thailand would be seen prioritising health conscious trips. 44% of them are interested to experience spa and relaxation travel while 38% in a health and wellbeing travel experience in 2017.

Practise of sustainable tourism

Eco-friendly travel options are preferred over the other choices by more than 36% of the travellers. Eco-tour travel experience help to fulfil the aesthetic travel needs while maintaining cultural and environmental integrity by taking longer, more scenic routes and modes of transport. With the introduction of an international standard for sustainable accommodation, about 41% of the travellers are in favour of eco travelling.



Travel market trends for 2017

Big data has been the buzzword in the travel industry for quite a long time. Gartner updated its definition in 2012 stating big data is high volume, high velocity, and/or high variety information assets that require new forms of processing to enable enhanced decision making, insight discovery and process optimisation.

Big Data

83% of millennials said they would allow travel brands to track their habits in exchange for a better, more individual experience. Meanwhile, 85% of respondents across all age groups said that customized itineraries are far more appealing than one-size fits all solutions. As analytics become more sophisticated, travel companies are targeting different customer demographics personally in email and social media messages. Total retail travel sales across the globe were predicted to be around \$22.049 trillion, about 6.0% from the previous year. The travel industry forecasts that by 2019 this figure will reach to 762 billion U.S. dollars. ABTA found that 76% of UK internet users had booked holidays digitally in the past 12 months. 52% of travel bookers use online platforms to make their bookings; thus keeping up with the latest trends in digital marketing impact the travel sector.

Millennials seek more relevant and trusted content be it through social media or any other travel portal. To keep up the face value and meet the competitive world, OTAs are increasing their investment in Big Data analytics.

Multi-channel marketing

The rise in people travelling for leisure and business saw a major upswing in the digital platforms. Driven by digitisation and consumer reliance on mobile devices OTA's continue to remain buoyant. Higher digitisation, mobile adoption and international expansion are the major drivers for the OTAs. Market Realist claims online booking accounts for more than 40% of total travel sales. Globally, the online travel sector is expected to grow at an annual rate of 3.8% over the next 10 years to \$11.4 trillion – creating a marketplace four times the total size of the current UK economy.

Virtual Reality

The 'near VR' experience offers travellers the opportunity to almost 'try before you buy'. Be it a virtual romantic honeymoon walk along a sun-kissed beach or be it a walk through a hotel conference suite, virtual technology can be used as one of the most effective option to create platform for content. It works more immersive than multi-media channels, which put visual effects before substance.



As the ying to technology's yang, the real flavour of travel remains to be the human touch. Forging genuine relationships on holiday will be an increasingly important hallmark of travel in 2017 and beyond.





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TAKING TRAVEL TO THE NEXT LEVEL





Travellers have long used the web as a guide when choosing a holiday destination, but recent additions to the technological landscape have made the world even smaller and more accessible. Hand held devices with GPS locators and downloadable applications now offer users the kind of inside information that was once only available to intelligence agencies. No matter where people are heading, they can arrive pre-armed with detailed and updatable knowledge of a particular location.

The advent of Google Maps and Google Earth changed people's world view forever. It also changed the way people travel, not only to the big cities with broadband, but even to small tropical islands where it is now possible to zoom in on specific areas right from the laptop, explore the terrain, check out the beaches and assess the local amenities.

Travellers are getting smarter in the way they search, book and experience travel. In previous years, travel companies often seemed scared of their customers being armed with self-gained information and expertise, mostly gleaned from the web – but over time this has helped them refine and improve their products and services.

The industry powerhouse behind companies such as Booking.com and Kayak reckons one of the key trends to affect the consumer landscape over the course of the next 12 months will be how travellers look to technology to “eradicate on-the-road niggles”.



WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT 2017?

From finding the nearest ATM or available Wi-Fi to queue jumping at top attractions and getting on-the-go advice on how to get over jetlag, meaningful functionality in palm-based technology will abound. The rise of machine learning and artificial intelligence will allow app providers to develop their services to go beyond mere functionality. These will evolve into “travel besties”, meaning

services can predict individual needs and working out what to do before the consumer asks for assistance.

Use of smart, instant message technology that moulds to our preferences to solve every question and wish in real-time, regardless of where people choose to stay, will become second nature. Seamless assistance will be at the fingertips.

1 Automation

Here's a look at some of the trends COMING IN 2017 AND BEYOND

While travel and hospitality industries are about one-on-one guest services, there are now more self service options. It is not about hotels that are now staffed entirely by robots. From check-ins to concierge and housekeeping request, hotel chains like Marriott, Starwood, Hilton, and IHG are building apps that essentially let the guests stay at a hotel without having to interact with staff. The same goes for airlines and airports, where travellers can even tag their own luggage in addition to doing almost everything on their phone, including rebooking a missed connection.



2 Smart Suitcase

This is the suitcase that does it all. Even if the traveller is lost, the smart suitcase won't. It has built-in GPS that can be tracked anywhere in the world. The Bluesmart Smart Suitcase can be controlled by a mobile app, as long as the phone battery is in place. The suitcase also contains a built-in power bank that will charge the phone up to six times. There is a built-in scale to make sure that people don't pack too much and get pulled up at the airport, plus a digital lock that keeps out thieves.



3 Jet Lag Calculator

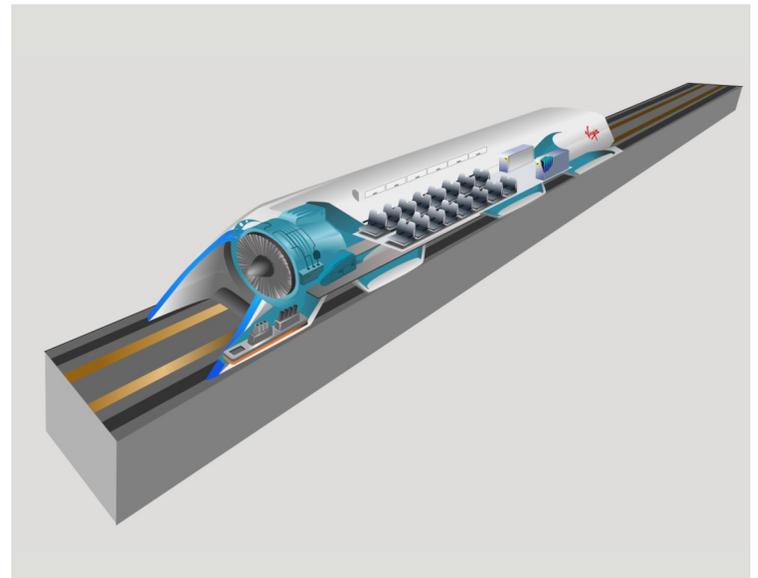
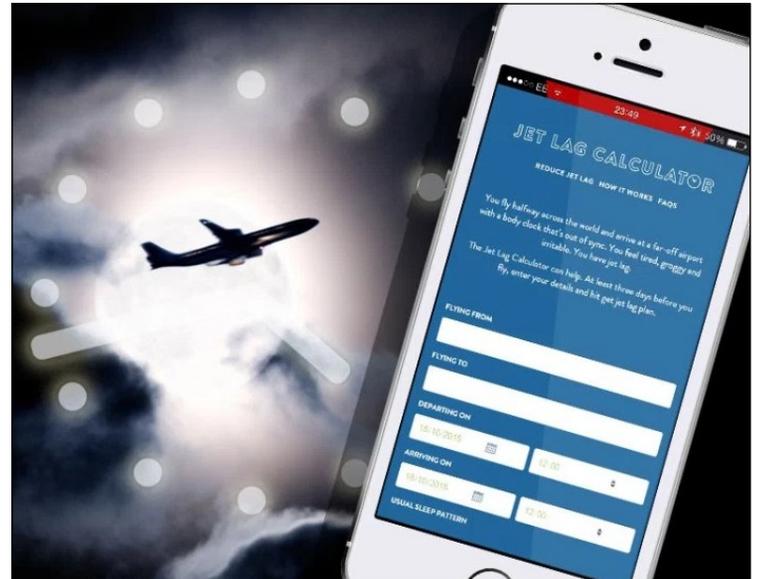
The Jet Lag calculator could come in very useful for someone who needs a holiday to get over the actual holiday! The Jet Lag Calculator will work out a Jet Lag Plan that will help the person get back to normal as quickly as possible. It should be filled in three days before the travel.

4 Hyperloop

Travelling at the speed of sound, Hyperloop will take passengers from San Francisco to Los Angeles in 30 minutes. It is not the average mode of travel. Elon Musk's singular vision of 700mph pods hurtling people and goods all over the world through steel tubes, won't take much time to set into action. Three projects will be underway from 2017 and close to completion by 2020. It is energy-economical, with the potential for being an affordable service for everyone.

5 Virtual Reality

Virtual reality is a blank canvas that allows designers to create any world they wish. VR-enabled storytelling is the latest trend in the travel industry. Not only could one visit an historic site, but they would be able to see and hear scenes from the past and converse with a smart storyteller in the guise of a historically accurate avatar who knows about the history of the place.





The tech revolution, as commonplace as it may seem nowadays continues to barrel forward, and 2017 will see some of the most innovative and evolutionary disruptions that have been so far. There will be more connection, more automation and more significant impact in the travelling industry than ever before, and the revolution has just begun.

The innovations coming to fruit in 2017 are poised to redefine travel and connection. 2017 holds many a change in store, the technology of this next phase is dynamic, gigantic, and will feel like a futuristic sci-fi fantasy novel.

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WORLD FESTIVALS

Festivals are a living, dancing museum of cultures and traditions in an increasingly globalised world. There is no better place for travellers to understand a country than an event where it proudly celebrates its individuality. Here is a list of some festivals which travellers can explore in the festive season.

Set in Harbin's coldest months, this festival features breathtaking temporary works of art, all created with ice from the Songhua River. Between the four primary parks and amusement zones, there are a few thousand pieces, not to mention all the ice architecture created throughout the city for the winter. The two month Harbin Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival in January and February is a must-see for families and gives a whole new meaning to the name Winter Wonderland. It is a combination of art and science that creates the elaborate and ornate ice and snow spectacle. Deionized water is used on some pieces to produce ice as transparent as glass, and multicolored lights add multi-dimensional depth and beauty. Over the course of a hurried half-month, more than 15,000 people carve (by hand or laser) more than 4 million cubic feet of ice. From scaled-down versions of the Forbidden City and the Great Wall to simpler student-created pieces, the sheer volume of beauty is staggering.



Harbin Ice & Snow Sculpture Festival
Date-5th January-25th February 2017
Place- Harbin, China

Held during New Zealand's summer, in January, the festival hosts upwards of 60 performers of all types: comedians, street performers, acrobats, hoola-hoopers, circus, vaudeville and burlesque acts, trapeze artists, musicians, visual artists, dancers and all around fringe festival performers—those whose ideas, acts, and art are a little bit off the wall and happily, cheekily, more than left of center. Over the course of 11 days, it typically attracts about 300,000 people who come to see nearly 500 unpredictable performances. Many countries celebrate the very particular and universally recognizable performance fixture—the busker. It provides residents and visitors with laughter and some mayhem, but it also celebrates the city, its people, and its public spaces by incorporating elements of the festival into high-traffic areas or existing venues.



World Buskers Festival
Date-19th-29th January, 2017
Place- Christchurch, New Zealand

Each long weekend during the Australia Day national holiday, the small town of Lexton in regional Victoria swells from its sleepy population of around 150 to over 10,000 as festival-goers from around the world arrive for the annual Rainbow Serpent Festival. The Rainbow Serpent Festival has come a long way since it started in 1998, from a small gathering in a secluded clearing to an internationally recognized festival. The festival offers much more than the usual lineup of electronic music. It is a chance to truly escape the commercialism of the, modern day world and reconnect with the earth in a way that the aboriginals have done for many thousands of years.

Rainbow Serpent Festival

Date- 27th -30th January

Place- Lexton, Australia



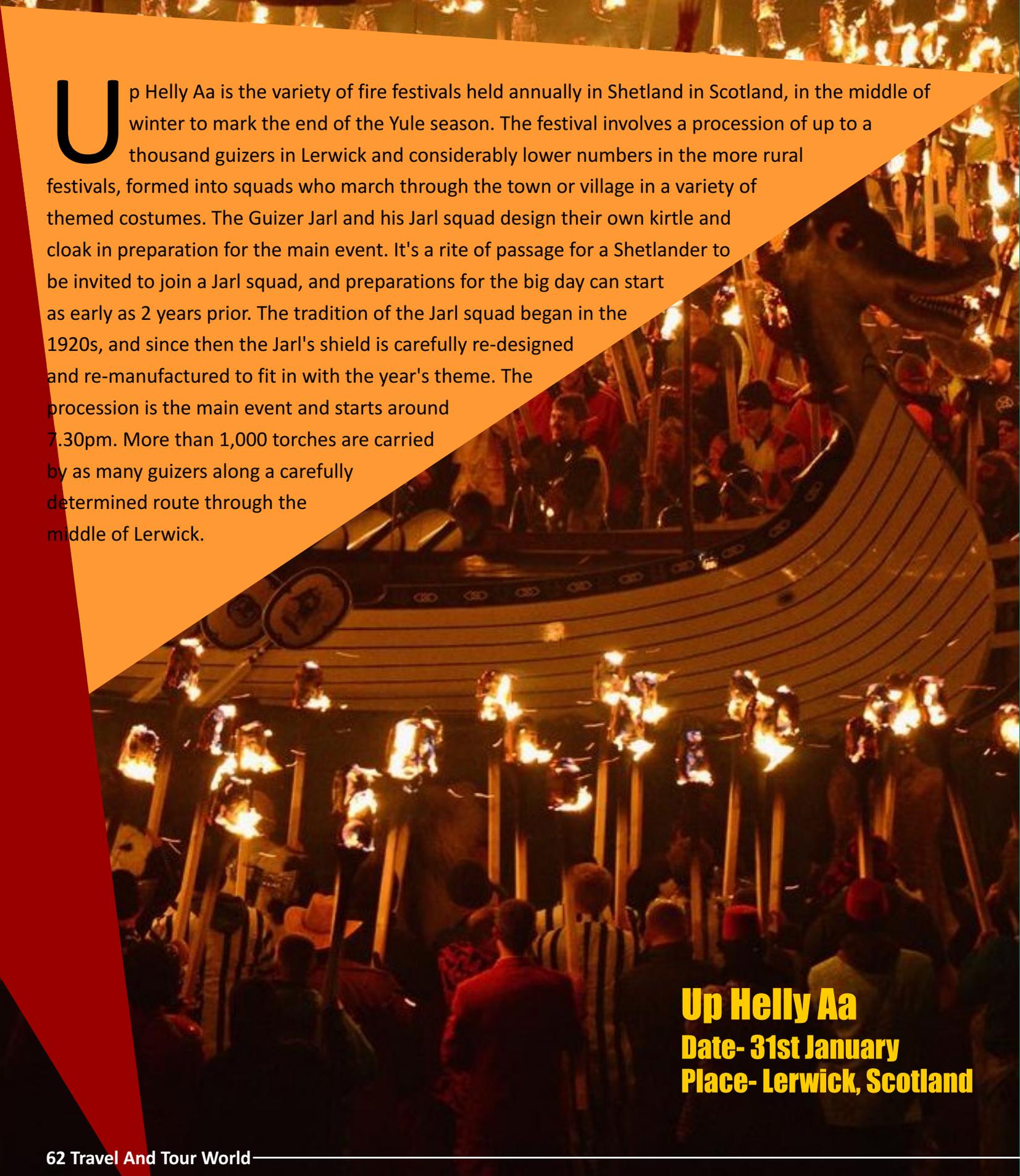


Just behind Nara Park, stands an old, extinct volcano, called Mount Wakakusa, that rises gently to a height of 350 meters. From its peak, one can have unobstructed views of the entire city. Mount Wakakusa is hence very popular for walking and strolling. The mountain is covered by grass, and lining the slope of the mountain are cherry trees that are usually in full bloom around early April. But as winter approaches, the grass begins to die and the cherry trees lose their leaves and the mountain looks very bald. This is when the famous Wakakusa Yamayaki festival takes place. The ceremonies are conducted by Todaiji Temple, Kofukuji Temple and Kasuga Shrine. The festivities start with the ceremonial lighting of a torch at Kasuga Taisha Shrine. The fire is then carried in a parade to the foot of the mountain where a large bonfire is lit. At 6 pm there is a spectacular fireworks display over the mountain. Once the fireworks are complete, the grass on the mountain is set on fire.

Wakakusa Yamayaki

Date- 21st January

Place- Nara, Japan

A large wooden dragon boat, filled with people holding torches, is the central focus of the image. The boat is illuminated by the warm glow of the torches, and the people inside are visible, some wearing traditional costumes. The background is dark, suggesting a night-time setting. The overall atmosphere is festive and traditional.

Up Helly Aa is the variety of fire festivals held annually in Shetland in Scotland, in the middle of winter to mark the end of the Yule season. The festival involves a procession of up to a thousand guizers in Lerwick and considerably lower numbers in the more rural festivals, formed into squads who march through the town or village in a variety of themed costumes. The Guizer Jarl and his Jarl squad design their own kirtle and cloak in preparation for the main event. It's a rite of passage for a Shetlander to be invited to join a Jarl squad, and preparations for the big day can start as early as 2 years prior. The tradition of the Jarl squad began in the 1920s, and since then the Jarl's shield is carefully re-designed and re-manufactured to fit in with the year's theme. The procession is the main event and starts around 7.30pm. More than 1,000 torches are carried by as many guizers along a carefully determined route through the middle of Lerwick.

Up Helly Aa
Date- 31st January
Place- Lerwick, Scotland

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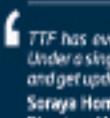
Since 1989, it provides annual marketing platform and opportunity to network with the travel trade in all major cities.

OTM is India's biggest travel trade show on the basis of number of participants, visitors and rented area. It is held every year in February, in Mumbai, the largest source market of Domestic and Outbound tourists. This is in addition to the TTF Mumbai in pre-diwali high season in September. More than 2,500 Exhibitors from 80 Countries and 36 Indian States / Union Territories have participated in our TTF and OTM branded shows, making us the leading travel trade show organisers, with about 50% market share.



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Ganpatsinh Vasava
Tourism Minister of Gujarat



TTF has evolved over the years with improved networking facilities. Under a single roof, one can explore a wide range of travel opportunities and get updated on the latest developments and trends in tourism.

Saraya Homchuen
Director - Mumbai Office, Tourism Authority of Thailand



TTF as a show is very well organised and has a mix of both domestic and international players. I was quite surprised to see the huge turnout of people at TTF, especially the travel companies.

Vasundhara Gupta
Sales Manager - Corporate & Trade, Costa Cruises



TTF is a great opportunity for us to market our airline to the customers. The response that we got at the show was more than what we expected.

Tejpreet Singh
Manager - Passenger Sales & Marketing, Korean Air



Schedule

2017

TTF Chennai	: 6, 7, 8 Jan
TTF Bengaluru	: 13, 14, 15 Jan
OTM Mumbai*	: 21, 22, 23 Feb
TTF New Delhi	: 27, 28 Feb, 1 Mar
TTF Kolkata	: 7, 8, 9 July
TTF Hyderabad*	: 14, 15 July
TTF Ahmedabad	: 1, 2, 3 Sept
TTF Surat	: 8, 9, 10 Sept
TTF Mumbai	: 15, 16, 17 Sept
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BLTM Gurgaon	: 26, 27 Oct

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Organized by EUF – E Uluslararası Fuarçılık, an affiliate of ITE Turkey, the

organiser of leading exhibitions in the leading industries of Turkey, the International East Mediterranean Tourism and Travel Exhibition – EMITT, will be held at Tuyap Fair, Convention and Congress Center between 26 – 29 January 2017. Organised with corporate sponsorship of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkish Republic, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Turkish Airlines, with support from KOSGEB and in partnership with Turkish Hoteliers Federation (TÜROFED) and Turkish Tourism Investors Association (TYD) the exhibition continues to receive applications from all over the world in full throttle. EMITT 2017 aims to attract 5.000 organisations and institutions and 60.000 visitors from 80 countries.

ITE Turkey Tourism, Travel and Fashion Group Director Hacer Aydin stated that they're quite happy with the great interest shown in the International Hosted Buyer program organised with the goal of offering new business development, procurement, partnership and collaboration opportunities to sector's players at the international level, said: "We'll be organising

the Hosted Buyer Program as part of EMITT Exhibition this year as well. This year, we'll be organising our program in partnership with Travel Shop Turkey. We've already received applications from 60 countries that wish to join the exhibition. Russia is among the countries that have shown the greatest interest. Also, we expect the number of companies from Russia applying for the program to increase until the exhibition date. In addition to Russia, companies from countries like Azerbaijan, United Arab Emirates, Philippines, South Africa, India, Spain, Italy, Kuwait, Lebanon, Macedonia, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Jordan and Greece have shown great interest in and applied to the program. In addition, exhibition space sales continue in full throttle as well. EMITT is the biggest meeting point of not only Turkish tourism industry but also of the global tourism industry. In addition to being a commercial platform that brings together the professionals of the tourism industry, the exhibition is also the ultimate address for travel enthusiasts as well..."

Bringing together every year, tourism professionals and tourism destinations from different parts of the world and Turkey and professional visitors, EMITT will be held once again this year at Tuyap Fair, Convention and Congress Center between 26 – 29 January 2017.

ibtm arabia 2017

When: 7 – 9 February

Where: Abu Dhabi, UAE



Abu Dhabi's constantly evolving infrastructure, value for money and support mechanisms for event organisers mean the Emirate is proving ever more popular with MICE

industry professionals. Testament to this is the fact that a raft of new exhibitors have signed up for the first time to ibtm arabia 2017, the Middle East's leading exhibition for the events industry, which takes place in Abu Dhabi, UAE, from 7 – 9 February.

“Ensuring attendance at a show in the Middle East is as productive as possible requires real local expertise. There are regional nuances when it comes to doing business in the region that it is essential to acknowledge and adhere to.

“There is huge importance placed on networking and building a relationship ahead of having formal meetings. To ensure that we give our attendees at ibtm arabia the very best and most effective environment for doing business, ibtm arabia is a one-to-one event and has an exclusive 'pod' format which we created. This, combined with ibtm events' bespoke 'matchmaking' software which creates a personalised diary of 100%

mutually matched pre-scheduled appointments for each attendee, means that time is focused on meeting with people with whom there is a very high chance of doing business.

“The overall agenda for the ibtm arabia event is deliberately structured to facilitate relationship building and to create a real community for the duration of the three-day-event. A total of nine networking events take place, kicking off with a 'Discovery Day', which allows our Hosted Buyers and exhibitors to get to know each other whilst exploring the local culture in an informal environment before meetings commence. The day begins with a keynote educational session which acts as a forum for attendees to debate and discuss key industry issues, innovations and themes.

“We have 100% new hosted buyers each year at ibtm arabia, ensuring a fresh audience which in turn continues to attract an extremely high calibre exhibitor. Such is the renown of ibtm arabia, that we have once again had some very high profile brands sign up as exhibitors for the first time this year, including, amongst others, Millennium Hotels & Resorts, Jumeirah, The Rezidor Hotel Group and IMG Worlds of Adventure. Returning exhibitor numbers are also growing year-on-year, in part given the proven high quality of new Hosted Buyers our event attracts each year.

Iran Hotel and Tourism Investment Conference (IHTIC)

When: 7-8 February 2017

Where: Parsian Evin Hotel, Tehran, Iran

Iran, the 18th largest economy in the world, is to host the first Iran Hotel and Tourism Investment Conference (IHTIC), a top-level gathering of international investors, owners, operators, developers and government officials.

In addition to rich reserves of oil, gas and metals, Iran has a promising consumer sector with a well-educated population of 80 million inhabitants. There are huge investment opportunities across all of Iran's economic sectors – energy, mining, hospitality & tourism, fast moving consumer goods, food & beverage, retail, automotive, aviation and manufacturing.

Under the 2025 Tourism Vision plan, Iran is expecting to increase the number of tourism arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million by 2025. The 4.8 million tourists brought around \$6.5 billion in revenue to the country despite sanctions and limitations imposed by the EU, the UN and the USA. With the lifting of sanctions in January, it is expected that by 2025 the country will receive \$30 billion from tourism income.

Only 13 out of the 96 hotels in Tehran are classified as four or five-star, although it is widely acknowledged that these would not meet



**Iran Hotel & Tourism
Investment Conference**

7-8 February 2017

Parsian Evin Hotel, Tehran, Iran

internationally recognised standards for such classification.

Sébastien Bazin, Chairman and CEO, Accor Hotels speaking at AHIF 2015 said: "The Iranian market is a top priority for Accor Hotels, as are Africa and India. These three geographies are ones where I want to make a major push. They have a lot of things in common: civilization, architecture, demography, booming medium-sized enterprises, lack of supply, lack of infrastructure and lack of low-cost airlines".

In 2014, Accor Hotels became the first international hotel group to enter the market since the 1979 revolution. Sébastien Bazin said, "We are very excited about signing this partnership with Aria Ziggurat in Iran. We are certain that Novotel and ibis will fit perfectly into the growth momentum that Iran's hospitality sector is enjoying. Our brands are looking at huge growth potential in this country. Our ambition is to develop an important network in the country thanks to our global portfolio of brands covering all segments, from luxury to midscale and economy."

According to Iran's Chief of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, Masoud Soltanifar, investing in the tourism sector has become one of the priorities of the Iranian authorities. The government has provided a series of incentives through the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Act (FIPPA) including a 50% full term tax reduction on income, loan structure and eligibility for government funding and property ownership rights.

Other hotel operators have also seen the potential and entered the market already. Abu Dhabi-based Rotana Hotel Management Corp. has signed management agreements for four hotels in Iran – two in Tehran (opening in 2018) and two in Mashad (opening in 2017). Melià Hotels International is planning to open a 319-room hotel

in 2017 on the Caspian Sea, with investment coming from a third party.

Jonathan Worsley, Chairman of Bench Events and founder of IHTIC, said: “I greatly enjoy pioneering new markets; it started with IHIF in Berlin 20 years ago and has continued right through to the Iran Hotel & Tourism Investment Conference in 2017. I believe in Iran's hospitality potential and whilst breaking new ground is risky with numerous obstacles, those that are first-to-market will no doubt benefit from healthy ROI's and relationships with both local partners, investors and authorities alike.”

The Iran Hotel and Tourism Investment Conference will take place 7-8 February at the Parsian Evin Hotel in Tehran.



When: 21- 22 February 2017

Where: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Australia



The Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) is a two day exhibition for those involved in organising business travel, meetings, incentives and events. The event allows industry decision makers from around Australia, Asia-Pacific and the rest of the globe to meet.

The Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME), launches ten Melbourne City Experiences, a new and exciting addition to the 2017 Hosted Buyer program. Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) has partnered with a selection of venues, accommodation and attractions across the broad business events sector, emphasising unique products and services that best showcase Melbourne to international and domestic event organisers.

The ten carefully curated tours will immerse attendees in the culture, environment, cuisine and hospitality that supports Melbourne being ranked as the World's Most Liveable City for the sixth consecutive year by Economist Intelligence Unit.

Karen Bolinger, Chief Executive Officer, Melbourne Convention Bureau, is excited by this new opportunity for event buyers and organisers to be

immersed in the personality and vibrancy of Melbourne.

“Business events are the highest yielding sector of the visitor economy, delivering \$9.8 billion to the Victorian economy annually. For AIME's 25th anniversary we wanted to showcase the diversity of Melbourne to the hundreds of domestic and international hosted buyers in a distinctive way.

“The tours highlight our world-class venues, food and beverage, entertainment and accommodation. With so many partners involved in the development of these tailored experiences, it exemplifies how collaborative Melbourne is,” said Ms Bolinger.

Hosted buyers attending AIME 2017 will be able to experience industry-leading education programs, peer-to-peer networking sessions, appointments with event suppliers from across the globe, as well as complimentary travel and luxury accommodation.

Those who organise, influence or make budgetary decisions for meetings, incentive travel, business travel, events, product launches, staff training or international conventions are invited to apply to be part of the AIME Hosted Buyer Program.

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When: 29 Nov - 1 Dec
Where: Barcelona

ibtm world 2016, held in Barcelona from 29 November to 1 December, was another extremely successful edition for ibtm events. Almost 15,000 delegates attended and over 67,000 pre-scheduled meetings were arranged over the three-day show, with very positive feedback received from exhibitors and hosted buyers.

As the show provides the opportunity to reach high profile industry media, key influencers and peers, a number of high profile exhibitors again used it as a platform for news announcements. AccorHotels celebrated their new Pullman in Sarawak, and the

launch of a new brand Jo&Joe; Novotel Suites revealed its debut in Vietnam; Hyatt Regency Tashkent announced it's opening in Uzbekistan and Flanders Meeting & Convention Center launched 'A Room with a ZOO', the only convention centre anywhere in the world set in a zoo.

Following the roll out of the company's proprietary matchmaking technology at ibtm world 2015, this year for the first time, ibtm world created a Hosted Buyer recommendation system where the technology gave other suggestions of exhibitors to meet with based on the business objectives expressed by hosted buyers.



More than 200,000 recommendations were made, with some exhibitors being selected 2,000 times. This unique technology gives exhibitors the opportunity to have their brands pushed towards hosted buyers who originally might not have thought that these suppliers would be relevant.



Looking ahead to the next edition, Graeme Barnett, Senior Exhibition Director, ibtm world, commented: “The 2017 edition, taking place from 28 – 30 November in Barcelona, marks ibtm world's 30th Anniversary, a major milestone for the company. Whilst we will be celebrating our legacy and everything that we've collectively achieved over this time, our eye is very much on the future and ensuring we maintain our reputation for providing an inspirational environment in which to forge great connections that add value to our partners businesses. “We're committed to continuing to innovate and

inspire within the industry and we want to celebrate our partners who do the same. This year our Innovation Zone was hugely popular and we're looking forward to enhancing the area further for 2017.

“We are continuing to invest in new technologies, including our enhanced appointments system and our new ibtm events app. We're also continuing to develop our knowledge programme to ensure it remains best in class whilst ensuring we work with our peers in the industry to support, motivate and inspire existing and future industry professionals.”

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**10-15
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**13-15
JANUARY**

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**INTERNATIONAL
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**12-15
JANUARY**

CMT
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**14-22
JANUARY**

**18 - 22
JANUARY**

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**19 - 24
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**18 - 22
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**19 - 22
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**26 - 29
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