

The **co-operative** travel news

Part of Chelmsford Star Co-operative Society Limited

ISSUE 1 | MAY 2016

WELCOME...

To the first edition of our travel newsletter. Our aim in each edition is to provide you with plenty of interesting facts about new and exciting holiday locations and important information you need to know before you take off in search of adventure.

You'll find it reassuring to know our Travel Teams in Chelmsford and Braintree are extremely well travelled themselves! Their vast knowledge and

first-hand experience will help to ensure you're fully informed about your chosen holiday, whatever the destination.

And, as we're a fully independent travel agency, we can guarantee you the very best available holiday deals with the right tour operator - whether it's an all-inclusive break away, a cruise or a fully bespoke package - at a price that's just right for your budget.

We're sure you'll be pleased to know your local co-operative travel has recently been recognised in the 2016 'Agent Achievement Awards' for small

Agency of the year in London and the Southeast - which means our clients enjoy a level of service that's hard to beat.

PS.
Don't forget both
our **Travel branches**
are open every
**Sunday 10.30am -
4.30pm!**

AGENT
ACHIEVEMENT
AWARDS 2016
FINALIST



Early Booking Bonanza 2017

They are the best operator for promising, and delivering, early-booking discounts. Their early-booking campaign runs until June 30th 2016 - **they have a low deposit offer which starts at just £99 per person!!**

We have also received a...

Titan Agent Award 2016

Braintree..... **Bronze**
Chelmsford..... **Gold**

For outstanding sales in 2015/16

Must See Destination

Cuba is definitely a must see destination for this year and next; with the US lifting the trade restrictions it won't be long before it starts to change and get overcrowded. Havana is rich in History and Culture; due to it being popular, there is no better time to book while there is still some availability.

Mercury offers a great tour starting from £1,495 per person which is great value for money for what is included.



DID YOU KNOW?

We have one of the largest ranges of brochures in Chelmsford and Braintree. With so much choice and variety we can find the perfect holiday for you, whether this is sailing the seas on a cruise, relaxing on beautiful beaches, exploring cultural cities, escorted tours, coach holidays to pampering spa breaks. We can cater for all your holiday needs whether in the UK or further afield.

Whether you choose to fly, cruise or coach travel, we can find the holiday for you!



CURRENCY

Our customers often tell us that we have the best Euro and Dollar rate on the high street!

We can also cater for large quantity conversions and exotic currencies, all can be ordered for your convenience.

To order your currency or to find out today's rate call your local branch.



JUST YOU 2016/17

Just You are a specialist operator for single travellers with one big difference - no single supplements! As all of their travellers are single people they do not charge extra for travelling alone! They offer Escorted Tours, River Cruises, City Breaks - all at different paces to allow you to choose a more sedate holiday or a little more active if necessary!!

DISCOVER YOUR TRAVEL DREAMS
just you

NEW SHIP

Cruise and Maritime are launching a new ship called the Columbus for 2017 departures; this ship is perfect for clients looking for a relaxed atmosphere but still with a wide selection of facilities on board. The ship is classed as medium sized and will offer the same traditional style of cruising as their other ships. Latest offers include a **buy one get one free** promotion which offers great savings.



 **CRUISE & MARITIME**
VOYAGES

Don't forget... use your Co-operative Membership Card and earn points on your holiday booking too! www.chelmsfordstar.coop/travel

MEET OUR BRAINTREE TEAM...

Spotlight...

on Fay our MANAGER



Specialises in...

- Asia - particularly South East Asia
- Caribbean

Contact

Fay on **01376 551444** to discuss your requirements.

Or email her at...
fayb@chelmsfordstar.coop

Fay recommends...

HUNGARY - BUDAPEST...

There is no better time than now to travel to Budapest, I travelled there for a city break and had a wonderful time. There is so much to do in Budapest, split into 2 sides; Buda & Pest with the River Danube running in between makes it a very pretty place to visit. For people who love architecture this city has it all!

The river and its Buda Castle are UNESCO World Heritage sites; you can book guided tours and lovely relaxing river cruises to take in the history of the city. All of the best sights are free to visit and due to them having their own currency the city is very cheap to visit.

Another relaxing experience is visiting a hot spring, there are more than 1,000 to choose from, and it is well worth taking half a day to relax after a day's sightseeing.

Rich in history from the world war there are plenty of museums; a must see is The House of Terror museum which details Hungary's relations with Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in a series of exhibits.



There is also plenty of nightlife on offer in the city, with fancy restaurants to ruin pubs - which are old buildings converted into quirky bars.

Budapest is an all year round destination, with summer walks to Margaret Island, which hosts summer fetes and concerts, to an amazing Christmas market in the winter.

There are a range of hotels from 2-5 star properties. Transport links are really frequent making it one of the easiest cities to get around I have ever visited.



Hungary – Budapest

- Depart from London Stansted - 12.09.16
- Based on 4 nights in a 4* hotel with breakfast included
- TOTAL £448 - based on 2 adults sharing

Fay also recommends...

VIETNAM...

Having spent a few months in Vietnam, I can highly recommend it as a great holiday experience. It is a truly unspoilt hidden treasure that only those visiting the country will be able to understand.

Vietnam is not short of World Heritage places, culture, history, city life, country life & beaches, which makes the country a beautiful place to visit. There are several of the world's top beaches, many offering plenty of water sport choices for those wishing to get a bit of beach life.

The best way to make the most out of your time would be doing an organised tour which takes in the main highlights of this beautiful country. Touring allows you to fit as much in as possible. The Impressions of Vietnam with Mercury Holidays is very well priced. This tour departs from London Heathrow directly on the



02.11.16, prices for this date start from **£1,395 per person.**

The 7 night tour includes;

- City tours of Saigon & Hanoi including a walking tour of Hanoi's Old Quarter
- Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels



- Daytime Mekong River Cruise and Can Tho Canal Ride
- Vietnamese cooking demonstration
- Overnight Halong Bay Cruise and Me Cung Cav
- Guides, excursions with entry fees to all sights, some meals and international and internal flights.



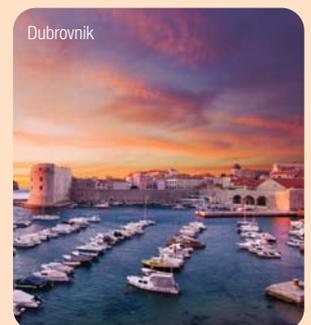
Why not extend your stay?

A popular optional extra includes the Temples of Cambodia - **4 nights** starting from **£399 per person** or if you want to relax and enjoy the beach after the tour **4 nights** half board in Hoi An starts **from £239 p/p.**

WHAT'S HOT!

We are seeing a much higher demand for Croatia this year.

City breaks to **Dubrovnik, Twin Centre holidays, Fly Drives** and the **Islands of Brac, Hvar** and **Korcula** are becoming more attractive to travellers looking for something a little bit different too.



MEET OUR CHELMSFORD TEAM...

Spotlight...

on Matthew our
MANAGER



Specialises in...

- Middle East
- West Africa

Contact

Matthew on **01245 490290**
to discuss your requirements.

Or email him at...

Matthew.griffiths@chelmsfordstar.coop

Matthew recommends...

ICELAND - REYKJAVIK...

Why Iceland? That's what I thought before I visited. The truth is the answer is ridiculously simple - it's one of the most beautiful places you could imagine, in my humble opinion!

In Reykjavik you have a beautiful balance of desolate, rural, traditional, island existence and a remarkably bustling city where tourism and normal, local daily life rarely seem to get in each other's way. Cut off from the rest of Europe by what is, at times, a savage Arctic Sea you really get the feeling that this is where Viking life came from and, in the most part, is still celebrated and revered with pride - the local beer is called "Viking."

Whale watching in Faxaflói Bay is an absolute must. Depending on the time of year, you can see Orca, Beluga, Humpback, Minke and Grey Whales, with Porpoises in visitation all year round. One of the world's largest colonies of Puffin makes its home on the island each summer - estimated to be between 8-10 million birds.



There are, of course, two things that Iceland is known worldwide for and each one is as spectacular as the other; the Northern Lights are one of nature's most incredible sights; spiritual and mesmerising, the anticipation is palpable when waiting for the first sighting and then, very quickly, the wait into the small hours of the morning is made worthwhile as the sky dances with colour - strangely you can almost hear them in a choral sort of way.

Finally, no trip to this amazing country is complete without a visit to the Blue

Lagoon, a natural spring that has been a tourist attraction for some time now, but has been used as a place for healing and well-being by Icelanders for many generations. The contrast between the volcanic-hot water and the Arctic-cold air is something that is very hard to describe - the feeling of the silica mud on your face while sipping a cool drink sitting in the water is not so hard to describe - heavenly.

Matthew also recommends...

THE GAMBIA...

Wow. The Gambia. Where do you start? Easy, the people. No, the wildlife. No, the beaches. No, the food. No, the scenery. Ah, not so easy after all... The Gambia has all of these things in abundance and it is my absolute favourite place in the world.

Let's start at the beginning; a former British colony (thanks largely to a very dark part of our shared history) and then, until October 2013, a member of the Commonwealth. The Gambia has links with our islands going back hundreds of years and most Gambians are nearly fluent in English, as well as French thanks to their next-door neighbours, Senegal.

There are beautiful beaches that stretch for miles along the Atlantic

coast, which you can be enjoying around 6 hours after leaving Gatwick, so it's closer than Dubai, and it lies in the same time zone as us, so no jetlag or changing of watches!



The wildlife is abundant, although the Lion, Elephant, Zebra, Rhino & Cheetah have long-since migrated further south; the country is a haven for Ornithologists with hundreds of migrating species flocking to the shores throughout the year. Makasutu National Park is home to Crocodiles, Snakes, Vervet & Red Colobus Monkeys and their much larger cousin - the Red Baboon - which can stand to around 4.5 feet tall!

For history buffs the country is a goldmine, most notably because of Kunte Kinte, the slave made famous in the 1970's book and film "Roots." Gambians are not shy of showcasing the horrors that befell their forebears and, in my opinion, rightly so. A visit to Kunte Kinte's village and the Slavery Museum was well worth the guilt I felt on behalf of my country and yet, despite all this, the country is known as the "Smiling Coast" - and you know, they really do smile, all the time!

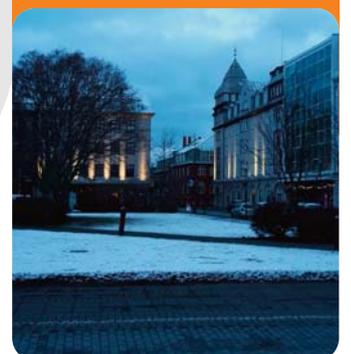
Africa - The Gambia

- Depart London Gatwick - 27/02/17
- 14 nights at the Senegambia Beach Hotel, Kololi
- Staying in a Twin Room on a Bed & Breakfast basis
- TOTAL £1,848 - based on 2 adults sharing



Iceland - Reykjavik

- Depart London Gatwick - 06.02.17
- 5 nights at the Center Hotel Klopp, Reykjavik
- Staying in a Twin/Double Room on a Bed & Breakfast basis
- TOTAL £929.20 - based on 2 adults sharing



Adventures of COOPER BEAR...

Chelmsford's smallest member, Cooper has been on his travels with our fellow members.

If you would like Cooper to join you on your next holiday, make sure you inform your consultant at the time of booking. Cooper will be ready and waiting with tickets for collection!



Or email him at...
cooper@chelmsfordstar.coop



Five must visit destinations for 2017...

1. Croatia
2. Cape Verde
3. Malta
4. Costa Brava
5. Formentera

Membership Benefits

Did you know that you can earn points on your holiday?

For every **£1 spent** on a travel booking you will receive **2 points**.

This year, at our AGM, members approved a share of the profits award of £6.50 per 1,000 points earned up to 30th January 2016.

Not a member?

Sign up now at:
www.chelmsfordstar.coop/members/join-today
or pick up a leaflet instore.



IT'S COMPETITION TIME!

Can you guess where Cooper has been?

Identify the 4 countries where Cooper is pictured above for your chance to **win £50 in Co-op vouchers**. Fill in your details below, cut out and hand it to one of our Travel team in-store. Alternatively, enter online at: www.chelmsfordstar.coop/travelcompetition

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Name

Address

Email

We believe your right to privacy is of the utmost importance and as such any information you choose to provide us will be treated with care, securely stored and not passed onto any third party. To opt out please tick box shown.

Terms & Conditions: No cash alternative will be offered. Photocopies will not be accepted. Closing date for entries 27th August 2016. Winner will be notified after the draw takes place.



Why Book With Us?

When you book your holiday with us, not only do you get great value for money but you get security and financial protection. With **full ABTA protection**, we search through thousands of holidays to get you the best deal at the lowest possible price.

As a wholly independent travel company with no financial ties to any of our travel partners, we can offer you completely impartial advice on all your holiday needs.



The co-operative travel

Call today to get away!

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Both branches open: Monday - Saturday 9am - 5.30pm / Sunday 10.30am - 4.30pm www.chelmsfordstar.coop/travel