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First with the news

Wednesday 10th Jul 2013

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## Daddo back for TC

**INDEPENDENT** group Travellers Choice has confirmed the return of Andrew Daddo for a second time as Master of Ceremonies for its Annual Shareholders' Conference, being held in Hobart between 29 Nov-01 Dec.



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## NZ/VA argue restrictions

**AIR** New Zealand and Virgin Australia will be able to maintain their transTasman alliance for three years, under a favourable draft determination handed down by the ACCC (**TD** breaking news).

The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission is of the view the ongoing alliance will "likely" lead to material public benefits in the form of enhanced products and services, which should promote competition.

Despite the draft approval being two years shorter than the desired five years requested, the applicants both welcomed today's decision by the regulator.

However, the green light does come with a range of conditions.

It's been proposed that Air NZ and Virgin must hold existing capacity on eight routes, namely between Christchurch & Brisbane and Melbourne; Wellington and Brisbane; Dunedin and Sydney, Melbourne & Brisbane; Auckland and the Gold Coast, as well as Queenstown and Brisbane.

Air New Zealand argued the requirements, saying "in the current market structure, capacity conditions are not necessary to maintain strong competition"

"In the two years since the alliance became operational it has delivered benefits to tourism and business in the form of more flight capacity, more frequency, new routes, better scheduling and service quality while maintaining

competitive pricing," an Air New Zealand statement said.

Virgin Australia said it would review the proposal & conditions prior to a final determination, expected to be made in Sep.

The VA/NZ Tasman alliance is also still awaiting a decision from the New Zealand Ministry of Transport for its extension.

Today's decision follows a joint submission to the NZ MOT lodged late last month, in which Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia argued "no new or wider capacity conditions are warranted" for their Australasian Airline Alliance.

"Capacity conditions are distortive, costly & not required", the airlines told the NZ MOT.

The applicants claim "substantial" benefits have already arisen from the pact incl the introduction of 628 additional online connection options, a better breadth & depth of schedules and lower fares.

NZ/VA also said the partnership has enabled them to improve their competitive position against the Qantas-Jetstar Group, and warning that "neither party is capable of constraining the Qantas/Jetstar-Emirates group alone," without the alliance's continuation.

### Eight pages of news

**Travel Daily** today has eight pages of news & photos today plus full pages from: (**click**)

- AA Appointments jobs
- Bentours

## ICC Sydney chief

**AEG** Ogden exec Geoff Donaghy has been named ceo of the new International Convention Centre Sydney project, which is set to begin construction in Dec.

Donaghy has been on the AEG Ogden board for eight years.

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## Canberra Ibis Syles

**ACCOR** has today announced a managerial takeover of Rydges Canberra Eagle Hawk Resort, to now be re-branded as Ibis Styles Eagle Hawk.

The 151-room hotel becomes Accor's 5th property in the ACT.



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## SQ/VA pact sees growth

**SINGAPORE** Airlines is experiencing double digit growth in both inbound and outbound feeds through its codeshare alliance with Virgin Australia, with SIA vp South West Pacific, Subhas Menon telling **TD** the partnership is a major focus for the carriers.

"We're getting more and more feed from Australian passengers transferring from Virgin Australia flights - but our inbound traffic is also feeding strongly into the VA network," he said.

Singapore Airlines is promoting a Visit Australia Airpass product in overseas markets, which pairs its international flights with VA's domestic network, offering a simple year-round coupon-based fare structure with flights from as low as A\$75 per sector.

Inbound pax can buy up to ten coupons in combination with their SIA or SilkAir international flight purchased outside Australia.

For outbound passengers, Singapore Airlines' high frequency departures mean that connections from Virgin Australia to its flights are smooth no matter what time of day, he said.

Currently SIA offers four daily flights from Sydney, Melbourne and Perth to Singapore; three daily from Brisbane and almost two a day from Adelaide, while SilkAir flights ex Darwin make it the group's sixth Australian port.

"We are a one stop shop for Australian passengers, whether they want to travel morning,

afternoon, evening or night," Menon said, with easy links to onward services such as its four daily London Heathrow flights via "our world class hub at Changi".

**MEANWHILE**, Menon said that Melbourne is likely to be the first SIA Australian port to see its new inflight product (**TD** yesterday).

"It will happen sooner or later," he said, adding that the new cabins were an evolution of existing product which is still very popular with passengers.

See page six for more from SQ.

## No plans for SIA P-Y

**SINGAPORE** Airlines has shown no sign of following other carriers by introducing a premium economy cabin, with yesterday's new product launch confirming that the carrier's 777-300ERs will have the traditional First, Business and Economy classes.

Speaking at the event in Singapore, commercial head Mak Swee Wah said SIA constantly evaluates new product options and has not seen the need to introduce premium economy.

He also said that Singapore Airlines was committed to maintaining a First Class offering, despite some other carriers phasing out the cabin.

"There is still a demand for this cabin from some clients," he said, adding that offering First Class also helped maintain SQ's premium positioning.

## CZ kks 787s to AKL

**CHINA** Southern Airlines is set to seasonally lift frequencies to Auckland, with GDS displays showing flights lifting from 7 to 10 weekly between Dec and Mar, and the extra services to be operated by 787-8s (**TD** 17 Jun).



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## Velocity at lounge upgrades

**MEMBERS** of Virgin Australia's frequent flyer program Velocity can now seek seat upgrades on domestic flights using points at the airline's lounges in Australia on the day of flight departure.

The upgrade option is available to Velocity members with a confirmed Flexi fare booking class (Y, B, H, K, or L classes) on VA '795' ticketed stock.

Upgrade points start at 4,900 for one-way VA flights ranging in

length from 0-600 miles, moving to 7,400 points for 601-1,200 miles; 9,900 points for 1,201-2,400 miles; 14,900 points for 2,401-3,600 miles; 24,900 points for 3,601-4,800 miles and 29,000 points for 4,801-5,800 miles.

A number of conditions apply to the upgrading process, with not all Business Class seats available for the option and domestic flights which form part of an international journey excluded.

Codeshare flights operated by other carriers are not eligible.

**MEANWHILE**, Velocity Frequent Flyer Gold and Platinum members are now eligible to upgrade from a Flexi Economy fare to Premium Economy or Business Class, or from a Premium Economy fare to Business Class using points on flights to LAX or Abu Dhabi.

The upgrade option applies to Economy Flexi fares booked in Y, B, H, K or L classes, or Premium Economy Cabin W, R or O classes.

Upgrade points vary from as low as 18,000 from a Flexi Economy fare to Premium Economy, or 45,000 to Business, or 25,000 from a Premium Flexi to Business.

## S America Mission

**AVIAREPS** Oceania has been appointed as the coordinator for an annual sales mission for South American tourism bureaus from Chile, Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela to Australia and NZ.

The firm's regional director Alison Roberts-Brown said a series of B2B sessions for product managers and agent expos were slated for Auckland (on 22 Aug), Melbourne (26 Aug), Brisbane (28 Aug) and Sydney (29 Aug), which will include the largest delegation of South American hotels, resorts, DMC's and other suppliers to ever visit the region.

Formal invites will be sent soon.

## Daily Mauritius A380s

**EMIRATES** will boost capacity between Dubai and Mauritius by deploying an Airbus A380 on one of two daily services to the Indian Ocean destination from 16 Dec.

The upgauge from a Boeing 777-300 will add 153 seats each day.

Earlier this year, EK operated a one-off service to Mauritius to celebrate the nation's 45th anniversary of independence (**TD** 12 Mar).



## Window Seat

**SINGAPORE** Airlines appears to have thought of just about everything with its new cabin products, which feature fabulous lie-flat seats in First and Business and more personal space in Economy (see **p2** & **p6**).

But at yesterday's official global unveiling of the cabins in Singapore, **TD** was intrigued to note a friendly flourish to make those First Class dreams even sweeter.

That's right - it appears that travellers up the front on the new aircraft will have the option of a bedtime companion, in the form of a cuddly teddy bear, complete with a knitted Singapore Airlines jumper.



**AND** at the launch of the new SIA product, some staff from the airline also revealed hitherto secret aspects of its extensive product testing regime.

Evaluation of new Economy class seating options included a series of so-called "sleep tests" in which employees were asked to spend the night - a minimum of nine hours to simulate a long-haul sector - in various seats under consideration.

This exhaustive trial led to a number of enhancements to the product including its flexible adapting head cushion and new side bolsters for back support.

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## Freestyle a hit for Norwegian



**NORWEGIAN** Cruise Line says it is having a record-breaking year for sales ex-Australia, even though none of its ships sail here.

The line claims its passenger numbers are up 30% year-on-year, and it attributes this to its unique Freestyle cruising concept and the popularity of its cruises around the Hawaiian island chain on the *Pride of America*.

NCL's vice president and general manager int'l, Francis Riley said during a Sydney visit yesterday that he wasn't surprised that the line is seeing good local growth.

"Freestyle cruising is all about freedom, flexibility and choice, and I think the regimentation that many other cruise lines have is not something the Australian market is akin to.

"That, combined with a product that is growing in terms of the number of ships in our fleet and guest satisfaction scores that we see, plus word-of-mouth and customers coming back, is starting to take hold," said Riley.

He noted that Hawaii is a big market for NCL which seems to

have accelerated since *Pride of America's* recent \$30m makeover, but there's been a surge in Europe and Alaska as well.

From its 1966 birth, NCL now operates a fleet of twelve vessels with a total of 30,500 berths, yet Riley says the company has no plans to bring ships here.

In May, it launched the 4,000-berth *Breakaway*, based in New York, and in early 2014, another new 4,000-pax ship, *Getaway* will enter the fleet to be based in Miami.

"*Breakaway* is a game-changer, it has taken Freestyle cruising to the next level," added Riley.

"By the time *Getaway* is launched, we'll have the youngest fleet of ships afloat in the North American market."

"There are those who want to be on the latest, the most modern ships and ours are all purposely-built for Freestyle cruising, which gives us an added attraction," Riley said.

Francis Riley is pictured above left with Nicole Costantin, NCL & Brett Jardine, CLIA Australasia.

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## Life not such a beach

**AUSTRALIAN** travellers prefer historical or cultural holidays to beach flop and drops, according to a global survey released yesterday by Expedia.

The annual 'Fly and Flop' report claims that about 37% of Australians listed sightseeing as their preferred holiday, versus a global average of 28% for this type of travel, and in contrast to 34% of people around the world who expressed a preference for beach vacations.

The report also claims that Australians prefer international beach destinations to domestic, and spend an average of \$2,000-\$3000 on their trips.

Key drivers of destination choice included personal recommendations and word of mouth, according to Expedia, although value was also a key factor with a third of respondents choosing their destination based on last minute package deals.

Expedia said that in the survey, 64% of Australians also preferred to book their travel online, just above a global average of 60%.

## Road entertainment

**A NEW** on-road entertainment system has been launched by Greyhound in the US, available on the company's services between Dallas and Houston in Texas.

The system, dubbed Bus Line Universal Entertainment, or BLUE has been designed along with Lufthansa Systems and offers movies, music, internet browsing & games to be streamed directly to a personal wi-fi enabled device.

BLUE will be piloted for 6 months before being progressively rolled out to the rest of the US network.

## Kuala Lumpur LCC airport open 2014

**MALAYSIA'S** Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein has said Kuala Lumpur's much delayed new low-cost carrier airport (**TD** 20 Jun) will definitely be open & operating by 02 May next year.

The new date is more than a year behind the initial opening date of 01 May 2013, with the Minister saying a committee has been set up to ensure no further delays are experienced.

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**TICNSW relocates**

The Tourism Industry Council NSW has relocated to the offices of the NSW Business Chamber. Membership enquires/matters can be directed to (02) 9458 7008.

**AA behind the British/Irish Lions**



THREE members of the team from travel industry recruitment firm AA Appointments nailed their colours firmly to the British & Irish Lions mast last weekend

as they attended the final rugby match of the team's Aussie tour. The team were also assisting 20 working tour reps who were carrying out duties for int'l fans of the Lions in roles they obtained through the company on behalf of official rugby tour company Lions Rugby Travel.

The organisation was a joint venture set up between the rugby team itself and former player Mike Burton, who operates a successful sports tour company. Burton has been associated with AA Appointments in Australia for the last 14 years, exclusively advertising for and sourcing tour reps for tours whenever tours travel down under to Australia. Pictured above from left prior to the match is Rebecca Davies, Karen Stovell and Kate Bouffler, all from AA Appointments.

**Double LHR runways**

A BRITISH research organisation has recommended that London Heathrow double both of its runways to 7,000 metres each to enable simultaneous takeoffs and landings and temporarily solve immediate capacity issues. According to a report from the Centre for Policy Studies, both strips should be extended at one or both ends and then divided by a safety barrier in order to comply with safety requirements. LHR has looked into such an idea in the past, but concerns on safety have prevented further exploration of the concept.



**AFTA UPDATE**  
The latest updates from AFTA's Chief Executive, Jayson Westbury

THIS week's *Travel Daily* column is being written in Washington D.C. as I have been attending a World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) meeting with IATA and the Cruise Lines Industry Association. The IATA meeting was fundamentally to discuss the New Distribution Capability (NDC) which is framed within a proposed Resolution 787. The NDC has been a controversial subject on the global stage as IATA has filed the Resolution for approval with the United States of America Department of Transport (DOT) and this has drawn more than 400 formal comments from across the industry. Fundamentally, the NDC presents the travel industry with a new communications standard on which technology companies may be able to bring new features and present ancillary product from airlines to the distribution system and travel agents. I am really pleased that WTAAA was also able to meet with the three major GDSs, who all are working on how they may be able to use this new standard to ensure travel agents remain relevant and have access to this new content. While there is an ongoing debate afoot with IATA about the specific application and detail contained within the resolution, I think that the concept and intent of bringing new standards for airlines to use with GDS is good for the industry. It was also a very good opportunity to meet with CLIA for the first time on a global level to talk about the cruise industry and how together travel agents and cruise lines can grow together. It is refreshing to be talking to a global industry association that values travel agents to the extent that CLIA does. WTAAA will continue to engage with CLIA on a global level like it does with IATA and this is an important acknowledgment of just how important the cruise industry is to travel agents. There are many mutual challenges and this new dialogue will be an excellent pathway to work together across the globe, and Australia will benefit from this process. This new engagement further shows the collaborative approach the WTAAA is taking on many issues.



**WIN A SET OF WASHINGTON DC CANDLES**

This week *Travel Daily* is giving five lucky winners the chance to win a set of six scented candles depicting each of the unique neighbourhoods within Washington DC. From historic museums, monuments and memorials, to world class dining, Washington DC offers visitors something distinctive at every turn. Over 100 free attractions, exciting neighbourhoods and national treasures to discover. To win, be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to: [candlecomp@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:candlecomp@traveldaily.com.au).

**What is the adult entry price to the Smithsonian's National Zoo?**

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Lynne Anderson** from **Flight Centre Katoomba**.



**Flight attendant class**

**WILLIAM** Angliss Institute has discounted its Dec Certificate II in Tourism (Flight Attendant) by 15% for new applicants registering for the course before 31 Oct. The two-week course teaches a number of techniques and skills to prepare students for interviews with the world's best airlines.

**SU on Man U jerseys**

**RUSSIAN** airline Aeroflot has signed a five-year sponsorship deal with popular English football champions Manchester United. The deal sees the carrier replace Turkish Airlines on the team's jersey, also making it the first Russian company to sponsor the famous British side.

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# SIA wows with new cabin products

**SINGAPORE** Airlines' new seats (*TD* yesterday) continue the airline's strong tradition of innovation, with a host of new features set to make long haul flying even more comfortable.

The new First, Business and Economy Class products, which will roll out on eight new SIA Boeing 777-300ERs to commence operation from Sep this year, all show an impressive attention to detail, and while the First and Business seats are stunning, *TD* was particularly impressed at the thoughtful touches which feature in the new, more spacious economy seating (right).

A flexible headrest which slides up and down to suit different neck heights, pockets for smartphones and tablet devices, and a tray table with an integrated vanity mirror are just a few of the innovations, while the large touch-screen inflight entertainment system - also with a touch screen handset for every seat - will also help the hours to fly by.

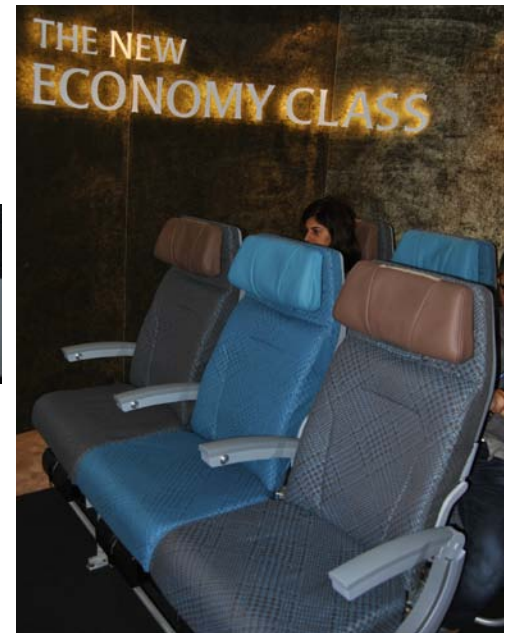
Every seat has two USB ports, one of which has boosted power to charge iPads, and in economy class there are also two laptop power points for every three seats.

When reclined, the base of the economy seats slides forward slightly, while the footrest also now adjusts so that taller passengers can still have a place for their feet.

**RIGHT:** The large economy seat touch screen, with USB ports and the new touch-screen handheld controller below offering a host of options.



**ABOVE:** You can expect that economy class passengers disembarking from SIA flights may look a little less ruffled, with the new seats cleverly offering a vanity mirror behind a slide on the tray table for those pre-arrival touch-ups.



**LEFT:** The new business class offering on SIA's 777-300s and Airbus A350s is an evolution of the existing product, and has been developed in partnership with James Park Associates, the same designers behind SQ's First Class SkySuite product launched in 1998.

SIA says that at 71cm, the new seat is almost 50% wider than most other products in this class. Enhancements from the previous seat include greater recline, which enables it to be placed in the "Lazy Z" and "Sundeck" seating positions for more comfort.

The seats will be configured in a forward-facing 1-2-1 arrangement giving all passengers aisle access, and when it's time to sleep the back of the seat folds forward to convert to a 1.98m long flat bed.



There are lots of nooks and crannies for the storage of personal items, including a thoughtful spot (left) adjacent to the USB port which is ideal for an iPad or even a laptop to be stowed when taking a break from working on the height-adjustable table.

**SIA'S** new 777-300ER aircraft, to be delivered over the next two years, will be fitted with just eight seats in the exclusive first class cabin, which has been created in conjunction with BMW Group's DesignworksUSA.

Almost a home away from home, the First Class seats (right) are 89cm wide and convert into a bed which is 2.08m (82 inches) long - two inches more than the previous version and with an additional mattress topper for even greater comfort.

Key enhancements also include the in-seat lighting, which is the result of extensive research to determine the optimal intensity and colour; and stowage space under the ottoman large enough for a standard cabin bag.

First Class seats also feature a massive 61cm inflight entertainment screen, controlled using the touch-screen handheld controller, and new HDMI ports enable KrisWorld to be used as a personal media player.

Enhancements to the next generation KrisWorld (left) include a 3D flight path tracker which allows customers to view key points of interest such as the Taj Mahal or other landmarks when they are flying over them.



For more photos and video of the new Singapore Airlines product see our website and [facebook.com/traveldaily](http://facebook.com/traveldaily).



## AY adds Tromso

**FINNAIR** will launch seasonal thrice weekly services between Helsinki and the arctic gateway of Tromso from 01 Jan-28 Mar, using by Embraer E90 aircraft.

## Cash Splash in the rock's shadow



**WINNERS** of Territory Discoveries' recent cash bonanza sales incentive celebrated their success with a weekend enjoying some luxury in the NT itself.

Five top-selling agents claimed a prize of \$10,000 each, while Flower Travel in Vic earned a \$15,000 cooperative marketing campaign as the highest-selling agency during the sales period.

The winners and representatives from incentive sponsors enjoyed a fine meal at the new Tali Wiru

dining experience at Uluru along with touring of Kata Tjuta with SEIT and a helicopter flight over Lake Amadeus.

**Pictured** above is Jane Gannon, Allure Travel by CTM; Jenny Flower, Flower Travel; Sara Kearney, RACV Cruise & Tours; Rachel Karas, FC Neutral Bay and Christie Bishop, FC Wagga Wagga with Alison Conroy, Territory Discoveries; Tony Quarmby, Tourism NT and Georgia Rowe from Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia.

## AUH lounge addition

**ETIHAD** Airways passengers flying Pearl Business Class will be able to access a new dedicated lounge in Terminal 1 at Abu Dhabi International Airport, which is set to open next week.

To make way for the new lounge, work will commence today to convert the existing T1 Diamond First Class Lounge.

In the meantime, guests flying Pearl Business Class out of T1 can continue to use the Business Class lounge in the same terminal, while First Class and Etihad Guest Gold Elite pax can utilise the dedicated Diamond First Class lounge at AUH Terminal 3.

**MEANWHILE**, Etihad has also launched a joint promotion with car rental firm Budget, with five prizes of 100,000 Etihad Guest Miles up for grabs for Budget bookings before 30 Sep.

Members of the EY loyalty program are also being offered double Etihad Guest Miles for minimum three-day rentals in Europe, the Middle East and Africa as part of the promotion.

## Fiji ferry launch

**FIJIAN** tourism minister Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum has officially launched *Malolo IV*, which is a new fully air conditioned 24m vessel seating 180 passengers.

The new ferry is an expansion of the existing Malolo Cat fleet and will be used to carry passengers between Denarau and the three resorts located on Malolo Lailai Island - Plantation, Lomani and Musket Cove Island Resort.

*Malolo IV* operates four services daily, starting at 5.45am ex Malolo Lailai with the final departure ex Denarau at 5.30pm.

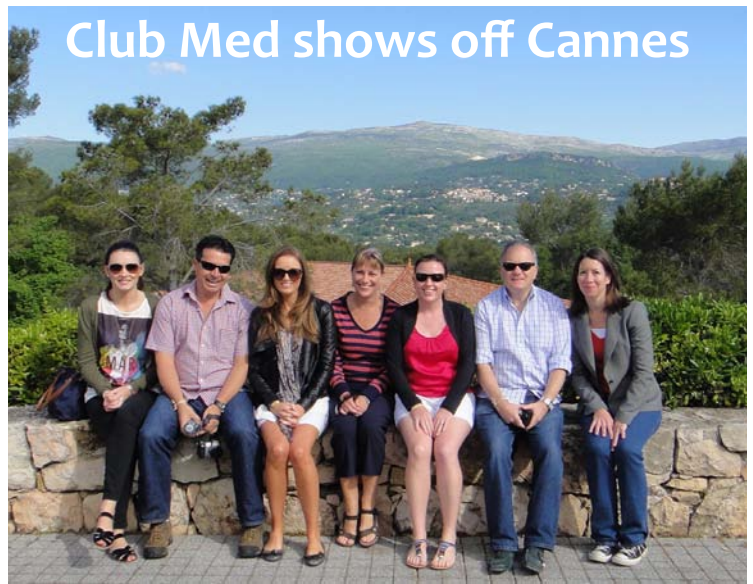
## Allegiant HNL/LAX

**AN ALL** new twice weekly jet services between Los Angeles and Honolulu is being introduced by Las Vegas-based carrier Allegiant.

Commencing 30 Oct, the low-cost carrier is offering fares on the new route for US\$99 one-way, for travel by 13 Feb 2014, if booked before 14 Jul.

The airline already operates to HNL from nine US cities.

## Club Med shows off Cannes



**CLUB** Med and THAI Airways gave this group of Queensland-based agents an opportunity to visit France in May, experiencing TG's new A380 aircraft between Bangkok and Paris.

The famil included two night in Paris and the TGV train to Cannes where they were fortunate to experience the buzz of the Cannes Film Festival, staying at Club Med Opio En Provence, located in the hills near the city.

Nestled among quaint villages, the resort showcases the scenic side of the region, surrounded by

olive groves and offering stunning views (as seen here).

Participants also enjoyed a day on the *Club Med 2* Cruise Ship and two nights in Bangkok for shopping and sightseeing.

**Pictured** from left are Rae Painter, Noosa Travel; Matthew Nickelson, sales mgr Queensland & Northern Territory; Jodie Weeks, Club Med BDM Qld/NT/Nth NSW; Tracey Standing, Main Beach Travel; Joanne Warne, Sister Act Travel; Peter Lucas, Atlas Travel and Helen Berry, CTM Travel Brisbane.

## How 'bout them Mets?



**ABOVE:** These top performing Consolidated Travel consultants were treated to an all-inclusive educational to San Francisco and New York recently, flying Business Class with United Airlines.

The trip included two nights at the iconic Handlery Hotel in San Francisco & sightseeing with Urban Safari, before jetting across the country to the Big Apple.

Based at the New York's famous Hotel Beacon, participants watched a baseball game in

which the Chicago Cubs defeated the New York Mets.

**Pictured** at Citi Field Stadium from left, front row are: Tina Jackson, Quadrant Travel & Journeys; Marion Earl, Terrace Travel; Liz Osborne, Capital Travel; Pauline Cash, Mission Travel and Deidre Parkes-Finch, UA.

Back row: John O'Rourke, Gippsland Global Travel; Drew Wales, Blue Powder Tours; Adam Shepherd, Consolidated Travel & Karen Mansour, Avgo Travel.



## Accommodation Updates

**WELCOME** to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to [accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au).



Newly reopened in the last week following a major refurbishment, Sydney's **Best Western Plus Hotel Stellar** has a new cafe, designed to respond to guest feedback for an on-site eatery. Named Bar Stellar, the Parisian-style establishment offers a combination of modern Australian and French cuisine aimed at providing a high quality food and beverage service to guests and customers from neighbouring businesses, which will include fine wines, cocktails, cakes and sweets.



Following a \$15m renovation which began in Nov last year, the classic yet contemporary **Hyatt Regency Newport Beach Hotel**, known among locals as Hollywood's Playground, has been completed. The works included a full top-to-toe upgrade of all 407 rooms and suites, three new pool areas and new inspirations for the restaurants, lounge area and library. The front drive and lobby were also upgraded as part of the project.

### North Qld MoU pact

A **FORMAL** working relationship has been established between Tropical Tablelands Tourism (TTT) and Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two. TTT chairman Michael Trout said he was looking to build on the growth experienced in 2012 through initiatives such as a Drive North Qld smartphone app, Avis Drive campaign and new guides. He added the MoU will enable the two groups to form a better framework for collaboration.

### Tibet Rail extension

**MANAGEMENT** of the Qinghai to Tibet railway in China have said new routes to more remote parts of Western China are either under construction or being planned for future development. According to China's *Xinhua* newspaper, the first extension to open will be from Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, to Xigaze in the region's southwest, with another route to Nyingchai in the east.

### Andaz opening Maui

**RESERVATIONS** are open from 29 Jul and beyond for stays at the soon-to-open Andaz Maui. The Hyatt-family brand resort will be located at Wailea and will feature 297 rooms and suites along with two restaurants, two poolside eateries & retail market.

### QE2 to be renovated

A **GROUP** of private investors in Dubai will pump approx US\$90m into a plan to restore and convert the retired *Queen Elizabeth 2* into a floating hotel (**TD** 18 Jan). The vessel will be owned by a Dubai Govt entity known as **QE2** Shipping, with work to begin soon. Work continues to restore the liner's nine engines, at which point it will sail under its own steam to China for the conversion, which is expected to take between 8-12 months. A final location for the **QE2** in its new life as a floating hotel has not yet been determined, however a spokesperson for **QE2** Shipping said discussions were underway with several countries.

### LX carry-on discounts

**PASSENGERS** with carry-on bags only will soon be able to buy discounted airfares on select flights with Swiss International Air Lines, the carrier has announced. From 01 Sep, passengers flying to or from Geneva will be able to buy Geneva Economy Light fares, which will be cheaper but have no checked luggage allowance. Geneva Economy Flex fares will allow one checked piece along with rebooking and cancellation. At this stage, the carrier has not said whether the system will be rolled out to any other airports.

### Pinnacle name change

**DELTA** Air Lines regional subsidiary carrier Pinnacle Airlines is to be renamed Endeavor Airlines, effective from 01 Aug, according to reports from the US. The Minneapolis based business unit currently operates Delta Connection flights for its parent company out of Minnesota.

## WIN A RIVER CRUISE FOR TWO IN EUROPE WITH APT



Click here for more info and terms & conditions of the competition

This month **Travel Daily** is giving one lucky reader and their friend the chance to win a 15-day European river cruise, including return flights, courtesy of **APT**.

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Every day **Travel Daily** will ask a different question – just read the issue and email us your answer. There will be 23 questions in total, which will also be posted on our website. 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 amazing river cruise holiday. Email your answers to: [APTcomp@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:APTcomp@traveldaily.com.au)



**Q.8: Name the legendary hotel that APT clients will stay at whilst visiting Seville in Spain.**

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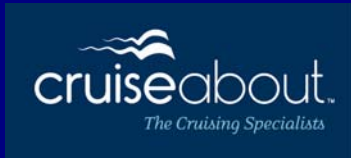
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