



## AITO AGENTS' FOURTH FAMFERENCE, JUNE 2025 – GIBRALTAR



17<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Commenting on **AITO Agents' fourth Famference**, Martyn Sumners, Executive Director of AITO, the Specialist Travel Association ([www.aito.com](http://www.aito.com)), says: "Since launching the "Famference" concept, four years ago, and having been welcomed to three superb destinations, in Malta, Tenerife, and the Algarve, we knew that we were delivering a tough challenge to Gibraltar – and Gibraltar took us on, nevertheless, and 'The Rock', as it is sometimes known, certainly delivered, big time! This was once again about changing perception and it certainly did.

**"Our huge thanks go to everyone involved in welcoming 18 AITO Specialist Travel Agents and 17 AITO Specialist Tour Operators, plus two of the team from AITO HQ – Yvonne Kinder and me.** We stayed on the superb Sunborn Gibraltar Yacht Hotel Resort, and were joined by 10 delegates from Visit Gibraltar, based both in the UK and in Gibraltar.

"We were delighted to be joined by 14 AITO members who were new to the AITO Famference concept, along with no less than nine members of the AITO Agents' Panel – a great opportunity for one and all to compare notes about the way forward for AITO Specialist Travel Agents, and to discuss ideas while visiting a destination which was new to many.

"It was action all the way, with **welcome drinks at The Wheelhouse**, on the bow of the yacht, followed by **ten-pin bowling at the King's Bastion**, dating back to 1782 – this was Gibraltar's key western defence at the time, and played a central role in repelling a Franco-Spanish battery attack. After multiple uses over the years, in the 1990s the bastion was redeveloped and, today, it serves as a major leisure facility, preserving its historic significance via modern use."

The AITO group, divided into three smaller teams, **took part in 10 activities over the 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> June**, including stand-up paddleboarding, a city walking tour with experts from the Gibraltar Museum, a cable car ride followed by a tour of the Botanical Gardens, dolphin spotting by boat, e-bike adventure to the Upper Rock, the full Rock Tour (including the Siege tunnels), a visit to the Northern Defences, a hefty climb up the Mediterranean steps and exploration to Lower of St Michael's Cave.

Neanderthal homes within the Rock were viewed, and everyone marvelled at the military heroes who tunnelled within the limestone Rock.

**At the farewell dinner, held within the WWII tunnels of itself, AITO was honoured to be greeted by the Rt Hon Minister, Christian Santos, GMD, MP (Minister for Equality, Employment, Culture &**

**Tourism), along with Tracey Poggio, Director of Tourism for Gibraltar in the UK.** Speeches were responded to by Gemma Antrobus, AITO Agents' Chair.

Everyone sported red and white outfits, many in 1940s theme, to commemorate D-Day on 6 June. There was a full-size replica of a WWII Spitfire plane suspended from the ceiling, and the **Gibraltar Sea Scouts Pipe Band** and **Tears of Joy Choir** entertained their AITO guests.

**Ends/16<sup>th</sup> June, 2025**