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Wednesday 29th April 2015



QF wants Travelsky boost

AN ALLIANCE with China Eastern will "improve the international competitiveness of a key Australian business and iconic brand." Qantas has pleaded to the competition watchdog.

Oantas made the remark in reply to the ACCC's recent Draft Determination on the proposed China Eastern alliance which it rejected last month.

In a supplementary submission made public overnight, QF argued "a strong & efficient Qantas is in the long term national interest".

The Australian flag carrier said the ACCC's view on the pact is "short term and narrow. It ignores the realities of the regional dynamics...and the fact that the market is growing and evolving at a rapid rate".

Colossal issue of TD!

Travel Daily today has nine pages of news and photos, plus full pages from: (click):

- AA Appointments jobs
- Travel Industry Exhibition
- Club Med
- Renault Eurodrive
- JITO

To allay concerns of possible flight capacity adjustments, QF has proposed a Draft Capacity Condition that will mean the carriers "will neither have the ability or incentive to reduce capacity or limit growth".

Qantas also told the Australian **Competition & Consumer Comm** the planned pact will enable it to gain greater traction within China's travel agent GDS.

"The Proposed Conduct will facilitate sales & marketing of QF fares and products in China.

"In particular...[it] will enable Qantas to better penetrate China's Global Distribution System, Travelsky, which is a monopoly platform owned by the CAAC.

"The platform has an inherent bias towards Chinese carriers and the expansion of China Eastern code to additional Qantas services will better enable Qantas to compete," the submission said.

JITO going strong

THE JITO travel jobs site now features several hundred roles in TMC/corporate, wholesale, retail and online travel - see last page.















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Defence flights ex Nepal

FOREIGN Minister Julie Bishop has announced plans for the evacuation of Australians from earthquake-devastated Nepal on Australian Defence Force aircraft.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has published a bulletin with further details, advising of a process for affected Aussies to register their interest in the military flights.

Bishop also encouraged Australians still in Nepal to "pursue all available commercial flight options to leave the country," with Kathmandu Airport open but lengthy delays in place.

The DFAT bulletin advises that

timing of the flights is still subject to approval by Nepali authorities, and that priority will be given to the elderly, people who are sick or have pressing medical issues, and families with young children.

Australians will be taken out to Bangkok on military aircraft which are bringing humanitarian supplies into Kathmandu.

Those evacuated will be responsible for their onward travel from Bangkok, DFAT said.

Australians in Nepal wanting to be on the ADF flights can register on +977 98510 23248, by email to ert.kathmandu@dfat.gov.au or through DFAT's 24 hour Consular Emergency Centre in Canberra on +61 2 6261 3305.



AMERICAN Airlines and Etihad Airways have boosted their codeshare partnership, with the AA code to be placed on Etihad flights from Abu Dhabi to Dallas and San Francisco.

Etihad will in turn codeshare on American Airlines flights ex DFW to Albuquerque, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans, Sacramento, San Diego and San Jose.

Accor Byron property

ACCOR is set to operate a new Byron Bay property under its MGallery brand, with the \$100m "Elements of Byron" project due to open by Christmas.

To eventually comprise almost 200 separate one and two bedroom villas, the "landmark beachfront resort" will also have a dedicated conference wing.



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Wave Break Is washed up

ANNASTACIA Palaszczuk's **Oueensland Government has** all but killed off the prospect of a cruise ship terminal at Wave Break Island on the Gold Coast. formally asking the consortium in charge to look for a new site.

State Development Minister Anthony Lynham delivered the news to ASF Consortium yesterday, following through on a Labor election promise not to build the facility at Wave Break.

"The government has decided to suspend the current process and consider better investment opportunities," Minister Lynham

Club Med d'Albion

CLUB Med is providing agents with deeper knowledge on its 5 Trident 266 room and 23 villa Club Med La Plantation d'Albion.

Options include four-bedroom ocean view villas - for more info, see page 12 of today's issue.

is quoted as saving.

Considerable financial backing was on the table from Chinese investors for the proposal, with ASF spending most of the last two years attempting to sway public opinion for the plan in its favour.

Most recently, developers had been seeking the green light to proceed with an environmental assessment for the project.

Lynham said the consortium's application had been "halted", and that Labor's argument has always been that Wave Break Island was an unsuitable site.

He added that a revised proposal with a reduced scale and better environmental outcomes can be reached to meet all of the Govt's objectives and guidelines.

In addition to the terminal, the project called for a casino and residential development.

ASF is now expected to consider other sites for the proposal.

Long stays in capital

DOMA Group has opened The Burbury Apartments, its newest long-stay apartment residences property in Canberra.

Aimed at corporate business visitors, the new complex sits at the city's Parliamentary Triangle, with each apartment featuring a full kitchen, king beds, laundry facilities and undercover parking.

Apartments will be serviced weekly, with restaurants, day spa and business centre also on site.

Amadeus and IHG

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group and Amadeus today announced the development of a "next-generation Guest Reservation System" (GRS), which is scheduled to roll out in 2017.

IHG will be the launch partner for a new "cloud-based community model," a first for hotels but similar in concept to the systems developed by Amadeus for airlines.



Window Seat

THE travel industry was well represented at Gallipoli over the Anzac Day weekend, at the Lone Pine memorial in particular.

Travel Daily was sent this pic over the weekend of this wreath (pictured) laid at the memorial ahead of the Anzac Centenary by italktravel in Newcastle.

Lone Pine was the scene of one of the bloodiest battles in the Gallipoli campaign, with hundreds of Anzac and Turkish casualties recorded in one brutal offensive in Aug of 1915.





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PARTYING appeared to be the constant element of the annual Aussie Gold Mega Incentive run recently by Infinity Holidays.

The event held earlier this month saw 60 of the wholesaler's top sellers of Australian and New Zealand product jetting up to North Queensland to celebrate.

Despite some dicey weather, it was nothing compared to Cyclone Nathan which temporarily put the event on hold from its originally scheduled date in Mar.

Guests were flown in to Cairns from their home points where they were transferred to the Tjupukai Aboriginal Culture Park to take part in some spear and boomerang throwing activities.

Other recreational pursuits included ATV riding, horse riding, white water rafting and more.

Attendees are **pictured** above at the Party on the Pontoon, held for the first time in nine years.

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ATE for Gold Coast

QUEENSLAND will host Australian Tourism Exchange for the second time in three years, with Tourism Australia md John O'Sullivan announcing that ATE 2016 will take place on the Gold Coast (*TD* breaking news).

O'Sullivan said the event would inject \$10 million into the Gold Coast economy as well as provide an ideal showcase for the region's tourism product offerings.

"The Gold Coast has undergone something of a renaissance in recent years, with sizeable investments in tourism infrastructure and international aviation access giving the region a renewed sense of confidence ahead of hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2018," O'Sullivan said.

Dates and the specific venue for ATE 2016 will be announced in the coming months, while ATE 2015 will take place in Melbourne in Jun - further info in today's issue of *Business Events News*.

Langham goes gold

ELITE travel show Luxperience, taking place in Sydney from 06-09 Sep, has signed The Langham, Sydney as its latest Gold Partner.

The Langham will showcase its recent grand transformation at the show, as well as host buyers.

New Hilton Waikiki

HILTON Worldwide will open its first Hilton Garden Inn branded property in Hawaii from next year.

Formerly the Ohana Waikiki West, the 623-room property will receive a major renovation before opening under its new name.

Hertz appointment

HERTZ Australia has named Maria Pantazis as its new regional travel industry sales manager for Australia and New Zealand.

Pantazis is well known to the industry through a long career with Qantas, and will be based in Sydney reporting to Lisa Miller, Hertz regional director of sales.









Switzerland Tourism, Swiss Travel System & Rail Europe GSAs (CIT Holidays, Go Holidays, Infinity Rail, Rail Plus AU & NZ & Rail Tickets) invite you to sign up & be a part of the first ever Swiss Travel Pass Superstar E-learning program for Aussie & Kiwi Travel agents.

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BNE airport upgrade

BRISBANE Airport is calling for expressions of interest to build a new Domestic Terminal Northern Regional Satellite terminal which will expand gate numbers to 72.

Travel Partners takes out TAIFI

TRAVEL Partners has become the first agency group to take out the TAIFI (Travel Agents & Intermediaries Failure Insurance) offered by Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers (TD 09 May 14).

Director Jeff Hakim said the coverage meant consumers could have "total peace of mind that their money is protected" when booking with Travel Partners.

"We are delighted to extend our service and commitment to our customers...we feel it's important as an ATAS participant to effect this insurance for our customers."

He said Travel Partners also wanted to "stand out from other agents with a physical insurance policy, rather than just give a peace of mind promise".

Travel Partners also provides insurance for ATAS accredited wholesaler collapse, including credit card chargebacks.

TAIFI is underwritten by International Passenger Protection, with IPP md Paul McLean saying he believes the AFTA consumer campaign and other publicity will see consumers "educated in making a decision to book with an agent based on whether they offer such covers or not"

Qantas FF to part ways with Optus

QANTAS and Optus will not renew their three-year loyalty scheme partnership when it expires on 30 Jun this year.

The pact was announced with much fanfare by former Qantas Loyalty ceo and later Head of International, Simon Hickey (TD 17 May 2011) but now QF and Optus will "enhance their loyalty offering in different ways based on what their respective customers most value".

Qantas Loyalty ceo Lesley Grant said that while the program has an "extremely low turnover rate... it's to be expected that from time to time there will be partners that move in and out of the program".



AUSTRALIAN owned travel firm Scenic has opened reservations for its brand new Myanmar cruise product that debuts in Sep 2016.

The 5-star Scenic Aura is a sister ship to Scenic Spirit (which will ply the waters of the Mekong from Jan), sailing between Mandalay and Pyay over 10 nights, with port calls at Minhla, Magwe, Salay, Bagan, Yandabo and more.

Scenic is whetting the appetite of potential clients, releasing a series of CGI images of what is in store for Scenic Aura passengers.

As exclusively revealed by Travel Daily earlier in Jan, Scenic Aura (TD

19 Jan) will feature 22 all balcony suites with separate bedroom (below), living room and balcony, ranging from 24sqm to 70sqm.

Scenic Aura will feature a vitality pool and bar area (above), open air cinema on the Sun Deck and a choice of dining venues, from a la carte to casual dining.

Guests will be pampered with butler service and an almost 1:1 guest-to-staff ratio, complimentary beverages, a suite of Scenic FreeChoice activities, Scenic Enrich special events and more.

Earlybird deals are available until 31 Aug - CLICK HERE for more.



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Travel is competitive. The World Travel Market Global Trends Report called 2015 the year of the "braggie" – a picture uploaded to social media to brag about the holidaymaker's exotic surroundings. And a simple beach shot isn't going to cut it. Travellers are seeking out one of a kind experiences that they are passionate about. They are embracing the opportunity to create their own itineraries that shape a genuine and authentic travel experience. Research from management consultants Bain & Company found that international travel and tourism is fuelling an appetite for 36o-degree luxury experiences, such as high-end transportation, that includes highly customised super cars and yachts, as well as luxury hotels and cruises.

For agents, this means that they need to create bespoke itineraries for their clients that take into consideration the latest trends, hot destinations, new technology and immersive experiences. Itineraries need to be exciting, innovative and perfectly planned for a seamless travel experience. Then all the traveller has to worry about is taking the perfect braggie.

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Bigger Vegas outlets

OPENING of the expanded North Premium Outlets in Las Vegas has been set for 14 May, the centre has announced.

Brand names set to open include Neiman Marcus Last Call, Saks Fifth Avenue off 5th, Citizen, The Cheesecake Factory & more.

R&C roadshow series

BOUTIQUE property group Relais & Châteaux will showcase its fine cuisine and hospitality offerings at a pair of roadshow events kicking off from tonight.

Dubbed 'A Taste of Oceania', the events will feature reps from members in ANZ and the Pacific.

For details on the events, email rc-australia@relaischateaux.com.

Dusit Shanghai x2

BANGKOK-BASED Dusit Fudu Hotels & Resorts has announced it will introduce its luxury Dusit Thani to the Shanghai market.

Dusit Thani Hotel, Shanghai Zhabei is slated to open in 2019 and will offer 215 rooms, along with a conference centre.

The hotel will be complemented by the Dusit Princess Serviced Residence, Shanghai Xuhui, that is expected to open next year.

UA/ANA up c'share

UNITED Airlines is seeking a green light from the US Dept of Transportation to place its flight designator on All Nippon Airways' services between Tokyo and Hanoi, effective within 30 days.

Shenzhen to Osaka

NONSTOP services linking the Chinese city of Shenzhen with Osaka in Japan will be launched by Shenzhen Airlines from 10 Jul.

The carrier's new route will cut the current journey time between the two cities from 10 hours to just over three, with the service to operate three times weekly.

Super lounge in Chile

LATAM Airlines Group has opened the largest airline lounge in all of South America, with a new 7,000m² facility debuting at Santiago Airport (*TD* 20 May 14).

The lounge can accommodate up to 460 people comfortably, with showers, laundry services, video games and a sleeping room.

Starwood newbuild

STARWOOD will build its first mixed-use Westin development in Southeast Asia, with a newbuild in the Philippines capital Manila slated to open in 2019.

The Westin Manila Sonata Place and The Residences at The Westin Manila Sonata Place will offer a combined 650 hotel rooms and residences, located downtown.

Two other Starwood properties make up the group's pipeline for the Philippines, with the Sheraton Manila Hotel and Westin Manila Bayshore to open from 2017.



Wednesday 29th Apr 2015

Tall SeaWorld coaster

THE battle for bragging rights over the largest roller coaster in Orlando has a new entrant, with SeaWorld Orlando announcing a new 61m high ride for next year.

Unnamed at present, the roller coaster will be 134m in length and will hit speeds of 112kph.

The ride (rendering **pictured** below) will feature a theme based on sea creatures and has been earmarked for a 2016 opening.



Cuba not clear yet

MEMBERS of the US Congress have introduced a bill designed to impose new embargoes on travel to the Caribbean island of Cuba.

The congressmen are seeking to ban funds from being used to launch new routes landing or passing Cuban confiscated land.

If successful, the bill will prevent any new direct air routes between the US and Cuba from launching.





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Atura Dande debut

AMALGAMATED Holdings Ltd has opened Atura Dandenong in Victoria, the company's third property in its relatively new midmarket positioned brand.

Formerly known as the Chifley Doveton, the 128-room property has received a complete fit-out to match Atura's signature "urban, industrial style".

The property features an onsite Brownstone Micro Brewery which boasts a range of craft beers and Atura's boutique in-house brew.

Atura Dandenong joins Atura Blacktown in Sydney and Atura Albury in regional NSW which opened in late 2013 and early 2015 respectively.

CZ confirm Nairobi

CHINA Southern Airlines today confirmed it will expand its global footprint from Guangzhou to Nairobi (*TD* 04 Mar) from 05 Aug.

CZ will utilise Airbus A330-200s on the route, saying Nairobi will serve as "an extremely important link in connecting passengers on Asian Pacific flights to the greater African region".

Pax from Australia and other major markets will have seamless connections to Nairobi within four hours in both directions.

KQ will offer passengers the opportunity to connect to Dar Es Salaam, Entebbe, Johannesburg and other major African cities.

It is expected China Southern will codeshare on the route with SkyTeam alliance partner, Nairobi based Kenya Airways, on the new international route in due course.

Last year, China & Kenya signed an MoU to aimed at driving more Chinese travellers to East Africa.

Back-Roads steps forward

BACK-ROADS

Touring's latest brochure was officially launched in Sydney last night, with the combined summer and winter program hitting agency shelves two months earlier than last year.

Marking the first year-round program, the brochure features 15 new tours and itineraries which take in Europe's waterways for the first time.

Barge cruising is expected to be a

popular option among Aussies, with five waterway itineraries outlined in the new program, including a six-night Burgundy cruise, priced from \$3,745ppts.

Portugal has also been reinstated to the 2015/16 program after a 12 month hiatus, with product available from Nov 2015 into mid next year.

Brand manager for Australia and New Zealand Hugh Houston said the move to combine summer and winter itineraries had been well received by the trade, with the new waterways itineraries also likely to be a popular option.

"We have taken a different approach and extended the program to make people think about travelling year round," Houston said.

He added that the move to launch the brochure early was expected to see a stronger uptake of bookings for the new program.

"We've come a long way in the last 12 months and we are heading in the right direction.

"We're happy with how we're building the brand in Australia," Houston said.

Group sizes are capped at 18 passengers with a minimum two night stay in each destination.

Savings of 10% are available for all bookings secured by the end of Jun, with 5% past passenger savings available thereafter.

Houston is **pictured** with Karen Nelson, Back-Roads Touring NSW/ ACT business development mgr.



Opportunities at Vietnam Airlines Sales & Marketing Team (NSW & VIC)

Vietnam Airlines is seeking two highly motivated sales professionals to join its AU Sales & Marketing Team, one based at its Sydney CBD and one at its Melbourne CBD office on full time fixed term employment contract.

The two Sales Support Coordinators will help maximize the Company's sales and marketing opportunities working in collaboration with other sales team members, travel agents, tour operators and corporate clients.

Primary responsibilities include:

- Sales reporting using Sabre CRS and other internal programs;
- Analyzing of market activities and initiatives to enhance the Company's position in the market;
- · Coordinating of sales meetings, sales presentations & travel expos;
- · Coordinating of sponsorship opportunities and media requests;
- Supporting reservations team and participating in agency helpdesk activities when required.

The successful applicant will have the following skills and attributes:

- Minimum of 2 years experience in the airline/travel industry with a business development or marketing background;
- Working knowledge of airline GDS & CRS with Sabre an advantage;
- Experience and/or working knowledge of ticketing, pricing and fare distribution;
- · Proven communication and presentation skills.
- The ability to work under pressure, unsupervised and within a team.

Interested applicants with full work rights are invited to forward their resume by 5pm Friday 1st May 2015 to Ms. Thuy Nguyen via admin.au@vietnamairlines.com.

Please indicate clearly which work location you are applying for.

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted for interview.







Tas Indigenous tours

TASMANIA'S Premier Will Hodgman has officially launched new indigenous cultural tours of kunanyi (Mount Wellington).

Operating from Hobart, Trowunna Tours provides visitors with a deeper understanding of the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, bush medicine and "tucka".

The three-hour tour operates twice daily on Tue, Thu and Sun, priced from \$75 per adult.

More at trowunnatours.com.

Avis/QR partnership

MEMBERS of Qatar Airways' Privilege Club frequent flyer can now accrue Qmiles when booking car hire with Avis after the two firms signed a two-year deal.

Up to 800 QMiles will be earned per Avis rental, depending on a customer's Avis membership tier.

Two nights free in NZ

GRAND Pacific Tours has a 'Pay 8, Stay 10' promotion on its New Zealand North Island Tour.

The offer includes two free extra nights pre and post in Auckland & Wellington respectively, with the trip now priced at \$2,584ppts.

SAA bans "trophies"

THE transportation of "hunting trophies" of endangered wildlife has been banned with immediate effect by South African Airways.

The ban applies to animals including elephant, rhinoceros, lion and tiger which have been killed during "game hunting activity," SAA country manager Australasia Tim Clyde-Smith.

He said today that the hunting of endangered species has become a major issue in Africa and should be stamped out.

"In consultation with key authorities, SAA will no longer support game hunters by carrying their trophies back to their country of origin," he added.

AA delay Dreamliners

AMERICAN Airlines is pushing back the delivery of a bunch of brand new Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft to better adapt its business model to accommodate a slowdown in int'l operations.

The airline revealed it will delay four 787s, originally scheduled for next year, to be pushed back until 2017, while a fifth Dreamliner will now enter service in 2018.

AA took delivery of its third 787 on Fri and intends to add them into commercial service in Jun.

Last week, rival carrier United Airlines said it was switching an order for ten 787 aircraft for the bigger 777-300ER (TD Mon).



Accommodation Updates

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, Travel Daily's Wednesday feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



Designed to complement its position overlooking the Brisbane River & Southbank, the Mercure Brisbane has unveiled a fresh and contemporary restaurant and bar. The self-titled facility is the final touch in a two year renovation project which saw all rooms

refreshed. Offering a subtle blue & grey colour scheme, the restaurant offers stone benchtops and mirrored back panels to exude a cool charm.



As part of the first phase of a \$30 million renovation, The Langham Hong Kong has released images of two new Signature Suites which the property says each boast a unique personality. The Directors Suite & Penthouse Suite aim to create a residential feel themed

on modern luxury, offering one and two bedrooms respectively. Both offer bespoke detailing, while a third suite is due to open later this year.



Proving popular among guests, Centara Hotels has moved to implement its Beach Bar concept across all properties, following its debut at the Centara Samui Grand Beach Resort in Koh Samui. The pioneering outlet is dubbed 'Coast' and offers indoor and outdoor

seating options including large sofas, with canapes served on a rotating basis throughout the day. Beach bars will roll out across the rest of 2015.

Seaplane to Bani Yas

ANANTARA Hotels Resorts & Spas has partnered with Middle East operator Seawings to offer new Seaplane Safaris from Abu Dhabi to Sir Bani Yas Island.

Day trips with a wildlife drive start at AED2,999 (AU\$1,020).

BUD arrivals soar

PASSENGER numbers through Budapest Airport soared 12.6% year-on-year during Q1 2015, rising to over 1.96 million.

Growth came in the form of new routes and capacity by Air China, Emirates, Iberia & Wizz Air.





Fraser footy audience

FORMER Socceroo Harry Kewell and ex rugby union player Chris Latham will showcase some of the drawcards on offer around Queensland's Great Sandy Strait & Frasers Island for an upcoming destination piece on Fox Sports.

The duo filmed the segment this week which is set to be aired to a major national and potential international audience.

Local tourism partners involved in the segment include Tasman Venture, Spirit of Hervey Bay, Compass Helicopters, Kingfisher Bay Resort & Enzo's on the Beach.

Activities that will receive 'air-time' including cruising and fishing the Great Sandy Strait, kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding in Awinya Creek, lunch at Kingfisher Bay Resort & a 4WD adventure on Lake Mackenzie.

SQ Apple Watch app

AN UPGRADED version of Singapore Airline's Apple and Android smartphone app has been released, with the latest refresh now compatible with the Apple Watch.

New features include a 'My Trips' page that provides info such as flight dates and booking references, while panoramic photos have been infused into the layout "to render a modern and sleek look".

Trip reminders and up-to-date information such as when checkin counters open will be displayed via the Apple Watch 'Glance View'.

Vatican early entry

ITALIAN Dream Incorporated is offering early entrance guided tours of the Vatican including a visit to a "Secret Room", priced from €150 per person.

The 4hr experience begins at 8am, thereby avoiding Museum crowds when the doors open to the public at 9am.

Call (03) 9520 2353 for more.



Sail around the world on an APT small ship cruise with this month's exciting Travel Daily competition, brought to you in partnership with Australia's leading award-winning cruise operator APT.

Every day we'll be taking you on an adventure, showcasing the many highlights and destinations available on an APT Luxury Small Ship cruise. The person with the most correct answers, and who wows us with the most creative answer to the final question, will win the following unforgettable prize: an all-inclusive '17-day Southeast Asia Adventure' Expedition Small Ship cruise for two, departing 14 June 2016. Send your answers to: APTcomp@traveldaily.com.au

Q19. On APT's 11-day Kimberley Coast Cruise name two out of the four Signature Experiences.

Hint: CLICK HERE, see p24-25.





Double-deck India rail

INDIA'S Home Minister Rajnath Singh has announced a new double-decker train service will operate twice weekly between Lucknow and New Delhi.

The train will begin operation from 01 May on Fri and Sun, with stops at Ghaziabad, Moradabad and Bareilly.

Graceland jets stay

TWO aircraft owned by 'The King' Elvis Presley will remain permanently at his Graceland property in Memphis, following speculation they would be moved.

The 'Lisa Marie' & 'Hound Dog II' have been available to access by visitors to the Graceland mansion centre since 1984.

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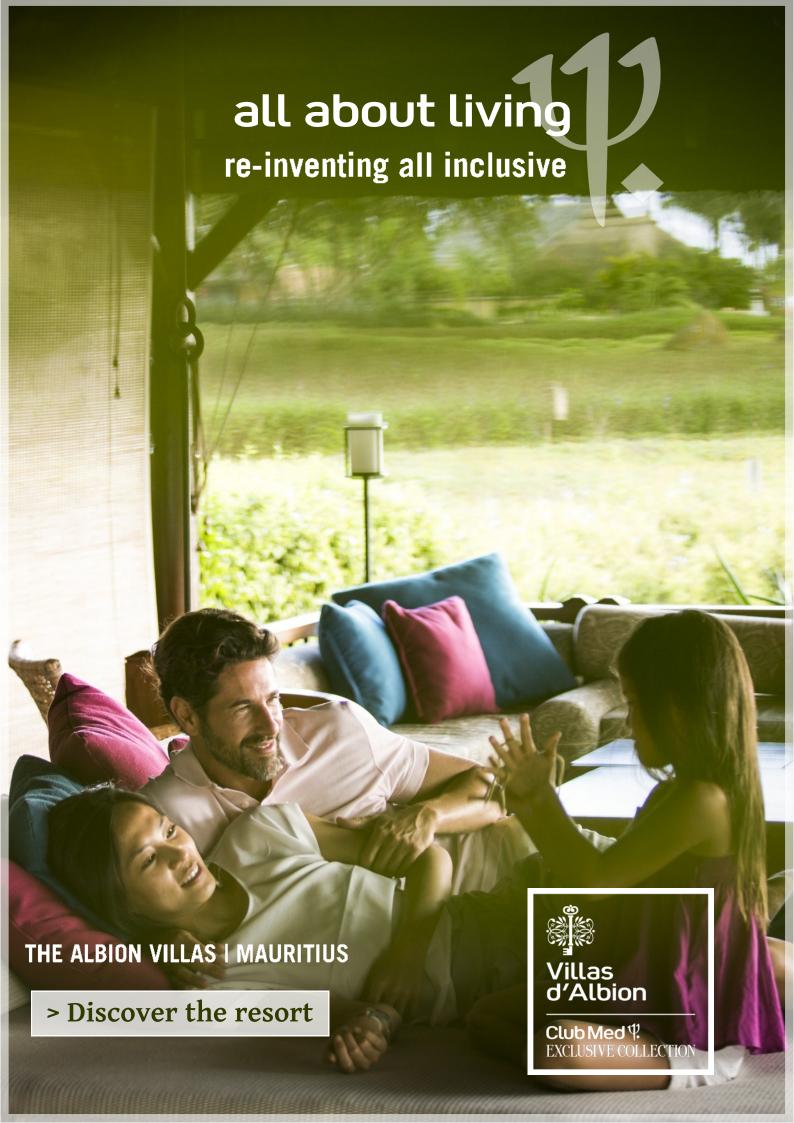
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