

One&Only offer

EMIRATES One&Only Wolgan Valley is offering 20% savings on bookings of three or more villas.

Special rates start at \$796 per person per evening and include ultra-luxury accommodation, dining, wine and more.

See **page seven** for details.

FC profit hits new record

FLIGHT Centre has revealed a record underlying pre-tax profit of \$384.7m, despite sluggish growth in Australia (**TD** breaking news).

In its 2017/18 results announced this morning, Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG) confirmed a profit near the top of its earlier guidance range, with 16.8% growth on last year and a 2% advance on its previous record set in 2013/14.

The group revealed a record total transaction value (TTV) of \$21.8 billion - up 8.5% on last year - with almost half (49%) of its TTV now generated by operations outside of Australia.

"The company's record results highlight its business model's strength, its ongoing relevance to customers globally and its increasing diversity," said FCTG md Graham Turner.

"The Americas and EMEA businesses performed particularly well and together generated a

\$151 million profit, which more than doubled their combined results from just two years ago."

However in Aust/NZ, TTV grew by 4% to reach \$12.3 billion, a softer level of growth than normal due to GDS and network changes, which have included the merger of Escape Travel and Cruiseabout into the Flight Centre and Travel Associates brands.

Underlying profit before tax in Aust/NZ was \$250 million, down 4% on last year, and was adjusted to exclude non-recurring items including \$13.3 million relating to Flight Centre's loss in the Federal Court over airfare price fixing allegations (**TD** 04 Apr).

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news and photos, plus full pages from:

- One&Only Wolgan Valley
- AA Appointments jobs
- Shandong Tourism

Travel Shandong

SHANDONG Tourism is today promoting its partnership with tour wholesaler and destination management company Expedition Exclusive.

The company offers tours which explore China "like a local".

For more, see **page nine**.

CRUISE DEAL OF THE MONTH



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Upgrade for lounges

QANTAS will embark on a multi-million dollar extension of its lounge upgrade program, with new works planned in Auckland, Brisbane, Hobart, Sydney, Tamworth and Tokyo.

The flagship SYD Int'l First lounge will be refreshed and expanded by 15%, the BNE Int'l Lounge will be enlarged to cater for an additional 100 guests, while the AKL First and Business lounges will be combined.

QF's record \$1.6b profit

QANTAS has revealed the best financial result of its 98-year history, with its underlying profit before tax up 14% to \$1.6 billion in 2017/18 (**TD** breaking news).

The result is 5% higher than its previous record of \$1.53 billion set in 2015/16, and comes amid strong demand in the domestic arena - though with the looming prospect of higher fuel prices.

Shareholders will reap a windfall of up to \$500 million, with the airline to pay a fully franked dividend of 10c per share on 10 Oct and plans for a market buy-back of up to \$332 million.

Qantas group ceo Alan Joyce said the record profit reflected a strong market as well as the benefits of ongoing work to improve the business.

"These numbers show a company that's delivering across the board," Joyce said.

"We're seeing healthy demand across key sectors matched with improving levels of capacity discipline," he said.

Qantas achieved total revenues of more than \$17 billion in the year to 30 Jun, an increase of 6%

on the previous year.

Its underlying earnings (EBIT) were \$1.789 billion, a 12% increase on last year.

Qantas Domestic showed the strongest growth, with record earnings of \$768 million, an increase of 19.1%.

Qantas International earnings were up 6.7% to \$399 million, with Joyce saying customers had "given their stamp of approval" to new international initiatives including new direct Perth-London services and the revived Singapore hub.

The Jetstar Group also set records, with earnings of \$461 million, up 10.6%.

The loyalty business performed well too, with record earnings of \$372 million.

As part of its annual results announcement, Qantas revealed it will create a second pilot training academy to help address worldwide crew shortages.

Both facilities will be in regional Australia with locations to be announced in coming weeks.

The first will open next year (**TD** 22 Feb) and the second in 2020.

HA travel waivers

HAWAIIAN Airlines has announced waivers for travel until 26 Aug as Hurricane Lane bears down on the islands of Hawaii.

Flights to, from and within Hawaii can be changed once without penalty provided the ticket was issued on or before Tue.

Fare differences will also be waived for flights rebooked before 09 Sep, after which passengers will need to pay any applicable fare difference.



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AFTA Long goodbye

AFTA has confirmed the departure of Dean Long, who has headed its public policy and strategic partnerships since 2014.

CEO Jayson Westbury said Long had been an "unbelievable asset", with key activities including driving the establishment of the ACS chargeback scheme.

He is taking a new role in the payments industry and AFTA will replace him with a manager - public & industry policy.

Australia key to Air NZ result

AIR New Zealand this morning reported a NZ\$540 million pre-tax profit result for the year to 30 Jun - its second best ever - with Australia a "standout performer" in driving the performance, according to NZ chief commercial officer, Cam Wallace.

Speaking to **TD** this morning, Wallace said both short- and long-haul markets continued to be well supported by the trade.

The strong result will see a bonus of up to NZ\$1,800 each paid to about 8,500 NZ permanent employees not participating in a short-term incentive program.

The carrier had record operating revenue of NZ\$5.5 billion, up 7.4%, and achieved its earnings guidance despite a "fuel price headwind" which added more than \$130 million to costs.

Ongoing investments will see the upcoming launch of new non-stop services to Chicago and Taipei plus additional Brisbane flights from Wellington and Queenstown, while the airline is also expecting to start taking delivery of 10 Airbus A320/321neo aircraft which will provide "continued growth and cost benefits to the Tasman and Pacific Islands network".

NZ also announced it would lease three Boeing 777s to deliver greater schedule reliability as it continues to work through the maintenance requirements on its 787s relating to the global Rolls-Royce Trent 1000 engine issues.

The changes will free up two widebody aircraft and allow retiming of flights to Buenos Aires and Tokyo Haneda.

Another key development for

Air NZ is the upcoming cessation of its trans-Tasman alliance with Virgin Australia, which terminates on 28 Oct, and the subsequent launch of the airline's new codeshare deal with Qantas.

Wallace said he was excited about the opportunity to "compete more aggressively on the Tasman with a deeper schedule, new routes, updated planes and a fantastic codeshare connecting partner who will provide us with the best product and most comprehensive access to the Australian domestic market".

Trivago hit by ACCC

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has launched Federal Court action against Trivago, accusing it of misleading TV advertising.

The corporate watchdog alleges that since at least Dec 2013, Trivago has presented its website as "an impartial and objective price comparison service" that would help consumers find the cheapest hotel prices.

Instead, the ACCC says Trivago prioritised advertisers who were willing to pay the highest level of fee per click.

Trivago is also accused of displaying false or misleading "strike-through" price comparisons, with offers for standard rooms often compared with offers for luxury rooms at the same hotel.

"This case highlights growing concerns the ACCC has in relation to comparison platforms, and on how algorithms present search results to consumers," said ACCC chair Rod Sims.



Window Seat

SRI Lankan consul-general Lal Wickrematunge was one of the panellists earlier this week at the opening session of the Travel Industry Exhibition in Sydney (**TD** Tue), and was asked to reveal one of his favourite places in Sri Lanka.

As well as an illustrious career in public life and business, Wickrematunge is a former international cricketer for Sri Lanka, and opened by saying "the secret spot I hated was when I had to face [former Australian fast bowlers] Lillee and Thomson at the wicket without a helmet".

After the obligatory laughter he continued: "The secret spot I love is up in the mountains at 7,000 feet, above the tea plantations, playing golf."

Wickrematunge said his favourite course is so hilly that on some holes you can't see the flags from the tees because you have to hit over a mountain.

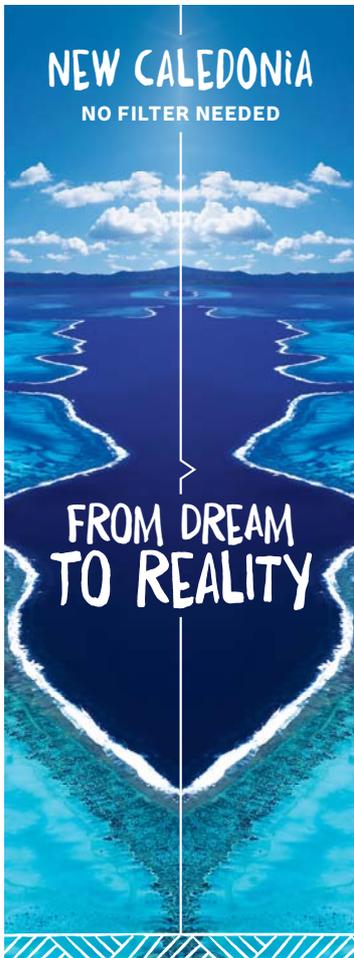
"But you can get your caddy to pick it up and put the ball in the hole and say hole in one," the crafty consul concluded.

Endeavor lays keel

THE keel laying ceremony for *Crystal Endeavor* took place yesterday at the Stralsund shipyard in Germany, with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel in attendance.

The vessel will be the world's largest Polar Class ship and will feature over 100 suites.

Bookings for *Endeavor* go on sale to the public today.



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AIR MAURITIUS

Webjet claims record year

WEBJET ceo John Gucsic this morning unveiled the results of what he described as “another outstanding year” for the company, with TTV up 47% to \$3 billion and revenue more than doubling to \$761 million.

However the company's net profit after tax declined 21% to \$41.5 million due to a range of one-off adjustments, including a change in accounting treatment for the Exclusives deals business.

Excluding extraordinary items net profit was up 30% to \$43.2m, with Gucsic noting flight bookings on the Webjet OTA platform continue to grow at three times the rate of the general market.

Margins also increased, reflecting sales of ancillary products such as packages, car hire and hotels.

In Webjet's Online Republic operations motorhome and car bookings grew, but cruise fell due to a “material slowdown in the regional cruise market” which made it difficult for aggregators.

The B2B WebBeds division saw growth in volumes and profitability, with the result including 10 months' contribution from the JacTravel acquisition (TD 03 Aug 2017).

Gucsic said with over 5% of the domestic OTA market and 3% of international “we believe we are well positioned and have substantial headroom for ongoing bookings growth as the B2C market continues to shift online”.

Serko targets 10m

SERKO ceo Darrin Grafton says he expects international expansion to double the five million bookings expected out of Australian markets this year.

At the Serko agm this week he said the new Zenon platform - with customised versions to roll out for Flight Centre (under the white-labelled Savi band), Orbit World Travel and NZ-based Tandem Travel - would “revolutionise the world of online travel and expense” by keeping business travellers connected with their organisation's preferred suppliers from pick-up to drop-off.

P&O Cruises sells Jewel



P&O Cruises Australia has confirmed *Pacific Jewel* will leave its fleet in early 2019 and Princess Cruises' *Star Princess* will join the brand by the end of 2021.

The introduction of the 3,100-passenger *Star Princess* will mark an 85% boost in passenger capacity over the 1,670-guest *Pacific Jewel*.

The addition will follow the introduction of *Star's* sister ship, *Golden Princess*, to P&O in 2020.

Pacific Jewel is currently P&O's second largest ship (behind *Explorer*) and her final voyage is scheduled to depart from Melbourne on 24 Feb 2019, before being transferred to a new operator following her sale.

“*Pacific Jewel* has been a jewel by name and jewel by nature,” said P&O Cruises Australia president Sture Myrmell.

“I feel sentimental farewelling a much-loved ship but excited for the future because the addition of two bigger ships is a game-changer for P&O Cruises and its guests,” he added.

The announcement is part of the cruise line's strategy to refresh its fleet over time, having already announced the departure of *Pacific Eden* to make way for

Golden Princess back in Mar (TD 07 Mar).

“We are ensuring P&O has the right ships for a contemporary brand operating in a competitive market,” Myrmell said.

P&O will continue to base ships year-round in the key homeports of Sydney and Brisbane, as well as offer seasonal sailings from other Australian states.

Over the coming weeks the company will contact all guests whose bookings are affected by the changes.

Village theme parks continue to languish

VILLAGE Roadshow today unveiled its results for the year to 30 Jun, with the company saying the figures “continue to be primarily impacted by the Dreamworld tragedy” in 2017.

EBITDA earnings from the division more than halved to \$41 million, with the Gold Coast parks also impacted by lower than expected attendances during the Commonwealth Games.

However, strong sales of season passes indicated a “return to a positive trajectory,” Village said.

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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.

Design Hotels has appointed **Allison Barclay** as Sales Manager for Australia and New Zealand. In her new role, Barclay will be charged with growing the Design Hotels community in the APAC region.

Diana Taylor has joined the **Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Trust (MCET)** as its newest trustee. Taylor has extensive experience in a number of legal roles, and will serve as trustee for the next three years.

Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) has welcomed **Frances-Anne Keeler** as Chair on the ATDW board. Keeler has over 25 years' experience in tourism, business and major events, and aviation services.

Andrew Maister has stepped into the role of General Manager in the Brisbane office of car hire company **VroomVroomVroom**. He will be responsible for evaluating new business opportunities for the company.

Dream Hotel Group has welcomed **Jeff Donnelly** on board as Vice President of Development. Donnelly brings close to 10 years' experience in the hospitality sector, including with his own consultancy JD Advisors.

Airbnb Experiences

AIRBNB has expanded its New Zealand Experiences program nationwide, showcasing a range of activities around the country "that go beyond typical tours".

The program offers guests the chance to enjoy "handcrafted activities, designed and led by inspiring locals", including learning about Maori traditions, squash lessons with a former world champion, or a movie studio tour.

Guests can also book culinary tours, "hidden" city tours, yoga tours, and glass bead making.

To view the selection of offers, [CLICK HERE](#).

IHG welcomes avid

THE Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG) has officially opened the doors to its first avid hotels property, the 87-room avid hotel Oklahoma City-Quail Springs.

The property offers a modern design with brightly decorated rooms and the "avid hotels Guarantee" which allows guests to change their rooms at no extra cost if they are not happy with the quality.

Atout France site

FRENCH tourism board Atout France has refreshed its website to include "the lesser-known" places and activities available in the country.

Users can explore a range of different options, including wine, fashion, seaside, and golf, with improved planning tools also available to help users make the most of their French holiday.

To view, [CLICK HERE](#).

Creative NZ push

TOURISM NZ has launched a new online campaign that aims to encourage Australian travellers to visit the Marlborough and Wellington regions between Sep and Nov 2018.

Highlighting the theme "Creativity around every corner", the campaign "aims to raise the profiles of Wellington and Marlborough as the ideal destinations for Australians looking to find their creative spark," said Andrew Waddell, Tourism New Zealand's general manager of Australia.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the video.

As happy as Maddy



MADDY Kirk from Helloworld Travel Armadale in Western Australia has walked away with a Google Home Mini after winning one of the main prizes in *Travel Daily's* annual salary and employment survey.

Participants in the competition had to complete a five-minute survey to win a range of prizes including one of two Google Home Minis, 20 EVENT cinema tickets and 30 annual subscriptions to *travelBulletin*.

The survey was open to anyone in the travel industry, including

agents and suppliers.

Pictured: Maddy Kirk basking in her win with her new Google Home Mini.

On the Go draw

ON THE Go Tours is celebrating its 20th birthday by launching a new agent competition that offers a grand prize for two to Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

Agents will earn one entry per booking made with On The Go Tours until 07 Dec, with winners to be announced every fortnight.

Sales Manager

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Only successful applicants will be contacted.

Redy2Go celebrates



SYDNEY Airport transfer company Redy2Go has celebrated its one millionth passenger since starting operations in 2014.

A family from Canada (pictured above) received an upgrade to a Mercedes People Mover, a bottle of Moët & Chandon Champagne, flowers, toys for the children, a complimentary return booking, and a three-hour guided Sydney tour.

Venture Far brox

VENTURE Far has released its 2019-20 Indochina brochure with details on Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar tours.

The program highlights include visiting floating markets along the backwaters and canals of the Mekong Delta, crossing mountainous terrain and discovering the culture of hill tribes in northern Vietnam before crossing into Laos.

CLICK HERE to view the online version of the brochure.

Visit Ballarat push

VISIT Ballarat has today launched a new artisan focused destination campaign, Made of Ballarat, to entice more Melburnians to visit and explore the destination.

The campaign showcases the city's artisans, makers and creators through a variety of media including cinema, creative events and publications.

To find out more about Made of Ballarat, the weekly series of mini events and artisan stories, visit www.madeofballarat.com.au.

TAT local director

TOURISM Authority of Thailand (TAT) has appointed Suladda Sarutilavan as the director of its Sydney office.

Sarutilavan took up the role at the beginning of the month and has been working with TAT for the last 20 years, previously as the director of TAT Pattaya office.



WIN A LUXURY RIVER CRUISE

This month, Scenic and *Travel Daily* are giving readers the chance to win a luxurious river cruise. Experience a 15-day cruise in a balcony suite. The prize includes:

- Jewels of Europe river cruise for 2 people departing Oct 2018
- All-inclusive cruise including butler service, complimentary beverages all day, everyday, all meals, and all tipping & gratuities

SCENIC
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To win, answer every daily question correctly and have the most creative answer to the final question. Send your answers to scenic@traveldaily.com.au

Q17. Danube Delta Discovery is how many days?

ESB unveils upgrade

THE Empire State Building (ESB) in New York has unveiled the first phase of a redevelopment project, opening a new Observatory entrance.

The next phases will include new electronic self-service ticket kiosks, digital hosts and a lighting ceremony installation.

Additional enhancements will be announced in the coming months, with work slated for completion by the end of 2019.

Anantara priv jet

ANANTARA Hotels, Resorts & Spas has launched the Anantara Private Jet Experience, offering journeys aboard a private Gulfstream V or Cessna Citation X.

Guests can now discover the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand and combine stays at Anantara properties with the convenience of private jet transportation.

SydEx held today

SYDEX 2018, an emergency management exercise, will today be conducted at Sydney Airport.

More than 20 agencies and organisations including the NSW Police Force, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW SES, along with 500 personnel and 170 volunteers, will be involved in the exercise.

MadeComfy Bris

MADECOMFY, a performance-based short term rental specialist, has opened a Brisbane office following a \$6m capital raising in May and 500% year-on-year growth in Sydney and Melbourne.

The company's recently conducted study highlights that the demand for short-term rentals has "more than doubled over the last two years and makes up 11.8% of Australia's total tourism accommodation".

THE WHO'S WHO OF SUPPLIERS ARE IN THE 2018 AFTA TRAVEL PAGES SUPPLIER DIRECTORY.

[VIEW HERE](#)

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