



SEE THE VIDEO

Scheduled for delivery in 2021, the *Ponant Icebreaker* will be able to sail through 2.5 metre thick ice and reach 90° latitude North, the Geographic North Pole.

A WORLD FIRST PONANT ICEBREAKER: THE ULTIMATE POLAR EXPLORATION

The French company PONANT is launching the first true luxury ice breaker cruise ship and strengthening its undisputed position as the world leader in polar cruises.

Design a luxury cruise ship capable of sailing to the remotest areas of the icy polar regions: this is the new challenge set by the global leader in Polar Exploration, the French company PONANT.

Within three years, it will be possible to reach the remotest and least explored regions of the Arctic, Antarctic as well as the Geographic North Pole aboard an exceptional icebreaker combining comfort, design and cutting-edge technology. The *Ponant Icebreaker*, which will sail from the Norwegian shipyard of Vard (subsidiary of the Italian firm Fincantieri) in 2021 will mark a new stage in the history of polar travel, an area where the French shipowner is one of the leading protagonists.

The first true ice breaker luxury cruise ship, the *Ponant Icebreaker* will be able to sail through sea ice some 2.5 metres thick. Powered by Liquefied Natural Gas, with a hybrid electric engine, and bearing the Clean Ship label, it will be a real pioneer

in the preservation of the environment. Fitted with a scientific laboratory, this hybrid vessel will also act as a logistical base for oceanographic expeditions, ensuring the future of this fragile environment. "Extreme adventure, refined comfort, major innovations: the *Ponant Icebreaker* is the absolute culmination of our concept of Polar Expeditions," explains the PONANT CEO, Jean Emmanuel Sauvé.

For more than 20 years, the company has acquired unrivalled savoir-faire in geographically extreme areas and inaccessible and unexplored regions. It offers a vast choice of exclusive itineraries formulated by experienced sailors, sailing through dreamlike landscapes, getting as close as possible to emblematic wildlife (including polar bears, whales and penguins) in conditions of comfort (panoramic suites, wellbeing areas, gastronomic cuisine, theatre, heated swimming pool) that are unique in the expedition cruise sector. Naturalists, scientists and specialist speakers travelling aboard the ship will transform this journey into a voyage of initiation. For these white odysseys, the *Ponant Icebreaker* will host some 250 privileged passengers who will undoubtedly return from their experience as ambassadors for the extraordinary polar universe.

The *Ponant Icebreaker* will join a prestigious fleet. "Commissioning this icebreaker cruise ship is a decisive step for the company, which has doubled its fleet since it was bought by Artémis (holding of



the Pinault family) in 2015," said Jean Emmanuel Sauvé. "In addition to confirming our position as leader in the polar destinations, this exceptional vessel underlines our position in the luxury sector in France and internationally. The *Ponant Icebreaker* means polar exploration with a degree of luxury never before experienced."

In embarking on this new adventure, PONANT is following in the wake of *Pourquoi-Pas?*, captained by Jean-Baptiste Charcot, a great figure of exploration and science, and the precursor of polar expeditions under the French flag. Thanks to this new generation icebreaker, the company will offer original itineraries to discover sites that were hitherto inaccessible.



Learn more, contact your Travel Agent or our Cruise Consultants to register for our February Information Events in NSW, VIC & QLD:

1300 737 178 (AUS) | 0800 44 32 62 (NZ)
reservations.aus@ponant.com | au.ponant.com

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www.renaulteurodrive.com.au

Vale Barry Matters

THE Australian travel industry is today mourning the sudden death of former APT Group managing director Barry Matters.

Matters died on Fri after a short battle with cancer, with APT owner Geoff McGeary and md Chris Hall acknowledging Matters' achievements during his 35 years with the company (see **page 4**).

His life will be celebrated at a service at the Melbourne Cricket Ground this Fri 09 Feb.

Trafalgar guarantee

TRAFALGAR has announced that all of its upcoming tours to Italy and Ireland in 2018 are now definite departures.

The travel company said it made the decision in order to cement its commitment to "#agentsfirst".

Scenic confirms *Eclipse II*

WITH just over 200 days until the debut of Scenic's new ocean cruise product *Scenic Eclipse*, the Australian luxury cruise and tour operator has confirmed the addition of a sister-ship, to debut in 2020 (**TD** breaking news Sat).

Scenic Eclipse II will be of similar design to the original 114 all-verandah suite expedition ship & enable the company to "further strengthen Scenic's position as the leading innovator in the cruise industry," the group said.

Founder and chairman Glen Moroney said the expansion of Scenic's ocean cruise fleet was a "natural progression" and follows "unprecedented interest" in *Scenic Eclipse*, which is on target for its debut on 31 Aug this year.

In 2016, Moroney hinted to **TD**

a second ocean ship was "likely".

Unveiled first to travel agency partners at Scenic's sixth annual 'Night of Stars' event in Sydney on Sat (see **page 4**), *Eclipse II* will cruise in Europe and the Russian Arctic following its maiden voyage from Athens to Lisbon.

Earmarked destinations include Russia's White Sea, Canada's Northwest Passage, Southern Greenland, the Bering Sea and Alaska's Inside Passage.

Construction of *Eclipse II* will commence next year with itineraries to be unveiled in Apr - view a promotional video **HERE**.

MEANWHILE, *Scenic Eclipse* was last week floated out from the Uljanik shipyard in Croatia.

Ponant ice breaker

FRENCH cruise company Ponant will take possession of what it is referring to as "the first luxury ice breaker cruise ship" called *Ponant Icebreaker* in 2021.

The new ship will be capable of cutting through 2.5 metres of ice and reaching the most remote areas of the icy polar region.

See today's **cover wrap** to learn more about the vessel.

Portland famil

CONSOLIDATED Travel, Virgin Australia and Delta Air Lines have revealed Portland, Oregon as the mystery destination for its latest famil incentive competition.

Completion of the Brand USA Badge Campaign is needed to be eligible for the four-night prize.

See **back page** for more details.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news and photos, a front cover page for **Ponant** plus full pages from:

- Viking
- AA Appointments jobs
- Consolidated Travel

Viking cruise sale

VIKING Cruises has launched its Explorer Sale which sees potential savings of up to \$6,300 per couple on selected departures.

The promotion also offers the chance of free flights to Asia subject to conditions.

Offer ends 31 Mar - see **page 7** for more information.

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Lux Gold transfers

THE Travel Corporation's Luxury Gold has introduced new door-to-door private airport transfers on select 2018 small group journeys.

The new pick-up service will see customers collected at their home & transported to the airport, and then provided VIP transfers from their destination airport to the hotel on their itinerary, and v.v.

Capped at a radius of 50kms from a qualifying international airport, Luxury Gold's door-to-door airport service permits a maximum of three guests per vehicle, with one suitcase and one carry-on piece of luggage.

Transfers are available on Luxury Gold journeys to Europe, Africa, Asia and India.

AirAsia confirms Avalon

GEELONG'S Avalon Airport will receive international commercial air services for the first time - likely before the end of year - after the Victorian Govt confirmed AirAsia's intent to commence direct flights from Kuala Lumpur, as mooted last week (**TD Fri**).

AirAsia said its long-haul budget arm AirAsia X Malaysia would operate twice daily frequencies to Avalon "later this year", at which time the carrier will pull out of its existing Melbourne Tullamarine double daily service.

Around 500,000 international passengers are forecast to use AVV in its first year of operation.

"We are proud to renew our

commitment to making air travel affordable for Australians with this move to Avalon, which will help us maintain our cost edge & allow us to continue offering low fares to Asean, Asia and beyond," Air Asia group ceo Tony Fernandes said yesterday.

Avalon Apt ceo Justin Giddings said the 10-year agreement would "accommodate AirAsia X's significant growth".

TIME website debut

TO KICK off The Travel Industry Mentor Experience program for 2018, the body has launched a new website to showcase the benefits of receiving mentoring.

The platform will also focus on stories, mentor-mentee profiles and news from TIME itself.

TIME founder and chair Penny Spencer said the site will "bring the TIME experience to life".

CLICK HERE to view the website.

Peru training portal

AN E-LEARNING platform dedicated to the Australian travel industry has been rolled out today by PromPeru to enhance agent knowledge, enabling front-line sellers to become recognised as Peru specialists.

The platform is divided into eight region and theme-specific badges for agents to complete, spanning Peru's coast, highlands, the Amazon, adventure travel, culture & heritage, gastronomy and basic travel information.

To mark its launch, PromPeru is offering an incentive for agents to win a place on a famil to Peru departing later this year.

Agents who complete all eight badges between now and the end of Jul and submit their 'Ultimate 10-day Peru Itinerary' will go into the draw to win one of eight spots on the educational.

Other prizes are also on offer - see perutravelttraining.com.au for more info, and submit itineraries to svet@gate7.com.au.

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Magellan unrest continues

HELLOWORLD'S confirmation on Fri afternoon that its takeover of the Magellan Travel Group is on track (**TD** breaking news Fri) has again unsettled Magellan members, who at the time of the announcement were yet to receive written confirmation of the promised revised financial offer in relation to the deal.

Helloworld Travel ceo Andrew Burnes said he was "confident that the transaction will now

complete by the end of the month" - later than the previously planned settlement in early Jan.

"Due to some complexities with the Magellan membership structure it has taken longer than initially anticipated for Magellan to complete the transaction," he told investors in an ASX update.

Later on Fri afternoon the written offers were finally sent, with conditions understood to concern some Magellan agents.

It's now almost two weeks since the group was flown into Melbourne for a crisis meeting to discuss the deal, where they were promised a significantly enhanced share of the \$32.5 million being paid by Helloworld (**TD** 24 Jan).

While the terms remain confidential, it's believed a key worry in relation to the formal offers is a requirement that would require members not to transact business with any suppliers without Helloworld approval.

Ardent wipes \$25m

DREAMWORLD owner Ardent Leisure has told shareholders the group expects to write off up to \$25 million in the value of its theme park business due to a slower recovery in visitation than expected after the tragic death of four visitors in Oct 2016.

For the period 10 Dec-31 Jan attendances were up 41% and revenue rose 71% year-on-year.

GA ups CGK/PER

THE West Australian Govt has welcomed Garuda Indonesia's plan to add an extra weekly service on the Jakarta-Perth city pairing, saying the move will boost visitor numbers to the state from one of its fastest growing tourism sources.

Garuda will add the fifth weekly frequency commencing 04 May, and follows a recent push by WA's Asian Engagement Minister Bill Johnston in Indonesia.

GA area manager Australia, Dony Widodo said the carrier expects not only an increase in pax lift to the Indonesian capital from Australia but onwards to destinations such as Tokyo, Osaka, Seoul and Amsterdam.

SAA trims London

UPDATED airline schedules indicate South African Airways is scaling back its Johannesburg-London route, with frequencies set to drop from two daily services to one, effective 19 Apr.



Window Seat

COMEDIAN Vince Sorrenti was in fine form on Sat night when he hosted Scenic's "Night of Stars" at Sydney's Ivy Ballroom.

However he also gave some of the Scenic team a few nervous moments - particularly at the conclusion of the awards ceremony when several dozen of the company's top sellers were on stage receiving their "Diamond" awards.

"Everybody on this stage now has won return Business class flights to Dubai plus three nights at the Burj Al Arab hotel," he said - before quickly pointing out that he was just joking.

He also highlighted that the celebrations would continue in the Ivy Ballroom, which he said had been booked "from 11.30pm until 5am... Tues morning".

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Monday 5th February 2018

Call-centre check-in

BANGKOK Airways has introduced a free 24/7 "Call Centre Check-in" service for all domestic passengers.

To take advantage of the new facility passengers are advised to check-in 24 hours in advance or at least two hours prior to departure.

QR, JAL up c'share

JAPAN Airlines and Qatar Airways will expand their codeshare partnership on 11 flights to the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia from 01 Apr.

Destinations affected by the changes include Turkey, Jordan, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Azerbaijan.

Tickets for the new shared routes go on sale from 14 Mar.

MEANWHILE Qatar Airways will soon welcome its first A350-1000 aircraft delivery this month, the first in an order of 37 units.

QR is the global launch customer for the A350-1000.

JQ Points Plus Pay

QANTAS has announced its customers can now use Qantas Points to book flights and add-ons for Jetstar flights using the airline's Points Plus Pay program.

Purchases can be made entirely using Qantas Points or in combination with other accepted payment methods.

The promotion is only applicable to Jetstar-operated flights originating from Australia and where seats are available.

A minimum of 3,500 pts is also required to make a booking.

Tribe Collingwood

START-UP hotelier Tribe Hotel Group has secured a site for a flagship property at 60 Langridge St, Collingwood in Victoria.

The company opened the doors to its debut property, Tribe Perth, in Jun last year.

Tribe has also acquired sites in Hobart & Adelaide and is planning to expand into overseas markets.

Scenic's Night of Stars



SCENIC honoured its top achieving agents on Sat night at the sixth annual "Night of Stars" in Sydney - coinciding with the global announcement of the new *Scenic Eclipse II* (see page 1).

The gala event was hosted by comedian Vince Sorrenti and featured a series of entertainers showcasing various Scenic destinations across the globe - along with the full celebrity cast of TV travel show *Getaway*.

Senior travel industry staff from across the country were in attendance, with state & national awards for top selling agencies, home-based groups, online agencies and top consultants.

The celebration also marked ten years since Scenic launched its own river ships, with the debut of the 100% Australian company's revolutionary Scenic Spaceships on Europe's waterways.

Weston Travel & Cruise from the ACT was awarded for achieving the highest sales from a single location in 2017 Australia-wide.

Pictured accepting the award are a thrilled Deb Long and Emma Sullivan, with Scenic national sales manager Rob Kalembe and gm sales & marketing Australia/Asia Pacific Anthony Laver.

Lots more pics from Scenic's night of nights now online at facebook.com/traveldaily.



Geoff McGeary, APT Travel Group (ATG) Owner and Chris Hall, ATG Managing Director, deeply regret to inform the travel and tourism industry that our previous Group Managing Director, Barry Matters, passed away on Friday 02 February after a short battle with cancer.

Barry was highly regarded and respected throughout the company and the broader travel industry. Over his long and distinguished career Barry formed many strong relationships and friendships at ATG and across the industry. He was a strong leader, a mentor to many, and a true gentleman, we know that this news will be a shock to many.

We would like to acknowledge Barry's wonderful achievements during his 35 years with the company. His career with APT started whilst he was still at school, after completing a university degree he joined APT fulltime, moving through the financial areas of the business as an Accountant and Financial Controller. Barry became the Managing Director of APT, and finally the Managing Director of Australian Pacific Holdings (APH) before retiring in 2014.

Under his leadership APT transformed from an Australian coach tour operator with a single brand focus, to a global leading cruising and touring company with a portfolio of brands and products. Barry's management, foresight, and diplomacy enabled the formation of strategic partnerships with AMA Waterways, Noble Caledonia, Captains Choice, Botanica, Cruiseco and Setours. The formation of these partnerships combined with the wholly owned brands of APT and Travelmarvel has been highly successful and has set the group up for long term success.

Barry's profound impact on the APT Travel Group will be enduring and his friendship will long be remembered.

At this difficult time our thoughts are with his wife Lindy, his four children - Sarah, Ben, Rebecca and Sophie, his mother Betty, his siblings Robyn, Geoff and Russell, and all his family and friends.

Barry's life will be celebrated at a service on Friday 09 February at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in the MCC Members Dining Room at 2.30pm.

Helloworld heads to Vietnam



VIETNAM Airlines recently treated a team of Helloworld Travel agents to a family of Vietnam travelling from the north to the south of the country.

Over a week the group explored Halong Bay, Hoi An and Saigon.

Highlights included walking tours, a Halong Bay overnight cruise with the Heritage Line, sampling local cuisines and learning about the country's in-depth history.

Participants experienced Vietnam Airlines' product and the tour arrangements and itinerary was provided by Insider Journeys.

Pictured are: Atina Vertzonis, Helloworld Travel; Jason Sartori, All World Travel Service; Matthew Foreman, Helloworld Travel Drummoyn; Paula Ranalli, Helloworld Travel Surrey Hills; Naomi Hammond, Helloworld

Travel Croydon Hills; Monica Busch, Black Rock Travel; Karen Moore, Helloworld Travel Laurieton and Jasmine Maree Levingston, Helloworld Travel Armidale.

Oscar anniversary

AIR New Zealand's chatbot Bravo Oscar Tango (Oscar for short) has marked its first birthday and is having on average 1,000 conversations each day.

Oscar was introduced on the airline's website to answer commonly asked flight, baggage, lounge and Airpoints queries and his intelligence has since improved, allowing him to have conversations on more than 380 different topics.

He is now able to answer close to 75% of questions.



Brochures

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



Travelmarvel - Europe River Cruising Preview 2019
New destinations and Hop-on Hop-off touring have debuted in Travelmarvel's 2019 Europe River Cruising Preview brochure. The company is extending its coastal and expedition cruise products to include Iceland, Baltic Sea, the Scottish Isles and the fjords of Norway in 2019. The program also showcases fresh refurbishments across Travelmarvel's European Gems River Ships. The vessels will offer two dining options, formal and informal, for both lunch and dinner. The operator has contracted *MS Rossia* to cruise the waterways of Russia in 2019, offering tours from 12 to 20 days throughout the region.



Skimax - Ski Southern Hemisphere 2018
Skimax's new 2018 ski brochure for the Southern Hemisphere packs in early bird offers, accommodation, lift passes, car hire and adventure activities for ski trips in Australia, New Zealand and South America. The program includes mountain stats and facts on each destination, such as terrain, lifts, facilities and information on the elevation, skiable area, longest run and terrain parks.



Coral Expeditions - Coral Adventurer 2019
Coral Expeditions has released its first brochure for its new expedition ship, the *Coral Adventurer*. The vessel's maiden voyage will be an 18-night sailing from Singapore to Darwin, departing on 24 Apr. The cruise will form a series of themed departures called "In the trail of Tasman", which will trace the route of Dutch explorer Abel Tasman. *Coral Adventurer* will also operate the regular Kimberley season between Broome and Darwin before cruising into the Gulf of Carpentaria in Cape York & Arnhem Land, New Guinea and the Spice Islands & Raja Ampat.

SFMOMA CityPASS

THE newly expanded San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) will join the CityPASS program from 01 Mar.

The program offers travellers 45% off combined admission to many of San Francisco's attractions and includes a Cable Car and Muni Bus Passport.

SFMOMA added nearly three times more gallery space under a \$305m expansion.

VA IASC go-ahead

THE International Air Services Commission (IASC) has given the green light for Virgin Australia to use its capacity on the New Zealand route for codeshare services with Hainan Airlines.

Under the Australia-New Zealand air services arrangements VA already had unlimited capacity to operate scheduled services between Australia & NZ, via and beyond third countries.

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AirAsia plans Avalon launch



AIRASIA X celebrated the announcement of twice daily flights into Melbourne Avalon from Kuala Lumpur (see **page 2**) with govt and airport officials.

Cebu Pacific previously flagged its intentions to start services into Avalon in 2013 (**TD** 23 Apr 13).

D7 will move its current MEL flights to AVV at the same time.

Pictured at the launch: Catriona Rowntree, MC; David Fox, Linfox Airports; Benyamin Ismail, AirAsia X Malaysia; Ben Carroll Vic MP; Tony Fernandes, AirAsia Group; Julie Bishop; Federal MP; Justin Giddings, Avalon Airport; Sarah

Henderson, Federal MP; John Eren, Vic MP and Richard Marles Federal MP.

Solo travel guide

THE International St Giles hotel group, which includes the Tank Stream Hotel in Sydney, has launched a solo-travel program to help solo travellers experience the best of the destination they're in while visiting.

The program features NYC, Kuala Lumpur, London, Manila, Penang and Sydney.

It includes info on restaurants, bars, entertainment & activities.

A number of St Giles hotels also offer discounts and free breakfast as part of the product.

CLICK HERE to view the guide.

Alitalia AR tie-up

ALITALIA and Aerolineas Argentinas have signed a joint-business agreement (JBA) to improve the pax experience and connectivity options between Italy and Argentina, as well as beyond these countries.

The carriers will coordinate their schedules and connections, and could jointly launch new routes.

The JBA follows a codeshare tie-up signed by the carriers last year.



Centara Grand Beach Resort Hua Hin

This month *Travel Daily* and Centara Hotels & Resorts are teaming up to give readers a chance to win an escape to Thailand.

The prize

Return flights to Bangkok and seven nights accommodation at Centara Grand in Bangkok and Krabi for two.

How to win

1 Head to centarahotelsresorts.com/b2b to check out all the key selling points and amazing destinations that Centara has to offer your clients.

2 Send us your 3 favourite Centara selling points along with a picture or meme of you enjoying your ultimate Centara moment. The most imaginative entry will win. Send your entries to centara@traveldaily.com.au



Marriott rivals up comm

THREE hotels are raising their group commission levels, and Wyndham Hotel Group is holding them steady, following Marriott's controversial move to cut commissions on group bookings from 10% to 7% at its Canada and US properties (**TD** 29 Jan).

The Eden Roc Miami Beach, Nobu Hotel Miami Beach in the United States, and Nobu Hotel Los Cabos in Mexico, all announced they will be raising

their commission levels on offer to 12% (from 10%) in response to Marriott's move.

The increased offer is available to groups that book at least 10 rooms and stay before 31 Dec.

Wyndham Hotel Group confirmed in a statement there was no plan to adjust the commission structure in the near future and the organisation valued its group intermediaries and travel agent partnerships.

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19

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STORES

60

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5

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This role will see you take ownership of your own department, lead this growing division to greater growth in 2018. You will be responsible for managing the P & L so experience in this area is essential. Look after the whole operation from Sales, Account Management to Consultants. If you are looking for a step up and have worked across different areas in a TMC this could be your next step, please call for a confidential chat.

CORPORATE HOTEL SALES ROLE

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Exciting time to join this expanding hotel group as a MICE BDM. Working as part of the sales team you will be responsible for managing the corporate market, building relationships and a pipeline to bring in new business across the portfolio of hotels. Previous experience in a similar role required with strong presentation, negotiating and contracting skills. Great salary plus bonus on offer for the successful candidate.

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CONDITIONS: Valid for tickets issued by Consolidated Travel or via Quikticket between 22 January - 11 February 2018 on VA/DL International itineraries ex Australia plated on VA (795) & DL (006) ticket stock on the Consolidated Travel IATA only. Child, Infant, Group Sales, Wholesale and Cancelled or Refunded tickets are not eligible. The prizes are open to all full time international selling agents only. Consolidated Travel, Virgin Australia & Delta Air Lines reserve the right to alter or cancel the promotion any time. Famil will be during 01 May - 05 May 2018, *Subject to change. Prize includes Return airfares from the nearest Virgin Australia port, 4 nights twin share accommodation & Transfers. All additional travel expenses, insurance, ancillary costs, etc, are at the passengers own expense. Airline tickets cannot be reissued and are non-transferable, and cannot accrue frequent flyer miles or be exchanged for cash. It is a condition of accepting the prize that: the prize winning agency accepts any conditions of use of the various components of the prize. Prizes must be taken as stated and no compensation will be payable if a winning agency is unable to use a prize as stated. Receipt of a prize may have Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) implications. To the extent that there is any FBT liability, this will be paid for by the employer of the recipient. The grossed-up value of a prize and any other Fringe benefits the recipient receives during the course of the FBT year may be reported on the recipient's annual PAYG Payment Summary as required by taxation law. All prizes include GST where applicable and taxes are included in the price of the ticket and land content. Consolidated Travel Group ABN 60 004 692 791. Date of issue 02 February 2018.