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FOR PREMIUM TRAVEL
PROFESSIONALS



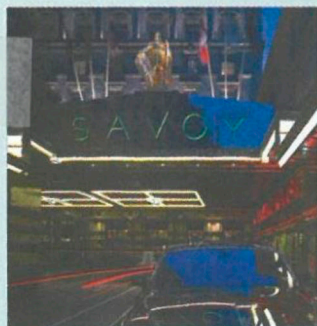
SETTING SAIL

We've got cruise covered in this new-look issue... with trend forecasts, tips from agents on growing sales, and a look at upcoming ship launches, it's time to get onboard

Plus: Ski, the luxury view from Ledbury Research, Joss Kent, on location with Travel Solutions, what's hot in New Zealand, how to publish a magazine, the world of Virtuoso and more!

The benefit factor

Who's doing what to help agents? **Debbie Ward** finds out

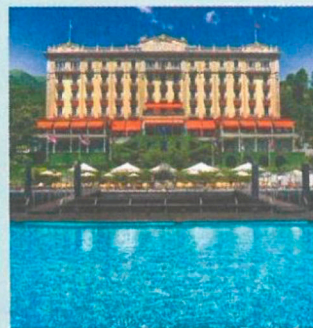
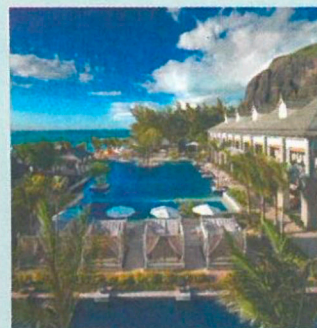


BECOME FAMOUS:

FHRI, the company behind Raffles, Fairmont and Swissotel, has revamped and relaunched its Famous Agents programme with more emphasis on education. Now called Famous Agents Academy, it allows agents to earn rewards such as complimentary room nights, retail gift cards and member-only rates by taking online courses and making bookings at FHRI hotels. A membership number allows agents to track client reservations and convert them to points. Standout FRHI hotels include Fairmont Le Chateau Frontenac, Raffles Singapore and The Savoy, famousagents.frhi.com

SISTER ACT:

Agents booking two holidays of a week or more at Mount Cinnamon Resort & Beach Club overlooking Grand Anse beach in Grenada can earn two nights and breakfast for two at a Mount Cinnamon sister property in the UK, such as the Old Swan & Minster Mill in the Cotswolds or the Cary Arms, in Babbacombe Bay, Devon. Bookings must be made by November 30 for stays before the same date. To claim the incentive, send an email to Annabel@lepetit-monde.com stating booking details, client names and dates.



BE A PRO: To celebrate five years since launching SPG Pro for the trade, Starwood is reinventing it with new benefits and components for agents. The revised scheme now grants all travel professionals the chance to earn Starpoints and attain SPG elite status, with the upgrades which come along with that at nearly 1,200 hotels worldwide. Registered SPG Pro users can start earning points from October. SPG drives more than 50% of occupancy across Starwood globally, spg.com/pro

FLY & TRY: Preferred Hotel Group has introduced its first-ever travel agent rate offer, giving a discount up to 50% on the best available rate or a flat fee of \$100pn at more than 160 member hotels and resorts worldwide. Preferred said the deal – available when booking via GDS only – will allow agents more of a chance to try out the properties. To see the list of participating hotels and resorts – including Grand Hotel Tremezzo on Lake Como, pictured – go to preferredhotelgroup.com/tarate

Aqua's third ship makes Mekong debut

By Debbie Ward

Aqua Expeditions' third vessel will launch this October as small-ship luxury cruising continues to grow in Asia.

The Aqua Mekong will voyage its namesake river through Cambodia and Vietnam offering three, four and seven-night itineraries from Angkor Wat gateway Siem Reap to My Tho, near Saigon and vice versa, stopping in Phnom Penh.

The vessel is a sister to the company's two other vessels on the Peruvian Amazon and features 20 suites with floor-to-ceiling windows, a spa and fitness centre, library, screening room and observation deck with pool and lounge bar. The menu is by Michelin-starred David Thompson, the chef behind Nahm at the Metropolitan by Como in Bangkok.

The UK accounts for about 20% of business, which Aqua plans to increase with the help of UK trade sales and training representative Malcolm Macfarlane. Agents earn 10% commission with Aqua and voyages are also bookable through operators such as Abercrombie & Kent, Bales Worldwide, Cox & Kings and Audley.

Meanwhile, Travel Indochina has launched its 2014-16 Luxury Asia River Cruising brochure including Aqua and two new river boats in Burma, the 28-cabin Irrawaddy Explorer and the 21-cabin Sanctuary Ananda.



ONE NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

For clients looking for a stay with a twist, suggest Vienna's Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (tba21.org), where guests can sleep on Elevator Bed, an installation by Belgian artist Carsten Holler. They'll spend the night alone, but a member of staff is on hand through the night. Available until November 23, it can be booked via the Sofitel Vienna Stephansdom (guestservices.vienna@sofitel.com) from €390 and is 10% commissionable.

