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Travel Daily

First with the news

Friday 16th January 2015

ONLINE ACCOMMODATION SPECIALIST

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Insight Egypt return

TODAY'S *Travel Daily* features an exclusive special guest column from Insight Vacations chief exec John Boulding following the company's resumption of guided holidays to Egypt.

Boulding took part in Insight's first itinerary back in Egypt after a 17-month hiatus, saying locals have embraced their return.

"Conversations with many locals indicated a general consensus that Egypt is re-establishing its position as the leading stable nation in the region," he writes.

Read his comments on **page 5**.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news & photos, plus a full page: ([click](#))

- AA Appointments jobs

New wholesaler security

GOW-GATES Insurance Brokers has announced the introduction of a new "affordable" protection option for travel agents in the instance that an ATAS Accredited Wholesaler enters insolvency.

The additional benefit to Gow-Gates' Professional Indemnity Facility includes a provision for the insurer to make a payment to mitigate the potential of a claim being made against the agent, such as repaying lost travel funds.

It also enables reimbursement for credit card chargebacks up to a specific limit for any one booking and an annual aggregate limit in respect of all bookings.

"This new benefit is designed specifically to address concerns about both agent liability and credit card chargeback risks

associated with Wholesaler Insolvency," Gow-Gates said.

Sold at a "reasonable" cost on top of the CGU Professional Indemnity Facility, it minimises the potential of any claim being made against agents by clients for losses incurred if an ATAS Accredited Australian wholesaler collapses, ranging from \$10,000 to a maximum of \$50,000.

"This is not intended to be a replacement for the more extensive protection offered by the IPP End Supplier Failure Insurance, instead it's a new approach to providing a level of cover that might be more suitable & affordable for your business," the industry insurance firm said.

Agents can access the optional cover from today - 1800 640 535.

US eases Cuba entry

THE Obama Administration has simplified entry into Cuba by Americans with immediate effect, easing decades-old restrictions on travel and business dealings with the island country.

American citizens will be able to gain authorisation to enter Cuba for any of a dozen reasons without needing to first obtain a special licence, the US Government announced yesterday.

US airlines and travel agents will be allowed to provide service to Cuba without a specific licence, and travellers will be permitted to use credit cards and spend money while in the country, the *New York Times* has reported.

The US Dept of Transportation said it would engage with the Cuban Govt to establish a bilateral air services deal to boost flights.

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Domestic fares rising

NEW government data confirms air travellers are forking out more on domestic airfares this month compared to last year.

The Domestic Air Fare Index uses Jul 2003 as its base year with a value of 100.

According to the Jan 2014 index, Business class and Best Discount domestic fares both increased by more than 6 points compared to 12 months ago, to values of 89.5 (was 83.4) and 60.9 (was 54.5).

Full Economy fares rose over the past year by three points to now sit at 119.9 - their second highest level aside from Dec.

Restricted Economy fares were also up three points.

Travel Alberta link

APOLOGIES to Travel Alberta and Calgary Stampede for the link error in yesterday's **TD** ad for the Ranch, Rodeo & Rockies event.

Agents can RSVP to the event by **CLICKING HERE** or on the ad below.

QF domestic class shuffle

QANTAS is refining its domestic fare structure that will see fare families drop from four to three.

'Flexi Saver' and 'Fully Flexible' fare families will be morphed into a new 'Flex' family in response to passenger feedback, QF said today.

The restructure applies for tickets issued or reissued on or after 18 Feb, and means Qantas will offer just 'Business', 'Flex' and 'Red eDeal' domestic fare types.

Changes are aimed at "making it simpler for customers to choose the right fare and ensure Qantas maintains its competitive advantage" while being able to react "more nimbly to market demand," QF told **Travel Daily**.

The consolidation provides Qantas with the ability to expand its number of Red eDeal family fares while keeping lead-in fares the same, the carrier said.

'Flexisaver' booking classes 'L' & 'V' will merge into the 'Red eDeal' category, joining classes 'S', 'N',

'Q', 'O' and 'E'.

Previously marketed Flexisaver 'H', 'K' & 'M' fare classes merge under the new 'Flex' family with 'Fully Flexible' 'Y' & 'B' classes.

QF said the main beneficiary of the realignment will be SME and business customers who need "some flexibility and freedom" to make flight alterations.

Combining Business & Economy fares will also become simpler.

Further, adjustments improve Qantas' "ability to compete for leisure and business customers who are able to lock in the best fare where more certainty exists in their plans".

Similar changes were made to QF's international fares about one year ago (**TD** 28 Nov '13).

The Australian flag carrier last revised its domestic fare families in Jul 2011 when it shelved its 'Super Saver' fare (**TD** 23 Jun '11).

The qantas.com website will also be rejigged from late Mar reflecting the changes, making it possible for customers to mix & match flight options.

ADL terminal growth

APPROX \$1 billion in on-site investment, leading to creation of 3,500 new jobs forms the core of the Adelaide Airport Master Plan, approved by the Fed Govt today.

Designed around a 30-year vision for the facility, investment will focus on terminal expansion and an Airport Business District with identified industry "clusters".

PER master plan nod

PERTH Airport has received the green light from the Federal Govt for its own Master Plan, with the facility already well underway on a wide variety of redevelopments.

The government nod approves construction of a third runway and endorses an Airport Rail Link.



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Travel Daily

First with the news

Friday 16th January 2015



France open for business

ATOUT France director Patrick Benhamou has thanked the Australian market for its support following recent terrorist events in Paris, saying he has not yet seen any signs of cancellations from local travellers.

Benhamou said he had received nearly 1,000 messages of support and solidarity from the Aussie database.

“[It is] too early to say that tourism to France will be ‘another victim’ of the shoot out,” he told *Travel Daily*.

The country saw a total of 1.3m

Australian visitors in 2013, with the final tally for 2014 due to be calculated and released shortly.

In recent days, France has raised its security levels in public areas such as department stores, train

stations, airports and museums but travellers knew there was no destination in the world with a zero risk factor, he said.

Benhamou hinted there was a chance the country could see a

resulting drop in arrivals based on recent history.

September 11 saw a 5% fall in world traffic, bird flu cut arrivals globally by 3% and the 2009 financial crisis led to a 7% drop in travel.

If the security threat in the city became a longer-term problem, Benhamou said

his biggest worry from a travel perspective would be the effect on the corporate incentive market from Australia.

Benhamou is **pictured** above showing his patriotic French pride.



Caesars denied entry into bankruptcy

LAS Vegas-based casino giant Caesars Entertainment Corp have lodged a second bankruptcy filing in Chicago after their first, in Wilmington, Delaware was ruled invalid by a bankruptcy court.

The overseeing judge said he would instead issue a stay order against the filing, *Yahoo* reported.

Caesars’ dire situation stems from a buyout and assumption of debt which occurred before in 2008, prior to the financial crisis.

Currently it isn’t clear what the effect will be on its Vegas casino.

Rendez-vous regos

REGISTRATIONS have opened for the Canadian Tourism Commission’s annual trade event, Rendez-vous Canada 2015.

Organisers expect 1,500 int’l tourism professionals will gather at Niagara Falls for the four day show from 26-29 May.

To register, **CLICK HERE**.



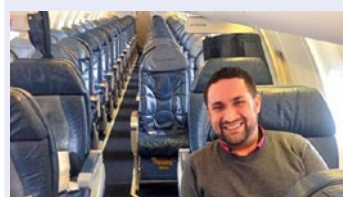
Window Seat

EXHAUSTINGLY long delays with aircraft in the US city of Cleveland resulted in Delta Air Lines unwittingly operating a service to NYC for just two pax.

According to *ABC News*, a man keeping an eye on delay push notifications on his smartphone turned up at the airport to find all other pax had been rebooked to depart on other services.

Because the 76-seat plane was needed to operate other services, it was forced to depart with only the duo onboard.

The passenger even tweeted a photo of his flight (**pictured**).



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HOME-BASED agent group Travel Counsellors will conduct a series of new “intensive” training courses over the course of the year to provide its members with new skills and knowledge.

Multiple sessions will be conducted between Mar and Nov in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide and are free for existing Counsellors to attend.

Content will include essential

skills such as customer service, marketing & selling techniques, time management and more.

A number of suppliers will also attend selected sessions to run training sessions and updates on cruise, touring and new airfares.

“We are constantly working on the tools, support and technology we offer, and will also use the roadshows as a platform to showcase the developments within the business, and how these will benefit our Travel Counsellors and their businesses,” Travel Counsellors Australia gm Tracy Parkinson stated.

The company says the sessions will also give its agents a chance to meet and network with their colleagues in their local area.

A group of Travel Counsellors in training are **pictured** above.

Emirates boosts ORD

CAPACITY between Dubai and Chicago will be increased from 01 May when Emirates upgauges the aircraft used on the carrier’s ninth route into the United States.

EK will replace Boeing 777-200LRs to the 777-300ER, adding 88 seats in each direction daily.

Andorra on TDF route

ORGANISERS of the Tour de France have overnight confirmed the 2016 edition of the race will spend three days in Jul in the Principality of Andorra.

Hotel ‘secret deals’ defended

EXPEDIA says it will continue to promote ‘secret saver’ deals to consumers, saying the packages offer “excellent value”.

The OTA’s remarks follow an article in **TD** in which NSW Fair Trading highlighted a rise in hotel and resort complaints (**TD** Mon).

Fair Trading said there had been an escalation in gripes for ‘secret deal’ offers, citing an example of a mystery destination accommodation package to the Gold Coast, but it did not specify any particular operator at fault.

Spokesperson for Expedia Stuart Udy told **TD** it, or its takeover subject Wotif.com, had received no complaints for the Gold Coast.

“We take customer comments very seriously and if a customer complains about a property we have our local staff investigate and resolve the issue,” Udy said.

“If a property has dropped its standard we can take it off the list.”

Udy said Expedia’s Secret Saver offers are tremendous value when a customer does not mind where they stay in a city.

“A place like Auckland for example is perfect. Any hotel in the city is a 5-minute cab ride to anywhere else, so why not save some bucks and stay at the level of property you like but the name is not known till you book.”

He said the online travel agent has the “occasional complaint”, adding it is an inevitable problem when Expedia processes two bookings every second from an inventory of 320,000 properties.

Agents can book Secret Saver hotels and earn commission on the transaction via Expedia TAAP.

Southwest \$1.6m fine

US BUDGET carrier Southwest Airlines has copped a US\$1.6m fine for violating tarmac delays - the largest civil penalty of its kind imposed by the authority.

The penalty was levied after Southwest failed to offer pax on 16 aircraft delayed at Chicago Midway Int’l Airport the ability to deplane after 3 hours at the gate.

The US transport regulator said Southwest has experienced a “malfunctioning of its crew scheduling system” on 02 Jan last year, impacted by a severe winter storm, creating an unexpected shortage of staff and delaying the clearance of Southwest’s gates.

FJ backs out of ASPA

FIJI Airways has rescinded its membership in the Association of South Pacific Airlines (ASPA) over what it says are “strongly biased” and “gratuitous” public comments made by General Secretary George Faktaufon.

The brewing storm relates to the recent impasse resolution settled between Fiji Airways and Solomon Airlines (**TD** yest).

FJ chief exec Stefan Pichler said Faktaufon “appeared to blame Fiji for the impasse” and urged it to instead remain neutral & “follow its mandate of capacity building”.

The Nadi-based carrier said it would not seek to regain its membership unless there is a change in the leadership of ASPA.



Network Services Coordinator

A vacancy exists for a **Network Services Coordinator** with Helloworld Limited.

Located in **North Sydney**, in the **Retail Shared Services** division of Helloworld Limited, this **12 month fixed term** role entails providing quality operational support on all areas of business products and systems provided to the Helloworld Limited staff & brands. Liaising with our networks, the sales team & public, managing incoming calls and email enquiries. Working with the Retail Sales Support and Customer Service Manager assisting with any project work or cross departmental needs. Web & intranet site loading for the combined networks.

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- Results Driven & Goal oriented;
- Self-motivated with the ability to work in a team and/or autonomously;
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Labor elevate tourism

TOURISM & Transport Forum ceo Margy Osmond has called for Queensland Premier Campbell Newman to match the promise of the Opposition by elevating tourism to a Senior Cabinet position if it retains government.

Labor Opposition leader Annastacia Palaszczuk announced her tourism policy for the state yesterday in Airlie Beach.

If she wins govt, Palaszczuk said she also would guarantee a \$40m boost in funding for Tourism & Events Queensland over 4 years.

Osmond labelled the Labor policy proposals as "sensible".

"Tourism is a critical economic driver for Queensland, contributing \$23 billion to gross state product each year.

"Elevating the tourism portfolio to a senior cabinet position just makes sense, but I would call on Labor to ensure tourism is highly visible and not simply rolled into another portfolio," she added.

DXB world's busiest

DUBAI International Airport has surpassed London Heathrow as the world's busiest airport, new data from Airports Council Int'l for year-ending Sep 2014 shows.

According to recently posted data, DXB welcomed 68.9m int'l pax during the period at a year-on-year growth rate of 7.8%.

Conversely, London dropped to second with 67.8m int'l pax at a growth rate of 2.1%.

However, the figures don't take domestic patronage into account which is expected to see LHR reclaim its spot at the top.

Irish tourists drink up

MORE than 1.2 million visitors passed through the doors of the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin during 2014, reaffirming it as the country's favourite attraction.

Tourism Ireland said the brewers of the famed stout were looking forward to another strong year of visitation in 2015 which will be improved upon the completion of new exhibitions and technology.

FCm GBTA addition

THE Global Business Travel Association Risk Committee and Risk Task Force has welcomed FCm Travel Solutions global director of risk management Charles Brossman to its ranks.

Brossman is the creator of the FCm global risk management program used by companies to carry out their duty of care needs.

DL expands at JFK T4

DELTA Air Lines has opened the latest US\$75,000 segment of its \$1.2 billion expansion project at New York City JFK Airport, with eleven new gates and 75,000sqf of new terminal space now open.

The expanded presence is allowing DL to streamline its regional operations by relocating its Delta Connection services from their former T2 home to T4.

Gourmet restaurants and a new flagship Sky Club are all located near to the new enclosed gates.

More racks on wheels

EUROPCAR has rushed to fit more of its SUV vehicles in South Australia with bike carriers after waves of travellers visiting for the Santos Tour Down Under quickly exhausted its inventory.

Bike carriers were sourced from around the country along with other cars fitted with the carriers and quickly transported to SA.

Rarotonga special

TRAVEL agents can obtain Air New Zealand's \$200 discount off fares to Rarotonga (TD 08 Jan) when booking flights via the GDS.

Cheap Philippine seats

CEBU Pacific Air has \$149 fares for travel over select dates from Sydney to Manila between 01 Jul-30 Nov if booked by today.

GUEST COMMENT

Insight returns to Egypt

John Boulding, Insight Vacations CEO



I HAD the great privilege of joining Insight Vacations' first tour back to Egypt last week. We have been operating in Egypt for over 30 years so it was with very heavy hearts that we suspended our tours in 2013.

The decision was made to resume operations following the presidential election late last year and I'm confident after what I experienced that it will soon be one of our top selling destinations once again.



I joined the Wonders of Egypt trip, a nine-day escorted journey that spends four nights in Cairo and four nights on a luxury cruise of the Nile. It features many of Insight's hallmarks – Signature Hotels in the best central

locations, Signature Experiences, private transfers, all transportation, scheduled flights and smaller group sizes. We use the *River Tosca* on two itineraries which is the best ship on the Nile, plus other excellent ships.

My first and overarching impression is just how pleased locals are to have international guests back. We were warmly welcomed not just by our team but shopkeepers and stall holders, waiters, hotel staff and workers at the great archaeological sites. I was quickly reminded how friendly and inviting the Egyptian people are.

Some observations throughout the trip were that the airport is still relatively quiet so expect a smooth and speedy arrival. Our local guides meet Insight guests before they reach passport control and take care of the formalities including arrival visa so there's no opportunity to feel confused. Arriving at our Cairo hotel, we were greeted with a genuine 'welcome to your new home in Cairo!' – a sentiment that we felt throughout the tour. Egypt is of course predominantly a Muslim country, though there was a Santa Claus in our hotel lobby marking Coptic Christmas the previous day, that drove home its secularity. Insight's Signature Hotel in Cairo is surrounded by cafes, bars and shops and feedback from our guests was that they felt comfortable stepping out exploring these on their own.

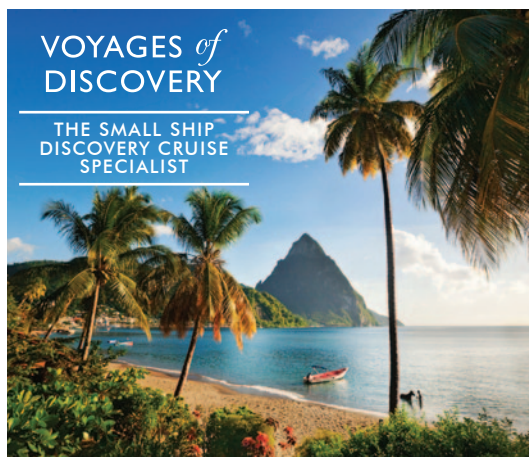
I was expecting to encounter an underlying tone of politics, though this wasn't the case. The last 12 months aren't being swept under the carpet; locals were very open and willing to share their thoughts on what has happened in their country, though there was definitely a sense of stability and positivity pervading. Conversations with many locals indicated a general consensus that Egypt is re-establishing its position as the leading stable nation in the region.

That said, I assure the industry and future Insight Vacations travellers to the region that we are closely monitoring the situation in Egypt and we've shown that we are able to swiftly deal with any issues should they emerge.

As part of this industry, we now have an amazing opportunity to support and help to regrow tourism in Egypt. Now is the time to recommend Egypt to your clients – it has never been better value and there is a supreme experience waiting for guests in what can only be described as one of the world's most amazing countries.

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Hainan Boston route

CHINESE carrier Hainan Airlines has applied to regulators in the US to commence a new Shanghai-Boston service, starting Q2 2015.

If granted approval by the US Dept of Transportation, HU says it will utilise Boeing 787 *Dreamliner* aircraft on a thrice weekly basis to the Massachusetts capital.

Hainan already services Boston from Beijing and has been given a green light by the Chinese Govt to begin a new route from PVG.

New rail for Beyond

TWO new rail experiences have been introduced to the Beyond Travel product range for 2015, led by a new group adventure on the famed Trans-Siberian journey.

The small group itinerary has been designed to be affordable and to "open up the market" in Australia, Beyond Travel marketing manager Bryce Crampton said.

Further new rail product added include a 15-day 'Jewels of Persia' deluxe private rail journey from Budapest to Tehran and a '1001 Nights' first class private trip.

Rove builds for Expo

A NEW brand of technologically advanced hotels designed for the World Expo 2020 in Dubai are expected to be up and running in time for the global extravaganza.

Dubbed Rove Hotels, the brand is an offshoot of the Emaar Hospitality Group and is aimed at being "modern, cosmopolitan, smart and cultural".

Rooms will be around 26sqm in size each and feature a 42-inch TV, media hub, designer mattresses and a modern bathroom, with nearly half of the rooms able to be interconnected.

Guests will be able to check-in using a smart kiosk, check out by 2pm and access concierge services through smartphones.

The first of ten Rove Hotels will open in the Za'abeel area later this year, with a total of ten to be placed in Al Wasl, Al Jafiliya, Port Saeed and Dubai Marina.

Cathay refresh kits

AUSTRALIAN skincare brands Aesop and Jurlique will continue to be included in Cathay Pacific's new First and Business Class passenger amenity packs.

Unveiled this week, the revamped kits include signature products such as hand & lip cream and will be available to CX passengers on long-haul flights.



Travel Specials

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au.

Voyages is turning on the charm for Valentine's Day 2015, releasing a new luxury package for loved-up couples. Priced from \$879ppts, included is three nights accom at Sails in the Desert, daily breakfast, a Sounds of Silence dinner, helicopter flight and much more. Phone 1300 134 044.

Learn about the dining habits of the UK Royals on a new tour of Scotland from **Back-Roads Touring**, escorted by former Royal chef Carolyn Robb. Currently available with a \$1,500 discount, it includes dinner onboard the Royal yacht Britannia. Guests will enjoy fine whisky, tour regal palaces and more, priced at \$4,195ppts if booked by 28 Feb. Phone 1300 100 410.

Single supplements have been removed on a series of Asian river cruises with Pandaw to mark the company's 20th birthday. Guests can save up to 25% on select voyages departing from Mar 2015 to Mar 2016, but you have to be quick - book by 31 Jan. Phone **Active Travel** on 1300 783 188.

Agents excited about \$1 deposit



PLATTERS of cupcakes decorated with chocolate \$1 gold coins were delivered to agents on the Sunshine Coast during recent sales calls by Intrepid Travel.

The sweet treats were to mark the tour operator's current tactical promotion of \$1 deposits on a huge range of adventures departing in 2015 (*TD* 06 Jan).

Intrepid is encouraging agents and travellers to take on a new challenge in 2015 and step out of their comfort zone, with trips able to be locked in for a buck.

The promotion is valid for bookings deposited by 15 Feb.

The team from Escape Travel Kawana are **pictured** above ready to tuck into their \$1 deposit cakes.

BNE traffic uptick

BRISBANE Airport last year recorded its strongest full year of growth since 2005, according to its latest results, showing 4.92m int'l pax used the facility in 2014.

The figure was a 5.5% jump on the prior year, while domestic passenger numbers were also up 1% to 17.08m for the full year.

TZ hits 4m milestone

SCOOT is celebrating after welcoming its four millionth pax onboard overnight on a flight from Singapore to Don Mueang.

The low-cost carrier has launched a special \$0 fare offer on the return leg for pax paying a one-way fare - only taxes and fuel levy is payable - book by 18 Jan.

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An exciting and rare business development opportunity has arisen with Show Group Enterprises developing the film and television production markets based at our Sydney Head Office.

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For a job description please visit www.showgroup.com.au

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This boutique family owned Cruise Company is looking for a talented group’s consultant to join their dynamic team based in central CBD. Arrange group tours on the world’s best cruise lines, including flights, pre/post arrangements & land logistics. Put your organisational skills to the test and be rewarded with a top salary package, fab famils, on-board inspections as well as ongoing development. If you have min 3 yrs exp, preferably in groups, strong GDS skills, jump ship today & come aboard today!

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MELBOURNE (INNER) – SALARY PACKAGE \$70K (OTE)

Sick of the same old boring itineraries to Bali and Gold Coast? We have an exciting NEW position available for an experienced retail consultant who is looking for something more. This well-known travel company is now looking for a group’s consultant to join their busy team. Moving away from face to face sales you will construct group itineraries for group travelers of 10 or more to overseas destinations for weddings, sport groups and more! Stop wasting your talents and make the move today! Call us today.

COME AND JOIN THE MAIN EVENT EVENT MANAGER

MELBOURNE – SALARY PACKAGE UP TO \$86K (DOE)

Ready to make your next move in the Events space? This great opportunity won’t be around for long. Having been in the industry over 30 years with offices Australia wide, this company will create innovative events on the largest of scales. As a Senior Event Manager, you will lead and manage the operations personnel to execute amazing events on a day to day basis. If you have at least 3 years event management / program management experience and are ready for a change we want to hear from you!

WHERE THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER RETAIL TRAVEL CONSULTANT GOLD COAST – TOP SALARY PACKAGE

Have you got experience in booking high end leisure travel?

This leading agency is looking for a first class travel consultant to come and join their dynamic team as an International consultant looking after their high end clients, booking a variety of packages and exotic destinations. Every day will be a new challenge. A minimum 2 years experience, GDS experience plus strong sales and customer service skills a must. Enjoy a fantastic office location, strong salary package and incentives. Sound good? Apply now!

PAVE YOUR WAY TRAVEL CONSULTANTS

BRISBANE CBD – UP TO \$45K PKG + \$\$ BONUSES

Here’s your chance to join a growing and innovative company that is really going places. Forgot about chasing up missing passport details, docs and admin as you’ll have a support team there to handle it all for you. All you need to worry about is consulting and planning the itinerary of your clients dream. Plus you’ll be rewarded with a strong base salary + \$\$ incentives, free cruises and a real work/life balance. All you need is a min 2 years travel consulting experience, proven sales skills and a positive attitude.