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Travel Daily

First with the news

Thursday 3rd January 2013

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Conover appointed ceo of SeaDream

FORMER Seabourn Cruise Line head Pamela Conover has been named as the new chief executive officer of SeaDream Yacht Club.

Conover's extensive career within Carnival Corporation also saw her as president of Cunard Line during the introduction of the *Queen Mary 2*.

SeaDream operates the 56-stateroom *SeaDream I* and *II* boutique mega-yachts, with Conover to be based in Miami.

She took up her new role effective yesterday, with Bob Lepisto's role as SeaDream Yacht Club president still unchanged.

More appointments on p3.

Today's issue of TD

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

- TMS Asia Pacific jobs

End-of-year agency closures

THE Travel Compensation Fund today revealed the voluntary terminations of seven head office agencies and two branches, all of which have closed or ceased trading as travel agents.

Almost half of the closures were operated by Jetset Travelworld Limited franchisees, and include Jetset Spearwood from WA and its branch location Jetset Riverton.

Also closed is Queensland-based Travelscene Atherton and Travelworld Salamander Bay, which was one of the branches run by the Hunter Travel Group.

The closures also include Sunshine Coast agency Myanmar Traveller, Surfers Paradise-based Blue Reef Travel and Hughes Global Travel Pty Ltd, located in Southport Qld.

The final closure announced

today was Trevor's Travel Centre from Warramong in NSW.

This agency, which previously traded as Trudi's Travel Centre, was owned by Trevor James Jones - not to be confused with Magellan Travel Group founder and Hawthorn Travel owner Trevor Edward Jones.

Air NZ Holidays is back

AIR New Zealand Holidays is set to once again offer a wholesale product range in Australia, with the brand to return to the local market after five years.

The move was announced this morning by AOT Group ceo Andrew Burnes (**TD** breaking news), who said there was expected to be significant NZ enquiry associated with the release of the new *Hobbit* movie.

A range of brochures specifically for the Australian market will be launched in the coming months, providing "extensive holiday options in New Zealand and the South Pacific," Burnes said.

AOT formed the Pacific Leisure Group as a joint venture with Air NZ to operate the wholesale program just over a year ago (**TD** 24 Oct 2011), and recently appointed Jonathan Watts as gm.

Burnes said AOT was "very much looking forward to working with the industry" to ensure the Australian success of the brand.

Trafalgar, Insight air

INSIGHT Vacations and Trafalgar have released Qantas airfares priced from just \$1629 including taxes return to London when booked by 15 Jan in conjunction with a Trafalgar or Insight product departing Feb-Nov 2013.

Also on offer in conjunction with an Insight or Trafalgar trip is a \$1675pp Singapore Airlines fare to Rome, London or Paris.

The SQ deal must be booked by 28 Feb 2013 - for more on the deals see trafalgaragent.com or www.insightvacations.com.

EK lifts New York, Paris

EMIRATES has boosted capacity to New York JFK and Paris CDG airports, with double daily A380 services now operating from Dubai into both cities.

The increases were announced about six months ago (**TD** 02 Jul, **TD** 05 Jul) with the additional superjumbos deployed effective from 01 Jan 2013.

"The decision to commit a second A380 to both New York and Paris is a clear indication of customer demand, for the state-of-the-art aircraft and these two popular destinations," said EK exec vp Passenger Sales, Theirry Antinori.

The use of the larger aircraft boosts Emirates' New York JFK capacity by 1848 weekly seats, while CDG increases by 2198.

London industry deal

RADISSON Blu Edwardian Hotels is offering a special travel industry rate of just £99 per room per night at the Radisson Blu Edwardian Mercer Street Hotel.

The property is ideally located in the heart of London's Covent Garden, with the special price valid Fri-Sun until 31 Jan 2013.

Mon-Thu stays cost £119 per room per night, with the rates excluding breakfast and 20% VAT.

Travel industry ID is required upon check-in - bookings via email to whittys@radisson.com or call 03 9520 2353.

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MO PR appointment

MANDARIN Oriental Hotel Group has appointed Media Moguls Communication as its public relations agency in the Australian market.

The move is effective from this month, and expands Media Moguls' travel industry portfolio which also includes Destination Gippsland, Tourism Tasmania, Palazzo Versace, The Langham Melbourne and Hobart's MONA.

XL Airways goes down

FRANKFURT-based charter operator XL Airways Germany has filed for bankruptcy, after previously "suspending operations" for the northern winter season in mid-December.

XL Airways Germany operated five 737-800 aircraft, flying on behalf of several holiday charter operators including Condor, Luxair and Oger tours as well as providing wet lease services.

The airline had previously announced that it would provisionally "rest" its AOC by implementing a cooperative operation with Hamburg Airways.

AA boosts Miami-LHR

AMERICAN Airlines is set to boost capacity on its direct flights from Miami to London Heathrow, with four additional weekly services over the winter scheduling period moving it to a double daily operation.

During the summer season AA will fly the route 7 times a week.

Dubai opens A380 terminal

THE world's first airport facility dedicated to A380 superjumbos has launched in Dubai, with the phased opening of DXB's new Concourse A yesterday.

Four of the 20 gates at the terminal were brought into operation, with EK003 flying from Dubai to London Heathrow becoming Concourse A's first flight "ushering in a new era in Dubai's aviation history".

The expansion has come none too soon, with DXB handling ever increasing passenger numbers.

Final figures haven't been released for 2012, but DXB is predicting a huge total of 57 million passengers for the year.

In fact aircraft have been pulling

up at the gates at the new terminal for some weeks now, but until yesterday's opening passengers were transferred by bus to the existing facilities.

Dubai Airports ceo Paul Griffiths confirmed that Concourse A would open in stages, with more gates coming online in each successive phase.

"We believe that this approach of gradual transition will enable us and all our partners to ensure smooth operations and help us to deliver on our customer service commitment," he said.

Griffiths said that the dedicated A380 Concourse A facility is "one of the highlights of Dubai's ongoing ambition to establish the world's leading aviation hub".

Concourse A is part of the Terminal 3 complex exclusively built for the use of Emirates Airline, and once it's fully operational will increase DXB's annual passenger capacity from the current 60 million to 75 million.

New Turkish Club Med

CLUB Med is continuing to expand its offering, with the upcoming opening of Club Med Belek which is located on the Turkish Riviera, about 55km from the capital Antalya.

Club Med says the new resort will become its "flagship luxury family resort in Europe," offering a wide variety of activities including three Sports Academies offering golf, sailing, tight rope walking and flying trapezes.

It will have a 4500 square metre spa, a bowling alley and three fine dining restaurants, and is separated into a "lively family area" and a "more serene wellness area".

HRG appointment

HOGG Robinson Group has appointed Mike Holmes as its new Worldwide Government Services Director, a role in which he will assume responsibility for all global government business.

Thailand up 15%

2012 was a huge year for travel to Thailand, with the country recording a 15% increase in arrivals over 2011, surpassing 21 million visitors for the year.

Visitor spending also soared 24% to US\$31.6 billion, with Australia in eighth place as a source market after China, Malaysia, Japan, Russia, South Korea, India and Laos.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand is forecasting another year of double-digit performance in 2013, with predictions that arrivals will increase 11% to 24.5 million for the year.

The results also saw strong Dec traffic at both Suvarnabhumi and Phuket airports, with BKK up 35% and HKT up 47%.

CZ cancels KK

CHINA Southern Airlines has cancelled the previously planned introduction of direct flights between Guangzhou and Kota Kinabalu in Sabah.

According to travel agent GDS screens the route was scheduled to commence operation from 23 Jan 2013, but is now no longer available for reservation.

However the carrier will fly to Kota Kinabalu on a temporary basis next month to meet Chinese New Year demand.

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APT's Dino calls it a day

APT has officially said goodbye to Dino Magris, who played a key role in the company's domestic operations for many years.

Magris announced his retirement at the end of Jul, with a formal farewell held just before Christmas at APT's office in Victoria.

APT owner Geoff McGeary, who's pictured above with Magris, hailed Dino's fantastic contribution, saying he'd given the company an "extraordinary 30 years' service".

Magris was instrumental in the development of APT's Australian extended coach touring and day tours, and most recently the



strategic development of the company's 4WD Kimberley and Outback Wilderness 4WD Adventures.

"He was the face of APT's business development there and a most loyal employee for APT, but he was also an ambassador of, and contributor to, the region's tourism industry," McGeary said.

VX fined \$55k for delay

VIRGIN America has been fined \$55,000 for keeping passengers in a delayed aircraft on the ground at Chicago O'Hare Airport for two hours and 16 minutes.

The incident occurred on 16 Jul 2012, with the airline fined by the US Dept of Transportation because it failed to inform the passengers that they could leave the aircraft prior to its departure for San Francisco.

Under US rules carriers must give an opportunity for pax on delayed aircraft to leave the plane every 30 minutes if possible.

Panamanian carrier Copa Airlines was also fined \$150,000 for a five hour tarmac delay, in which pax were not offered food until more than four hours into the delay.

MSC itinerary changes

MSC Cruises has announced the addition of Dubrovnik to the upcoming northern summer Mediterranean season operated by its *MSC Fantasia*.

The vessel will operate in the Med between 24 Mar and 27 Oct 2013, with each voyage visiting Venice, Bari, Katakalon, Santorini, Athens, Corfu, Dubrovnik and then returning to Venice.

The Dubrovnik call replaces a day at sea.

MSC has also advised of an itinerary change on the *MSC Magnifica* cruise departing Hamburg on 17 Sep 2013, with the port of call at Toulon in France on day 12 replaced by Marseille.

More info 02 8076 1000.

UA 787 international

UNITED Airlines will today launch its first scheduled international Boeing 787 service.

The Dreamliner will replace 777 aircraft on the Los Angeles-Tokyo Narita route, with UA32 to depart LAX at 11.15am today.

UA took delivery of its first 787 several months ago and has been trialling the aircraft and training crew on US domestic routes.



GOLD Coast Tourism has proven that nothing is too hard for its local operators when it comes to providing superior service.

A list of hotel requests for 2012 by clients staying in Gold Coast properties ranges from the bizarre to the seemingly impossible, but the hoteliers came through every time.

One hotel, without naming names, confirmed that it had been asked to book rooms on different floors for a guest's wife and girlfriend.

Another was asked to purchase alpacas for a Middle Eastern royal family, while staff at a third property were asked to sell a luxury sports car after the guest who owned it had to leave the country unexpectedly.

Probably the trickiest request was when one of the hotels was asked to organise a private jet to fly the Argentine Polo Team from the Gold Coast to Malaysia - with just six hours' notice.

A FRAUDSTER who racked up a \$5000 hotel bill in the UK where he was pretending to be a top rugby player has been busted because hotel staff thought he was too fat.

According to court documents, 30 year old Christopher Hoare registered at Eastwell Manor in Kent under a false name.

He provided a fraudulent credit card number and said a fictional organisation called Sports England Training would be paying the bill, telling staff he was a rugby player transferring to the London Wasps.

The hotel manager said he called police after becoming suspicious when Hoare wore the same clothes for a few days, and also appeared "not to have the physique and healthy appearance that one might associate with a professional rugby player."

Industry Appointments

inPlace RECRUITMENT For the top travel jobs
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THIS week's Industry Appointments column is brought to you by **inPlace Recruitment**. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry, send us an email at appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Hawaiian Airlines has announced the appointment of **Hadden Watt** who will lead the airline's implementation of turboprop air services to Moloka'i and Lana'i in 2013 as Managing Director - Turboprop Operations. He was previously HA's Senior Director of Strategy and Transformation, and will oversee operations of the new service by Idaho-based Empire Airlines which has signed a three year MoU to maintain and fly ATR-42 aircraft on behalf of Hawaiian Airlines.

Michel Scheffers has been named as resident manager for **Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort and Spa**.

The Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) has announced the appointment of **Shazrina Othman** as its new PR and Communications Manager. Othman holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the University of Wisconsin in the USA

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide has appointed **Aylwin B. Lewis** to its Board of Directors. Lewis is currently the ceo of US takeaway chain Potbelly Sandwich Works, and his career includes a wide range of roles in retailing, franchising and fast food.

Welcome to the industry!



ABOVE: It looks like there was lots of festive cheer last month when Virgin Australia popped into the STA Travel offices just before Christmas to welcome the latest batch of STA recruits.

Virgin's Melissa Train and Jodie Collins are pictured above with the STA Travel Class of December 2012 who are clearly already enjoying the industry: Gabby Marshall, Sally Dowling, Taourin Eimermacher, Ryan Huymphreys, Georgina Honner, Julie Mitchell, Devon Garner, Steph Morriss, Tim Butterfield and Lindsey Nicholls.

EVA air boosts Bali

TAIWAN-based EVA Air will lift frequencies on the Taipei-Denpasar route from five weekly to daily during the Chinese New Year period 04-17 Feb 2013.

ACG orders 60 737s

AIRCRAFT leasing company Aviation Capital Group has confirmed an order for 60 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

The deal, worth \$6 billion at list prices, includes 50 of the -8 variant and 10 737 MAX-9s, and brings to more than 1000 the total number of 737 MAX aircraft on order with Boeing.

The 737 MAX utilises new LEAP-1B engines offering a 13% reduction in fuel burn, and claims an 8% operating cost advantage over its competition.

Virgin Australia placed an order for 23 737-MAX-8 about six months ago (**TD** 05 Jul).

Palmer Motorama

PALMER Coolum Resort on Qld's Sunshine Coast will this weekend open the doors to the new 'Palmer Motorama' - a museum showcasing about 40 vintage vehicles from the private collection of the resort's owner, mining billionaire Clive Palmer.

The cars will be housed in the resort's Pavilion while construction of a permanent home within the property gets under way.

Vehicles include several classic Rolls Royces as well as a 1954 Aston Martin, with guests and visitors able to enjoy the display from 11am to 4pm each day and daily tours at noon Mon-Fri.

LAN summer boost

STRONG demand for international travel in South America has seen the newly cooperating LAN and TAM bolster a range of routes between Dec and Apr 2013, with additional LAN frequencies from Santiago to both Los Angeles and Miami in addition to seasonal service between Santiago and Orlando.

TAM will also offer additional flights from Miami to Brasilia as well as between Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Orlando in Florida.

LAN yesterday became the first carrier to operate international 787 flights at LAX, with the start of thrice weekly direct Dreamliner flights to Santiago.

MEANWHILE LAN has also announced the temporary suspension of flights to Frankfurt in Germany, with the destination to cease operation from 01 Apr-29 Jun 2013.

The move coincides with the introduction of the Boeing 787 on the Santiago-Madrid route, which will extend onwards to Frankfurt from 30 Jun.

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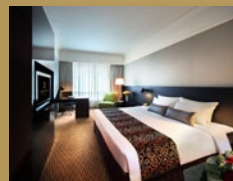
Throughout January, **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win an incredible major prize of a trip for two to Singapore, including flights, courtesy of **Park Hotel Group** and **British Airways**.

Park Hotel Group is also giving away three weekly prizes of hotel stays in Singapore and Hong Kong.

To win the first weekly prize, simply answer Question 1 (below) by close of business on Friday 11th Jan 2013. The subscriber with the most creative answer will be the weekly winner.

There will be three questions throughout the month. At the end of January the **TD** reader with the most creative responses to **all three** questions will win the major prize of a holiday for two people to Singapore, flying British Airways.

Q1: In 25 words or less tell us what Chinese Zodiac animal best represents the Park Hotel Hong Kong and why?



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