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Fri 03 Sep 10

Page 1

EDITORS: Bruce Piper and Guy Dundas E-mail: info@traveldaily.com.au Ph: 1300 799 220



### **VA to Singapore**

VIRGIN Blue has revealed in its application of authorisation to the ACCC for a proposed alliance with Etihad Airways (*TD* 26 Aug) that it intends on flying into Singapore.

Virgin says it has agreed with Etihad to launch a thrice weekly V Australia 777 service between Brisbane and Abu Dhabi, via Singapore, commencing Feb 2012.

Currently, Etihad operates its services from BNE to AUH via Singapore on Mon, Thu and Sat, departing at 12:15pm and arriving into the UAE capital at 23:20pm.

### **U2** giveaway

AA APPOINTMENTS is offering travel industry staffers who register for a new job with the recruitment agency between 01 Sep and 30 Nov the chance to win VIP tickets for the U2 concert in Sydney on 13 Dec.

See page 8 for today's AA jobs.

### **QH Trip bonuses**

QANTAS Holidays/Viva! Holidays is offering a range of Sep bonuses for its Trip loyalty program - details on page nine.

### Today's *Travel Daily*

*Travel Daily* today has seven pages of news and photos, plus a full pages from:

- AA Appointments
- Qantas Holidays

### DJ/EY seek early approval

VIRGIN Blue is calling on the Australian competition watchdog to grant 'interim authorisation' for its tie-up with Etihad Airways (TD 26 Aug) by as early as next Fri, "to ensure the new V Australia services are able to successfully commence" by Feb next year, Travel Daily can reveal.

The request is part of a 39-page submission that Virgin Blue and Etihad has presented to the Australian Competition Consumer Commission, to support the pact.

The detailed document provides information on a number of other important aspects of the DJ/EY alliance and also spells out Virgin Blue's aim "to challenge Qantas' supremacy" in terms of business and int'l travel for Aussies.

Virgin says it needs as much time as possible to begin selling and marketing the Abu Dhabi route, and is hopeful of tentative approval by next Fri 10 Sep, "given the urgency, and the fact that the alliance will not result in any detriment, but will immediately create benefits."

The carriers say their alliance is "clearly pro-competitive" and that Virgin Blue would not be able to "viably" pull off flights to Abu Dhabi in its own right, in competition against Etihad.

The airlines say they will

actually suffer detriment if the interim authority is not forthcoming, as they need time to develop a customer base and distribution channels, and have their product featured in tour brochures and holiday packages.

Virgin says it requires at least six to nine months lead time "to build customer demand" for its new long-haul Abu Dhabi route, pointing out the failure of its Melbourne-Johannesburg route was due, in part, to not establishing a brand presence in new markets beforehand.

DJ admitted the recent renewal of the Qantas and South African Airways codeshare (*TD* 19 Aug) meant "there was no chance of being able to effectively compete" and as a result, abandoned its only "loss making" Africa route.

It's not viable for V Australia to compete on routes against incumbent carriers with global networks servicing the market, like Qantas, DJ said.

Virgin has told the ACCC a decision to grant interim authorisation "will not prejudge the final authorisation", saying it is not necessary for the watchdog to decide whether the Alliance "satisfies the authorisation test."

For a full report on the issues raised by DJ/EY see pages 4 and 5.



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HERE are the latest snow falls, depths and ski lifts in operation across the region:

- Falls Creek 137cm / 15 lifts
- Perisher 182.9cm / 44 lifts
- Thredbo 192.5m / 13 lifts
- Selwyn 110cm / 10 lifts
- Mt Buller 117cm / 19 lifts
- Mt Hotham 151cm / 12 lifts
- Coronet Peak 120cm/ 8 lifts
- The Remarkables- 110cm/7 lifts
- Mt Hutt 205cm / 4 lifts MTA Qantas record

THE MTA network of home-

achieved \$1 million in reported

QF regional gm Andrew Hogg

said the carrier was thrilled with

the result, with the milestone

being the first time in Mobile

Travel Agents of Australia's 10

single airline in a single week.

strength of the MTA network of

and of the professionalism and

success of our members," said

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year history that over \$1 million

in sales had been achieved with a

"It is testament to the growing

cash sales for Qantas.

based travel consultants last week

# push for premium pax

QANTAS is intending to offer its First Class passengers upmarket Marc Newson-designed First Lounges in Los Angeles, Hong Kong and Singapore, as it continues its focus on the premium segment.

QF already offers the Sofitelmanaged lounges at Melbourne and Sydney international, with the concept's expansion to the overseas ports signalled in the QF annual report released today.

The lounges offer a day spa, restaurant, library, private work suites and concierge services.

The focus on the premium segment is also reflected in plans for a revamped domestic business class product over the next year, according to ceo Alan Joyce.

Other initiatives will include new domestic Neil Perry-designed business class menus "more consistent with our international offering," and a new inflight entertainment format.

offering a winter special (Nov-Apr) on its Two Capitals Tour which is priced at just \$1240 per person.

The package includes two nights

Joyce also confirmed a "significant refresh" of the Qantas Club lounge facilities, which will also include new food menus designed by Neil Perry.

Plans for the coming year also include a major refurbishment of the QF campus in Mascot, NSW.

Two documents were released today - the annual report as well as an "annual review" which contained much of the same info apart from financial details.

The annual report includes the remuneration of senior executives including Joyce, whose total pay was just shy of \$3 million, incl \$1.73m in salary plus share-based payments of \$964,000.

Jetstar ceo Bruce Buchanan received \$1.1m in total, with a \$776,000 base salary and shares worth \$225,000, while Qantas Group Executive Rob Gurney was paid \$509,000 plus benefits which took his total package to \$1.1m.

Base salaries for other senior staff included \$775,000 for Lyell Strambi, \$663,000 for frequent flyer chief Simon Hickey and \$618,000 for Risk Officer Rob Kella.

### Explorer fare update

THE oneworld alliance has announced changes to its Global Explorer fares, with additions including fares ex Georgia and the economy booking class for Air Pacific changed from L to M class.

Effective immediately, Royal Jordanian has also been added to the oneworld Circle Asia and South West Pacific Explorer Fares.



DIVERS investigating a 200-yearold shipwreck in the Baltic Sea have discovered what they say is the world's oldest drinkable beer.

They were actually trying to salvage champagne from the wreck, but also discovered a handful of beer bottles - which the divers immediately sampled.

"Researchers who tried drops of the dark, foamy liquid liked the taste of it," said a spokesman for the team, Bjorn Haggblom.

**TECHNOLOGY** has once again come to the fore in Japan, where a beach town is offering "virtual girlfriends" to attract nerdy male visitors.

A series of special 2D barcodes has been set up in locations across Atami, and when tourists point their smartphones at them the system creates a snapshot of them with an "augmented reality" female cartoon character from a Nintendo DS console game called Love Plus.

Local hotels have jumped on the gadget bandwagon, with one property offering rooms with barcodes which allow the geeks to visualise their girlfriends in an extremely brief "summer kimono".

The local business association stressed that there is no sexual content in the game, saying "the virtual girls can kiss you as a way of communication, but nothing happens when she sleeps next to you at the hotel".

### Russia winter deal

**RUSSIAN** Travel Centre is

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### **ANZCRO top for Tranz Scenic**



ABOVE: New Zealand specialist wholesaler ANZCRO was this week named the number one Australian wholesaler/operator for NZ's Tranz Scenic Train network for 2009/10.

ANZCRO was the top producer for Tranz Scenic's rail services which include the TranzAlpine, The TranzCoastal and The Overlander.

Local Tranz Scenic rep Ray Lane is pictured centre presenting the

award to ANZCRO staff on Tue, from left: md Owen Eagles; Deborah Farquhar, client services; Jill Hoare, product mgr; and Chris Gowing, marketing team leader.

### Value appointment

**VALUE** Tours has promoted Elizabeth Laugher to the role of Marketing Manager, moving from her previous position as online marketing executive for the ski and snow holiday wholesaler.

### LH Singapore boost | Greyhound growth

LUFTHANSA will increase its flights between Singapore and Munich to a daily operation from 27 Mar 2011, according to GDS.

The northern summer will also see LH increase Munich flights to Seoul, Mumbai and Miami.

### Arrivals stay stable

THE trend estimate for short term visitor arrivals into Australia during Jul was static, after marginal decreases in May and Jun according to ABS figures released this morning.

Seasonally adjusted estimates showed a drop of 1.5% compared to Jun, while the trend estimate for departures continued to grow, up 1.2% month on month.

The year-on-year arrivals figures showed strong growth from Asia, with visitors from China up 39%, from Japan up 25% and Korea up 18% versus Jul 09.

For departures, there's been a big jump in travel to Indonesia (up 35%), the US (up 24%), China (up 27%), Singapore (up 22%) and Vietnam (up 19%) compared to the corresponding period in 2009.

**GREYHOUND** Australia has announced a new agreement with Australia Wide Coaches which will allow customers to now book travel between Sydney and the NSW regional city of Orange on Australia Wide's daily services via Katoomba and Bathurst.

Greyhound ceo Robert Thomas said the deal would give Australia Wide access to the Grevhound worldwide customer base, and also came just in time for the upcoming Bathurst 1000 V8 supercar event in Oct.





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### VIRGIN BLUE-ETIHAD SPECIAL REPORT

### Alliance to compete with Qantas

THE proposed joint venture between Virgin Blue and Etihad Airways, combined with planned alliances with Delta Air Lines and Air New Zealand, will mean Virgin can "genuinely compete with Qantas' international network", the Australian carrier says.

Virgin Blue believes the Alliance with EY will enhance competition in international aviation to and from Australia, and make DJ a second Australian international network carrier, a move likely to "stimulate a competitive response from Qantas."

DJ says the links with EY, DL and NZ will "present a credible network offer" to lure corporate and government markets, in which tenders are commonly negotiated on a network-wide basis.

The combined Alliance would give Virgin Blue access to an int'l network of over 300 destinations.

DJ's objective to increase its network will enable it to better compete for a higher share of the corporate market, which will see Virgin Blue "challenge Qantas' supremacy in terms of int'l and corporate travel for Australians and promoting further competitive response from Qantas."

Virgin says its JV with Etihad will enhance domestic competition between itself and

the Qantas-Jetstar Group, "as it will give Virgin Blue the opportunity to better match Qantas' network, feeder traffic and distribution strength."

Virgin has said there are no other airlines which have a comparable network of domestic and international services as QF, and as such other airlines cannot fulfil a significant portion of a company's travel needs.

It also highlighted that Qantas' method of contracting and bundling services for corportate travellers, "allows it to leverage their domestic and international network in such a way that other carriers find it difficult to compete."

DJ says Australian consumers will benefit from the improved competition, which will increase consumer choice and stimulate additional competition in both domestic and int'l passenger air services markets.

### **Metal neutrality**

VIRGIN Blue and Etihad say they need to jointly set schedules and fares "in order to achieve metal neutrality".

DJ said there's no other possible scenario under which it would be able to commence viable services to Europe via any other midpoint.



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#### www.hrgworldwide.com HRG Australia. A Hogg Robinson Group company

### **New VA destinations**

AS PART of Virgin Blue's planned pact with Etihad, the DJ network of global destinations will increase by over 20 cities through code share services, effective 01 Oct.

New DJ destinations, serviced by Etihad, include Cairo, Doha, Athens, Manchester, Dublin, Munich, Chicago, Toronto, Beijing, Bangkok, Colombo, Kuala Lumpur, Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

The 'reciprocal freesale code share' agreement under bilateral rights will permit Virgin Blue to offer passengers services including from Sydney-Moscow, Gold Coast-Abu Dhabi, Uluru-London, Perth-Athens, Brisbane-Manchester, Cairns-Munich or Melbourne-Frankfurt, for example.

Under the alliance, DJ can also immediately sell interline services on all Etihad destinations.

### JNB/HKT losses

VIRGIN Blue says "urgency" on an interim authorisation for its Alliance with Etihad Airways (page one) is also necessary so it can avoid loosing more money on its other "loss making" Africa and Thailand routes.

DJ says it needs an OK on its Abu Dhabi service immediately "so that it can recoup lost sales from ceasing to offer these other services."

Virgin said in its submission to the competition watchdog that its Boeing 777 aircraft is not suited to the Phuket market, which is an "outbound leisure" sector.

# **Etihad dissatisfied** with Qantas pact

ETIHAD Airways believes Virgin Blue will be "a better strategic partner going forward", compared to its previous code share agreement with Qantas.

In its submission, the Alliance says there was a significant overlap between Qantas and Etihad, and that the UAE carrier "has not been satisfied" with QF's level of support and investment in their partnership.



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### EY SYD time change

ETIHAD Airways is likely to retime a portion of its existing 11 weekly Sydney-Abu Dhabi services should the DJ/EY Alliance gain approval, Virgin says.

The time slot change will "be attractive for passengers" and allows the carriers to "optimise behind and beyond connections" to both airline's networks, and means efficient utilisation of V Australia's Boeing 777 aircraft.

### Alliance duration

THE Alliance between Virgin Blue and Etihad Airways will be for "no earlier than five years", consistent with the period granted for the Qantas/British Airways Joint Services Agreement and the V Australia/Delta Air Lines joint venture.

DJ and EY expect to reach an agreement on schedule and fares once granted interm authorisation (as soon as 10 Sep), at which time they'll begin joint marketing and selling the new services.

The reciprocal code share will be initiated from 01 Oct.

In the long-term, Virgin Blue and Etihad say there are potential additional synergies to be struck, including further product alignment, combined airport processes, staff travel reciprocity and joint sales & marketing.

There's also the potential of broader cooperation on aircraft maintenance and ground handling in five years.

### Poly Blue/EY tie up

THE Virgin Blue/Etihad Airways Alliance will extend beyond DJ's domestic, V Australia's int'l and Pacific Blue Tasman and Pacific operations, to include a code share agreement between the Polynesian Blue subsidiary, sometime in the future.



### VIRGIN BLUE-ETIHAD SPECIAL REPORT

### DJ/EY pact to stimulate tourism

THE Australian tourism industry as well as potential and existing Virgin Blue and Etihad Airways passengers will directly benefit from the proposed Alliance, the carriers say in their submission to the ACCC

The airlines claim that the Alliance will stimulate tourism to Australia, particularly to cities beyond the main international gateways of Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

They say that V Australia's new Sydney-Abu Dhabi service, to debut in Feb next year, will provide Australian travellers with more choices flying to the UAE and onwards to Europe, the Middle

### JQ's reaction

THE mooted Etihad-V Australia flights to Singapore (page one) would see a second low cost Australian carrier operating to the Asian hub, alongside Jetstar, which plans its own long-haul Singapore services from 16 Dec.

Jetstar spokesman Simon Westaway, told TD yesterday the carrier's "strategic decision to consolidate its Asian hub in Singapore is paying real dividends for our Pan Asian Strategy."

Singapore currently supports over 20 direct Jetstar flight markets, expanding its hub by 46% in the past financial year, and will support future daily MEL-SIN A330 services later this year in its next phase of growth, Westaway said.

East, South Asia and Africa, and vice versa

It will also provide passengers with access to improved online connections and a broader schedule or air services, be it on Virgin Blue or Etihad aircraft.

"Increased passenger numbers on these services will have a direct benefit for tourism to Australia," the submission says.

The Alliance will give Etihad the chance to promote its combined Virgin Blue services to new destinations, which "were previously unavailable without the inconvenience and costs associated with switching airlines."

"The combination of the creation of a new service and intensive marketing of the destination can actually generate tourism from a source population to a particular destination", which would benefit regional economies around destinations served under the Alliance, Virgin Blue says.

#### VA/DL decision?

VIRGIN Blue's desire to have the ACCC grant 'interim authorisation' for its Alliance with Etihad by 10 Sep (page one) could be an early sign that Virgin is expecting a green light from US authorities on its tie-up with Delta Air Lines.

It's been expected for months that the V Australia/Delta joint venture would gain approval in the month of Sep.

### **AUS vital to Etihad**

ETIHAD Airways will look to use the proposed Alliance with Virgin Blue to improve its brand presence and services in and out of Australia, a destination that accounts for over 10% of EY's available seat kilometres.

EY says it considers Australia to be of "great strategic importance" because of its location, and believes the Alliance will enhance its position here for the corporate sector, and will enable it to target domestic Australian destinations that are not serviced by Etihad.

The carrier also says the pact will offer a more competitive product in order to compete more effectively with rivals, Emirates and Qantas.

### QR still keen on SYD

QATAR Airways is still hopeful of launching direct Doha-Sydney services this year, according to the joint Virgin Blue/Etihad Airways submission to the ACCC lodged this week.

Virgin says as part of QR's growing presence in Australia, the airline is planning to launch daily non-stop flights to Sydney using a Boeing 777-200LR in 2010.

The allegation is made despite Qatar Airways remaining tightlipped about its entry into the NSW capital any time soon, with Sydney appearing to have fallen off QR's radar for the immediate future, as flagged earlier this year by Travel Daily.



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### Don't forget to enter our



**EXCLUSIVE** to the 2010 Northern Hemisphere Ski Issue (Mon), **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win an amazing ski holiday in Switzerland, courtesy of Switzerland Tourism, Saas-Fee and Swiss Travel System.

The prize includes: seven nights accommodation in a 3-star selfcatering apartment in Saas-Fee, Valais Switzerland for two people; a four day ski pass and first class travel on all public transport within Switzerland with Swiss Passes.

Send in a caption to go with the photo pictured above for your chance to win.

Email your answer to:

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# WIN A HOLIDAY FOR TWO TO HAWAII







During September, *Travel Daily* is giving readers the chance to win an incredible seven-day holiday to Hawaii, courtesy of **Hawaii**Tourism, Hawaiian Airlines and Aqua Hotels and Resorts.

This fantastic prize includes return economy airfares from Sydney to Honolulu with Hawaiian Airlines, six nights accommodation at your choice of an Aqua property in Waikiki and return transfers with a lei greeting.

Each day *Travel Daily* will ask a Hawaii-related question – just read the issue and email us your answer. At the end of the month the subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this fantastic Hawaii holiday.



Q.3: How many hotels are there in Aqua Hotels & Resorts' product range located on O'ahu?

Email your answer to: hawaiicomp@traveldaily.com.au

Hint! Visit www.hawaiitourism.com.au

Plus, a daily prize of the new Jack Johnson CD -To The Sea (pictured to the right) will be awarded for the first correct entry received, thanks to **Universal Music Australia**.



Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: Polly Britten from Flight Centre Bathurst.

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### Polar Air cargo fine

POLAR Air Cargo LCC has agreed to pay the US Dept of Justice a US\$17.4m fine for its involvement in an air cargo cartel that fixed fuel surcharges on commercial services to Australia, between Jan 2000 and Apr 2003.



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EDITORS: Bruce Piper & Guy Dundas E-mail: info@traveldaily.com.au

### **TD** winner meets Minnie

JUST as this year's Travel Daily footy tipping competitions draw to a close, last year's NRL tipping winner sent in the photo at right which shows him enjoying his Disneyland prize.

Nathaniel Foster from Qantas won a fantastic trip for two courtesy of Travel2 and Delta Air Lines, and is pictured meeting Minne Mouse in California.

This year's AFL competition has now wrapped up, while today is the last day for NRL tips to be entered in the last round, with all of the winners to be announced next Fri.



### **Behind the scenes**

TODAY Travel Daily TV
features a 'behind
the scenes' video
of the filming of
the Talking Travel
segment

highlighting the new TV campaign promoting Tempo Hols' Egypt program (*TD* 25 Aug)

The commercials differ from other industry promotions because they use real travel professionals to discuss the features and benefits of the products, with presenters from across the industry who applied for the roles via a call for auditions in *TD*.

"The use of real experts is one of the more powerful aspects of the program," said the company's founder Brendon Drake, with the team online at talkingtravel.com.au.

Click on the logo above or see traveldaily.com.au for the video.

### **UAE** inbound stats

ONLY 6.1% of a total 728,000 passengers heading to Australia from the UAE in 2009 actually ended their journey here, ranking Australia as the 6th most popular int'l destination for UAE travellers.

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### TRAVEL DAILY EXCLUSIVE

# Celebrity Interview with Rob Palmer

Dtium

This issue *Travel Daily* interviews
celebrity carpenter
and last weekend's *Dancing with the Stars*winner Rob Palmer.

Palmer is also the resident chippie on Better Homes and Gardens, having started his TV career after an initial stint with his own building firm.

He's also a spokesman for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, having been diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes aged seven.

TD caught up with him at an event this week, as he basked in the glow of scoring three perfect tens during the Ch 7 final to take out the coveted mirror ball trophy.

What is the highlight of your career? Happened last Sunday. Won Dancing With The Stars.

What is your favourite holiday spot and why?

Oh geez tough. For a proper holiday the Cook Islands. It's as far away from anything that anything can be and when you're there you're really on holidays.

What is one thing you cannot leave home without?

My blood sugar machine, my insulin, everything. My little bum bag with all my diabetes stuff.

What is the most common thing you leave home without?

Oh gee, um, I don't know. I don't really leave home without anything. Oh - my phone charger!

Do you have an embarrassing travel story you can share with us?

I was in Las Vegas with four mates, we'd been out. We'd had a big night. We'd got home very late, packed the car in a rush and I left my bum bag with all my diabetes medicine on the bumper bar of the car and then we drove off on our way to LA. An hour and a half into the

trip I started looking through all our stuff and the boys realized that I'd forgotten something and without saying a word the driver's turned around and looked at me. I nodded, he nodded. He stopped, turned around and we drove an hour and a half back to Vegas looking for something we didn't even know was going to be there. Luckily the guy who owned the hotel had seen it fall off the bumper bar - it was a little motel on the side of the road in Vegas we were very surprised it was there, but he found it, and kept it for us. And what was supposed to be a two and a half hour journey, turned out to be a six hour trip and the boys were not very happy at all!

What features do you look for when choosing a hotel?

Really it just needs a bed and a shower. I'm not too fussy.

What's your favourite piece of luggage? Just a satchel bag. I like to travel light. Who is the one person you wish you could sit next to on a plane and why? Probabally, Angus Young from AC/DC just to find out what he's really like.



*Travel Dally* is offering a fabulous prize today in conjunction with our Rob Palmer interview - a hammer personally autographed by the celebrity carpenter.

The hammer, along with a one year Better Homes and Gardens magazine subscription, will be sent to the tenth *TD* reader who correctly answers - In what year did



Dancing with the Stars begin in Australia? - robcomp@traveldaily.com.au.

### Sweet bmi giveaway

BMI is giving away four places for travel agents at each of two upcoming update events at the Lindt Cafe.

Following a briefing on bmi's product with delicious hot chocolate, guests will enjoy a Chocolate Master Class by Lindt's Maitre Chocolatier.

The events will take place in Sydney on 16 Sep and in Melbourne the following day.

To enter simply name three European cities that bmi operates to, and email your answer along with your city of choice to: bmi@discovertheworld.com.au.

### **Qantas ROE update**

QANTAS has revised its Rate of Exchange, effective 01 Sep 2010, to 1.092542.

#### Delta's new interior

DELTA Air Lines has unveiled plans for its fleet of 16 Boeing 747-400 aircraft, which will see a revitalisation of their interiors.

The upgrades include new fully horizontal flat bed seats in the BusinessElite cabin and new Economy class seats featuring in seat on-demand entertainment and more under seat storage.

The rollout of the upgraded jumbo seating is scheduled to commence from next year.

### **Travel Corp event**

TRAVEL consultants are being advised to save the date for the 2011 Europe trade show featuring Trafalgar, Insight Vacations, Contiki, Busabout Europe and Uniworld Boutique River Cruises, between 18 Oct and 08 Nov 2010.

Invitations will be sent out in the next few weeks.

### Blue Lagoon cruise

BLUE Lagoon Cruises in Fiji is reminding agents that its early bird rate 30% discount on the 'Historical and Cultural Dateline Cruise' is ending on 15 Oct.

The cruise stops at Fiji's popular and secluded islands, onboard the *MV Mystique Princess*, and departs on 22 Nov.

Prices start from \$2450ppts.

# Travel Daily

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### Kakadu drops 20%

KAKADU National Park visitor numbers have dropped by 20% this year, according to staff at the popular NT tourist attraction.

Imelda Dover, manager of visitor services at Kakadu said that 95% of visitors surveyed say they are satisfied with the experience and the introduction of a \$25 entrance fee for non-Territorians, does not seem to be the reason for the drop off

### Fraser tourism fight

FRASER Island tour operators have critisied a State Opposition plan to close parts of the world's largest sand island.

A discussion paper was released earlier this week by the Liberal National Party, suggesting that parts of the island be closed on a rotation system for regeneration and to limit the number of visitors.

Fraser Island Four Wheel Drive Hire Association member, David Robertson said people are already making rotation decisions for themselves so the LNP does not need to be implementing stricter regulations.

"When you look at impacts of visitation in areas, you find if you have a large number of people dispersed over a broad period of time, the impacts can be regulated and maintained at a lower level", Robertson said.

### Samoa ferry safety

THE Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade is advising Samoa-bound travellers to take caution when choosing to do adventure sports and inter-islands trips, as operators/ferries do not always meet proper safety standards.

Smartraveller says Aussies should check the credentials and safety equipment before to ensure travel insurance policies will cover the planned activity.

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