

Industry Insight by...



What's coming up in Southern Europe? ANTOR members share their latest news so agents can keep a pulse on what's hot and happening in each destination....

THIS WEEK some of ANTOR's Southern European members will be sharing insights into their destinations and the upcoming events that will no doubt be of interest to your customers...

Gibraltar

Following the demise of Monarch Airlines last year, both easyJet and BA have seen an opportunity to increase their existing services to the Rock, with BA launching new Gatwick departures for summer. Gibraltar's events calendar continues to develop and attract visitors; in particular, the growth of the Calentita Food Festival in June, the MTV Gibraltar Calling International Music Festival in September and the Gibunco Gibraltar International Literary Festival in November. The launch of spectacular Skywalk by Star Wars actor Mark Hamill in March created a buzz ahead of summer bookings and we are definitely seeing a trend of visitors with purpose when they visit the Rock.

Malta

This year is a very exciting time for the Maltese archipelago, with Valletta as the European Capital of Culture. In April, Malta hosts its renowned International Fireworks Festival - April 21, 27 and 30 - and Annie Mac's Lost & Found Festival will return from May 3-6, bringing with it world-class DJs, castle raves and boat parties. Following the successful launch of the Malta Tourism Authority's Gastro Trail at the end of 2017, more maps will be introduced later this year, highlighting the best diving spots and natural attractions across the beautiful isle.

Cyprus

In 2017, The Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) celebrated a record-breaking year for tourism with three million global visitors, up 14.6% from 2016. Our long-term goal is to reach six million global tourist arrivals by 2030, which will be supported by strong infrastructure growth across the island. As the third largest island in the Mediterranean, Cyprus boasts the cleanest bathing waters in Europe and award-winning beaches, with 64 having Blue Flag accreditation. In February, Fig Tree Bay in Protaras, was named 13th in TripAdvisor's round-up of the best beaches worldwide.

France

This year is an eventful year for France; the Ryder Cup descends on Paris from September 25-30 and, after a ten-year absence, Formula One will return to Provence on June 28. Other highlights include the extension of national sea life centre Nausicaa, where a new 10,000sq.m tank will make it one of the world's largest aquariums. Meanwhile, two new museums open their doors: 'Calvados Experience' Museum in Normandy and 'Le Musée de la Romanité' in Nîmes. Last but not least, this

year will also see the end of the Great War Centenary, with commemorations taking place in November.

Italy

This year has been declared the 'Year of Italian Food and Wine' by Italy's Culture and Tourism Minister, so special focus will be on Food and Wine tourism. Experiencing Italian cuisine, products and wines is one of the main reasons for holidaymakers to Italy; the diversity and richness of the offer, mainly a regional one, is second to none. There is always a new dish to try, and our aim is to broaden the knowledge of our culinary heritage worldwide as our food is a major part of our culture. Italian cuisine is mainly characterised by regional dishes and we tend to promote this aspect of it as it represents the deep link between the territory and the food, its authenticity and sustainability. We hope that by focusing on food and wine tourism, visitors will want to return again and again to experience different regions and their local dishes.

Spain

In 2018, Spain launched a new campaign entitled 'Spain in 10 seconds' spearheaded by 12 prominent Spanish personalities from the fashion and art, culture, sports and entertainment sectors and drawing on their personal experiences showcasing Spain as a travel destination. The aim was to showcase the great diversity of the Spanish urban, cultural, gastronomy and shopping tourism offer from an innovative point of view, in a way never shown before. #Spainin10sec is a continuation of Spain's 2017 digital campaign 'Spain is part of you'. In this instance however, the focus of the campaign highlights the traveller's motivations rather than the destination's tourism proposition, positioning the visitor at the heart of the campaign and it provides excellent product knowledge.

Greece

In the last couple of years Greece has experienced a mini cultural renaissance with the openings of a plethora of museums, archaeological sites and cultural spaces. Following the opening of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre including the new Opera House and the new Contemporary art Museum, these last few months welcomed more cultural spaces including: The Benaki Toy Museum that features a collection that consists of approximately 20,000 toys, books, ephemera, clothing and artefacts of childhood, originating not only from Greece but from around the world. Finally one of the greatest engineering achievements of ancient times on the island of Samos - the 6th century BC Eupalinos Tunnel - has re-opened to the public following extensive restoration works. The Eupalinos Tunnel, which operated for 1,000 years before it fell into disuse, is part of the Pythagoreion archaeological site and a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1992.