

# CARRIER

## CARRIER REPORTS SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN HIGH VALUE BOOKINGS

*Educationals considered pivotal in ensuring agents remain knowledgeable and confident in securing these exclusive bookings*



Luxury tour operator Carrier reveals that bookings in excess of £100K have grown by 140% since 2019. In 2023 (YTD), these bookings represent almost 20% of their total sales. The higher value trips tend to be multi-generational or special occasion bookings and come with a unique kind of exclusivity and privileged access; they range from private island buy-outs to once-in-a-lifetime trips. Carrier report that these bookings have an average of 8 passengers and are also for longer durations of around 17 days.

Carrier Head of Sales, Rick Milne commented “The majority of these bookings come through our agent partners because having a trusted advisor is key. Facilitating some of these complex bookings isn’t something all tour operators can fulfil. These bookings require a great deal of trust, exceptional connections, and strong supplier relationships, these are all traits that Carrier are renowned for. They haven’t happened by chance either, acquiring these high value bookings has been a strategic focus of the business. Our aim is to help agents grow their business, not with offers and volume that attract low quality leads, but with better quality enquiries and bookings at a much higher value.”

### **The bookings**

Early in 2022 Carrier confirmed their biggest ever booking of £1million. The enquiry came from one of Carrier’s top agents who partnered with Carrier to help facilitate the booking travelling in the winter of last year. The week-long trip was a buy-out of the exclusive

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Necker Island, with a mixture of business class flights and private jet travel for 40 passengers.

A multi-generational Lapland booking equating to almost a quarter of a million pounds was confirmed in April 2023. Every detail of this itinerary was tailored to the clients' preferences and included a private charter, a private visit to see Santa and baking with elves. On request, Carrier also facilitated an elf being present in every transfer.

Other notable bookings include a family gorilla trekking trip to Rwanda worth over £280K. The original enquiry was started in 2021 but the youngest child was too young to gorilla trek, so it was put on ice. An adventurous itinerary curated by Carrier's Luxury Travel Designer, Katie Paterson, was confirmed in January 2023. Following Paterson's educational to Rwanda in 2022, she added in an extra property, Cleo Hotel in Lake Kivu, which she cites as 'one of the most beautiful places' she has ever seen. The trip includes hikes, private boat trips on the lake and canopy walks over the Nyungwe Forest, as well as the once-in-a-lifetime gorilla trekking experience.

## **The importance of educationals**

Carrier emphasise the importance of educationals to provide their own staff and preferred agent partners with the most up-to-date and relevant product knowledge. This is especially important when dealing with bookings of this scale. The business has an extensive educational programme for 2023 with their Luxury Travel Designers and Product team visiting almost every corner of the globe from French Polynesia, Australia, and Vietnam, to Canada, Namibia and the Costa del Sol.

Extending their educational programme to agents too, Carrier also invite a number of preferred agent partners on FAM trips each year. Coining their educationals, 'inspirational', as they place a huge focus on the whole experience, creating moments that leave agents speechless but with compelling stories to tell. In March, Carrier's Key Account Manager, Georgia Bowhay hosted five strategic agents on a trip to Octola Private Wilderness in Finnish Lapland. The trip included a reindeer sleigh ride to lunch with Father Christmas, a handicraft workshop with the locals and snowmobile rides.

Following two large Necker Island bookings, Carrier's most recent agent educational, at the end of May 2023, saw them partner with Virgin Limited Edition for a dual private island trip to the British Virgin Islands. Led by Virgin Limited Edition's Senior Sales Manager, Rachel Healey, and escorted by Carrier's Luxury Travel Designer, Alison Benson, the group stayed at the Branson estate on Moskito Island, before moving to Necker Island where they were treated to the famous sushi kayak, activities such as morning yoga and kite surfing, a boat cruise around the BVI's and lunch with Sir Richard Branson.

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Milne said “The BVI’s trip was offered to Strategic Partners who give Carrier considerable Caribbean business and who have a client base that regularly book high value trips or multi-generational travel. It’s important to us to equip not just our own staff, but our agent partners with the knowledge and know-how to secure these high value bookings. Our educational programme allows agents to enjoy these trips just as their clients would, so they can go back with the confidence and enthusiasm to get the bookings over the line.”

Further elevated educations for 2023 include Singapore, Langkawi, a Maldives and Dubai twin centre, and Tanzania.

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**For press enquiries please contact:**

Char Connolly

E: [charlotte.connolly@carrier.co.uk](mailto:charlotte.connolly@carrier.co.uk)