

Alesha Dixon, Bella Ramsey, Deborah Meaden & Joanna Lumley, call out TUI Group on dolphin cruelty

Thursday 22 August, 2024

Embargoed 22 August 2024 00:01 TUI Group is being urged to end the sale and promotion of tours and activities where captive dolphins are used for entertainment in an [open letter](#) signed by celebrities including Alesha Dixon, Bella Ramsey, Deborah Meaden, Evanna Lynch, Gail Porter, Joanna Lumley, Jane Fallon, Mark Watson, Sarah Jane Morris, Richa Moorjani and Rou Reynolds, on behalf of [World Animal Protection](#).

Dolphins are highly intelligent, powerful marine predators that, in their natural environment, swim and hunt across vast swathes of the oceans. Bottlenose dolphins can swim 100km in a day, and some species cover much more. But confined to tiny, barren, concrete tanks thousands of times smaller than their natural space, exposed to infection and chemicals and often drugged to cope with captivity – they sadly can only swim a few metres at a time in any direction. The anxiety and stress can cause them to self-mutilate and become aggressive – all in the name of entertainment and profit.

There are over 3000 dolphins held captive across the globe, TUI Group are profiting from the suffering of at least 400 of them at around 25 entertainment venues where they are deprived of almost all their natural behaviours.

Alesha Dixon, singer, author & TV personality, "TUI you are the last major tour operator in the UK selling tickets to dolphin entertainment. Dolphins are not entertainers they are sentient wild animals. Enough is enough. Join the other tour operators and stop profiting from this cruelty."

Deborah Meaden, businessperson and TV personality, "I really can't believe in this day and age we still have to point out the cruelty. Do the right thing TUI and do as your competitors have done and stop selling tickets to these cruel and exploitative attractions."

Evanna Lynch, Actor and World Animal Protection Global Ambassador, "It is truly shameful that TUI is still choosing to take part in such an obviously cruel and outdated practice as captive dolphin 'entertainment'. TUI it's time to do the right thing and stop putting profit over animal welfare."

Richa Moorjani, Actor and World Animal Protection Global Ambassador, "It's deeply disappointing to see TUI still promoting dolphin performances. These intelligent creatures deserve to live in their natural habitats, not confined for human amusement. It's time to end this cruelty and make compassionate choices."

TUI Group are urged to join the ever-increasing movement of travel companies, governments and tourists who are saying no to cruel captive dolphin entertainment, but the travel giant continues to put profit over animal welfare.

- In March 2024 easyJet holidays announced that they would not sell tickets to any captive wildlife attractions including captive cetacean venues
- A few days later, Jet2holidays announced that they would stop selling captive dolphin venues
- Virgin Holidays, Expedia Group, Booking.com and Airbnb have all long since committed to never selling tickets for these cruel and exploitative attractions
- Canada and France, Brussels and New South Wales have all banned the keeping of whales and dolphins in captivity
- Dutch travel association ANVR and South Africa's SATSA state that captive cetacean entertainment is unacceptable in their guidelines for their member organisations
- Strict regulations in the UK mean there have been no cetaceans in captivity for over 30 years

Tricia Croasdell, World Animal Protection, CEO said, "The longer that influential companies like TUI Group continue promoting and selling tickets to captive dolphin entertainment, the worse the problem becomes. Selling tickets to such venues means more whales and dolphins are being bred into environments where they will never be able to thrive or carry out their natural behaviours. TUI has said

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that they know it is controversial and that more of their customers would rather see wild animals in the wild, so why are they stalling on this? The only reason can be profit and it is inexcusable for a multi-million-pound company to put profit before compassion.

"We need to make this the last generation of dolphins in captivity, and we need companies like TUI Group to stop propping up the industry before that can happen."

[Join the movement](#) to call on TUI Group to end the sale and promotion of venues that use dolphins for entertainment, so that we can ensure this is the last generation of dolphins in captivity.

-Ends-

Notes to Editor

- To read the full letter please click [here](#)
- Earlier this month World Animal Protection were joined by 14 other animal welfare organisations in a [protest](#) outside TUI Group's Berlin HQ presenting a combined petition of 350,000 signatures from the general public who see the huge role TUI Group plays in perpetuating this cruel and outdated form of entertainment – which means a lifetime of these intelligent wild animals confined to tiny barren tanks performing circus tricks for food.

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