

How to sell ASIA

From understanding your client's key priorities to catering for varying budgets, top Asia tour operators offer practical advice

Ask the right questions



Becky Baumbach, national sales manager, APT Travel Group

"Get a feel for what clients are looking for. Are they seeking luxury, adventure, cultural immersion or relaxation? Do they prefer private touring, small groups or larger social groups? How much structure do they want compared with free time? What level of accommodation and service do they expect? Do they want elements of rail or cruise built in? What's their budget? And do they have any mobility needs or special requirements?"

Reassure first-timers



Neil Sealy, managing director, Exoticca

"Many first-time visitors to Asia are apprehensive about safety and security. Reassure them they will be in good

hands on a group tour; the guides in Asia are among the best in the world, and the standard of hotels is generally excellent. Many clients are not too worried about the accommodation on a touring holiday, as long as it is clean and comfortable. We offer a range from three to five stars, so there is something to suit most budgets."

Sell shoulder seasons



Carrie Grant, head of industry partnerships UK & Ireland, Intrepid Travel

"By travelling in the shoulder seasons, clients enjoy fewer crowds and more

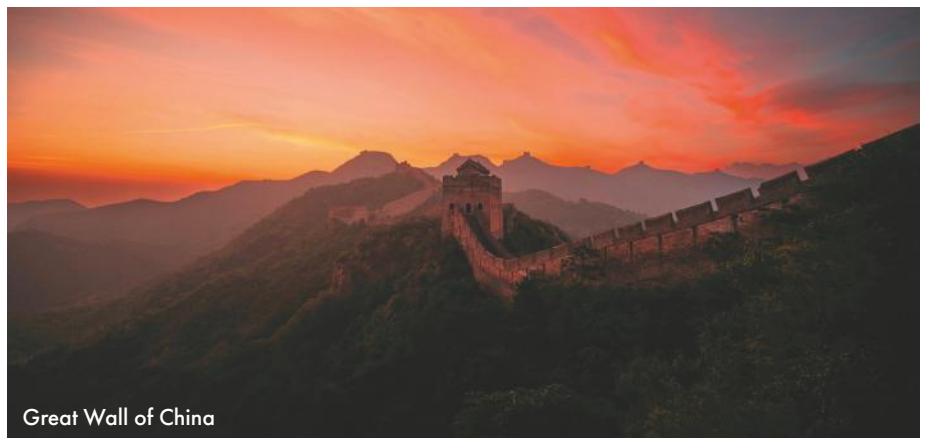
opportunity for connection with local communities. For agents, it also means more inventory and smoother trip planning. Hotspots such as Bali, Kyoto and Halong Bay will always attract attention, but many travellers are craving something different. This helps spread the benefits of tourism into communities that genuinely welcome it."

Elevate the experience



Gary King, head of trade sales, Wendy Wu Tours

"One of the most interesting developments we're seeing is renewed interest in China following the recent visa-free travel policy for UK visitors. It's removing a



Great Wall of China



We're also seeing a clear appetite for premium touring, with customers looking for smaller groups, upgraded hotels and experiences that elevate the overall journey

barrier and putting China back on the radar. We're also seeing a clear appetite for premium touring, with customers looking for smaller groups, upgraded hotels and experiences that elevate the overall journey."

Consider community tourism



Stu Darnley, national sales manager, G Adventures

"Asia is a fantastic region for value at every price point, but we're seeing interest in high-end adventures, which

is reflected in the success of the launch of our National Geographic Signature travel style earlier this year. It reflects a broader shift among affluent, time-poor travellers. There is less interest in opulence for its own sake and greater demand for trips that deliver on community tourism, local enterprise and travel as a force for good."

Go cross-country



Clare Fisher, senior Asia specialist, Insider Journeys

"Clients are now booking our longer, cross-border tours of 14 to 18 days, with the option to add on more destinations.

We are currently seeing 40% of our travellers booking Vietnam Small Group Journeys, especially journeys combining Vietnam and Cambodia. We've also seen a 30% increase in clients booking Small Group Journeys to Sri Lanka, finishing with a stay at one of the beach resorts Sri Lanka has to offer – or even an extension to the Maldives."



Kyoto, Japan

Optimise clients' time and money



Noemi Espinosa, senior product executive, Regent Holidays

"One trend we're seeing is that people want a balance between guidance and independence. They

like having a guide to provide context at key sites, but they also appreciate free time to explore on their own. For entry-level budgets, the key is access and smart itinerary design; these clients can still have meaningful experiences through well-chosen tours and central hotels. Even modest budgets can include cooking classes, market visits or street-food tours."

Enjoy Japan's quieter side



Tyler Palma, product director, Inside Travel

"Japan has always been huge for Inside Travel and seemingly everyone wants to experience it.

Traditionally, InsideJapan's springtime tours have always sold out way in advance due to the popularity of cherry blossom season, but these days, autumn tours for Japan also do. There is also a new Summer Elegance tour, launched to embrace seasonal cultural experiences such as festivals and food."

Upsell an extension



Phil Shipman, UK & Ireland sales director, Cosmos Tours

"For value-focused travellers, escorted tours offer a structured way to see major highlights efficiently,

while clients with more to spend can enhance their trip with a couple of pre or post-tour nights for added flexibility. Higher-spend travellers often appreciate extending their stay further. Japan has been the standout performer, with Classic Japan: Land of the Rising Sun bookings up 154% year-on-year."

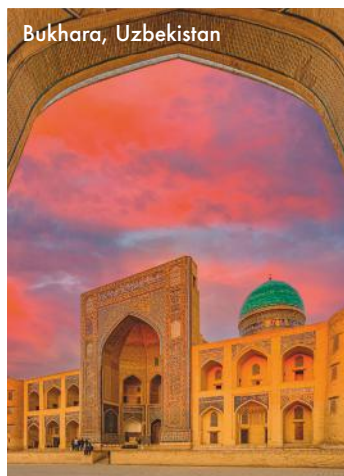
Focus on value and variety



Hayley Morris, head of trade and partnerships, Newmarket Holidays

"Focus on the value that escorted touring offers in Asia – having

knowledgeable local guides and a structured itinerary removes much of the complexity of travelling across multiple destinations. It also helps to highlight the immersive cultural experiences included in tours, from cuisine and heritage sites to unique activities that travellers might struggle to organise independently. For 2027, we're expanding options that combine well-loved highlights with less-explored regions. Our new Tour Plus enhancements also have the option to extend the holiday experience in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam."



Bukhara, Uzbekistan



We've seen a 41% increase in passengers booked onto our Uzbekistan trips by travel agents between January and March 2026, compared to the same period last year

Book early at busy times



Mark Henderson, head of specialist product, Incredible Journeys

"Booking behaviour shows more travel is being booked for the current year,

particularly Q2 and Q3, reflecting shorter lead times. With that in mind, early planning is still important for peak seasonal periods such as major festivals and natural events. For those with limited time, a single-country highlights tour is ideal as these itineraries capture the essence of a destination and often spark the desire to return for a deeper, more immersive visit in the future."

Highlight the range

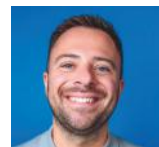


Abbey Cousins, business development manager, Jules Verne

"Asia currently represents 38% of all revenue from our trade customers

travelling in 2026. Highlight the diversity of cultures, landscapes and experiences, from a jungle safari in search of endangered Bengal tigers in India to an adventure through Uzbekistan's Silk Road cities. Uzbekistan has been selling particularly well for us; we have seen a 41% increase in passengers booked onto our trips by travel agents between January and March 2026, compared to the same period last year."

Include a cruise



Lloyd Morris, strategic account manager, Riviera Travel

"We are seeing more interest in our Grand Tours, which offer customers the opportunity to stay longer for a more

immersive holiday. One example is the enhanced Best of Japan itinerary, where we've taken the original 13-day tour and added four days to venture off the beaten path. We are also seeing more demand for the Mekong River – so much so we are building our first ship outside Europe."



Newmarket Holidays group at the Taj Mahal, India

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Sumit Art Creations, Kadagan; Unsplash/chen zy, Charlotte Cumming