METEOR

41°–74° Club of New York, Inc.

The Premier Association for Professional Women in Travel

41°–74° CLUB YEAR 2026–2027

Note from the President

Happy November! The October meeting was another wonderful success, attended by thirty-three members, auxiliaries and guests! Our own **Vaida Balciute** shared all the exclusive benefits of flying Emirates. We then had an added treat when **Jennifer Barrera**, Sales Manager, Dubai Economy and Tourism (DET), provided us with information about Dubai's iconic landmarks, vibrant neighborhoods, world-class shopping and rich cultural experiences. To top it all off, the meeting was held in the penthouse of the exquisite **Westin Times Square.** The hospitality from the hotel staff was first class and there was a wonderful selection of high-quality food and beverages.

We are proud to announce that seven of our members and one auxiliary member walked in the **Making Strides** walk in support of breast cancer awareness in Central Park on **Sunday, October 18th**. Our team, led by **April Dawn VanWagner**, raised **$1,500** for the cause. See pictures and more details in the article below.

This month features so many exciting and important events. Election Day is the 3rd, so remember to exercise the precious privilege of casting your ballot. Next comes Veterans Day, when we honor the brave men and women who have served our nation, both past and present. Finally, we end the month with our time-honored holiday of Thanksgiving. We have so much to be thankful for and our club exists to give back to worthy charities as well as helping those less fortunate.

In between, our next meeting is scheduled for **November 12th at Arte Cafe** and the sponsor is another member of our club, **Karlene Angus-Smith**, representing Sandals & Beaches Resorts. Please RSVP by **November 10th**, as registration will close that evening. We hope to have another great turnout for this meeting.

The dates of all other club meetings for this year are listed on our website here. Please be sure to mark the dates on your calendars and do your best to attend at least two meetings to remain in good standing. Remember, only members in good standing are allowed to vote in our club's elections, as per club by-laws.

Remember, our Annual Holiday Luncheon is scheduled for **Friday, December 4th at the Lotte NY Palace**. Invitations were emailed via Paperless Post on **October 16th** to over 400 people in our email database. All tickets are now **$250** if paid by check or Zelle and **$265** if paid by credit card or wire transfer. We already have **112 seats** secured, so we are sure to sell out very soon. If you know of anyone interested in attending who has not received an invitation, have them email us at 4174holidayluncheon@gmail.com to request one.

Welcome back to **Kate Otto** of Regent Seven Seas, who renewed her membership in October. We continue to encourage you to sponsor a new member. Please provide anyone interested in becoming a new member the link to our website, www.4174club.org, to get information and to complete a new member form.

It is such a privilege to be working with all of you to keep **The 41°–74° Club of New York the Premier Association for Women in Travel**!

Warm regards,

Corrine Mutarelli

President 41°–74° Club of New York, Inc.
Club Year 2026–27
"The Premier Association for Professional Women in Travel"

OUR MISSION

Networking & Socializing in Action – Be Part of the Impact!

October Open Meeting at The Westin New York at Times Square

An Evening of Connection, Hospitality & Industry Leadership. On Thursday, October 8, 2026, the 41°–74° Club of New York gathered in the penthouse of **The Westin New York at Times Square** for our October Open Meeting. Proudly sponsored by **Emirates**, the evening brought together leaders across the travel sector for professional development, philanthropy and executive networking with sweeping Manhattan views as the backdrop.

Our own **Vaida Balciute**, representing Emirates, presented the exclusive benefits of flying Emirates: from its signature First and Business Class experiences and award-winning onboard service to the seamless connections offered through its Dubai hub. She shared how Emirates continues to set the standard for premium long-haul travel, giving advisors an exceptional product to offer their most discerning clients.

Vaida was joined by **Jennifer Barrera**, Sales Manager, DET, who brought Destination Dubai to life: its iconic landmarks, vibrant neighborhoods, world-class shopping and rich cultural experiences.

Dubai welcomes visitors with 821 hotels, more than 500 food and beverage concepts, over 125 airlines and a community of 200+ nationalities, and has been named #1 in Tripadvisor's Travelers' Choice Awards. Jennifer also shared a Dubai Destination Update, including a video message from a Dubai sheikh on the destination's safety and security, reassuring advisors that Dubai remains a welcoming and secure choice for their clients.

Guests enjoyed curated hors d'oeuvres and an open bar featuring premium brand liquors, imported and domestic beers and fine house wines, accompanied by live guitar music. The hospitality from the hotel staff was first class throughout.

The evening concluded with the **50/50 raffle**, which raised $250. Our sponsor, **Vaida Balciute**, won the grand prize and generously donated her winnings back to the charity, so the full amount was donated.

We invite all members to continue embracing this mission: show up, engage and be part of the impact!

IN ATTENDANCE · 33 MEMBERS, AUXILIARIES & GUESTS

Sponsor: Vaida Balciute (Emirates)

Members: Joann Armine, Jennifer Barrera, Marleny Bautista, Adele Black, Valerie Blasi, Loretta Carson, Cathy Chiappa, Francesca Commisso, Diane Curtis, Margot Cushing, Roberta Long-Kelleher, Peggy Murphy, Corrine Mutarelli, Darley Newman, Lisa Orlando, Iris Salazar, Ana Schuetz, Norma Spadola, Deb Traussi, Maya Trinquart, Michele Weis, Astra Williams, Denise Womble.

Auxiliaries: Ciaran Donahue, Chris Griffin, Peter Mutarelli, Leigh Sassone.

Guests: Silvia Casadel, Leonora Chianello, Louis de Joux, Diana Harris, Lizziee Jerez.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: OCTOBER MEETING SPONSORS

Dubai Economy and Tourism & Emirates

DESTINATION DUBAI · DET

Dubai Beyond Real

A destination like no other, where the extraordinary meets soulful moments.

You already met Zoe and Nate during our October meeting. Now let's find out: are you more like Nate or Zoe?

Nate tells his Dubai story with grand, thrilling exaggeration. Zoe, calm and grounded, is quick to say, "That's not how it happened, babe." Their playful banter fills a dinner with friends, until both arrive at the same truth: Dubai was beyond real, and you had to be there to feel it.

Whether you crave Nate's adventure or Zoe's calm, Dubai delivers both. Take the quiz to uncover your travel style and receive a free, personalized Dubai itinerary.

Take the quiz Watch and share the story

OCTOBER MEETING SPONSOR

Emirates

From its hub in Dubai, Emirates connects travelers to destinations across six continents aboard one of the world's youngest wide-body fleets, including the iconic **Airbus A380** and **Boeing 777**. In **First Class**, private suites offer the ultimate in comfort and privacy, while A380 guests can enjoy the famous Onboard Lounge and Shower Spa. **Business Class** delivers lie-flat seats and fine regional cuisine, **Premium Economy** adds extra space and elevated dining, and **Economy Class** remains renowned for its generous comfort and service.

Every journey is enhanced by the award-winning **ice** entertainment system, complimentary **Chauffeur-drive** service for eligible First and Business Class guests, exclusive Emirates lounges and the **Emirates Skywards** loyalty program — giving advisors a truly premium product to offer their most discerning clients. Scan the QR code for the full suite of Emirates advisor resources.

SCAN TO EXPLORE

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: OCTOBER HOST VENUE

The Westin New York at Times Square

THE WESTIN
NEW YORK
AT TIMES SQUARE

Experience New York City from the heart of Midtown Manhattan, just steps from Broadway, Times Square and the Port Authority Bus Terminal. With direct subway access and destinations like Hudson Yards, Madison Square Garden and the Empire State Building within easy reach, exploring the city starts right outside your door.

Designed with well-being in mind, spacious guestrooms and suites feature the signature **Westin Heavenly® Bed** and **Heavenly® Bath**, creating a restorative setting above the energy of the city. Stay active around the clock at the 24-hour **WestinWORKOUT® Fitness Studio**, featuring state-of-the-art equipment and Peloton bikes.

Start the day with nourishing breakfast favorites at **Foundry Kitchen**, then return to **Foundry Bar** for crafted cocktails and American cuisine. Guests can also enjoy knowledgeable concierge services, thoughtful amenities and convenient access to the best of New York City.

For meetings and celebrations, the hotel offers **more than 34,000 square feet of flexible event space**, including three ballrooms, breakout rooms and dedicated planning and catering support.

At The Westin New York at Times Square, every stay is designed to help guests feel their best while traveling, with the comfort, wellness and convenience to recharge, stay on routine and make the most of every day in New York City.

MORE DETAILS

Explore the hotel's rooms, dining, wellness and event spaces.

View The Westin resources

SAVE THE DATE!

November Open Meeting

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

November Open Meeting at The Arte Cafe

Sponsored by Sandals & Beaches Resorts

An evening of networking, industry connection and culinary delight on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

WHEN

Thursday, November 12, 2026

5:30 – 8:00 PM

WHERE

Arte Cafe

106 W. 73rd Street, New York, NY 10023

FEATURED SPONSOR

Sandals & Beaches Resorts

Representative Karlene Angus-Smith

DINNER & WINE

Registration includes a full dinner and one glass of wine.

Limit 30 persons — registration will close immediately once 30 RSVPs are reached. Open to all members and prospective members. Reserve your place here

SAVE THE DATE!

2026–27 Club Meetings & Event Dates

Thursday, November 12, 2026
Open Meeting — Arte Cafe, Sponsored by Sandals & Beaches Resorts — Representative Karlene Angus-Smith

Friday, December 4, 2026
Annual Holiday Luncheon — Lotte NY Palace, 12 noon – 3 pm

Thursday, January 14, 2027
ILA Spa at the Lotte New York Plaza, Sponsored by Aruba Tourism Authority — Representative Natasha Lee Soy

Thursday, February 11, 2027
Open Meeting — Venue TBD, Sponsored by Kensington Tours — Representative Leigh Sassone

Thursday, March 11, 2027
Open Meeting — Tony DiNapoli's, Sponsored by St. Lucia Tourism Authority — Representative Francesca Commisso

April 2027
Special Event — details TBA

Thursday, May 13, 2027
Open Meeting — Fushimi Times Square, Sponsored by Delta Vacations — Representative Lisa Orlando

Thursday, June 10, 2027
Annual General Meeting and Elections — Arte Cafe, Sponsored by Innroads Group — Representatives Mari Garcia & Ciso Moreno

SAVE THE DATE!

2026 Holiday Luncheon — Sponsorship Opportunities

Friday, December 4 | Lotte New York Palace

The 41°–74° Club of New York invites our travel industry partners and friends to support our annual Holiday Luncheon, one of New York's most anticipated holiday gatherings for travel professionals.

The luncheon supports a local 501(c)3 non-profit organization (to be determined in September). We invite our industry partners to join us in this important philanthropic effort through one of the sponsorship opportunities below.

CO-HOST SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Diamond – $15,000 — includes luncheon for 20 attendees (2 Full Tables), your company's name in the program and a link on our website to your company's site throughout 2027.

Platinum – $4,000 — includes luncheon for 10 attendees (1 Full Table), your company's name on the invitation and in the program as well as the link on our website to your company's site throughout 2027.

Gold – $3,000 — includes luncheon for 5 attendees (1 Half Table), your company listed in the invitation and on the program as well as the link on our website to your company's website throughout 2027.

Silver – $2,000 — includes luncheon for 3 attendees, your company listed in the invitation and on the program as well as the link on our website to your company's website throughout 2027.

Patron – $750 — includes luncheon for one attendee, your company listed in the invitation and on the program as well as the link on our website to your company's website throughout 2027.

Full tables will be available only to Diamond and Platinum Sponsors. Additional tickets will be available for purchase for other sponsorship levels, but we cannot guarantee those guests will be seated at the same table.

*****Space is limited to 200 attendees.**

41°–74° Club of New York
2032 Williamsbridge Road
Bronx, NY 10461
Attn: Holiday Luncheon

Support the 41°–74° Club's Philanthropic Mission

To secure your sponsorship, please reach out to Holiday Luncheon Committee at 4174holidayluncheon@gmail.com. Payment can be made by credit card through the Holiday Luncheon page, or by check payable to the address shown at right. We are deeply grateful to all industry partners for their continued support and generosity.

Corrine Mutarelli

President & Holiday Luncheon Chairperson, The 41°–74° Club of New York

"The Premier Association for Professional Women in Travel"

OUR MISSION

Philanthropy, Networking and Professional Development

WOMEN IN TRAVEL WALKING FOR A CAUSE!

The 41°–74° Club of NY Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

On Sunday, October 18th, 2026, Team 41–74 walked with thousands of survivors and caregivers in Central Park, NYC. The annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk celebrated **33 years** and had an estimated **50,000 participants.**

The day began with a 9:15 am meet-up and was quite a chilly yet sunny start to the day. The team participants were:

- Corrine Mutarelli – President / Travel Showcase
- Peter Mutarelli – Past Auxiliary President / Travel Showcase
- Vaida Balciute – Secretary / Emirates
- April Dawn VanWagner – Immediate Past President / Plaza Premium Group
- Karlene Angus-Smith – Sandals & Beaches Resorts
- Francesca C. – Trove Tourism
- Norella Pena – ITA Airways
- Maria G. Tuttocuore – UNICA Journeys
- Catterina Yanez – JetBlue Airways

The energy and experience made for a memorable event. Walking along in Central Park and making conversation, our team celebrated at each mile post. The sun began to really shine, it became warmer and the weather was perfect. It was inspiring to see all the various teams — whether walking in support of a company, or a family walking for a loved one who had passed on or was currently fighting. The sea of pink was exciting, and seeing the creative ways participants dressed up was so enjoyable.

Reaching the finish line at the end of the 4-mile walk, it felt like time flew by. There was a sense of pride and exhilaration. We completed the walk right around noon. A few of us grabbed a bite to eat at the fantastic **Leo Cafe**, on 70th and Park in the lobby of the Asia Society museum — a great selection of light bites and beverages, lots of room and no crowds. It was the perfect setting to sit, talk and break bread.

Thanks to all who donated, our team raised **$1,500** this year. Very exciting!

Looking forward to next year — while the official walk date has not yet been announced, please do keep it in mind and join in this important event.

April Dawn VanWagner

Immediate Past President, The 41°–74° Club of New York, Inc.

Team Super Deo Walks for CaringKind

In loving memory of my mother, my beloved "Super Deo," who passed away from Lewy body dementia in 2023.

On Saturday, October 17th, I was proud to lead Team Super Deo at the inaugural CaringKind Alzheimer's Walk & Brain Health Day in Central Park to honor my mom's memory, joined by industry colleagues and dear friends from outside the travel community. On a chilly October morning, their warmth, friendship and support did more than brighten the day — they helped thaw the cold and reminded me of the power of community, compassion and showing up for one another.

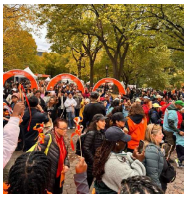
The walk supports millions of individuals, families and caregivers affected by Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Dementia impacts far more than the person diagnosed; it touches entire families, challenging them in ways few can truly understand. I'm happy to share that Team Super Deo raised **$500** and reached our fundraising goal!

This walk was my way of celebrating my mother's life, honoring her strength and raising awareness for a cause that is deeply personal to me. Every step was a tribute to those we have lost, those living with dementia, and the caregivers who stand beside them with extraordinary love and resilience.

I hope even more friends, family and colleagues will join Team Super Deo next year as we continue to support this important cause together. Thank you to everyone who walked, donated and helped honor my "Super Deo." ❤️

Ana Schuetz

Member 41°–74° Club of New York, Inc. · Club Year 2026–27



GIVING BACK

Join Our Industry Colleagues from Skål New York in Support of Nepal

Skål International New York has launched an appeal in support of the people of Nepal and has reached out to the 41°–74° Club of New York, as one of its key travel-industry partners, to join the effort. The massive floods have taken at least 1,400 lives, and more than 6,000 people remain missing.

Skål International New York and many other Skål chapters are asking the travel and tourism industry to provide whatever financial support they can for the people of Nepal during this time of tremendous need. Funds collected will be provided to the Consulate General of Nepal in New York, led by Consul General Dadhiram Bhandari.

Thanks to the generosity of our industry, **$1,650 has already been raised**. We encourage all members to donate and help this effort go even further — thank you for supporting this worthy cause.

HOW TO DONATE

Donate via Skål New York

Zelle
NEW YORK SKAL CLUB, INC.

Venmo
Skål New York Club

Memo: **Nepal Relief – Public – [your name]** or **Nepal Relief – Private**

Donors may choose whether to be recognized publicly. Contributions made through Skål International New York are not tax-deductible.

41°–74° BOOK CLUB CORNER

Join Us for Our Next Read

UPCOMING BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

November 17, 2026: "Becoming Madam Secretary" by Stephanie Dray

> 6:00 PM Eastern Time via Zoom
> Join Zoom Meeting
> Meeting ID: 881 1670 1995 · Passcode: 898052

January 2027: "The Unraveling of Julia" by Lisa Scottoline
Date to be advised

New readers are always welcome! Whether you have read every selection or are joining for the first time, come along for great books and lively conversation with fellow members. You will find book club information on the 41°–74° website. See you in November!

Regards,

Roberta Long-Kelleher
The 41°–74° Club of New York Vice President

MEMBER NEWS

Happy Birthday, November Members!

Happy Birthday to Dear Members of The 41º–74º Club of New York celebrating birthdays during the month of November!

Loretta Carson
Irene Sino
Suzanne Halama
Kiara DiPaola
Susan Mirabito
Justin Heckman

May your day be filled with joy, laughter and everything you wish for! Warmest wishes for a fantastic year ahead.

The 41°–74° Club of New York

Celebrating Our New Members of the 41°–74° Club of New York

We are happy to welcome our newest Member, **Francesca Commisso**, Director, Travel Trade, Trove Tourism Development Advisors and our newest Auxiliary Member, **Louis de Joux**, President, Reperio.

Your presence strengthens our community and we look forward to sharing great times, building friendships and creating lasting memories together.

Welcome aboard!

Call for New Members & Auxiliaries

The 41°–74° Club of New York invites qualified travel professionals and industry partners to join our growing community. As the Premier Association for Women in Travel, our strength comes from engaged members who are committed to advancing our industry together. We encourage all members to recommend colleagues and emerging leaders who would benefit from — and contribute to — our mission.

Our three-pillar mission remains at the heart of everything we do: **Philanthropy. Networking. Professional Development.**

Together, we can continue to grow, strengthen our impact and build an even more powerful future for women in travel.

For membership information, please contact the Membership Committee led by **Roberta Long-Kelleher**, The 41°–74° Club of New York Vice President.

Stay Connected with the 41°–74° Club of New York!

We encourage all Members to follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram by scanning the QR codes. Joining us on all three platforms ensures you never miss important Club news, upcoming events, industry updates, philanthropic initiatives and member highlights.

Connect with us — engage with us. Grow with us! Every follow, like, comment and share helps strengthen our community and expand the reach of our organization.

LINKEDIN

FACEBOOK

INSTAGRAM

FROM MEMBERS' DIARIES

The Art of Connection: A Little Italian Hospitality Goes a Long Way

One of the things I love most about working in the travel industry is the people we meet along the way. What starts as a simple introduction can turn into a meaningful connection, a lasting friendship, or an unexpected opportunity.

I felt exactly that when I attended my first networking event with the 41°–74° Club of New York. From the moment I arrived, I felt genuinely welcomed. The conversations were warm, the atmosphere was friendly, and I left feeling inspired. I remember thinking, ***I've found my tribe!***

That experience reminded me how much a simple gesture of kindness can mean and how important it is to make people feel included, appreciated, and valued.

It's also something I love about Italian hospitality.

In Italy, hospitality is more than good service. It's about genuine warmth, elegance, attention to detail, and making people feel at home. It's about those little touches that make an experience memorable.

That's what makes me proud to represent ITA Airways. From the moment travelers step on board, our goal is to bring a little piece of Italy to their journey through Italian style, thoughtful details, and a welcoming onboard experience. The Italian experience begins long before landing in Rome.

And speaking of connections, 2026 has been an exciting year for ITA Airways! We introduced new nonstop service between Houston and Rome, further strengthening our presence in the U.S. market. Another important milestone was joining Star Alliance, creating new opportunities for global connectivity and opening the door to even more travel possibilities.

In my role, I have the pleasure of working with travel professionals across the United States. I've learned so much from the friendships I've built, the women who have inspired me, and the relationships that continue to help me grow, both personally and professionally.

I truly believe that when we approach people with kindness, curiosity, and a positive mindset, wonderful things can happen.

As Thanksgiving approaches, I'm especially grateful for this community of inspiring women and the opportunity to be part of it. Thank you to the 41°–74° Club for making me feel so welcome. I look forward to many more conversations, friendships, and opportunities to grow together.

After all, whether we're welcoming someone on board or into a room full of new faces, genuine hospitality begins with how we make people feel.

Wishing everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Norella Pena
Sales Account Executive, ITA Airways

FROM MEMBERS' DIARIES

Reflections on South Africa

Although I have had the privilege of traveling to Africa many times in the course of my career, and have been to South Africa before, this September, I escorted a small group of advisors there and wanted to share some of our experiences. Most of the advisors had never been anywhere in Africa before, so it was interesting to watch them experience the beauty and wonder of South Africa through that lens.

Prior to meeting the group in Johannesburg, I spent several days traveling to the Madikwe region, a malaria-free zone, located in the northern part of South Africa's North West province, bordering Botswana. It is popular with guests traveling with children or for those not interested in taking antimalarial medication. Upon arrival in Johannesburg, I was met and taken by private shuttle to the Federal Air terminal, which is about an 8-minute ride to the other side of O.R. Tambo airport. One can relax in comfort in the lovely Baobab Lounge prior to your flight. I flew into the Madikwe West airstrip, which was closest to my first stay at the Tuningi Safari Lodge – a 5-star property that accommodates just 16 guests. The staff was amazing, accommodations beyond my expectations and we enjoyed game drives with just 5 guests in a vehicle. The property recently underwent a total refurbishment and the all-inclusive features made for a wonderful stay. They recently added a hide that allows guests to watch the wildlife at the watering hole from a ground-level position, which is great for photographers. In addition to the spa and boma, this property is great for families as well. The game drives were incredible as we saw the Big Five as well as many other animals.

From there, it was a one-hour drive to the Madikwe Hills Lodge – a sister property to Tuningi. This 5-star property features 10 glass-fronted suites looking out over a watering hole where elephants and rhino, zebras as well as baboons and so many other species of wildlife gather – day and night! The bush area extends right up to the Botswana border, so it is quite expansive.

From there, I flew back to Johannesburg from the Madikwe East airport and spent one night at the boutique Fairlawns Hotel, located in the exclusive Sandton region. It allowed me to spend the day with a car and driver to visit the Apartheid Museum and do some other exploring of the city. I spent time in the Rosebank area, exploring the Sunday craft market located in the lower level of the Rosebank Mall. If you love handicrafts and art, this is the place for you!

I met my group at the InterContinental O.R. Tambo airport, which is the most convenient property to stay at for any guests connecting to Victoria Falls or many of the airstrips that serve the many private reserves. Our first stay was at the amazing Cheetah Plains – a property that consists of 3 exclusive villas that are truly next-level luxury! The size of each room in the villa is amazing and while one often thinks of a villa as a central lounge area with bedrooms connecting to the shared spaces, this is different. The main house of each villa is truly a house with living area, full bar, wine cellars, entertainment room and more. Each villa comes with its own safari vehicle, equipped with both heated and air-cooled seats, charger plugs for your phones/cameras with both USB-C ports, storage compartments for each row of seats, complimentary use of a Nikon Z6 camera and more. Our rangers and trackers were incredible. The hospitality of Cheetah Plains included in-room spa services as well as allowing us to take advantage of the onsite hair salon. A helipad is located on the property for guests who wish to arrive more quickly than via overland transfer. On site, there was also a lovely boutique curated with items hand-selected by the owner of the property as well as The Goodman Contemporary Art Gallery, with artwork available for sale.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE →

FROM MEMBERS' DIARIES

Reflections on South Africa (continued)

After 2 nights, we drove to the Limpopo province to the newly opened Sandringham Lodge. This family-owned and run property offers a choice of 6 tented accommodations in the N'Weti Camp section, and 6 luxury suites in Shisaka Camp along with 2 family suites. The property has a great bar and lounge area, curio shoppe, wellness center/spa area to take advantage of between game drives. They offer high tea at 3:30 PM just before the afternoon game drives and we always returned home to hot or cold washcloths as well as a delightful welcome-back drink – whether it was smoothies in the morning or a refreshing cocktail or juice in the afternoon. The sundowner stops out on the afternoon game drives really were breathtaking.

After our 2-night stay, we drove 45 minutes to the Hoedspruit airport for our flight down to Cape Town. Our first stay was at the Claremont Hotel, part of the Sabi Sabi Collection. This 5-star boutique luxury heritage hotel is located about 15 minutes from the waterfront but is an excellent choice for those who have been to Cape Town before and want a more relaxed stay in a Cape Dutch heritage manor home. The 15 rooms are located in both the main house and throughout the beautifully landscaped garden area. Its location makes this the perfect spot to visit the Kirstenbosch Gardens or the Constantia winelands – the oldest wine-producing region in South Africa. The food at their restaurant, Veld and Vine Bistro, was delicious and given the strength of the US dollar, an excellent value.

After a full day's trip down to Cape Point, Boulders Beach and the area, we returned to Cape Town for a 2-night stay at the Cape Grace Hotel, located right on the V&A Waterfront. While in Cape Town, we had a site inspection of the Cape Cadogan Hotel followed by dinner at the Upper Union Restaurant. This property is great for those seeking the vibe of the local area and is near to the Bo-Kaap section of the city.

Our last day was spent in the winelands, beginning with an incredible tour followed by the most fun and engaging wine and food pairing/tasting at Babylonstoren. We then went to Franschhoek for lunch at Miko's, the restaurant at Richard Branson's property, Mont Rochelle. Following that, we ended our afternoon with a tasting at the beautiful Delaire Graff Estate. Sitting outside on the patio with the lush landscapes surrounding us and the dramatic mountains beyond made for a lovely way to end the trip.

South Africa has so much to offer guests, particularly those who are seeking experiences beyond the wildlife and game drives. The truth is that we only scratched the surface of all that South Africa has to offer and I, for one, am anxious to return and explore so much more. If you have any questions, please contact me at norma.spadola@africantravelinc.com or check out our website at www.africantravelinc.com.

Norma Spadola CTIE
Northeast Sales Manager for African Travel

AFRICAN TRAVEL

AFRICAN TRAVEL
WE KNOW AFRICA

MEMBER UPDATES

TAG, You're It! Your Trip Can Change a Life

Dear Travel Advisor,

Every day, you help travellers fall in love with the Caribbean. You're the one who introduces them to the reefs, the resorts, the people, and the places that stay with them long after they've unpacked their bags. We'd love to invite you to be part of something that turns that connection into lasting change.

INTRODUCING TAG – TRAVEL ADVISOR GIVEBACK

TAG is a community of travel advisors giving back through the Sandals Foundation, powering real, everyday progress across the Caribbean — stronger schools, better healthcare, protected reefs, and new opportunities for the people who call these islands home.

HERE'S WHAT MAKES IT SIMPLE

- Join with a recurring monthly gift of just US $5 — many advisors choose to give more.
- Choose the cause closest to your heart: Education, Health, Environment, Youth & Women's Empowerment, or Animal Welfare.
- 100% of your donation goes directly to change — administrative costs are covered separately by Sandals Resorts International, so every dollar you give works.
- Receive your official TAG toolkit: a digital badge, email signature graphics, social media assets, approved messaging, and a participation certificate to share your story with.

WHY ADVISORS ARE JOINING

Today's travellers want to book with people who care about more than the sale. TAG gives you a genuine, meaningful way to show clients that their trip can help build a better future for the destination they love — and gives you a story worth telling.

JOINING TAKES JUST A FEW MINUTES

Visit the Sandals Foundation Website to sign up for recurring giving, choose your monthly amount and your cause, and you're in. Your TAG toolkit will follow shortly after. We'd be honored to welcome you to the TAG community.

Karlene Angus-Smith
Associate Director Industry Affairs

Sandals Beaches
@sandalsresorts @beachesresorts

MEMBER UPDATES

Pairing Yacht Charters with Incredible Shore Experiences

KENSINGTON

KENSINGTON YACHTS

Greetings to all advisors from Leigh at Kensington!

Our simple yet transformative approach to yacht charters ensures that you always experience the very best, aboard and ashore.

First, we find the perfect yacht charter for your needs. Then we go beyond to create all the other moments of your yacht experience – privately guided excursions ashore, exquisite dining, exclusive access, private transfers, and much more. Our Yacht Specialists are experts in their destinations and have all the inside knowledge to make every moment of your superyacht experience perfect, both onboard and onshore.

Pairing yacht charters with incredible shore experiences

Contact for bookings and ideas: info@kensingtonyachts.com or leigh.sassone@kensingtontours.com

Leigh Sassone
Director of Sales – Northeast USA

DID YOU KNOW?

Industry Intelligence for Travel Advisors

Holiday Airfares Hit a 10-Year High — Lock In Clients Now

Hopper's 2026 Holiday Travel Index shows round-trip domestic Thanksgiving airfare averaging **$402, up 31%** on last year, with Christmas fares averaging **$452, up 23%** — the highest holiday prices in a decade.

With Thanksgiving on November 26 and the Sunday after (November 29) expected to be among the busiest flying days on record, now is the moment to contact clients who haven't yet confirmed holiday plans.

Read more: Hopper – 2026 Holiday Travel Index

ASTA Petitions American Express to Restore Advisor Access

Since September 15, Amex Platinum and Centurion cardmembers must book directly through American Express Travel to receive Travel Privileges benefits such as onboard cruise credits of up to $300 — cruises and packages booked through independent advisors no longer qualify.

ASTA has launched an industry-wide petition urging Amex to create a verified pathway for professional advisors to book eligible benefits for mutual clients. Members, non-members and industry partners are all invited to sign.

Read more: Travel Market Report – ASTA Launches Petition Urging Amex to Restore Travel Advisor Access

The Plaza Hotel to Close for Four Years from January 2027

New York's landmark Plaza Hotel on Fifth Avenue will close starting in January 2027 for extensive repair and restoration of its landmark-protected façade. The Grand Ballroom will also be shuttered — worth flagging now for any clients planning weddings, events or stays at the hotel.

Read more: Travel Market Report – New York's Plaza Hotel to Close for Next 4 Years

Expedia's Unpack '27: Where Clients Are Looking Next

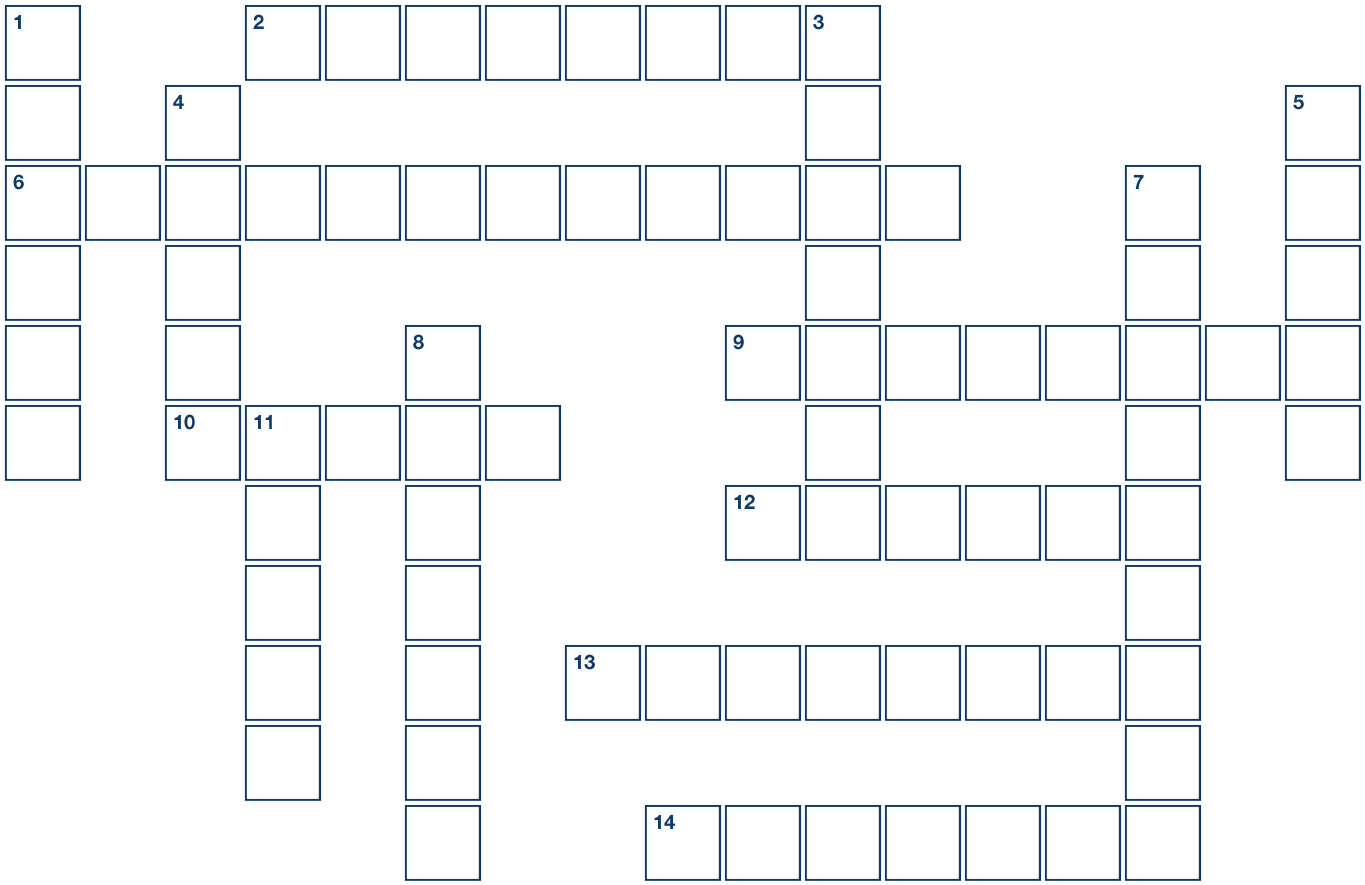
Expedia's annual trends report, released October 14, names **South Lake Tahoe** its No. 1 Destination of the Year for 2027, with searches up 195% year-over-year, ahead of destinations in Japan, Uruguay and South Korea. Set-jetting remains strong: nearly 1 in 5 travelers say they have booked a trip after seeing a destination on screen.

Read more: Expedia – Unpack '27: The Trends in Travel

IN BETWEEN MAPPING TRIPS

The Globetrotter's Crossword: Around the World in 14 Words

From the fjords of Norway to the game drives of South Africa — many of this month's answers can be found in the pages of this issue.



ACROSS

2 ___ pass: needed at the gate (8)

6 Holiday that makes November 26 one of the year's busiest travel days (12)

9 Keepsake brought home from a trip (8)

10 South Lake ___: Expedia's No. 1 destination for 2027 (5)

12 Game-drive adventure in Madikwe or the Limpopo (6)

13 Planned pause of a day or more between flights (8)

14 Suitcases and carry-ons, collectively (7)

DOWN

1 Weariness after crossing many time zones (6)

3 Boat steered through the canals of Venice (7)

4 Private vessel for a Kensington charter (5)

5 Narrow Norwegian inlet carved by glaciers (5)

7 Hotel expert who secures the hard-to-get dinner reservation (9)

8 Instrument that always points north (7)

11 Bound book of maps (5)