



AITO Know-It-All

AITO (www.aito.com) turns 38 years old this year. Its 120-plus specialist operators continue to innovate, as will be clear from the selection of new programmes and itineraries below.

New tours and announcements from AITO members

Arblaster & Clarke Wine Tours has launched a programme of English wine weekends for 2014. Put your best foot forward and discover the delights of rural England by walking from vineyard to vineyard in the South Downs, where there is an excellent selection of award-winning English wine to taste. For more information, click [here](#).

China Links Travel has launched the second edition of its *China and Asia Tours* brochure, which includes departure dates until May 2015. For 2015 bookings made up to 31 March 2014, China Links guarantees to hold the 2014 price. For more information, click [here](#).

Cox & Kings has partnered with *Art Safaris* in Africa to offer a collection of small-group holidays aimed at those inspired to paint and sketch the stunning wildlife and landscapes of Botswana, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. Whether a beginner or an experienced artist, the professional team of tutors and guides will encourage guests to sit, look, observe and sketch the surroundings, using observation as a way of learning about the land, people and wildlife. For more information, click [here](#).

Discover the World has launched its *2014 Iceland Summer Programme* with a new range of self-drive, escorted and trekking itineraries. Created by Iceland experts, the new summer tours highlight places off-the-beaten-track and reveal some wonderful hidden gems. Self-drive clients will also have exclusive access to the 'iDiscover' iPad touring service from May 2014. For more information, click [here](#).

Expressions Holidays is offering a new French touring holiday for individuals wishing to witness the blooming sunflower and lavender fields of Provence. The eight-day self-drive tour of the [Lavender and Sunflower Fields of Provence](#) passes some of the most beautiful scenery en route to luxury hotels in Tourtour, Crillon-Le-Brave and Luberon. For more information, click [here](#).

A Golfing Experience has launched its new *Belgium, Battlefields & Golf programme*, offering great golf packages linked with the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and the Battle of Mons in 1914, plus the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. For more information, click [here](#).

Inntravel is offering new and truly authentic village-to-village privately-guided walking in the Sailing Valley in Nepal, well away from the tourist trail. Stay in charming guesthouses, built and run by the communities, while marvelling at the astonishing views. For more information, click [here](#).

Ionian Island Holidays has introduced a new flight route to Preveza from London Heathrow with British Airways. The new flight will depart every Sunday from 25 May until 5 October 2014 for holidays to Lefkada, Meganisi and Paxos. For more information, click [here](#).

Journey Latin America is offering complimentary tickets during *Rio Carnival* to the 'Magic Carnival Ball' hosted at the legendary Copacabana Palace. Guests will also enjoy one night in a deluxe room with a view over Copacabana beach. For more information, click [here](#).

Llama Travel has launched a new 2014 programme to Colombia, one of the most hotly-tipped holiday destinations. The *Best of Colombia*, an 11-day holiday, includes time in the capital city, Bogota, the rolling hills of the Coffee Region and the enchanting city of Cartagena, overlooking the Caribbean coast. For more information, click [here](#).

Mountain Kingdoms has completed its project to build a traditional twig bridge in Zanskar, Ladakh. Over the past five years, Mountain Kingdoms MD Steve Berry has raised £3,000 to restore a traditional twig bridge in Padum and thus to help preserve an ancient culture. The bridge is an extraordinary structure which can be used by locals and trekkers alike and forms part of a new Mountain Kingdoms trek in Zanskar in September 2014. For more information, click [here](#).

On Foot Holidays has launched a self-guided hike to the spectacular Serra de Tramuntana Mountains of Mallorca for 2014. Uncovering the little-known, wild and remote side of this temperate Mediterranean isle, the scenic eight-night trail encompasses the sophisticated capital of Palma, lofty peaks and deep valleys, and wonderful local cuisine. For more information, click [here](#).

Sunvil Discovery has launched its new *2014 real Portugal & Madeira* brochure, brimming with carefully selected properties and imaginative itineraries, focusing on lesser-known and undiscovered areas. The colourful and diverse Centro region has been expanded for 2014, with new properties ranging from grand historic townhouses to rural village casas. For more information, click [here](#).

Wilderness Scotland has introduced a new programme of guided road cycling adventures that give access to some of the most spectacular and culturally interesting places in Europe. See the real Scotland on a *Grand Tour* from the battlefield of Culloden to Edinburgh Castle. For more information, click [here](#).

Wildlife Trails has launched a new competition to win £400 towards a safari. *The Design, Travel and Conserve Giveaway* asks for people to describe their 'dream wildlife safari' and share it with Wildlife Trails using social media. Deadline for application is midnight on 24 March. For more information, click [here](#).

News from AITO-affiliated Tourist Board members

Andorra Turisme has announced that a new, free, open-air 'Cirque du Soleil' event will take place in the country this summer (5 July to 2 August), created exclusively for the country. The one-hour performances of *Scalada* will take place at a special outdoors auditorium in the capital city, Andorra La Vella. For more information, click [here](#).

The German National Tourist Office has announced two upcoming travel events in Germany for 2014: The ITB *Berlin* Convention, the world's largest tourism convention, and the Germany Travel Mart (GTM) in Bremen. For more information, click [here](#).

Gran Canaria houses the most complete archaeological collection in the Canary Islands and has recently opened the Maipés de Agaete Archeological Park - an aboriginal necropolis placed on a 1km lava track, allowing visitors to contemplate the visible marks of the a long-ago tsunami in the majestic Valley of Agaete. For more information, click [here](#).

Hungarian Tourism has announced the date for one of the biggest cultural events in Hungary - the *Budapest Spring Festival*. Returning for its 34th year, the special festival will take place from 21 March to 6 April. For more information, click [here](#).

Oman Tourism Office has announced the opening of a new five-star resort, Salalah Rotana Hotel, set along the shores of the Indian Ocean with the famous Salalah Beach just in front of it. Opening on 1 March, Salalah Rotana Resort will offer 400 rooms and suites that are beautifully built around lagoons, water features and man-made canals for an unforgettable experience. For more information, click [here](#).

Turismo do Portugal has revealed that the Casas Brancas Association is launching a new project in April 2015 - *Casas Brancas: Creative Tourism Network*. The project aims to strengthen the Casas Brancas network, starting with its creativity and capacity to sustain the identity, cultural values and heritage of the Alentejo and Vicentina Coast, and offering new products and services. For more information, click [here](#).

Tenerife Tourism Corporation has revealed that the second edition of the acclaimed *Starmus Festival* will take place on the island in September. 'Astro tourists' will have the chance to learn and share their knowledge and experiences about astronomy and science, whilst enjoying the stunning skies and landscapes of Tenerife, accompanied by some of the greatest minds of our time. For more information, click [here](#).

For further information on AITO, please contact Travel PR on 020 8891 4440 or email Sue Ockwell (s.ockwell@travelpr.co.uk), Rebecca Milne (r.milne@travelpr.co.uk) or Laura Manning (l.manning@travelpr.co.uk)

Issued: 26 February 2014