

Experience Latin America

ela, the largest Latin American event in Europe is back for its fifth consecutive year. Here's what to expect from the three-day show

ela is Europe's only trade event dedicated to Latin America. This year (June 11-13) 127 exhibitors will join buyers and travel operators at Canary Wharf, London, for a programme of seminar sessions and key speakers.

The exhibitors

Returning are the tourist boards from Peru, Belize, Quito, Mexico and Brazil, airlines that include Air Europa, Copa Airlines and Gol Airlines, LATAM Airlines and United Airlines, and hotels and DMCs from across the region like Alto Atacama Desert Lodge & Spa, Argentina Travel Partners, Araras Eco Lodge, Belmond, Crillon Tours, Inkaterra, and Hacienda Hotel Vira Vira & Sol y Luna.

The first-time exhibitors include local tour operators Camino Travel, Careli Tours Nicaragua and Cuba Private Travel and (hotels) Hotel B in Lima, Hotel Carlota in Ecuador, Hotel Hangarao Eco Village & Spa in Colombia and Jashita Hotel in Mexico.

Achievement awards

The LATA Achievement Awards, recognising the efforts of LATA partners, will take place on June 11 and will feature six new categories. The extended accolades include: Tour Operator of the Year, Airline of the Year, DMC of the Year, Hotel of the Year, Cruise of the Year, Destination of the Year, Marketing Campaign of the Year, Product Launch



of the Year, People Award and Innovation in Sustainability.

A new judging panel will be fronted by Derek Moore, Chairman of AITO and co-founder of Explore Worldwide. He will be joined by Aneil Bedi, Director at M&C Saatchi; Barbara Kolosinska, Director at C&M Travel Recruitment; Quinn Meyer,

founder of the CREES Foundation and Danny Callaghan, General Manager of LATA.

Latin America appeal

LATA member Cox and Kings has registered a 5% increase in bookings to Latin America since the beginning of this year, compared to the same period last year. Bookings to Peru overall are up by 38%, but the strongest by far is Mexico which is up by close to 300%.

Revealed Travel reports an increase in Chile bookings due to improved connectivity and related destination publicity arising from the direct British Airways flight from Heathrow to Santiago, which launched in 2017. Peru continues to be a mainstay due to the continuing popularity of Machu Picchu while Argentina bookings are up, thanks to Norwegian Air, which facilitated the connection.



LATA Foundation

The LATA Foundation works closely with the travel industry to support social and environmental projects throughout Latin America. The goal is to encourage the travel industry to give something back to the countries they operate in and provide more ethical tourism practices. latafoundation.org