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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Friday 28th December 2012

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## BA to interline with CZ

**CHINA** Southern Airlines has signed a new interline agreement with British Airways.

The move is understood to involve significant cooperation between the carriers, covering 33 destinations across the UK and Europe with connections via CZ's London Heathrow flights which launched in Jun this year.

China Southern gm Si Xianmin has also pledged to further develop the airline's 'Canton Route' which connects its Australian flights to Europe via Guangzhou.

Speaking at a conference in China this week, Si said the city is an "ideal transit hub" between Europe and Australia, with the initiative showing good success.

## Tauk about the US

**TRAVEL** The World has released the new Tauk World Discovery 2013 USA & Canada brochure.

The program introduces five new itineraries including *Hidden Gems of New England*, *Grand New England*, *The Hudson Valley*, *New Mexico: Land of Enchantment* and the intriguing *The Tauk Baseball Event*.

More info 1300 804 522.

## New Georgia route

**FLYGEORGIA**, a startup carrier in the eastern European nation of Georgia, has announced the debut of direct flights between Dubai and its capital Tbilisi.

## 3rd Oasis-class ship for RCI

**ROYAL** Caribbean this morning announced a firm order for a third Oasis-class vessel, with the 5400-passenger ship set to join the mammoth *Oasis of the Seas* and *Allure of the Seas* in 2016.

The move was flagged in Oct, with extended negotiations since then seeing the vessel constructed by STX in France.

Royal Caribbean Cruises Limited ceo Richard Fain said that *Oasis* and *Allure* had "fundamentally transformed the cruise experience for our guests.

"These ships have consistently generated outstanding guest satisfaction ratings and continue to produce superior financial results," he said.

The newbuild contract includes a one-year option for a fourth Oasis-class vessel which, if confirmed, would be delivered in the middle of 2018.

Interestingly, the deal also includes the transfer of the *Atlantic Star* cruise ship, operated by Spanish cruise line Pullmantur,

## Shrinking Gulf Air

**GULF** Air has flagged further service reductions from next month, including reduced frequencies from Bahrain to Bangkok, Frankfurt, Manila, Paris, Chennai, Colombo, Dhaka, Kathmandu and Khartoum.

The carrier is also suspending flights to Copenhagen, Rome, Aden, Erbil and Kabul.

as part of the payment consideration.

*Atlantic Star* is well known to the Australian market, having previously sailed under the P&O Cruises banner as *Pacific Sky* between 2000 and 2006 - including the infamous Diane Brimble onboard death in 2005.

*Oasis of the Seas* debuted in Nov 2009 with a range of industry firsts including a massive 'Central Park' in the centre of the ship which enabled the creation of inward-looking balcony cabins.

It also offers an aquatic amphitheatre, scores of restaurants, an onboard zip-line and ice skating rink and two FlowRider surf simulators.

A statement from Royal Caribbean today said that its annualised compound capacity growth rate remains at a "historically low" 3.5% between 2012 and 2016.

## Strong year for Hawaii

**THE** Hawaii Tourism Authority says it's expecting a record-breaking full year result for 2012, with visitor expenditure surging almost 20% for the year to 30 Nov to a total of \$12.9 billion and expectations of almost 7.9 arrivals.

The \$2.1 billion increase means that visitors spent on average \$193 each per day over the 11 month period, with HTA ceo Mike McCartney saying that was a hefty \$16 increase on last year.

"The HTA's continual efforts to increase airlift and distribution throughout the state have led to incremental growth in visitor arrivals and expenditures across the four major islands," he said.

McCartney said the organisation is continuing to be optimistic looking forward, with the greatest potential coming from international markets including Asia and Oceania "as a result of numerous new flights and increases in flight frequency in 2012, with more expected in 2013".

## IATA's NDC revealed

**THE** International Air Transport Association is planning a 2013 roadshow to provide further information on its controversial 'New Distribution Capability' (**TD 17 Oct**), with IATA's Director - Passenger Eric Leopold saying it will "help close the gap between the merchandising offers available on airline websites and the offers that travel agents are able to book."

In an interview with US website *Travel Market Report* Leopold downplayed suggestions that NDC would replace current GDS offerings, but would instead define a standard Application Program Interface (API) which will enable standardised development of new distribution solutions.

"With an open API, anyone can use it to develop applications, as opposed to today's GDS, which are proprietary solutions," he said.

But "NDC is not a GDS bypass and is not a travel agent bypass...it gives GDS and travel agents the ability to access the same product offers when airlines sell their products directly to consumers via their websites".

The report says IATA is aiming for NDC to make it easier for airlines to sell diverse products, as well as developing standards to allow airlines to connect with distributors without "reinventing the wheel for every connection".

## US flights disrupted

**A MASSIVE** winter storm has caused flight chaos across the north-eastern USA this week, affecting the Christmas travel plans of thousands of passengers.

About 30cm of snow fell on parts of the continent, with northern New England and New York the worst affected areas.

1500 domestic services were cancelled on Boxing Day.

Today's Travel Daily

Travel Daily today has four pages of news & photos.

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## Portuguese airport portfolio sold

**THE** government of Portugal has announced the acquisition of ANA, which runs the country's ten key airports, by a French firm called Vinci Concessions.

The deal includes the rights to run the airports in Lisbon, Porto, Faro and Beja on the mainland as well as six facilities in the Azores and Madeira for 50 years, including managing airport facilities, commercial activities, ground handling services, safety and security and passenger assistance operations.

The move will boost Vinci's portfolio to 23 airports managed in Portugal, France and Cambodia handling around 40 million passengers every year.

The Lisbon hub is claimed to have a major advantage due to its strategic position in relation to high growth destinations such as Brazil and Portuguese-speaking African countries including Angola and Mozambique.

Vinci Airports will have annual revenue of more than €600m.

## QR expands Thailand

**QATAR** Airways is set to boost its presence in Thailand with the addition of a fourth daily direct flight between Doha and Bangkok.

The additional service will commence 20 Feb, with the carrier continuing to deploy its 777 aircraft on the route.

"Our strategy has always been to serve popular routes with multi-frequency flights, and Bangkok is an example," said QR ceo Akbar al-Baker.

The addition of more aircraft to the Qatar Airways fleet will see even more expansion in the coming months, with the carrier set to launch new destinations including Gassim in Saudi Arabia on 07 Jan; Najaf in Iran on 23 Jan; flights to Phnom Penh in Cambodia on 20 Feb; Chengdu in China on 19 Mar; Chicago in the USA on 10 Apr; and Salalah in Oman on 22 May.

## Emirates aces ATP tennis

**EMIRATES** today expanded its program of sports sponsorship with a new global partnership which will see it become the Official Airline of the Association of Tennis Professionals World Tour.

EK will also become the new title sponsor of the ATP rankings effective from 01 January, with the five year deal giving the carrier an on-site presence at tournaments across the season.

Emirates is already involved in tennis as the sponsor of a range of events including the Emirates Airline US Open Series.

"Through our global network and carefully selected sports sponsorships Emirates successfully unites and engages fans and we look forward to working with the ATP to maximise the customer experiential and digital media opportunities this

## Alaskan Dream adds

**ALASKAN** Dream Cruises has announced the addition of a third vessel in 2013, complementing its current fleet of *Admiralty Dream* and *Alaskan Dream*.

The 62-passenger *Baranof Dream* will operate a range of voyages including a new 11-day itinerary called 'Admiralty, Baranof and Chichagof Explorer'.

The company launched just last year and is expanding following strong demand for its product.

Alaskan Dream Cruises was started by the Allen family, who are members of Alaska's Tlingit Kaagwaantaan Clan.

## Double QF hotels pts

**QANTAS** is offering double frequent flyer points on selected partner hotels for bookings made via its website, which is powered by the Hooroo.com offshoot.

A sale which launched yesterday is offering savings on a range of properties including Rendezvous, Oaks and more, with offers available until midnight on Sun.

See [hotels.qantas.com.au](http://hotels.qantas.com.au).

sponsorship presents to us," said Emirates Executive Vice Chairman, Sir Maurice Flanagan.

Emirates takes over the ATP Official Airline role from South African Airways, which has worked with the organisation since 2006.

**MEANWHILE** Emirates also yesterday launched a range of New Year fare deals including return UK flights from Australia for just \$1783.

Special offers are available to more than 120 destinations, valid for booking between 26 Dec and 10 Jan - including new destinations Warsaw from \$1607 and Lyon from \$1636.

There are also deals available to the UAE and Africa as well as Asia including Bangkok, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

EK is heavily promoting itself across the country currently, including cinema advertising highlighting its new 'Hello Tomorrow' tagline.

## Bangkok Airways boost

**BANGKOK** Airways has announced the addition of two new routes, including the resumption of flights between Bangkok and Krabi from 31 Mar.

It's nearly five years since PG flew to Krabi, with the new plans indicating double daily A320 flights on the route.

PG will also expand its operations in Myanmar with the launch of a new four times weekly flight between Bangkok and Mandalay effective 16 Sep.

Bangkok Airways will be the third foreign carrier to operate flights to Myanmar, which is the country's second biggest city.

## GBTA appointment

**THE** Global Business Travel Association has announced the appointment of Carole Poillerat as the new Vice President for GBTA in France.

Poillerat is Global Category Leader, Meetings & Events for pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca.

## A friendly Irish gathering



**TOURISM** Ireland's Australia and New Zealand manager Diane Butler recently visited Ireland for a series of meetings with key members of the Irish travel industry as well as colleagues within the organisation.

While in Belfast and Dublin, Butler met with some of her predecessors who have been repositioned into other markets

or placed into other roles within the Tourism Ireland group.

Butler is **pictured** above left with Tourism Ireland's Southern Europe manager Billy Condon; Monica MacLavery (nee Nerney) who's now working in the role of Overseas Manager for next year's major The Gathering promotion; and Head of Australia and Developing Markets Jim Paul.



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## Charity bonanza for Skal Perth



**ABOVE:** Perth Skal members raised \$5000 for the Salvation Army and \$1000 for Anglicare at their annual Christmas function held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The annual Christmas raffle was a huge success, with members

from across the industry generously donating flights, accommodation, gifts, wine and champagne.

**Pictured** enjoying the event are, from left: Anne Pesic and Laurie Lord of Willie Creek Pearls with Jennie Allen from British Travel.

## Smartphone check-in

**THE** Skypark Central Hotel in Seoul, Korea, has eschewed traditional room keys or cards, and is instead now offering guests a smartphone at check-in, which they use to unlock the door.

The new system, which also eliminates the need for any in-room remote controls or even a hardwired room phone, has been implemented in partnership with electronics giant LG.

It's initially available for 16 rooms at the hotel, with the smartphone able to control the temperature, lights, TV and DVD.

An inbuilt app also enables guests to order room service, housekeeping or maintenance services as well as setting a 'do not disturb' on the room.

The world first "smart room service" allows the hotel to establish a centralised monitoring system, providing a single management screen overview.

## Crystal in the Arctic

**CRYSTAL** Cruises has announced the participation of a range of culinary experts in an upcoming Wine and Food themed cruise in the Arctic Circle during 2013.

The *Crystal Serenity* departure from Copenhagen to Stockholm on 05 Jul will visit 10 ports over 15 days, with guests including Norwegian chef Sven Erik Renaa, Chablis wine ambassador Gwenael Laroche, and US celebrity TV chef Mark Cummings.

More info [wiltrans.com.au](http://wiltrans.com.au).

## AeroMexico order

**BOEING** and Mexican carrier AeroMexico have finalised an order for six 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, along with 'reconfirmation rights' for a further four of the new planes.

The order was first announced in Jul and is valued at over \$1.46b at published list prices.

It brings to 19 the number of 787s on order by the Mexican airline, with the first delivery expected mid-2013.

## Window Seat

**IT** only comes around once every four years, but the inauguration of the US president provides some amazing accommodation opportunities in Washington DC.

The Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill has just released deals for the weekend of 18-21 Jan when President Obama's recent US election win is celebrated - and the top package is a bargain at just \$70,000.

The "Presidential Entourage" deal includes accommodation in the hotel's top suite which sleeps up to six guests, along with limousine airport transfers, in-room snacks from the hotel's executive chef.

Naturally daily breakfast-in-bed is included, along with a decadent en-suite dinner and a private tour of the city - prior to attendance at the black tie All American Ball held in the hotel.

If \$70,000 is a bit steep there's also a \$30,000 couples deal which includes four nights in the Capitol Suite - or just a standard room for \$599 per night.

**THERE** are plenty of wine-themed cruises, but Celebrity Cruises has just announced a voyage specially for beer lovers.

The nine-night "California Beer Festival at Sea" is set to take place in May 2013 on board the 2850 passenger *Celebrity Solstice* - which will by then be well known to Australian cruisers after its current down under deployment.

The beer themed cruise departs from Ensenada, Mexico on 06 May and visits San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Francisco, Vancouver and Seattle.

It will be hosted by a California 'Brew Master', featuring home brewing lessons, boutique beer tasting parties, a four course beer-paired luncheon and lots of brewery shore tours.

## Travel Specials



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**THIS** week's *Travel Specials* is brought to you by **Travel Industry Club**. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of send the details to [specials@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:specials@traveldaily.com.au).

There's no excuse not to plan an industry-rate getaway in Alaska, with **Travel Industry Club** offering immediate confirmation on May and June departures aboard the luxury *Celebrity Century*. Seven night Inside Passage voyages start and end in Vancouver and include the Hubbard Glacier, with prices starting at just \$772pp including all taxes, charges and gratuities - for more details and to book, phone TIC on (02) 9700 8711.

Sydney's **Grace Hotel** is offering 'Shop & Stay' packages from \$299 - just in time for the Boxing Day sale frenzy. It's truly a bargain because the deal includes a \$100 Queen Victoria Building shopping voucher, as well as a buffet breakfast for two. Offer valid until 24 Jan for Mon-Sun bookings, and then onward into Feb for Fri/Sat/Sun bookings only. There's also a 'Play & Stay' package for \$230 including a family pass to Sea Life Sydney Aquarium, Wild Life Sydney Zoo, Madame Tussaud's or Sydney Tower Eye. More info at [www.gracehotel.com.au](http://www.gracehotel.com.au).

**Accor Hotels** is offering free breakfast and savings of 25% on accommodation at a range of domestic properties as part of the group's Luna New Year Sale. Members of Accor's loyalty programs will receive triple points, while Advantage Plus members also receive an extra 10% off the sale price. The deals must be booked between Wed 09-Tue 15 Jan and are valid for stays during Feb - see [www.accorhotels.com](http://www.accorhotels.com).



## LH marketing appt

**ALEXANDER** Schlaubitz has been named as the new Head of Marketing at Lufthansa Passenger Airlines.

The 47-year-old moves from his most recent role as Director of Customer Marketing for Europe, the Middle East and Africa for social media giant Facebook.

Schlaubitz takes over from Hubert Frach, and will be responsible for all of Lufthansa Passenger Airlines' marketing activities including advertising and brand management as well as direct marketing and analysis.

## Ascott China boost

**SINGAPORE**-based serviced apartment operator The Ascott Limited has announced the addition of three new properties in China.

The expansion includes the 90-unit Ascott Heng Shan Shanghai which is set to open in 2014.

There's also the 250-unit Ascott Emerald City in Suzhou, opening in 2015, as well as the 194-unit Somerset Baitang Suzhou which will debut in 2017.

Ascott will lift its Chinese presence to over 8000 units in 46 properties across 17 cities.

## US agents to Dubai

**THE** American Society of Travel Agents will hold its upcoming International Destination Expo at the brand new JW Marriott Marquis hotel in Dubai 04-07 Apr.

## We just want mo of Larry



**ABOVE:** These delegates at this year's Jetset Travelworld Network conference in Las Vegas just couldn't get enough of the event's MC, TV personality and all-round great guy Larry Emdur.

Emdur was more than happy to pose for this Movember pic during one of the social events during the conference.

He's pictured with, from left: Sarah-Louise Scales of Peregrine and Gecko's Adventures alongside Nina Grant, Ida Portella and Uli Leitschek, all from Travelexperience.com.

## Kingfisher not flying

**INDIAN** carrier and oneworld member-elect Kingfisher Airlines remains grounded, after its owners failed to present Indian regulators with a viable funding plan for its recovery.

The carrier earlier this week presented a proposal to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to resume limited service but aviation minister Ajit Singh said the plan was not satisfactory because of significant debts.

He said the airline owed money to staff, airports and banks as well as outstanding tax bills, with all stakeholders needing to be on board before the carrier is allowed to fly again.

Etihad has been mooted as a potential investor in the beleaguered airline which has been trying to raise additional funding for over a year.

Last week the *India Times* reported on talks by Etihad to take a stake in either Kingfisher or Jet Airways, after recent changes allowed foreign carriers to invest in the Indian aviation sector.

## WIN TWO NIGHTS IN AT FRASER PLACE MELBOURNE!



**LEFT:** The team at Show Group Enterprises celebrated their Christmas party at the Grand Hyatt Melbourne with a cocktail making class.

Pictured from left are Katrina Page, Nell Gooley, Marnie Costantini, Julieann Zeman & Elizabeth Jones.

*"It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas."*

Travel Daily's popular Christmas photo competition is back!



Fraser Place has arrived in Melbourne with the launch of the brand new studio suite accommodation in a quintessential Melbourne city laneway.

Our good friends at **Fraser Place Melbourne** want to celebrate the festive season with the travel industry, and are asking you to send in your work Christmas party photos throughout December.

At the end of the month, the judges will select their favourite photo and the person who submitted this will win two nights accommodation for two guests in a brand new Studio Deluxe Suite, buffet breakfast for two on both mornings, complimentary internet and midday check-out.

Bonus points will be awarded for photos that include a copy of the Travel Daily issue.

So get into the spirit and start snapping, then email your festive photos (including names of the people pictured) to:

[xcmasphotos@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:xcmasphotos@traveldaily.com.au)



### Supplier Updates

**WELCOME** to *Supplier Updates*, *Travel Daily's* new regular feature.

Agents can now access the latest special deals and promotions being offered by suppliers, simply by **CLICKING HERE**.

Supplier enquiries for notices: [advertising@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@traveldaily.com.au)

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