

World at one

Make the most of World Travel Market's seminars with Natalie Marsh's guide to the highlights



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here can you meet tourist boards, travel associations and tour operators from around the world, listen to the biggest names in the industry share their views on the hottest topics, and exchange ideas with like-minded people? World Travel Market, of course.

Between November 4-6, ExCeL London will welcome more than 50,000 exhibitors and visitors to one of the world's largest travel expos. Across the three days, the events programme will span 80 seminars, panel discussions and Q&As focusing on the travel industry's biggest trends, as well as the latest developments in the fields of social media, responsible tourism, conservation and more.

We've put together a handy guide to some of the sessions at World Travel Market.

LOOKING AHEAD

Travel Leaders Speak:
UK Travel Markets –
What to Expect in 2020

When: Monday, November 4,
2pm-3.30pm, WTM Global Stage

Tell me more: Brexit, currency fluctuations and consumer confidence are some of the issues that have come to the fore in the travel industry over the past 12 months. As the turn of the year approaches, will these continue to have as much of an impact? And what new trends will affect consumer behaviour as well as travel businesses?

On the agenda: Four travel stalwarts will discuss the biggest topics affecting the travel industry. Julia Lo Bue-Said, from The Advantage Travel Partnership; Jo Rzymowska, Celebrity Cruises; Patricia Yates, VisitBritain and VisitEngland; and Neil Slaven from easyJet, will share how

IN FOCUS

Aviation

The aviation sector has been in the spotlight thanks to acquisitions, airport expansion and new aircraft on order.

John Strickland of JLS Consulting will speak to chief executives of two airlines key to the UK market for their take on the state of the industry.

Wizz Air CEO Interview

Wizz Air has seen huge growth since its inception in 2004. Founder and chief executive József Váradi will be speaking about how the airline has expanded and how other issues such as Brexit and flight disruptions have affected the industry.

Tuesday, November 5,
10am-10.45am,
Europe Inspiration Zone

Virgin Atlantic CEO Interview

Virgin Atlantic chief Shai Weiss (pictured) will be speaking about the airline's growth strategy, especially since its recent delivery of A350s. He will also discuss what impact the new runway at Heathrow will have on the airline, among other key topics.

Tuesday, November 5,
2pm-2.45pm,
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top tip

Find out more about the events programme at london.wtm.com



LEFT: Simon Press (left) of WTM opens the 2018 event with Richard Gayle, Travel Forward
PICTURES: Matt Sprake; Simon Harvey; Alex McGuire

the year has traded and what could come the travel industry's way in 2020. Moderated by Ben Ross, deputy head of travel at *The Telegraph*, the session will also provide insight from Euromonitor's Caroline Bremner.

FOOD AND DRINK

The Latest Trends in Gastro Tourism: The Americas/ UK & Europe

When: Monday, November 4, 12pm-12.45pm, Americas Inspiration Zone; Tuesday, November 5, 2.45pm-3.30pm, UKI & International Inspiration Zone

Tell me more: Foodie experiences are becoming increasingly popular among travellers. You only need to look at the increase in foodie tours in destinations around the world and the desire to try authentic cuisine, to know that interest in gastro tourism is growing.

On the agenda: Carol Hay from the Caribbean Tourism Organisation and Aashi Vel from culinary website Traveling Spoon, along with

“The increase in foodie tours shows interest in gastro tourism is growing

moderator Erik Wolf, founder of the World Food Travel Association, will discuss what's new with food tourism in the Americas. The UK & Europe session will see Wolf ask Marc Crothall from the Scottish Tourism Alliance and blogger Amber Hoffman, from *With Husband in Tow*, how Europe will keep up with the demand for food tourism, and how it's changed over time.

TOURS AND ACTIVITIES

What's Next for the Best Part of Travel: Tours, Activities, Attractions & Experiences

When: Tuesday, November 5, 1.30pm-3pm, South Gallery Rooms 20 & 21

Tell me more: This sector is growing

quickly, with customers' spending on experiences showing no sign of letting up. With such a wide range of tours, activities, attractions and experiences on offer for travellers in their chosen destinations, it's not surprising that this is a lucrative area of the industry.

On the agenda: This session will bring together eight speakers to discuss the trends affecting the sector. It will begin with moderator Douglas Quinby, co-founder and chief executive of Arival – which offers insight for companies selling tours and attractions – outlining how digital transformation has affected the sector, including how travellers shop and book. There will then be a round-table debate, where participants will discuss technology and the future of distribution, and how this affects the booking process.

WELLNESS TOURISM

A New Decade of Wellness Travel

When: Wednesday, November 6, 11am-12pm, Americas Inspiration Zone ➤



Tell me more: From yoga programmes to health retreats, wellness tourism is booming as more travellers seek out holidays and experiences that focus on their mental and physical health. To respond to this demand, tour operators are increasing their wellness-related offering, with more product on the market than ever before.

On the agenda: Anne Dimon, president of the Wellness Tourism Association, will present the key trends in the sector. She'll also be moderating a discussion with

other influential figures in the wellness scene to speak about new developments, as well as how demand for wellness holidays has changed and evolved over the years.

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL Using Original Content and Social Media to Seamlessly Sell Travel Online

When: Monday, November 4, 10.45am-11.30am, WTM Global Stage

Tell me more: Travellers are increasingly turning to social media to find inspiration for their next escape. From image-led apps such as Instagram and Pinterest, to content that engages users on Facebook and Twitter, social media has an increasingly important role to play in showcasing and selling travel experiences.

On the agenda: Steve Keenan, co-founder of Travel Perspective, will talk to Dr Kris Naudts, founder and chief executive of global start-up Culture Trip. Naudts will be talking about what works when it comes to using social media as a tool to sell travel.

NATURE AND WILDLIFE

What Can the Travel Industry Contribute to the Conservation of Wildlife and Habitats?

When: Tuesday, November 5, 2.45pm-3.45pm, Middle East & Africa Inspiration Zone

Tell me more: Wildfires in the Amazon and increasing damage to the Great Barrier Reef are just some of the environmental issues that have dominated the headlines this year. The spotlight has also fallen on the wildlife lost as a result, and the travel industry has put more projects and initiatives in place to help with wildlife conservation.

On the agenda: Five speakers working in the wildlife sector will be sharing their experience of helping with conservation, including Andy Donnelly from the Galapagos Conservation Trust, which aims to reduce plastic pollution, and Pippa Hankinson from Blood Lions, which campaigns against hunting. The panel will be moderated by Matt Walpole from conservation charity Flora & Fauna International. Participants will share how the industry can help conservation efforts. **TW**

IN FOCUS Youth Travel

There's plenty of talk about millennials making their mark, but Generation Z – those aged under 25 – is quickly coming up behind them, with the capacity to travel for holiday, study or work. Hear from experts with a wealth of experience in this digitally savvy sector of the market.

A Spotlight on Gen Z: What's Next in Youth Travel

In this session, Steve Lowy, chairman of the British Educational Travel Association speaks with three people in the youth travel market to find out what some of the biggest trends are among Generation Z and how to stand out from the crowd to pique their interest.

Tuesday, November 5, 10.30am-11.45am, South Gallery Rooms 20 & 21

top tip

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