Abercrombie & Kent

UNITED KINGDOM & IRELAND

To tour the United Kingdom and Ireland is to explore its long and enthralling heritage. Steeped in history; castles, historic towns, stately homes and remarkable cathedrals punctuate the beautiful and often dramatic countryside from the tranquil rolling hills of southern England to the shimmering fens of Norfolk and majestic mountain scenery of the Scottish Highlands. Furthermore, the UK & Ireland bristle with contemporary style; the cosmopolitan capitals of London, Dublin and Edinburgh seamlessly blending tradition with modern, multi-cultural flair.

SOUTHERN ENGLAND

A widely recognised centre for fashion, gastronomy, art and theatre, London's distinction lies in its ability to combine this dynamic, multi-cultural vibrancy with tradition and a monarchical history going back centuries. Venturing outside of London to the serenity of the English countryside, Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon are internationally recognised, while the Cotswold Hills are a vision of rural life. Rolling hills, thatched cottages and a liberal sprinkling of colourful wild flowers lead you through the picturesque villages of Bibury, Chipping Campden and Broadway. England's southwest peninsula is flanked by a dramatic and beautiful coastline scattered with tiny fishing villages and beautiful coves nestled between the cliffs.

NORTHERN ENGLAND

Conjuring images of a romantic wilderness, northern England is home to magnificent national parks. The Lake District sees the pretty villages of Grasmere and Keswick perched on the shores of glittering lakes while further east, the Yorkshire Dales and rolling moors of the Peak District are adorned with numerous stately homes including Castle Howard, Chatsworth House and Belvoir Castle.

WALES

A drive west through North Wales reveals the dramatic rugged mountains and wild landscapes of Snowdonia National Park. Step back in time as the notable turrets of Caernarfon and Conwy castles evoke stories of past conflicts. Further south, St David's Cathedral and Tintern Abbey offer poetic retreats, or, for something more lively, join the passionate Welsh and watch the national game of rugby at the impressive Millennium Stadium.

SCOTLAND

A land of legend, romance and majestic scenery, Scotland's kilts, bagpipes, castles and clans have sparked the imaginations of many. The capital city of Edinburgh is a World Heritage Site and, meandering through the winding medieval streets, flanked by beautiful Georgian and Regency architecture, it's easy to see why. Edinburgh Castle dominates the city, perched on an ancient volcanic mound watching over the bustle below while the charming Royal Mile leads from here down to the elegant Palace of Holyrood House, one of the many royal associations to be found in Scotland. A welcoming and vibrant city, Edinburgh plays host to numerous festivals such as the Military Tattoo and Hogmanay.

Beyond the city, rural Scotland is a captivating realm of craggy mountains, idyllic glens and serene lochs. Magical landmarks such as Inveraray Castle, eerie Glencoe and imposing Ben Nevis will punctuate your journey towards the striking Atlantic Coast where towering mountains sweep down towards the sea and the unspoiled Hebridean Islands of Skye and Iona.

IRELAND

Renowned for its hospitality, 'the Emerald Isle' is one of striking natural beauty, wonderful architecture, a lively culture of music and dance and a rich literary history. The welcoming capital of Dublin is home to stylish designer boutiques, fine monuments and a host of traditional Irish pubs. The country's spectacular coastal scenery is nicely complemented by a number of picturesque coastal towns such as Galway, famous for its fresh oysters and a gateway to the wild beauty of Connemara. Nearby, the Aran Islands uphold Irish tradition by maintaining Gaelic as a language.

Northern Ireland's capital city of Belfast has emerged from its troubled past to become a vibrant, friendly destination. Must-sees include the World Heritage Site of Giant's Causeway, an unusual collection of basalt columns forming stepping stones that lead into the sea.

Enjoy an exclusive early morning walk through Sissinghurst Gardens • Be led on a private tour of the Houses of Parliament
Experience an exhilarating private rib ride on the River Thames • Taste whisky in Scotland with your own expert
Play golf with a former Ryder Cup captain • Go behind the scenes of the world's largest costumier

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ITALY & CROATIA

With an appreciation of food, history and beauty deep-rooted in the national identity of many Italians, Italy is a wonderfully diverse destination that never disappoints at any time of year. Additionally, beautiful coastlines and historic towns in Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro continue to attract visitors to the Adriatic coast.

NORTHERN ITALY

Built entirely on water, the extraordinary floating city of Venice oozes romantic charm. A labyrinth of intriguing streets, connected by intricate bridges, showcase a stunning mix of Byzantine, Gothic and Renaissance architecture.

Liguria, or 'The Italian Riviera', encompasses the glamorous Portofino and the quaint and colourful villages of the Cinque Terre, famous for the picturesque hiking paths that run between them.

The dynamic city of Milan serves as Italy's capital of fashion and design and is also home to da Vinci's 'Last Supper'. In contrast, the Italian Lake District offers the visitor a haven of palatial villas, rose-laden belvederes, hanging wisteria and majestic Alpine vistas.

CENTRAL ITALY

Shaped through 2,700 years of history, Rome is a cornucopia of artistic and architectural masterpieces and classical ruins sitting alongside the impressive papal state of the Vatican City.

Umbria is an ancient region blessed with peaceful, undulating countryside and fast-flowing rivers. The architecturally rich towns of Perugia, Assisi and Orvieto are well worth exploring.

Rural Tuscany, with its beautiful landscape and rustic hidden gems is a delight to visit, while the region's towns boast much in the way of art, local artisans and exquisite food and wine. Florence, in particular, remains a monument to the Renaissance. Festivals and pageants, such as the Palio in Siena, are held with ancient pomp and ceremony whilst towns such as San Gimignano and Lucca hold an abundance of archaic charm.

SOUTHERN ITALY

The Amalfi Coast takes travellers past rocky cliffs plunging into the sea. Amalfi, Ravello and Positano cling precariously to steep cliff sides whilst the islands of sophisticated Capri and its peaceful neighbour, Ischia, beckon. A short drive away, Pompeii and Herculaneum reveal towns frozen in time since their burial in AD79 under the molten lava of Vesuvius.

The island of Sicily possesses an old world charm whilst vast historical influences from across the Mediterranean are evident in the temples of Agrigento and Syracuse and the Greek Theatre at Taormina.

Puglia is less well known but similarly charming, occupying the quiet 'heel' of Italy and resembling Greece with its whitewashed houses and stunning beaches.

CROATIA

Croatia's capital Zagreb is a cosmopolitan city awash with cultural institutions, theatres, galleries, cafes and markets alongside a host of historical treasures.

Istria is a natural paradise with three national parks and a beautiful coastline providing a stunning backdrop to the historic towns of Porec and Rovinj, both of which display a strong Venetian influence whilst Pula is known for its Roman monuments.

The Dalmatian coast is a picture of turquoise blue waters and striking orange roofs. Split's Roman town is full of charm whilst the UNESCO city of Dubrovnik is home to celebrated sights such as the 14th century Sponza Palace and the Dominican Monastery. The idyllic Dalmatian Islands lie just a short boat ride from the coast and are a paradise of beautiful beaches, colourful wild flowers and authentic wines.

MONTENEGRO

The striking UNESCO city of Kotor lies within a spectacular fjord and reflects a remarkable legacy of Roman culture. The town of Budva is also a treasure house of cultural heritage, perched upon a small peninsula. For those looking for a relaxing retreat, the exclusive resort of Sveti Stefan offers beautiful and secluded sandy beaches.

SLOVENIA

The small country of Slovenia is one of Europe's lesser-known gems. The relaxed and friendly capital of Ljubljana is characterised by its beautiful baroque architecture and younger art-nouveau designs. Further north, the stunning Lake Bled is an enchanting picture postcard with the Assumption of Mary Pilgrimage Church famously positioned on a small island in the pristine glacial lake.

"Exploring the Diocletian's Palace, our guide was showing us around the 2000-year-old building which is still occupied by a living community. Our guide took us to a truly genuine coffee bar where local men were playing cards. They didn't speak a word of English and we, not a word of Croatian, but we were invited to join their game, using expressions and laughter to communicate. It was great fun and a truly special experience, even if we did lose!"

Learn the secrets of authentic pizza making from a Roman pizzaiolo • Enjoy lunch with a Prince on his wine estate and adopt one of his wines • Test drive a Ferrari, Maserati or Lamborghini • Enjoy a private visit to an iconic fashion Atelier
Enjoy a private visit to the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel • Join an expert hunting for Istria's elusive truffles

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RUSSIA

Covering such a vast area, Russia is a fascinating meld of Oriental, European and Asian traditions. Still widely undiscovered, Russia is one of the great destinations for travel in the 21st-century.

MOSCOW

The legacy of the Imperial and Soviet years still remains strongly evident in Moscow but the city now sits alongside modern, western influences to create a contemporary and evolving capital. The Kremlin on Red Square recounts the core of Russian history, housing treasures gathered by both Tsars and Empresses. Next to the Kremlin, Red Square is also home to St Basil's Cathedral and Lenin's Mausoleum. Moscow is also a centre of the arts with an abundance of galleries and the legendary Bolshoi Theatre where Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake premiered.

ST PETERSBURG

A city of timeless glamour and elegant architecture, St Petersburg has recovered its former glory since the devastating siege during WWII and has emerged with a deep historic feel and spirit of reform. One of the world's greatest art galleries, the Hermitage, reflects the authority of former imperial Russia, whilst the golden dome of St Isaac's Cathedral dominates the skyline. St Petersburg also boasts many vast palaces, the most famous of which is in Pushkin where Catherine I commissioned her grand Summer Palace in 1717. The flamboyant Rococo style and lavish interior were added over the years by subsequent empresses.

THE GOLDEN RING

Dotted with churches and onion-shaped domes, the circle of towns to the northeast of Moscow forms an excellent touring itinerary outside of the city into rural Russia. Dating back to the 11th-century, the towns of Vladimir, Suzdal, Yaroslavl and Rostov were flourishing trade centres while Sergiev Posad was known as a religious centre following the foundation of the Trinity Monastery of St Sergius.

KAMCHATKA

Home to magnificently diverse and abundant wildlife, Kamchatka is an untouched land of majestic volcanoes, steaming geysers, wild bears and pacific salmon making it a UNESCO site unlike any other.

VOLGA RIVER CRUISE

An ideal way to experience authentic Russia, a Volga river cruise leads you out of the cities into a rural and simpler realm still abundant with elaborate wooden houses and a deep-rooted way of life. Sail through the largest lakes in Europe and authentic Russia beyond the lights of the Kremlin.

UZBEKISTAN, KAZAKHSTAN, TURKMENISTAN & AZERBAIJAN

Situated on the Great Silk Road, a historic trading route between Europe and Asia, the widely unexplored destinations of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan offer much in the way of authentic old-world charm, captivating history, intricate architecture, dynamic cities and dramatic landscapes.

UKRAINE, ARMENIA & GEORGIA

Ukraine is a country of beautiful architecture and surprising landscapes, full of history and a deep Jewish heritage. Armenia is the world's oldest Christian nation where spectacular landscapes envelope endless monasteries and crumbling churches whilst the largely untouched and cultural land of Georgia embodies the values of hospitality and friendship.

"Arriving by air in Moscow, I looked forward with dread to a long wait at Russian customs and passport control. But, as I stepped off the plane, the A&K Guardian Angel was waiting for me and escorted me past all the queues, fast tracking both customs and passport controls in no time at all. Other non A&K passengers were met only in the busy arrivals hall and, by the time they made it there, I was already relaxing in my chauffeur-driven car, hall-way to my hotel – I felt very special."

Meet a survivor of the Siege of Leningrad and hear his stories • Learn about life as a soviet spy during dinner with a former KGB agent • Fire a cannon from the walls of Peter & Paul's Fortress • Meet a Russian cosmonaut on a private tour of the Cosmonaut Training Centre • Visit the workshop of a famous Uzbek puppet maker • Take a calligraphy class in Tashkent

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GROUPS & INCENTIVES

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Our comprehensive services for special interest groups ensure seamless ground operations and distinct, creative proposals, so you won't have to worry about a thing. Our Tour Directors are the best in their field, with specialised knowledge ranging from art to architecture, from history to nature. Whatever your interests, we can tailor-make a proposal to suit you; gastronomes can enjoy the food and wines of France, history lovers may like to explore the ancient ruins found in Greece while horticulturalists may like to discover the beautiful gardens of England.

MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Originality, flexibility and attention to detail ensure the success of our Incentive Programmes. With offices in Italy, Russia and the UK, as well as a Regional Director in Spain, we can effortlessly arrange tours to Rome, Florence, Moscow, St Petersburg, London, Edinburgh, the Cotswolds, Barcelona and Madrid, including special dining opportunities, teambuilding activities, specialist speakers, private visits and many more custom-built services.

Our Key Services Meetings and events • Gala dinner venues • Technical equipment hire and technical support
Catering • Floral decoration • Entertainment • Hotel accommodation • Transportation • Restaurants • Sightseeing tours
Tickets for cultural events • Multi-lingual local guides • Corporate/pillow gifts • Multi-lingual event management personnel

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VILLAS

For a completely relaxing vacation we recommend spending time at a luxury villa. Offering the perfect home from home experience, a villa vacation is ideal for friends and families with plenty of space for everyone to fully relax and unwind.

QUALITY & SERVICE FROM THE VILLA EXPERTS

We have chosen an exceptional portfolio of villas, each individually inspected for quality, comfort and safety before being accepted into our collection. Our standards mean that every aspect has been thoroughly checked to meet strict health and safety guidelines. We also understand that a happy villa vacation relies not just on the quality of the home but on the warmth of the welcome and the support that only a professional, local team can provide. For your clients' peace of mind, we provide them with a local 24/7 emergency contact number.

DESTINATIONS

Choose from a selection of over 300 villas in France, Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal. We also have a selection of European ski chalets located throughout the Austrian, French and Swiss Alps.

VILLA OPTIONS

Villa Only

The independent traveller may wish to opt for 'Villa Only' option. This includes exclusive rental of the villa, bed linen and pool towels (changed weekly) and an A&K representative on call 24/7 for emergencies.

Hosted Villa

The 'Hosted Villa' option is ideal for those wanting to find out more about the local area with additional services aimed at ensuring everyone gets the chance to fully relax. Guests can enjoy exclusive rental of the villa, a daily maid service and an airport arrival welcome as well as a welcome at the villa including a show around of all the facilities. An A&K host will also be on call 24/7 to assist with local travel advice, restaurant reservations and general enquiries. Additionally, guests will be provided with a fully stocked drinks fridge, ingredients for the first evening's supper, a continental breakfast delivered on the first morning and a starter pack of provisions and bathroom amenities. Bed linen and pool towels will also be changed twice weekly.

Something Special

There are a number of other services you may wish to discuss and book with your A&K Villa Consultant. These will vary by property but can include a private chef to personally cater for your clients' stay, or just for a single special meal, vineyard tours and tasting, in-villa activities including spa treatments and art classes or individual arrangements for extra special celebrations.

Booking Process

Visit akvillas.com to see our full range of luxury villas or speak to an A&K Consultant on 800 652 8413.

www.akvillas.com info@akvillas.com 800 652 8413

REST OF EUROPE

Though easily accessible in terms of distance; different customs, languages, standards and, in some cases, currencies, can make touring Europe complicated to arrange. A&K Europe's network of local offices and Guardian Angels ensures consistency in quality and local expertise whilst you deal with one individual contact and one transaction point for the whole tour, freeing yourself up to look after your other clients.

A wonderfully diverse destination, your clients will delight in the ability to combine destinations and experience the huge variety and wealth of culture on offer across Europe.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Influenced by North Africa and Europe, Spain and Portugal are countries of unique cultural and architectural heritage. With world-class museums, monumental architecture and an unforgettable gastronomic scene, the delights of Spain and Portugal are found in all directions from the large and vibrant cities to the rustic fincas, sprawling vineyards and beautiful beaches.

FRANCE

France's alluring charm lies in its unique blend of chic glamour, historic grandeur and quaint rural serenity. Visitors may enjoy the wonderful galleries, museums and street cafes of Paris before exploring the vineyards and historic chateaux of the Loire Valley and Bordeaux. A trip to the coast brings the fascinating history of the D-Day landings in Normandy to the north, whilst the southern coastal towns along the Cote d'Azur are situated alongside elegant beaches and cosmopolitan harbours oozing with style.

GERMANY

The dynamic capital city of Berlin is at the cutting edge of art and architecture whilst reminders of the city's, often turbulent, history remain at every turn. Heading into Bavaria, Germany's charm takes a more traditional turn with the lively atmosphere of

the Hofbrauhaus, Munich's most famous beer hall, and the enchanting medieval villages and romantic countryside of the Black Forest.

GREECE

The Ancient Greeks were at the forefront of creative thinking, writing and theatre, the results of which still underpin much of our modern world today. Greece's rugged landscape is awash with the evidence of this ancient world from the imposing Acropolis which dominates the skyline of Athens, to Ancient Olympia, home to the original Olympic Games. Meanwhile, for those looking to relax against an idyllic backdrop, the Greek islands conjure up images of pristine beaches, crystal waters and winding paths flanked with iconic whitewashed houses.

BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS & LUXEMBOURG

Though some of the smallest countries in Europe, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg are rich in history and offer a host of great artists. Belgium's capital Brussels is home to one of the most ornate market squares in Europe, while the picture postcard towns of Ghent and Bruges are gems of medieval architecture. Meanwhile, Amsterdam's canals and gabled houses set this cosmopolitan city quite apart from others in Europe. Spring in the Netherlands also brings with it a myriad of colour as tulips, crocuses and hyacinths burst into bloom making gardens such as Keukenhof and Lisse well worth a visit.

HUNGARY, AUSTRIA & CZECH REPUBLIC

Ideally combined into a tour of central Europe's most enchanting cities, Budapest, Vienna and Prague suggest an element of the old-world with their cobbled streets and traditional coffee houses. Prague's unique gothic architecture nicely complements the romantic imperial palaces of Vienna and Salzburg while the vibrant spa city of Budapest offers majestic baroque, neoclassical and art-nouveau architecture in abundance.

POLAND & SLOVAKIA

Few countries have survived such a turbulent past as that of Poland, yet this beautiful country lives to recount its fascinating history through its churches and palaces. Warsaw was largely destroyed during the war but painstaking reconstruction has restored many of the city's great landmarks. To the south, Krakow, full of impressive medieval architecture, is one of the oldest cities in Europe and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Conversely, Slovakia's capital, Bratislava, is one of the youngest capitals in Europe yet boasts a wonderful old town and a striking castle from which you can gain spectacular views of the city.

> "Having had a delicious dinner at our hotel, we expressed a wish, as keen cooks, to try preparing some of the dishes ourselves. Our guide then arranged a private cooking class for us with the chef at the hotel. This special cooking experience was the highlight of our tour, we can't wait to take the recipes home and repeat the joy of family cooking!"

Discover traditional brewing methods on a private tour of a family brewery • Refresh your wardrobe with a personal shopper
Learn the history of the D-Day Landings from a former army Major • Enjoy a private classical music concert
Meet a Spanish guitar maker • Learn the secrets of local cuisine with a private cooking class • Design your own champagne

PERFECT FOR...

GASTRONOMY
- Chocolate demonstration, Bruges
- Truffle hunting, Istria
- Wine tasting, Burgundy
- Tapas tour, Madrid
- Food walk, Paris

ADVENTURE
- Private yacht, Santorini
- Fly in a MIG jet aircraft, Russia
- Hiking the Cotswold Way, England
- Maserati track driving, Parma
- Horseriding, Shannon

FAMILIES
- Bike tour, Berlin
- Pizza making, Rome
- Matryoshka Doll painting, St Petersburg
- Mini Highland Games, Edinburgh
- Sea kayaking and snorkelling, Croatia

SHOPPING & FASHION
- Personal shopper, London
- The Golden Mile, Madrid
- Athens Fashion Week
- VIP visit to top Paris fashion houses
- Meet a local shoemaker, Florence

ART & ARCHITECTURE
- The Hermitage, St Petersburg
- Sistine Chapel, Rome
- Sagrada Familia, Barcelona
- Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
- Meet a famous artist, Prague

MUSIC, THEATRE & FESTIVALS
- Opera at the Arena di Verona
- Flamenco show, Seville
- Le Grand Bal, Vienna
- White Nights Festival, St Petersburg
- Oktoberfest, Munich

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INSTANT EXPERT

a travel professional's guide to Europe

Abercrombie & Kent

THE A&K DIFFERENCE

WELCOME

With such a rich history, abundance of diverse cultures and world-class gastronomy within a relatively small and easily navigable geographic area, a visit to Europe can offer something for everyone and constantly reveals new hidden gems to even the most seasoned traveller.

As well as introducing you to all the iconic sights of the 29 European countries we offer, here at A&K Europe, our dedicated research team keep abreast of all new developments, restaurants, villas, hotels and opportunities to ensure we can lead you straight to the heart of the local culture. Our unparalleled network of guides and on-the-ground colleagues allow us to uncover experiences beyond the reach of the normal traveller and really capture the essence of your destination in a way you will never forget. Anyone can visit Ireland, but only A&K can offer you the hospitality of a local family home for an authentic Irish dinner.

With additional services such as our outstanding Guardian Angels and unique Concierge Rail Service, we can make multi-country touring stress-free and enjoyable, balancing your own personal requirements and interests to seamlessly guide you through each of the destinations you choose to visit.

From Lisbon to the Urals, Edinburgh to Sicily, come and discover the diversity across Europe and experience the special A&K difference for yourselves.

Geoffrey Kent
Founder, Chairman and CEO

A&K EUROPE SERVICES

Individual FIT travel arrangements, tailor-made group and MICE programmes in selected destinations, special interest itineraries, cruise ship shore excursions and a hand-picked portfolio of luxury villas available on an A&K hosted or tailor-made basis.

EXPERIENCED MULTI-LINGUAL TOUR CONSULTANTS

Our well-travelled and experienced Tour Consultants offer expert knowledge and passion which extends into every tour we produce. Fluent in multiple languages, our friendly team are able to offer an exceptional and truly personal service.

MULTI-COUNTRY ITINERARIES

Why deal with several different suppliers to arrange a multi-country tour when you can work with just one specialist providing consistent support? With A&K Europe you can build up an itinerary to any number of destinations in Europe, dealing with one central contact point and one simple transaction, without losing any of the competitive edge or local detail.

A&K EUROPE'S GUARDIAN ANGELS

Our unique network of on-the-ground staff allows A&K Europe to provide unparalleled support, available to your clients 24/7. After a personal greeting at the airport and an orientation meeting at their hotel, our Guardian Angel will be working behind the scenes to ensure your clients enjoy every minute of their trip. He/she is always only a phone call away for support and advice.

CONCIERGE RAIL

Rail travel in Europe is fast, comfortable and inexpensive, but train stations are confusing and handling luggage is strenuous. A&K Europe's innovative Concierge Rail Service provides the perfect solution with the reassurance and practicality of escorted transfers, seat reservation and porterage.

PRIVATE SHORE EXCURSIONS

We offer private shore excursions for cruise line guests arriving into ports all over Europe allowing guests to travel in the privacy of their own party and fully customise their tour to suit their individual interests. Our expert guides will introduce each destination with passion and knowledge whilst maintaining the flexibility to accommodate your clients' preferences on the day.

THE BEST EXPERT GUIDES & TOUR DIRECTORS

Thanks to the stringent selection criteria employed by A&K Europe, our expert local guides, Tour Directors and villa support teams are renowned for being the best in the industry. Professional, knowledgeable and supremely organised, an A&K Tour Director or Event Manager is an indispensable ingredient for a successful group tour.

PEACE OF MIND

All of A&K Europe's suppliers are required to comply with stringent health and safety requirements and guests are covered by our comprehensive corporate liability insurance.

& MOMENTS

Over 25 years of networking has enabled A&K Europe to build up an impressive array of 'Insider Access' opportunities, those special moments that give a visitor a deeper insight into their chosen destination and reward them with experiences and memories that only A&K can unlock.