

## AITO Know It All

AITO ([www.aito.com](http://www.aito.com)) is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. As its 120-plus specialist operators continue to innovate, here is a selection of exciting new programmes, destinations and itineraries on offer.



AITO has also been nominated in the [British Travel Awards](#)' 'Best travel review/ratings website' category. Please help AITO to win by voting [here!](#)

For the latest Directory of AITO members' PR contacts, please [click here](#).

### New tours and news from AITO members

**Artisan Travel** launches a new 100% tailor-made tour to Äkäslompolom in Finnish Lapland, where the itinerary is yours to create. Activity choices include skiing on a wonderful choice of pistes, snowmobiling, husky and reindeer safaris, plus visits to the incredible Snow Village. Äkäslompolom sits within the Aurora Zone, so there is a good chance of spotting the Northern Lights. Departures run from 25 November 2016 to 16 April 2017. For more information, [click here](#).

**CICERONI Travel** offers the opportunity to discover a hidden world in Barbados with a new escorted cultural tour launching March 2017. Based at the renowned five-star Cobblers Cove, explore rich architectural treasures from the Dutch-influenced Jacobean mansions of the seventeenth century to the sophisticated twentieth century houses of Oliver Messel – in several of which we will be hosted privately. For more information, [click here](#).

**China Links Travel** introduces a new Japan-only brochure, with 14 trips including group tours, self-guided tours with self-drive options, tailor-made and private tours, add-ons and cultural experiences. Try the *Classic Japan Tour* – an exhilarating holiday exploring Kyoto, Mount Fuji and Tokyo, or discover luxury travelling with the new *5\* Private Tour*, which includes the opportunity to stay in a traditional Ryokan. For more information, [click here](#).

**Ffestiniog Travel** has launched its Rail Holidays of the World 2017 brochure, offering a record 38 escorted tours across Europe and beyond. For rail connoisseurs, new itineraries include *Southern Sweden – Steam, Trams & Trains*, and *Bulgaria by Steam*, while *Danube from Sea to Source* traces the course of Europe's second longest river by train and boat. For more information, click [here](#).

**Fleewinter** introduces its biggest destination yet with its new India programme. Led by two country experts, expect extensive knowledge of the country, tailor-made classic trips as well as more unusual tours to suit individual requests. Try a selection of taster itineraries, focusing on culture, history, relaxation and wellbeing, or the newly added Andaman Islands for those looking to get far away from the beaten track and detox from modern life. For more information, [click here](#).

**Intravel** presents its first-ever Caribbean holiday with *Hike Dominica*. Known as the 'Nature Island', discover Dominica's evocative Boiling Lake, Dragon's Mouth, Valley of Desolation, plus many other locations which prove the little-known island to be far removed from any typical Caribbean cliché. Dominica is the perfect place for slow-holiday specialist Intravel's new 10-night *Secret Treasure of the Caribbean* walking holiday – available from November 2016. For more information, [click here](#).

**Oasis Overland** offers a new itinerary trekking through the rainforests of the Virunga Mountains in search of the protected Mountain Gorilla. The trip combines some of the

smaller (but more rewarding) East African National Parks, which are full of wildlife, with rare opportunities to participate in walking safaris. For an alternative experience, give quad biking, kayaking or white-water rafting a go in Uganda. For more information, [click here](#).

**Peter Sommer Travels** announces a brand new tour - *Exploring Hadrian's Wall: Romans, Reivers and Romantics*. Immerse yourself in England's richly-layered history and discover stern traces of Roman power, explore medieval market towns and stay in magnificent 14<sup>th</sup> century Langley Castle. With remarkable landscapes in a distinctly English region, the countryside inspires awe in its own right. For more information, [click here](#).

**Pettitts** feature a challenging and hugely rewarding journey to the eastern tribal state of Nagaland in India. As one of India's last remaining frontiers, Nagaland is indelibly linked to the colourful, indigenous tribal groups which are an important aspect of the region. The highlight of this journey includes a two-day visit to the renowned Hornbill Festival, known as '*the festival of festivals*', held annually in December and attended by all sixteen tribes of Nagaland. For more information, [click here](#)

**Sunvil** invites you to enjoy and participate in festive delights this winter in the Scandinavian city of Malmö. From the end of November, this friendly, compact city in southern Sweden is illuminated by twinkling lights. The streets are infused with the scent of cinnamon delicacies and filled with colourful stalls selling unique hand-crafted gifts. From 10<sup>th</sup> December, visit Christmas markets at Drottningtorget and St Gertrud's Church before enjoying the Santa Lucia celebrations. For more information, [click here](#).

**skiNorway** has been shortlisted as the 'Best UK Snowsports Tour Operator' in the World Snow Awards 2016, presented by the Telegraph Ski & Snowboard. Vote for them [here](#) to show your support for the only AITO operator to be nominated, and help showcase AITO to the snow sports industry. For more information, [click here](#).

### **Latest news from AITO-affiliated Tourist Boards**

The **Belgian Tourist Office** invites bicycle fans to try a cycling trip in Belgium, the home of the former professional road and track cyclist, Eddy Merckx. Whether it's a gentle few miles with the family, or a trip across the hills of the Ardennes, Belgium's beautiful regions are perfect for exploring on two wheels. For more information on itineraries, plus details about Belgium's cycling heritage, [click here](#).

The **Catalan Tourist Board** has launched a new visual campaign, *Catalan is Your Home*, to showcase the many real experiences visitors can enjoy in Catalonia. Presented by Cesc Gay, a Catalan film director, the campaign features five dynamic stories of unique experiences available in different locations. Visitors can gain an insight into the passion that fuels the 'human towers', discover the secrets of Catalan wines, kayak and snorkel in crystal waters, plus much more. To learn more about Catalonia, and watch Cesc Gay's videos, [click here](#).

The **Czech Tourist Authority** announces the opening of a new four-star luxury hotel in Prague: The Dancing House Hotel. This remarkable and magnificent building, designed by Croatian architect Vlado Milunić, Frank O. Gehry and British architect (of Czech origin) Eva Jiřičná, has become an integral part of Prague. With vintage wine festivals also taking place across the country, autumn is the perfect time to visit the Czech Republic. For more information, [click here](#)

The **Egyptian State Tourist Office** reveals that a new passenger ferry between Hurghada and Sharm el-Sheikh has just commenced operation. With a capacity of 300 passengers, the new service will operate on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The crossing takes around

two hours and costs from £54. This news coincides with a recent trip by a British parliamentary delegation to Sharm el-Sheikh, where inspected levels of safety and security received positive feedback. For more information, [click here](#).

**Macao Government Tourism** is getting ready to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Macao International Music Festival, taking place from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Internationally-renowned musicians from the Berlin Philharmonic String Quintet, the world famous Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra and the China Philharmonic Orchestra will perform a diverse programme including classical, opera, jazz and fado music and even film scores. For more information, [click here](#).

The **Saint Lucia Tourist Board** is launching a brand-new programme called 'Romance Revitaliser', centred around tailored, on-island experiences for couples. Bespoke romantic packages are tailored to each couple's requirements for a personal and holistic visit to one of the Caribbean's most romantic islands. Whether celebrating a honeymoon, anniversary or just rekindling a relationship, couples will create memories to cherish for a lifetime. For more information, [click here](#).

The **Tenerife Tourism Corporation** has opened online registration to join next year's Tenerife Walking Festival, taking place from 23 to 27 May 2017. This third edition of the festival is set to be the biggest and best yet, featuring a total of 20 walking routes plus a packed programme of supporting activities such as food fairs and stargazing sessions. For further details and to register, [click here](#).

**Visit Denmark** announces a new BA route to bring UK travellers to LEGOLAND® Billund Resort in Denmark. The launch of the first British Airways flight from Heathrow to Billund in the summer of this year has opened new opportunities for high quality family holidays in Denmark. Denmark is home of LEGO® and the original LEGOLAND® has teamed up with surrounding attractions/destinations like indoor water resort Lalandia® and wildlife safari park GIVSKUD ZOO. For more information, [click here](#).

**Visit Portugal** has released a series of itineraries, which present monuments and locations classified as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The "World Heritage Guide Books" include *I. In the heart of Portugal*; *II. In the North of Portugal* and *III. Lisbon, Sintra, Évora and Elvas*, and are available as a free app for iOS and Android phones, as well as being accessible online. For more information, [click here](#).

## **Ends/ 12 September 2016**

For further information on AITO, please contact [Travel PR](#) on 020 8891 4440 or email Sue Ockwell ([s.ockwell@travelpr.co.uk](mailto:s.ockwell@travelpr.co.uk)) or Rebecca Milne ([r.milne@travelpr.co.uk](mailto:r.milne@travelpr.co.uk)).

Issued by Travel PR on behalf of  
The Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO),  
18 Bridle Lane, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 3EG  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 8744 9280

[www.aito.com](http://www.aito.com)