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Wednesday 4th January 2012



Contact Sally Frape at TMS Asia Pacific

BNE • MEL • PER • SYD

Centara comp goes off

WE'VE been overwhelmed with the response to our fantastic Jan competition, with more than 100 *TD* readers lodging entries within minutes of yesterday's newsletter being published.

This month *Travel Daily* together with Centara Hotels & Resorts is offering four weekly prizes of trips to Phuket and Krabi in Thailand, including flights.

See page four for entry details to be in the running for the first weekly prize.

Magic takes a spell

BRISBANE-based travel agency Holiday Magic (ABN 73 010 809 953) was yesterday terminated from Travel Compensation Fund participation because the firm "lacks sufficient financial resources".

The Manly, Qld-based JTN affiliate agency promoted itself as "The Whitsunday and Queensland Island Holiday Specialist".

Aussie long-haul aspirations

A NEW report by the Canadian Tourism Commission has revealed a huge jump in "potential longhaul travellers" from Australia.

The CTC's Global Tourism Watch summary for Australia estimates that in 2011 there were 8.3m Australians likely to travel longhaul - up a huge 22% from 2007.

Key factors driving the surge include the strong Aussie dollar along with cheap international airfares, however the report warns that "rising inflation, a fragile housing market and high household debt levels could undermine consumer confidence and change travel plans".

The survey is conducted on a regular basis by research firm Harris/Decima, asking thousands of participants aged 18 and over from around the world for their views on Canada.

During 2011, while Canada retained its allure as a desirable destination, "aggressive

marketing efforts by international tourism rivals" have put a dent in the country's awareness.

The report also cited a trend for major events such as the FIFA World Cup or the 2010 World Expo to come "more into play as a reason for travel".

In the Australian market TV travel shows were key sources of information on Canada, while word-of-mouth at 20% was tied for second place with travel magazine articles and websites.

To see the full report go to bit.ly/ctcaustraliareport.

Solomon to Fiji, PNG

SOLOMON Airlines has announced new flights to Fiji and Papua New Guinea, with GDS displays now showing the routes set to debut from 26 Mar.

Honiara-Nadi and Honiara-Port Moresby services are set to operate once per week using Solomon Airlines' Airbus A320.

It's a major move for the carrier, which hasn't flown to Port Moresby since 1995 and also ceased Fiji operations in 2007.

The Fiji services will operate each Thu, while flights to PNG will take place every Tue.

Ecuador at Easter?

EXPLORE Worldwide is offering a \$385 discount on the 17-day Ecuatoriana and The Galapagos tour which departs on 04 Apr - over the Easter holidays.

The 16-night trip covers the highlights of Ecuador before continuing with a week of sailing, swimming and snorkelling in the spectacular Galapagos.

This departure is priced from \$5008ppts - 1300 414 151.

Four pages of news

Travel Daily today has four pages of news and photos, plus a full page from: (click)

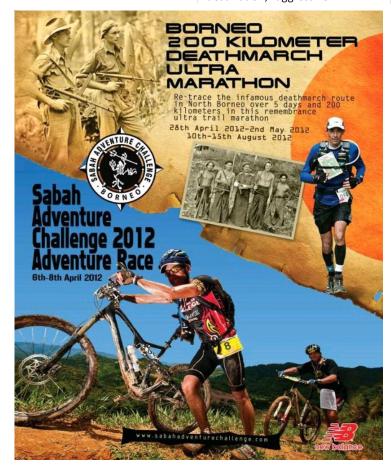
AA Appointments

QF pilot surplus

ABOUT 150 Qantas long-haul pilots have taken up an offer of leave without pay in order to work for other carriers, according to a report in today's *Australian Financial Review*.

Although a common practice among airlines to match pilot requirements to network demands, the report also warns of possible pilot redundancies if QF's long-haul international operations contract.

There's speculation among some of the pilots that QF mainline will not receive any of the Boeing 787 *Dreamliners* until the business turns around, with one quoted as saying "we can see international as having 14 A380s and that's it, which is enough to discourage most of us".





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A sister publication to

Travel Daily and Cruise Weekly





Wednesday 4th January 2012







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

Jumeirah Istanbul

JUMEIRAH Hotels and Resorts has announced yet another new luxury property, this time in the Turkish capital of Istanbul.

The city's oldest upmarket property, Pera Palas, located in the Beyoglu district, will be managed by the Dubai-based hospitality group from early 2012.

The iconic hotel has 115 rooms and underwent a major upgrade between 2006 and 2010.

The Pera Palas is well known for accommodating passengers on the Orient Express train, with former guests including a host of celebrities and heads of state.

Safer to fly than drive

THERE were just 153 fatalities in US aviation over the last 10 years, or two deaths for every 100m commercial flyers, according to US FAA figures released this week and analysed by Associated Press.

That was just a tenth of the death rate from US aviation in the previous decade, while between 1962 and 1971 the figure was 133 deaths per 100m passengers meaning flying was more than 60 times as dangerous.

The exceptionally low result for the last decade means passengers are much more likely to die while driving to the airport than flying across the country.

The reduction in accident rates means that regulators are now focusing attention on improving runway operations to also eliminate risks on the ground.

Tiger boosts Aussie seats

TIGER Airways this morning revealed a range of additional frequencies on its Australian domestic routes during the upcoming Northern Summer scheduling period.

Between 26 Mar-27 Oct Tiger will operate an additional 240,000 seats from its Melbourne base and Sydney, along with over 46,000 to the Gold Coast, 69,000 to Perth and 28,000 to Brisbane.

Spokesperson Vanessa Regan said the expansion was to cater for demand and seasonality.

"Since resuming domestic services on 12 Aug 2011

DJ agent business deal

BREAKAWAY Travelclub is promoting discounted fares on the new Virgin Australia business class product, with the aim of allowing agents to experience the new cabin for themselves.

Bookings are only available until 06 Jan, for travel 18 Jan-29 Feb and are only valid for those in the (A) travel agent category.

Companions and dependent children up to 15 years of age may travel at the same price but must accompany the industry employee on all segments.

For a quote call 02 9250 9400 or breakaway@travelclub.com.au.

AirAsia X on sale

MALAYSIAN low-cost long haul carrier AirAsia X has launched a New Year sale, offering fares from Kuala Lumpur to the Gold Coast starting at RM616 (about A\$190).

There are also bargains to Perth (RM496/A\$153) and Melbourne (RM646/A\$200), with the offers valid for sale 03-15 Jan and travel 09 Jan-31 Mar.

Sectors can also be combined, with Perth passengers able to fly though to London for just A\$589.

AirAsia X specials are also available to Osaka, Tokyo, Paris, Seoul and London, and must be booked online at airasia.com. customers have embraced Tiger's affordable airfares coupled with industry leading reliablity," she said.

The new schedule is on sale from today, with prices leading in at \$39.95 MEL-SYD, \$59.95 MEL-OOL, \$69.96 MEL-BNE and \$109.95 MEL-PER.

Regan said that while the additional seats announced today are on existing routes, "new routes are expected to be announced in due course".

Last week Tiger's Singaporebased ceo Chin Yau Seng flagged a boost to the carrier's Australian fleet (*TD* 29 Dec), saying he expected its seven locally-based aircraft to increase to ten by the middle of 2010.

Surf's up at Manly

DESTINATION NSW is ramping up its promotion of the inaugural Australian Open of Surfing, which will take place at Sydney's Manly Beach 11-19 Feb 2012.

DNSW ceo Sandra Chipchase said more than 100,000 surfers, tourists and Sydney-siders are expected to take part in the free nine-day event, which will also include live concerts.

As well as Destination NSW, the event is being sponsored by Hurley and Billabong, and as well as the surfing will feature a massive "Beach Bowl" skateboarding structure which will see more than 80 skaters compete for \$50,000 in prizes.

Provence direct

EUROSTAR will operate weekly direct train services between the UK and France's Provence region, with journey times of less than six hours from St Pancras International in London.

The special services will operate 07 Jul-01 Sep 2012, and if direct services are full, Eurostar also offers year-round connecting services which arrive into Avignon TGV station.

Creative China out

CREATIVE Holidays has today announced the launch of a significantly expanded China program for 2012.

The Hong Kong & China portfolio offers product in Hong Kong, Macau, Beijing, Shanghai, Xian, the Yangtze river and regional areas of the country.

There are also four exclusive independent touring itineraries within China: the four-night *Guilin and Yangshuou*; the five-night *The Great Wall and Terracotta Warriors*; a seven night *China Highlights* and the 10-night *China the Beautiful*.

Stopover options include a selection of so-called 'Creative Breaks' offering a range of carefully selected hotels such as the new three-star Ramada Kowloon right through to luxury options including The Legendale in Beijing and The Langham Yangtze Boutique in Shanghai.

While the stopover market continues to be an important segment, Creative md Paul McGrath said the wholesaler had also seen an increase in family travel to Hong Kong as well as long weekend shopping breaks.

"The combination of Hong Kong and regional China also offers agents an excellent opportunity to increase the value of a client's trip," he added.

For more info call 13 12 22.

Storms hit UK travel

A NUMBER of airports across the UK have warned of delays and cancellations due to severe weather across the country.

Affected airports include London Heathrow, Gatwick and Glasgow, while Edinburgh Airport was closed to inbound flights overnight as the city experienced gale force winds.

Severe weather warnings are in place, particularly in the north of England and Scotland.

Trains have also been disrupted across the country as trees fell onto railway tracks.





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Wednesday 4th January 2012



TRATISCO:

Dnata buys UK travel agency

EMIRATES-owned travel services provider Dnata has purchased a majority stake in UK-based online travel agency Travel Republic.

Travel Republic was founded in 2003 and has grown to become Britain's largest privately owned OTA, with turnover during 2011 surging 40% to £400 million.

As well as operating in the UK, Travel Republic also has offices in Spain, Italy and Ireland.

The company offers dynamic packaging of holidays, including flights with about 100 airlines along with a choice of 120,000 hotels across the globe.

Travel Republic md Kane Pirie said the Dnata deal would accelerate the growth of the firm,

which last year assisted over two million people with their holiday bookings.

And Dnata divisional senior vice president Iain Andrew said Travel Republics would complement the company's existing leisure and corporate travel services.

Dnata owns 23% of business travel specialist HRG, while other operations include flight catering and IT services at 76 airports around the world.

Travel Republic will continue to operate under its own brand, with the deal effective 28 Dec.

MEANWHILE Dnata has also expanded its flight catering operation, last month buying 50% of South African firm Wings Inflight Services.

Accommodation Updates

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, **Travel Daily**'s Wednesday feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



Choice Hotels Australasia has reopened the doors of the Comfort Inn Sovereign Hill property following a \$400,000 refurbishment of the heritage style hotel. The 43 rooms have been made up into a more contemporary style and fittings, incluidng a luxurious bed, iPad docks and free wifi access.



Muri Beach Club hotel on Rarotonga in the Cook Islands has announced it will offer flat screen TVs with external hard drive access in all 30 rooms across all types. Also new is a

volleyball net next to the beach and a QUAD hire from reception.



Mandarin Oriental, Paris has unveiled 39 suites including seven duplex suites which are located across two floors on the seventh and eighth levels of the hotel. The seven include the Royale Mandarin Suite, Royale Orientale Suite, Cabochons Suite, Broderies de Cristal Suite, Couture Suites and Atelier Suites.



The Racha in Phuket Thailand has introduced two new categories of pool villas - the two bedroom Grand Pool Suites and Spa Pool Suites. The two bedroom option offers new bathrooms with jacuzzi bathtubs, indoor and outside rain showers, in villa movie library and more, while the Spa suites have a

large living room and bedroom, electric blinds and a full glass wall for views of the pool. Construction is now complete.

US boosts Washington

US Airways will offer 11 new destinations from Washington's Reagan National Airport, after finalising a "slot-swap" deal with Delta Air Lines.

US Airways will also add a new Club at the airport, with new ports ex Reagan incl Jacksonville, Pensacola, Tallahassee, Little Rock, Birmingham and Memphis.

Antarctic budget trips

GECKO'S Adventures has launched a new affordable range of Antarctic adventures, with a series of 11 voyages set to depart between Nov 2012 and Feb 2013.

The trips are operated by sister company Quark Expeditions on board the *Ocean Diamond*, a "modern, stable and fuel-efficient polar expedition vessel".

Voyages start and finish in Ushuaia, Argentina and include the 10-day Introduction to Antarctica priced from \$4170ppts.

There's also an 11-day Antarctic Explorer from \$5096pp and the 20-day Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica voyage which starts at \$10,046ppts - with all prices quoted including a 25% earlybird discount for bookings deposited by 29 Feb.

All rooms have private facilities and exterior views, and the prices also include a range of activities, with further excursions such as overnight camping also on offer for details call 1300 854 500.

New Loews ceo

LOEWS Hotels has announced the appointment of Paul W. Whetsell as its new President and Chief Executive Officer.

Whetsell, who's most recent role was as a board member of Virgin Hotels, will succeed Jack Adler, who is retiring from the company effective 17 Jan.

New York-based Loews owns or operates 18 hotels in North America, including its newest addition, the 414-room Loews Atlanta Hotel which opened in Apr.



Window Seat

AND you thought New York hotel prices were high.

The developer of One57, set to become Manhattan's tallest residential building, has just announced a price increase for the iconic tower's penthouse.

The asking price for the 1020 square metre six-bedroom unit, which will fill the building's 89th and 90th floors, is now a cool US\$110 million, up 12% on the figure a month ago when the 95 condominiums went on sale.

"We're reflecting the sales in the marketplace," said Extell Development ceo Gary Barnett.

"Given where the market is, we're being very conservative on pricing," he said.

One57 is located on West 57th Street across from Carnegie Hall and is planned to open in 2013.

If the US\$110m pricetag is a bit high, you might consider one of the entry-level two bedroom units, which start at just \$6.5m.

TOURISM Queensland is encouraging travellers to make the most of the upcoming Australia Day celebrations, highlighting a series of quirky events which will take place across the state.

On the Sunshine Coast, the Aussie World theme park will host a series of Dunny Races, alongside existing attractions such as the brand new Plunge water ride.

In Yeppoon a Great Australia Day Beach Party will include an ice-cream eating competition (get ready for brain freeze) as well as the intriguingly-named "bare-bottom boat regatta".

But probably the quirkiest event is the famous Cockroach Races at Brisbane's Story Bridge Hotel which includes a Miss Cocky competition and of course 14 cocky races - "BYO cockroach or buy one from the stable on the day".



Wednesday 4th Jan 2012

VisitBritain downbeat

THE UK's national tourism body VisitBritain is forecasting 30.7m visitor arrivals this year - the same as in 2011, despite the effects of the 2012 London Olympics.

Hands up if you love travel!



ABOVE: They certainly don't do things by halves in the Red Centre.

Travelworld Alice Springs staff went Outback Quad Biking as part of their Christmas celebrations, and are pictured during their offbeat adventure.

Front row: Bunje, Mike Wolke and Dunja Ganama.

Back row: Rob Gane, Simon Jenkins, Koy Birnie, Saffron Russell and Jeanette Wilde.

Stay tuned to **TD** in the coming days when we'll announce the winner of our Christmas photo competition in conjunction with Fraser Suites Sydney.

Rotana to add eight

ABU Dhabi-based Rotana Hotels has confirmed significant expansion for 2012, with eight new properties including its first hotels in Bahrain, Jordan and Oman as well as its second in Qatar - plus four in the UAE.

The growth will see Rotana managing over 14,000 rooms by the end of the year.

Park Central purchase

NEW York's Park Central Hotel has been sold for US\$396.2 million, with the new owners planning a US\$35m renovation to commence later this year.

LaSalle Hotel Properties said the hotel would continue to be managed by Highgate Holdings.

The Park Central has 934 rooms and is located on Seventh Avenue between 55th and 56th Streets.

TravelManagers in the GSR club

TRAVELMANAGERS has been awarded Great Southern Rail's "Chairman's Club Award" for 2010/11 after achieving impressive sales for the operator.

GSR interim ceo Russell Westmoreland said the 50 top selling agents in the domestic market were in the Club, with TravelManagers Australia increasing sales of The Ghan, The Indian Pacific, The Southern Spirit and The Overland by 87% over the 12 month period.

UTracks Spring sale

UTRACKS is offering savings of 10% per person for travel in the upcoming European spring season on its range of boat-based cycling holidays.

The special is valid for bookings made by 31 Jan, with a discounted lead-in price of just \$585 for the four day Tulip Tour which starts in Amsterdam incl accom, bike hire and entry fees.

More info 1300 303 368.

Another AA cut

AMERICAN Airlines will suspend the operation of its daily Chicago-Calgary flight from 30 Jan 2012, with the move part of the ongoing network review for the bankrupt carrier.

Crystal Feb 'Book Now'

CRYSAL Cruises has increased fares on 19 voyages, and set a new booking deadline of 28 Feb 2012 for its 2012 and 2013 'Book Now' earlybird specials.

The Book Now promotion gives travellers a two month window for the lowest prices possible on every worldwide cruise aboard *Crystal Symphony* and *Crystal Serenity* in 2012 and 2013.

When previously published fares expired on 31 Dec prices increased from US\$200-US\$400 per couple on select voyages.

Further price increases are expected on 29 Feb, with the Book Now rates also offering a range of other bonuses - for more info see www.wiltrans.com.au.

Win A Centara Holiday To Thailand

Throughout January, **Travel Daily** and **Centara Hotels & Resorts** offer you a chance every week to win a fantastic holiday for two at two of Thailand's most popular destinations: Phuket and Krabi.

The prize includes four nights accommodation at the Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket followed by a three night stay at Centara Anda Dhevi Resort & Spa with daily breakfast, return economy flights for two and relevant transportation. In Phuket, you will also enjoy complimentary one-off entrance to the island's most fantastic water park at Centara Grand West Sands Resort & Villas Phuket.

Every week we offer one prize and to enter the competition, simply answer the question of the week.

(Email your answers to: centaracomp@traveldaily.com.au)

Question of the week

In 25 words or less please tell us why would you like to win A Centara Holiday To Thailand





Travel Daily is Australia's leading travel industry publication. Produced each weekday since 1994, the newsletter is first with the latest industry news and is available by paid subscription to people within the travel industry. Sign up for a free 14 day trial subscription at www.traveldaily.com.au.

PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Phone: 1300 799 220 Fax: 1300 799 221 Publisher/Managing Editor: Bruce Piper

Editor: Guy Dundas

Contributors: Chantel Long, Jenny Piper

CRUISE

and Barry Matheson

Email: info@traveldaily.com.au

Travel Daily Group:

Advertising and Marketing: Lisa Martin and Magda Herdzik

Email: advertising@traveldaily.com.au Business Manager: Jenny Piper Email: accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Pharmacy

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