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Thursday 20th October 2016

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Govt travel insurance push

AUSTRALIA'S Embassy in Thailand was the busiest consular post around the world utilised by Aussies in trouble when travelling abroad in 2015/16, a government study has found.

According to the latest *Consular State of Play* report, cases of assistance in Thailand jumped 25%, from 667 to 836, while cases were also higher in the USA (+19% to 770), Indonesia (+26% to 688) and Philippines (+11%).

Cases in Italy dropped 11%, falling from 609 to 542.

Overseas hospitalisation cases jumped 15% year-on-year to 1,667 incidents in 2015/16, most of which were in Thailand.

Cases of arrest skyrocketed to 1,551, up 23%, with the US by far the most likely location for Aussies to get in trouble with the law, rising from 169 to 262 cases.

The number of Australians that

needed to be repatriated jumped from 61 in 2014/15 to 76.

Despite spikes in a number of fields, the total number of cases of assistance in 2015/16 dropped slightly, from 15,824 to 15,740.

The Consular State of Play study - designed for use by travel agents - highlighted that travel insurance "should be one of the first things on anyone's list".

It found 31% of travellers were willing to travel uninsured and 27% were not covered, or were not sure if they were covered, for medical expenses, while just 8% who travelled abroad did so without an insurance policy.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop yesterday said: "Australians should be fully prepared for overseas travel and take responsibility for individual travel decisions".

"This includes obtaining comprehensive insurance, being aware of insurance policy conditions and visiting Smartraveller to understand advice for destinations, including the laws of those countries."

To view the report, [CLICK HERE](#).

Today's issue of TD

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

- Albatross Tours
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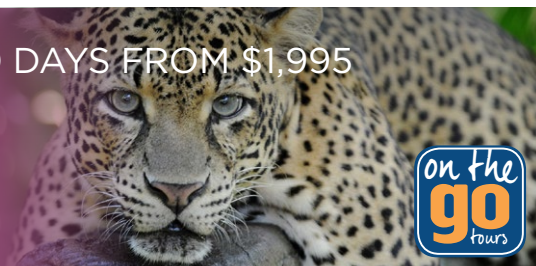
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THAI delay MEL A350

THAI Airways has pushed back its planned Airbus A350 service on the Bangkok-Melbourne route from 30 Oct until 01 Dec.

TG will utilise the A350 on select flights to Singapore, Chiang Mai & Dubai, ex BKK, from 01 to 30 Nov.

You'd be barking mad to miss out on Zurich.
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FlyBuys, Velocity p'ship

FLYBUYS and Velocity Frequent Flyer have entered into a new partnership which unlocks a host of new ways for Virgin Australia frequent flyers to earn points.

Effective immediately, flybuys can be transferred into Velocity Frequent Flyer Points and Velocity Frequent Flyer Status Credits can be earned when shopping at Coles, Coles Online, Liquorland or First Choice Liquor stores.

GM of flybuys Adam Story said the pact was particularly beneficial as it has more partners than any other Australian supermarket loyalty program.

Jetstar on Hahn Air

QANTAS owned Jetstar Group has been confirmed as a new interline partner available on the HR-169 ticket of Hahn Air.

So far this year, Hahn Air has added 40 new carriers into its global network of over 300 air, rail and shuttle partners.

Other new interline airline deals have been struck with Air Corsica, CityJet, Blue Air, FlyOne, People's Viennaline and Myanmar National Airlines.

Another 20 airlines that do not have a GDS presence are also able to be ticketed by agents through Hahn Air under the H1 and 5W codes, including Borajet Airlines, JetAir, T'way Airlines, SpiceJet and others.

See www.hahnair.com.

"It's not just by shopping for groceries at Coles [members can earn points], but also by paying for everyday expenses such as fuel, clothing, homewares, energy bills, car, home and health insurance and gym memberships with one of our partners, and on all spending on a Coles or NAB flybuys credit card," Story said.

Velocity Frequent Flyer ceo Karl Schuster he was "delighted" by the pact which offers "the most compelling proposition between an Australian frequent flyer program & a supermarket group".

Every dollar spent earns flybuys members one point but to celebrate the launch, card-carriers can receive 15% bonus Velocity Points when transferring flybuys points into Velocity Frequent Flyer Points.

The deal follows the recent renewal of Qantas' partnership with Woolworths (**TD** 22 Aug).

SQ A380 upgrade

SINGAPORE Airlines ceo Goh Choon Phong has revealed that five new Airbus A380s to be delivered to the carrier in the second half of 2017 will feature an upgraded cabin product.

Although specific details were not outlined for the superjumbo, Goh indicated the new A380s would have "the latest state-of-the-art cabins".

SQ currently operates a fleet of 19 of the double-decker aircraft.

Bali Tours incentive

AGENTS making new air & land bookings to Bali, Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia through Bali Tours between 17-31 Oct will receive a \$25 Coles Myer Gift Card for every adult passenger.

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AAA: more rules for Airbnb

PROPOSED changes to the regulation of short-term letting in New South Wales could pose as a safety issue for domestic and international visitors, warns Accommodation Association of Australia ceo Richard Munro.

His concerns follow an 18-month NSW parliamentary inquiry which could see a single set of statewide rules passed for home owners using house-sharing sites like Airbnb.

One such recommendation published in a report yesterday

states that private homeowners would not need permission to rent out their homes to short term guests.

Munro disagrees with the recommendation, believing instead that residential premises operating as "quasi hotels" should be held to the same standards as traditional accommodation providers and conform to disability access regulations and other measures such as building and fire safety requirements.

"There must be a level-playing field for these 'quasi-hotels' and traditional tourism accommodation businesses," remarked Munro.

"Quasi-hotels are operating in New South Wales, including in Sydney's northern suburbs, which is a worrying, emerging trend and such operations will continue to flourish unless there is a regulatory clamp-down."

EagleRider webinar

ASIA Pacific Travel Marketing Service will host a webinar on EagleRider Motorcycle Rentals & Tours at 9:30am (AEDST) 27 Oct.

Topics covered will include selling points, current specials and product updates for 2016/17. To register, **CLICK HERE**.

Beijing airfare war

AN AIRFARE war on flights to Beijing has broken out between Qantas & Cathay Pacific Airways.

QF's bargain return Economy class fare of \$588 on its non-stop SYD-PEK service (**TD** yesterday) has been closely matched by CX, which has released a \$605 fare to Beijing, flying via Hong Kong.

Cathay Pacific's 'Asia on Sale' promo spans 58 destinations and is valid over wider travel dates, including 01 Nov-09 Dec and between 06 Feb-31 Aug, when booked by 11 Nov.

Ex Melbourne, CX's Economy class fares to Beijing leads in at \$591 - www.cathaypacific.com.au.

Xiamen LAX move

CHINESE carrier Xiamen Airlines has lodged an application with US transport regulators, seeking approval to commence Boeing 787 *Dreamliner* services between Xiamen and Los Angeles, starting Jun next year.



Window Seat

TOWERING over LEGOLAND Dubai's MINILAND at 17 metres tall is the attraction's most impressive replica structure yet, the Burj Khalifa.

The record-breaking build consists of 439,000 LEGO bricks, weighs more than a ton and took over 5,000 hours to build.

Visitors will be able to visit the attraction when LEGOLAND Dubai opens on 31 Oct.



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Thursday 20th October 2016

Renewed Raffles to expand



AN EXTENSIVE renovation of Singapore's landmark Raffles Hotel (**TD** 12 Oct) is likely to be backed with further expansion of the Raffles brand internationally.

In Sydney to outline plans for the iconic hotel, Raffles Hotel Singapore gm Simon Hirst said works between Jan 2017 and mid-2018 would enhance the

prestige and charm of the hotel.

Accor vp comms Asia Pacific Gaynor Reid (**pictured** left with Hirst and hotel director of sales and marketing Cheryl Ong) said the group's Jul acquisition of the Raffles brand had prompted strong investment interest from hotel owners, creating potential for new properties in the future.

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Food Focus for Coast

VISIT Sunshine Coast has put a focus on food tourism, announcing a new mobile food trail to promote its local produce.

The region hosted a networking event for 100 industry figures in Mooloolaba yesterday, held jointly with Tourism & Events Qld.

Visit Sunshine Coast ceo Simon Latchford said the food trail was close to being finalised and would showcase food producers, breweries, wineries, cooking schools and restaurants.

"At various times, the Sunshine Coast has been one of the state's major sugar cane producers... and today, the region's farmers can produce just about anything from ginger and herbs through to snails, camel milk and feijoas," Latchford said.

Qld Tourism Minister Kate Jones said the trail would help visitors plan and move through the region, "tasting, staying and spending as they go."

Cover-More shares

COVER-MORE Group Ltd has raised \$11.7m at \$1.20 per new share through its retail entitlement offer completed this week, in addition to \$61.7m from its institutional entitlement offer, the insurer announced in a statement to shareholders today.

New shares under the retail offer will be issued next Mon and will trade on the ASX on a normal basis from Tue.

Canada visitors up

CANADA'S arrivals grew rapidly in Aug, up 18% over the same month last year.

Destination Canada's latest figures show arrivals from Australia were also up 18%, to 44,000 pax during the month.

Canada is having a strong year, with arrivals from Australia up 13% to 221,570 in the first eight months of 2016, in line with 13% growth from all int'l markets.

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DOT clamps down on airlines

THE US Government is assessing if travel agents in America should be required to meet a minimum customer service standard when selling airfares to consumers.

Yesterday, the US Department of Transportation (DOT) announced a raft of actions aimed at enhancing protection for air travellers and increasing competition between airlines.

"The actions are a result of the Department's continued commitment to ensuring that passengers are treated fairly by the airline industry," the DOT said.

Secretary Anthony Foxx said the initiative was about providing pax with "clear and complete" info on airlines people choose to fly with, and to "expect fair and reasonable treatment when they fly".

Changes announced will include a need for airlines to refund pax any baggage fees charged when luggage is substantially delayed.

Airlines that account for 0.5% of US domestic scheduled services will be required to report on-time performance, oversales and mishandled luggage from 01 Jan, double the current level, and US airlines will also need to report data for flights operated by domestic codeshare partners.

Airlines and online ticket agents will also be prohibited from favouring options for certain airlines, without disclosing their bias, the new rulings stipulate.

DOT is also exploring a rule for airlines and ticketing agents to

provide customers with prices for commonly added ancillary services (such as checked baggage) at all points of sale.

Further, online travel companies will have greater access to airline fare types as DOT investigates "potentially unfair business practices".

"Currently, some airlines prevent online travel sites from listing all fare and flight options.

"DOT will be looking into whether that kind of restriction is an unfair practice that makes it harder for travellers to find the most affordable and convenient flights that match their needs".

The authority said in coming months it will finalise additional rules requiring travel agents to provide passengers the ability to cancel a reservation within 24hrs and receive a "prompt response", to ensure they are treated fairly.

Collette Compass

COLLETTE has unveiled a new travel app for customers, designed to enhance the visitor experience.

The Collette Compass App contains a traveller's full itinerary, from the chauffeur collection, through the entire journey and until they return home.

Users can customise content to include trips, meals and visits to sites in the existing journey.

The app also features detailed maps, information about on-tour excursions, attractions and more.



Journey by rail to the top of the world. Check it out in the October issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK HERE to read **travelBulletin**

Quest Mounts Bay opening



A FANCY soiree was held at the Quest Mounts Bay Road in Perth this week in celebration of the official opening of the new Quest Apartment Hotels property.

Esteemed guests included world cycling champion Michael Freiberg and Minister for Planning Donna Faragher.

"The Perth and wider WA market is of huge importance to Quest's growth strategy, so we add 790 rooms to the local market over the next two years," said David Ridgeway, gm operations, Quest at the opening.

Pictured are David Ridgeway, gm, Quest; Minister Donna Faragher and Don Goode, franchisee.

CAN male-only lanes

GUANGZHOU Baiyun International Airport has introduced special security lanes for male passengers only.

The new male-only lanes follow the Sep debut of women-only aisles at CAN which are managed by female security guards only.

Marriott Int'l Athens

MARRIOTT International will return to Athens following the announcement of a new property, Athens Marriott Hotel.

Earmarked to open from 2018, the property will feature 366-rooms, pool, two restaurants, meeting spaces and more.



CELEBRATE EMIRATES A380 TO CHRISTCHURCH

This week, Travel Daily, Emirates and Christchurch Airport are offering you the unique opportunity to fly on the inaugural Emirates A380 flight from Sydney to Christchurch departing on 31 Oct 2016 in business class.

From Private Suites and Shower Spas in First Class, to an onboard bar and flat-bed seats in Business Class, to free inflight Wi-Fi throughout the aircraft, the Emirates A380 is as close as it comes to flying in your own private jet. Once you arrive in Christchurch, spend your day sightseeing the best the South Island has to offer and enjoy a lunch hosted by Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism.

Every day this week, one lucky winner will be chosen. For your chance, simply answer today's question and tell us in 25 words or less "Why you would love to fly on the Emirates A380". Send your answers to

emirates@traveldaily.com.au

From 31 Oct 2016 how many A380 flights a day will Emirates operate into New Zealand?

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Industry Appointments

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Eclipse Travel has announced two new staff appointments: **Karen O'Dwyer** is joining as Adventure Travel Consultant while **Stephen Lanfranco** has been promoted to Business Development Manager. O'Dwyer, a travel industry veteran, was most recently the Adventure Travel Consultant for Back Track Adventures. Lanfranco is moving up from his previous position as Eclipse Travel's Sales Team Leader

Former Disney Executive **Andrew Kam** has been hired as the Vice President of **Wanda Culture Group**. His new role will see him head up the expansion of the group's theme park division.

Wyndham Vacation Resorts Asia Pacific has appointed **Lara Korb** as the new Hotel Manager at Wyndham Vacation Resorts Perth. She comes to the role with close to ten years' management experience in the Canadian hospitality industry.

President and CEO of Sabre Corporation **Tom Klein** is the new Chairman of the Board for **Brand USA**. Klein succeeds Marriott International CEO and president Arne Sorenson who served as Chair from Jan 2015.

Choice Hotels Asia-Pacific welcomes **Liz Galea** as its new Development Manager. She will be responsible for helping Choice Hotels add new properties to its growing portfolio with a special focus on New South Wales, Victoria, ACT, Tasmania and New Zealand.

Former Managing Director, Australia & New Zealand of SilverNeedle Hospitality, **Cameron Stewart** joins Quest Apartment Hotels as the company's new **Director Group Operations**.

Women-only touring

WORLD Expeditions has launched a collection of women-only travel adventures in response to a growing number of females seeking adventure experiences in a "safe and supportive environment".

"We've taken this demand for active adventure travel for women to the next level, offering specially-crafted small group itineraries for women only in some of the world's most exciting, natural destinations," company ceo, Sue Badyari, said.

Some of the new 21 small-group adventures include: the seven-day Women's Salcantay Trek & Machu Picchu trip priced from \$2,080pp, the 17-day Women's Everest Base Camp, Kala Pattar journey starting at \$2,980pp and the Women's Vietnam Charity Challenge trekking through the local villages of Northern Vietnam starting at \$1,990 per person.

CLICK HERE for more details.

CASA Note7 advisory

THE Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) has finally followed the Federal Aviation Administration's lead (**TD 12** Oct) in issuing a ruling that air travellers must not carry the troubled Samsung Galaxy Note7 devices on board their flight.

Under Australian aviation dangerous goods safety regulations the lithium batteries found inside the Note7s have been identified by the manufacturer as "having the potential to produce dangerous heat, fire or short circuits".

CASA advises passengers with a Note7 should contact Samsung prior to travelling.

Eurowings ups LIS

EUROWINGS will be increasing its Stuttgart to Lisbon route from four to six flights weekly, effective 08 Apr, with the low-cost carrier utilising Airbus A320s.

SYD KK's MU KMG

CHINA Eastern Airlines' new direct route from Kunming to Sydney will launch next month.

The thrice-weekly service on 234-seat Airbus A330-200 is expected to further grow tourism in Sydney while also providing a new gateway destination for Aussies travelling to China.

"This marks a new route for Sydney Airport and reinforces our position as the world's leading airport for Chinese long haul airlines, with 13 routes between Sydney and mainland China," Sydney Airport md and ceo Kerrie Mather said.

OpenTables passport

ONLINE restaurant booking platform OpenTable has launched a new language booking function to help Australians in non-English speaking countries.

Aussie diners can now view menus, read and submit restaurant reviews and find key information in English at more than 38,000 restaurants across more than 20 countries.

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Ryanair check-in

RYANAIR has announced that from 01 Nov it will be charging passengers £6 (AU\$9.55) for online check-ins made more than four days before a flight.

Under the old rules, pax with unreserved seats could check-in free a week before flights.

The low-cost carrier claims the move is designed to allow those who pay for an allocated seat an improved chance of getting the seat of their choice.

Pan Pac incentive

MEETING planners who spend more than \$5,000 on a meeting at any of the Pan Pacific Group's Oceania hotels will receive a complimentary stay in a suite at any participating Pan Pacific Hotel or PARKROYAL Hotel globally.

CLICK HERE for full details.



This month, *Travel Daily* and Vanuatu Tourism Office, Air Vanuatu and Tamanu on the Beach are giving readers the chance to win a trip to Vanuatu including:

- Five (5) nights run of house accommodation at the newly reopened Tamanu on the Beach including daily a-la-carte breakfast
- Return transfers courtesy of Tamanu on the Beach
- Two complimentary return economy class tickets on Air Vanuatu from Sydney or Brisbane to Port Vila.



To win, answer each daily question correctly and have the most creative final answer. Send your entries to vanuatucomp@traveldaily.com.au

13. What is the name of the volcano on Tanna?

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Publisher/Editor in Chief: Bruce Piper **Managing Editor:** Jon Murrie **Editor:** Guy Dundas

Contributors: Jasmine O'Donoghue, Bonnie Tai, Nathalie Craig, Jenny Piper - info@traveldaily.com.au

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan and Lisa Martin - advertising@traveldaily.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper - accounts@traveldaily.com.au

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