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Travel Daily

First with the news

Monday 21st December 2015



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Packer steps down

CROWN Resorts Ltd director James Packer has stepped down from his role as a director from the firm, effective immediately.

Packer said he was relinquishing the role, as previously advised to shareholders, to enable him to devote more time on other "key development projects" in Sydney, Melbourne and Las Vegas.

Crown Resorts chairman Rob Rankin emphasised "this is not an ending, but a phase and an internal transition".

Packer said: "I remain incredibly passionate about Crown and its world-class integrated resort businesses... I am enormously proud of all that has been achieved, but we have so much more to deliver for shareholders".

He will remain as co-chairman of Melco Crown Entertainment & co-chairman of Alon.

QT Bondi opening

NEW hotel QT Bondi is opening its doors in time for Christmas.

QT Bondi features 69 luxury high-end hotel apartments, distinctive artworks and interiors, located on Beach Road, Bondi.

Rates start at \$280 per night.

FCTG takes BYOjet stake

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group continues to broaden its reach in the online travel space, today announcing it has secured a 70% stake in BYOjet.com.

The acquisition follows a trading halt by BYOjet.com's listed parent company Disruptive Investment Group (DVI) this morning ahead of the announcement.

BYOjets.com is an "emerging" OTA, specialising in low cost airfares and turns over around \$100 million annually.

It also sells a range of other travel products, while additional revenue is comes from the JETMAX booking system as a white-label technology product.

Managing director Graham 'Skroo' Turner said BYOjet.com was a profitable business with a low cost model to deliver cheaper airfares to the public - directly and via metasearch - than many of its OTA rivals.

Turner said the Australian-born business offers "strong potential" for growth, providing the business with access to Flight Centre's privately negotiated airfares, increased sales of other

products such as insurance and hotels, improved contracting and the expansion of the company into new markets.

The majority share acquisition will see Flight Centre hold a 70% interest in Professional Performance Systems (PPS), the firm that owns BYOjet.com and its associated businesses.

DVI will retain a 16.4% interest in PPS, while BYOjet co-founder Lenny Padowitz will hold a 13.6% share of the business and will remain as the chief executive.

Turner added the deal, along with the completion of the sale of StudentUniverse.com (pg 2), reflects Flight Centre's expansion strategy beyond leisure and corporate travel, to "grow more aggressively in some sectors of the market that haven't previously been priorities".

Today's issue of TD

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

- AA Appointments jobs
- Corporate Traveller job ads

QF San Fran relaunch

QANTAS has relaunched flights between Sydney and San Francisco, following its expanded commercial partnership with US carrier, American Airlines.

The inaugural SYD to SFO service took off over the weekend, followed by the departure of American Airlines' debut flight from SYD to LAX.

"This is a new era for both airlines and we're excited to be unlocking new travel options for our customers," said Qantas chief executive officer, Alan Joyce.

The two airlines will operate a combined 50 return services per week between Australia and the United States.

Movieworld hotel?

MOVIEWORLD has filed a a lodging development application with the Gold Coast City Council, in bids to build a new nine-storey hotel and a "new attraction and lakeside precinct".

It's still early days yet for the development, with the *Gold Coast Bulletin* reporting approvals were only privately certified and lodged between 17 Nov and 03 Dec, 2015.

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FCTG sale complete

FLIGHT Centre's plan to ramp up its student travel proposition in the United States has gained speed, with StudentUniverse.com group of companies agreeing to the US\$28m buy out (**TD Wed**).

Just under 99% of shareholders of the unlisted, Irish incorporated parent company accepted the proposal, which as a result has become unconditional.

FC managing director Graham Turner said Flight Centre Travel Group looked forward to working with StudentUniverse to expand the business.

"StudentUniverse will give us a stronger presence in the student & youth demographic, both in the United States and globally, and will bring new expertise to FLT in a number of key areas, including online technology and digital marketing," Turner said.

dnata Hainan deal

HAINAN Airlines has inked a contract with air services provider dnata for full ground handling services at Sydney Airport.

HU is the sixth Chinese carrier dnata offers services for locally.

Bali consul change

THE Turnbull Govt's Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop has named Dr Helena Studdert as Australia's next Consul-General in Bali, effective Jan, replacing Consul-General Majell Hind who has held the role since 2014.

Air Canada BNE upgauge

THE service may be more than six months from launching, but passenger demand has seen Air Canada increase its new Aussie route to Brisbane from an original thrice weekly operation to daily.

Scheduled for launch on 01 Jun, Air Canada's Vancouver-Brisbane service will move to daily inside three weeks, effective 17 Jun, resulting in a 133% seat capacity increase on the route.

President of passenger airlines Benjamin Smith said customer reaction to AC's second entry point into Australia has been "very positive".

The upgauge is a direct reaction

to last week's announcement of a revised bilateral air agreement with the Australian government (**TD Wed**), "which enables us to increase our presence in this important Asia-Pacific market," Smith commented.

"This expanded service also underscores Vancouver airport's importance and attractiveness.

"The seamless connections made possible for visitors by its in-transit pre-clearance facilities, combined with our extensive domestic & US network radiating from Vancouver, position YVR to be the preferred gateway hub for trans-Pacific travel to and from North America," Smith said.

As exclusively revealed first by **Travel Daily** in May, Air Canada will operate the Brisbane route using triple class Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft.

QF, SQ satisfy most

QANTAS is back on top, pleasing the most customers as a Domestic and Domestic Business airline according to the latest Roy Morgan airline customer satisfaction results for Oct.

QF's satisfaction rating hit 84%, placing the airline just ahead of last month's winner Virgin Australia (82%).

Singapore Airlines retained its status as the most satisfying International Airline (91%) followed by Emirates (88%), a placing both airlines have held all year respectively.

Roy Morgan Research ceo Michele Levine today said SQ continued to "set the bar extremely high, achieving 90% or higher for most of 2015".

World Journey teaser

NEW expedition-style safaris in Botswana, self-drive options in Namibia and Alaska, bear viewing at Bones Bay Lodge in Canada & private tailor-made itineraries in Madagascar are among the array of fresh product featuring in the World 2016 program, due for roll out by World Journeys in Jan.

See **page four** for more newly released brochures.

PER boss to depart

PERTH Airport chief executive officer Paul Geatches will exit the role in Jul after nine years service.

Chairman of Perth Airport Pty Ltd Colin Beckett said Geatches has played a significant role in leading the transformation of PER, overseeing the delivery of the \$1.1b redevelopment program.

A global search to replace Geatches is now underway.

AA flagship 777 Sydney debut




THE inaugural American Airlines Boeing 777-300ER commercial service to Australia touched down in Australia on Sat, with AA73 from Los Angeles welcomed to Sydney with a traditional water cannon salute.

It's 23 years since AA operated regular services to Australia, with Sydney Airport managing director and ceo Kerrie Mather saying the

new airline will provide travellers with "more choice, convenience & connections" across the USA, Mexico, Caribbean & Latin America.

AA's new service is expected to bring in an additional 41,000 visitors annually to Sydney.

Mathers is **pictured** centre with American Airlines executives and the welcoming party in front of AA's flagship 777 aircraft.

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VA most punctual

VIRGIN Australia was the most punctual domestic airline in Nov according to a performance report from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, released today.

It revealed 87.2% of VA's Nov flights arrived on time followed by Qantas (85.4%), Tigerair (81.5%) and Jetstar (72.5%).

VA scored 89% for on time departures preceded by QF (87.1%), TT (82.9%) & JQ (69.3%).

The most punctual routes for arrivals were to and from Adelaide & Canberra (97.3%) while the Darwin-Perth route had the best departure rate (97.2%).

The Port Macquarie to Sydney route was the least punctual for arrivals at 61% accuracy while departures were worst on the Melbourne to Newcastle route with only 59.5% of flights on time, the report shows.

Canada arrivals flat

THE number of Aussies entering Canada in Oct was up fractionally compared to the corresponding period in 2014, rising 1.8% to 16,629 visits, new data from the Canadian Tourism Comm shows.

Year-to-date figures from the Australian market remain strong, up 2.9% on the year prior at a shade under 250,000.

Across all markets, growth for the Jan-Oct period was up 6.2%.

Novotel NZ opening

NEW Zealand's latest internationally branded hotel, the \$22m Novotel New Plymouth Hobson opened last week.

The 85-room property features executive and studio rooms as well as one- and two-bedroom apartments, a fitness centre, gym and sauna and is located a short walk from the town centre.

Rates start at \$150 per night.

KLM to Salt Lake City

TWICE weekly services linking Amsterdam and Salt Lake City will be launched by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines from 05 May.

Flight frequencies will be jacked up to thrice weekly from 04 Jul.

New seasonal services will also debut to Ibiza, operating on weekdays from 04 Jul to 25 Aug.

MEANWHILE, KLM is axing its Houston route, not Air France, as mentioned by *Travel Daily* on Fri.

IGH OpenAir package

INTERCONTINENTAL Sydney has partnered with the St. George OpenAir Cinema to offer a Night with the Stars package.

The deal includes one night's accom and tickets for two to a screening at the OpenAir Cinema and breakfast in Cafe Opera, priced from \$433 per room, per night for two people.

See stgeorgeopenair.com.au.



Window Seat

TRUE Blue Aussies won't feel left out when they head on a Ziptrek Ecotour in Queenstown, with the company putting together an "Aussie version" of their new audio tour app.

Aussie "translator" Steve Marchment guides guests through treetops, assuring them "it's pretty hard to understand these kiwis as they yabber on...I'm here to give you a proper tour".

Ziptrek Ecotours director Trent Yeo said Marchment is "a fair dinkum Aussie who actually does hail from the land of thongs, shrimps and schooners, but he took his job very seriously and watched all the old Crocodile Dundee movies!"



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Key Account Sales Executive, Brisbane This role works closely with the Key Account Manager and is critical in the delivery of a first class customer experience, by providing technical, operational and sales support. An uncompromising commitment to service excellence is essential for this role. Great step up for someone with 3 years + experience in the Travel or IT industry, wanting to develop their career in a commercial team. GDS experience is desirable but not essential – training will be provided to the right candidate.

For more information or to apply for either of these roles, please contact PacificHR@travelport.com

Please outline which position you are applying for. No agencies please.

Three Capes induction

TASMANIA'S Three Capes Track, a three-night cabin-based 46km trek on the east coast, was officially launched today by Tourism Minister Richard Colbeck.

Dinner with Dubai Tourism

DUBAI Tourism treated a group of top trade partners in Melbourne to a dinner last week to thank them for their support during 2015.

Participants gathered at Vue de Monde, hosted by Dubai Corporation for Tourism & Marketing director of Asia Pacific Julie King, who provided an update on a number of exciting attractions coming to the emirate in 2016.

King is pictured right with Emirates regional sales mgr Vic/Tas Dean Cleaver.

Pictured below are: Linda Addy, STA md, Andrea Robinson, STA marketing & product trading director & Tim O'Callaghan, Qantas regional mgr, Vic.



BELOW: Steve Reynolds, APT executive general manager and Chris Hall, APT chief executive officer with Julie King.



Hyatt appointment

HYATT Hotels Corporation has announced the promotion of group veteran of more than 24 years Philippe Roux-Dessarps as vice president of global brands.

In the role, Roux-Dessarps will oversee the Park Hyatt brand.

St Regis Macau debut

MACAU'S St Regis Macao, Cotai Central opened on Fri.

Located within the integrated resort destination, the luxury hotel features 400 rooms ranging in size from 53m² to 477m².

More at stregis.com/macau.



Brochures

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Crooked Compass - 2016

Crooked compass has unveiled its 2016 brochure, with tours ranging three to 36 days in length from India to Peru. The 36-day Epic Himalaya Nepal, Mustang and Tibet tour departs Kathmandu 27 Aug and ventures to 28 destinations before returning to Kathmandu. Other highlights include the 4-day Mount Cultural Show - Papua New Guinea and 8-day Kenya Uncovered.



Island Escape Cruises - Tahitian Affair 2016

Island Escape Cruises' 2016 Tahitian Affairs brochure features small boutique ship lagoon cruising. The new brochure covers seven-and 10-night cruise itineraries departing from Papeete and Bora Bora between May and Oct 2016. Both cruises visit Raiatea, Motu Iruu, Huahine, Tahaa and Bora Bora Lagoon and the 10-night cruise also includes Moorea.



Sunlover Holidays - Tasmania 2016/17

Sunlover Holidays' brochure offers a huge range of accommodation, tours, attractions and package holidays throughout Tasmania. Holiday options include a short-stay in Hobart, an extended self-drive trip through regional Tasmania with everything in between. A new "Hobart in Style" holiday package, along with Innkeepers & Tasvillas Passes have been added. Look for our new "We Love It!" sticker highlighting the most popular products.



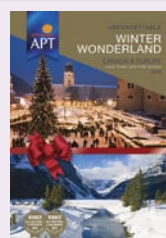
Qantas Holidays - UK/Europe 2016

The 2016 brochure presents an expansion of products; in Croatia more cruising and touring, more regional destinations in Greece and Turkey, self-drive options & mini-tours, plus new pre/post cruising options. Other additions include the launch of the new luxury train Belmond Grand Hibernian, a Visa-Free St Petersburg tour, The Gardens of London tour and Portugal's Garden, all available alongside old favourites from Qantas Holidays' UK/Europe collection.



GPT NZ Cruise & Luxury Coach Tours 2016/17

Grand Pacific Tours has partnered with Celebrity Cruises to release a 16-page brochure with tours combining an ocean cruise aboard *Celebrity Solstice* and a luxury coach tour, departing Nov 2016 - Feb 2017. Tours aim to see key icons not included on the cruise. All tours are fully escorted and include airfare/s, taxes, cruise, accommodation, most meals, sightseeing and attractions such as a tour of the Hobbiton Movie Set to the TranzAlpine Rail Journey.



APT - Winter Wonderland 2016

The new brochure offers a choice of six itineraries showcasing both the town squares and festive markets of Europe and the mountains, hotels and mountain villages of Canada. APT's luxury river cruising in Europe features Christmas markets and the festive highlights of Central Europe. Four itineraries are available, with departures running from 15 Nov - 24 Dec and ranging from 10-23 days in length.

The most popular tour is the 21-day Christmas Markets Magnificent Europe from Paris to Prague, which takes in eight countries. Highlights include the Majestic Imperator rail journey to Salzburg and a private performance and cocktail reception at Vienna's City Palace.

Chile airport strikes

LAN Airlines has been forced to cancel 200 domestic flights as a result of strike action by workers tied to the Chilean civil aviation authority.

Ten of Chile's airports are closed *Reuters* reported, with only Santiago de Chile-Punta Arenas, Temuco and Calama airports remaining operational.

The service delays have left thousands stranded, with LAN urging affected pax to postpone trips until 15 Jan, 2016.

AZ Biz chauffeurs

ITALIAN national carrier Alitalia will offer a complimentary chauffeur car service for its Business class customers.

The new service will be available from today and is offered to premium customers who fly to 35 of the airline's destinations served directly or via Abu Dhabi.

More info: www.alitalia.com

NT nano-brewery

THE Purple Mango Cafe in the Marrakai region of the Northern Territory, has won a \$85,950 Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund Grant to launch its proposed nano-brewery & mango winery.

NT Chief Minister Adam Giles says the nano-brewery and winery will complement the Marrakai region's wide range of existing tourism offerings.

CS100 certification

CANADA-BASED aircraft manufacturer Bombardier has received Transport Canada Type Certification for its brand new CS100 aircraft; which will pave the way for the delivery and entry of the aircraft with the first operator SWISS in the second quarter of next year.

China FTA boost

THE China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) was implemented over the weekend, with Tourism Minister Richard Colbeck lauding the "historic entry" as "great news for Australia's tourism industry".

Under the new agreement, Australian companies will be given the opportunity to design, build and operate hotels in China on a wholly-owned basis, with agencies also given the green-light to establish operations to provide travel services, tours and hotel accommodation (**TD** 02 Sep)

"The Government has made tourism infrastructure one of five National Investment Priorities," said Minister Colbeck.

"ChAFTA will encourage investment in this industry which supports around a million jobs."

Alongside ChAFTA a new Working Holiday arrangement has also been implemented, estimated to boost demand for tourism services with 5,000 Chinese work and holiday-makers expected to travel to Australia each year.

Hilton into Ningbo

HILTON Worldwide has this week debuted the DoubleTree by Hilton Ningbo-Chunxiao, China.

Offering 220 rooms, the new addition is the first Hilton in the Zhejiang province and marks the brand's entry into "an important tourist and MICE destination".

Silver plots Cuba flts

NEW commercial air services between Florida and Cuba will be relaunched by Silver Airways, with the airline announcing on Fri it intends to offer routes to most, if not all, ten airports in Cuba.

"With code share partners, United and JetBlue, and interline agreements with many other domestic and int'l airlines, Silver is extremely well positioned to operate nonstop scheduled service from various Florida points to Cuba, the Bahamas and further into the Caribbean," Silver Airways said in a statement.

Santa Claus is coming to town!



ABOVE: This creative entry was sent in by Hawaii Tourism Oceania's Charis Ricafuente and depicts a jolly Santa catching up on **TD's** latest news and enlisting the help of Air Canada to deliver presents to all the good girls and boys in time for Christmas day.

For the chance to win tickets for two to Vancouver flying with Air Canada see the details below and send us your own festive picture.

Beijing pollution

BEIJING is on 'red alert', with severe and unhealthy levels of smog expected to hit the capital for three consecutive days.

Smarttraveller has not updated its level of advice for Beijing and is urging visitors to "exercise normal safety precautions".

The red alert period extends until 22 Dec, 2015.



Air Canada is gearing up for an exhilarating 2016 with the launch of its first non-stop Dreamliner flights from Brisbane and the unveiling of an industry-leading on-board product – including its first premium economy cabin – on its daily Sydney-Vancouver route.

To celebrate Air Canada and Travel Daily are offering two round trip Air Canada economy class tickets, from either SYD or BNE. All you need to do is create a fun Christmas photo featuring Air Canada and *Travel Daily*, then send it to aircanada@traveldaily.com.au before 31 Dec!

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