

TOURISM NOW

MA GA ZI NE

#EmpoweringDiversity

LGBTQ+
in Tourism

Embracing the power of diversity to continue building a more inclusive and welcoming world.

JULY 2024

T N E T N O C



Skål International
Edificio España | Avda. Palma de Mallorca 15, 1º
29620 Torremolinos | Málaga, Spain
+34 952 389 111 | communication@skal.org

TOURISM
NOW
MAGAZINE

04

Editorial

Message from the President of Skål International and the Editor of the Tourism Now Magazine.

06

LGBTQ+ in Tourism

Articles celebrating #EmpoweringDiversity, inclusion and the powerful impact the LGBTQ+ community has on the global travel industry.

22

Meet Skål International

Skål International Membership classifications & special publication on the occasion of Skål International's 90th Anniversary.

28

Corporate Social Responsibility

Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards 2024. Overtourism: a global challenge in 2024. Biosphere: What is last-chance tourism and why is it so popular?

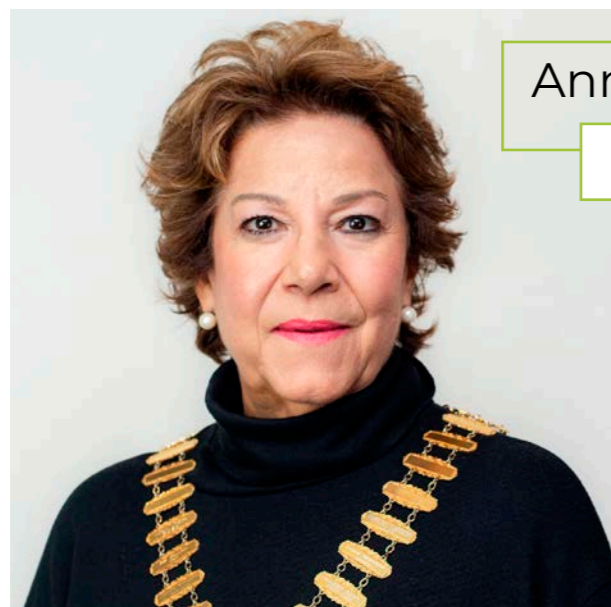
38

Events

Save the dates. Izmir Skål International World Congress. Latest news about trade shows.

Boost your brand with advertising opportunities in Tourism Now magazine.
More info: skal@skal.org.

EDITORIAL



Annette Cardenas
Skål International President

ENHANCING SKÅL INTERNATIONAL RELEVANCE IN THE INDUSTRY

In today's rapidly evolving tourism landscape, **embracing diversity and inclusion has become more crucial than ever**. As a renowned global organisation of tourism professionals, we have been at the forefront of promoting diversity and inclusivity within the industry.

By **identifying and integrating new trends**, our organisation has taken proactive steps to ensure that its membership reflects the dynamic growth and changing face of the tourism industry.

Recent initiatives aimed at diversifying our membership base have led to the introduction of **two new membership classifications** tailored to embrace the evolving trends of the industry.

'Wine Tourism' and 'Arts, Culture and Events', are now new classifications which we feel will enrich our membership base and present new opportunities to do what we do best - Business among friends.

The introduction of new membership classifications exemplifies our commitment to staying ahead of the curve in the ever-changing tourism landscape.

This strategic move not only enhances Skål International relevance in the industry but also ensures that its members are equipped to navigate and capitalise on emerging trends.

Yours in Skål!



Toni Ritter
Tourism Now Editor & Skål International Director

CELEBRATING LGBTQ+ DIVERSITY IN TOURISM

Welcome to the latest edition of our magazine, where we dive into the dynamic world of LGBTQ+ tourism.

This issue is a celebration of **#EmpoweringDiversity**, inclusion, and the powerful impact the LGBTQ+ community has on the global travel industry.

Tourism has always been a bridge that connects cultures, fosters understanding, and promotes global harmony. In recent years, the LGBTQ+ community has become an increasingly influential force within this sector, shaping destinations, influencing marketing strategies, and driving economic growth. This phenomenon, often referred to as '**Pink Money**', highlights the significant spending power of LGBTQ+ travelers and its profound impact on the tourism industry.

Our journey also takes us to the heart of the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA). For decades, IGLTA has been at the forefront of promoting LGBTQ+ tourism, advocating for safe and welcoming travel experiences, and connecting travelers with LGBTQ+-friendly businesses and destinations.

As you navigate through this issue, we hope you are inspired by the stories, insights, and initiatives that underscore the importance of LGBTQ+ inclusion in tourism.

Thank you for accompanying us on this journey in an open-minded, unprejudiced and respectful manner. Together, **let's embrace the power of diversity and continue to build a more inclusive and welcoming world.**

Always safe travels and happy reading!



LGBTQ+ IN TOURISM

WHAT IS PRIDE MONTH

Pride Month is celebrated each year in June to honor the LGBTQ+ community and remember the Stonewall Riots, a pivotal event in LGBTQ+ history. Here's an overview of its significance:



Stonewall Inn. Greenwich Village, New York City.
Photo by 'Rhododendrites', licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

ORIGINS AND HISTORY

Stonewall Riots (1969): The origins of Pride Month date back to the **Stonewall Riots**, which began on June 28, 1969, in New York City. These riots were a series of spontaneous protests by members of the LGBTQ+ community in response to a police raid at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village. The events marked a turning point in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights, catalyzing the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PRIDE MONTH

Commemoration: Pride Month commemorates the struggles and achievements of the LGBTQ+ community over the decades. It remembers the activists and advocates who have fought for equal rights and recognition.

Visibility and Awareness: It raises awareness about the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including discrimination, prejudice, and violence. Pride events highlight the need for continued advocacy and policy changes to protect LGBTQ+ rights.

Celebration of Diversity: Pride Month celebrates the diversity within the LGBTQ+ community. It acknowledges the different identities and experiences, promoting acceptance and understanding.

Empowerment: It empowers LGBTQ+ individuals by creating a sense of community and belonging. Pride events often provide a platform for self-expression and the celebration of identity.



WHAT IS LGBTQ+?

LGBTQ+ is an acronym that represents a diverse community of people with different sexual orientations and gender identities. The acronym stands for:

- **L: Lesbian** – Women who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women.
- **G: Gay** – Men who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to other men.
- **B: Bisexual** – Individuals who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender.
- **T: Transgender** – Individuals whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Q: Queer or Questioning** – Queer is a broad term for people who do not strictly fit into traditional categories of gender and sexual orientation. Questioning refers to individuals who are exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The **plus sign (+)** represents additional sexual orientations and gender identities that are not explicitly included in the acronym, such as:

- **Intersex** – People born with physical sex characteristics that do not fit typical definitions of male or female.
- **Asexual** – Individuals who experience little or no sexual attraction.
- **Pansexual** – People who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to others regardless of their gender or gender identity.

Thus, LGBTQ+ encompasses a wide range of identities and orientations that do not conform to heteronormative and binary gender norms.

ACTIVITIES AND TRADITIONS

Parades and Marches: One of the most visible and popular aspects of Pride Month are the parades and marches held in cities worldwide. These events feature colorful floats, costumes, and performances, celebrating LGBTQ+ culture.

Educational Events: Many organizations and communities host workshops, panels, and lectures to educate people about LGBTQ+ history, issues, and rights.

Cultural Events: Pride Month includes a variety of cultural events such as film screenings, art exhibitions, and music festivals that showcase LGBTQ+ talent and creativity.

Advocacy and Fundraising: Many Pride events also focus on advocacy, with campaigns for legal reforms and social change. Fundraising efforts during Pride Month support LGBTQ+ organizations and causes.

IMPORTANCE

Promoting Equality: Pride Month is crucial for promoting equality and human rights. It draws attention to ongoing issues such as marriage equality, transgender rights, and protection against discrimination.

Building Solidarity: It fosters solidarity within the LGBTQ+ community and with allies, creating a supportive network that can work together to achieve common goals.

Encouraging Acceptance: By celebrating LGBTQ+ identities and stories, Pride Month helps to break down stereotypes and prejudices, encouraging a more inclusive society.

Overall, Pride Month stands as a powerful symbol of the ongoing struggle for LGBTQ+ rights and the celebration of diversity and inclusion.

■ **By Toni Ritter.**
Skål International Director.



PINK MONEY

The Economic Impact of 'Pink Money' on the Tourism Industry



'Pink Money' refers to the substantial purchasing power of the LGBTQ+ community, a demographic increasingly recognized for its significant economic influence.

In the tourism sector, **Pink Money** represents a critical revenue stream, as LGBTQ+ travelers are among the most affluent and frequent travelers. Companies that identify and strategically target this market can gain substantial economic benefits. This article explores the scientific basis and economic implications of **Pink Money** for the tourism industry.

ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Numerous studies highlight the substantial economic impact of the LGBTQ+ community. In the United States, for instance, **the purchasing power of this demographic is estimated to exceed one trillion dollars annually**. This economic strength is also reflected in their travel patterns: LGBTQ+ individuals travel more frequently and spend more per trip compared to their heterosexual counterparts. This makes them an attractive and lucrative market segment for tourism businesses.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND PREFERENCES

LGBTQ+ travelers exhibit distinct consumer behaviors and preferences that differentiate them from the general population.

Research indicates that LGBTQ+ travelers prioritize destinations known for their LGBTQ+-friendly policies and social acceptance. Cities such as Amsterdam, Madrid, San Francisco, and Berlin have established themselves as premier destinations for LGBTQ+ travelers due to their progressive attitudes and inclusive environments. These cities benefit economically from the influx of LGBTQ+ tourists, who contribute significantly to local economies through spending on accommodation, dining, culture, entertainment, and shopping.

MARKETING STRATEGIES AND COMMUNICATION

To effectively harness the potential of **Pink Money**, **tourism companies must adapt their marketing strategies and**

communication efforts. This involves creating inclusive advertising campaigns that resonate with the values and experiences of the LGBTQ+ community.

Companies should use LGBTQ+-affirming symbols and language in their promotional materials to signal their support and inclusivity.

Moreover, active participation in LGBTQ+ events, such as Pride parades, and support for LGBTQ+ causes can enhance a company's visibility and reputation within the community.



SERVICE CUSTOMIZATION AND EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Beyond marketing, the customization of services to meet the specific needs of LGBTQ+ travelers is crucial. This can include offering **travel packages** tailored to same-sex couples, ensuring LGBTQ+-friendly accommodations, and developing specialized itineraries that cater to the interests of LGBTQ+ travelers.

Additionally, **employee training programs** focused on sensitivity and awareness of LGBTQ+ issues can enhance service quality and ensure a welcoming environment for all guests. The Marriott hotel chain, for example, has implemented comprehensive training and developed LGBTQ+-specific offerings, setting a benchmark in the industry.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR TOURISM COMPANIES

The economic benefits of targeting the LGBTQ+ market are significant. Expanding the customer base to include LGBTQ+ travelers can lead to increased revenues and market share.

Furthermore, companies that are perceived as LGBTQ+-friendly can enhance their brand reputation, attracting not only LGBTQ+ customers but also allies who support diversity and inclusion.

Studies have shown that businesses advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and inclusivity also experience higher employee satisfaction and retention, which is particularly advantageous in the service-oriented tourism sector.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Despite the numerous benefits, targeting the LGBTQ+ market is not without challenges.

In certain countries and regions, LGBTQ+ rights remain limited or are not recognized, posing risks for businesses operating in these areas. Companies must navigate these complexities carefully, balancing their support for LGBTQ+ inclusivity with the potential for backlash in more conservative markets.

A nuanced and culturally sensitive approach is essential to mitigate risks and maximize positive outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The economic impact of **Pink Money** in the tourism industry is profound.

LGBTQ+ travelers represent a high-value market segment that, when effectively targeted and served, can bring substantial economic rewards to tourism businesses.

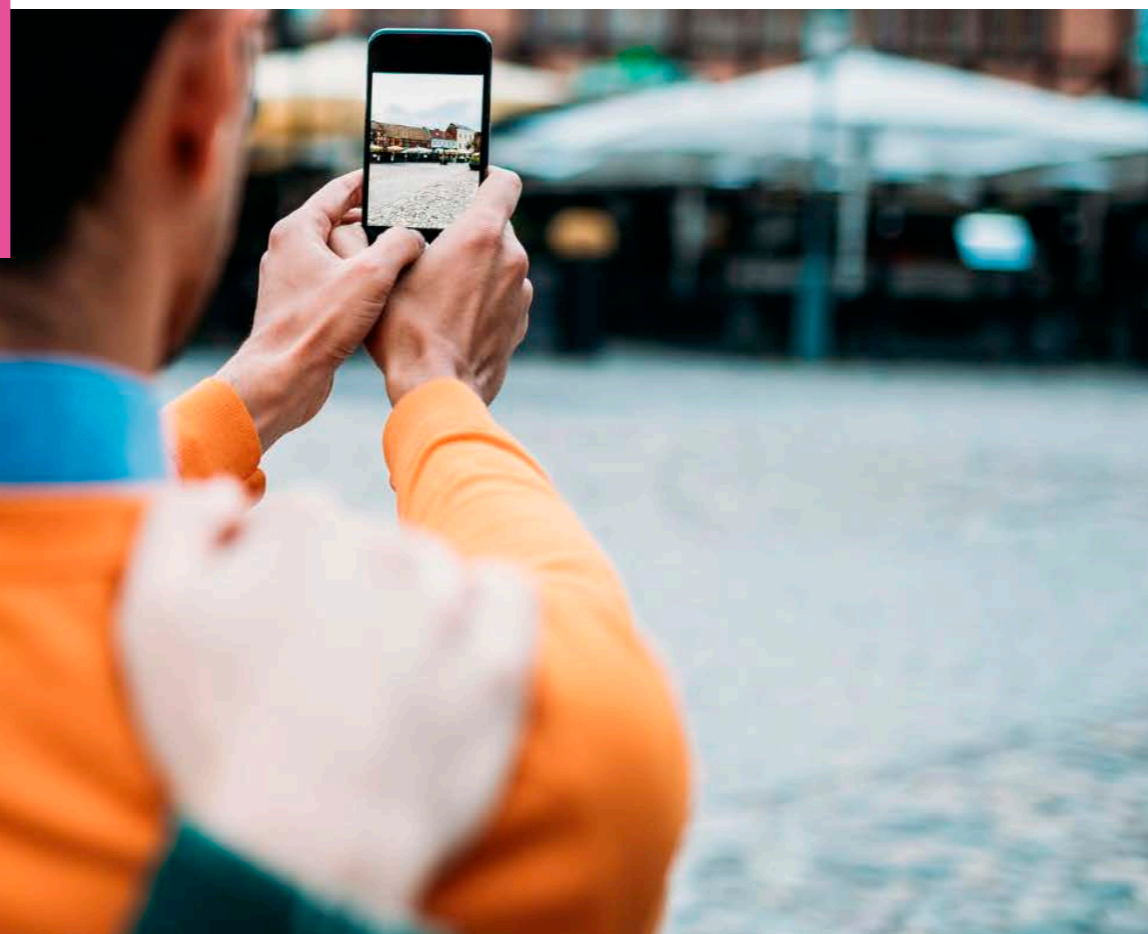
By understanding and addressing the specific needs of the LGBTQ+ community, companies can enhance their competitiveness and achieve significant financial gains. However, this requires **a strategic approach that combines inclusive marketing, customized service offerings, and a commitment to diversity and inclusion.**

With sensitivity and a deep understanding of the LGBTQ+ community, tourism businesses can create a mutually beneficial relationship that fosters economic growth and social progress.

■ **By Toni Ritter.**
Skål International Director.



Businesses advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and inclusivity also experience higher employee satisfaction and retention, which is particularly advantageous in the service-oriented tourism sector.



How can we make Travel more LGBTQ+ friendly?

Traveling is one of life's greatest joys. It allows us to explore new cultures, meet new people, and create unforgettable memories. However, for LGBTQ+ travelers, the journey can sometimes still be fraught with challenges that many others might not consider.

According to the International [LGBTQ+ Travel Association \(IGLTA\) 2023 Virtual Think Tank Report](#), LGBTQ+ travelers are eager to explore new destinations, with 60% planning to travel more in the next year compared to pre-pandemic levels.

But despite their enthusiasm, safety and discrimination remain significant concerns for these travelers. So, how can we make travel more LGBTQ+ friendly?



UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF LGBTQ+ TRAVELERS

LGBTQ+ travelers value safety, authenticity, and visibility in their travel experiences. Safety, in particular, is a crucial concern. The IGLTA report highlights that 73% of LGBTQ+ travelers consider safety a top priority when choosing a destination. This isn't just about personal safety in terms of physical harm but also about feeling welcome and respected.

For many LGBTQ+ individuals, travel decisions are influenced by local attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people and the legal protections in place. While some destinations have made great strides in becoming more inclusive, others still lag, creating environments where

LGBTQ+ travelers might face discrimination or hostility. It's essential for the tourism industry to recognize these concerns and take steps to address them.

SAFETY FIRST

Ensuring safety for LGBTQ+ travelers involves more than just physical security. It includes creating a welcoming atmosphere where travelers feel comfortable being themselves. This can be achieved through various measures, such as training staff to be aware of and sensitive to LGBTQ+ issues, ensuring that marketing materials reflect diversity, and providing clear information about local LGBTQ+ laws and customs.

Hotels, airlines, and other service providers can also implement policies that protect LGBTQ+ travelers from discrimination. For instance, having a zero-tolerance policy for harassment and making it clear that discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated can go a long way in making LGBTQ+ travelers feel safe, especially when these policies are communicated openly.

CREATING INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING EXPERIENCES

To make travel more inclusive, businesses in the tourism industry need to go beyond simply stating that they are LGBTQ+ friendly. It's about creating an environment where LGBTQ+ travelers feel genuinely welcome and respected. This involves

concrete actions and an ongoing commitment to inclusivity.

Training and Education:

One essential step is training staff to understand and respect the needs of LGBTQ+ travelers. This includes not assuming the gender or relationship of guests when they check-in or interact with them during their stay. Simple actions, like asking how the room should be prepared if two men book a double room, can make a big difference in how welcome guests feel.

Training should cover appropriate language use, understanding the challenges LGBTQ+ travelers might face, and knowing how to handle any issues that might arise. It's also crucial to train staff to recognize their own biases and learn how to overcome them. Ongoing education and training sessions can help keep inclusivity at the forefront of everyone's mind.

Authentic Promotion of Inclusivity: Nearly 50% of LGBTQ+ travelers prefer destinations that actively promote inclusivity and LGBTQ+ rights. This means that destinations should not only welcome LGBTQ+ travelers but also actively promote and support LGBTQ+ rights and visibility. Collaborating with LGBTQ+ groups and participating in events that promote diversity and inclusion, like Skål International's Tourism Innovation Night in Berlin, are excellent ways to demonstrate this commitment.

Promoting inclusivity also involves being transparent about the destination's

LGBTQ+ policies and culture. Travelers appreciate honesty about what they can expect regarding local attitudes and legal protections. Marketing materials should feature diverse couples and families, showcasing that the destination is welcoming to everyone.

Ongoing Commitment

Beyond Pride Month: It's essential to emphasize LGBTQ+ inclusivity not just during Pride Month but throughout the year. This commitment shows that businesses value their LGBTQ+ guests and are dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for them at all times. The tourism industry needs to come together to emphasize the importance of creating LGBTQ+ safe travel, even in regions where state laws might be against it. After all, it's a human right, and everyone deserves to travel safely. We, as a globally connected industry, can become a safe hub, with safe spaces within our businesses for the community, within every country.

ADDRESSING NEGATIVE TRENDS

Unfortunately, some destinations are retracting from LGBTQ+ friendly human rights. This emphasizes even further how the tourism industry must stand firm and emphasize the importance of creating safe travel experiences. The community's spending power is significant, and respecting this demographic should be a priority for any forward-thinking business.

Tourism companies should voice their support for



LGBTQ+ rights and advocate for change where necessary. This might involve working with local governments to improve protections for LGBTQ+ individuals or supporting non-profits that work towards equality.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR BUSINESSES

1. Implement comprehensive training programs for staff to ensure they understand and can meet the needs of LGBTQ+ travelers.
2. Promote your commitment to LGBTQ+ rights actively and visibly, both in marketing materials and through participation in relevant events.
3. Collaborate with LGBTQ+ organizations to create safe and welcoming environments.
4. Solicit feedback from LGBTQ+ travelers and use it to continuously improve services.

Making travel more LGBTQ+ friendly is not just a moral imperative but also a smart business move. By creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments, the tourism industry can tap into a significant market segment eager to explore new destinations.

It's about more than just putting a rainbow sticker on your door; **it's about making real, lasting changes that show LGBTQ+ travelers they are respected and valued, just like everyone else.** In the end, in tourism, we are customer-oriented, and everyone is our customer.

■ **By Moritz Freise.**
Skål International Berlin
President.

Celebrating Diversity and Inclusivity in Travel



A spotlight on IGLTA

In today's interconnected world, the significance of **inclusive and diverse travel experiences** cannot be overstated. Whether exploring a bustling metropolis, relaxing on a serene beach, or immersing oneself in cultural heritage, every traveler deserves to feel welcomed and respected regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

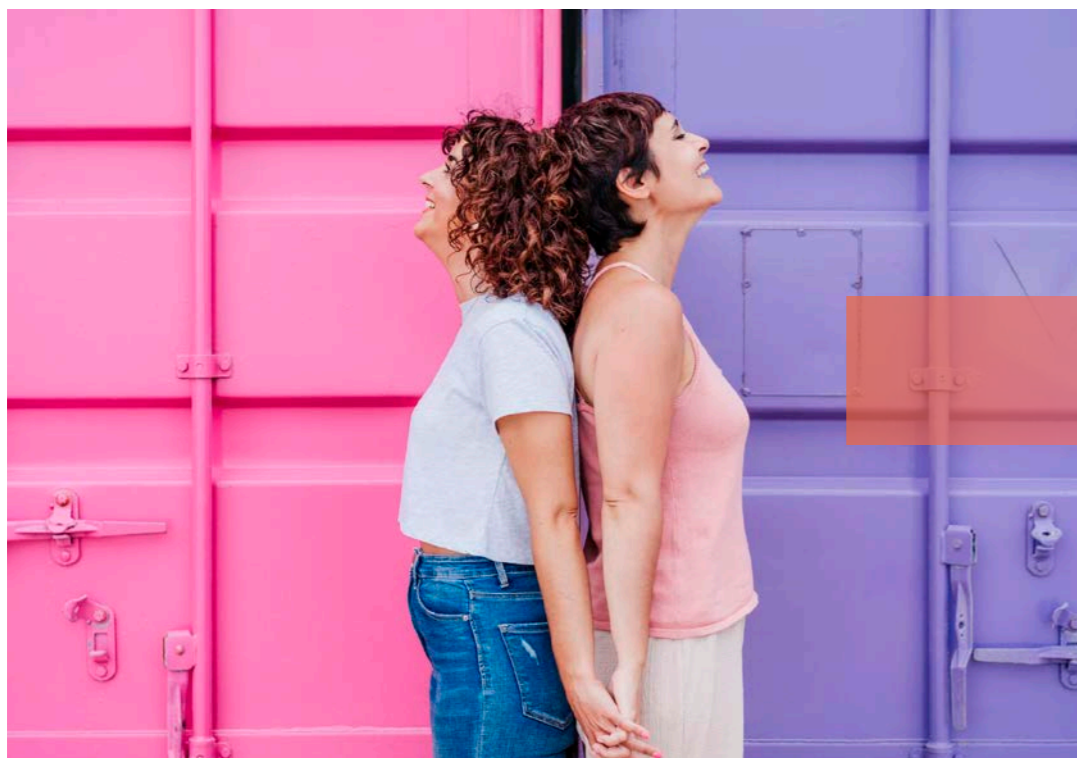
This is where the [International LGBTQ+ Travel Association](#) (IGLTA) shines as a beacon of advocacy, education, and community for LGBTQ+ travelers worldwide.

ORIGINS AND MISSION

Founded in 1983, the [IGLTA](#) was one of the first organizations dedicated to promoting LGBTQ+-friendly travel destinations and businesses. Its mission is rooted in the belief that travel is a transformative experience that

should be accessible to everyone, free from discrimination.

Over the decades, IGLTA has grown into a **global network of tourism professionals, influencers, and travelers** committed to advancing LGBTQ+ travel opportunities and rights.



PROMOTING LGBTQ+ TOURISM

One of the core functions of IGLTA is to connect LGBTQ+ travelers with welcoming destinations, accommodations, and businesses through its robust network of member organizations. By partnering with hotels, tour operators, airlines, and tourism boards, IGLTA ensures that LGBTQ+ travelers can find safe and inclusive spaces wherever they choose to explore.

EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Beyond promoting LGBTQ+ tourism, IGLTA plays a vital role in education and advocacy. The association provides resources and training to travel professionals on how to create LGBTQ+-friendly environments and experiences. This includes sensitivity training, best practices for marketing to LGBTQ+ travelers, and understanding the legal and cultural landscapes affecting LGBTQ+ tourism globally.

GLOBAL IMPACT

IGLTA's influence extends globally, fostering dialogue and collaboration among tourism professionals, policymakers, and LGBTQ+ organizations worldwide.

By advocating for LGBTQ+ rights in tourism, **IGLTA helps shape policies that promote equality and inclusivity in travel destinations** around the globe.

ANNUAL GLOBAL CONVENTION

A highlight of IGLTA's calendar is its annual Global Convention, bringing together industry leaders, influencers, and advocates to discuss trends, challenges, and opportunities in LGBTQ+ tourism. The convention serves as a platform for networking, education, and celebrating achievements in the realm of LGBTQ+ travel. **This year's convention will take place in Osaka, Japan from 23. – 26. October 2024.**

COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT

Perhaps most importantly, IGLTA serves as a community for LGBTQ+ travelers and allies alike. Through its events, social media platforms, and online resources, IGLTA fosters connections and provides support to individuals seeking LGBTQ+-friendly travel experiences.

Whether planning a honeymoon, family vacation, or solo adventure, LGBTQ+ travelers can

find guidance and recommendations from a community that understands their unique needs.

LOOKING AHEAD

As society continues to evolve, so too does the mission of IGLTA. The association remains committed to expanding LGBTQ+ travel opportunities, advocating for equality, and celebrating the rich diversity of the global LGBTQ+ community. By promoting inclusive travel experiences and supporting LGBTQ+ rights worldwide, IGLTA paves the way for a future where every traveler can explore the world with pride and without fear.

In conclusion, the International LGBTQ+ Travel Association (IGLTA) stands as a testament to the power of travel to unite and empower.

By championing inclusivity, education, and community, IGLTA not only enhances travel experiences but also **drives positive social change on a global scale**. Whether you're an avid traveler, a tourism professional, or simply an advocate for equality, IGLTA invites you to join in creating a more welcoming world for LGBTQ+ travelers everywhere.

■ **By Toni Ritter.**
Skål International Director.

MEET SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

Joining the Global Network of Travel and Tourism Leaders

In the dynamic world of travel and tourism, where innovation meets exploration, joining the ranks of an international association like Skål International, renowned for its global presence and diverse industry sectors, provides senior managerial executives with a vibrant hub for collaboration and networking.

Dedicated to professionals across five pivotal sectors—Accommodation, Attractions, Specialised Tourism Services, Tourism and Travel Organisations, and Transportation—the association offers over **40 distinct membership classifications** catering to diverse roles and specialties, ensuring that every professional finds their niche.

Recently approved classifications—Wine Tourism and Art, Culture, and Events—highlight the association’s forward-thinking approach.

Wine Tourism immerses members in the vineyard-laden landscapes where wineries open their doors for immersive tours and tastings, enriching the visitor experience with insights into viticulture and wine production.

Meanwhile, **Art, Culture, and Events** extend beyond traditional museum settings to embrace large-scale cultural phenomena like concerts, festivals, biennales, and cultural celebrations. These events not only captivate international and

national audiences but also bolster ancillary sectors such as air travel, accommodations, restaurants, and local tourism products.

A future membership classification the association might consider incorporating is **Technology Tourism**.

This category integrates cutting-edge innovations, including virtual reality travel experiences, AI-driven travel itineraries, and smart tourism solutions, to enhance visitor engagement and streamline travel logistics.

Joining the association unlocks a plethora of advantages. From unparalleled networking opportunities with global leaders to access to cutting-edge industry insights and resources, members stay at the forefront of industry trends. Professional development is fostered through tailored workshops, seminars, and training sessions, empowering members to navigate the evolving landscape of travel and tourism with confidence.

Explore our association’s diverse membership classifications:

- ACCOMMODATION**
- HOLIDAY PARK/CAMP
 - HOTEL
 - HOTEL ASSOCIATION
 - HOTEL CHAIN/GROUP
 - MOTEL
 - TOURIST APARTMENT

- ATTRACTIONS**
- ATTRACTION
 - GOLF CLUB
 - RESTAURANT
 - SPA
 - SPORT TOURISM
 - WINE TOURISM

- SPECIALISED TOURISM SERVICES**
- CONGRESS & CONVENTION CENTRE
 - CONSULTANCY
 - GENERAL SALES AGENT
 - MEDICAL TOURISM
 - PROF. CONGRESS ORGANISER
 - RESERVATIONS SYSTEM
 - SUPPLIER OF GOODS, SERVICES & IT
 - TRAVEL & TOURISM EDUCATION
 - TRAVEL INSURANCE
 - TRAVEL MEDIA

- TRANSPORTATION**
- AIRLINE
 - AIRLINE ASSOCIATION
 - AIRPORT
 - CAR HIRE
 - COACH COMPANY AND AUTOCAR
 - CRUISE LINE AND SEA FERRY
 - INLAND WATERWAYS
 - PORT AUTHORITY AND SEA PORT
 - RAILWAY

- TOURIST AND TRAVEL ORGANISATIONS**
- ARTS, CULTURE AND EVENTS
 - DESTINATION MGMT COMPANY
 - HOME BASED TRAVEL AGENT
 - INBOUND TOUR OPERATOR
 - OUTBOUND TOUR OPERATOR
 - TOUR OPERATOR
 - TOURISM AUTHORITY
 - TOURISM ORGANISATION
 - TRAVEL AGENTS
 - TRAVEL AGENTS & TOUR OP. ASSOCIATION
 - TRAVEL BROKERS

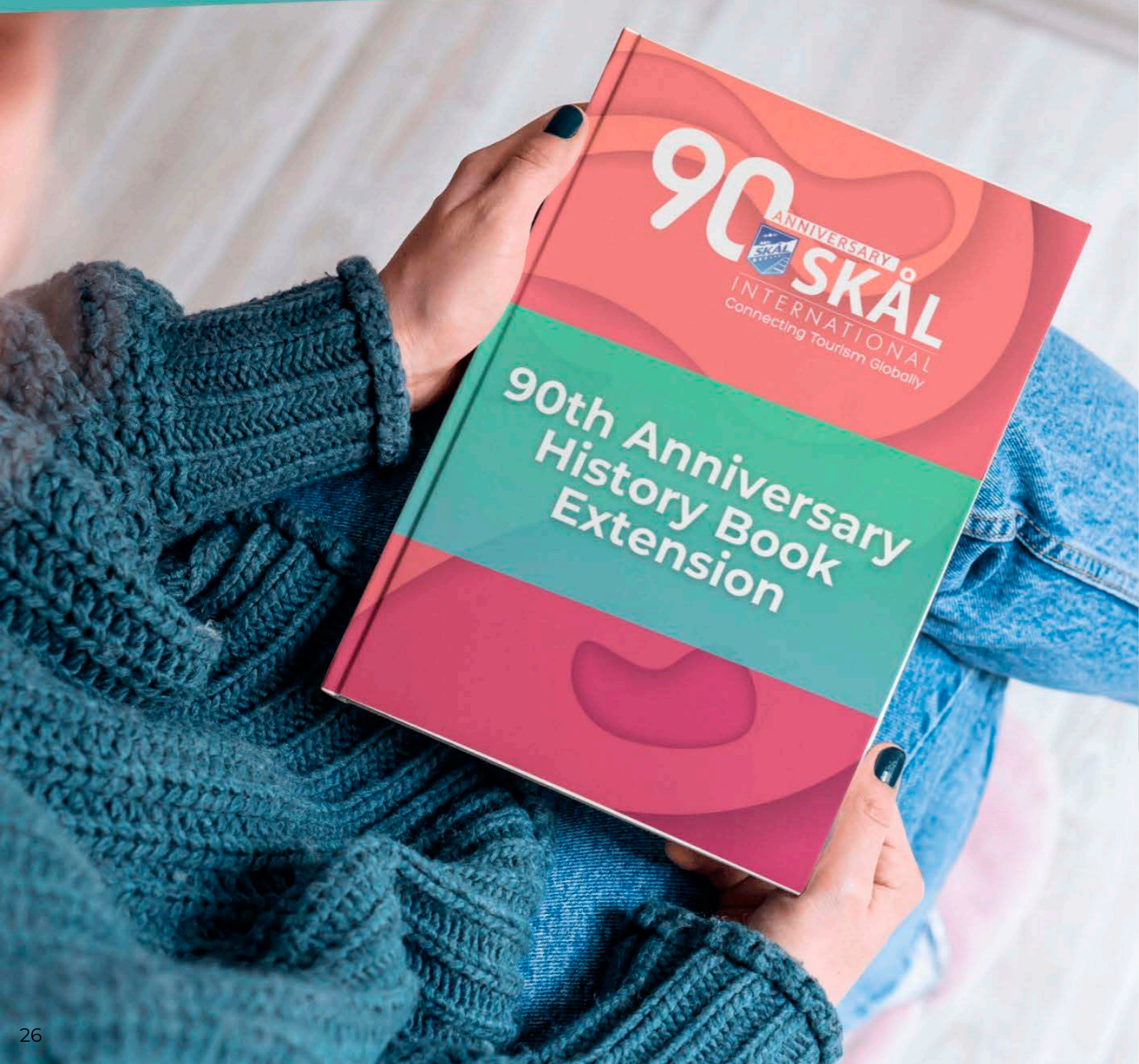


An unforgettable memory:

90th Anniversary History Book Extension



Access here



Skål International 90th Anniversary Newsletter



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



GO CARBON NEUTRAL IN 5 SIMPLE STEPS

Solutions for tour operators, travel agencies,
hoteliers, and other tourism companies.

1



Measure Your
CO2 Footprint

2



Offset Past
Emissions

3



Start
Reducing

4



Stay CO2 Neutral
in Real-Time

5



Engage &
Communicate



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS

2024



THE 23RD EDITION OF THE SKÅL INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS HAS CONCLUDED WITH AN IMPRESSIVE TOTAL OF 56 ENTRIES FROM 20 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE.

Independent judges will evaluate the submissions, and the winners will be announced at the Skål International World Congress, to be held in Izmir, Türkiye, in October 2024.

WITH THE COLLABORATION OF:



Overtourism: a global challenge in 2024

As the world emerges from the pandemic-induced slumber, the travel industry faces a paradox: overtourism.

The very success that draws millions of visitors threatens the sustainability of our cherished destinations. In this article, we'll explore the impact of overtourism, real-world cases, and strategies for a more sustainable future.

THE IMPACT OF OVERTOURISM

A Growing Concern

Overtourism isn't a new concept, but its repercussions have intensified.

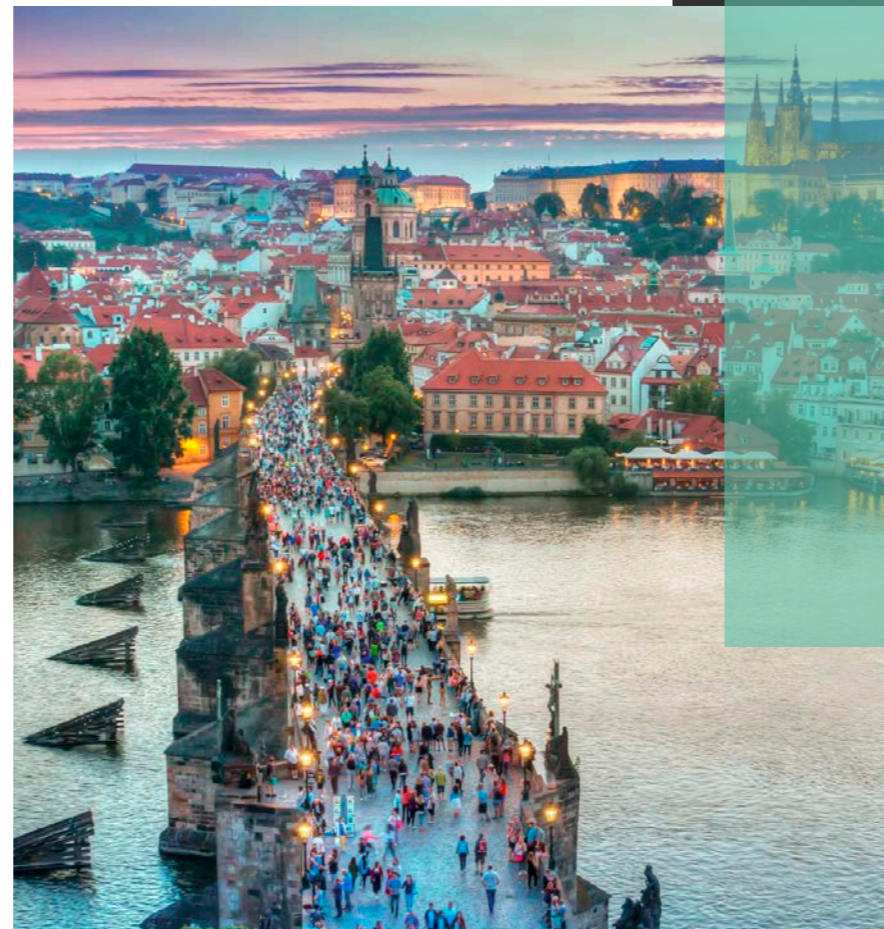
As global travel rebounds, cities grapple with overcrowded streets, strained infrastructure, and disgruntled residents. The delicate balance between economic prosperity and environmental preservation hangs in the balance.

The Numbers Speak

In 2023, international tourism ended at 88% of pre-pandemic levels, with

an estimated 1.3 billion international arrivals.

As we move into 2024, the [World Travel & Tourism Council \(WTTTC\)](#) projects a record-breaking year for the sector, with global economic contribution reaching an all-time high of \$11.1 trillion. **Spain alone, which welcomed a record 85.1 million international visitors in 2023** (up 19% from the previous year), expects even more visitors through 2024. However, this growth comes with challenges, particularly in managing overtourism.



REAL-WORLD CASES: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Success Stories

1. **Bhutan:** The Himalayan kingdom focuses on high-value, low-impact tourism. Visitors pay a daily fee, ensuring quality experiences while preserving culture and nature.
2. **Amsterdam:** The Dutch capital limits Airbnb rentals and promotes cycling. It's a model for other cities.
3. **Machu Picchu, Peru:** This iconic archaeological site now implements visitor caps and time slots to prevent overcrowding. Sustainable transport options minimize environmental impact.

The Culprits

1. **Barcelona:** With 30 million overnight stays in 2017, Barcelona epitomizes overtourism. Its narrow alleys overflow with visitors, and locals grapple with rising rents and crowded public spaces.
2. **Venice:** The 'City of Canals' faces a double-edged sword. Its beauty draws millions, yet the weight of their footsteps erodes its foundations. In 2019, UNESCO warned that Venice could be placed on its endangered list.
3. **Kyoto:** Cherry blossoms lure tourists, but the ancient capital struggles to accommodate them. Residents contend with packed temples and congested streets.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Dispersal and Diversification

- Encourage travelers to explore lesser-known gems. Promote rural escapes, hidden villages, and off-season wonders.
- Implement context-specific measures to manage congestion in specific areas and attractions.

Infrastructure Upgrades

- Invest in resilient infrastructure. Smart traffic management, waste disposal, and improved facilities are crucial.
- Address pressure on resources caused by residents, commuters, and tourists alike.

Community Engagement

- Involve locals in decision-making. Their insights are invaluable for sustainable tourism planning.
- Create cities for all: citizens, investors, and visitors.

LOOKING AHEAD

Overtourism isn't just a buzzword; it's a call to action.

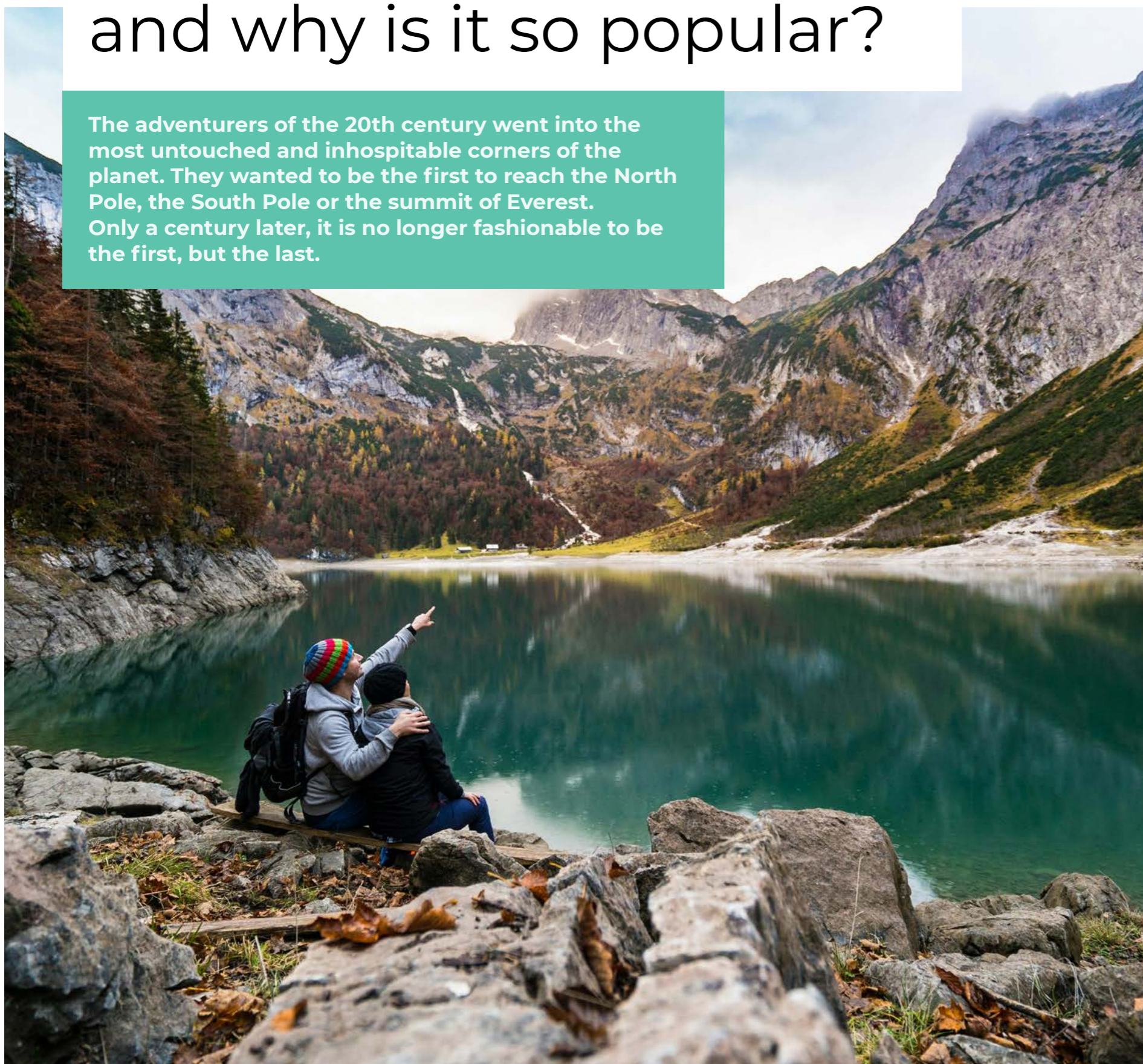
By balancing economic growth with environmental and social well-being, **we can create a world where travel benefits everyone**—visitors, residents, and the planet alike. **Governments, administrations, businesses, and visitors must collaborate** to ensure a sustainable future for our beloved destinations.

Sources: [UN Tourism](#), [WTTTC](#), [BBC](#), [Sky News](#).



What is last-chance tourism and why is it so popular?

The adventurers of the 20th century went into the most untouched and inhospitable corners of the planet. They wanted to be the first to reach the North Pole, the South Pole or the summit of Everest. Only a century later, it is no longer fashionable to be the first, but the last.



Climate change has fuelled a trend in global tourism known as “Last Chance Tourism (LCT)”, to see the most vulnerable environmental riches before they disappear. At its core, this tourism stems from the same sense of rarity and uniqueness that underpinned those “firsts”.

Seeking to see something unique and ephemeral, we travel to the Great Barrier Reef, the Maldives, Mount Kilimanjaro or the North Pole. Last chance destinations also include disappearing cultural values. Thousands of tourists went to Germany to witness the “last” part of the Berlin Wall before its fall between 1989 and 1990. During the summer of 2008, thousands of fans packed Yankee Stadium to witness the last game played in their historic stadium before its demolition.

These destinations are becoming increasingly popular. In 2018, Forbes magazine named TUO as one of the top travel trends of the year. For example, a study by the University of Queensland showed that 70% of tourists visiting the Great Barrier Reef were primarily motivated by the idea of seeing it before it disappears.

It is as if these ephemeral places have a special attraction for us. In November 2017, it was announced that Uluru, a sacred rock in Australia, would be banned from being climbed within

two years. The reason was that tourists were no longer interested in the attraction, with only 16% of visitors to the area climbing it, down from 74% in the 1990s. After the announcement, people flocked to climb the rock.

Why do we behave like this?

The University of Lincoln offers an explanation:

It is a psychological phenomenon known as fear of loss. In general, humans would rather not lose something than gain something else that would give us satisfaction. For example, between a sure reward of 1000 euros and a reward of 1500 euros that we have an 80% chance of winning, most people will choose the first option.

This mentality, applied to the tourism sector, means that humans choose to travel to an ephemeral place rather than to a lasting destination, even though we may like the latter better. However, this behaviour could jeopardise those very vulnerable places we long to visit.

The paradox is that mass tourism itself often degrades the cultural and physical fabric of these places, causing them to lose their authenticity. Moreover, many of the most vulnerable landscapes or species are found in remote locations. Therefore, this tourism is often associated with long-distance air travel, one of the most

polluting means of transport. Tourists, by visiting these places that will disappear due to climate change, are contributing to accelerate this process.

A clear example is the case of polar bears. In fact, the concept of last chance tourism first emerged to explain the growing tourist interest in cold regions, such as the poles and glaciers. These are highly vulnerable to climate change, as the poles are experiencing average temperature increases twice the magnitude and rate of those recorded in temperate

and tropical regions. This affects not only the landscape, but also its wildlife.

Canada is home to Churchill, one of the last tourist sites where polar bears can be seen in their natural habitat. Tourists flock here because of the urgency to see these animals before they become extinct due to climate change. The irony is that almost all of these tourists have probably had to travel long distances to be there, which increases greenhouse gas emissions.

What is the solution? It is not to stop visiting these

destinations, but to promote more environmentally friendly initiatives, such as prioritising trains over planes or cruises, travelling in low season so as not to saturate the area or following the recommendations offered by the different destinations so as not to damage their environment.

In short, since we humans will continue to seek to explore the world, because it is in our nature, we will try to do so in the most sustainable way possible.

■ By Biosphere



LAST CHANCE
TOURISM



RESPONSIBLE
TOURISM
INSTITUTE



BIOSPHERE



CONNECT WITH MORE RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERS

Expand your reach to conscious travelers by ensuring your sustainability.



Allow your clients to check, in real time, the sustainable practices of your entity in an adapted understandable language.



Communicate your sustainability with the distinctive materials we provide you!



Make it easier for potential consumers to find you by your sustainable attributes, demonstrated and guaranteed in a transparent way.

➤ +25 years of experience building the concept of sustainable tourism.

➤ Works jointly with the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

➤ Unique International System of continuous improvement processes for assessing the contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

✓ Unique methodology worldwide to connect DMOs, businesses and citizens and link them to the 17SDGs

✓ Easy, exciting and common learning methodology to share your responsible practices.

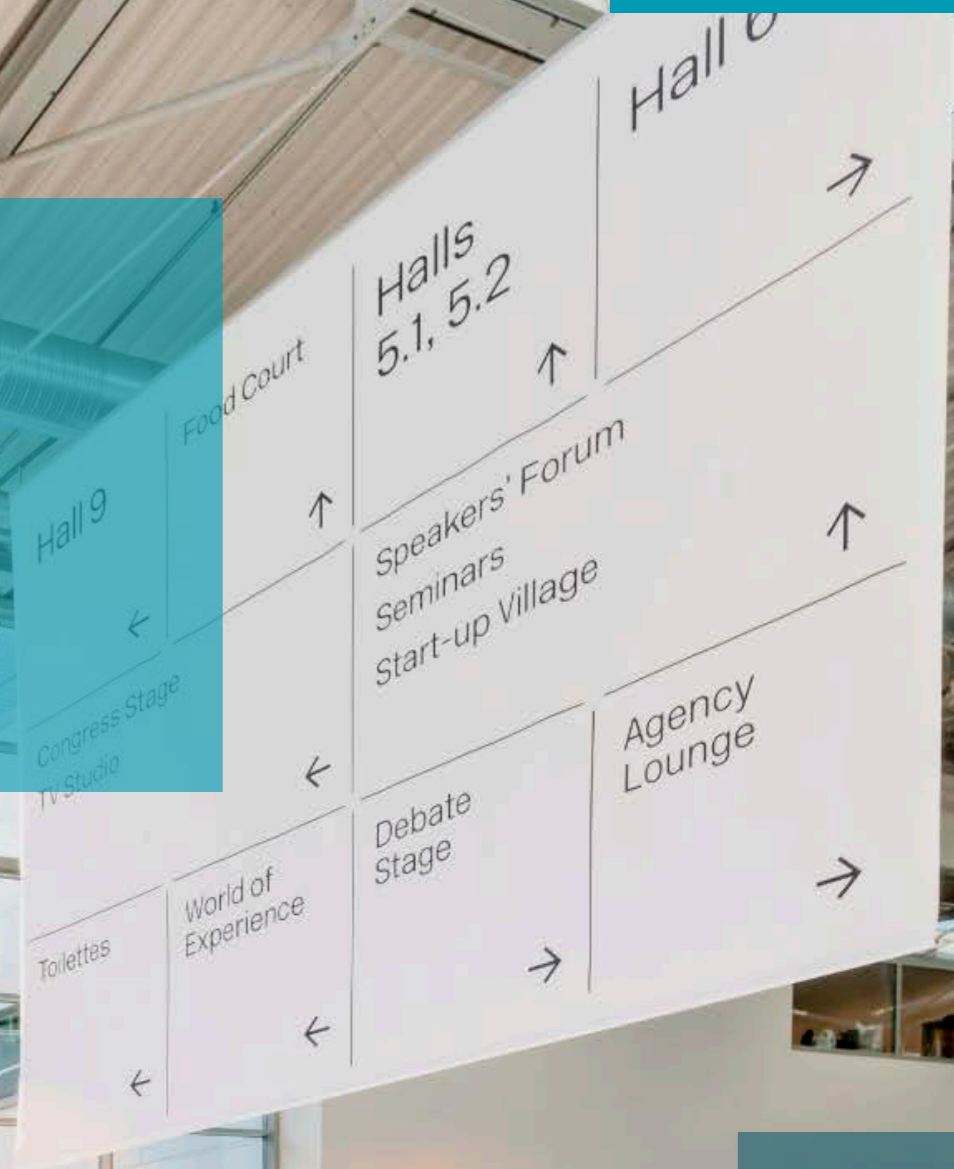
✓ Awarded on numerous occasions and recognized as the best sustainability management and certification tool in the world.



MORE INFO:
biospheretourism.com



TOURISM EVENTS



JOIN US AT THE Skål International World Congress Izmir, Türkiye

Skål International invites Skålleagues to its **83rd World Congress**, held from **October 16-21, 2024**, in the beautiful city of **Izmir, Türkiye**. This year's event is particularly special as we celebrate the 90th anniversary of Skål International, making it a prime opportunity for networking, business development, and fostering lifelong friendships among global tourism professionals.

A FULL PROGRAM PACKED WITH NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



WHY ATTEND THE SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS?

Attending this year's congress offers a unique blend of professional growth, cultural immersion, and celebration:

- **Cultural Richness:** Explore the ancient cities of Ephesus and Pergamon, the vibrant Kemeralti Market, and the stunning Mediterranean coastline. Izmir, known as "Beautiful Izmir," and "The Pearl of Aegean" seamlessly blends modern amenities with historical charm.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with tourism industry leaders and professionals from around the world. Engage in discussions that could shape the future of global tourism.
- **Celebration of Milestones:** Join us in celebrating the 90th anniversary of Skål International. This milestone underscores our long-standing commitment to promoting global tourism and friendship.
- **Diverse Programme:** Participate in a wide range of events, including the opening ceremony, trade fair, workshops, travel forums, and gala dinners.
- **Exclusive Tours:** Enhance your visit with pre and post-congress tours. Discover UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Seven Churches of Revelation, Urla Wine Route, and the natural wonders of Pamukkale and Cappadocia.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

The comprehensive programme includes:

- **16 October:** Arrival and Get-Together Party.
- **17 October:** Opening Ceremony, Urla Tour with Lunch, and Dine Around.
- **18 October:** Annual General Assembly and Dine Around.
- **19 October:** Global Market Place & Trade Fair, Travel Forum, Workshops, and Cocktail Party.
- **20 October:** Çeşme Tour with Lunch and President's Gala Dinner.
- **21 October:** Departure or Post-Congress Tours.

PRE AND POST TOURS

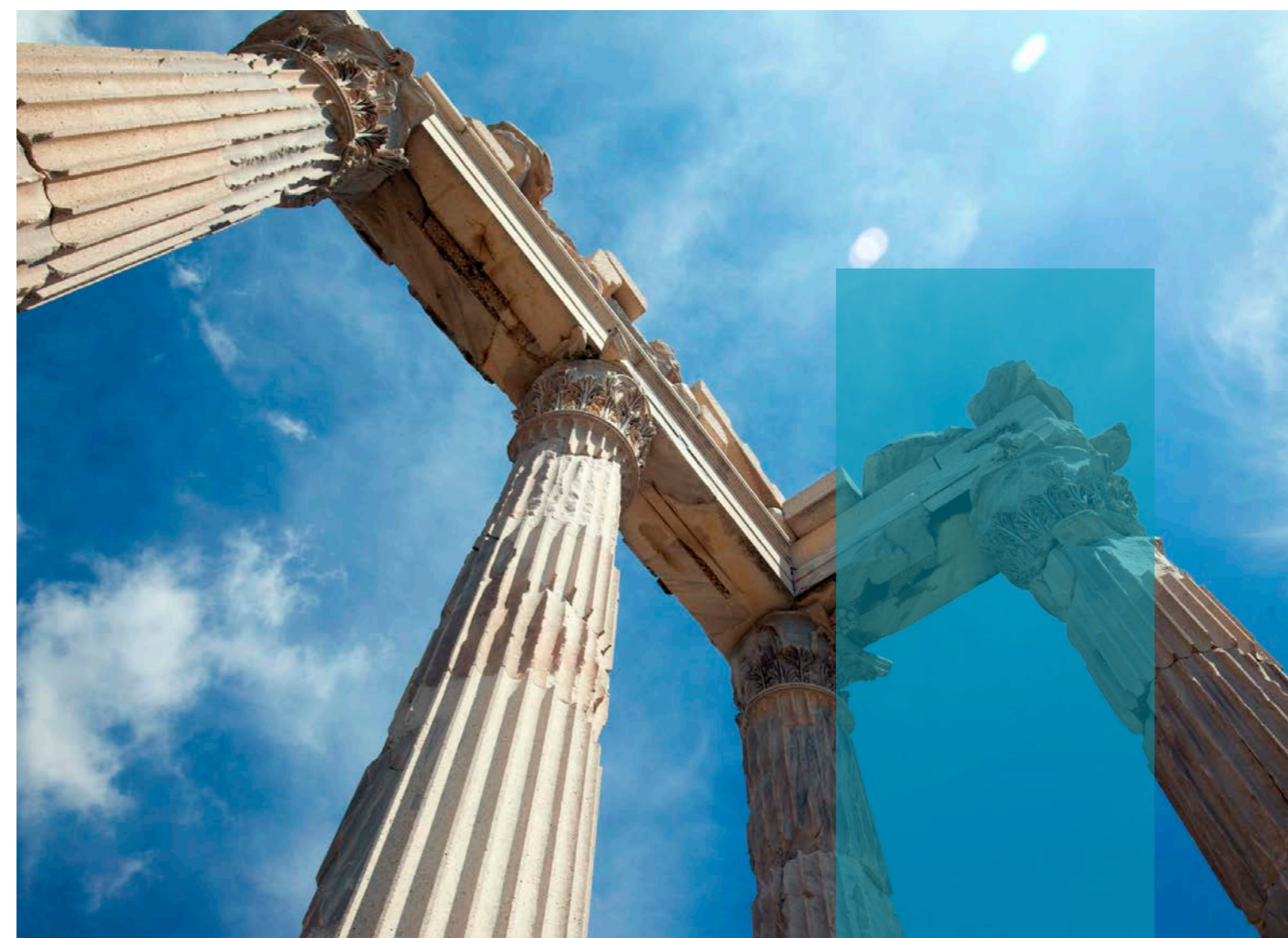
Enhance your congress experience with a variety of pre and post tours:

Pre-Congress Tours:

- **UNESCO World Heritage Tour (13-16 October):** Explore Istanbul, Troy, and Pergamon before arriving in Izmir.
- **Seven Churches of Revelation Tour (12-16 October):** Visit the significant historical sites of early Christianity.

Post-Congress Tours:

- **UNESCO World Heritage Tour (21-24 October):** Discover Pamukkale and Cappadocia, with its thermal pools and unique geological formations.
- **Legendary Ephesus & House of Virgin Mary Tour (various dates):** Delve into the ancient wonders of Ephesus and its historical surroundings.



IZMIR OFFERS A PERFECT MIX OF MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE AND ANCIENT WONDERS, MAKING IT AN IDEAL LOCATION FOR THIS PRESTIGIOUS EVENT.

Special travel discounts with Turkish Airlines and a variety of pre and post-congress tours are available to enhance your stay. We look forward to welcoming Skålleagues from around the world for an unforgettable experience.

MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION



WTM Africa 2024 reflects surging interest in African tourism

The doors to World Travel Market Africa (WTM Africa) 2024 may have closed but our industry advances forward.

An 53% increase in attendees and 40% in buyers, compared to 2023, indicates revived global interest in African travel and tourism products.

"This record-breaking surge in buyers highlights the growing confidence and investment in Africa as a compelling travel destination", said Carol Weaving, Managing Director, RX Africa. "This growth is a testament to the resilience and rising global appeal of the African tourism industry".

Over three days in April, **WTM Africa hosted 705 exhibitors and 5,752 industry professionals from 99 countries.** The influx of new buyers featured strong representation from emerging markets: Greece, Philippines, Switzerland, Singapore, Lithuania, New Zealand, Ghana, China, Japan, and Argentina. The result? An impressive 10,505 pre-scheduled meetings indicating revitalised enthusiasm in our continent.



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IS FRONT AND CENTRE

"The emphasis on sustainable tourism signals a bright future for the African tourism industry. As seen at WTM Africa, travel suppliers are actively responding to the global demand for responsible experiences", said Megan De Jager, Portfolio Director at Africa Travel Week.

The Responsible Tourism Awards proved a strong highlight at WTM Africa this year, with new winners announced:

- Denis Private Island – Seychelles.
- Grootbos Lodge & the Green Futures College – South Africa.
- Warrior on Wheels Foundation – South Africa.
- Okavango Gin – Botswana.
- Ecodrop – Zimbabwe.
- Trip to Help – Kenya & Tanzania.

In 2023, five of the eight global winners of the Global Responsible Tourism Awards originated from Africa, solidifying the continent's role as a leading figure in responsible tourism practices.

COLLABORATION IS KEY

WTM Africa 2024 featured the support of 53 official partners, reflecting the collaborative spirit driving Africa's tourism sector.

"A groundbreaking partnership between Cape Town Tourism and Victoria Falls Tourism is redefining how African destinations approach marketing. Their initiative, 'Africa Wonders', captivated audiences on the first day of the show", De Jager explained.

"The Africa Wonders initiative provides a powerful lesson: collaboration and innovation can overcome limited resources, setting a new standard for African destination marketing".

KEEPING OUR INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGEABLE

WTM Africa's high-value content programme proved a resounding success, bringing together the who's who of the African tourism industry, including representatives from Cape Town Tourism, Weeva, Singita, the TBCSA and many more.

The speaking programme was sponsored by LIFT, who provided flights for speakers and hosted buyers.

"We hosted just over 73 live sessions based on high-demand industry and business topics, including responsible tourism, MICE and business travel, travel tech and artificial intelligence (AI). These were well attended by attendees with a high level of engagement", De Jager explained.

The highly anticipated ATW Trends Report 2024

(unveiled at WTM Africa) is now available at [ATW Connect](#). This insightful report highlights why Africa is emerging as a must-visit destination this year, and features current inbound arrival statistics provided by Euromonitor.

AWARDS ARE BACK

A highlight of WTM Africa 2024 was the inaugural African Media Awards, recognising exceptional reporting on tourism, travel, and hospitality in Africa.

The awards celebrated the crucial role journalists play in promoting our continent's destinations and experiences and nurturing the growing global interest.

The conference day closed with the inaugural Media Awards, recognising excellence in African travel journalism. 2024 winners are as follows:

- Sustainability Feature Award: Alexander Okere – Illegal Animal Trade.
- Visual Tourism Award: Kelly Hammond.
- Destination Feature Award: Phoebe Smith.
- Tourism News Award: Adele Mackenzie – Tourism Update.



Business impact, market growth and young talent sums up IMEX Frankfurt 2024

The 2024 edition of IMEX Frankfurt marked a notable surge of confidence and business certainty in the global events industry this week.

The growth across exhibitor markets and thousands of buyers bringing a steady, long-term pipeline of RFPs all pointed to an industry thriving on solid foundations once again.

IMEX CEO Carina Bauer & Chairman Ray Bloom



IMEX Frankfurt, which took place May 14 – 16, welcomed **12,000 event professionals** through the doors of Messe Frankfurt, of which over 4,000 were buyers. **More than 60,000 meetings** were pre-booked with thousands more taking place on the show floor.

Chairman Ray Bloom said: *"I'm delighted to see the return of the Asian market. I've heard that one of our exhibitors, Japan, which had its largest ever representation, has used the show to communicate the business readiness of those areas affected by the recent earthquake"*. He also observed that Africa is experiencing growth and maturity within the sector with Uganda stating that tourism, of which business events is included, has now officially overtaken coffee as its dominant market.

NEXT GENERATION – HOT TOPIC

Encouraging the next generation of event planners entering the sector was the focus of many conversations at the show, explained IMEX CEO Carina Bauer.

During the show, ICCA announced a new partnership with universities to provide scholarships, mentorships and networking opportunities for students and young event planners. Carina added: *"We've been really pleased with the number of young people attending our Rising Talent program for those with up to three years' experience."*

It was also great to see the launch of a complementary program - Young Stars – part of our broadest ever range of German language education and an integral part of the hugely successful MICE Impact Academy". In addition, the IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum marked its 22nd year.

Carina also explained that many senior leaders had remarked on the variety of content on offer this year, with several appreciating having the time and space to go deeper into important workplace topics such as burnout and mental health.

Equally, at the planner level, there was a positive response to sessions covering topics in a highly practical way, such as sustainability and especially AI (Artificial Intelligence). *"It's clear that this blend of strategic leadership sessions and practicality is giving everyone the choice they want and the personalization they need"*, she said.

She also explained that Monday's specialist education programs received widespread credit, with many participants valuing the new program design that offered more time for breakout conversations and for networking.

IMPACT TALKING POINT MAKES AN IMPACT

Impact, IMEX's Talking Point for the next two years, was embraced by partners and exhibitors with Sarawak's vibrant,

multi-sensory activations at the show entrances striking a friendly, welcoming note and others such as Singapore, Houston and Glasgow all launching different impact projects during the week.

New this year and a notable success was the dedicated Impact Zone in Hall 9, led by MICE Impact, a co-creative area that united planners, suppliers, and partners with a range of workshops, panels, and stakeholder discussions.

The Google Xi CoLaboratory made a popular return to IMEX while others offering both tailored education and a variety of activations included Maritz, Encore and industry associations.

Finally, as part of its drive towards net zero, for the first time all IMEX attendees had the chance to make a personal and positive climate contribution by 'balancing' their travel to and from Frankfurt thanks to a new partnership with Cloverly.

Next year's [IMEX Frankfurt](#) will take place May 20 – 22, 2025.

[Link](#) for quick access to 'IMEX in 100 photos' gallery.

IMEX America will take place October 8 - 10, 2024 at Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas.



What's it all about?



It's about putting yourself at the heart of the action.

It's about seizing the opportunity when it appears right in front of you.

It's what happens when the global events community gathers at IMEX America '24.



Let's go.

**REGISTER
FREE
TODAY**
imexamerica.com

IMEX
LAS VEGAS OCTOBER 8-10 2024

ibtm® WORLD

IBTM launches Exceptional Experiences programme at Cannes Lions

IBTM has introduced an exciting new addition to its flagship IBTM World event taking place in Barcelona from 19-21 November.

The new programme, called Exceptional Experiences, has been developed as a direct response to the challenges faced by in-house event professionals and marketers, and will showcase innovative strategies to help this community create event experiences that fuel business growth.

Exceptional Experiences was launched at a pop-up event at Cannes Lions. The session, which took place on Friday 21 June, assembled trailblazers from the creative and media industries to explore the most exceptional concepts and activations from the week. Participants included Jimmy Knowles, Global Head of Experiential at Canva; Judy Lee, Senior Director, Global Brand Experiences at Pinterest; Shauna Little, Vice President, Advertising Solutions and Marketing at The Washington Post; and Claudia Hall, Event Director at IBTM World.

Claudia Hall, Exhibition Director, IBTM World, said: *"The Exceptional Experiences workshop at Cannes Lions celebrated the hard work of event planners and marketers to create incredible activations and stories during the week. We discussed the different ways to bring our communities together and build long standing partnerships, including the everyday challenges event planners face, such as the use of AI to increase efficiency without losing the authenticity our events should provide"*.

Evolving from the hugely successful corporate event marketers programme at IBTM World 2023, Exceptional

Experiences is designed to develop the future roadmap for the event industry. It will comprise an exclusive invite-only workshop at IBTM World in Barcelona for senior executives, VPs and influential leaders from different sectors on day one of IBTM – 19th Nov 2024.

On day two – 20th Nov 2024, IBTM's Exceptional Experiences Forum will take place on the Main Stage. This dedicated content stream will provide education sessions on subjects such as how to harness AI and technology, build your community and leave a lasting, positive impact on attendees.

Register your interest to attend [here](#).



ibtm WORLD
BARCELONA, SPAIN
19-21 Nov 2024

CALLING ALL CULTURE CREATORS



Built by
RX In the business of
building businesses

EVENTS THAT CREATE CULTURE
CREATE BETTER BUSINESS

Register now

TOURISM NOW MAGAZINE

 **SKÅL**
INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally

Contact Us:

Skål International
skal.org
+34 952 389 111
communication@skal.org



TH
AN
KS