



AITO SETS THE STAGE FOR ITS OVERSEAS CONFERENCE IN ASTURIAS, NORTHERN SPAIN, FROM 27-30 NOVEMBER 2025

26 November 2025

AITO - The Specialist Travel Association has released details of its upcoming Annual Overseas Conference in Asturias, Northern Spain.

In partnership with the Spanish Tourist Office, London, and Asturias Tourism, the three-day event will bring together AITO members with business partners and industry experts to discuss the major challenges and opportunities currently shaping the travel sector.

The theme of this year's conference is ***Algorithm v the Human Side of Travel***; the conference will once again provide a forum for AITO members to debate the future of specialist travel, including the growing influence of AI and digital tools, alongside the personal expertise, experience, and creativity that set the AITO family apart.

Headline Speakers include:

- **Colonel Richard Kemp – Former British Army Officer and Writer**
Richard Kemp is a former British Army Officer known for his leadership in the world's toughest hotspots, including Afghanistan. He later served in Downing Street, on both the Joint Intelligence Commission and COBRA. Today, he is a respected writer and media commentator on defence, intelligence, and global security issues.
- **Kenton Cool – World-leading Mountaineer and Adventurer**
One of the world's leading mountaineers, Kenton has climbed Mount Everest 19 times, a non-Sherpa record. With 44 major expeditions completed, he is one of the world's most sought-after mountain guides, and co-founded Adventure Base in 2008, offering premium adventure experiences across the Himalayas and in Chamonix.

Industry speakers include:

- **Martin Alcock** - Martin is an owner/director of Travel Trade Consultancy (TTC); he is well-respected by the travel industry and relied upon by tour operators and investors for his expertise in financial, regulatory and strategic challenges. Prior to TTC, Martin qualified as a Chartered accountant with PricewaterhouseCoopers and previously worked in the ATOL Department of the Civil Aviation Authority.
- **Richard Hearn** - Richard is a former AITO Chair, with a career focused on rural and sustainable tourism. He was General Manager at Canvas Holidays, founded a subsidiary at Wallace Arnold and then jointly founded both Inntravel and Village Ways (India). He sits on the advisory panel of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism.
- **Alessandra LoTufo Alonso** - Alessandra is a trailblazer, advancing gender equity in travel and tourism through Women in Travel CIC. She connects diverse women to meaningful opportunities worldwide, leads innovative training programmes, and drives industry transformation by championing inclusion, entrepreneurship, and social impact across global destinations.

- **Alisdair Luxmoore** - Alisdair is an AITO Council Member and an entrepreneur; he founded Vamoos in 2014. He previously ran AITO specialist Fleewinter, built two Moroccan hotels, and launched Super Yacht Holidays, offering luxury trips in Greece.

Says **Chris Rowles, Chair of AITO**: "I'm delighted that our generous hosts have invited us to hold this year's conference in the beautiful Principality of Asturias, Spain. This lesser-known gem, set between dramatic mountains and the region's rugged coastline, offers a rich mix of history, culture, and cuisine. It's the perfect destination for curious, discerning travellers such as AITO members, and doubtless there will be some new holiday programmes to the region introduced over the coming months.

"We're proud once again to present a strong business programme, combining expert insight from within the AITO community with external perspectives that both challenge and inspire. **The theme for our Overseas Conference is *The Algorithm v The Human Side of Travel*, and we'll discuss how both AI and people can work in tandem to the future benefit of specialist travel.**

"This is our chance to step back from the everyday, reflect on the big-picture issues facing our industry, and collaborate on ideas that will keep AITO members firmly at the forefront of the UK's SME travel sector."

Ends