



## **AITO Know It All – Media Newsletter**

After 42 years, AITO's ([www.aito.com](http://www.aito.com)) 120-plus specialist holiday companies continue to create inspiring trips and experiences for travellers of all ages and abilities to enjoy. Here is a selection of new itineraries, member updates and exciting events taking place in 2018 and going into 2019:

**Issued on 9 April 2018**

### **New tours and news from AITO members**

*Travellers can book directly through the AITO members featured in this newsletter. AITO members marked \* can also be booked through a local, trusted [AITO Specialist Travel Agency](#).*

**Activities Abroad\*** has a **new** summer family adventure to [Croatia's stunning National Parks](#). This seven-night holiday is based in Skradin, close to the Krka National Park, and offers activities including cycling, white water rafting and sea kayaking alongside stunning scenery. **Departures in May, July, August and October 2018.**

**Andante Travels** is running a special tour to Cuba this year for the legendary [Havana Ballet Festival](#), which takes place every two years. Part of Andante's *Travels In Opera & Ballet* collection, highlights include ballet performances, a private backstage tour of the Grand Theatre, exclusive meetings with the Malposo Dance Company and a private visit to the Cuban National Ballet School. **Departs 29 October 2018.**

**InsideAsia Tours\*** has launched a brand-new cultural activity tour in Indochina: [Hands On Indochina](#). This 15-night small-group tour is filled with unforgettable hands-on experiences, immersing guests in the wonderful culture and rural charms of Vietnam and Cambodia, with opportunities to meet the locals and support local sustainable tourism projects along the way. **Departing 17 March and 4 October 2019.**

**Inntravel\*** has introduced a **new** self-guided walking holiday, [Secret Andros](#), on the northernmost island of the Cyclades. Guests can explore the hinterland along restored *kalderimi* (cobble mule trails), past old olive presses and windmills, and visit the traditionally Greek town of Chora, with its proud seafaring heritage and even a Museum of Contemporary Art. **Departures between 12 May and 15 October 2018.**

**Kudu Travel\*** is offering a **new** [cultural walking tour](#) in southern India. Visit Goa, with its remarkable heritage of military forts and churches and Karnataka, crossing the Western Ghats to reach the Deccan Plateau and explore the Cradle of Indian civilisation covering Badami, Hampi, Belur and Halebid. The itinerary includes undemanding walks, a boat trip and a jeep safari. **Departs 18 January 2019.**

**Fleewinter** has launched a range of spa and wellness holidays, including [The Stress Cure at](#)

[Rogaška](#). Located in the peaceful spa resort of Rogaška Slatina, eastern Slovenia, counter-balance the negative effects of stress with the unique healing powers of magnesium-rich mineral water, known as Donat Mg, relaxing spa treatments and centuries-old wellness traditions, staying at the elegant Grand Hotel Rogaška. **Departs year-round.**

**Llama Travel** is pleased to announce a significant upswing in bookings to Argentina, with a 200% increase in leads for 2018 so far (compared to the same period in 2017) and an increase of over 300% in bookings. Llama Travel offers [holidays to Argentina](#) (its fourth most popular destination) from £1,779 pp, including flights from the UK and accommodation. **Departures available between April 2018 and April 2019.**

**Mountain Kingdoms\*** has introduced a fascinating new [wilderness trek](#) in the southernmost reaches of the stunning Bhutanese Himalaya. This 16-day holiday takes guests through sub-tropical forests, alpine meadows and over passes with amazing views, before reaching little-visited Dagana, with sightseeing opportunities in culturally fascinating Paro, Thimphu and Punakha. **Departs October 2018.**

**Pettitts Travel\*** has recently released an exciting 15-day [Food Tour of Japan](#). Learn how to prepare Japanese delicacies such as soba buckwheat noodles, rolled sushi, miso soup and Japanese-style salad as well as visiting Dotonbori in Osaka, where guests can sample everything from 'fugu' puffer fish to 'tacoyaki'. There is also the opportunity to visit Nijo Castle and The Golden Pavilion. **Departures available until December 2019.**

**Ramblers Walking Holidays\*** is offering savings of £61 pp and no single supplement for May and June departures of the new [Walk from Cómpeeta](#) trip. Set amongst orchard valleys and vineyards, Cómpeeta is a hidden gem in southern Spain, steeped in Moorish history with walks include the Sierra Almijara and Sierra Tejada, with panoramic views of the Mediterranean. **Departs 26 May and 2 June 2018.**

**Undiscovered Destinations\*** has introduced a fascinating tour to the remote Indian region of Nagaland to join the annual [Hornbill Festival](#) celebrations, with plenty of time to explore Nagaland's pristine national parks, home to rhinos and tigers. This inter-tribal festival features traditional arts, dances, folk songs and games set amidst immaculate replicas of tribal settlements. **Departs in November 2018 and 2019.**

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

**The Catalan Tourist Board** has declared 2018 as the Year of Cultural Tourism. Visitors are encouraged to explore the region's wealth of cultural attractions, traditions, spectacular landscapes and its unique gastronomy scene. [Catalonia](#)'s millenary history has left behind a range of fascinating legacies, from thousand-year-old cave paintings and Greek and Roman artefacts, to Medieval and Romanesque monasteries and iconic pieces of modernist architecture. Catalonia also boasts nine UNESCO World Heritage designated sites and its cultural festivals and traditions are world-renowned.

**The German National Tourist Office** announces Germany's eagerly awaited [white asparagus season](#). Starting in mid-April, this highly-prized speciality is featured within the GNTO's specialist travel itineraries (known as 'scenic routes') through Baden, Münsterland and across Lower Saxony. For those interested in asparagus-related food and travel stories, **the white asparagus season runs until 24 June.**

**The Greek National Tourism Office** is pleased to announce that the historic [Eupalinos Tunnel](#) on Samos, dating back to the 6th century BC, has re-opened to the public following extensive restoration works. One of the greatest engineering achievements of ancient times, the Eupalinos Tunnel operated for 1,000 years before it fell into disuse. This aqueduct is part of the Pythagorean archaeological site, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1992, which can now be visited in its entirety, including the Heraion of Samos – a large sanctuary dedicated to Hera, the goddess of marriage, women, childbirth and family. Visitors can now enjoy one of the most rewarding travel experiences in Greece on the eastern Aegean island of Samos.

**The Hungarian Tourism Agency** invites everyone to the [Gourmet Festival 2018](#). This finest festival of Hungarian gastronomy will go beyond the borders of the country this year by introducing not only some of the best restaurants in the region, but also inviting guest chefs from neighbouring countries. The festival will welcome culinary adventurers between **17 and 20 May 2018** in the heart of Budapest, at Millenáris Park.

**The Jordan Tourism Board** is excited to announce the first ever [Jordan Food Week](#). Taking place between **18 and 22 April 2018**, this week-long national celebration of Jordanian cuisine and culinary traditions has been launched by the USAID Jordan Local Enterprise Support Project (LENS). Jordan Food Week will be held in Abdali, Amman, and will feature more than 200 food artisans, chefs and farmers from across Jordan selling and showcasing their locally-made products.

**The Macao Government Tourist Office** is leading the way in luxury travel, as stated by the prestigious [Forbes Travel Guide 2018](#), which has awarded Macao's hotels and restaurants more five-star grades than any other city in the world. This renowned travel guide, which uses incognito judges to rate and rank the world's finest hotels, restaurants and spas, gave 12 hotels and 12 restaurants in Macao the coveted top award.

**The Malta Tourism Authority** is pleased to announce that, from **4 May 2018**, [Air Malta](#) will launch three flights a week from London's Southend Airport to the sunny Mediterranean isle of Malta. The new service makes the Maltese archipelago even more accessible to UK visitors and, with Valletta as the European Capital of Culture 2018, there has never been a better time to visit.

**Ras Al Khaimah Tourism**, UAE, announces that its UK Roadshow will take place from **30 April to 3 May** in London, Manchester, Newcastle and Glasgow. The 2018 RAK Roadshow will promote the Emirate to tour operators and travel agents across the UK as it strives to reach one million international visitors by the end of 2018. For more information, please contact [tom@raktada.com](mailto:tom@raktada.com).

**The Slovenian Tourist Board** is launching the world's first ever [World Bee Day](#) on **20 May** to celebrate the country's long history of beekeeping and to raise awareness of the positive impact that bees have on the planet. This international celebration will take place on the birthday of Slovenia's Anton Janša, considered one of the greatest bee experts of all time and the pioneer of modern beekeeping. Slovenia is a leading beekeeping tourism destination with over 10,000 beekeepers, 12,500 apiaries and nearly 17,000 hive colonies. It is also one of the first countries to certify apitourism providers.

**The Spanish Tourist Office** is celebrating the **90th anniversary** of [Paradores](#) – historical accommodation in converted palaces, royal manor houses and fortresses. All are part of the

history and tradition of Spain and much has changed since the first Parador opened in Gredos in 1928, welcoming Spanish Royalty along with leading intellectuals and stars from the cinema and art worlds. The hotel chain has celebrated continual growth ever since, achieving the highest standards of customer service, luxury and comfort. Discover the cultural, gastronomic and sporting experiences offered by Paradores in 95 locations all over Spain. Contact [juanjose.gonzalez@parador.es](mailto:juanjose.gonzalez@parador.es) for more information.

**The Tenerife Tourism Corporation** is excited to announce that the popular [Tenerife Walking Festival](#) is returning for a fourth consecutive year. Taking place from **22 to 26 May 2018**, the Tenerife Walking Festival combines different types of hikes and trails and is considered to be one of the most outstanding hiking events in Europe. With only 200 much-coveted spaces available, hikers are being encouraged to sign up now!

**Turismo Lanzarote** is delighted to announce that the [Lanzarote Fashion Weekend](#) is taking place from **11 to 13 May 2018** with a catwalk in a unique space – the volcanic tunnel of Jameos del Agua – and will be broadcasted live. Fashion brand Custo Barcelona will kick-start the event by presenting its collection of eight exclusive designs, inspired by the colours of Lanzarote. The event will be followed by a cocktail dinner and a DJ session held in the pool and volcanic surroundings of Jameos del Agua, an experience in one of the most unique natural environments in the world.

**Visit Portugal** is launching a **new** digital brochure, which is available in eight languages, including English and Chinese, to showcase the diversity of what's on offer in Portugal. A sustainable tourist destination, Portugal is designed by nature for relaxation as well as activity, with plenty of opportunities for immersion in the changing landscapes from north to south. On two legs or two wheels, the Portuguese countryside has a host of adventures on offer, including historic walled towns, lush natural surroundings, rural best-kept secrets, fantastic gastronomy and a wide diversity of experiences all year round. [Download Choose Portugal here.](#)

**Visit Sweden** is excited to reveal its **new** working partnership with the [Småland region](#) of southern Sweden – home to the sparkling lakes, endless forests and pretty meadows which inspired the work of celebrated Swedish painter and illustrator, John Bauer. The Småland region is also home to world famous children's author Astrid Lindgren and visitors can experience Astrid Lindgren World and learn about IKEA founder, Ingvar Kamprad. Pop into the first IKEA store and museum to find out more.

## Ends

### Note to Editors:

AITO, [www.aito.com](http://www.aito.com), is an alliance of over 120 of the best travel specialists. AITO members collectively provide an unrivalled range of holidays to every corner of the world. They are passionate about what they do and pride themselves on their attention to every detail of their customers' holidays.

AITO members' joint aim is to offer personal, caring service, to look after the environment in the places in which they work and to provide holidays that deliver both good value and high standards. All AITO holiday companies are required, as a condition of membership, to take full financial protection measures on behalf of their clients via the appropriate industry bonding schemes.

Travel PR will happily email all AITO members with any queries that travel writers may have – it's a great way to receive speedy feedback or information from AITO experts via just one email request.

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)), Jackie Franklin ([j.franklin@travelpr.co.uk](mailto:j.franklin@travelpr.co.uk)), or Charlotte Osborn ([c.osborn@travelpr.co.uk](mailto:c.osborn@travelpr.co.uk)).

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