



Venture Dubai brox

VENTURE Holidays has beefed up its recently released Middle East program, adding content in Doha, Qatar for the first time.

The program's core product is centred on Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Oman, and has been expanded to include new hotels, theme park passes (Legoland and Bollywood), attractions (Dubai Eye) and sightseeing options.

In Oman, Venture has added some extended sightseeing day trips from Muscat, including a Wonders & Luxury tour which incorporates a stay in the Desert Night Camp in the Wahiba Sands desert - view the guide [HERE](#).

Automated border plans

THE Department of Immigration & Border Protection (DIBP) has put the call out for a Service Provider to facilitate and implement a new automated processing solution through the Australian border protection process.

A Request for Tender (RFT) document lodged on AusTender states it is seeking an automated processing solution to support the concept of a "seamless traveller" movement, to be adopted as early as May.

There are three solutions sought under the flagged services - 1) Replacing Int'l Passenger Cards

(IPCs) with a solution that collects data and passes it onto the DIBP; 2) An Automated Border Control solution that eliminates the need for physical tickets "and have the ability to process travellers using 'contactless' technology" which will remove the need for some travellers to present a passport, and; 3) A solution to replace the manual triage process at the Exit Marshall Point, removing the reliance on the IPC card or tickets being used as a message stick.

The current RFT is to provide a pilot program for Solution 2, which will be trialled at Canberra Airport before rolling out to nine other int'l gateways including Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Darwin.

As part of the reforms, the dept said it's exploring technological innovation and enhanced service delivery to support traveller numbers which are "growing significantly & within the next four years are expected to increase".

DIBP said the experience it had gained over the last eight years with current Arrivals and Departures solutions would enable it to "improve and extend self-processing facilities to travellers arriving into Australia.

"A key objective is to work towards 90% of travellers presenting to an automated border control processing point by 2020."

Tender submissions are open until 31 Jan.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has three pages of news and photos.

Collette sales surge

US-HEADQUARTERED touring company Collette is reporting "excellent results" during the first week of its New Year global sale.

Launched on 28 Dec & running until 09 Jan, the promotion offers 15% off more than 120 tours across the globe.

The deal provides a discount of \$1,185 per person off Collette's Complete European Journey, or \$1,845pp off the Complete South America itinerary.

"Agents are encouraged to get in quick, with space on key travel dates filling up fast," Collette's head of marketing Australia, James Hewlett told *Travel Daily*.

Aquis Surfers Paradise move



AS HONG Kong-based tycoon Tony Fung continues to evaluate the future of a planned integrated casino resort at Yorkeys Knob near Cairns, the businessman has revealed his ongoing intention to invest in Queensland.

Fung's local business arm Aquis Australia has confirmed plans for a new \$440 million, 580-room and suite luxury resort in Surfers Paradise at the site of the current Pacific Point apartment complex on Main Beach Parade.

Fung said the property, the only new, large-scale hotel currently planned for south-east Queensland, would be the first "truly six-star beachfront hotel in Australia", targeting "super luxe" travellers from around the world.

"Our goal was to create a hotel that would become a destination in itself, something

that is instantly recognisable and synonymous with luxury."

"We have been very vocal in our belief that the Gold Coast has the potential to expand into exciting new markets and attract a new generation of luxury traveller if it can provide accommodation and facilities that match and exceed anything else the world has to offer," Fung stated.

He added that the fact the project (**pictured centre**) was not linked to a casino would give the new hotel a "unique position".

"Not all new visitors to Queensland will want to stay in a casino. Our project's unique beachfront location will make the Gold Coast's beautiful beaches the star attraction, not pokies."

A development application has been lodged, with construction slated to commence next year.

KE 747-81's to Sydney

SYDNEY has been earmarked as a new destination for Korean Air's behemoth Boeing 747-8 Intercontinental aircraft.

According to GDS displays, KE will deploy the 368-seat jet on its daily Seoul Incheon-Sydney route from 01 Sep, replacing the Airbus A330-300 currently utilised.

NCL bonus credit

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line is offering a bonus onboard credit of up to US\$500, in addition to its Free at Sea promotion, for bookings made by 06 Jan.

More info at www.ncl.com.

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Kazakhstan lifts visa requirements

KAZAKHSTAN has removed visa requirements for citizens of the EU and OECD countries as well as Monaco, the UAE and Singapore for travel up to 30 days.

The measure was introduced in a bid to promote a favourable investment climate and develop the country's tourism potential.

In a statement, the country's ministry said "the move would open up additional opportunities to the business community for cooperation with the outside world and facilitate international contacts in different spheres".

Neighbouring Uzbekistan adopted a similar scheme, announcing in Dec that it would roll back its visa requirements for 15 countries.

Norfolk Island 'disaster'

NORFOLK Island's tourism industry has warned of "economic and social disaster" in the wake of Air New Zealand's decision to abandon services from Auckland (**TD** 16 Dec).

The Norfolk Island Accommodation and Tourism Association (ATA) blamed the Australian Government and has demanded support for additional carriers to serve the territory.

President of the ATA Rael Donde said the island's regional council was insolvent and its private sector was "on the verge of economic collapse".

He called on Federal Minister responsible for the island, Fiona Nash, to approve more adequate

tourism funding and remove an "anti-competitive" \$500,000 bond requirement for new airlines.

"Without adequate tourism promotion funding, there will be grave economic and social consequences for everyone living on Norfolk Island," Donde said.

Air New Zealand's cut to services would reduce visitor arrivals from 26,000 to less than 20,000 a year, he predicted, causing a "catastrophic contraction of the economy."

He said govt support was needed for Norfolk Island Airlines to introduce new services.

Wu offers free tours

IN CELEBRATION of the upcoming Chinese New Year, Wendy Wu Tours will reward the first 30 agents to make five bookings with the tour operator a free trip to China.

Reservations must be made between 01 Jan and 31 Mar, and agents need to have completed 'Wuniversity' to qualify.

Up for the challenge? email agents@wendywutours.com.au to claim a spot.

IAG mulls new ops

INTERNATIONAL Airlines Group (IAG) is looking to set up what it describes as a new "next-generation, long-haul operation" at Barcelona's El Prat Airport from Jun this year.

It is unclear whether IAG will set up a new airline or take advantage of existing resources from its carriers, however, the company said in a statement the new operation would "add another dimension to IAG and complement the other airlines in the group".

Driven by increased demand for flights via El Prat, suggested initial destinations include Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile and Havana.

Tassie salmon stoush

WOTIF founder Graeme Wood has become embroiled in a political clash in Tasmania after being linked to a campaign against plans for a salmon farm.

The millionaire property owner is reportedly behind a television and Facebook advertising campaign objecting to a proposed aquaculture project at Okehampton Bay, on Tasmania's east coast.

Local Liberal MP Guy Barnett has criticised Wood's involvement in the campaign, saying it was not politically neutral.

Ads against the salmon farm compare it to defecating in the bay, close to where Wood plans a Spring Mill Bay hotel project.

Odyssey 2017 options

ODYSSEY Travel has released a series of pre-guaranteed tours for this year.

New itineraries include Hidden Southern Italy, Small Group of Ireland, Normandy and Brittany, Following Caravaggio, Wagner Ring Cycle, Journey through Mongolia and Russia, Southern Africa and more.

The new introductions become guaranteed to operate once three people place a deposit.

For more info on departures, visit www.odysseytraveller.com.

Window Seat

A YOUNG girl's teddy bear which was accidentally left behind at Russia's Koltsovo International Airport went on an adventure of his own.

When the girl realised her little bear had missed the flight, her mother wrote to the airport asking to them to find the toy and to look after him while they were away on their holiday.

The airport took to its Facebook page to share pictures of the teddy (one is **pictured** below) riding in a toy plane, eating cake in his high chair, napping and watching the planes land.



New QR sleepwear

QATAR Airways has launched a new partnership with The White Company to provide luxury sleepwear (**pictured** below) to its First and Business class pax.



Men's and women's pyjamas are both made of 100% cotton and come with a matching pair of cotton slippers.

The PJs have already launched in First class on board Airbus A380 flights to London, Bangkok, Paris, Sydney and Guangzhou while they will debut in Business class early this year.

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an initiative to help drive more female leaders in our industry

Vancouver meets New York

AIR CANADA



TRAVEL consultant Tara Kane of Escape Travel in Caloundra, Queensland has blended together the iconic city skylines of Vancouver and New York in her clever entry (pictured above) into Air Canada's special Christmas competition.

We've enjoyed viewing all your entries but now the hard job of

picking which lucky reader will win two return Economy class tickets to New York via Vancouver is in the hands of Air Canada.

The announcement is expected shortly so keep your eyes peeled!

Thank you to each and every one of you who has made such an incredible effort to enter this popular competition.

G Adventures sale

G ADVENTURES is slashing \$150 off all trips valued at \$1,000 or more for the month of Jan.

The sale is valid for tours departing before 31 Jul 2017.

Travel agents can book the trips using the promo code 17GA150ADV01AUD.

AF-KLM trims debts

AIR France-KLM has sold 49.99% of catering firm Servair to HNA Group while also gaining €201 million by selling a 1.13% stake in Amadeus.

The carrier said the transactions were about "refocusing on core business" and debt reduction.

UA & HRG for ASX Regatta



UNITED Airlines & global travel management company HRG recently treated its corporate Stocklands team to a day on a luxury yacht on Sydney Harbour.

The team also had the opportunity to compete with 50 other yachts racing around the harbour for The ASX Financial

and Media Markets Regatta sailing regatta which raises money for key charities.

Pictured above are Louie Lam, Angel Marfuru, Nell Laime, Belinda Davidson, Genevieve Gittins, Sam Leet, David Lorimer, Verena Billett, Kirill Litovchenko, Karina Batnes and Andy Thiss.

Sandals St Lucia

SANDALS Resorts International has announced plans for a 350-room resort on Saint Lucia in the Eastern Caribbean with construction to start in H1.


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Accommodation Updates

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



Wyndham Resort Torquay located along the Great Ocean Road in Victoria has unveiled its new Breathe Spa from OnTrack Retreats. The 107-room day spa offers relaxation and rejuvenation treatments, detox and restoration, body wraps, facials, remedial

massage and a range of waxing options.



The 575-rooms at Casino Tower **Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas** have been renovated as part of a \$13 million hotel upgrade. The rooms now have a more contemporary look in shades of gray, white and plum. New amenities include 55-inch HD

TVs and conveniently located USB ports. The bathrooms are now larger with marble flooring and refreshed artworks.



Boutique hotel **Sudamala Suites & Villas, Sanur**, Bali has revamped its pool side Java-style 'joglo' pavilion into open-air Thai restaurant Aroy Thai Cafe & Lounge. The restaurant serves light, Thai-inspired cuisine broken up into four easy categories: bites

and salads, soups, mains and desserts.

Ritz-Carlton SFO sold

THE landmark Ritz-Carlton, San Francisco has been acquired by real estate investment trust firm Carey Watermark Investors 2.

Located in the Nob Hill district on the famed California Street cable car line, the 336-room property completed a US\$20m renovation in 2014.

Dubai Harbour plan

NEW waterfront destination, Dubai Harbour will be completed in phases over the next four years by developer Meraas.

It will include a 1,400-berth marina, a shopping mall covering 3.5 million square feet, and the Dubai Lighthouse which feature a luxury hotel and an observation deck with 360 degree views.

S Africa entry change

SOUTH Africa has adopted new entry requirements for minors under the age of 18 born in the country who have a current valid South African passport.

Effective immediately, people under 18 will no longer require birth certificates which contain parental details in order to enter South Africa.

SU plots JFK 3rd daily

RUSSIAN carrier Aeroflot plans to add a third daily service between Moscow Sheremetyevo and New York JFK from 01 Jun to 28 Oct, according to a flight schedule update by the airline.

Aeroflot intends on operating Airbus A330-300s on the new services, SU122/123.

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Produced each weekday since 1994, the newsletter is first with the latest industry news and is available by paid subscription to people within the travel industry - sign up at www.traveldaily.com.au.

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Part of **Business Publishing Group**.

     