

KUONI

THE KUONI
WORLDWIDE TRENDS
REPORT 2018





INTRODUCTION

It's almost 40 years since Kuoni launched its first trends report, which was originally a simple sales overview of long-haul destinations. Those early reports were introduced at a time when tourism in the Maldives was embryonic and all the company's sales came through travel agents.

Today the travel landscape is complex and competitive, yet Kuoni retains its status as the market leader in premium travel. The 2018 report reflects not only where people are going around the world to relax, explore and restore at all stages of life, but how people are being inspired to book.

This year we explore more about shopping for holidays in a digital age, when the whole world is online at our fingertips. Yet despite transformational technology, there is a growing thirst for expertise. Conversations are still at the heart of holidays, from planning them to remembering them in the years that follow. Trust has never been more vital when it comes to travel.

Political upheaval and economic uncertainty are permanent fixtures in the life of a travel company and 2018 is already providing plenty of obstacles and opportunities to navigate, from royal honeymoons and rising interest rates to a change of leadership in Zimbabwe.

This report is created by experts. We've delved deep into data, reviewed booking patterns and consulted with more than 300 Personal Travel Experts.

Every year destinations go up and some come down in popularity, but one thing is overwhelmingly clear. The experience of travel has never been more in demand.



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OF THE TRAVEL
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**HUGE RISE IN DEMAND
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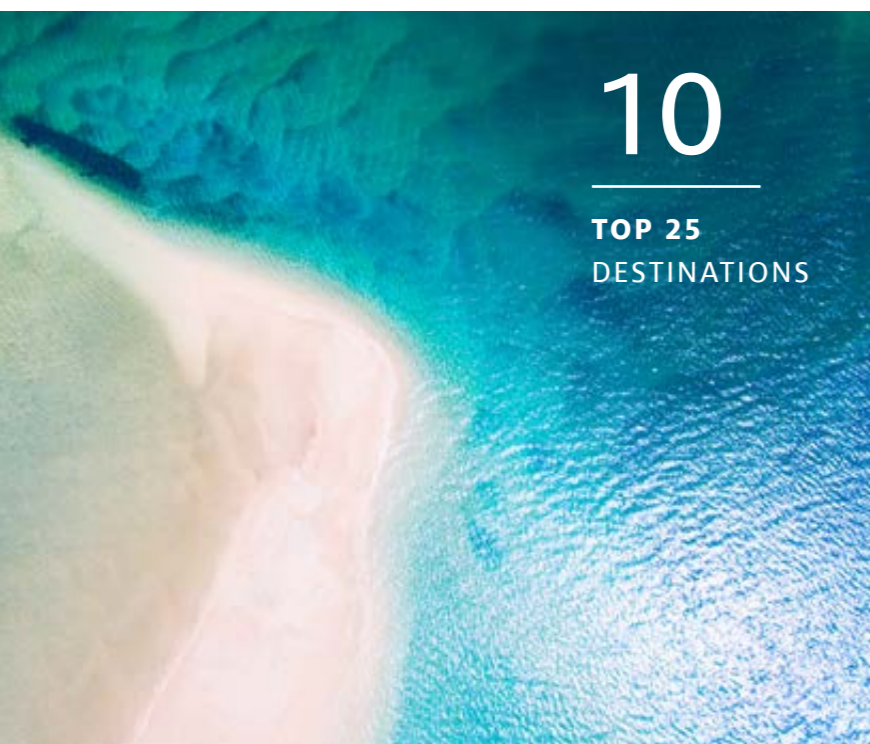
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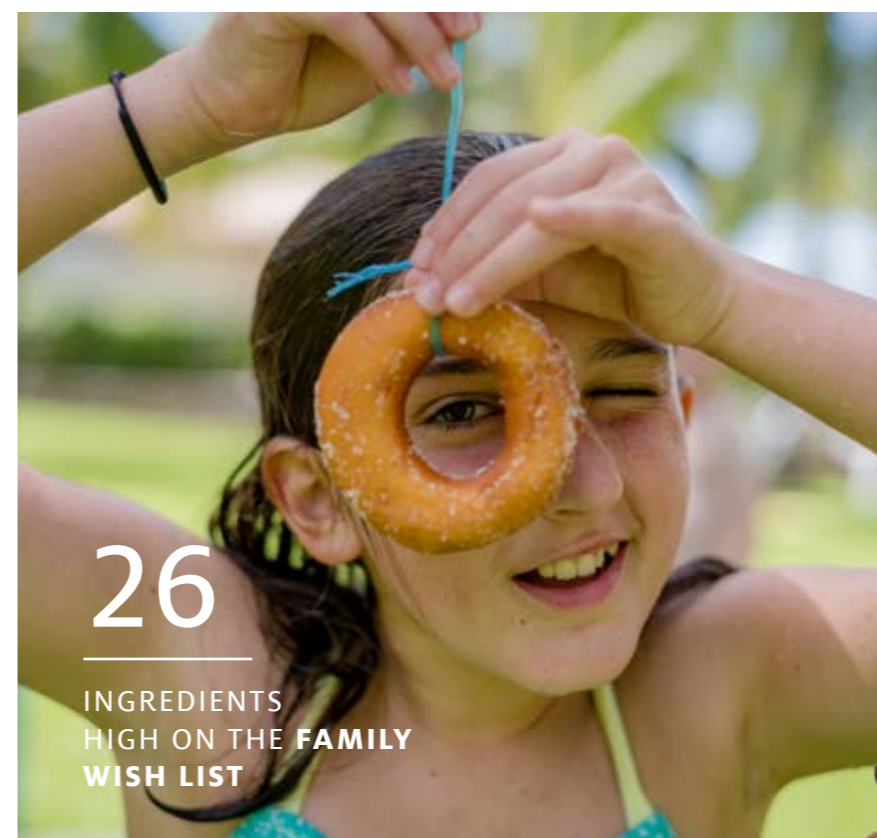
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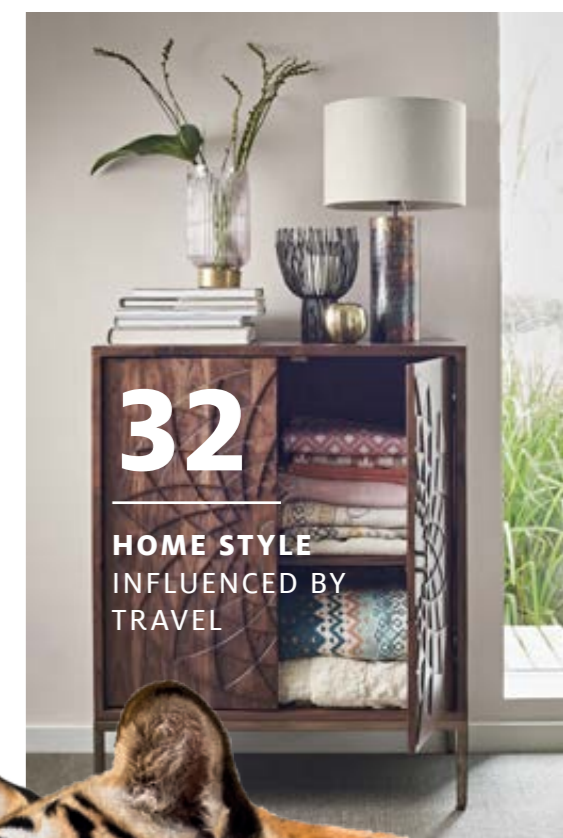
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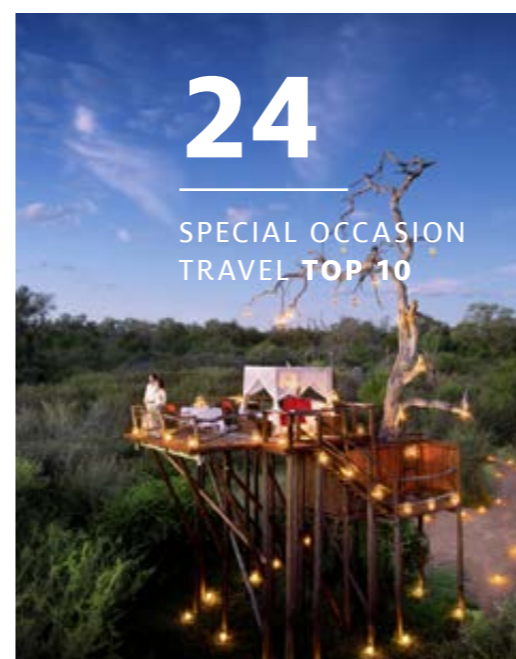
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THE RISE OF THE EXPERT

'Kuoni's research shows that whilst people love browsing the web for ideas, inspiration and initial research, there is a swing back to real expertise when it comes to booking'.

HOW ARE PEOPLE BOOKING

When the whole world is online at our fingertips, it's easy to assume that everyone's booking their holidays with a click, but Kuoni's research shows that whilst people love browsing the web for ideas and inspiration, there is a swing back to real expertise when it comes to booking. Conversations are still central for premium travel. Whilst the vast majority of people may be going online for research, when it comes to more complex, multi-centre travel real expertise and advice is still central to converting browsing into booking.

Kuoni's own research shows that 79 per cent of people now admit they feel overwhelmed by the volume of search results when they start their holiday planning.

Are we drowning in data?

- 49% strongly agree that travel planning has become more of a headache than an enjoyable part of the holiday
- 79% feel overwhelmed by the amount of information they get online before booking a holiday
- 59% prefer real advice from trusted experts when booking a holiday
- 52% say they are unsure which online sites, reviews and data to trust when booking a holiday

Source: Independent research by Censuwide, carried out in January 2018

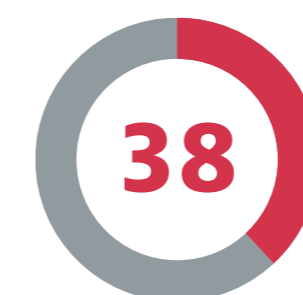
TALKING TO SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE

Find an expert was introduced to kuoni.co.uk five years ago with the aim of guiding people to specialists in the destination or type of holiday they're interested in. To remain at the forefront of travel trends, new destinations, cruise ships and experiences the team took 343 trips in 2017 across 38 countries to destinations ranging from Costa Rica to Tanzania. Ship visits with cruise lines included Celebrity Cruises, APT River Cruises, Pandaw and Star Clipper.

TRAVEL BY APPOINTMENT

Planning and booking a holiday is one of the most exciting and important decisions of the year and, in the case of honeymoons, weddings or other special trips, it's one of the most important decisions not just of the year, but sometimes of people's lives.

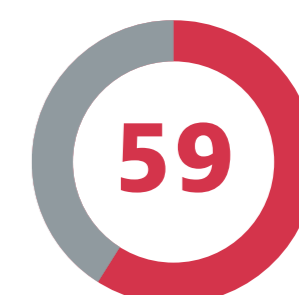
With tea, coffee or Champagne, the appointment service from Kuoni is on the rise. So far appointments for January 2018 were running 31 per cent ahead of the same week the previous year. Technology behind the scenes has been developed so the Kuoni team can book appointments with Personal Travel Experts most relevant to the destinations or types of holidays the customer is interested in.



% Increase in appointments (total 2017 compared to 2016)



hours average length of consultation



% Come with a blank sheet - people don't have a destination in mind and are happy to be inspired



WEBCHATS

The website is effectively the biggest shop window and we're seeing more customers make initial enquiries through webchat. It's been four years since webchat was first introduced and, as the travel experts get better trained and more used to handling it - and shoppers more used to the format - it's a great first point of contact. Whilst people don't book on the basis of webchat alone, it's a great ice-breaker and provides a friendly starting point for many customers to iron out a few initial queries. Increasingly online chats go on to more detailed conversations about the trip face-to-face at an appointment or on the phone.

SPECIALIST PHONE CALLS UP, BUT GENERIC PHONE CALLS DOWN

There's been a shift in how people plan and book holidays over the phone. The Kuoni website gives people a choice of how they get in touch with us by phone, either a general number or contact details of Personal Travel Experts directly who have specialist knowledge or are local to customers' homes.

ONLINE INSPIRATION

In 2017, internet browsing on a mobile device finally became more popular than using a desktop computer. This important shift is especially noticeable with Kuoni as 60 per cent of visitors to the website are now on their phone or tablet. Last year, mobile sessions were up 14 per cent and Kuoni saw a slight decrease in desktop visitors. With more customers interacting in this way, Kuoni have improved the online experience for mobile users.

PROPOSALS GET PERSONAL

Personalisation is a growing trend in retail, not just in travel. Making all holiday proposals personal is now central to Kuoni's service, with every one customised to include beautiful images, travel ideas, hotels, airlines and prices specific to the customer's brief.

WHAT'S NEW

Kuoni @ John Lewis:

- Peter Jones moves into travel for the first time, 16th February 2018
- White City due to open 20th March 2018

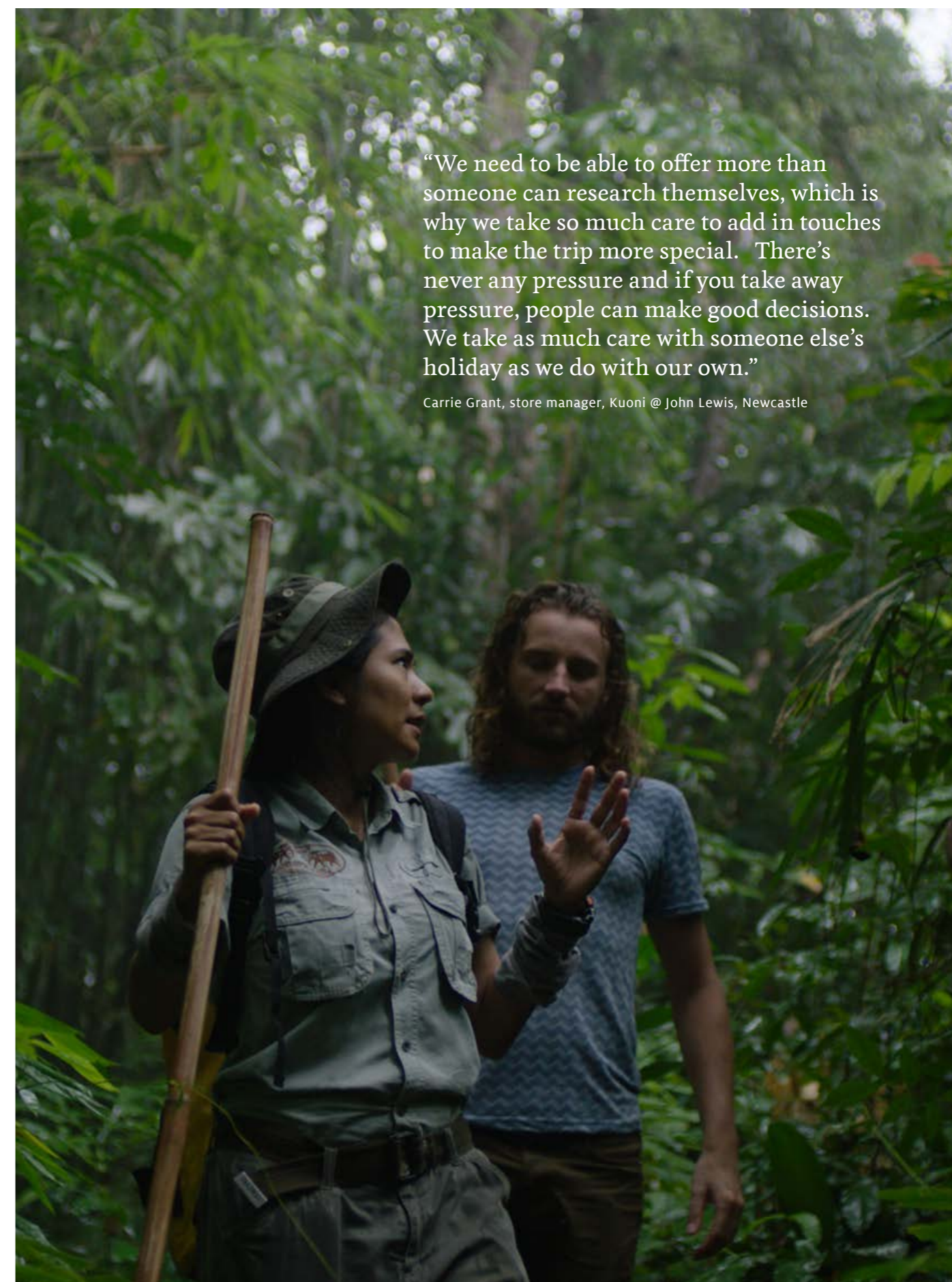
50 KUONI STORES

22 HIGH STREET STORES

18 JOHN LEWIS STORES (INC PETER JONES & WHITE CITY)

10 STORES IN SHOPPING CENTRES

PLUS 10 PARTNER STORES



TOP 25 DESTINATIONS

- 1 ➡ MALDIVES (1)
- 2 ➡ MAURITIUS (2)
- 3 ⬆ THAILAND (4)
- 4 ⬇ SRI LANKA (3)
- 5 ➡ USA (5)
- 6 ⬆ ITALY (7)
- 7 ⬇ INDONESIA (BALI) (6)
- 8 ⬆ BARBADOS (9)
- 9 ⬇ ANTIGUA (8)
- 10 ⬆ MEXICO (14)
- 11 ⬇ INDIA (10)
- 12 ⬆ SOUTH AFRICA (15)
- 13 ⬇ ST LUCIA (12)
- 14 ⬇ VIETNAM (13)
- 15 ⬆ UAE (17)
- 16 ⬇ MALAYSIA (11)
- 17 ⬆ GREECE (25)
- 18 ⬆ CANADA (19)
- 19 ⬆ KENYA (23)
- 20 ⬆ SEYCHELLES (21)
- 21 ⬇ AUSTRALIA (18)
- 22 ⬆ SPAIN (24)
- 23 ⬇ TANZANIA (22)
- 24 ⬇ CUBA (16)
- 25 ⬆ PORTUGAL (26)



Kuoni sells more than 90 destinations around the world and the top 25 list is based on those destinations which have seen the highest booking numbers for 2018 holidays at the time of going to press.



THE TOP
5

WHAT'S TRENDING

THE MALDIVES STAYS ON TOP

The Maldives remain Kuoni's biggest selling destination for a staggering 15th consecutive year – and the Indian Ocean archipelago is showing no signs of slowing down.

According to local tourism authorities, the number of arrivals from the UK showed an 18.7 per cent year-on-year increase in November 2017, boosted perhaps by the country's expansion of hotels with at least 27 resorts having opened in the Maldives since 2013. Beyond the honeymoon market, the Maldives has broadened its appeal for families, solo and millennial travellers. A further 23

resorts are scheduled to open in 2018 and 2019, so it's reputation as an innovative and style-setting destination continues.

New to Kuoni for 2018 is The Floating Resort by Scubaspa, a unique concept combining exceptional spa experiences with unforgettable scuba diving which will appeal to customers asking for a Maldives cruise option. Also exclusive to Kuoni from May 2018 will be a new island resort called Bathala, which has recently changed hands and is a favourite of the diving community – more details will follow later in the year.



“Thailand's Cape Kudu Hotel feels more like a home than a hotel. You will feel relaxed from the moment you arrive in the lobby with stunning views across to the rocky limestone outcrops that I always associate with Thailand. It makes for a stunning sunrise...

It also feels remote, yet what I really like about it is that just a short stroll down the road you come to the old traditional beach shack-style restaurants which serve amazing food and cheap beer.”

Jennie Moore, Thailand Product & Category Manager

TRENDING THAILAND

Thailand is one of the star performers for 2018, overtaking Sri Lanka in third position in the top destinations list. Sales have been consistently up and this was thanks to a host of new flight routes with Qatar to Chiang Mai, Krabi and Pattaya creating easier access for British visitors. Affordability on the ground is also a contributing factor making it great value for eating out and drinking. Kuoni has also seen an increase in demand for high-end, boutique-style resorts with pool villas and has added the intimate Cape Kudu Hotel on Koh Yao Noi, the all-villa Kata Rocks in Phuket and Sala Phuket Resort & Spa. The Thai tourism authorities also reported a record breaking year for tourism in 2017 with more than 35 million international arrivals and the same is predicted for 2018.



MORE IN MAURITIUS TO SUIT ALL BUDGETS

Mauritius remains in second position for 2018 and the coming year sees the country celebrate 50 years of independence, a fact that saw Lonely Planet choose the Indian Ocean island as one of its top ten places to visit in 2018. Access to Mauritius has increased over the last year, thanks to new Emirates flights from the UK, while British Airways is increasing its flights to Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport from three to five a week. To satisfy 2018 demand for holidays to the country, Kuoni has added five new hotels broadening the destinations appeal for all price points: all-inclusive family resort Lux Belle Mare, all-suite Sands Suites Resorts & Spa, adults-only Ambre, the rustic C Hotels by Constance, and Paradise Cove, a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World and a favourite with couples and honeymooners.





STRONG FOCUS ON LUXURY IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka's tourism industry remains buoyant with a record breaking 2.3 million visitors arriving during the course of the year, according to Sri Lankan tourism promotion minister John Amaratunga. The country's tourism drive, largely based on trying to increase visitor spending as well as visitor numbers, has resulted in strong growth in the luxury sector, reflected by the fact that it remains a firm favourite with Kuoni customers at number four in the company's 2018 best-selling list. Sri Lanka's relatively small size, varied tourism offering and good infrastructure make multi-centre breaks popular, with customers using private drivers or local carrier Cinnamon Air to navigate from one place to another. New for Kuoni in 2018 are Anantaya Passikudah with a beautiful beachfront setting on the east coast, the Kuoni-exclusive Dickwella Resort & Spa on the south coast, and Cape Weligama sitting on a stunning peninsula overlooking the Indian Ocean.

USA FLY-DRIVE PUT IT ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Whilst there's been much talk of "Trump Slump" and Kuoni noted a downturn in USA bookings in its trend report last year, bookings so far for 2018 show a much more positive outlook. Overall the USA is seeing robust growth with Kuoni's own business 19 per cent up for 2018 departures. Kuoni experts are seeing a spike in interest for fly-drive itineraries with the most popular routes including the classic San Francisco to Los Angeles and Las Vegas to San Francisco via Death Valley and Yosemite National Park. Other areas seeing increased demand are Route 66, New England, the Capital Region and also Colorado and the Rockies.



"With new hotel openings, anniversaries and bolder marketing we're expecting the USA to do well in 2018. Fly-drives are one of the areas performing well for us and that's an area where we add real value - customers are looking to us to design bespoke itineraries, which aren't easy to plan and book online. A new direct BA route to Nashville, which launches this May will be great for those southern musical fly-drives."

Tom Waite, Senior Product Executive



RISING FAST FOR 2018

SOUTH AFRICA EDGING INTO **THE TOP 10**

For the past three years South Africa has steadily been making its way up the best-sellers list. Currently at number 12 it is predicted to enter Kuoni's top ten destinations by the end of the year. Whilst the widely reported drought in Cape Town is a cause for concern, tourists are taking advice to limit water usage. The favourable exchange rate means a holiday here is still extremely good value, not to mention the increased flight capacity during the winter with British Airways and more exposure here in the UK from the Tourist Board. With such a varied offering from vibrant cities, high-end safaris, relaxing wine regions and great beaches, Kuoni focuses on offering customers different ways of experiencing traditional activities. Experiences such as a sidecar tour of Cape Town, where visitors tour the city in the sidecar of a decommissioned military motorcycle, and promoting lesser-visited areas, including KwaZulu-Natal and Madikwe Game Reserve.

MEXICO: UP FOUR FROM 14 TO 10

Premium all-inclusive resorts in the popular regions of Cancun and the surrounding Maya Riviera are driving demand in Mexico along with easy access to cultural sites and renowned dive spots. Its popularity looks set to continue into this year as the country jumps three places in Kuoni's top 15 destinations. Brand new is the Hotel Xcaret Mexico that opened in December 2017 and is set to grow into a mega resort with its own dedicated sports/music venue over the next ten years. The hotel features accommodation in five 'casas' and appeals to different market sectors with rooms suitable for families and couples.

KENYA: UP FOUR FROM 23 TO 19

Kenya tourism was buoyed by a number of prestigious awards in 2017, including Africa's leading national park, the Maasai Mara, and leading luxury adventure destination at the World Luxury Hotel Awards, as well as the world's best safari destination at the World Travel Awards. It's in this area that Kuoni has seen massive interest in Kenya, which rises from 23rd to 19th placed destination. While the Mara remains the most popular, Kuoni is seeing growth in other areas, including Samburu, Tsavo and Amboseli. Popular lodges with Kuoni holidaymakers include Elephant Bedroom Camp on the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro River in Samburu with its intimate, friendly and warm atmosphere, and the luxury Finch Hattons tented camp on the south-western edge of Tsavo West National Park.

HUGE RISE IN DEMAND FOR COSTA RICA

Costa Rica may not be one of Kuoni's top 25 destinations, but watch this space. The country is Kuoni's biggest selling Latin American destination with a growth of more than 300 per cent from 2015 to date, partly thanks to the launch of direct British Airways flights in May 2016. To help satisfy this increased demand, Kuoni has added more beach resorts to its portfolio, as well as a number of national parks with high-end lodges in the south-west. New for 2018 includes Loz Quetzales, a unique bird-watching retreat in the Talamanca mountains, the plush Piedras Blancas on the Pacific coast for excellent jaguar spotting, and Limon on the Caribbean coast home to the La Camèlèon Boutique Hotel and the laid-back Noa Beach Club, where guests can soak up the sun, lounge on hammocks and sip cocktails to chill-out music.

CARIBBEAN BACK ON TRACK POST-HURRICANE

Following an initial dip in confidence following the hurricanes of 2017, the Caribbean is back on the up, with all the islands featured by Kuoni in full operation. Barbados (up from nine to eight in the top destinations list) and Antigua (down from eight to nine) remain Kuoni's best-selling Caribbean islands. Saint Lucia is not far behind at number 13, and is also a popular wedding destination for couples getting married overseas.



2017

- 1 ITALY
- 2 GREECE
- 3 SPAIN
- 4 PORTUGAL
- 5 CROATIA

2018

- 1 ITALY
- 2 GREECE
- 3 SPAIN
- 4 PORTUGAL
- 5 CYPRUS

WHAT'S TRENDING IN EUROPE

MORE DIVERSITY BROADENS APPEAL FOR ITALIAN TRIPS

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council, international visitors to Italy reached almost 60 million in 2017, continuing a decade-long upward trend that is predicted to continue growing for the foreseeable future. The areas around Sorrento and Lake Garda remain firm favourites, while Milan (new to Kuoni's Italian collection) is attracting attention thanks to its cutting-edge design hotels. So popular is this northern fashion and financial powerhouse that it received more visitors in 2016 than Rome. In an effort to diversify from more mainstream resorts, Kuoni has also added the island of Ischia, known as the European capital of spa, and the Aeolian islands of Vulcano and Lipari for 2018.



CYPRUS MOVES UP AS CROATIA MOVES DOWN

Cyprus' status as one of Europe's true year-round destinations is reflected by its entry into Kuoni's top five European destinations for 2018 at the expense of Croatia.

This year sees a new addition on the hotel front, as well as the return of an old favourite. The five-star Parklane, A Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, housed in what was formerly Le Meridien in Limassol, opens its doors this summer to reveal 274 rooms and 52 suites, plus a spa with 13 treatment rooms and a large kids' adventure park. September 2017 also saw the re-opening of the Columbia Beach Resort after a near year-long renovation.

PREMIUM TRAVEL GATHERS PACE IN GREECE

Greek tourism remains the one sector of its economy that continues to thrive, with the World Travel & Tourism Council predicting an up-coming decade-long travel boom. Kuoni customers are certainly following the trend with bookings for 2018 already showing a 50 per cent increase over 2017 and seeing the country rise eight places to 17 in the best-selling destination list. The premium travel sector has been boosted by a number of spectacular hotels such as Ikos Dassia on Corfu which will open in June 2018. Other new-to-Kuoni hotels on the island include the Corfu Imperial Grecotel Exclusive Resort, the recently renovated MarBella Corfu Hotel and the neighbouring adults-only MarBella Nido Suite Hotel & Villas that opens for the first time in May 2018.



WORLDWIDE GROUP TOURING

TOP SELLING TOURS BASED ON PASSENGER NUMBERS

2017

- 1 HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA - TAJ TOUR
- 2 HIGHLIGHTS OF CUBA
- 3 TEMPLE, TIGER & TAJ TRAIL, INDIA
- 4 BORNEO EXPLORER
- 5 HIGHLIGHTS OF VIETNAM
- 6 COSTA RICA EXPLORER
- 7 CHEETAH SAFARI, KENYA
- 8 HIGHLIGHTS OF JAPAN
- 9 CLASSIC SOUTH AFRICA
- 10 TASTE OF TANZANIA

2018

- 1 HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA - TAJ TOUR
- 2 HIGHLIGHTS OF VIETNAM
- 3 CHEETAH SAFARI, KENYA
- 4 HIGHLIGHTS OF JAPAN
- 5 COSTA RICA EXPLORER
- 6 BIG FIVE SAFARI, KENYA
- 7 ESSENTIAL SRI LANKA
- 8 HIGHLIGHTS OF CHINA
- 9 BORNEO EXPLORER
- 10 KERALA EXPLORER, INDIA

RISING DEMAND

FOR REVITALISED WORLDWIDE TOURS

If anyone thought escorted touring was about large coaches and guides on auto-pilot, then the revitalised touring collection from Kuoni will make them think again. Escorted touring is one of the fastest growing sectors of Kuoni's business with a 15 per cent increase in sales over the last 12 months. Customers are attracted by a number of different factors, the intimate size of tours (none have more than 18 people), local knowledge of guides and the wide variety of trips on offer, as well as the knowledge of the company's Personal Travel Experts, many of whom have had first-hand experience of escorted touring holidays.

EPIC COMBINATIONS

Kuoni customers are increasingly looking to combine two or more touring holidays into one epic holiday, allowing them to tick off as many of the world's iconic sights as possible. For the Highlights of South Korea tour, some 70 per cent of 2018 bookings are in combination with the Highlights of China or Japan tours. Similarly Highlights of Peru sees 65 per cent of those bookings combining the trip with either Highlights of Bolivia or Highlights of Argentina and Brazil.

EPIC ADVENTURE BOOKING BOOSTED BY PLATINUM PENSIONERS

Epic adventures, worldwide tours and luxury cruises have seen demand increase over the past two years according to Kuoni. The rise of the "Platinum Pensioner" is one of the reasons bookings for these types of trips are on the rise. According to new data from the office of national statistics, the number of British households that could consider themselves as millionaires rose by nearly a third in two years. A total of 3.6 million households in Britain held wealth of more than £1m by June 2016, up 29% in two years, the Office for National Statistics said. Wealth includes pension savings, investments, belongings, and property values less any outstanding mortgage. Equity release and a relaxation on pension regulation in recent years' means wealthier, older consumers, who are still fit and healthy, are spending more on experiences as they continue to live life to the full.

TREND FOR EPIC TRIPS

- 20 nights: Ultimate Indochina: A combination of Highlights of Vietnam & Highlights of Cambodia & Laos
- 21 nights: Ultimate South America, a combination of Highlights of Peru & Bolivia & Highlights of Argentina & Brazil
- 18 nights: Highlights of South Korea and Highlights of Japan

WHAT'S HOT

IN ESCORTED TOURING

EUROPEAN TOURING

Touring in Europe is on the rise with a 70 per cent growth in passenger numbers for Italy; the Highlights of Tuscany and Highlights of Sicily tours are popular choices. The former is a seven night stay-put tour based in an 18th Century Tuscan Villa close to the walled city of Lucca. Kuoni include visits to medieval cities, pretty coastal villages and time to savour the regions famed 'slow food' movement.

MONTENEGRO NEW FOR 2018

Hailed as one of the up-and-coming shorthaul hot spots, Montenegro can be explored on the new Highlights of Croatia and Montenegro tour. The trip allows guests to experience wine tasting in a cave under Dubrovnik's airport runway and explore Montenegro's Kotor, a medieval city with Unesco World Heritage status on the shimmering Adriatic coast.

NEW EXPERIENCES 2019

1. A behind the scenes look at the Havana Queens Dance ensemble rehearsal performance and a chance to meet the dancers on the Cuba Explorer tour
2. Dinner on a floating restaurant on the Tortuguero canals on the Costa Rica Explorer tour
3. Meet with archaeologists to learn about the work they are doing in the restoration of China's Terracotta Warriors on all of Kuoni's China tour itineraries
4. Sleep under the stars with Meerkats nearby on Kuoni's new Botswana Explorer

SOLO TRIPS

Group tours are perfect for people travelling on their own who want to explore the world safely and share the experience with like-minded companions. One in nine people (11.5 per cent) in 2017 reported that they took a solo holiday in the previous 12 months according to ABTA's Consumer Trends Survey. Kuoni already has great value tours for single travellers, however as demand grows, from 2019 Kuoni will be expanding with a range of popular tours and departure dates with no single supplements.



SIMON REEVE PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON RUSSIA

Kuoni ambassador Simon Reeve's BBC2 show Russia with Simon Reeve has obviously influenced customers with his in-store travel presentations. The Highlights of Russia tour taking in two nights in Moscow and three in St Petersburg, which was new for 2018, is already sold out on selected departure dates.

STAY & CRUISE

BLENDING THE BEST EXPERIENCES ON LAND AND AT SEA

It's more than four years since Kuoni launched its Stay & Cruise collection. Starting with just eight cruise lines and itineraries to test the water, interest has continued to grow each year. Kuoni now works with 16 handpicked cruise lines. Demand shows strong growth with 2017 cruise departures with Kuoni's business up 45 per cent versus 2016 departures, and 2018 bookings up by 38 per cent versus the same time last year.

By blending Kuoni's vast experience designing land-based itineraries with some of the most impressive experiences at sea, the collection is attracting both travellers who have never been on a cruise before, right through to those who've grown to love cruise holidays. According to our cruise specialists around 50 per cent of cruise bookings are for customers who are trying it for the first time.

INVESTING IN EXPERTISE

With 70 cruise experts across 49 Kuoni stores in the UK, including branches of John Lewis, the past four years has seen investment in training and marketing, reaching a point now where the cruise experience is seamlessly knitted into online inspiration, special offer promotions, honeymoon recommendations and the brochure collection.

SPANNING THE SPECTRUM

Options for cruise holidays span the budget spectrum too, from a seven-night Croatia Island Hopping trip from £1,103 per person, to a 134-night luxury round-the-world itinerary featuring 63 destinations and costing £57,352 per person.



Celebrity Edge, suites and staterooms designed by Kelly Hoppen MBE

AT THE FOREFRONT OF CRUISE TRENDS

The programme introduces brand new ships as launch announcements are made, such as Celebrity Edge, due to be one of the most transformational cruise ships to sail the sea. The suites and staterooms, designed by renowned interior designer, Kelly Hoppen MBE, offer guests the ultimate in modern luxury and comfort, while the ground-breaking infinite veranda enables guests to fully expand their rooms to the edge of the ship bringing them closer to the ocean than ever before.

Celebrity Edge, due to launch December 2018

ULTRA-LUXURY AND EPIC ADVENTURES FOR 2018

If the last four years have been about building expertise and a reputation as a premium stay and cruise retailer, 2018 will be about the year of ultra-luxury. Well known for special occasion travel, Kuoni is putting a stronger emphasis on the ultra-luxury experience with partners including Regent Seven Seas, Seabourn and Silversea. Epic around-the-world voyages will be forming a bigger part of Kuoni's cruise inspiration, training and customer communications.



MOUNTAIN RAILS & ALASKA CRUISE

Drive Canada's famed Icefields Parkway that links the Banff and Jasper National Parks, sample one of the world's iconic rail journeys on the Rocky Mountaineer and spend time in cosmopolitan Vancouver before joining an Alaska sailing aboard Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Infinity. The sailing takes in the Inside Passage, the Hubbard Glacier and Alaska's rustic capital Juneau.



JAPAN IN SPRINGTIME

There's no better time to visit the Land of the Rising Sun than Springtime thanks to the amazing pink-cloud cherry blossoms that are dotted around the country. Sailing on Azamara Club Cruises' Azamara Quest and featuring unique ports and late-night and overnight stays, the trip takes in a number of ports including Tokyo, Hiroshima, Kobi and Mount Fuji. When guests disembark, they can board one of Japan's famed Bullet Trains and stay in a traditional Ryokan in Nagano, before returning to Tokyo.

BEST SELLING CRUISE DESTINATIONS 2018

- 1 ALASKA
- 2 JAPAN
- 3 MEDITERRANEAN
- 4 CARIBBEAN
- 5 MEKONG RIVER

NUMBER OF OCEAN CRUISE LINE PARTNERS 11

NUMBER OF RIVER CRUISE PARTNERS 3

NUMBER OF SMALL SHIP/ DISCOVER LINES: 2
(Star Clippers & island-hopping cruise, Croatia)

160 SHIPS IN TOTAL

CRUISE BUSINESS INCREASED BY 45% LAST YEAR

70 CRUISE EXPERTS

LONGEST CRUISE ITINERARY BOOKED 143 NIGHTS

33% INCREASE IN ANNUAL WEB TRAFFIC TO CRUISE PAGES (2016 VS 2017)

24 % INCREASE IN CLICKS TO 'FIND A CRUISE EXPERT' (2016 VS 2017)



Average
spend
£7500

TOP WEDDING DESTINATIONS

2017

- 1 MAURITIUS
- 2 SAINT LUCIA
- 3 MALDIVES (RENEWAL OF VOWS)
- 4 ANTIGUA
- 5 SEYCHELLES

2018

- 1 MAURITIUS
- 2 SAINT LUCIA
- 3 ANTIGUA
- 4 SRI LANKA
- 5 ITALY

Average
party size
**10-15
guests**



LGBT WEDDINGS

Whilst honeymoon bookings for LGBT couples has increased by over 80 per cent compared with the same time last year on the back of its specialist team and an increase in numbers of same sex couples getting married, Kuoni is also booking more wedding ceremonies.

TOP CHOICES ARE:

- 1 NEW YORK
- 2 LAS VEGAS
- 3 PORTUGAL

DESTINATION WEDDINGS

There's been a sharp increase in the number of couples planning destination weddings. Kuoni's business finished 14 per cent up at the end of last year compared with 2016 as a result of a new specialist support team of wedding planners and a re-vamped collection of venues.



MOST ROMANTIC PLACES TO MARRY

- 1 SANTORINI GEM – overlooking the Caldera
- 2 MALCESINE CASTLE in Lake Garda on the outside terrace
- 3 LION SANDS Game Reserve in the treehouse
- 4 SRI LANKA – Uga Bay on the east coast
- 5 KATA ROCKS PHUKET – spectacular panorama of the Andaman Sea



IT ALL STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION

The average destination wedding is booked one year in advance. From the time of enquiry to the big day, each event involves an average of 20 conversations. From flowers to hair and travel arrangements for guests, to who will conduct the ceremony the hottest topics are:

- 1 WHAT WILL THE WEATHER BE LIKE?
- 2 WHAT WILL OUR WEDDING RECEPTION LOOK LIKE?
- 3 WHO WILL BE THERE TO HELP ORGANISE US?

SOUTH AFRICA WEDDINGS **NEW**

In other parts of the world South Africa is new to the Wedding collection. In the Cape Floral region, The Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa, which is in a spectacular location between Table Mountain and the Twelve Apostles mountain range, is one of the flagship locations, along with Lion Sands Game Reserve, which features lodges in both Kruger National Park and Sabi Sands Game Reserve – and has a spectacular treehouse.



NEW VILLA WEDDINGS

A handpicked selection of CV Villas, one of Kuoni's sister companies, in Italy and Greece have been introduced so couples can enjoy an intimate wedding ceremony and reception with the added convenience of having it all in one venue.

- Borgo San Biagio, Umbria is an exceptionally unique venue set in a beautiful medieval hamlet. The ceremony is held in the Borgo's private chapel while the reception can take place in a number of quaint spots around the hamlet holding up to 80 guests.
- In Greece CV Villas' Kingfisher Point in Corfu is made up of two ultra-luxurious houses with superb sea views and infinity pools that look out over the ocean. The ceremony can be held in the villa grounds before having a stylish reception party.



SPECIAL OCCASION TRAVEL

From landmark birthdays to anniversaries, increasingly big life events are being celebrated with a travel experience. Kuoni has long been the “go to” company for honeymoons, accounting for around a quarter of all bookings and now the total special occasion travel, from engagement to retirement, makes up just over a half of Kuoni’s business.

Kuoni’s personal travel experts report that life’s big milestones are increasingly being used as an opportunity to push the boat out and head for adventure or indulgence. Princess Eugenie getting engaged in Nicaragua highlights a growing trend for couples, with engagement trips of the fastest growing areas. Many of Kuoni’s experts confirm they have had a noticeable increase in enquiries about bookings for trips to propose.

Maldives sandbank proposal

“We were whisked off by speedboat to a beautiful tiny sandbank for a gorgeous sunset followed by a private BBQ dinner surrounded by stars and the sounds of the ocean. Our very own chef prepared locally caught fish and seafood whilst we indulged in Champagne, this idyllic setting was so romantic and the most incredible spot to get down on one knee just the two of us.”

Dan Shovelar, Store Manager at Kuoni Guildford

Fabulous at fifty

“Your 50th birthday is a special milestone so one of my customers chose The BodyHoliday in Saint Lucia to celebrate on her own. It is perfect for a solo wellness holiday and includes a 50-minute spa treatment every day of your stay. She topped it off with first class flights. There’s a really sociable vibe with the staff and other solo guests, so you can have as much or as little company as you choose. It’s the perfect beach retreat for your body and mind.”

Stacey Owens, Store Manager at Kuoni Peter Jones

TOP TEN SPECIAL OCCASION TRAVEL

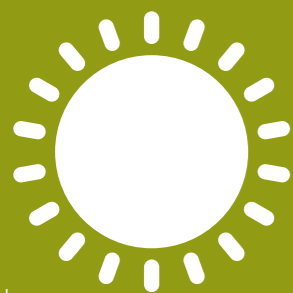
- 1 HONEYMOONS
- 2 BIRTHDAY (LANDMARK 30/40/50/60/70)
- 3 WEDDING/RENEWAL OF VOWS
- 4 EMPTY NESTERS’ BUCKET LIST TRIP
- 5 FAMILY GATHERINGS
- 6 ENGAGEMENT TRIPS TO PROPOSE
- 7 LAST HOLIDAY BEFORE BABY
- 8 RETIREMENT
- 9 REKINDLED ROMANCE/SECOND HONEYMOON
- 10 NEWLY SINGLE (EITHER DIVORCED, SEPARATED OR WIDOWED)

TOP HONEYMOON DESTINATIONS

| 2017 | 2018 |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 MALDIVES | 1 MALDIVES |
| 2 MAURITIUS | 2 MAURITIUS |
| 3 SRI LANKA | 3 INDONESIA (BALI) |
| 4 INDONESIA (BALI) | 4 SRI LANKA |
| 5 THAILAND | 5 THAILAND |
| 6 USA | 6 USA |
| 7 MEXICO | 7 ST LUCIA |
| 8 ITALY | 8 MEXICO |
| 9 SAINT LUCIA | 9 ITALY |
| 10 SEYCHELLES | 10 SOUTH AFRICA |

FAMILIES

From sleeping in treehouses to zip-lining through the rainforest, resorts and destinations around the world are upping their game to attract young holidaymakers. The all-inclusive trend continues for 2018 with approximately 24 per cent of family bookings being all-inclusive, as resorts continue to diversify and improve their dining options and activities.



INGREDIENTS HIGH ON THE FAMILY WISH LIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 SUNSHINE | 4 GREAT POOLS |
| 2 FLEXIBLE ROOMS SO CHILDREN AND ADULTS CAN HAVE THEIR OWN PRIVACY | 5 WIDE RANGE OF PLACES TO EAT |
| 3 DIRECT FLIGHTS | 6 WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND EXCURSIONS FOR ALL AGESEXCURSIONS FOR ALL AGES |



ALL-INCLUSIVE REACHES NEW HEIGHTS IN MEXICO

Mexico has moved up the overall best-sellers list (page 15) and has huge appeal for families, with 2018 set to get even bigger. Exploring underground caves, cycling through jungle trails and driving amphibious vehicles through torch-lit paths are part of the experience programme at the Hotel Xcaret Mexico. Inspired by Mexican traditions, arts and cultures, this new resort (opened Dec 2017) is ideal for families, comes with its own array of parks and attractions, and is set to take the all-inclusive concept to a new level.

LUXURY IN HALKIDIKI

For a luxury retreat without a long-haul flight, the Ikos Oceania in Halkidiki, Greece is rapidly becoming a favourite for Kuoni families with an expansive 350 metre beach with gentle sea, perfect for smaller children, plus an excellent all-inclusive plan with a variety of à la carte and buffet restaurants. Everything has been considered, from activities for teens to a crèche for the smallest guests. Deluxe One Bed Family Suites are perfect for families looking for more room.

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

Maybe it's the YouTube affect, but there's been an increase in demand for California fly-drives among families with kids aged 10 and up. In 2016 USA had the number two spot for best-family destinations. Last year it dropped to number four but this year sees its recovery and it has reclaimed the number two position. Whilst the theme-parks of Orlando will always be a draw, Kuoni has noticed a marked increase in demand for road trips taking in LA, along the Highway 1 coastal route down to San Francisco and Monterey.

THE TOP 5

LONG-HAUL FAMILY HOTELS

- 1 KURAMATHI MALDIVES
- 2 THE RAVENALA ATTITUDE, MAURITIUS
- 3 ZILWA ATTITUDE, MAURITIUS
- 4 ATLANTIS THE PALM, DUBAI
- 5 PARADISUS PLAYA DEL CARMEN LA ESMERALDA, MEXICO

EUROPEAN FAMILY HOTELS

- 1 MARTINHAL SAGRES BEACH FAMILY RESORT, PORTUGAL
- 2 PINE CLIFFS, A LUXURY COLLECTION RESORT, PORTUGAL
- 3 IKOS OCEANIA, HALKIDIKI GREECE
- 4 PRINCESA YAIZA SUITE HOTEL RESORT, LANZAROTE
- 5 CHIA LAGUNA, SARDINIA

FAMILY DESTINATIONS FOR 2018

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| 1 MALDIVES | 4 THAILAND |
| 2 USA | 5 MEXICO |
| 3 MAURITIUS | |

KID-FRIENDLY EXPERIENCES

- 1 CHOCOLATE MAKING IN SAINT LUCIA
- 2 DINNER WITH A LOCAL FAMILY WITH ATTITUDE RESORTS, MAURITIUS
- 3 UNDERWATER CAVE ADVENTURE AT HOTEL XCARET, MEXICO
- 4 CHILDREN CAN BECOME 'YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS' OR 'YOUNG GARDENERS' AT COSTA NAVARINO, GREECE
- 5 ELEPHANT HILLS, THAILAND (GREAT FOR FAMILIES WITH OLDER KIDS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT)

YOU ARE WHERE YOU TRAVEL: THE RISE OF WOW EXPERIENCES

The phrase you are what you eat may well be true, but increasingly it's becoming true that you are where you travel. People are investing in travel as never before, alongside life's milestones and to experience the world and its wonders throughout their lifetime. The memories made, the relationships nurtured and occasions celebrated are becoming central to shaping the people we are. The experience economy shows no signs of slowing, as Kuoni reveals its top ten list:



1 **Luxury Robinson Crusoe in the Maldives**

Pre-book a private dinner on the beach or an overnight stay in the new beach villa on Lonobu, the private sister island at Maafushivaru.



2 **Dine by a waterfall in Thailand** Book a private dinner by a tumbling waterfall in the jungle at The Sarojin in Khao Lak. A private chef serves fresh dishes, from marinated king prawns with vermicelli noodles and sweet chilli dip, to grilled lamb massaman curry with crispy shallots.



3 **Fly over volcanoes on La Reunion** Take a scenic flight for jaw-dropping views of active volcanoes, waterfalls, lava fields, forests and mammoth craters. A fabulous twin-centre option with Mauritius.



4 **Tango in Buenos Aires** Head to the elegant Esquina Carlos Gardel Tango Show to watch the performers undertake seemingly impossible moves at this dinner-dance show complete with a live orchestra.



5 **Wake up at Uluru** Stay the night at Longitude 131 – a basecamp with just 15 tents in the foothills of Australia's national icon. See the changing colours of Uluru with guided encounters at sunrise and sunset, and listen to ancient tales from aboriginal landowners.



6 **Drive around Bali in a campervan** Hire a classic Volkswagen Kombi and set off exploring the island – the campers can be rented during a stay at Alila Seminyak, a beachfront resort with five swimming pools.



7 **Cycle along a beach in Mozambique** Head off the beaten track to explore the unspoilt coastline on a bike-ride in the Bazaruto National Marine Park.



8 **Take in a classical concert in Italy** The annual summer-long Ravello Festival plays host to ballet, classical music and jazz performances all with the rugged Amalfi Coast as a stunning backdrop.



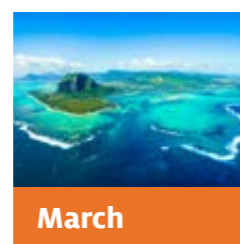
9 **Stay in an Airstream in Bolivia** Take a step back in time to the 1950s and stay in a vintage Airstream caravan on the vast salt deserts of Salar de Uyuni with unrivalled views of the surrounding wilderness.



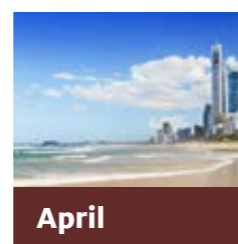
10 **Go turtle watching in the Seychelles** October to February is a prime time to see newborn hawksbill and green turtles head for the sea at Anse Kerlan beach. The Constance Lemuria hotel employs its own Turtle Manager.

WHAT'S INFLUENCING TRAVEL IN 2018

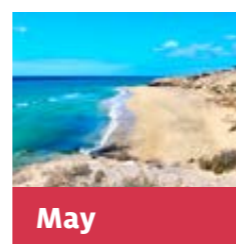
The Kuoni team looks ahead to the important anniversaries and new flight routes that may be influencing holiday choices in 2018.



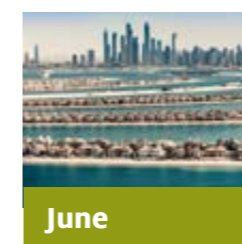
March



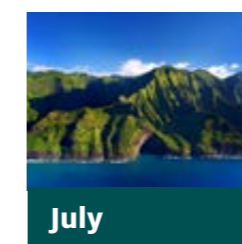
April



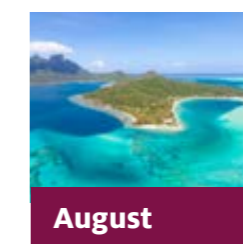
May



June



July



August



September



October

12

There's sure to be a party atmosphere in Mauritius throughout the year as the island celebrates the 50th anniversary of independence from the UK.

18

The kangaroo route to Australia will become just a single hop with the first direct Qantas flights from Heathrow to Perth. Later in the month, the Australian airline will also be using Singapore rather than Dubai for flights with a stopover.

28

Get set to sizzle in the Seychelles as British Airways begins new summer-long, twice-weekly flights to the Indian Ocean islands.

4-15

More reasons to take a trip Down Under, especially for sporting fans; April sees the hosting of the Commonwealth Games on the famed Gold Coast.

4

America will be focussing on its civil rights history in 2018 which sees the 50th anniversary of the assassinations of both Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy, as well as the signing of the Civil Rights act. Travellers to the States can follow the route of King's 'I Had A Dream' speech on Kuoni's Philadelphia and Washington DC itinerary.

1

Flight connections from Wales will receive a significant boost with the launch of Qatar Airways flights from Cardiff to Doha. The daily Dreamliner flights will link the Welsh capital with Doha's Hamad International Airport, one of the world's biggest hubs.

19

Harry and Meghan tie the knot in Windsor, and their hotly anticipated honeymoon choice will create a buzz around the latest hotspots.

25

Star Wars prequel Solo – A Star Wars story hits the big screens at the end of the month and is sure to drive interest to Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands, one of the key filming locations.

8

Emirates launches its new daily route from Stanstead to Dubai and will be the first Middle Eastern airline to operate out of the popular North East London airport, which is ideally positioned for travellers in the areas of Cambridge and Peterborough.

14

Russia is set to score an increase in interest when the first ball is kicked in the FIFA World Cup. A Kuoni Highlights of Russia tour featuring two nights in Moscow and three in St Petersburg is an ideal way to take in this marvellous country.

18

The centenary of the birth of the great Nelson Mandela is sure to spike interest in South Africa, already a popular destination in the Kuoni portfolio.

20

Get set for another Abba revival with the release of Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again. The film is again set in Greece, but Money, Money, Money means it's Croatia's turn to benefit by association. The production kept costs down by filming there instead of on the Greek islands.

22

Not only does Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom bid to become the summer's big blockbuster this month, but July also marks the 25th anniversary of Jurassic Park, the first film in the long-running saga. Both movies were filmed in Hawaii which has benefitted from its past association and could be set to do so again.

17

Simon Reeve tours the UK, sponsored by Kuoni he will be sharing inspiring tales from his travels to audiences of thousands.

19

India's National Parks will once again be put in the spotlight when Warner Bros release their adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book, which will be called Mowgli.

20

The Invictus Games comes to Sydney, founded by man of the moment Prince Harry, it brings together five hundred competitors from 18 nations.



HOME STYLE INFLUENCED BY TRENDING DESTINATIONS

Travel is such an integral part of our lifestyles today, it's not only inspiring the flavours of our food it's also becoming an influencer when it comes to interior design. As Kuoni's partnership with John Lewis develops, it's clear on-trend destinations are also impacting our home style too.

INDIA

An updated Fusion collection takes its influence from the beautiful colours seen in the cities and palaces of Rajasthan. The in-house Design Studio at John Lewis drew upon the architecture and interior decoration of the palaces to inspire both colour and pattern. With an abundance of product from Persian-style rugs to coloured glass, the collection nods to the wonderful styles of India. One particular piece from the new collection is the Array Cabinet, made from the finest acacia wood by craftsman in India whose skills have been passed down for generations. The carved doors are inspired by concentric patterns in nature, where an arc or circle is arrayed around the same centre point much like the tiny florets in the core of a sunflower.



Cocktail Shaker

JAPAN

Japan's influence has been huge this year in the design world. John Lewis launched an exclusive collection this year that was inspired by the collection of Japanese art and design at the Victoria & Albert Museum. The collection celebrated the distinctly Japanese motifs across cushions, plates and wallpaper.



Tiger Candle, Gold



"The influence of Japan is far-reaching; from its cultural traditions, food and craftsmanship to future-thinking mavericks and pioneers - we undoubtedly see Japanese influencers in so many aspects of how we think, live and look."

Philippa Prinsloo, Head of Home Design at John Lewis



Lima Llama
Pinata Bauble

Array Cabinet SS18

John Lewis

CONTACT THE PRESS TEAM

Kuoni Travel UK is part of DER Touristik, one of Europe's leading travel groups. Kuoni has continued to set the pace in luxury worldwide travel in the UK market for over fifty years and is regularly voted one of the best holiday companies in the country by readers of national newspapers and travel industry titles.

The company excels in creating tailor-made holidays and honeymoons to more than 90 destinations around the world. Since 2008 Kuoni has grown its retail network across the UK and can be found in 50 locations on premium high streets and in selected John Lewis department stores. Each store is unique in design and showcases Kuoni's Personal Travel Experts and personalised customer service.



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THE KUONI WORLDWIDE TRENDS REPORT 2018