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MOVIE tickets are up for grabs for travel advisors who take part in the new Qatar Specialist agent training program (**TD** yesterday).

Registrations are now open for the free online modules which feature a dedicated Australia section - see the **cover page**.

AY to offer JQ Seoul route

FINNAIR is set to promote a new route between Australia and Europe via Korea in partnership with Jetstar, under a new application lodged by Qantas today with the International Air Services Commission (IASC).

Qantas is applying for variations to five existing IASC determinations on the Korea route, saying "it is proposed that Finnair offer code share services on flights operated by Jetstar on the Korea route from 01 Jan 2024".

The planned arrangements would allow Finnair's AY code to be placed on Jetstar operated services on the Brisbane-Seoul and Sydney-Seoul routes, providing connectivity with Finnair's own flights from Helsinki to the Korean capital.

"The ability for Finnair to expand its selling proposition by independently marketing and pricing services between Australia and Korea provides an increased range of choices and benefits for consumers," Qantas said.

The Commission is now seeking submissions on the proposal, with a deadline of 12 Dec. **BP**

QF USA on sale

QANTAS today launched a North America and Vancouver sale, offering discounted flights from most Australian cities to New York, Los Angeles, Dallas, San Francisco and Vancouver leading in at just \$1,199 return in Economy class.

Business and Premium Economy deals are also on offer, valid on selected travel dates for bookings confirmed by 04 Dec.

Learn and win!

DESTINATION Webinars and Visit Anaheim are offering the opportunity to win a six-night land package and waterpark passes for two, plus a \$100 Visa gift card, by participating in special online sessions on Thu.

There are two webinars on offer starting at 8.30am and noon AEDT on 30 Nov - rego details on the special product profile on the **last page** of today's **Travel Daily**.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news including our **Sustainability** page, plus a front cover wrap from **Qatar Tourism**, a special update from **Destination Webinars** and full pages from:

- Silversea
- Infinity Holidays

Anaheim specials

INFINITY Holidays is offering up to 15% commission on six specially curated packages in Anaheim, California.

The six-night holidays are part of a Visit Anaheim partnership - see **page 10** for details.

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AF/KL/EY pact

AIR France-KLM and Etihad have announced a major new frequent flyer program partnership, with the reciprocal deal allowing members of Etihad Guest and Flying Blue to earn and burn miles in either loyalty scheme when flying on any of the three airlines.

The partnership went live overnight, with the expanded cooperation arrangements between the carriers also covering more than 60 new routes across the globe.

Reciprocal benefits for elite members of the programs will be announced shortly, the airlines noted, with the deal implemented following the debut of Air France non-stop flights from Paris Charles de Gaulle to Abu Dhabi last month.

Alliance pledges payouts

ALLIANCE Airlines MD Scott McMillan has committed to returning to dividend payouts for shareholders “at the earliest possible date” during the company’s AGM today.

McMillan noted Alliance’s strong and growing fly-in fly-out operations, which have retained all major contracts including a new five-year agreement with BHP Nickel West, continuing a 23-year relationship with the miner.

As well as that, Alliance’s wet-lease operations including the

Embraer E190 fleet operated on behalf of QantasLink “continue to expand in volume and scale,” with aircraft operation set to rise progressively into 2025.

He detailed the carrier’s ongoing focus on environmental considerations, including reductions in fuel consumption due to lower thrust ratings.

“Our strategy is to remain the pre-eminent Australasian owned provider of quality aviation charter capacity to the mining and resources sector and other domestic carriers within Australia,” he concluded. *BP*

EVA Air agent fare

TAIWAN’S Eva Air is inviting the travel industry to experience its aircraft and services, via a special industry fare offer.

The fare is available to travel advisors who complete all four modules on the **Travel Daily** EVA Travel Training Academy (**CLICK HERE**), and present both the completed certificate and the fare application form (**HERE**).

Terms and conditions apply, while taxes and fuel surcharges are additional.

VA Velocity gifting

VIRGIN Australia’s SME-focused Business Flyer program is inviting member corporations to give accrued Velocity frequent flyer points to staff as part of a special festive season promotion.

The carrier is offering a 20% bonus on points transferred to individual travellers, with the deal available between 28 Nov and 17 Dec via the Business Flyer corporate platform - **CLICK HERE**.

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ATIA kicks off ATAS annual reviews

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has begun requesting financial reports from members of the Australian Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS) as part of its annual review process.

This year, following the 2022 Independent Review of the ATAS Charter, financials must be prepared by accountants, rather than just management accounts, underscoring ATIA’s ongoing commitment to building industry standards and financial integrity.

ATIA Compliance Manager, Nina Hedges urged participants to think of the process as “a testament to your business” and a commitment to operating at elevated standards - more from ATIA on **page six**.

Bunnik Tours

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Qatar expands Malta codeshares

QATAR Airways and airMalta have announced an expansion of their codeshare network.

The increased partnership began earlier this month on airMalta routes from Malta to London, Milan, and Paris, as well as additional Qatar services between Doha and Milan.

The Southern European island country has long been one of Qatar's best-selling destinations.

TAT Fliggy pact

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has signed a letter of intent with online travel platform Fliggy to promote Thailand to Chinese travellers.

Fliggy is part of e-commerce giant Alibaba, and the new cooperation agreement includes a new 24/7 Chinese customer service hotline, as well as co-operative marketing and campaign collaborations.

RCI's Icon delivered

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has officially welcomed "a new era of vacations", with the cruise line's new *Icon of the Seas* joining the fleet.

The ship, which is set to debut in Jan, is now receiving its finishing touches at the Meyer Turku shipyard, after a celebration which symbolised the end of *Icon's* construction.

More than 1,200 crew members and workers gathered to mark the milestone at the special celebration.

They were joined by Royal Caribbean Group President & Chief Executive Officer Jason Liberty, the cruise line's President & Chief Executive Officer Michael Bayley, and Meyer Turku Chief Executive Officer Tim Meyer.

Icon of the Seas is Royal Caribbean's first ship powered by liquefied natural gas.

To see more of the latest cruise news, head over to today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

Inbound forecasts rise: report

A NEW Tourism Research Australia report is predicting faster growth in international arrivals to Australia than previous forecasts, with the encouraging projections underpinned by the ongoing resumption of flight routes and the reopening of China.

The *Tourism Forecasts for Australia: 2023 to 2028* study also predicts "record spending across Australia's tourism and travel industry", delivering wider benefits for accommodation, hospitality, transport, experience and event providers.

International visitors this year are expected to number 7.3 million - almost double the figure in 2022 - rising to 9.3 million in 2024, 98% of the levels achieved in 2019.

A new record of 10.2 million is expected in 2025, while visitor numbers will reach 12.1 million in 2028, the report prognosticates.

Tourism Minister Don Farrell hailed the report, saying "Australia

is the best place to live, work and visit, and thanks to our resilient, world-class tourism operators, international and domestic travel has bounced back".

"A thriving tourism industry is crucial to our economic prosperity, with every dollar spent in the visitor economy generating a further 81 cents for other parts of the economy."

International visitors are expected to spend \$28.6 billion in Australia this year, up 124% on 2022, meaning every arrival is spending \$4,000 on average.

Strong growth is forecast across the board, particularly for visitors from Southeast Asia, as well as arrivals from NZ, the USA, Japan, India, Malaysia & the UK.

However visitation from Europe is expected to be weighed down by the Ukraine war, economic headwinds, high airfares and negative sentiment towards long-haul flights - see tra.gov.au. *BP*

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Rex wins WA FIFO deals

REX Group's National Jet Express (NJE) has won two long-term mining contracts in Western Australia, strengthening its presence in the state's fly-in fly-out (FIFO) market.

The airline will operate two new charter flights between Perth and Kalgoorlie and Kambalda twice a week for a mining company in the Goldfields region, using both Embraer E190 and De Havilland Dash 8-400NG aircraft.

NJE will also introduce three times weekly charter flights between Perth and Woodie Woodie for Consolidated Minerals using E190 aircraft.

The agreements follow NJE's announcement last month of several new Queensland-based FIFO contracts (TD 25 Oct).

"These two new contracts in our largest base in Western Australia demonstrate that the Mining and Resources Industry recognises the Rex Group and NJE as the premier



provider of FIFO services in Australia," NJE Managing Director Chris Hine commented.

"NJE is rapidly becoming the first port of call for resource companies seeking premium, safe and reliable air services in modern aircraft with a greatly reduced carbon footprint."

The charter airline's rapid expansion is being driven by significant demand, Hine pointed out, with NJE recently investing in an additional De Havilland Dash 8-400NG aircraft (TD 29 Aug).

The carrier also plans to add extra aircraft to both its Dash 8-400NG and E190 fleets before the end of this financial year. JM

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NY hotel specials

NEW York City will run the annual "NYC Hotel Week" from 03 Jan-04 Feb 2024, offering 24% off standard room rates.

NYC Hotel Week is timed to coincide with NYC Restaurant Week, NYC Must See Week and NYC Broadway Week, which are all aimed at boosting off-season visitation to the city.

See nyctourism.com.

Agents win with QF

QANTAS is inviting travel agents to subscribe to its trade email list, and is offering the opportunity to win one of three \$500 Qantas Holidays vouchers.

Entries in the promotion close on 15 Dec, with the winners to be judged via their answer to a 25 words or less question.

Those on the list receive Agency Alert and Qantas Announcement emails providing timely operational updates - to sign up see qantas.com/agencyconnect.



Window Seat

CLEARLY some people don't pack light when they travel - such as a guest in a London hotel who apparently had a suitcase filled with about £350,000 worth of jewellery.

The Metropolitan Police is now wanting to arrest a housekeeper at the unnamed Knightsbridge property, who has allegedly absconded with the glittering haul.

Scotland Yard is seeking assistance to track down the 28-year-old, with officers suspicious after she travelled to Romania a few days after the gems were stolen.

They believe it was an opportunistic theft, with a police spokesperson saying the victim has been "devastated by the loss of many valuable personal possessions".

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TK revamps LCC

TURKISH Airlines' wholly owned subsidiary AJet will commence flights next year, having rebranded from AnadoluJet.

The re-established airline is poised to serve a "broader audience with its cost-effective approach", Turkish said.



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Visit USA gives thanks to Aus



MORE than 50 media, members and partners in the US travel industry in Australia gathered in Sydney last week for The Visit USA and Brand USA breakfast.

Sponsored by Colorado Tourism Office, Arizona and Disney Destinations, the thanksgiving celebration was held at The Butler in Potts Point.

Guests were greeted with mimosas on the balcony, which overlooks the city skyline, and were also served a family-style Thanksgiving breakfast complete with pumpkin pie.

"Our annual Thanksgiving breakfast is so important to us as it gives us, alongside Brand USA, the opportunity to thank so many of our members and partners in person," Visit USA Australia President Caroline Davidson said.

"We are so grateful for the commitment and dedication

of our industry colleagues in delivering continued growth in visitation to the US."

Around 800,000 Australians have visited the US so far this year, representing a 60% increase on the same period last year, Davidson pointed out.

"This day is always a very special time as it allows us to have gratitude, thank our valuable partners, and celebrate just like our US friends and family do," Brand USA Trade Director Clinton White added.

Next on the calendar are the Visit USA Expos, which will take place in Feb 2024, with registration opening early next month for travel agents **HERE**. *JM*

Pictured: Andrea Robinson, Disney Destinations; White; Davidson; Millie Browne, Colorado Office of Tourism; & Linkd's Jack Curtis representing Arizona.

BA duty-free Avios

BRITISH Airways has introduced Avios points collection on World Duty Free purchases at London Heathrow Airport.

Executive Club Members who are also members of World Duty Free's loyalty program can collect one Avios point per £1 spent at Heathrow, as well as 250 points on their first purchase.

Avios points will be awarded within 72 hours of each eligible purchase, while savvy travellers can also use their British Airways American Express card to collect even more points on each of their purchases.

Four Seasons adds new China hotel

FOUR Seasons Hotels & Resorts has revealed plans for Chinese hotels in Suzhou and Hangzhou.

The former hotel is now accepting reservations ahead of its anticipated opening in the coming weeks.

Four Seasons is also planning its second hotel in Hangzhou, located at Hangzhou Centre.

A home in Thailand

MANDARIN Oriental Exclusive Homes has announced the launch of its first property in Thailand, Villa Mayavee.

The tropical four-bedroom mountainside retreat in Phuket is situated just a 45-minute drive from the airport, and boasts views of the Andaman Sea.

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itravel Eastern Creek opens



ITRAVEL has announced the opening of its newest store in Eastern Creek, NSW, located within Southridge Plaza.

Owner and Managing Director Julie Sebalj hosted an opening day celebration, which was attended by itravel CEO Steve Labroski and key leaders from the agency's head office.

Trade partners were also in attendance, including CVFR, Scenic, TTC Tour Brands, Princess, NIB and Norwegian Cruise Line.

"After 24 years of helping other people build their travel businesses, I thought it was time to launch my own," Sebalj shared.

National BDM Jo Howard said "itravel Eastern Creek is an exciting addition to the itravel Franchise network".

"Julie is very well respected and supported in the industry and we are thrilled to have her onboard."

Pictured: Joe Karbo, Steve Labroski, Jo Howard, Julie Sebalj, Josh Gordon, and Cherie Bowman.

ATIA UPDATE

from Nina Hedges, Compliance Manager



for your financial reports.

For those unacquainted with my infamous hat, I urge you to check out our recent webinar on Service Fees ([CLICK HERE](#)) - my hat was worn so firmly that it left a lasting mark on my forehead, and by the webinar's end, I was affectionately dubbed "the hat" instead of Nina.

So, with my hat firmly in place, I am extending a proud request for your financials for the 2023 renewal period.

This year, in accordance with the recommendation from the 2022 Independent Review of the ATAS Charter, we're requiring accountant-prepared financials, not just management accounts.

This is again underscoring our commitment to financial integrity.

Why do I proudly make this request, you ask? Because

this annual financial ritual is what ensures that the ATAS Accreditation is held only by the financially fit, and I stand by this standard with unwavering pride.

I get it - our industry is hustling hard, juggling a million tasks simultaneously and submitting financial reports to ATIA might be at the bottom of your to-do list.

But, let's flip the narrative and instead of viewing it as an arduous task, think of it as a testament to your business and something to be proud of.

Recognise the privilege of being part of this select group of industry members who operate at an elevated standard and who run financially sound businesses.

So, dust off those financial records, put on your own metaphorical compliance hat, and join me in proudly upholding the financial standards that set us apart and make ATAS the most recognised and relied upon endorsement in the industry.

As this is my last column for 2023, I want to take the opportunity to thank everyone for reading and wish everyone that is a part of our incredible industry the best for the festive season.

Cunard arrives

CUNARD'S iconic *Queen Elizabeth* has kicked off the line's 2023/24 Australian and New Zealand season, arriving in Fremantle, WA yesterday.

The local program comprises almost 60 port calls by the vessel and fleetmates *Queen Mary 2* and *Queen Victoria*, both of which will arrive in early 2024.

Carnival Australia said the trio will inject over \$81 million into local economies, with Cunard President Katie McAlister noting a strong line-up of partnerships, curated event voyages, local produce and guest speakers.

Onboard highlights during the season will include presentations by former Aussie cricket captain Kim Hughes, ex Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove, and media personality Tracy Spicer.

Performers include Brisbane circus troupe CIRCA, on board *Queen Elizabeth* for a six week residency from 01 Feb.

CZ plots Doha

CHINA Southern Airlines has released its preliminary Guangzhou-Doha schedule for the 2023/24 northern winter.

GDS screens list one daily Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner service on the route effective 21 Nov.

The Civil Aviation Administration of China earlier this month approved China Southern for seven weekly flights from both Guangzhou and Beijing to Doha.

Hamilton off market

THE owners of Hamilton Island in Qld's Whitsunday Islands have pulled the property from sale, after engaging merchant bank UBS to evaluate options ([TD 11 Sep](#)).

CEO Peter Brulisauer told the *Australian's* Lisa Allen the Oatley family has decided not to proceed with a sale, and would keep it under the current ownership under the leadership of its "exceptional management team".

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Carbon offsets “not credible”

THE travel industry needs to shift away from relying on carbon offsets and instead focus on reducing emissions per person per day, according to the co-founder and Chair of Intrepid Travel, Darrell Wade (pictured).

“Offsets have to be credible, and at the moment, they’re not...that’s the reality,” the Aussie entrepreneur recently revealed while speaking to *The Guardian*.

He also believes sustainable aviation fuel won’t be a viable option until it’s made large-scale from green hydrogen, saying “from an environmental perspective, I’d say we shouldn’t be getting in planes”.

Wade argued that “all the rhetoric in the world is not going to solve this problem... you need taxation, you need regulation, you need media pressure - you need litigation as a last resort”.

He went on to emphasise, though, that “the travel industry does an incredible amount of good”.



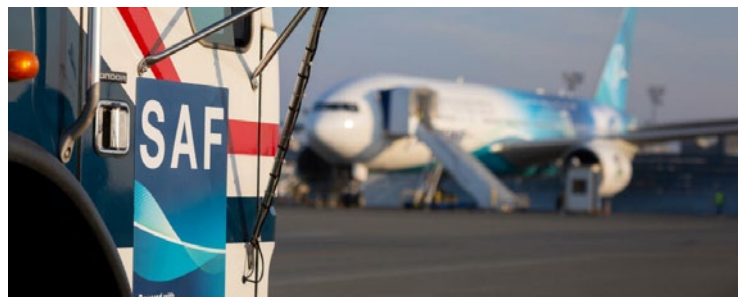
AVIATION STRIVES FOR NEW GREEN GOAL

THE global aviation industry will strive to lower carbon emissions by 5% before 2030 by using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

The agreement was made during The Third Conference on Aviation Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3), which was hosted by The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) earlier this month in Dubai.

More than 100 countries committed to the target, including the United States, which said the goal sent a “clear and positive signal” to the financial community to invest in new clean energy projects.

Some nations voiced their reservations, however, including China, which said the objective would “enormously increase” airline operating costs, while



Saudi Arabia and Iraq objected to both the target and the date.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) welcomed the agreement, saying it looks forward to governments delivering the supportive policies needed to enable aviation’s decarbonisation.

“The CAAF/3 agreement signals to the world in no uncertain terms the need for policies that enable real progress...there is no time to lose,” IATA Director

General Willie Walsh said.

“IATA now expects governments to urgently put the strongest possible policies in place to unlock the full potential of a global SAF market with an exponential increase in production.”

Walsh emphasised the urgent need for positive rather than punitive policies, which must “stimulate production, promote competition, foster innovation, and attract financing”. *JM*

Eco passport

THE Ascott Limited has launched a sustainability passport to engage guests in eco-friendly activities, wellness programs and community initiatives at its Somerset properties globally.

The Somerset Sustainability Passport Programme, which began rolling out last week, includes sustainable travel experiences; activities to enhance wellbeing; connecting guests with the local community, and more.

Pegasus adopts eco-flying platform

THE TURKISH low-cost airline Pegasus has adopted the Skybreathe 360° eco-flying platform to increase fuel efficiency and lower carbon emissions from its flights.

The tech will enable the carrier to monitor flight data, analyse various fuel-efficient procedures to implement, and identify areas of improvement.

Developed by OpenAirlines, the platform uses Big Data algorithms, machine learning and artificial intelligence to

analyse data from each flight and provide actionable insights.

Pegasus will also use the Skybreathe MyFuelCoach, which helps pilots make informed flight decisions to optimise operations and efficiency via a mobile app.

“This partnership reflects our determination to leverage advanced tech to enhance our fuel efficiency and operational practices while contributing to our 2050 Net Zero emissions target,” CEO Guliz Ozturk said.

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MONEY

WELCOME to Money, TD's Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.661

WHILE the greenback is in the drop zone for the third week in four, the Aussie has gathered substantial gains against key markets, scoring 98.21 Japanese yen for each Australian dollar, and for the same amount, exchanging 12.33 South African rand.

Brent Crude oil, benchmark of the commodity, has also struggled as it dips to the red again, hovering at US\$80.58.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.661
UK	£0.523
NZ	\$1.083
Euro	€0.603
Japan	¥98.21
Thailand	฿23.17
China	¥4.716
South Africa	12.33
Canada	\$0.900
Crude oil	US\$80.58

China lounge boost

PLAZA Premium Lounge has expanded its China portfolio with three new lounges at Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport.

The new lounges will offer a place for travellers to relax, eat, drink, work and refresh before flying, with a modern and warm interior and local signature dishes like ramen on offer.

The first lounge is slated to open this month, while the remaining two are set to launch later this year and in early 2024.

Sunshine Coast winners shine



THE annual Queensland Tourism Awards took place in Cairns over the weekend, with multiple Sunshine Coast tourism operators taking home a plethora of gongs.

Acknowledging the effort and professionalism of Sunshine Coast tourism operators, Visit Sunshine Coast CEO Matt Stoeckel congratulated all the award winners and nominees.

"I want to particularly congratulate Josh Donohoe and the Creative Tours team for their double gold in the awards," Stoeckel shared, highlighting Creative Tours' win in both the 'Tour and Transport Operators' & 'Excellence in Food' categories.

"It is the perfect end to the year to be able to celebrate the local operators who have contributed so much to showcasing the region's tourism excellence."

The Sunshine Coast also saw some winners in the 'Hosted Accommodation' category, with Narrows Escape Rainforest Retreat walking away with gold and Bli Bli House Riverside Retreat scoring silver.

RACV Noosa Resort also won silver in the Self Contained Accommodation category,

while Visit Sunshine Coast was recognised with silver in the Richard Power Award for Tourism Marketing and Campaigns for Australia's Craft Beer Capital.

Also a Richard Power Award winner, Tourism Noosa earned bronze for its Find Your Inner Noosa Winter Campaign.

Other Sunshine Coast winners on the night included Glass on Glasshouse and Pelican Boat Hire.

Queensland Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe, who made an appearance at the event, said the ceremony has successfully celebrated another "extraordinary year of accomplishments". *MW*

AA axes SEA-LHR

AMERICAN Airlines has announced the discontinuation of its long-haul flights between Seattle and London Heathrow.

It was AA's last international route out of the west coast city, but oneworld partner British Airways will continue to operate Seattle services from London.

AA will utilise the LHR slot freed up by the move to instead operate a second daily Miami-London flight from 01 Apr.

Destination Canada appoints Birse

JANAYA Birse has been appointed as Media Director for Destination Canada, taking over from Pip Macken who is leaving the organisation after 12 years.

Macken, who steps down this Thu, shared "this decision hasn't been made lightly but comes from a place of excitement for new horizons and a chance to explore some personal opportunities".

Birse brings extensive experience, including roles representing South African Tourism, Hawaii, Oman, VisitBritain, IHG and more.

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of delectable dining locations, craft breweries, and roof-top bars to make sure your days end as magically as they started.

STAY IN ANAHEIM

The **Desert Palms Hotel and Suites** is located within a 10-minute walk to the Disneyland Resort. Choose from kid suites with bunk beds, deluxe studio suites and kitchen suites plus complimentary daily hot breakfast buffet and Wi-Fi.

The **Best Western Stovalls Hotels** has no less than 4 hotels located just minutes away from the Happiest Place on Earth! The 4 hotels are certified Disney Good Neighbor Hotels, and AAA 3 diamond rated.

The **Great Wolf Lodge Garden Grove** is located 2.5km away from Disneyland. 603 guest rooms, 6 on site restaurants,

6 bars and other onsite attractions. All guest room reservations includes passes to their 105,000 sq.ft of indoor waterpark and free entertainment.

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