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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Friday 6th January 2012

**Online Global  
Account Director**

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- \* Develop Global Account strategy with online/digital focus
- \* Pivotal role with this global travel technology company

Contact **Stacy Balderston** at TMS Asia Pacific  
T: 02 9231 6444 or E: [sally@tmsap.com](mailto:sally@tmsap.com)

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ISSN 1834-3058

## SQ A380 back to MEL

**SINGAPORE** Airlines will once again operate Airbus A380 flights to Melbourne from 26 Mar, according to a GDS schedule update yesterday.

Previously SQ had planned to end its MEL A380 deployment from 15 Jan until further notice, but now the aircraft will return to the route on SQ227/228 during the Northern Summer period.

Emirates also recently announced it would operate A380s to Melbourne (**TD 21 Dec**), with its daily superjumbo flights set to link the Vic capital with both Auckland and Dubai.

## Accor likely to keep Sebel, Quay West

**ACCOR** is working to bed down its acquisition of the Mirvac hospitality portfolio (**TD 19 Dec**), and is expected to retain Mirvac's Sebel and Quay West brands on some of the properties.

Accor Asia Pacific coo Michael Issenberg is quoted in today's *Financial Review* saying the company is also likely to "draw on Mirvac's expertise in the strata hotel sector" where Quay West had been a key brand supporting Mirvac's building developments.

The Mirvac deal will see Accor grow its local portfolio to 241 properties, with Issenberg saying the takeover would enhance the company's position in the Australian market - particularly growing its upper-end presence.

## QH/Viva! comm boost

**QANTAS** Holidays has announced an increase in airfare base commission paid on Qantas Airways 'year round' fares to the US, Canada, Philippines, Thailand, Hong Kong and Singapore.

The increase, from 6% to 7%, is effective immediately on all new bookings until further notice.

Viva! Holidays is also now paying 7% on Air Australia flights effective on all new bookings through until 31 Mar 2012.

## FC signs Air Australia deal

**FLIGHT** Centre and Air Australia have signed a new preferred agreement, signalling an end to the impasse between the agency group and the airline (**TD 21 Dec**).

Air Australia chief commercial officer Damien Vasta described the move as a "positive development for both companies as Air Australia continues to expand".

He said that since relaunching in Nov the carrier had seen strong consumer support for the new brand, low-cost carrier approach and "niche network" which operates leisure routes from Melbourne and Brisbane to Bali, Phuket and Honolulu.

"We look forward to working with the Flight Centre team to help capture that demand".

Flight Centre spokesman Haydn Long told **TD** that the new pact is effective from yesterday.

"The airline did not renew the

previous contract when it expired towards the end of last year," he said, adding: "as we have always maintained, we want Air Australia to succeed and we want to work more closely with it.

"It was, however, important that Air Australia address the concerns that we raised repeatedly over a lengthy period.

"It has now taken positive steps to do that," Long added.

The reinstatement of the preferred deal is not related to Air Australia's insurance issues, which have seen Cover-More decline insolvency coverage while the airline is reviewed by reinsurer IPP London (**TD 02 Dec**).

Long said that Air Australia has now provided current information to insurers and "seems confident that normal coverage will be reinstated in the short term".

The strong consumer demand for Air Australia product is set to continue as it progresses plans to fly to Vietnam and China in 2012.

## Centara name change

**THREE** of Thailand's best known hotels have changed their names with the new year, with the amicable end of a 25-year partnership between Accor and Centara Hotels & Resorts.

Sofitel Centara Grand Bangkok will become Centara Grand at Central Plaza Ladpao Bangkok, while Sofitel Centara Grand Resort & Villas Hua Hin will become Centara Grand Beach Resort & Villas Hua Hin.

Finally Novotel Hat Yai Centara will become Centara Hotel Hat Yai.

To experience some Centara properties, don't forget to enter our fantastic Jan comp, offering four Thailand holidays - **see p4**.

## Four pages of news

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

- AA Appointments

## QF to return 747s

**QANTAS** is currently negotiating the final payout figure on the leases of three 747 aircraft which will retire by the end of 2012.

The carrier is likely to be required to pay up to \$14m per aircraft as compensation for diminished engine life span and configuration changes, according to today's *Financial Review*.

Aircraft retirement costs are a major component of the ongoing restructure of QF international.

A number of jumbos will be freed up when QF stops operating London flights via Hong Kong and Bangkok in Apr this year.

**MEANWHILE** one of QF's newly reconfigured 747s with the A380-style product is set to operate out of Sydney, with the first flight QF17 tomorrow flying to Buenos Aires.



# ben

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First with the news

Friday 6th January 2012

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## A380 wing cracks

**AIRBUS** has revealed "minor cracks" which have been found on some of its A380 superjumbos but says they pose no risk to aircraft safety.

One of the cracks was found during the examination of the Qantas A380 which had its engine explode over Singapore in Nov 2010, but has been determined to be unrelated to the engine failure incident.

The tiny cracks are on "some non-critical wing rib-skin attachments," with Airbus having now developed an inspection and repair procedure which will be done during routine scheduled four year maintenance checks.

A Qantas spokesperson said that no immediate action was required by A380 operators because the cracking represents no risk whatsoever to flight safety.

## Jetstar pips QF on web visits

**END** of year figures for online airline website visits show that Jetstar crept ahead of its parent carrier Qantas for the first time.

The carriers together still account for by far the biggest number of online users, with Jetstar coming in at 21.39% of visits, ahead of QF at 21.1%.

Virgin Australia was in third place with 19.99%, with the top three way ahead of the fourth placed carrier, which was AirAsia with 4.57% according to internet monitor Experian Hitwise figures for the week to 31 Dec.

Figures were also released for the top travel agency websites, with Webjet once again in the lead with 14% of visits.

Interestingly Expedia was in second place with an 11.3% share, ahead of Flight Centre

which attracted 10.01% of visits.

Lastminute.com.au was in fourth place with 7.99%, with sister brand travel.com.au coming in tenth with a 1.61% share.

JTG-owned Best Flights retained its fifth place with 3.49%, ahead of Zuji at 2.07%.

In the 'destinations and accommodation category' Wotif.com was the top rated site with 6.34% of visits, ahead of TripAdvisor Australia at 5.03%.

The top travel-related search terms during the week were Jetstar, Wotif, Webjet and Qantas.

## NT short breaks

**APT** has released its 2012-13 Northern Territory Short Breaks brochure, with key features including exclusive access to APT's five wilderness lodges as well as a range of indigenous cultural experiences.

More than 100 tours are featured, ranging from 14 days down to just half a day, and are designed for travellers who want flexibility and independence but with the expert knowledge of local guides.

The lead-in 5-day Red Centre Classic Sights starts at \$1420ppts including touring, accom in Alice Springs, Ayers Tock and Kings Canyon, guided sightseeing and a Sounds of Silence dinner.

More info 1300 278 278.

## CX Premium Economy

**CATHAY** Pacific has loaded inventory for its new premium economy product (**TD 29 Aug 2011**) with a four-class configuration of its 747 aircraft to debut in Jun this year.

Bookings are now available for the 747-400 which will operate thrice a week to London initially, increasing to daily from 01 Jul.

Premium economy will also be available on CX's other LHR flights from Sep, with the new class to be fitted to 777-300ER aircraft.

**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)

## Finnair relocAYtes

**FINNAIR** has moved to new Sydney offices over the festive break, with the carrier now represented by Airline Marketing.

The new address is Suite 2803, Level 28 Australia Square, 264 George Street Sydney.

Reservations can be contacted on the new number 1300 132 944 and the new fax is 02 9251 2622.

Email enquiries to [finnair@airlinemarketing.com.au](mailto:finnair@airlinemarketing.com.au).

## Thailand update

**THE** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has reissued its travel advice for Thailand, with the update including a lowering of the level of concern about areas on the Cambodian border.

The extensive update also has new information on crime, warning travellers about harassment and threats of violence by jet ski operators.

Australian travellers to Thailand are also advised to ensure that all items placed in shopping bags at duty free stores in airports are listed on receipts.

"There have been reports that shop attendants at duty-free shops in international airports have added extra items to bags at checkout counters or not charged the full amount for items purchased," the advisory states.

"Travellers have then been accused of shoplifting after leaving the shop," with substantial penalties including fines and imprisonment.

## Account Manager

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As someone with a history of sales success and preferably an understanding of travel agency technical platforms, you will have the ability to sell relevant travel solutions from the wide range of Sabre products. You will also be able to achieve stretched sales targets and successfully develop opportunities for increasing revenue through other services, products or initiatives.

This is a challenging and rewarding position that offers skilled communicators who are self starters and team players the chance to shine. You will have strong organisational, networking and negotiation skills plus a demonstrated ability to build relationships. A travel industry background is essential and a working knowledge of Sabre GDS functions and products is preferred.

If you meet the above criteria and would like the chance to show your strategic thinking and sales skills within a global company, please apply by forwarding your cover letter and resume to [scottt@sabrepacific.com.au](mailto:scottt@sabrepacific.com.au) or call Scott Paton on 02 8204 2624 for a confidential discussion. Applications close 5pm Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January.



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Friday 6th January 2012



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## Trolley dollies roll up for DJ



**ABOVE:** Some of the Virgin Australia sales team in Melbourne made their way around to some of their VIP industry partners to spread some Christmas cheer - fully decked out in Virgin Australia cabin crew uniforms. Felicity La Terra (left) and Melissa Train are pictured during their visit to Voyager Travel - complete with an inflight refreshments trolley which they used to serve up drinks and snacks to their delighted industry friends.

### Accor PCO planner

**ACCOR** has launched a new online planner to help Professional Conference Organisers find the perfect venue for their next event. Offering a choice of 1700 properties across Australia, Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa and the Middle East, PCOs can use the site to choose hotels based on a range of criteria, with floor plans for 150 of the biggest hotels. See [accormeetingshotels.com](http://accormeetingshotels.com).

### MH ups Beijing, Taipei

**MALAYSIA** Airlines is set to increase capacity to both Beijing and Taipei, with the start of the Northern Summer scheduling period on 25 Mar 12. Bookings are now open on the expanded services which see Kuala Lumpur-Beijing flights increase from 7 weekly to a double daily operation. MH Kuala Lumpur-Taipei services increase from daily to ten per week from the same date.

### Amadeus hotel move

**AMADEUS** has launched a new Hotel Optimisation Package, described as a complete set of services and technologies to allow large travel agencies and TMCs to grant efficient access to all relevant hotel content. Solutions include the Amadeus Hotel Dynamic Saver offering last room availability and automatic future comparison of negotiated vs public rates, which is estimated to save a typical large company as much as \$1.5m a year. The suite also includes integration of hotel aggregator content from suppliers such as Destinations of the World, as well as Amadeus LinkHotel which enables travel agents to quickly add specific hotels requested by corporate customers but which are not bookable via GDS.

### AA-LAN codeshare

**AMERICAN** Airlines and LAN Ecuador have announced a new codeshare pact, valid for sales from today and travel from 09 Jan.

### New Hawaiian role

**HAWAIIAN** Airlines has appointed Stephen Simmons to the newly created role of managing director of operations planning and scheduling. Simmons has been an independent aviation consultant for two years, and previously worked in crew operations for Northwest Airlines.



## Window Seat

**ANOTHER** Olympics, another ticketing debacle.

The latest drama to hit London 2012 is the revelation that twice as many tickets have been sold to the synchronised swimming events this year as are actually available.

An IT glitch saw the ticketing system loaded with 20,000 tickets for the underwater ballet - while only 10,000 remained for the total of four sessions.

Organisers have been forced to contact thousands of disappointed ticket applicants to offer them alternative events.

**SWISSOTEL** The Stamford in Singapore is offering aspiring (and wealthy) Romeos the opportunity to demonstrate their devotion with an exclusive and very upmarket Valentine's Day experience.

For just \$5999 (about \$7500), lovers can buy a romantic 12-course dinner for two on the hotel's roof helipad, with a background of Singapore's stunning skyline.

To add to the thrill, the lucky lady will receive a bouquet of 99 roses - along with a diamond jewellery set.

The package includes airport limousine transfers and a night in a luxurious Executive Club room, with a couple's spa treatment the next morning.

**TRAVELLERS** to Tokyo should make sure they get a bite of some very special sushi.

A Japanese chef this week paid a whopping \$700,000 for a 296kg bluefin tuna, as part of the traditional auction kicking off the new year at Tokyo's Tsukiji fish market.

Kiyosh Kimura's winning bid was more than twice the previous record, coming in at a whopping \$2650 per kg - and now he plans to chop the giant fish up into 10,000 pieces.

## Travel Specials

**WELCOME** to *Travel Specials*, *Travel Daily's* Fri feature. 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).

**Value Tours** is offering a range of ski deals in New Zealand, the USA, Canada and Japan, with 6 days/5 nights in Whistler for just \$639 per person. Japan deals include 7 nights in Hakuba from \$1067pp including two nights free at the Alpine Azumi Deluxe Apartments, or in Rusutsu from \$793pp for a seven night holiday. NZ ski deals include 8 days in Mount Hutt from \$2281 per family, including a special offer under which kids 10 years and under ski, stay and eat free - [valuetours.com.au](http://valuetours.com.au).

**Heavitree Gap Outback Lodge** in Alice Springs is offering rooms from just \$63. The property is part of the Aurora Resorts group, located at the base of the MacDonnell Ranges about five minutes drive from the town centre. More details [www.auroraresorts.com.au](http://www.auroraresorts.com.au).

**Fiesta Holidays** is offering a range of room and villa deals at the luxury W Retreat & Spa in Bali. Five nights, including flights from Perth, lead in at just \$1191 per person, or \$1389pp ex MEL and \$1407pp ex SYD. For more information the Fiesta Hols travel agent hotline is 1300 368 484.

**Lake Crackenback Resort** near Thredbo in NSW is offering a range of summer savings, including a stay 3/pay 2 deal leading in at \$290. There's also a special fly fishing event on Sat 21 Jan - [lakecrackenback.com.au](http://lakecrackenback.com.au).

## Tennis with SAA

**MANY** of South African Airways' industry partners will enjoy watching next week's Apia International tennis tournament in Sydney, with SAA in its sixth year of ATP sponsorship.

SAA Head of Australasia, Thevan Krishna, said association with the game had been "great for our branding in Australia, and we have seen a demonstrable return on investment and brand awareness each year as a result".

## New HK-Taiwan route

**HONG** Kong Airlines has been granted traffic rights between Hong Kong and Taiwan, with plans for four daily passenger flights to launch shortly.

The services will operate to both Taipei and Kaohsiung, with the carrier saying that as well as offering Chinese travellers more choices, the route also "lays a strong foundation for developing the third runway at Hong Kong International Airport".

This year the fast-growing Hong Kong Airlines is expected to also launch services to Sydney, as well as a new daily all business-class service between Hong Kong and London Gatwick which is scheduled to debut 08 Mar.

## South Australia looks divine



**LAST** month this group of Flight Centre agents were literally up the creek - Jacob's Creek, that is.

The Vic Southern Stars agents were hosted by Sunlover Holidays bdm Sarsha Harvey, with an array of activities including panda watching at Adelaide Zoo, a visit to the Adelaide Markets, sightseeing trips and a full-day Barossa tour.

They're **pictured** among the venerable vines above from left: Brodie Mitchell, FC Black Rock; Rebecca Masson, FC Frankston; Nicola Ruta, Area Accountant; Stephanie Thompson, FC Mentone; Louise Larsson, FC product manager; Alex Zych, FC Southland; Claire Horton, FC Rosebud; Melissa Austen, FC Bentons Square; and Sarsha Harvey, SA bdm Sunlover Hols.

## Le Boat gift cards

**EUROPEAN** canal boat operator Le Boat is offering travel agents a \$50 gift card per booking for all Jul 2012 departures, valid on new bookings for trips of seven days or more deposited this month. Details at [www.leboat.com.au](http://www.leboat.com.au).

## Hard Rock weddings

**THE** Hard Rock Hotel Penang in Malaysia is promoting its wedding packages which lead in at just A\$32 per person gross.

The hotel's dedicated weddings team offers both traditional and specially themed celebrations.

See [penang.hardrockhotels.net](http://penang.hardrockhotels.net).

## Three Sydney islands

**CAPTAIN** Cook Cruises is offering holders of its Hop On Hop Off Sydney Harbour Explorer Pass access to three Sydney Harbour National Park islands for a single \$7 landing fee.

The pass costs \$42 per adult, and normally passengers pay \$7 per island to land but between 07-25 Jan Goat Island, Fort Denison and Shark Island can all be accessed for just \$7 in total.

The Explorer Pass allows holders the freedom to hop from one Sydney Harbour attraction to another over a 24 hour period including Circular Quay, Taronga Zoo, Watson's Bay, Luna Park and Darling Harbour plus the islands.

## 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](mailto: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

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WEEKLY

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DAILY

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How exciting does this sound? Beautiful boutique office located in Melbourne’s CBD, Monday to Friday hours and fantastic high base salary. We have a new and exciting role that would suit a highly skilled senior consultant. Good cruise knowledge will also be beneficial for this role. Register with AA Appointments now as this agency is looking at a February March start date and you really do not want to miss this one!!

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**TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGER**

**MACKAY - SALARY PACKAGE TO \$52K PKG + INCENTIVE**

Wanting to step into management this New Year? Fancy yourself a guru at motivating and training staff? Here’s the perfect role for you to sink your teeth into. This newly opened office is looking for an experienced travel consultant to join them as an agency manager. Your travel consulting and management skills will be rewarded with a strong set salary pkg plus incentives, educational leave, travel discounts and much, much more. Don’t miss out – this role is starting ASAP.

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