

## PRESS RELEASE

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# ITB Berlin 2020: Display halls fully booked and strong demand from the Middle East

**First-time exhibitors from all over the world – Arab countries are strongly represented – Waiting list for the expanding Travel Technology segment – ITB Virtual Reality Lab grows by 50 per cent – New: Home of Luxury at the Marshall Haus**

ITB Berlin is in strong demand, and with 10,000 organisations and companies from over 180 countries attending it is booked up again this year. "Our fully booked halls are proof that even in the age of flight shame, overtourism, climate change and the coronavirus, ITB Berlin is still the focal point for the travel industry and radiates an international aura. For the global travel industry participating in large numbers and face-to-face meetings are important. For us, responsible decision-making and success in business are directly linked, which is why the slogan of the ITB Berlin Convention is 'Smart Tourism for Future'", said **David Ruetz, head of ITB Berlin**, and added: "At present the effects of the coronavirus are very limited. To date two Chinese exhibitors have cancelled. A large number of Chinese stands are run by staff from Germany and Europe and are thus not affected by cancellations. Overall, the percentage of exhibitors from the People's Republic of China is low. The safety of our visitors and exhibitors has the utmost priority. We are in permanent contact with the public health authorities and will take all recommended measures as and when they become necessary."

ITB Berlin is already independently taking active measures. Thus, there are additional medical specialists and first responders as well as English-speaking staff on the grounds and the sanitary facilities are being cleaned and disinfected at more frequent intervals.

### Focus on Oman, the partner country of ITB Berlin

From 4 to 8 March 2020 the focus of the World's Leading Travel Trade Show is on Oman, the official partner country of the event. At the opening ceremony on the eve of ITB Berlin the sultanate will take the audience on a tour of its many-faceted 5,000 year-old history. As the partner country Oman is making the most of its role centre stage, and for the first time is represented in two halls and at the south entrance. Visitors can find out about the country, its people and culture and about Oman's numerous sustainable tourism initiatives in Hall 2.2, and now also in Hall 4.1.

### Strong demand from Arab countries, Africa and India

In their role as emerging tourism destinations the other Arab countries are also strongly represented, for example in Hall 2.2, where all the emirates can be found. Saudi Arabia is making an impressive debut and occupying a 450 square-metre, two-storey pavilion on the outdoor display area between Hall 2.2 and the CityCube. After suffering a massive decline in visitors Egypt is back as a tourism destination and represented by numerous hotels and resorts in Hall 4.2. In Hall 21 Morocco's displays have grown by 25 per cent, highlighting the importance of tourism for the economy.

The Africa Halls (20 and 21) were booked up at an early stage. Numerous exhibitors are occupying larger stands, including Namibia (one-third larger), Togo, Sierra Leone and Mali. Zambia is relocating from Hall 20 to Hall 21. The India Hall (5.2b) is also fully booked. Goa and Rajasthan have larger stands. The Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, a newcomer to the show and India's first private museum for modern and contemporary art, is exhibiting its art treasures. Next door in Hall 5.2a the Maldives is providing information for visitors on a 25 per cent larger stand area. There is news



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from the Asia Hall (26), where Pakistan and Bangladesh are exhibiting for the first time. The Standard Hotels (USA) chain with its Boutique Hotels in Thailand is a newcomer to the event. The Treasury Department and Elephant Hills are first-time individual exhibitors from Thailand. The country's first luxury jungle camp is a partner of Elephant Welfare, among others.

In the America/Caribbean Halls (22 and 23) exhibitor numbers have increased too. Bolivia is returning after a two-year break. Three of Brazil's federal states are exhibiting their products individually for the first time. Cusco, a city in the Peruvian Andes, is represented with its own stand, and in Hall 22 the Mexican state of Quintana Roo is making its debut at ITB Berlin.

In 2020 Israel is occupying two-thirds of Hall 7.2, as it did last year.

### **Europe: first-time exhibitors, many returning exhibitors and larger stands**

Overall, bookings for the Europe Halls have remained stable. Russia is strongly represented in Hall 3.1 again, with the capital Moscow and St. Petersburg sharing a stand in Hall 4.1.

Turkey (Hall 3.2) is occupying a smaller stand this year but remains the largest exhibitor at ITB Berlin. Izmir is exhibiting individually for the first time and has doubled the size of its stand. MC Touristik, Otium Hotels and Armas Hotels are newcomers to the event, as is Ukraine. As in previous years Italy is strongly represented in Hall 1.2. On the ENIT stand, which has grown in size, more Italian regions are displaying their tourism products than ever before. Spain's representation is the same size and includes first-time exhibitors, among them the state-owned rail company Renfe, the airline Air Europa and the motorhome rental firm Compostela Camper (Hall 2.1). Hall 10.2 features Wallonia and Visit Brussels, two exhibitors who are returning after a long break. Regio Hotel Holland is exhibiting for the first time. Moldova is relocating from Hall 3.1 to Hall 7.2b, which is also where Karpaten Turism is displaying on its own stand. Slovakia, which used to be in Hall 7.2b, is relocating to Hall 1.1. Hungary can also be found in Hall 1.1. Its stand size has increased by 30 per cent. The number of exhibitors from Portugal has also been rising constantly over the years.

In spite of **Brexit** Britons have retained their wanderlust and the UK continues to be a holiday destination, as evidenced by the stand of Visit Britain in Hall 18, which is the same size as last year. What is more, the British Tourist Board has booked in at ITB Berlin for the years to come. Visit Wales has even returned in the role of a main exhibitor. Also represented in Hall 18 is Finland with its Sustainable Travel Finland project. Its aim is to be the number one sustainable travel destination in 2025. The results of seven pilot destinations will be announced during the course of the show.

In the Germany Hall (11.2) Saxony is occupying a larger stand. The partner country of ITB Berlin 2021 will be drawing the attention of both trade visitors and the general public with a VW camper van. The stand of Thuringia features an impressive display of flowers with which the federal state is promoting the horticultural show BUGA 2021. Visitors can find out everything about the many activities marking the 250th anniversary of the world-famous composer Ludwig van Beethoven on the stand of his birthplace Bonn in Hall 8.2.

### **New: hub27 fully booked**

Due to renovation work taking place on the Inner Circle beneath the Radio Tower a large number of exhibitors are relocating from Halls 12 to 17 to **hub27**, Messe Berlin's new state-of-the-art hall. This ultra-modern building covering 10,000 square metres is next door to the south entrance and provides direct access to Halls 1 and 25. It is also fully booked. Berlin-Brandenburg, Poland, Armenia, Bulgaria, France, Georgia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Austria, the German National Tourist Board and Deutsche Bahn are exhibiting in this new hall, as is Tirana International Airport, Albania's only international airport. Another new feature is the ITB Global Stand, where visitors to the ITB Travelbox can take a virtual reality tour of ITB's international shows – ITB Berlin, ITB Asia, ITB China and ITB India.

For those looking for a job in the tourism industry a visit to the **Career Center** in Hall 11.1 is a must. This year the hall is open from Wednesday to Saturday. The platform for students, graduates and young professionals is now offering an even wider range of services. First-time exhibitors represented with their own stand include Fachhochschule des Mittelstandes (FHM), Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (TOPAS e.V.), the South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, the cruise operator Costa Crociere and Novum Hospitality. Adina Apartment Hotels and Accor Hotels Germany can no longer be found at a counter and instead are hosting their own display area at the Career Center. Visitors can also obtain first-hand information from the programme of stage events. Among the speakers is Jasmin Taylor, formerly managing director of JT Touristik, who at a CEO Interview will talk about success and failure in the industry.

The PR agencies and ITB Blogger Base are relocating from Hall 5.3 and the Marshall Haus in the new multi-purpose hall hub27. This is also where to find the Media Hub which has workplaces for journalists and a press conference room.

### **Tour operators making their first appearance and debut for the Home of Luxury**

In addition to the regular exhibitors Studiosus, Ikarus and Gebeco, which are focusing especially on sustainable travel, Hall 25 features a large number of international travel companies and cruise operators who are new to ITB Berlin. The Vinoran Group, A.T.R. Touristik Service and the cruise operators Select Voyages and Russian River Cruises are presenting their new products for the first time.

The **Home of Luxury by ITB** is celebrating its successful launch at the Marshall Haus. The new hotspot for buyers and hoteliers representing the luxury travel market is fully booked. The fact that 95 per cent of the exhibitors from Europe, South America and Asia are newcomers to ITB Berlin shows that this is a buoyant market.

### **Adventure Travel, LGBT+, and Medical and Cultural Tourism Halls are fully booked**

Hall 4.1 is booming. Over 120 exhibitors from 34 countries representing the Adventure Travel and Responsible Tourism, Youth Travel and Technology and Tours & Activities (TTA) markets are presenting a wide range of products and services. What is particularly noticeable is the growing market for ecological, resource-saving and socially responsible tourism as well as adventure and youth travel. Following its successful launch in 2019, the **TTA** segment is expanding to provide space for new exhibitors, including EcoTours, Florencetown, Globaltickets, iVenturecard, Liftopia, tripmax and Vipper. The stand of the climate activists **Fridays for Future**, who are new to the show, is certain to attract attention. It can be found next door to the CSR stand, which is also new, and features a vertical garden of climbing plants and an Instagram wall. Hall 4.1 features newcomer Palau, an island country in the western Pacific Ocean, and Oman, the partner country of ITB Berlin. Over the five days of the show the programme of events taking place on two stages will focus on adventure travel and socially responsible tourism.

This year visitors can again enjoy a packed programme of cultural highlights at the **Culture Lounge** – now in Hall 6.2b. Under the supervision of Project 2508, around 60 exhibitors including museums, palaces, festivals and cultural projects from some ten countries are presenting their new programmes.

The gay/lesbian Travel Pavilion of ITB Berlin in Hall 21b features the largest exhibition of tourism products for the **LGBT+ Travel** market of any show worldwide. First-time exhibitors include the Italian Tourism Board ENIT and Portugal. More and more international companies are also exhibiting in the Medical Tourism segment. Newcomers to Hall 21.b include Malaysia, Jordan, CASSADA and COMFORT Gesundheitstechnik. From 6 to 8 March a parallel event, the ITB Medical Conference, will be taking place on the Presentation Area. The Health Tourism Industry Conference (HTI) is the medical partner of ITB.

### **Travel Technology and VR systems are exhibiting strong growth**

The **eTravel World** is fully booked and once again has a waiting list. In the eTravel World Halls (6.1, 7.1b and 7.1c as well as 5.1, 8.1 and 10.1) international companies are displaying the industry's entire range of technology products, including booking systems, global distribution systems, payment modules and travel agency software. First-time exhibitors include Airbnb and the online hotel booking platform Agoda from Singapore. At the eTravel Lab and on the eTravel Stage technology, IT and tourism experts will have information on AI, digital ethics and open data. On 6 March at 11.30 a.m. on the eTravel Stage, the CEO and founder of Winding Tree will give an exclusive presentation on an important milestone, namely how blockchain technology can be used to redefine distribution and commissioning models in the future.

Following its successful launch in 2019, the **ITB Virtual Reality Lab** is continuing its upward trend and has expanded its display area in Hall 10.2 by 50 per cent. Exhibitors there include a number of international players, among them [Jump To](#) (Australia), [Niantic](#) (USA), [SmartGuide](#) (Czech Republic), [Aeronike](#) (Italy) and [Google Street View + VR](#) (South Africa). Newcomers from Germany include [360-up](#), [Sensape](#) and [Virtual Reality Berlin Brandenburg](#) along with five co-exhibitors. About a dozen lectures will be taking place at which destination marketeers, tour operators and programme organisers can get tips on VR and AR applications.

### **Free Wi-Fi and new features of the ITB Berlin app**

Free Wi-Fi sponsored by Slovenia is available to all participants on every day of the show. Simply sign in without a password at **'ifeelsLOVEnia@ITB'** and register with your e-mail address. Using the ITB app sponsored by the Oman Aviation Group is easy too. Simply scan the barcode on your ticket to log in. The app has information on every exhibitor and event including the ITB Berlin Convention as well as hall plans, making orientation easy. The app features a new chat function which can be used to message other users, for making appointments or suggesting contact with users who have similar interests. The app will be regularly updated during the show to ensure users have the latest information. The ITB app is available for downloading free of charge for iPhones, Android smartphones and tablets and can be updated in German and English.

### **About ITB Berlin and the ITB Berlin Convention**

ITB Berlin 2020 will be taking place from Wednesday, 4 to Sunday, 8 March, and from Wednesday to Friday will be open to trade visitors only. ITB Berlin is the World's Leading Travel Trade Show. In 2019 a total of 10,000 companies and organisations from 181 countries exhibited their products and services to around 160,000 visitors, including 113,500 trade visitors. Parallel with the show the ITB Berlin Convention, the largest event of its kind, will be held from Wednesday, 4 to Saturday, 8 March 2020. Admission to the ITB Berlin Convention is free for trade visitors and exhibitors. For more information please visit [www.itb-berlin.com](http://www.itb-berlin.com), [www.itb-convention.com](http://www.itb-convention.com) and the [ITB Social Media Newsroom](#).

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