

AITO Know It All

AITO (www.aito.com) is celebrating its 40th year in 2016. Its 120-plus specialist operators continue to innovate – they've always been ahead of the game! – as will be clear from the sparkling selection of new holiday ideas and itineraries below.



New tours and news from AITO members

Ffestiniog Travel has released its Rail Holidays of the World 2017 pre-brochure, previewing some of the 38 escorted tours on offer next year. New itineraries include Uzbekistan & the Silk Road; Vietnam, Cambodia & the Mekong Delta; and South Africa & Stars of Sandstone, a 16-day rail tour featuring the famous Heritage Steam Festival. For more information, [click here](#).

Inntravel introduces a new trio of self-guided holidays for this summer. Enjoy a leisurely cycling break on the small and friendly island of Rugen, off the Baltic Sea coast of Germany, yet to be explored by British holidaymakers. The island boasts long sandy shores, quaint fishing villages, and Belle Époque architecture - perfect for experiencing on two wheels. For more information, [click here](#).

Kudu Travel launches a new seven-day tour in Switzerland this summer, starting on 24 July. Experience the Gstaad Menuhin Festival, celebrating the legacy of the great violinist Yehudi Menuhin with concerts held at the town's festival hall. Take a gentle hike amidst the superb Alpine scenery, explore the mountain railways or simply relax by the pool at the comfortable five-star hotel. For more information, [click here](#).

McKinlay Kidd offers a relaxing seven-night holiday, touring Yorkshire and Hadrian's Wall by train. Visit the historic city of York, the delightful town of Settle in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, and enjoy the classic Settle-to-Carlisle line, famous for its viaducts and views of the Pennines and Lake District Fells. For more information, [click here](#).

Oasis Overland launches a new 78-day expedition departing in September. Discover some of the oldest cities in the world, steeped in history and legend, from Troy to Esfahan. Visit the legendary 'Stans', the city of Ashgabat and the Old Register in Uzbekistan. Experience a night in a traditional yurt and camp in the epic wilderness of Kyrgyzstan. For more information, [click here](#).

On the Go Tours has an inspiring new private tour to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Easter Island – one of the world's most remote places. Starting and finishing in Hanga Roa, the five-day tour takes in all four corners of the island and encompasses iconic highlights, including of course the mysterious stone Moai statues. For more information, [click here](#).

Pettitts' new tour, departing in March 2017 – 'An Unforgettable Journey into the World of South Indian Cuisine' – will be accompanied by a CGH Earth Hotels' chef. Guests will shop in local markets, prepare food and eat in local restaurants and homes. Highlights include a 21-dish wedding feast in Chettinad, dinner at the unique 50 Mile restaurant in Periyar, and a farewell meal using Fort Cochin's classic home recipes. For details, [click here](#).

Sunvil's new itinerary to Halkidiki allows guests to follow in the footsteps of Aristotle in the 2,400th anniversary year of his birth. Based in the pretty seaside village of Olymbiada, very close to ancient Stagira, his birthplace, festivities include walks on the new Aristotelian trail, ancient cookery workshops and a range of interesting talks on his life and work, both as a philosopher and teacher of Alexander the Great. For details, [click here](#).

Undiscovered Destinations offers a 15-day escorted small group tour to Ladakh and Kashmir in India. Experience the colourful Hemis Festival of Leh, with performances by monastery lamas as part of the birthday celebrations of Guru Padamasambhava. Explore the green oasis of the Nubra Valley, the sacred Yarab Tso Lake and other incredible landscapes. For more information, [click here](#).

Wilderness Scotland continues to excel in off-the-beaten-track experiences, with an extended range of small group guided tours. Try an island-hopping adventure in the Outer Hebrides, exploring deserted islands, wild coastlines and white-sand beaches by sea kayak. Witness incredible wildlife and stunning scenery along the way, then relax and overnight in picturesque camping spots. For more information, [click here](#).

Latest news from AITO-affiliated Tourist Boards

Andorra Turisme offers a series of public events to complement the 2016 Tour de France, including a 'Bicycles for the Tour' exhibition on the history of the bicycle, music and dance performances, and a display of themed drawings by famous French cartoonist Jean-Jacques Sempé. For more information, [click here](#).

The Czech Tourist Authority is hosting a range of royal experiences to celebrate the 700th anniversary of the birth of European monarch Charles IV. As the Czech Republic becomes the Land of Royal Stories, castles and châteaux will offer experiences from stays in authentic royal accommodation to medieval fairs and tours. For more information, [click here](#).

Comboios de Portugal opens its Douro Historical Train route for the summer. Take a trip back in time on a steam train along the Douro River, passing through beautiful port wine vineyard landscapes. Travellers can enjoy a glass of port, traditional music and the chance to travel in the driver's cab for a unique experience. For more information [click here](#).

The Catalan Tourist Board invites visitors to Girona this summer – the real-life setting of Game of Thrones' *King's Landing* and *Braavos*. With stunning churches, cathedrals, city walls, winding alleyways and towering arches, the enchanting Catalan city has taken centre stage in season six of the hit drama. Fans now have the chance to explore various filming locations and imagine themselves in the *Seven Kingdoms*. For details, [click here](#).

Macao Tourism has transformed Nam Van Lakeside Plaza into an exciting new waterfront leisure hub – "Anim'Arte NAM VAN". Visitors can now enjoy a host of new creative experiences, including a craft market, arts pavilion, puppet making, graffiti displays and musical performances as well as the chance to take to the water on brand-new pedal boats. For more information, [click here](#).

The Red Sea Riviera boasts over a thousand diving sites, pristine marine life and warm, turquoise waters – perfect for underwater exploration. Ancient cultural sites and wonderful wildlife, combined with first-class resorts - Sahl Hashish, El Gouna, Hurghada, Makadi Bay, Soma Bay and Marsa Alam - deliver pure escapism, rejuvenating body and soul, just four and a half hours away. The Red Sea Riviera offers a vast array of exciting holiday ideas, at affordable prices. Enjoy the Riviera lifestyle – for details, [click here](#).

Tenerife Tourism Corporation welcomes Stephen Hawking, *Queen's* Brian May and many Nobel Prize winners to Starmus Festival III – an event celebrating the wonders of the Cosmos through science, art and music. Themed "Beyond the Horizon", physicists, musicians and astronauts will give talks, and a musical extravaganza offers Hans Zimmer,

British artist Sarah Brightman and rock band Anathema among others. For details, [click here](#).

Visit Guernsey has launched the Guernsey Autumn Walking Festival for September 2016. Visitors can choose from over 50 daytime and evening walks, from rambles through the island's scenic landscape to exploring rugged coastal paths. Led by Guernsey's gold and silver accredited guides, the walks vary in difficulty and length and are suitable for all ages and abilities. 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) or Rebecca Milne (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