

Travnews

NATAS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
TRAVEL AGENTS SINGAPORE

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- + NATAS MEMBERS APPRECIATION PARTY
- + BEING A TOUR LEADER:
WHAT IS IT ABOUT?
- + UNRAVEL EUROPE'S HIDDEN JEWEL,
SAN MARINO



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2018-2020**

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APPROVED MEMBERSHIPS

Company	Classification	Approval Date
Star Route Pte Ltd	Ordinary Member	23 September 2019
Fenming Travel Pte. Ltd.	Ordinary Member	24 September 2019
TC Wonders Pte. Ltd.	Ordinary Member	24 September 2019
Forecepts Pte. Ltd.	Associate Member	2 October 2019
Soon Travel Pte. Ltd.	Ordinary Member	9 October 2019
The UFO Traveler Pte Ltd	Ordinary Member	9 October 2019
Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board	Associate Member	4 November 2019

The total number of NATAS members as at 20 December 2019
Ordinary Members: 333 • Associate Members: 71 • Honorary Life Members: 5

SAY HELLO TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!
NATAS welcomes the following companies as new members.

Fenming Travel Pte. Ltd.
A subsidiary brand of Fenming Travel Pte Ltd - "AEGEAN DREAMS "Your True Greece Travel Specialist" - is a Singapore-registered travel boutique specialising in Greece. Besides family vacations, the firm also offers romantic events, weddings, historical, cultural and gastronomical-themed tours to Athens, Northern Greece, Peloponnese and many Greek islands. With a focus on offering bespoke, customised and tailored holidays, Aegean Dreams has established itself as a true Greece travel specialist among travellers.

Forecepts Pte. Ltd.
A firm that brands itself as a solution-oriented company, Forecepts prides itself on delivering customised solutions to interesting and challenging problems. Besides designing and building websites, it also specialises in mobile app development and digital experiences. Having been in the internet and web development industry since 2003 in Singapore, Forecepts Pte Ltd boasts 15 years of experience and hands-on execution in over 100 development projects in web and mobile solutions.

Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board
As the City of Los Angeles' official tourism marketing organisation, the Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board specialises in marketing and promoting the city of Los Angeles as the premier destination for leisure travel, meetings and conventions. With a mission to boost international and domestic travel trade to Los Angeles, the association works closely with travel partners from around the world.

Soon Travel Pte. Ltd.
Started by a group of fresh, young and energetic travelling junkies, Soon Travel Pte Ltd prides itself on offering unforgettable travel experiences for every budget. Made up of a small but efficient team, the company ensures that information, customer feedback and enquiries are always communicated

to deliver the highest service standards. With a flat team hierarchical structure, Soon Travel Pte Ltd responds to ground-level feedback quickly to provide travellers with a seamless travel experience.

Star Route Pte Ltd
Star Route Pte Ltd handles all aspects of FIT Tours, Outbound Group Tours, Corporate Retreats, M.I.C.E and Inbound Tours with a specialisation in event management for corporations. With a global network of airlines, hotels and land operators, the company offers an extensive range of travel-related products and services to meet the most demanding travel schedules. With a service philosophy to deliver the highest standards, Star Route Pte Ltd provides one-stop and hassle-free travel services to serve its customers wholeheartedly.

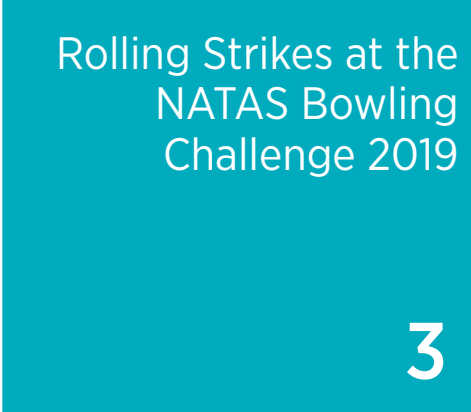
TC Wonders Pte. Ltd.
Established in December 2019, TC Wonders Pte Ltd works closely with local service providers in the travel industry including coach operators, restaurants and various hotels to offer all-in-one travel packages. By offering a wide range of accommodation, gourmet food and attractions, the company caters to the needs of every traveller. With the goal of reaching 50,000 travellers a year, TC Wonders Pte. Ltd. continuously explores new opportunities and new collaborations to create unique itineraries that wow.

The UFO Traveler Pte Ltd
Incorporated in 2014, The UFO Traveler Pte Ltd is an up-and-coming travel and events company. Located at Spaces Building at City Hall, Singapore, the company is made up of an international team of travel professionals, marketers and event designers all dedicated to bringing unique, fun and original travel experiences to travellers from around the world. With a commitment to delivering excellent service in all they do, The UFO Traveler Pte Ltd goes the extra mile for every client, every time.



Ushering in the New Year at the NATAS Members Appreciation Party!

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Ushering in the New Year at the **NATAS MEMBERS APPRECIATION PARTY!**



But the highlight of the day was undoubtedly the Lucky Draw. Besides shopping vouchers and hampers, attendees also had the chance to walk away with a pair of return economy class air tickets to Warsaw sponsored by LOT Polish Airlines. But there can only be one winner and that lucky individual was a representative from CTC. Congratulations!

We hope all our NATAS members had a great time at the party. As we usher in the new year with great celebrations and expectations, we'd like to take this moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to our members and partners. A big thank you for your unwavering support the past year and cheers to a smooth year ahead!

Great company, exciting entertainment and authentic Bavarian cuisine – that was what NATAS members had to look forward to at the Members Appreciation Party. Held on 14 November 2019 at Paulaner Bräuhaus Singapore, the event saw more than 100 members and trade partners coming together in celebration. The festive spirit was in the air as attendees mingled, chatted and joked while feasting on delicious Bavarian classics, Munich specialties and international dishes served up on traditional wooden platters. Not



forgetting the handcrafted premium quality beers, which had participants toasting the end of a fantastic year in true Bavarian fashion.



Adding to the joyous atmosphere were the many mini games played during the party where NATAS members engaged in friendly competition to win prizes such as aroma diffusers. The first 100 guests to arrive at the event also received an Early Bird giveaway worth more than \$100 each.



Special thanks to our sponsors:
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ROLLING STRIKES AT THE NATAS BOWLING CHALLENGE 2019



After a nail-biting match, Team Global finally emerged as the defending champion, walking away with the Championship trophy along with a small token sponsored by AIG SG. The highest-scoring winners of the night also won a trophy and a small gift from Avis Singapore.

Congratulations to all our winners and see you next year!



With the aim of promoting camaraderie and friendship within the trade, NATAS organised the ever-popular NATAS Bowling Challenge 2019 on 10 October 2019. It was an evening of rolling good fun as more than 80 bowlers and their supporters joined us for a fun-filled night.

As the competition kicked off, players wasted no time in showing off their prowess on the lanes. Amazing strikes, unbelievable spares and wicked curve balls were on display as bowlers battled for the coveted title of best bowler in the industry.



The travel trade is evolving, and this means those in the travel sector must move with the times to meet the growing demands of travellers. That was the aim of the Travel Agent Industry Forum 2019 (TAIF).

Organised by the Singapore Tourism Board in conjunction with NATAS, the event saw travel agents and tour



operators coming together to discuss key changes in the travel industry. And with topics touching on technology and platforms as well as business and manpower transformation, it was an insightful morning for all indeed.

During the breakout sessions, NATAS Youth Committee Chairman, Mr Albert Tan also got an opportunity to interact with aspiring professionals and share his personal experience of his journey in the tourism industry.

NATAS GALLERY | BOWLING



NATAS GALLERY | YEAR END PARTY





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INCREASE YOUR CRUISE PROFITS WITH CLIA



In 2018, cruise passengers from Singapore hit a new high, upholding impressive year-on-year double-digit growth and registering the most significant increase in all Asia markets. With more ships and higher consumer demand for cruise holidays in the region, the cruise sector is set to continue its steady growth momentum.

As an organisation targeting the growing cruise industry, CLIA provides travel agents with a comprehensive online training programme along with a host of resources for them to succeed in selling and maximising their profits from cruise packages.

Why should you sell cruises?

Travel professionals unfamiliar with the cruise sector may be wondering if they should venture into the business. The benefits of selling cruise packages can be summarised by these four points:

Top reasons why should you sell cruise

Massive Growth Potential



Majority Sold By Agents

Higher Commissions



High Level Of Customer Satisfaction



Matching the right people to the right cruise.

A good cruise consultant needs to be able to recommend the “right” cruise holiday experience to their clients, one that will suitably match their desires and needs. To do that, travel professionals must not only know their clients, but also have a good understanding of the cruise itineraries and products as well.



During the CLIA training, agents can look forward to gaining valuable tips on the cruise sales process on how to provide the right cruise recommendations to their customers. For example, travel agents must make cruise products simple for customers. Agents should also aim to provide at least two options and not assume that consumers are looking for the cheapest products.

To ensure that customers get the best vacation – always deliver more than expected

Just like fast food operators asking if you want an “upsized” at a fast-food restaurant is neither odd nor pushy, agents should also offer ‘upgraded’ options to their customers. Providing choices is a critical step in increasing the profit margin for travel agents.

Curious about what value-add you can offer? During the session, CLIA shared five ways travel agents can create the perfect cruise package, and at the same time, increase their profits. The tips can be found on CLIA’s online Learning Academy.

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) membership offers a globally recognised online training and accreditation programme – specially designed for travel agents – with modules dedicated to cruising related topics, river cruising and key destinations. Visit www.cliaasia.org to join.

Credits: Jiali Wong, Regional Manager for Asia, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA)

Boost your profile and credibility to convert first-time cruisers

With the numerous benefits of a cruise vacation, switch selling customers from land to cruise is now easier than ever. That’s why travel professionals should push cruise itineraries as one of the travellers’ holiday options.

That said, for agents looking to set themselves apart from the crowd – they must seem credible in their cruise expertise.

Building credibility can be done in three simple ways:

- Inform customers of your cruise knowledge that’s been acquired through CLIA’s and cruise lines’ training. Assure customers that booking from a travel agent saves them time and money, allowing them to maximise the experience.
- Gain accreditation from both cruise lines and the official global cruise body CLIA. In a CLIA survey, 99% of consumers said they would like to purchase their cruise from an accredited travel agent. Consumers can search for CLIA-accredited agents with the CLIA Travel Agent search function on the CLIA Asia website, www.cliaasia.org.
- Engage customers pre-trip, pre-departure and post-cruise to ensure top of mind recall of a cruise holiday. Agents can leverage the wealth of toolkits, images and videos available from CLIA and cruise lines.

Join us as a NATAS Registered Tour Leader!



I **Apply Online Now!**

Find out more at
<http://natas.travel/site/registry-overview>



Get recognition from NATAS as an **EXCEPTIONAL TOUR LEADER**



With the NATAS Tour Leader Registry, professional Tour Leaders can attain proper recognition for their exceptional services.

Knowledgeable, savvy and always on the lookout for the latest travel trends, those in the travel agencies truly have their sights set on making your dream vacation a reality.

And standing at the helm of these skilful professionals is the Tour Leader. The head honcho of a group package tour who takes on the huge task of ensuring every itinerary runs without a hitch. While a Local Tour Guide provides insights on attractions and destinations when everything seems like Greek to you, it is the Tour Leader's hard work that will see you embarking on a vacation you'll never forget.

Unknown to many, the job of the Tour Leader begins even before the trip, generally, in the week before a group tour kicks off. It starts with the preparation of the essentials in the itinerary - accommodation, transport,

meals - and only ends when the group safely arrives at the airport in their home country. During the trip, the Tour Leader is responsible for looking after the needs of every single tour member, such as dietary restrictions, among many others. Not forgetting the crucial task of ensuring that every member of the group is accounted for before leaving museums, parks and attractions.

A Jack (or Jill) of all trades, the Tour Leader also takes on different roles during a tour, apart from the main duties. These range from being a photographer, weathercaster, babysitter and even a mediator when tour members aren't getting along. At times, the job of a Tour Leader overlaps the duties of a Tour Guide, but they all lean toward the interests and safety of the tour group.

While some people may underestimate the role of a Tour Leader, especially

when a local Tour Guide is around, it's not a clear representation of what they can really do. In fact, many travellers who have been part of group package tours have shared their experiences at how a professional Tour Leader turned their overseas trips into memorable experiences.

And this is why the NATAS Tour Leader Registry was created. Launched in August 2002, the registry serves to recognise Outbound Tour Leaders who are trained and qualified personnel capable of delivering services that fulfil or exceed the expectations of their clients.

But that's not all. Registry applicants are also required to attend a comprehensive 40-hour training programme conducted by the Tourism Management Institute of Singapore (TMIS).

For more information on the NATAS Tour Leader Registry, visit natas.travel/site/registry-overview.

Discovering the beauty of Spain from the **Spain Tourism Board**



On 15 October 2019, the Spain Tourism Board along with the regional tourism offices of Andalucía and Castilla y León invited NATAS to a special lunch presentation at the Tapas Club. Over delicious Spanish small bites and refreshing sangria, attendees learnt about the various regions and the exciting highlights their cities had to offer. Participants also had a great time networking while forging new collaborations to boost tourism between the two nations.



Growing awareness on edutourism at the **Sarawak edutourism seminar**



Court. Organised by the Sarawak Trade & Tourism Office Singapore (STATOS) in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Sarawak (MTAC), Sarawak Tourism Board (STB) and Tourism Malaysia, the event served to increase awareness on Sarawak travel destinations and tourism products.



At NATAS, we regularly engage with international travel partners and organisations to foster new relationships and discover new travel opportunities. With this in mind, on 3 December 2019, we joined the “Sarawak More to Discover” edutourism seminar, luncheon and B2B session at Swissotel Merchant



Besides an enjoyable presentation and seminar on Sarawak tour packages and destinations, attendees were also treated to a rousing music performance by Sarawak musicians At Adau and introduced to traditional Sarawak cuisine by Masterchef Asia 2015 finalist Chef Jasbir Kaur.

Embarking on a journey to Okinawa with the **Okinawa Tourism Board**



Japan has always been a top hit with travellers, as such, it was with great delight that NATAS attended the Okinawa B2B session organised by

the Okinawa Tourism Board. Held at the Peninsula Excelsior Hotel on 25 November 2019, the event saw travel agents gathering to learn about the beautiful Japanese prefecture and its must-do popular activities. To establish Okinawa as a prime tourist spot, Jumbo Tours also did a special presentation on various attractions in Okinawa and its magical islands. As the event wound to an end, participants were invited to exchange name cards and participate in business matching for future collaborations.



UNCOVERING THE POTENTIAL OF CRUISE HOLIDAYS WITH CLIA



The cruise sector is growing and, with it, the demand for cruise holidays. With a greater number of travellers exploring the notion of a cruise holiday experience, NATAS organised an exclusive cruise workshop on 7 November 2019 for our NATAS members in collaboration with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA). Titled “Increasing your cruise profits through service”, the 1.5-hour workshop saw attendees gaining a brief insight into the cruise industry while picking up invaluable tips on how to sell and maximise their profits from cruise packages. In all, it was a fruitful session that provided NATAS members with a better understanding of the cruise industry to offer more travel options.



A FUN DAY OUT AT NAX SINGAPORE



It was a morning of adventure, fun and NERF bullets on 23 October 2019 when NATAS visited the world’s first NERF indoor attraction NERF Action Xperience (NAX Singapore). Located in Marina Square, the arena features multiple-themed activity zones where visitors can challenge themselves while fostering

meaningful connections with fellow players. Besides action-packed NERF battles and an adrenaline-inducing obstacle course, there’s also a room where kids can get creative. And with event rooms available for every function, it’s a great place for celebrations and team bonding events.

LIVING IT UP ON THE SINGAPORE SOUTHERN ISLANDS GUIDED YACHT TOUR

It was ships ahoy for NATAS members when we were invited on an exclusive guided yacht tour around Singapore’s Southern Islands on 27 November 2019. An industry-first in Singapore, the tour showcases the southern islands dotting our seas and its many other interesting stories and legends. Departing from Marina at Keppel Bay, the private yacht takes a leisurely cruise towards the historical islands in the south before dropping anchor at Kusu Island where passengers can explore the ancient Chinese temple and Malay shrines before visiting the famous tortoise sanctuary.



Unravelling the enigmatic secrets of Europe's hidden jewel

SAN MARINO



Tranquil, picturesque and absolutely breathtaking, San Marino has long charmed tourists with its beautiful scenery and spectacular panoramas. Once defined by Napoleon as “an example of freedom”, this jewel of Europe has successfully preserved its historical beauty as the world's oldest Republic.

With its rich culture and host of heritage sites, it's no surprise that San Marino is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In fact, the tiny country has been cited by UNESCO as “an exceptional testimony to a living cultural tradition that has persisted over the last 700 years.”

EXPLORE SAN MARINO'S THREE SYMBOLIC TOWERS

Given the micronation's storied history, a trip to San Marino is like travelling back in time. And the best place to start your journey is at Rocca Guaita (or The First Tower). The most iconic of San Marino's three towers, this impressive fortress was built in the 10th century and perches on the peaks of Mount Titano. Built directly into the rock aloft a mighty mountain, the structure is an architectural wonder that brings to mind stories about medieval knights and dragons. An interesting fact, the population of San Marino would take refuge against sieges

within the tower's massive stone turrets. And up to as late as 1970, parts of Rocca Guaita were still used as prisons.

Having conquered the first tower, head to the Castello Cesta (The Second Tower). Constructed at the end of the 11th century, this beautiful tower sits on the highest peak of Mount Titano. Once home to the Fortification Guards Division, it now houses the city's Museum of Archaic Arms. Filled with a large collection of ancient and medieval weaponry and battle dress, this tower is a must visit for military geeks and lovers of medieval lore.

The smallest of the three towers, Montale served a very strategic purpose: the best lookout post. Other than its defensive advantage, the tiny tower also houses a massive prison cell that is eight metres deep.





strategically placed around the area. In fact, the steps at Cava dei Balestrieri are often filled with crowds who gather to admire the skills of the men rapidly shooting arrows into targets located at the far end of the quarry.

WATCH THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT PIAZZA DELLA LIBERTÀ

Once the epicenter of political life in San Marino, Piazza della Libertà is the main location of all things official in the nation. Within the square sits the Statua della Libertà, whose white marble image seems to stand guard over the area. It was erected as a symbol of freedom and is what gives this piazza its name.



Visitors should check out the town hall and official government building, the façade of which is elaborately decorated with the Republic's coat of arms. Don't forget to take in the spectacular views of the surrounding landscape beyond the square's stone walls.

That said, no trip to Piazza della Libertà is complete without watching the changing of the guard. Taking place several times daily in summer, it's an enjoyable and unique glimpse into San Marino's traditions. The guards' uniforms are also a sight to behold – deep green jacket with maroon pants and a hat with a little red pompom.

VISIT QUIRKY MUSEUMS

In addition to traditional museums such as the Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Arts, Emigrant Museum and Museum of San Francesco, the streets of San Marino also lead to some really unusual museums. Topping the list is the Torture Museum. As its name suggests, this museum showcases different kinds of torture instruments

and devices used in the olden days. Reviews are very positive and it's definitely a one-of-a-kind experience.

Those seeking a more family-friendly museum can head to the Museum of Curiosities, which features a big display of interesting oddities such as the world's fattest man, tallest man, longest beard and many others.

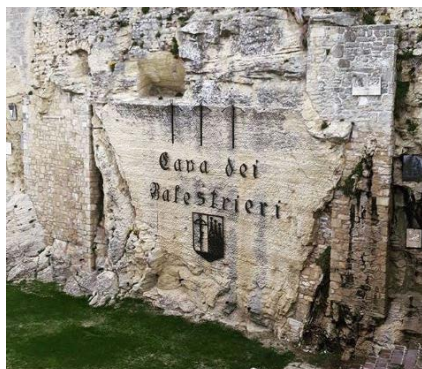
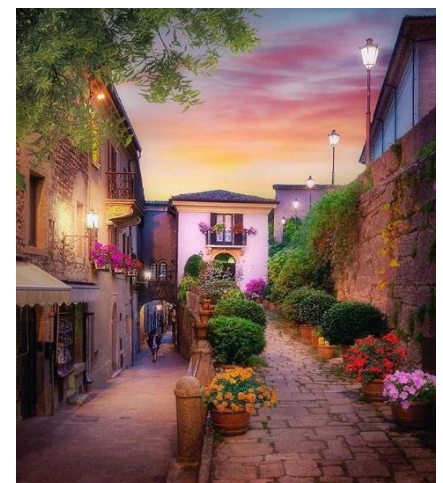
Fans of vampires, werewolves and horror legends should not miss out on the Vampire Museum. With displays based on vampire lore, witchcraft and lycanthropy, it's a great stop for a few hours of fun. Not advisable for kids though.

GETTING TO SAN MARINO

As San Marino has no airport and no trains go to this hidden jewel, the most convenient way to arrive is by car. Main airlines such as Singapore Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Lufthansa, British Airways operate flights from Singapore, either directly to Milan, Rome, or with one stop over via Frankfurt, Istanbul or London to Bologna International Airport, Milan Malpensa, Rome Fiumicino or Venice, followed by overland transfers.

As there's no border control from Italy to San Marino, travellers don't need a passport to enter. That said, it's highly recommended to get a stamp from the tourist department. At just €5, it's a great souvenir and proof that you've visited this highly underrated country.

Can't wait to visit San Marino? San Marino will be present at the NATAS Travel Fair held in Singapore in February 2020. See you there!



ADMIRE THE SKILL OF THE NATION'S CROSSBOWMEN

For those who have a thing for medieval weapons and archery, a visit to Cava dei Balestrieri is not to be missed. Located on the fringe of the city in a huge quarry that was artistically carved out of the rock lies the training area for San Marino's crossbowmen.

At first glance, it doesn't look like much until the crossbowmen take their places at the wooden structures that are

For more information on San Marino, please visit their website at its Economic Development Agency Chamber of Commerce at <https://www.agency.sm/> or email cons.singapore@gov.sm

Photograph credits: San Marino Tourism Board



SkillsFuture Credit Eligible Courses

Programmes :



WSQ Promote Singapore as Tourist Destination (Apr'20 Intake)

Thought of being a tourist guide but unsure yet? This course is designed to give you a taste of being a tourist guide by training you to describe Singapore's short but amazing heritage and recommend authentic Singapore Experience more professionally. Learn the first step on how to be a Super Host and a Tourism Ambassador.

WSQ Tourist Guide Programme (Mandarin: Feb/May'20 Intake)

WSQ Create Customer Experience (Mar/June'20 Intake)

WSQ Provide Guiding in Eco-Tourism and Nature Tourism (Mar/May'20 Intake)

WSQ NATAS Professional Tour Leading Programme

(English: Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr/May/June'20 Intake)

(Mandarin: Mar'20 Intake)



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SkillsFuture Credit Eligible Courses

Programmes :



WSQ Handle Cruise Packages (Jan/Apr'20 Intake)

The cruise industry is one of the largest components of tourism and is experiencing rapid growth. This is an opportunity for you to gain knowledge in handling customer's needs, preferences and requests as well as processing the cruise booking, liaison with cruise operator and acquiring feedback

WSQ Implement Operations for Service Excellence (Jan/May'20 Intake)

WSQ Drive Service Quality & Customer Satisfaction (Apr/Jul'20 Intake)

WSQ Develop Service Operations (Mar/June'20 Intake)

WSQ Manage Budget (Apr/June'20 Intake)

WSQ Develop Risk Management Plan (Feb/June'20 Intake)

WSQ Provide Safety and Security (Mar/May'20 Intake)



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