

# Travel AND Tour <sup>TM</sup>

Volume: 12, Issue: December 2020

W O R L D

Cover Story

## CHRISTMAS MARKETS STILL OPEN IN

# 2020

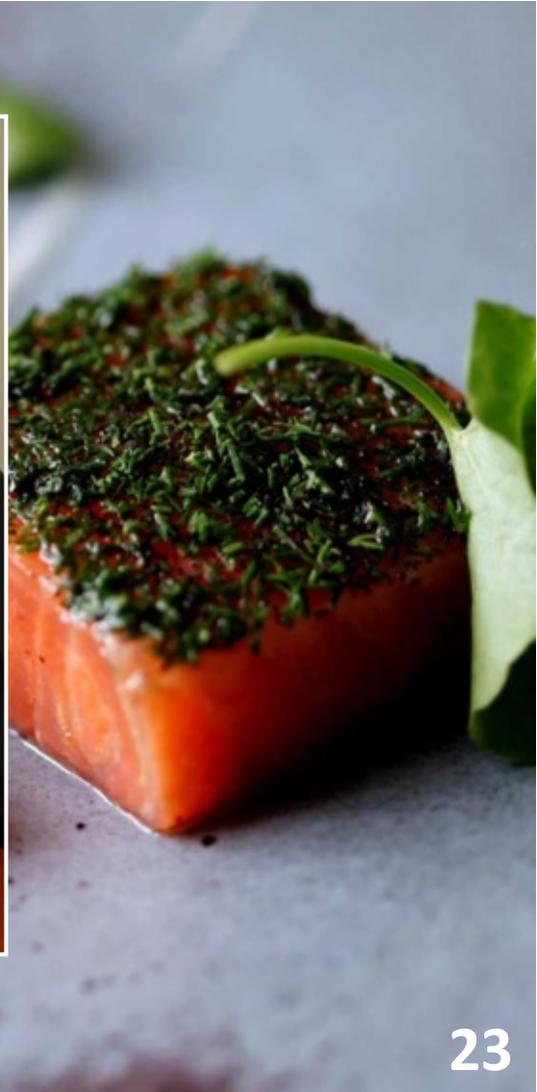




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**05- Meetings Point:** France's third-largest city **Lyon** is slowly becoming a popular choice for business tourism. With some of the most perfect meeting venues, conference centres, and convention hotels, the city provides great MICE opportunities.

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**Dear Readers,**

**W**e are completing this year with the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the festive month as the whole world is going to celebrate Christmas and New Year. In this current situation, Christmas markets are opening by maintaining social distancing and proper hygiene norms.

In this current issue, we are focusing on Christmas markets around the world which have opened right now and also some of the destinations where you can go for this Christmas holiday to enjoy a warm and sensational long vacation. You can also get to know about rich Chinese Communism history if you opt for China as your next holiday destination. Our Travel Tendency comes to you about the popular red tourism destinations which are reserved with long historical backgrounds.

In this issue, our highlight in Tech It is the digital customer experience in the tourism industry. Read this story to know the evolution of the digital trends in travel industry and how they are helpful to us. Our Meeting Point focuses on the most unexplored French meeting destination, Lyon recognized for its history, heritage, architectural and cultural scene. Hosting an event in Lyon will be a treat for the delegates.

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**T**he third-largest city and second-largest urban area of France, Lyon is situated at the confluence of the rivers Rhone and Saone, around 470 km south-east of Paris. Together with its suburbs and exurbs, it is the second most-populated area in France. However, despite being one of the most important cities of the country, it is still unexplored by many.

Recognised for its history, heritage, architecture and cultural treasures, the city also boasts a perfect MICE scene with its ideal conference and meeting venues as well as some of the best convention hotels. Over the years, Lyon has built its MICE industry and is gradually becoming a popular choice for meetings, conferences and business events.

# LYON

France's unexplored meetings destination

# TOP MEETING VENUES

**The Lyon Convention Centre :** Considered to be one of the most prestigious event and meeting complexes in Europe, the Lyon Convention Centre is located in the heart of the International City, a newly built district of Lyon, France. Designed by Renzo Piano, the building is known for its grand architecture and is ideal for international conferences, conventions, meetings, exhibitions, trade-fairs, seminars and all other similar events. The centre offers 24,000 m<sup>2</sup> of flexible space including 3 amphitheatres, 2 auditoriums, an exhibition area of 8,400 m<sup>2</sup>, 26 halls and 35-fully equipped meeting rooms that can accommodate up to 19,000 individuals. In the first six months alone, the convention centre hosted 120,000 guests for 12 shows and nearly 40,000 individuals in 11 conventions. At present, it hosts more than 300 events every year including major international conferences.

**Eurexpo Lyon :** Located on the commune of Chassieu, in south-east of Lyon, the Eurexpo Lyon is a convention centre and exhibition hall built in 1984 in a total area of 110 hectares. It consists of 140,000 m<sup>2</sup> of event space consisting of 13 exhibition halls ranging from 2000 m<sup>2</sup> to 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> as well as an auditorium, 26 meeting rooms, a 51,000 m<sup>2</sup> outdoor exhibition area and around 13,000 parking spaces. The centre is ideal for trade shows, congresses, meetings, incentives, exhibitions, contests, galas and similar national and international events.



**L'espace Tete D'Or Centre De Congres :** The L'espace Tete D'Or Centre De Congres is another ideal venue for hosting conventions, congresses, meetings, seminars, conferences, fairs, exhibitions and gala events. The venue offers flexible meeting rooms for rent that can accommodate anywhere between 10 to 2,500 people. The centre also has its own special team to provide assistance for organising corporate events. It is also equipped with state-of-the-art technologies necessary for a modern-day meeting, conference or seminar. The venue also comes with its own catering service and offers free private car parking space.



# BEST CONVENTION HOTELS

**Golden Tulip Lyon Eurexpo :** Situated only 6 km away from Eurexpo Lyon, the 4-star property offers 131 spacious and quiet modern rooms as well as two suites with contemporary facilities and magnificent views of the Lyon hills on one side and the Alps on the other. The hotel also serves as a great meeting venue with 300 sq. m. meeting rooms that can accommodate from 8 to 270 guests. It is ideal for all kinds of corporate events.

**Lyon Marriott Hotel Cite Internationale :** Connected directly with the Lyon Convention Centre, the hotel features 204 spacious and well-appointed guestrooms. Besides providing the finest accommodation services, the property also stands as an ideal business hotel. It has more than 1,100 m<sup>2</sup> of total event space with 16 fully equipped meeting rooms and a 432 m<sup>2</sup> ballroom suitable for hosting meetings, conferences and other corporate and private events. Each flexible meeting room has a capacity to accommodate up to 95 delegates and the ballroom is capable of holding 425 guests in theatre style.



## THINGS TO DO BEYOND WORK

Visit the **Musee des Beaux-Arts**, known as the second best arts museum in France after the Louvre to witness the cultural heritage of Lyon and see one of the largest collections of European artwork with paintings and sculptures from 14th century. Explore **Quartier Saint-Jean**, the medieval quarter north of cathedral to experience the old-world ambience of Vieux Lyon and walk along the narrow cobblestone lanes and quiet courtyards to visit unique museums, vintage shop, cafes and traditional restaurants. Enjoy a walk along the **Parc de la Tete d'Or** and visit the zoo and botanical garden inside the premises. Also, visit the magnificent **Basilique Notre-Dame**, the 130 m **high Basilica and the Cathedral of Saint-John**, the Romanesque cathedral with a late gothic facade. You can also enjoy some of the finest opera performances in Opera de Lyon, the 19th century opera house or watch theatre performances in **Theatre des Celestins**, the striking neoclassical theatre.



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In an exclusive with Travel And Tour World, Dalma Díaz Pinto, Ambassador of World Food Travel Association (WFTA), shares her views on association's role in promoting food tourism.

**FACE TO FACE**



**Travel And Tour World :** Tell us about the role of World Food Travel Association for the betterment of the industry?

**Dalma Díaz Pinto:** The WFTA is a non-profit organization that was founded in 2001 by its current executive director Erik Wolf. It is recognized as the world's leading authority on food tourism (a.k.a. culinary tourism and gastronomy tourism). The WFTA's mission is to preserve and promote culinary cultures through hospitality and tourism. We do this through our various services and programs like World Food Travel Day, Food Travel Talk TV and our Business of Food Travel Podcast. Every year, we serve nearly 200,000 professionals in 150+ countries.

**Travel And Tour World :** What are the key roles of World Food Travel Association to make a COVID-19 free world?

**Dalma Díaz Pinto:** We are all working hard to help our industry to get back on its feet and prepare for when travel resumes. When the pandemic first started, we published an article for our industry to offer suggestions of different things professionals can do to make money until travel resumes. We have also delivered

many online broadcasts and Summits to give industry professionals inspiration and hope in these trying times.

**Travel And Tour World :** Tell us about your role in this association?

**Dalma Díaz Pinto:** I serve as the Association's first ambassador in both Chile and in Latin America. In this role, I represent the interests of the Association in my area, and I also share gastronomy tourism news from my area to the Association. It is my job to spread the word about the Association in Chile. I live in Puerto Montt, in the northern Patagonia of Chile. From here I do my work with the team of my company Gastronomía Patagonia.



**Travel And Tour World :** What are the changes you have seen in food and beverage tourism industry in recent years?

**Dalma Díaz Pinto:** Consumers are more obsessed than ever with food and beverages. If you have any doubt, look at the rise of all the cooking and chef shows on television, not to mention the travel shows featuring food and drink. And of course there is Instagram. Consumers are both more aware of different cuisines and ingredients, they are also more knowledgeable about them than they ever have been before. There has also been a surge in awareness of food allergies and interest in special diets. And remember, consumers take their eating behaviors with them while traveling. A vegan does not stop being a vegan when he/she travels.

**Travel And Tour World:** Do you notice any changes in behaviour of the travellers in post COVID-19 for development & diversification in beverage products and experiences?

**Dalma Díaz Pinto:** Not many people are traveling yet. There is some movement at local and regional levels, and very little international travel. Obviously everyone is obsessed with health and safety, and that is not a bad thing. Better hygiene is always welcome. Many foodservice businesses are still learning what this means, for example, not handling cutlery

and glassware with their bare hands. Strangely, many foodservice establishments immediately began using disposable cutlery and dishes, whereas before they used ceramic or stoneware dishes and glassware. There is no precedent in recent memory about how to behave during a pandemic. We are all learning together.



**Travel And Tour World :** How the World Food Travel Association do the knowledge sharing with the tour operators around the world and what is its outcome?

**Dalma Díaz Pinto:** As mentioned above, we have various broadcasting tools where we bring news and ideas to our industry every month. We also publish thought leadership articles and pertinent news on our website. We also offer culinary certification programs for tour operators and tourist guides. Certification gives guides and operators additional training and preparation and a marketing cachet to help them to succeed better for when travel resumes.



It is that time of the year again when you can enjoy the festive spirit to the fullest. Celebrating Christmas holidays with friends and family amid the cold and snow is an age-old tradition. The festival of Christmas has always been associated with the winter season. However, there are several destinations across the globe where you can celebrate a warm and pleasant Christmas and do away with the freezing temperature. Take a look at the places that you can visit to experience a warm Christmas cheer.

**A**s December marks the summer season in the southern hemisphere, Australia is known for celebrating Christmas towards the beginning of summer holidays. For Australians, Christmas is all about pleasant weather and beach days with the capital city, Sydney specially decked up for the festive season. Therefore, Sydney is one of the most perfect destinations to experience a warm Christmas with decorations, carols and cuisines. Catch locals surfing in Santa Hats and enjoying “prawn runs” on Christmas Eve be a part of the street celebrations around the Pitt Street Mall, musical events and choirs as well as watch the tallest Christmas tree in NSW lighting up in Martin Place. You can even be a part of Australia's largest free Christmas concert at Woolworths Carols in the Domain on December 21 or enjoy the special Christmas lunch at STUDIO Sydney Tower on the Christmas Day. You can also experience street parties and barbeques on Boxing Day celebrated on December 26.

## *Sydney, Australia*



**R**ecognised as the city of four seasons, Buenos Aires experiences the onset of summer during Christmas as it is located in the southern hemisphere. The capital of Argentina offers a much offbeat Christmas experience amid warm climate and a busy holiday season. In Buenos Aires, the Christmas Eve or Nochebuena is celebrated with more pomp and glory than the Christmas day. The special Christmas dinner and mass takes place on the night of December 24 rather than the Christmas morning. You can also expect some of the best Christmas firework displays as the church bells go off in the midnight mass. Make sure to experience the special Christmas Tango show and dinner as well as the view of the magnificent Christmas tree and decorations at the Galerías Pacifico Mall.



## *Buenos Aires, Argentina*



If you want to experience Christmas in Europe without freezing, Tenerife would be your ideal destination. Here you can enjoy a warm, fuzzy and traditional Christmas surrounded with dazzling sunlight, array of palm trees and the gentle sea breeze. The largest of Spain's Canary Islands, Tenerife is known for its Nativity during Christmas. Almost every municipality creates its own nativity scene or Belen made of wooden or plastic figures with intricate details. Some localities even organise live nativity to celebrate the true spirit of Christmas. The island is also known for its traditional orchestral Christmas concert, traditional Christmas markets and traditional festive special dining arrangement across all its pubs, bars and restaurants.



## *Tenerife, Canary Islands*



One of America's well-known cities, Savannah turns itself into a Christmas wonderland during this time of the year. The weather around December is often variable and though there are chances of few cloudy days, most of the city remains moderately warm. Festivities begin towards the end of November and continue throughout the Christmas time. The whole city gathers to display events, shows, carnivals, boat parades, walking tours and much more. Every corner of the city wraps up in Christmas decorations with special gingerbread towns, trolleys and lights. While the city market comes to life with full holiday spirit, the historic Savannah theatre showcases the "Christmas Tradition" stage snow with Santa and Frosty and the Savannah River welcomes the "Sailing with Santa" charity cruise tour.



## *Savannah, Georgia*



**D**ecember is considered to be one of the best times to visit Hawaii as the weather is wonderfully warm through the day with a comfortable dip in the evenings. Hawaii's second largest island, Maui is the ideal destination if you are looking forward to celebrate Christmas away from the cold. The famous Banyan tree of Lahaina, one of the largest in the United States, is wrapped in thousands of Christmas lights and is a sight to behold. You can enjoy a special Hawaiian Christmas Day luau on the beach or engage in some whale watching and have a Hawaiian special Christmas dinner in Maui restaurants. The island also allows visitors to shop in special holiday markets or book a Christmas getaway at the Old Wailuku Inn in Ulupono.



## *Maui, Hawaii*



It is also summer season during Christmas in South Africa but the celebrations in Cape Town show how sunny and magical Christmas can be even though it is far away from the white North Pole. The capital offers some of the best Christmas market experience with handcrafted cards, decorations, treats, baked goods, clothing, jewellery and several last-minute gift-items. The 'Festival of Lights' in Adderley Street, 'Santa's Village' at the V&A Waterfront Victoria Wharf and the 'Carols by Candlelight' in Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden alongside sumptuous Christmas feasts at different restaurants are some of the most memorable Christmas experiences one can have in the city.



## *Cape Town, South Africa*



**W**ith comfortable temperatures, low humidity and less rainfall as compared to the rest of the year, December is a great time to visit Hong Kong. It also celebrates the grandest Christmas in all of East Asia and is considered to be having one of the world's most festive Christmas celebrations. Besides major Christmas displays and decorations, you can enjoy various Christmas-related entertainment and activities in the theme parks as well as marvel at the 'Symphony of Lights' show over Victoria Harbour.



## *Hong Kong*



# Travel News

## Canada extends international travel restrictions for another month

Canada has decided to extend its international travel restrictions that are currently in place for another month in order to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The latest travel restriction has been extended until to January 21, 2021. The restrictions had been in place since March and were initially due to expire on October 31. The official announcement of the extension was made by Public Safety Canada.

With the latest restriction Canada enters the eighth month of active travel restrictions and with several places around the world being effected with a second wave of the pandemic, it is also likely that the restrictions in Canada will be extended further. The new restrictions cover travellers arriving from a foreign country other than the United States as the travel ban affecting the Canada-U.S. border is covered by a separate agreement that was set to expire on November 21, 2020 and has now been extended to December 21, 2020.



## England set to enter new nationwide lockdown for a month

In an unfortunate turn of situations, Prime Minister Boris Johnson declared a month-long national lockdown across England once again. The decision arrived following a second wave of active coronavirus infections, taking the total number of COVID-19 cases above one million and overwhelming impact and pressure on the healthcare. Prime Minister Johnson announced that the latest lockdown will begin on Thursday and continue until December 2, 2020. All residents will only be allowed to leave their homes for specific essential reasons like education, work, exercise, shopping for necessities, medical emergency or caring for the ones in need. All non-essential retail has been asked to remain closed and pubs and restaurants have also been asked to shut except for takeaways.



### **EMITT re-scheduled its dates to February 9-12, 2022**

Ranking among the 5 top tourism exhibitions worldwide and contributing to the promotion of Turkey and the branding of the tourism sector as well as being the meeting point for the major sector representatives that lead the global tourism industry, International East Mediterranean Tourism Exhibition – EMITT re-scheduled to a new date. The date of the exhibition, which was announced as February 10 – 13, 2020 earlier, decided to be held on February 9 -12, 2022, following the meetings with many exhibitors, visitors, and domestic and international stakeholders, particularly the business partners of Hyve Group.

### **U.K. likely to face 2.4 million job losses in travel industry: WTTC**

According to a latest study of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the U.K. could witness a staggering loss of 2.4 million jobs in the travel and tourism sector this year if COVID-19 related international travel restrictions continue to remain in place. The latest figures arrived from WTTC's new economic modelling, that studied the punishing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions on the travel & tourism sector. At present, nearly 1.9 million jobs have already been impacted in the U.K. and another 2.4 million jobs is likely to be under threat if is no immediate alleviation of restrictions on international travel is made. As mentioned in a previous study by WTTC in June this year that revealed the risk of 2.9 million job losses, the new figure of 2.4 million jobs indicates a small, but positive gain, in part driven by the introduction of quarantine-free air corridors in June and a rise in domestic travel.



## Special Feature

**T**he food tourism in Nordic countries was non-existent even few years ago. But with the advent of time, the food tourism in Nordics gained momentum. From pølse to pickled herring, Scandinavia and Nordic bring along fascinating lip smacking food. Let's see the popular food tours.



# nordic Gourmet Tours



# Copenhagen

**W**hen it comes to beer & wine, the Danes are not modest. In Copenhagen beer tours, you can discover the very first Danish microbrewery, sample Danish craft beer and explore the hip borough of Vesterbro. To dampen your thirst and delight your tastebuds, there is a combination of a few tastes of beer with two bites, one of which is the Danish speciality smørrebrød (a voluptuously garnished open-faced sandwiches). Also, explore some of Copenhagen's food meccas, Copenhagen's very own Meatpacking District where you'll find a wide array of cultural, recreational, culinary and educational establishments.





# Oslo

From the incredible western fjords to the heart of Norway's capital, Norwegians surely know how to enjoy a good beer. It's the national beverage after all! Paired with something to nibble on, it's the perfect way to enjoy an afternoon.

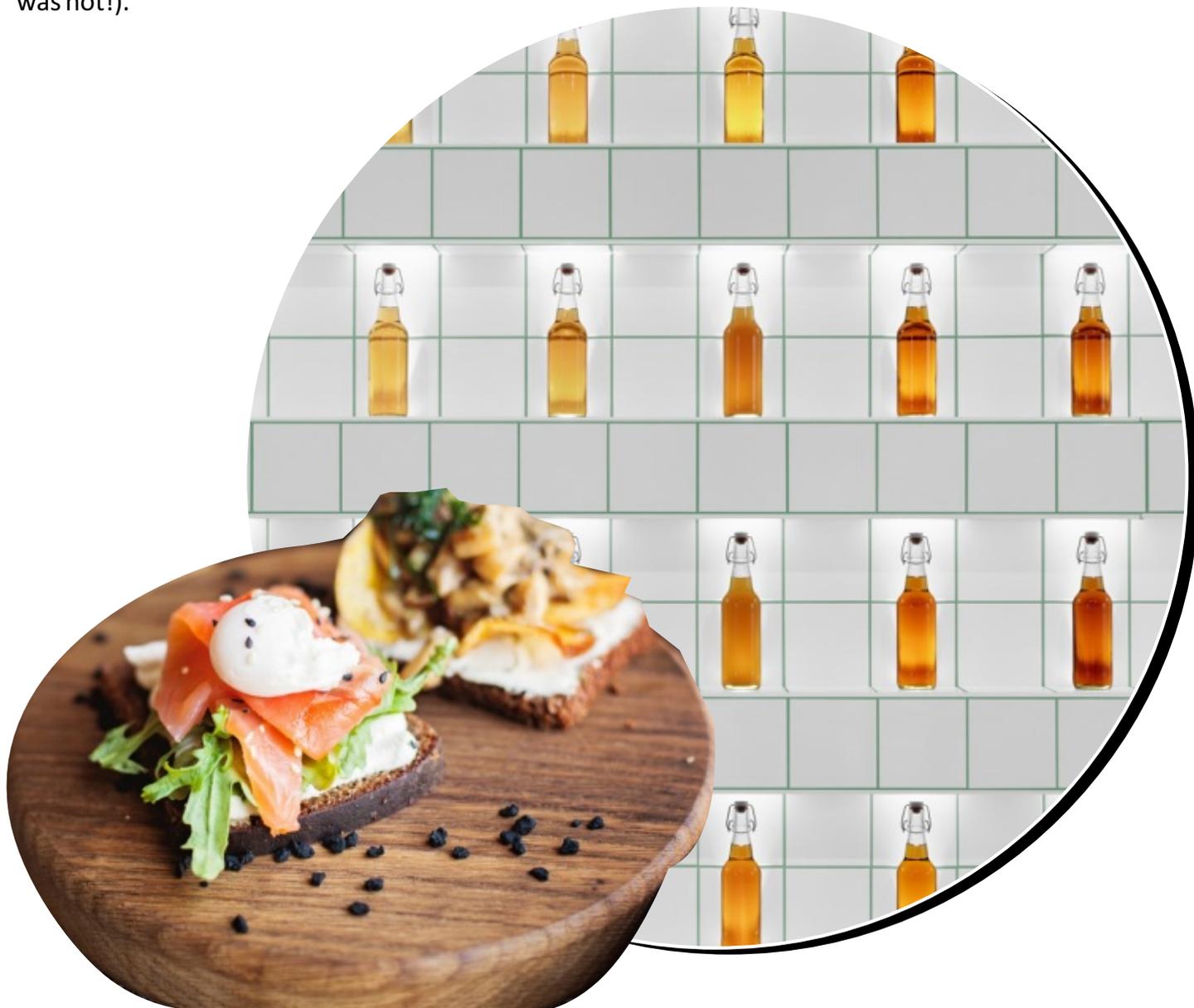
Embark on a journey that will take you to a microbrewery in Oslo. While sipping on a sample of the country's favourite drink, learn about some of the best "øl" (beer) offered by Norway's capital, exciting facts about the art of brewing in Norway and stories about Grünerløkka. Oslo gives you a complete tour starting from the Middle Ages with the flourishing production of beer to how beer heritage was affected by the appearance of liquors, how the religious authorities tried limiting alcohol consumption and the story behind Norway's Vinmonopolet system. You can even get some tasty bites. Have a cheery and tasty walk through some of the loveliest streets of Oslo. Enter the most iconic taverns of Grünerløkka and discover one of the pillars of Norway's terroir and tales of the Norwegian's national beverage.





# Stockholm

**W**alking through the winding alleyways of Stockholm's Old Town, where beer has flowed for centuries, you find yourself in the mood for a brew. Go on the beer tasting adventure and sample some of the best craft beers that Sweden has to offer. Learn how beer went from being the number one drink of the country to being the banned drink for over thirty years (while hard liquor was not!).





# Södermalm

**S**ödermalm is diverse in its tastes and flavours. It's the old working-class area of the city which has turned bohemian and chic. The chefs rush to open their own restaurants here, new vibrant restaurants seem to pop up like mushrooms. Now challenge your tastebuds when trying different food samples from different kitchens and cultures, whilst getting inspired by the bakers and chefs behind these wonderful creations.





## RED TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN CHINA

**R**ed Tourism is popular in the People's Republic of China where Chinese tourists visit destinations recognised for their historical significance to Chinese Communism. It is believed that Chinese visitors tour such locations to rekindle their lost sense of class struggle and proletarian principles.

It was in 2005 that the Chinese Government started actively supporting red tourism in order to promote 'national ethos' and support socioeconomic development of such areas. Since then this sector of tourism has gained much importance and attracted tourists from all over the globe to various sites that showcase the revolutionary history of the country. Read on to know about some of the most significant red tourism destinations in China.



Yan'an

Located in the northern Shaanxi Province, Yan'an was a strategic location for ancient Chinese warfare. The city is considered to be a holy land of China's Communist Party revolution. It became the seat of the Chinese Communist revolution from late 1935 to early 1947.

The city was also Mao Zedong's revolutionary base post the historic Long March and turned into an intensive training centre for party members and army troops. Yan'an is home to top 140 revolutionary sites, including Wangjiaping Revolutionary Museum- the Central Military Commission site, Fenghuang Mountain- the site of Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Baota Hill and Yangjia Ling Revolutionary Site.

## ZUNYI

The prefecture-level city situated in the Guizhou Province is known for its ethnic minority cultures. It is mostly famous for being the site of the Zunyi Conference and the venue of Mao Zedong's election as the leader of the Communist Party of China during the Long March. The conference was held in 1935 resulting in Mao Zedong's election and marking the beginning of the procedure of the Long March. The Zunyi Meeting Memorial Hall was constructed in memory of the Zunyi Conference and stands as one of the most popular red tourism sites in the city. Back in the day, the two-floor building was also the general headquarters of China's Red Army. The road in which the property is situated is named Ziyin Road or Hongjun Road, meaning the 'Red Army Road.' The site now features an exhibition hall where visitors can see the weapons and tools used by the Chinese Red Army as well as several sculptures related to Chinese revolution.



## JINGGANG MOUNTAIN

The Jinggang Mountain is situated near the Ji'an City in Jiangxi Province and stands as another remarkable red tourism site for its deep-rooted red culture. The venue was the heart of the early revolutionary activities of the Communist Party of China and was also the first rural revolutionary base of the party established in 1927. The site is known as the birthplace of the Chinese Red Army. It was also the starting point of the revolution led by the Communist Party. The communists were based in the mountains until February 1930 and the site was celebrated on posters, songs and operas to commemorate and support the red revolution. The venue boasts a picturesque landscape with its tall mountains, marvellous waterfalls, dense forest and striking sea of clouds and comprises of 29 historic red tourism sites including the former residence of Mao Zedong, the mint of the Red Army, the first hospital of the army, the Revolution Museum and the Martyrs Cemetery.



**K**nown as one of the earliest centres of the Chinese communist activity, Ruijin is situated in Ganzhou. It was the base of the Chinese Communists after they were forced out of Jinggangshan by Kuomintang back in late 1920s. The communists fled here as the site was located in the isolated rugged mountains along the Fujian border. It was also the birthplace of the Chinese Soviet Republic, established under Mao Zedong's leadership in 1931 and the starting point of the historic Long March. The city is a popular red tourism and ecotourism destination and is considered to be a pilgrimage for Maoists across China as well as the world.

The city was also the birthplace of Mao's family restaurant and has several other restaurants that offers Mao's favorite dish, braised pork in brown sauce. The red tourism has driven the local economy immensely and has also contributed to increasing people's understanding of China's revolutionary history. Recognised worldwide as the hometown of Mao Zedong, the iconic Chinese Communist revolutionary, Shaoshan is a treat for every history-lover.

## RUIJIN

Known as one of the earliest centres of the Chinese communist activity, Ruijin is situated in Ganzhou. It was the base of the Chinese Communists after they were forced out of Jinggangshan by Kuomintang back in late 1920s. The communists fled here as the site was located in the isolated rugged mountains along the Fujian border. It was also the birthplace of the Chinese Soviet Republic, established under Mao Zedong's leadership in 1931 and the starting point of the historic Long March. The city is a popular red tourism and ecotourism destination and is considered to be a pilgrimage for Maoists across China as well as the world.



## nanchang

Regarded as 'the City of Heroes' in China, the capital of Jiangxi Province Nanchang was the site of the significant Nanchang Uprising of August 1, 1927, led by Zhou Enlai and He Long, China's supreme commander. As the uprising is considered to be the 'first gunshot against Nationalists' by the ruling Communist government, the site has been marked as the place where People's Liberation Army was born. The city comprises of several well-preserved historical sites like the general headquarters of the Nanchang Uprising, the Memorial Hall of Nanchang Uprising with historical relics and photos, He Long's headquarters and the headquarters of the New Fourth Army.

Christmas markets are a festive staple every year globally, but with COVID-19 pandemic still raging on in Britain, many wonder if they can venture for such a celebration this year.

Bath, Edinburgh, Leeds, Cheltenham, Birmingham, Winchester, Oxford and Bristol are just some of the places which have already called it quits on their Christmas markets this year. The Winter Wonderland in London's Hyde Park is also cancelled. However, there are some cities that are still offering Christmas markets this year by maintaining strict hygiene and social distancing norms.



# CHRISTMAS MARKETS STILL OPEN IN

# 2020





Celebrate the Christmas party this year in your social bubbles and enjoy some Laguna bubbles this year in Cardiff. It's more important than ever to get together with friends and family and Cardiff is the perfect choice for Christmas celebrations this festive season. Here you can explore amazing shops, quaint Edwardian and Victorian arcades, restaurants and attractions that are within a 5 minute walk from the Cardiff Christmas Market. You can also take in the beauty of Bute Park, Cardiff Castle and many other sights – all just a stroll away from the market. There are a plethora of hotels, hostels and B&B's within walking distance of the heart of Cardiff. Cardiff has a wide variety of accommodations to suit anyone's needs.



The Christmas market and party in Plymouth is usually abuzz with magical markets, festive carols and Christmas treats. But this year, because of COVID-19, nothing looks the same as before. Christmas shopping has been forced to take a virtual turn, as many businesses and shops shut down permanently owing to lockdown. But don't fear because Christmas isn't quite cancelled yet, as there are still plenty of Christmas markets to visit in and around Plymouth in 2020.

Here you can explore the Ocean Artists Designers Makers Winter Market, Tavistock Warm up to Christmas and Plymouth Christmas Market. Located in the heart of the city centre, Plymouth Christmas Market features log cabins and other seasonal stalls, decorated with festoon and fairy lights and housing traders from the South West and beyond. Also purchase anything from Christmas gifts, handmade jewellery and clothing, to artwork and home decor.



# Darlington

Christmas celebrations started early on the 22nd November – approximately 30 additional stalls will line High Row, West Row, Horsemarket, Blackwellgate and Darlington Indoor Market Hall. You can be dazzled by the sights, smells and sounds as Christmas comes to life. If you are searching for the most perfect gift, then the Darlington Christmas Market is the place to be. You will be able to browse a variety of stalls including unique crafts, mouth-watering hot food, local produce and delicious sweet treats. You can also enjoy Christmas drinks at the market's outdoor bars. Darlington Covered Christmas Market sits in the heart of the town and will benefit from a multi-million-pound investment. It will remain sympathetic to its Victorian heritage but will transform into a 21st-century retail destination based on the already excellent fresh food offer with a more cosmopolitan feel.



This year Christmas markets have reopened for the festive season and these look incredible. Many people are already looking to get into the Christmas spirit and what better way than visiting a Christmas market. While some Christmas Markets and events have been cancelled in light of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Meadow Croft Garden Centre in Battlesbridge, Essex is welcoming visitors with open arms by maintaining strict COVID-19 health protocols.

# New Faces

## Louvre Hotels Group adds to senior management team



**L**ouvre Hotels Group, which operates the Campanile and Première Classe hotels in the UK, has made two senior management appointments as it looks to consolidate its ambitious growth plans. Lee Morgan joins the organisation as Sales Director, while Paul Netherwood has been appointed Revenue Manager at the group, which is a subsidiary of Jin Jiang International Holdings Co. Ltd., the second biggest hospitality group in the world. Lee has more than 20 years' experience in the hospitality industry, having worked for a wide range of hotel brands, including Travelodge, Hilton and The Rezidor Hotel Group.

## Polish Tourism Organisation appoints Rafat Szlachta as new President



**T**he Polish Tourism Organisation has appointed Rafat Szlachta, an economic tourism expert, entrepreneur, and political diplomat as their new President. The appointment will see the Polish Tourism Organisation move in a new direction, led by the Polish diplomat, businessman and an international ambassador for tourism and sports. Holding the position of Director of the Department of Tourism in Poland's Ministry of Economic Development until January 2020, Mr Szlachta was responsible for the direction of the department's

**Marriott International names [Satya Anand](#) President of Europe, Middle East and Africa**



**M**arriott International, Inc. has announced that Satya Anand has been appointed President of Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), a division within Marriott International that encompasses over 75 countries and territories. Anand was most recently the company's Chief Operations Officer, Luxury & Southern Europe and Global Design for EMEA. He will replace Liam Brown, who has been appointed Group President, U.S. & Canada for Marriott.

**Ruby Hotels expands its management board with new appointments**



**R**uby Hotels is expanding its senior leadership team. As of 1st October, Daniella Boeken will complement the Executive Management Team as Group Vice President Commercial. In this newly created position, Daniella Boeken will report directly to CEO and founder Michael Struck. Daniella will oversee the Revenue & Reservations, Sales, and Marketing & PR divisions. Born in the Netherlands, Boeken joins Ruby directly from the HR Group, where she was Commercial Vice President with responsibility for 35+ hotels. She previously held various management positions at Marriott International. Boris Simm, currently Group Director Operations at Ruby, will be promoted to Group Vice President Operations.



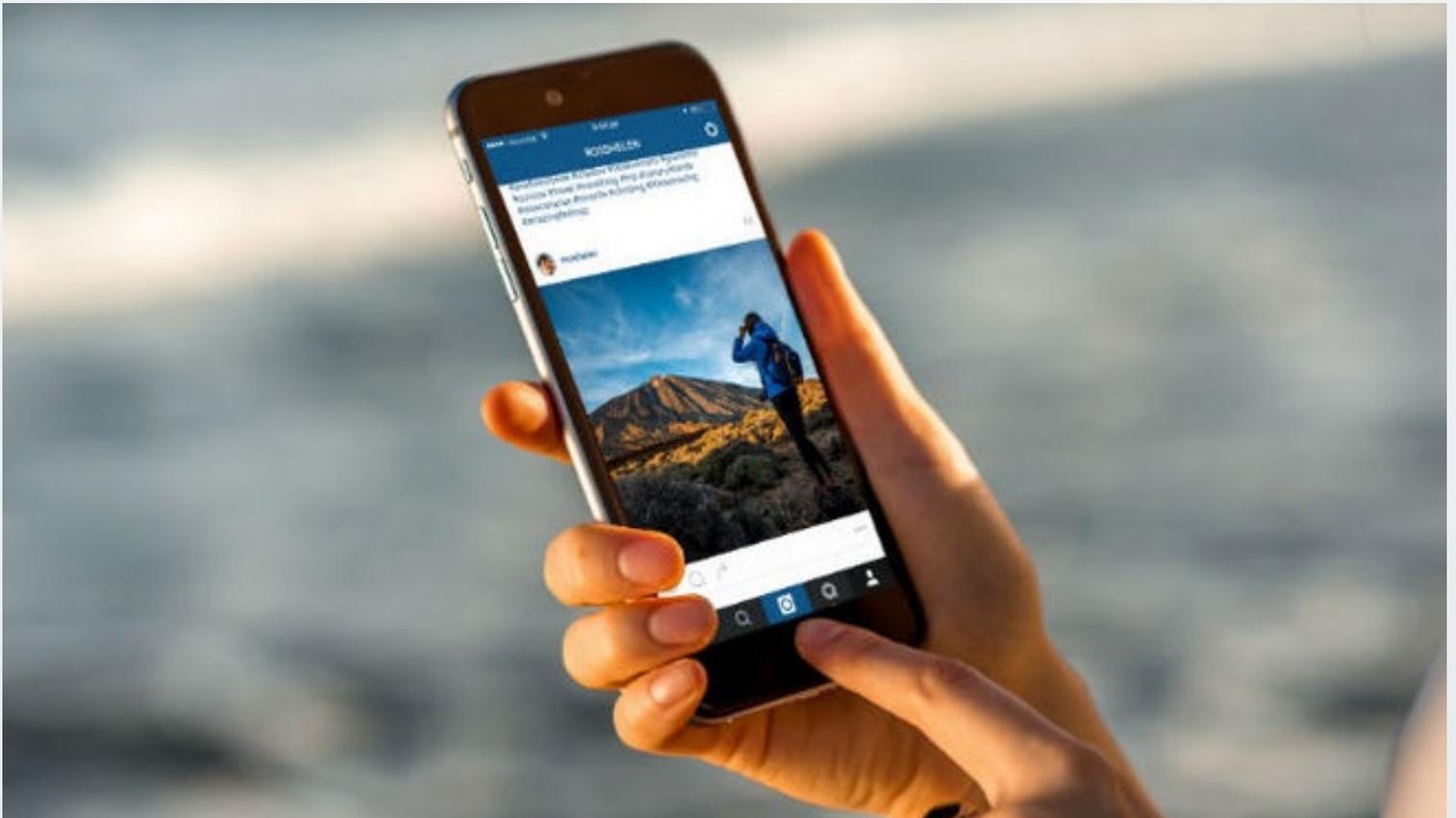
**T**he travel & tourism industry has changed rapidly in the last ten years, which is most evident in the manner in which customers research and book their upcoming holidays or business trips. Earlier, everyone relied on travel agents, but with the advent of Google and other similar search engines, people find it much easier to research accommodations, flights and activities by themselves.

In the last five years, travel industry has changed once again with a shift from desktop searches to those performed entirely on applications, now used as the primary source of information. Now at the click of a button on your smartphone, as you sit on the couch watching television, your hotel accommodation can be booked in a matter of seconds. This is no different for flights. Popular airlines have also capitalized on the ease of app use and have worked to make theirs as efficient and bug free as possible.

Three major digital experiences that have changed the face of travel and tourism industry are: a move to mobile apps, the use of artificial intelligence in the form of chat bots and social media marketing.

## Mobile Usage

The airline and accommodation sectors have realized the need to move from web-based platforms to mobile-based applications. Now the focus is on making the transition between the two easy and seamless. The digital analytics from first click to booking show the entire journey of a customer to get to the finished product. Some of the major airlines in the world have seen drastic increases in flight bookings simply by running specific diagnostic tests and following the customer journey which has allowed them to find and fix all errors, leading to an exponential rise in revenue. Find the error, reduce and eliminate it, get more bookings – it is that simple!



## Artificial Intelligence

In terms of digital customer experience trends, we're seeing a rise in the use of artificial intelligence in the form of chat bots. Just like some popular social media sites, travel sites are subjected to algorithms designed to match customers with the most tailored information possible to enhance booking potential. This is where big data for smarter customer experiences comes into play. If a chatbot asks a potential traveller what they are looking for and they respond with flights from New York City to Paris, this automatically provides them with a destination. From there the chatbot can select the best available flights in terms of travel time, hotels that may be of interest, discounted activity packages and more. As the customer clicks on the information provided, their digital path can then be charted and the results further refined by the bot, until they get the 'best' option that is closest to what the customer is looking for.

## Social Media Marketing

The social media marketing is employed more and more, especially on sites such as Instagram which often enlists the help of 'influencers' to depict the amazing travel experiences provided by their airline, tour group or cruise line. As far as digital customer experience trends go, this is definitely one of the most noticeable.

Everyone wants to go on a glamorous vacation and take those Insta-worthy pictures full of magnificent sunsets, stark landscapes and the obligatory beach

pic. Yet, one thing that may not be immediately noticeable is that a lot of these experiences are actually sponsored by specific airlines or resorts in order to garner widespread social media coverage.



A vibrant night festival scene featuring a large, ornate traditional Japanese building, likely a festival float or shrine, illuminated with warm yellow lights. The building has multiple tiers and is adorned with numerous circular lanterns. In the background, a massive display of fireworks bursts in shades of purple, blue, and white against a dark night sky. The foreground shows a dense crowd of people, though they are mostly obscured by the festival's elements.

# World Festivals

## Chichibu Night Festival

**C**hichibu Night Festival is considerably an enormous Japanese mass party, which gets packed quick and for good reason. Colourful floats decorated with lanterns, wood carvings and unique musical touches line the streets until they arrive at the city center.

**When: December 2 – 3, 2020**

**Where: Chichibu, Japan**



## *Klausjagen*

One of the strangest festivals in December, when locals and the visitors take to the northern shore of Lake Lucerne and chase down Santa with a cowbell and a bunch of hollering. The medieval pagan practice was meant to scare off evil spirits with noise but has transformed into a Christian festival involving good ol' St. Nick.

**When: December 4, 2020**

**Where: Küssnacht, Switzerland**



## *Christmas*

**B**eautiful Christmas lights, a gigantic Christmas tree, local and flavorsome food, rich wine and gingerbread, a beautiful ice rink, original and handmade Christmas gifts, Christmas concerts, here are the ingredients for your Christmas holiday, in family, with friends, alone or with your loved one. People throughout the world celebrate this day as a birth of Jesus Christ.

**When: December 25, 2020**

**Where: Worldwide**



## *Junkanoo Parade*

In this parade extravaganza, the locals prepare months in advance by fixing their costumes, floats and mastering their dance moves. Thousands of spectators crowd the side of the street and kickoff a massive parade in the Bahamas celebrating the Akan origin.

**When: December 26, 2020 – January 1, 2021**

**Where: Bahamas**

**REUTERS NEXT**RETHINK, REBUILD, RECOVER  
A NEW VISION FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Virtual Forum: January 11-14, 2021

**R**euters today launched one of the biggest and most ambitious leadership summits in the world, bringing together 25,000 executives over four days to hear from leading names in business, finance, politics, tech and media on the most pressing issues of our age. Over four days in January, Reuters Next will deliver agenda-setting discussion around the theme of Rethink, Rebuild, Recover; A New Vision For A Better Tomorrow, with the first speakers named including: European Central Bank president Christine Lagarde; Sandeep Mathrani, CEO WeWork; activist and businessman, Bobi Wine; Kristin Peck, CEO Zoetis; Shan Weijian, Chairman and CEO, PAG Group; and Mike Wirth, Chevron CEO.

This new virtual summit – which takes place January 11-14, 2021 - will examine topics such as global trade, climate change and sustainability, the fallout from the U.S. election and the impact of Brexit, new work models, press freedom, and economic recovery following the pandemic through a blend of fireside chats, presentations, panel discussions and networking. Led and programmed by newsroom editors, Reuters Next draws on the strength of the world's biggest news provider – with 2,500 journalists in 200 locations – and its unrivalled ability to provide professionals with both business and general news

from every part of the world. As a result, the summit brings together a diverse roster of speakers to examine topics from multiple perspectives, bringing their passion, experience and expertise to find new ways forward. Further preliminary speakers announced include: Dr Reza Baqir, Governor, State Bank Pakistan; Sebastian Thrun, CEO Udacity; Ilarion Mercurieff, President, Global Center for Indigenous Leadership and Lifeways; Dr Pandu Riono, Epidemiologist & Senior Staff, University of Indonesia, Faculty of Public Health; Iyinoluwa Aboyeji, Tech Entrepreneur Co-founder, Andela; Neil Roberts, Head of Marine and Aviation, Lloyd's of London Market Association; and Fola Fagbule, Senior Vice President, Africa Finance Corporation.

Josh London, Head of Reuters Marketing and Reuters Professional, said that Reuters Next will bring leaders from around the world together in January to discuss how they build a better world. Reuters has a unique, global presence and plays an essential role in providing trusted intelligence for professionals. He is thrilled that they can take that commitment to a new level through a hugely ambitious conference that we hope will set the global agenda for 2021.

Reuters Next is produced by Reuters Events and powered by Reuters award-winning newsroom. Reuters Events was created in October 2020 after Thomson Reuters acquired FC Business Intelligence. It delivers high-end conferences and exhibitions to diverse sectors including energy, insurance, pharmaceuticals, transportation, travel, strategy and technology. Its offerings help senior business professionals stay at the forefront of change through insight sharing and

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**27 Nov to 4 Dec  
2020**

**ATHENS INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXPO  
(Virtual)**  
[www.aite.gr](http://www.aite.gr)



**UZAKROTA ONLINE REBRAND**  
<https://www.uzakrota.com/online20/>

**1 to 3 December  
2020**

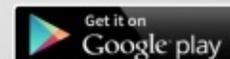
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**AND**  
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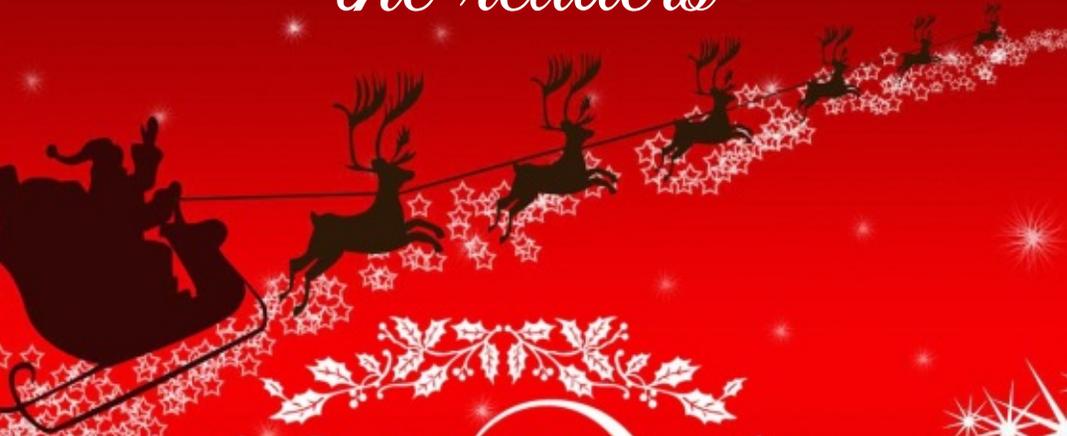
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# Travel AND Tour<sup>TM</sup>

W O R L D

*Wishing all  
the readers*



MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

The words "MERRY CHRISTMAS" are written in a white, ornate, serif font. The text is framed by a decorative wreath of holly leaves and berries. Two reindeer are positioned on either side of the word "MERRY", and a Christmas ornament is at the bottom center of the wreath.

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