



TRAVEL TRENDS REPORT 2020

INTRODUCTION



Travel Trends 2020 brings together the latest news and views from ABTA Members, market research and ABTA's own research, providing insights about trends and destinations to look out for in the year ahead.

2019 marked another year of political turbulence, capped by the General Election on 12 December. As we go to press, we do not yet know what the shape of the new government will be, nor are we any closer to finding a resolution to Brexit – all options still appear to be on the table.

We saw the very sad demise of Thomas Cook towards the latter part of 2019 – an iconic British travel company whose failure impacted hundreds of thousands of customers and employees as well as many other travel businesses.

In spite of this context, however, 2019 proved to be a resilient year for holiday-taking. ABTA's own research, along with other industry data, shows that despite the gloomy political and economic indicators, the vast majority of people still went on holiday – nearly nine in ten of us, in fact.

The enduring appeal of the package holiday is part of the reason for this, particularly as it evolves and adapts to appeal to new generations of holidaymakers. Also encouraging is that travel professionals are adapting to the changing needs of customers, a trend we think will continue

as travel businesses increasingly employ technology to complement and support customer service.

In last year's report, we predicted that 2019 would be the year that sustainability issues would go mainstream and that has proved to be the case, with a spotlight thrown on climate change in particular. Greta Thunberg and Extinction Rebellion have become household names and there is an increasing appetite to understand the environmental impacts of travel and tourism. Tourism can be a tremendous force for good, although impacts on destinations, their natural environment, economies and communities need to be managed.

For its part, ABTA is committed to working with its Members, their suppliers, travellers, and destination governments, including the UK government, to build a sustainable industry and ensure tourism benefits everyone.

Mark Tanzer
Chief Executive



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12 DESTINATIONS TO WATCH



Basilicata



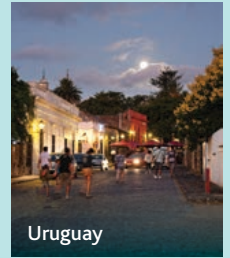
Georgia



Madrid and its neighbouring cities



The Netherlands



Uruguay



Grenada

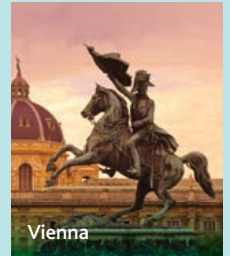
Credit: Orlando K. Romain - Dive Grenada



Morocco



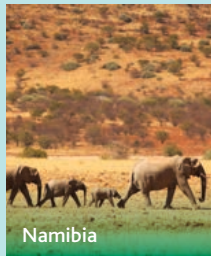
Singapore



Vienna



Chicago and Lake Michigan



Namibia



South Korea

Basilicata

Mountainous, heavily wooded and dramatic, Basilicata is a different side to Italy which travellers are now discovering – from the city of Matera to the impressive mountain range of the Lucanian Apennines to the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Chicago and Lake Michigan

The “Windy City” has a spectacular lakeside location on one of the five Great Lakes, is home to one of the liveliest music scenes in the USA and has even designated 2020 as the ‘Year of Chicago Music’.

Georgia

With unspoilt landscapes, delicious wines and welcoming people, Georgia is a delightful and surprising destination – with direct flights from the UK into its capital Tbilisi taking just under five hours.

Grenada

Often referred to as the Island of Spice, Grenada is incredibly fertile – its green hills are full of fruit, nut and spice bearing trees. It also has some beautiful beaches which are less crowded than many other Caribbean islands.

Madrid and its neighbouring cities

The Spanish capital Madrid is one of the world’s great city break destinations, and it is also a perfect base to visit many other historic cities and towns which are easily reachable by public transport or car.

Morocco

A country that is very easy to fall in love with, Morocco has dramatically varied landscapes offering windswept beaches, the sand dunes of the Sahara and the rugged beauty of the High Atlas and Rif mountains.

Namibia

Towering sand dunes, dramatic coastlines and beautiful national parks teeming with wildlife – Namibia is a place of dramatic contrasts and spectacular landscapes.

The Netherlands

A country that effortlessly blends the ultra-modern with its rich historical legacy. With Rotterdam hosting Eurovision Song Contest 2020 and Dordrecht celebrating its 800th birthday in 2020, these are just two of many reasons to visit.

Singapore

A blend of iconic hotels, 21st century architecture and the world’s best airport – join the party as this affluent and modern country celebrates its 200th birthday.

South Korea

South Korea is already a leading cultural power in the Far East, but its reach is going global, driven by world-class films, food and the blockbuster phenomenon of K-pop.

Uruguay

A compact gem, with spectacular landscapes, lovely cities and incredible steaks – Uruguay is one of the smallest countries in South America, but it packs a lot into its land mass.

Vienna

In 2020, this beautiful city will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven. Vienna has also been named the most liveable city in the world for the past two years, which visitors will be sure to agree with.

2019 MARKET OVERVIEW

2019 saw the biggest company failure in UK travel industry history, with the collapse of Thomas Cook, while the Brexit crisis that has dominated UK politics for several years continued.



In spite of these factors, people have remained committed to their holidays. ABTA research shows that 88% of people took a holiday in the 12 months to the end of July 2019, either at home or abroad, up slightly from 86% last year and the highest number since 2011.

Holidays abroad, particularly longer holidays of seven nights or more, proved especially popular. The number of foreign holidays of seven plus nights increased to an average of 1.1 per person in 2019, up from 1.0 in 2018 and 0.7 in 2016. More than six in ten Brits (64%) took a foreign holiday in the 12 months to July 2019, up from 60% the previous year, and the highest figure since 2011.

The year was notable for the great range of excellent value holidays and destinations available. After experiencing a challenging few years due to the perceived threat of terrorism, good value package destinations including Egypt and Turkey both saw double digit growth year on year in 2019, according to industry data¹.

Alongside favourite destinations such as Mainland Spain, the Canaries, the Balearics, Greece and Italy, the growth of Egypt and Turkey, plus the emergence of destinations such as Croatia and Bulgaria, have delivered tremendous choice and value for customers.

The resurgence of Turkey and Egypt partly explains why package holidays had a strong year – more than half the population (51%) took a package during the year, with value for money the top reason for choosing this type of holiday. All-inclusives also increased in popularity.

The other main reasons for picking a package are having everything taken care of and convenience. The variety of packages now available, with the ability to personalise an itinerary or even design a completely tailor-made experience, is ensuring this type of holiday is maintaining its appeal for UK holidaymakers. According to Office for

National Statistics (ONS) figures, the package holiday market has enjoyed five consecutive years of growth since 2014².

Europe was the number one choice for British holidaymakers travelling abroad with 84% visiting the continent in 2019. Long haul destinations also proved popular with North America and Asia topping the list of destinations further afield.

Despite taking more holidays, UK holidaymakers looked to make their money go further by cutting their spending both before and during their holidays. Compared to two years ago (2017), people spent on average £98 less before and whilst away on a short overseas break, and £94 less on a longer overseas break. Spending was also down for shorter and longer holidays in the UK.

¹ Data sourced from GfK's Travel Insights service to August 2019. Data shows: Egypt (+21%), Turkey (+22%), Bulgaria (+20%) year on year.

² ONS statistics show 2018 overseas package holiday visits of 18,172,000, up from 17,539,000 in 2017, 17,456,000 (2016), 16,676,000 (2015) and 15,868,000 (2014).

“ More than half the population took a package holiday ”



“ Good value package destinations including Egypt and Turkey both saw double digit growth year-on-year in 2019 ”



2020 MARKET OUTLOOK: OVERSEAS HOLIDAYS

With so many political uncertainties ahead, most notably the shape of the new UK government and the outcome of the Brexit process, it is difficult to predict with certainty what the year ahead will bring for holiday-taking.



UK economic growth for 2020 is forecast to remain modest on the basis of the swift passage of a Brexit deal, although forecasters are more gloomy about prospects if there is a no-deal Brexit³.

In April 2019, the UK's top ten ATOL holders added an additional 15% capacity to the market⁴. As we go to press, it is too early to say what the final ATOL authorisations will be for summer 2020. The market is responding rapidly to the Thomas Cook failure, with much of their capacity likely to shift to other organisers as airlines take up the routes and slots are vacated by Thomas Cook Airlines.

Looking at consumer sentiment, the mood appears to be fairly positive when it comes to holidays. ABTA's research shows that travel is still a spending priority for the year ahead as over a quarter of people (27%) plan to spend more on their holiday, up from

25% who said the same last year. The number of people who plan to spend less (14%) is consistent with the past two years.

The main reasons people are planning to spend more are to secure the destination of their choice and to take the trip of a lifetime. The main reasons cited by those who plan to spend less are that they took a major trip last year and lack of confidence in the economy.

Seven in ten people (70%) are planning a trip abroad. Europe remains the number one destination people plan to visit, with 57% saying they plan to take a trip there. The UK is the second most popular option at 56%. Just over half of people (51%) say they are concerned about the impact Brexit will have on the cost of their holiday. However, this has fallen since last year when 54% said they were concerned.

Value for money looks set to be a strong driver of holiday choices in 2020, as was the case last year. 21% of people say they plan to take an all-inclusive in the year ahead.

However, we're also expecting increasing numbers of holidaymakers to seek out authentic experiences and to think about the impact their holidays have on local communities and the environment – with 'slow travel' and an increased consumer focus on tourism impacts both being highlighted as trends to look out for.

³ www.focus-economics.com/countries/united-kingdom

⁴ www.travelweekly.co.uk/articles/328936/uk-package-holiday-capacity-soars

“Travel is still a spending priority for the year ahead”

2020 MARKET OUTLOOK: DOMESTIC HOLIDAYS

The number of trips taken in the UK between July 2018 and July 2019 increased, according to ABTA research. On average, UK holidaymakers took two staycations during the year – seeing a return to 2017 levels.

VisitEngland have also reported that domestic tourism in Britain saw a record breaking number of trips (35 million overnight holidays) from January to July 2019 – up 2% on the same period last year.

The UK will continue to be a popular destination in the year ahead, with 56% of people planning a domestic break⁵.

When it comes to the types of domestic holiday people prefer, breaks to the seaside look set to remain strong⁶, as do luxury short breaks⁷, and dog friendly staycations are expected to be popular⁸.

There are a range of important events and anniversaries in 2020, from historic occasions to sports tournaments, throughout various parts of the country.

The early May Bank Holiday (Friday 8 May) has been moved to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day. It will be celebrated with a number of local and national events, including: the Nation's Toast, where more than 20,000 pubs will encourage patrons to raise a glass to World War II heroes, bagpipers playing the traditional Battle's O'er at the top of the four highest peaks in the UK, and bells in churches

and cathedrals across the country are joining in a special Ringing Out for Peace.

Later in the year, the UK, USA and The Netherlands will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim Fathers' journey on the Mayflower, with major international events, cultural works and education programmes. 11 locations in England connected to the Mayflower story will take part in the Mayflower 400 programme – with Plymouth, where the ship set off, leading the way.

In the sporting world, the Fife Regatta will be returning to the Clyde in early June. Last seen in their home waters off Fairlie in 2013, it was deemed fitting to stage the regatta's return during Visit Scotland's 'Year of Coasts and Waters' – which will also see an array of other events around this theme including the RSPB's second dolphin watching festival in Aberdeen (DolphinFest 2020). For football fans, Euro 2020 is being held across the continent for the first time in the competition's 60-year history, with 12 cities including London hosting matches in June and July.



In Wales, the 'Year of Outdoors' will celebrate the country's outstanding natural landscapes, encouraging visitors to discover Wales through a variety of attractions and experiences. These include its 870-mile Coast Path, three National Parks, 600 Castles and a network of International Dark Sky Reserves – world-beating places to go stargazing.

In Northern Ireland, the Game of Thrones Studio Tour is due to open its gates for visitors in Spring 2020. It will comprise captivating sets, original props and costumes, and other behind-the-scenes items from the hit series, dropping fans into the heart of the Seven Kingdoms.

⁵ ABTA Holiday Habits 2019

⁶ According to VisitEngland, 35% of domestic holidays were to the seaside last summer

⁷ Hoseasons has seen a 20% increase in 'bubble break' (luxury lodges with hot tubs) bookings and a 23% increase in bookings for its luxury specialist brand

⁸ Due to demand, cottages.com now offers 14% more dog friendly accommodations (YoY), over half of its properties are now pet friendly and properties that accept pets also achieve 21% more bookings on average

“In early May the 75th anniversary of VE Day will be celebrated with a number of local and national events”



“More than half of UK holidaymakers are planning a staycation in the next year”

2020 MARKET OUTLOOK: CRUISE HOLIDAYS

The cruise market continues to grow in popularity for UK holidaymakers, with one in ten people going on a cruise between July 2018 and July 2019, up 2% on the previous year⁹.

With an ever-expanding range and diversity of trips on offer there has been a notable increase in demand from younger travellers, with more than a quarter (28%) of 18-34 year olds taking a cruise, up 6% on 2018. Furthermore, one in five (20%) of this age group say they would like to go on a cruise again¹⁰.

'Taster' cruises (two to five day trips) are becoming more popular, especially among the younger demographic – with a third (33%) of 18-34 year olds interested in going on a three to five day cruise. Royal Caribbean will continue to provide a range of short sailing itineraries across a variety of its ships around the world, tailored for younger holidaymakers. One of these is a four night Bahamas sailing roundtrip from Miami, which includes a stay on the cruise line's exclusive private island, Perfect Day at CocoCay.

Cruise ships are also increasingly being built with multigenerational travel in mind – with more than a third of young families (34%) having been on a cruise, up from 29% last year¹¹. Family cabins, water parks, theatres and game areas are all now more commonplace on modern ships, providing entertainment across the age groups. Carnival will be launching a trampoline park on its 'Carnival Panorama' ship at the end of the year and a rollercoaster on its new ship, 'Carnival Mardi Gras', in August 2020.

Meanwhile, holidaymakers seeking greener cruise trips have plenty of options to choose from. Royal Caribbean has announced 1,400 sustainable tours for the year ahead, offering responsible excursions while ashore, such as kayaking along Mallorca's west coast and grape harvesting at a winery in Uruguay, all provided by operators certified to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) standard. Royal Caribbean's newest private island, Perfect Day at Lelepa, will also be built with sustainability features designed to safeguard the island's ecosystems and will be the first carbon-neutral private cruise destination in the world.

Fred Olsen continues to run its 'Refill' campaign and has installed free water stations across its ocean fleet with passengers encouraged to bring their own bottles. Plastic water bottles that were previously supplied in passenger rooms have also been removed and replaced with glass carafes of drinking water, which are replenished daily. Intrepid has a no single-use plastic rule on all of its cruise holidays and sources 90% of its meals from local producers.

The demand for river cruises is also expected to continue to grow, with almost a third (32%) of people interested in this type of cruise¹². Passengers can sail to the heart of a destination and easily take part in a range of exciting activities, including biking, hiking or canoeing. Uniworld is launching four new vessels next year which will sail on rivers in Portugal, Cambodia, Vietnam, Egypt and Northern Italy. Shearings also offers a range of river cruises throughout the year, from exploring the German Christmas markets on the Rhine to navigating the riverscapes and spring colours of The Netherlands.

9,10,11,12 ABTA Holiday Habits data 2019

“ More than a quarter (28%) of 18-34 year olds have taken a cruise this year, up 6% on 2018 ”



KEY TRENDS 2020

THE RISE OF "SLOW TRAVEL"

In the digital age when everything happens at pace, an emerging trend is seeing holidaymakers choosing to slow down the tempo and experience destinations on a deeper level – making more genuine connections with local people and cultures along the way.

"Slow travel" is as much about enjoying the journey as it is the destination and involves making a conscious effort to take in the sights and sounds, rather than worrying about sharing them on social media. Even on a shorter trip, a less packed itinerary takes the pressure off having to visit all the usual tourist hotspots and instead focuses on having more meaningful experiences.

Tour operator, Responsible Travel now provides holidays specifically tailored for slow travel where the emphasis is on experiencing the country at a more relaxed pace, rather than rushing through

a checklist of things to do.

Luxury Gold, The Travel Corporation's premium group travel operator, has seen increased interest in its railway holidays, including a 22-day Trans-Siberian railway trip, providing the chance for passengers to sit back, unwind and take in the breathtaking scenery.

With more time in one destination, slow travel can potentially reduce the journey footprint, and provides travellers with the chance to support more locally run businesses such as restaurants, guesthouses and community projects – resulting in a positive impact on the local economy and community. Add to this the fact that ABTA's latest Holiday Habits Report reveals 62% of people want travel companies to ensure their holidays help the local people and economy, it suggests that slow travel has a bright future ahead.



TRAVEL AGENTS MEETING THE DEMAND FOR DIGITAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

Holidaymakers are seeking a variety of ways to get support during the booking process, with 16% of people who book a holiday online now using a live chat service or speaking to a travel professional via social media¹³.

Many travel companies are adopting a multi-channel approach to personalise their service for customers – from building specialist social media customer service teams to speaking directly to them via messenger apps.

Hays Travel has seen digital enquiries grow by 300% in the last two years and recently

created a dedicated digital contact centre with 48 staff, to meet the growing demand from customers wanting to access advice 24/7. Meanwhile, Travel Counsellors has announced multi-million pound technology upgrades in 2019 that will enable its members to better personalise their interaction with clients through its updated app and bespoke technology platform.

A step on from the booking phase, TUI has now implemented an instant messaging service via its app, allowing customers to

ask staff questions during their holiday.

Travel technology company Amadeus believes whilst the customer experience is becoming more positive with the support of technology such as virtual assistants, there is much more opportunity to take things even further; however the key is to create true value, not just tech gimmicks.

¹³ ABTA Holiday Habits Report 2019



ELECTRIC AVIATION TAKES FLIGHT

The future of aviation is shifting towards electric powered aircraft, as advancements in technology and increasing demands for more sustainable modes of travel have made the concept of commercial electric flights a very real prospect.

Airlines such as Ryanair and easyJet continue to push ahead with plans to fly low noise, electric passenger jets within the next decade, with easyJet aiming to achieve electric powered flights of around 310 miles (approximately the distance from London to Amsterdam) by 2030.

The 2019 Paris Airshow also unveiled a prototype of the world's first commercial all-electric passenger aircraft and is expected to enter service in 2022. The aircraft, called Alice, has been developed by Israeli firm Eviation and will be able to carry nine passengers up to 650 miles.

Developing electric aircraft for short haul travel will produce lower emissions and less noise, and help offset aviation's environmental impact, alongside other developments such as alternative sustainable fuels.



TOURING GETS THE PERSONALISED TREATMENT

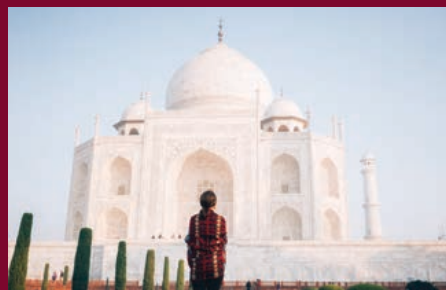
Travel companies are developing new types of flexible and immersive touring products, catering to different preferences to ensure widespread appeal across different types of holidaymakers.

The Travel Corporation's budget friendly brand, Costsaver, has seen its flexi-touring model go from strength to strength. Focusing on "guided independent" touring, sales have more than doubled year-on-year. Inghams has also seen a rise in demand for self-guided tours – where holidaymakers can see and explore a destination at their own pace; with all the planning, itinerary and logistics taken care of and without the need to travel as part of a wider group.

TUI's new 'Escorted Tours' programme offers tours with a personal touch, has also had a positive response from customers; so much so that TUI has increased the number of tours for its summer and winter 2020

programme, already up 50% and 24% respectively compared to 2019.

This trend doesn't just apply to types of tour, but also to tour group demographics. Intrepid Travel introduced women-only tours in 2018, led by female guides, which provide unique insights into the lives of women in Kenya, India, Nepal and Turkey. These tours have been one of Intrepid's fastest selling product ranges in its 30-year history, growing from just four departures to 36 in the space of a few months.



INCREASED FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Consumers are increasingly aware of the environmental and social impact of their holidays. For example, ABTA's latest Holiday Habits report shows that half (50%) of people now say that the green credentials of a travel company are important or essential when choosing a holiday, its highest level ever.

Following years of rising concern over specific issues such as animal welfare, plastic waste and climate change have progressed further into consumers' consciousness. Global climate strikes pioneered by Greta Thunberg, protests by environmental group Extinction Rebellion and the continued work from David Attenborough have increased awareness on climate change and this looks set to rise.

There is an increased call to demonstrate the value tourism brings and the positive impacts it can have. Tourism can be a force for good, offering a vital source of income and employment for communities in destinations.

Sustainability has been on the agenda for many travel businesses for quite some time, and the industry is increasingly taking action to address the environmental and social impacts of their

tourism products. This includes setting carbon reduction targets, developing excursions which maximise the benefit to local communities, single use plastic reduction and implementing animal welfare policies. More and more hotels are also joining Travelife – an accreditation scheme for accommodation providers who are committed to sustainability, to drive down the impact of supply chains.

ABTA is committed to working with its Members, their suppliers, travellers and destination governments, including the UK government, to build a sustainable industry so that tourism is a benefit to everyone.



Magical Matera, dramatic wooded mountains and delightful seaside villages

Mountainous, heavily wooded and dramatic, Basilicata is a very different side to Italy. Once characterised by extreme poverty epitomised in the classic book “Christ stopped at Eboli”, savvy travellers are now discovering the many charms of this impressive land.

The UNESCO world heritage site, and European Capital of Culture for 2019, Matera has undergone a renaissance in recent years, with many of the ancient Sassi cave dwellings that characterise the town, being converted into hotels, cafes and art galleries. Matera’s unique architecture will also hit the world stage in 2020 as it features in the latest James Bond film. In the interior of Basilicata you will find the impressive mountain range of the Lucanian Apennines and the National Park of Pollino, home to golden eagles, wolves, deer and otters. Beach lovers should head to the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea, with its many rocky

coves and charming villages. In particular, the seaside town of Maratea is an absolute joy and a great base for the lovely surrounding villages. Think of a more relaxed version Amalfi coast. Take time exploring its winding lanes, and then sit at an outdoor cafe in the charming main square, Piazza Buraglia. Basilican cuisine is simple but delicious, based on locally sourced fish, meat and vegetables. Don’t miss the tasty

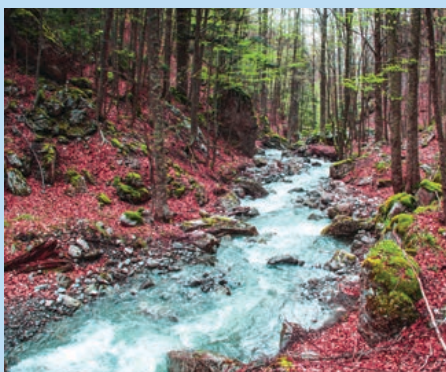
Maratea is an absolute joy and a great base for the lovely surrounding villages

Lucanica sausages and ciammotta, a delicious vegetable stew featuring aubergine and tomato. And one of your finest memories of Basilicata will be the delicious smell of baked bread wafting through the unforgettable streets of Matera.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/italy for more information.

To contact emergency services in Italy, call 112.



The Blues, bars and fantastic food set along a stunning lake

If you're looking for a good time, then Chicago is very much your kind of town and it's easily accessible too, with 14 daily direct flights from the UK. The "Windy City", with its spectacular lakeside location on the third largest of the five Great Lakes, is home to one of the liveliest music scenes in the USA and has even designated 2020 as the 'Year of Chicago Music'.

Jazz and Blues clubs are everywhere and the city hosts hundreds of gigs and concerts throughout the year including the massive Blues Fest in Millennium Park and Chicago's very own answer to Glastonbury, Lollapalozza, a four-day rock out. Head to Navy Pier and have fun on its ferris wheel and amusement arcades and don't forget to take a selfie by the iconic Big Bean sculpture. You'll need plenty of food to fuel your partying and in Chicago the calories come thick and fast, with the city's unique takes on the hot dog, Italian beef sandwich, deep dish pizza, cheesecake and donuts all washed down with a few local Goose Island beers. Chicago also has an impressive ethnic culinary heritage with Vietnamese pho, Polish pierogi and Mexican tamales. During the day you'll have a great time experiencing Chicago's street art and the impressive architecture of the Pritzker Pavilion and Frank Lloyd Wright's beautiful Robie House. Chicago marks the start of the well-known Route 66, and getting out of the city takes you into a very different world. Lake



Chicago has an impressive ethnic culinary heritage

Michigan is extremely beautiful with dramatic cliffs, tranquil sand dunes and beaches ringing its shores. Hiring a car is a must to take a tour round the lake, the area is also home to the famous Ryder Cup golf course and a number of national parks where you can experience the American wilderness at its awe-inspiring best, without the crowds you get in the more famous parks such as Yosemite and Yellowstone. If you're lucky and you visit later in the year, you may even see nature's very own light show, the Aurora Borealis flickering over one of the most beautiful spots on the planet.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/usa for more information.

To contact emergency services in USA, call 911.



GEORGIA

Unspoilt landscapes, delicious wines and incredibly welcoming people

Georgia is a delightful and surprising destination, easily accessible from the UK with direct flights into its capital Tbilisi taking just under five hours.

Tbilisi is a picturesque mix of cobbled streets and balconies covered in plants, set around the dramatic gorge of the Mtkvari river. It is a lively, fun city with a growing club scene, great restaurants and many impressive wine bars. Wine is something you will come across a lot in Georgia; it lays claim to being the birthplace of viticulture with a tradition going back thousands of years and there are up to 1,000 different grape varieties grown in the country. Georgian wines are often of a very high standard and also good value for money. The Georgian countryside is very green and largely unspoilt, with 70% covered in forests. To get a real feel for this ancient land, head to Svaneti in the northwest, with its rugged mountains and impressive ancient watch towers. Things don't slow down for winter either, with several tour operators now offering enticing new ski adventures aimed at advanced and intermediate level downhillers. Georgia is home to a number of UNESCO world heritage sites including the atmospheric Jvari Monastery and Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta, the historic capital of eastern Georgia. Georgian food is delicious

with an emphasis on the freshest of ingredients and it has an amazing range of cheeses, especially the national favourite Sulguni. Vegetarians are also particularly well served. You'll need to watch your waistline particularly in Svaneti where cheesy mashed potato, the

ultimate comfort food, is a staple of the local diet. Perhaps Georgia's greatest draw is its people; open and friendly, they regard visitors as welcome and honoured guests. After experiencing their warmth, you will be sure to want to return to this lovely country.



The Georgian countryside is very green and largely unspoilt, with 70% covered in forests. To get a real feel for this ancient land, head to Svaneti with its rugged mountains and impressive ancient watch towers



IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/georgia for more information.

To contact emergency services in Georgia, call 112.

GRENADA

An island feast for the senses with idyllic uncrowded beaches

This beautiful Caribbean island is a feast for all the senses, but your nose is in for a special treat as Grenada is incredibly fertile, and its green hills are full of fruit, nut and spice bearing trees. You'll find damsel, almond and banana together with the fragrant nutmeg and some much more exotic local plants.

Chocolate also grows happily on the island and chocaholics can spend a happy few hours in the Diamond Chocolate Factory watching the magical process of going from bean to bar. Pack some sturdy boots as you really shouldn't miss hiking in The Grand Etang National Park with its gorgeous volcanic lake surrounded by lush rainforest. The capital, St. George's, is a very attractive place with lively bars and restaurants and after lunch head off for the impressive views from its colonial forts. Grenada has some very beautiful beaches which are less crowded than many

other Caribbean islands, the most popular is Grand Anse (often featuring in 'best Caribbean beach' lists), where you can relax with a rum punch in hand or work off a few calories wind surfing. If you fancy a little solitude head off to Levera Beach, which is also home to sea turtles, and the white sands and clear waters of Morne Rouge Beach are idyllic. Any trip to the Caribbean that did not involve some time in or under the water would be a wasted trip and in Grenada make sure you take a boat out to the Underwater Sculpture Park for some unforgettable memories of snorkelling through

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/grenada for more information.

To contact emergency services in Grenada, call 911.

Pack some sturdy boots as you really shouldn't miss hiking in The Grand Etang National Park



Above: True Blue Bay Boutique Resort chocolate cooking session – tasting the dish. Left: Levera Beach Romance

MADRID AND ITS NEIGHBOURING CITIES | SPAIN

World class nightlife and museums, with beautiful cities a train ride away

The Spanish capital Madrid is one of the world's great city break destinations, and it is also a perfect base to visit many other historic cities and towns which are easily reachable by public transport and car.

Even in a country known for its ability to have a good time, Madrid is renowned as a party city and the locals, Madrileños, head out late each evening to the city's many top-class roof-top bars, restaurants and clubs. Culture lovers are spoilt for choice with over 60 museums, including three of the very best, The Prado, Thyssen-Bornemisza and Reina Sofia. There is a wealth of choice in the surrounding areas too, including these four highlights that are all very different and all quite exceptional. Toledo, a beautiful city greatly enriched through its Christian, Moorish and Jewish cultural heritage. Segovia, stunningly attractive with its castle palace, the Alcazar,

a UNESCO world heritage site which sits above the city and a perfectly preserved Roman aqueduct running through the centre of town. Ávila, rising out of the plain with its intact medieval walls taking you back to the time of the great Spanish warrior El Cid, a city of ancient palaces and churches. And Cuenca, a totally unique place with its signature cliff top hanging houses, The Casas Colgadas, making an unforgettable first impression. And food lovers are in for a treat with mouth-watering suckling pig in Segovia, T-bone steak and Yemas de Santa Teresa cakes in Ávila.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/spain for more information.

To contact emergency services in Spain, call 112.

Segovia, stunningly attractive with its castle palace, the Alcazar, a UNESCO world heritage site which sits above the city



MOROCCO

Dramatic mountains, windswept beaches and magical ancient cities

Morocco is a country that is very easy to fall in love with. Its dramatically varied landscapes offer windswept beaches, the sand dunes of the Sahara and the rugged beauty of the High Atlas and Rif mountains.

First time visitors must start their Moroccan adventure in the ancient city of Marrakesh, home to the unforgettable street theatre of the Djemaa El Fna square and many jewel-like traditional houses called riads, some of which have been converted into luxury hotels. The fascinating and beautifully well-preserved medieval city of Fez is well worth a visit and both cities have direct flights from the UK. Beach lovers are well served in Morocco with the resorts of Agadir, Taghazout and Essaouira, where you can choose between activities such as windsurfing or simply chilling by the pool in an all-inclusive hotel. To get a taste of another side of Morocco head into the mountains for hiking trails, beautiful waterfalls and

picturesque Berber villages. For a truly unforgettable experience stay overnight in the award-winning Kasbah du Toubkal, an historic mountain fortress set in an incredibly dramatic setting. Moroccan food is delicious with the signature dish of tagine blending meat or fish with dried fruits, all served with couscous. Shopping for leather goods, rugs and brass lamps are all part of the Moroccan experience and they are extremely good value for money. You will also develop a taste for the ubiquitous and refreshing mint tea in your time in Morocco, though it will never taste quite as good at home in the UK as it did under the star-spangled desert skies of this North African gem.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco for more information.

In Morocco, call the Ambulance on 150, tourist police on 052438601 or the Police on 190.



NAMIBIA

Towering sand dunes, dramatic coastlines and beautiful national parks teeming with wildlife

This incredibly beautiful country is a place of dramatic contrasts and spectacular landscapes.

Discover wide-open spaces in this sparsely populated destination, home to some of the world's largest sand dunes, oldest cultures and the most extensive conservation areas in Africa. This is an amazing country to look skywards too as you can see the heavens in all their glory with light pollution being extremely rare. Head north to Etosha National Park for elephants, big cats, antelope, and above all, rhinos, whilst Damaraland is home to Africa's largest population of black rhinos, as well as elephants and lions, which have adapted to thrive in a desert environment. Also visit the eerie and otherworldly Skeleton Coast, wreathed in mists blown in from stormy seas, strewn with shipwrecks and whale bones and the haunting ghost towns of Kolmanskop and Lüderitz. Take a trek through Fish River Canyon, second only in size to the much better known Grand Canyon in Arizona. Namibia leads the way in restoring natural habitats and the parks of Bwabwata and Nkasa Rupara are becoming increasingly rich in wildlife. Whilst there you won't need to rough it either, as throughout the country there are many luxurious,



IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/namibia for more information.

To contact emergency services in Namibia, call 10111 for the Police and 211 111 for the Ambulance.

The traditional people of Namibia, the Himba in the north west and San of the Kalahari, are fascinating and humbling examples of how to live a lifestyle in tune with your environment; time spent with them will be a highlight of any trip

ecologically sound safari lodges. The traditional people of Namibia, the Himba in the north west and San of the Kalahari, are fascinating and humbling examples of how to live a lifestyle in tune with your environment; time spent with them will be a highlight of any trip.

Don't forget though to reserve some time for the capital Windhoek; it has some exceptional restaurants, great nightlife and will be a wonderful way to top or tail your time in this remarkable country.

THE NETHERLANDS

A country that effortlessly blends the ultra-modern with its rich historical legacy

From 2020 don't make the mistake of calling The Netherlands Holland. It's never been its correct name and the Dutch people will appreciate it if you get their country's name right as they continue to celebrate the 75th anniversary of freedom after the Second World War.

This amazing country is only a short trip across the North Sea and is easily accessible via a short ferry ride or direct train on the Eurostar to Amsterdam and Rotterdam, two cities which are a great introduction to the country. Amsterdam, with its beautiful canals lined with elegant 17th century merchant houses, lively bars and coffee houses and the hip creative Rotterdam, host of Eurovision Song Contest 2020. The Netherlands has always punched above its weight artistically and you mustn't miss the masterworks of Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh on show in the cities' world class art galleries. However, this year travellers are advised to use the country's efficient, good value, fully integrated public transport network to head out and visit other lesser known gems, such as Delft, Haarlem and

Utrecht – smaller, quieter versions of Amsterdam. A must visit in Utrecht is the Rietveld Schröder House, like a three-dimensional Mondrian painting. Just a short train ride from Rotterdam is the idyllic town of Dordrecht celebrating its 800th birthday in 2020; check out the robot writing the Bible in real time in perfect medieval calligraphy in one of the main squares. The city of The Hague contains beautiful royal palaces as well as startling ultra-modern buildings, but only a 15-minute tram ride away are the long sandy beaches and chic hotels of Scheveningen, a well-kept local secret. Perhaps The Netherlands' most attractive trait is its people; charming, friendly and quietly proud of their modern, prosperous country, most of whom speak perfect English.



Use the country's efficient, good value, fully integrated public transport network to head out and visit other lesser known gems, such as Delft, Haarlem and Utrecht – smaller, quieter versions of Amsterdam

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/netherlands for more information.

To contact emergency services in The Netherlands, call 112.

SINGAPORE

A blend of iconic hotels, 21st century architecture and the world's best airport

Join the party in Singapore as this affluent and modern country celebrates its 200th birthday.

First impressions are lasting and surely there is no more impressive airport on the planet than Singapore's Jewel Changi, which regularly tops polls as the world's best. Now it has even more to offer, with a recently opened Canopy Park and the Changi Experience studio, a digital attraction featuring state of the art interactive

Singapore effortlessly combines the modern with its very distinguished history



games and immersive shows about the history of aviation. Once you manage to tear yourself away from Changi, the impressive skyline of Singapore will greet you. Singapore effortlessly combines the modern with its very distinguished history, epitomised by the recently refurbished iconic Raffles and Barracks Sentosa hotels. Sports lovers should head to the island in September for the Formula One Grand Prix which will be celebrated with a week of music, including bands such as the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Swedish House Mafia. Singapore is also a very green city; it is surrounded by jungle and delightful walking trails. A must

visit is the spectacular and beautiful UNESCO world heritage listed Botanic Gardens. Singaporeans take their food very seriously and they enjoy a delicious mix of Malaysian, Indian, Chinese and Indonesian cuisines. Seafood lovers are in for a treat, with exotic dishes like barbecued stingray, chilli crab and fried oysters. Food choices suit all budgets with both street vendors and Michelin starred restaurants. If you're looking for a spot of air-conditioned retail therapy head to the Orchard Road Mall. Singapore also has a host of neighbourhood markets if you're looking for something a little more quirky and individual.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/singapore for more information.

To contact emergency services in Singapore, call Police on 999 or the Ambulance services on 995.

SOUTH KOREA

A stunning country at the cutting edge of film, music and food

South Korea is already a leading cultural power in the Far East but its reach is going global driven by world-class films, food and the blockbuster phenomenon of K-pop.

The South Koreans are a friendly, courteous nation, rightly proud of their beautiful, successful and fascinating home. The capital Seoul is a vibrant, modern and bustling city but do not forget to visit a traditional tea room in the Insadong district and the "Secret Garden" of Huwon for a taste of old Korea. For something different, head for the Boryeong Mud Festival, or a noraebang, Korean karaoke, before both of which you may need to top up with the local tippie, Makgeolli – milky rice wine. Spring is a great time of year to visit with the cherry

trees in bloom and celebrated in blossom festivals such as those in Gyeongju and Jinhae. It will also be when Europe's first direct flight to Busan, the country's second biggest city, launches – opening up the region even further. Korea's west coast is dotted with over three thousand lovely islands, well connected with ferries that make for a relaxing trip at leisure. For a surreal experience go to Jeongdongjin, a village with a ship converted into a hotel on a hill and a North Korean spy submarine. The spectacular fortress of Gongsanseong and South Korea's most traditional city Silla, are both must visit attractions. Korean food is also on a mission to take over the world and it can be a lot of fun, particularly the cook your own (Korean BBQ) meat Galbi. Pickles

feature strongly, especially cabbage – the ubiquitous kimchi – which nutritionists are increasingly aware of being important for building up healthy stomach flora. Korean food can be very spicy though, so check with your waiter when ordering. Finally, check out Gangnam, not just a dance – it is the posh kids district of Seoul.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/south-korea for more information.

To contact emergency services in South Korea, call Police on 112 and Ambulance on 119.

Korean food can be spicy though, so check with your waiter when ordering



URUGUAY

A compact gem, with spectacular landscapes, lovely cities and incredible steaks

Uruguay is one of the smallest countries in South America, but it packs a lot into its land mass. The capital Montevideo has a spectacular riverside location on the massive River Plate which is more like a sea than a river.

The city has elegant art deco buildings, cafes and restaurants and a gentle, understated charm. Just a little way up the coast is the UNESCO world heritage site of Colonia del Sacramento, a lovely little cobbled town with characterful restaurants and bars where you can also catch a ferry to the Argentinian capital Buenos Aires on the other side of the River Plate. Lovers of the eccentric and original should head to Casapueblo, a former artist's studio, now converted into a hotel and museum, with its beautiful organic shapes that

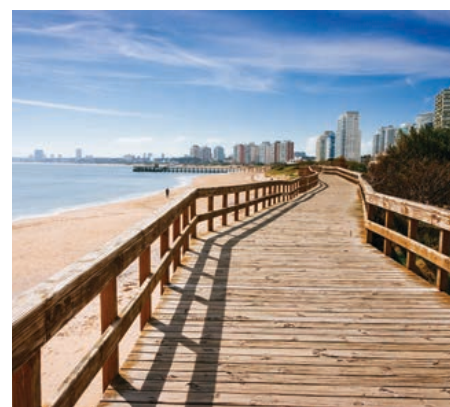
seem to grow out of its cliff edge location. If you fancy checking out fashionable people at play, head to the chic beach resort of Punta del Este, or for something a little more laid back, the coastal town of Rocha, set in a dramatic landscape of sand dunes and rocky crags. Uruguay is all about the beef, after all, Fray Bentos is a Uruguayan city, and it still has a strong gaucho culture. So free your inner cowboy or cowgirl in the north western town of Tacuarembó where you can stay for a few days on one of the

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/uruguay for more information.

To contact emergency services in Uruguay, call Police on 911 and Ambulance on 105.

nearby estancias or ranches. Uruguayan cattle are also bred to very high welfare standards and you will eat some of the best quality beef you will ever have. Uruguayan food is generally delicious, heavily influenced by Spanish and Italian cuisine and its wine is of a high standard, with the Tannat and Albariño grapes the most popular; a trip to a winery is a must. Uruguay is the undiscovered jewel of South America, so get there for bragging rights before the crowds arrive.



A sophisticated and beautiful capital of culture on a human scale

For the last two years Vienna has been named the most liveable city in the world by the Economist Intelligence Unit and visitors to this beautiful, sophisticated city will quickly agree with this high accolade.

Vienna was once the capital of the Austro-Hungarian empire and this rich heritage is reflected in the imposing baroque buildings, all in pristine condition, that make up its centre. A great way to see the sights is by taking the tram along the Ringstrasse, or ring road, that circles the city. Vienna has led the world culturally at many times in its history and it can quite rightly lay claim to be the world capital for classical music. In 2020 the city will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven, just one of many great composers, including Mozart, Schubert, Brahms and Mahler who called Vienna home. Their music is still played in venues such as

the Musikverein concert hall and the stunning Staatsoper - Vienna's state opera house. In the early 20th century, Vienna was home to a cultural revolution, including the Vienna Secession arts movement, and a must visit is to see the paintings of Klimt and Schiele in the Leopold Museum. Vienna's coffee houses and rich cakes, Sachertorte and strudel, are rightly world renowned, but a pleasant surprise are the many good value restaurants where the portions of local classics such as Wiener schnitzel and goulash are incredibly generous. Vienna looks gorgeous at all times of the year, but it is particularly lovely in the winter snow. Sipping a glass of delicious

mulled wine and your "soup in a roll" in the Christmas Market outside the magnificent town hall or Rathaus, one of many such markets in the city, you too may well agree that Vienna is the ideal place to live.

Vienna was once the capital of the Austro-Hungarian empire and this rich heritage is reflected in the imposing baroque buildings



IMPORTANT INFORMATION & FCO ADVICE

Visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/austria for more information.

To contact emergency services in Austria, call 112.



FCO GENERAL TRAVEL ADVICE

A few simple steps of preparation before and during your travel overseas can help to ensure a trouble-free trip.

THESE INCLUDE:

 Research your destination before travelling. The FCO's travel advice pages are a good place to start. For more information visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

 Learn about local laws and customs – there may be serious penalties for breaking a law that might seem trivial at home. Many countries have a zero-tolerance approach to offences involving drugs and sentences can be long.

 Whatever your age or fitness level, take out appropriate travel insurance that covers all your healthcare needs and intended activities.

 If travelling within the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, get a free European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for free or reduced cost emergency care. You still need full travel insurance though, as the EHIC doesn't cover all costs. After Brexit your EHIC card may not be valid. Check the latest information on the GOV.UK website before you travel.

 Research the health risks of the country you are visiting beforehand, so you can get the right vaccinations and take other preventative measures as required (eg malaria tablets). If you need to take medication, contact the embassy or consular office of the country you're visiting to see if there are restrictions in place.

 Check the entry requirements for the country you're visiting – you might need to get a visa or renew your passport.

 Take enough money with you, and make sure you have access to emergency funds. Don't keep all your money in the same place.

 Keep your passport safe and make photocopies – leave one with friends or family and take another with you, or store it online using a secure data storage site.

 Tell family or friends in the UK where you are going and leave emergency contact details with them.

 If you plan to drive overseas, familiarise yourself with local driving laws and make sure your licence is valid for where you are going.

 Locate the nearest British Embassy or Consulate. For more information visit www.gov.uk/government/world/embassies. You can also contact the FCO in London 24 hours a day, any day of the year, on 0207 008 1500.

 For more information visit www.travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and keep up-to-date with the latest FCO travel advice by signing up for email alerts.



What the FCO can and cannot do to help British nationals abroad.

The FCO's priority is protecting the welfare of British nationals abroad, and consular staff overseas will do their best to assist people when they suffer serious problems. However, it is important to know what the FCO can and cannot do to help.

THE FCO CAN:

- ✓ Provide advice and help if you have suffered rape and sexual or physical assault, are a victim of other crimes, are ill or in hospital.
- ✓ Provide timely, accurate, local information so that you can help yourself effectively.
- ✓ Issue emergency travel documents.
- ✓ Provide information about transferring money through commercial providers.
- ✓ Provide details of other organisations that may be able to provide specialist support.
- ✓ Contact family or friends for you if you cannot do this yourself.
- ✓ Provide support in the aftermath of major incidents affecting a large number of British nationals.

THE FCO CANNOT:

- ✗ Help you enter a country, for example, if you do not have a visa or your passport is not valid.
- ✗ Issue you with a new or replacement passport, or accept passport applications.
- ✗ Pay any bills or give you money.
- ✗ Ensure your safety and security in another country.
- ✗ Give you legal advice or translate formal documents.
- ✗ Carry out searches for missing people.
- ✗ Investigate crimes, get you out of prison or interfere in criminal or civil court proceedings.
- ✗ Get you better treatment in prison or hospital than is given to local people, but we may raise concerns with local authorities if treatment falls below internationally recognised standards.
- ✗ Make travel arrangements or find you accommodation.

For more information on available support, search “**FCO Support for British nationals abroad**” online.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FCO

In 2018/19, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) handled over 22,000 consular assistance cases around the world, took over 350,000 calls and issued almost 30,000 emergency travel documents. The most frequent case types were: arrest and detention (25%), death (18%), hospitalisation (17%) and victims of crime (6%). The highest number of assistance cases were reported in Spain, Thailand, USA, Greece and France. This underlines the importance of travelling aware and ensuring travellers have signed up to FCO travel advice for their destination.

The FCO also led the UK government response to 14 major incidents overseas and continues to provide support to British nationals affected by crisis situations. 2019 saw the FCO take part in the largest repatriation of UK citizens, where consular staff helped over 150,000 Thomas Cook customers return to the UK safely. The FCO also led the cross-Government crisis response to Hurricane

Dorian in the Northern Bahamas. The UK mounted an impressively rapid and effective response, distributing humanitarian stores through RFA Mounts Bay. The FCO set the groundwork for the international coordination of the relief effort and provided direct support in more than 50 consular cases.

Travel Aware

**travel
aware**
gov.uk/travelaware

Travel Aware is the FCO's flagship consular prevention campaign. It provides advice and tips on how to travel safely and avoid the need for consular assistance.

Advising young people has been a theme of the Travel Aware campaign in 2019 and that will continue as part of a multi-year prevention project of keeping young travellers safe. The aim is to introduce good travel habits to the future travel industry, which in turn will

be passed onto their friends and family. The first phase of the campaign launched in summer 2019 and advised 18-24-year olds to 'Stick With Your Mates' on holiday. Advice included using technology to share locations and looking after each other's drinks when out.

2019 saw the Rugby World Cup take place in Japan. Over 50,000 British fans attended and the FCO were there offering consular support and travel advice. Working with airlines, hoteliers and the Rugby Football Unions, the FCO shared top tips on how to ensure safe and secure games. As a result of Travel Aware prevention, consular cases were low and British nationals were kept safe during Typhoon Hagibis.

More information on Travel Aware campaigns and how to get travel advice to the country you plan to visit can be found on www.gov.uk/travelaware.

DID YOU KNOW...

★ ★ ★ ABTA is ranked the UK's most trusted travel association ★ ★ ★

77% of people **expect** their holiday company to be a **Member of ABTA**

78% of people feel **more confident** booking a holiday with an **ABTA Member**

62% of people feel **less positively** about companies that are **not ABTA Members**

72% of people feel that **ABTA's help and advice** in the event of a crisis is **essential**

★ ★ ★ ABTA was voted a Business Superbrand in 2019 ★ ★ ★

ABOUT ABTA

ABTA has been a trusted travel brand for over 65 years. Our purpose is to help our Members to grow their businesses successfully and sustainably, and to help their customers travel with confidence.

The ABTA brand stands for support, protection and expertise. This means consumers have confidence in ABTA and a strong trust in ABTA Members. These qualities are core to us as they ensure that holidaymakers remain confident in the holiday products that they buy from our Members.

We help our Members and their customers navigate through today's changing travel landscape by raising

standards in the industry; offering schemes of financial protection; providing an independent complaints resolution service should something go wrong; giving guidance on issues from sustainability to health and safety and by presenting a united voice to government to ensure the industry and the public get a fair deal.

ABTA has more than 4,300 travel brands in Membership, providing a wide range of leisure and business travel services, with a combined annual UK turnover of £39 billion. For more details about what we do, what being an ABTA Member means and how we help the British public travel with confidence visit abta.com.

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