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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Wednesday 27th March 2013

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## QF/EK alliance green light

**QANTAS** chief Alan Joyce has lauded a five-year approval by the competition regulator (to 31 Mar 2018) for its alliance with Emirates (**TD** breaking news), saying the pact is a win for Australian travellers and local tourism.

The partnership will see QF/EK offer nearly 100 flights a week between Australia and Dubai & is aimed at resurrecting the viability of Qantas' International business.

It includes Qantas establishing a new hub in the Middle East, with daily services ex both Sydney and Melbourne & onwards to London, commencing this weekend.

"Customers are already responding very strongly to the joint network that Qantas and Emirates have built, and to the frequent flyer benefits that extend across it, with a significant increase in bookings," Joyce said.

EK president Tim Clark welcomed the approval, saying the pact was a "game-changing partnership."

"Our two airlines will connect Australia to Europe, the UK and Northern Africa more smoothly than ever before," Clark stated.

In handing down the decision

this morning, ACCC chairman Rod Sims said the public benefits of the Master Coordination Agreement were likely to result in public benefits "through enhanced products and service offerings by the airlines, and improved operating efficiency."

The decision includes a range of conditions across the Tasman, such as maintaining at least pre-alliance aggregated capacity on four common routes, subject to a review on 01 Sep 2015.

Tasman growth is capped to not exceed trend GDP growth.

In its 162-page Determination, the ACCC admitted some of the benefits were "likely to be small" but added it was "satisfied that the proposed conduct would or would likely result in material, but not substantial, public benefits."

### Seven pages of news

**Travel Daily** today has seven pages of news, plus full pages:

- AA Appointments jobs
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- Cox & Kings

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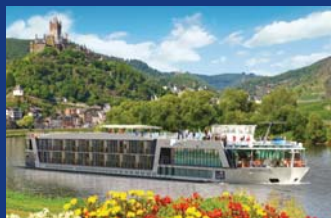
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## France targeting Aussies

**RENDEZ-VOUS** en France opened today in Toulouse, the home of Airbus with the cream of French tourism, 680 in all, displaying and releasing their offers to the 900 international buyers and tour operators invited by the official French tourism agency, Atout France.

The suppliers are presenting their latest offers and trends at a record 20,000 meetings at the two-day event.

As it got underway, Australian Atout France head, Patrick Benhmou, warned that France is in danger of being overtaken by neighbouring Italy as the world's top tourist destination, telling *TD* that Italy is now strong competition for France.

"And, I'm fearing more and more competition from the US because of the exchange rate, so that's why we can't rest on our laurels, and after four very big boom years, we have to get out there and beat the drum louder on France," Benhmou enthused.

He said he'll do this by staging a series of agents' educationals in partnership with Qantas Holidays,

and step up online training, seminars and sales calls.

"When I opened our Australian office 30 years ago, only 300,000 Aussies visited France and new figures show that we have doubled that number to 600,000, so more than half-a-million Australians now go to holiday in France and they stay the longest in terms of duration - 16 days on average," he added.

Benhamou revealed that Atout France is already planning its Australian workshops for Sep next year, and they will feature the biggest number of French exhibitors ever seen down under, with Monaco as the event's "guest destination".

"The market is doing well and we are more and more professional in how we sell France, such as working with 100 travel companies in France from hotels, DMCs and restaurant chains who are investing money to come to Australia," noted Benhmou.

More from *TD's* exclusive participation in Rendez-Vous in Toulouse on **page four** of today's *Travel Daily*.

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## QF Dubai crew hotel

QANTAS crews overnighing in Dubai will have a birdseye view of the city, with the recently opened JW Marriott Marquis Hotel selected as the airline's base.

Head of Qantas International Cabin Crew and Airports Ian Jackson confirmed the selection of the world's tallest hotel, which features 1,600 rooms, 10 dining venues and four bars.

Qantas launches services to its new Dubai hub on Sun 31.

## Virgin tick for Skywest takeover

VIRGIN Australia's proposed 100% takeover of Skywest has been given the green light from the Singapore High Court.

The move now clears the way for VA to acquire 100% of all

ordinarily issued shares in Skywest Airlines Ltd, with Virgin Australia welcoming the decision.

Although still subject to certain conditions imposed by local competition & regulatory officials in Australia, Virgin has said it now expects to take ownership and full control of Skywest on 11 Apr.

Shares in Skywest Airlines will cease trading from this evening, with the carrier being officially removed from the Australian Stock Exchange at the same time. Skywest shareholders approved the takeover earlier this month.

## ATDW gets tastier

THE Australian Tourism Data Warehouse has beefed up the number of quality restaurants nationwide under a new alliance with de Groot's Media.

The 6,000 restaurants added to the ATDW range from cafes, to pub dining, cheap and cheerful, family friendly, award winning and hatted restaurants.

"This new third party content partnership is a first for ATDW, in a step to extend and diversify the database to create more value to the distribution network," said ATDW ceo Liz Ward.

Importantly, the deal will result in an increased interest & visitation to Australia's destinations and wider regions, she added.

The restaurants complement 27,000 tourism product and event listings already on the database.

## C&K now Explore GSA

COX & Kings Australia has taken over the title of Australian General Sales Agency (GSA) for Explore Worldwide from Venture Holidays.

Venture Hols md Robert Mackay said "the move is a logical one with Explore joining other Cox & Kings Australia brands including Tempo Holidays and Bentours."

The change, effective 01 Apr, will see the introduction of a new reservations phone number for Explore, to 1300 439 756.

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## Rail+ Eiffel fast entry

RAIL Plus is now selling priority-entrance tickets to the Eiffel Tower, priced from \$55 per adult.

The fast-pass avail ticket holders to immediate entry to all three levels of the Parisian landmark, incl the top observation deck.

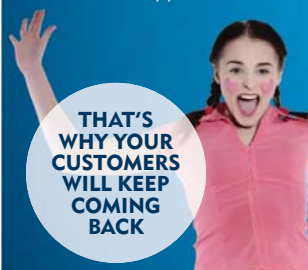
## Astor booking boom

CRUISE & Maritime Voyages Australia has reported "strong and growing" bookings for the Fremantle-bound Astor vessel.

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**Rendez-vous en France**

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you from Toulouse in France, courtesy of Atout France.

**ATOUT** France says Alsace is an emerging new market for Australians, a region that has never been strong in the market down under.

"We want to try and promote this beautiful area much more because it's noted for it's stunning scenery and, of course, wonderful wines," according to Patrick Benhamou, head of the French tourist bureau in Australia.

But he says, Bordeaux is still the Aussie favourite, with 15% of all wine tours sold to Australians.

"Paris remains the number one city tourist destination, before New York and London, while it seems Aussies love fine works of art, with 282,000 visiting the famous Louvre Museum in Paris in 2011," Benhamou said.

He says France is unique.

"I've been in the job 30 years and I still don't know the whole of France, but its unique appeal is the scenery, the way people eat and dress; the country changes every 100 kms when you visit it."

**Vive la France!**

IT'S never been a cheaper or better time to visit France, report the 20-strong Aussie agent contingent at the Rendez-vous en France show which officially gets under way today in Toulouse.

Speaking to *Travel Daily* at last night's opening gala dinner, the buyers said so many of their clients are visiting France because it's not as expensive as before, with several saying everything is practically half-price.

Marc Pilcer, Manager of France Tourism in Sydney, a 40-year French specialist, says it's due to the weak Euro - "\$AU1 equals about €0.80 cents now, when eight years ago €0.50 cents would be \$AU1, so it's currently 65% cheaper for us to tour France, indeed most of Europe today."

"Even in Paris, you can have a set 3-course menu for roughly \$AU16, compared to \$AU30 in the past."

France ticks all the boxes, say the agents; it's a pleasure to the senses from the tastes to sights, ambience, history and the general "joie de vivre".

**QIC Easter trading hrs**

**QANTAS** Industry Centre & QIC Refunds are advising agents the office will be closed on 29 Mar (Good Fri) and 01 Apr (Easter Mon), before resuming to normal trading hours on 02 Apr.

Agents requiring assistance with urgent matters are advised to call General Reservations on 13 13 13.

**NZ AU visitors sliding**

THE number of Aussies heading across the ditch to New Zealand for a holiday fell 0.5% to 35,232 during Feb, compared to the corresponding period last year.

On average, Australians are spending 11 days in the country for holiday purposes.

Feb year-ending visitor arrivals from Australia have slumped by nearly 5%, down to 435,440 y-o-y, Tourism New Zealand reports.

Across all markets, the inbound visitor tally fell 0.5% to 2.58m.

Holiday traffic out of China spiked by nearly 130% to 25,760, while Hong Kong arrivals climbed just short of 300% to 2,544.

**Snow Travel Expos**

THE annual Snow Travel Expo will return for its eighth season in 2013 with events planned for Melbourne and Sydney.

More than 50 global ski resorts will be present during the May shows, including partners in the USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, India, Europe, South America, Australia & NZ, in addition to tour operators, tourism authorities and airlines.

Shows will be held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre on Sun 19 May and the Sydney Exhibition Centre on 26 May - see [www.snowtravelexpo.com.au](http://www.snowtravelexpo.com.au).

**Broome Lounge upgr**

**QANTAS** has confirmed the temporary closure of its Broome Airport Regional Lounge until Jul as the facility expands to meet growing premium pax demand.

The refurbishment will result in an almost doubling in size of the current lounge, accompanied by additional seating and high speed wi-fi, designed to "give passengers more room to relax & work," said QF Domestic ceo Lyell Strambi.

"Broome is an important part of our network for leisure and regional business travel.

"We are committed to providing our customers with the best travel experience on the ground as well as in the air," Strambi said.

**Window Seat**



**ECCENTRIC** billionaire & builder of the much-hyped *Titanic II* cruise ship, Clive Palmer, has been involved in a slight ocean skirmish of his own ahead of the launch of the fabled replica.

Palmer's \$5m superyacht, named "Maximus" lost power in the Gold Coast Broadwater and started drifting towards rocks and an island while Palmer was entertaining friends onboard.

The crew dialled emergency services, who reached the vessel in time to right its course and save it, however many guests had donned their lifejackets.

Luckily, there are no icebergs in the Gold Coast Broadwater.

**ARGENTINA** is readying itself for masses of new tourists looking to follow in the footsteps of the recently elected Argentinian Pope Francis.

Globus managing director for groups and emerging markets Mike Schields said people of faith flocked to Poland for Pope John Paul II and would likely do the same for the newest Pope.

The new pontiff's home town of Flores in Buenos Aires, his Cathedral Metropolitana and even football matches of his beloved San Lorenzo soccer team are all expecting visitor numbers from tourists to swell.

**onefinestay partner**

**PERTH**-based travel sales agency Masstige Moments has been appointed as representative for unhotel group, onefinestay.

The concept places guests in distinctive private homes while owners are out of town, with the comforts of hotels, such as linen, towels and toiletries, a dedicated Guest Services team and more.

Currently, onefinestay.com is available in London and New York, with plans to expand to other markets later this year.

See [www.onefinestay.com](http://www.onefinestay.com).

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**Best Cruise Operator International**  
Avalon Waterways

**Best Sales Executive Industry Supplier**  
Chris Le-Roux - NSW  
Melinda Robilliard - VIC

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Wednesday 27th Mar 2013

## QF/AA JBA fully active

**QANTAS** and American Airlines have collectively informed the US Dept of Transportation that their Joint Business Agreement "has been implemented."

The transPacific airline partners said they will both separately submit a complete & unredacted copy of the JBA to the DOT.

## Choice Islands awards

**TAHITI'S** Bora Bora and Moorea have taken out the top two spots in TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice Islands awards in the South Pacific.

The Cook Islands Rarotonga and Aitutaki were voted 3rd and 5th best in the region, separated by Efate in Vanuatu.

South Australia's Kangaroo Island also made the Top 10 list, placing 9th.

The Top 10 Islands in the World, as voted by millions of travellers globally, were Ambergris Caye in Belize, St John (US Virgin Islands), followed by Bora Bora.

See [www.bit.ly/TAtopislands](http://www.bit.ly/TAtopislands).

## VA Italy codeshare

**VIRGIN** Australia has revealed intentions to launch codeshare services to Italy with both Etihad Airways and Singapore Airlines.

According to an application to the International Air Services Commission filed late yesterday, VA is seeking to codeshare with Singapore Airlines on flights from Australia to Rome and Milan.

Milan will also be serviced by VA under a codeshare deal with Etihad Airways, via Abu Dhabi.

Virgin Australia has applied for an allocation of 300-seats on the Australia-Italy route for a period of five years, and intends to fully utilise the allocation by 26 Oct.

## Cunard 2014 on sale

**CUNARD** has released fares for its 2014 program, priced from \$1,099ppts on a seven-night Med cruise aboard Queen Elizabeth.

Fares on sale at 10pm on 09 Apr.

## Tiger Maroochy first

**TIGER** Airways has inaugurated services between Melbourne and the Sunshine Coast today, with the first flight touching down earlier this morning.

Initially operating as four times weekly, the new service will be cranked up to daily in Jun.



**ABOVE:** The Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Tourism hosted a group of VIP partners from within and outside the trade to last night's FIFA World Cup qualifier at ANZ Stadium in Sydney, which pitted the Socceroos against Oman.

Invited guests enjoyed splendid hospitality, canapes and drinks in the comfort of a corporate box

overlooking the ground, while viewing a hard fought 2-2 draw.

**Pictured** above enjoying the action from left are: Javad Azizi, bdm, Oman Air; Martin Edwards, gm Bench International; Luisa Pastrello, gm Australia/NZ Etihad Airways; Mona Tannous, Sultanate of Oman and John Polyviou, gm Sun Island Tours.

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A key focus will be on the development of long term partnerships together with promoting the range of Hertz products and services to the corporate and travel industry sectors.

To succeed in this role you will possess extensive sales experience and be able to demonstrate previous achievements in developing and implementing business development and account management strategies for growth and retention.

Equally important will be your focus on relationship building, providing a high level of customer service and excellent communication skills. You will be highly motivated; results orientated and have the ability to work autonomously.

An in depth understanding of both corporate and travel industry market segments will be highly regarded. A high degree of capability with Microsoft Office programs is essential. Knowledge of CRS/GDS and Travel on-line booking tools will also be an advantage.

**Applications with a cover letter can be forwarded to Martina Jennings, Regional Sales Manager Vic SA WA NT - [mjennings@hertz.com](mailto:mjennings@hertz.com)**

**Applications close Tuesday 02 April 2012**

# Africa Safari Co national tour



**FOURTEEN** suppliers visiting from across Africa and promoting a range of different but equally unique experiences took part in the 2013 Africa Safari Co roadshow, which closed last night.

Events took place in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney, with more than 500 agents attending nationwide.

Africa Safari Co managing director Susie Potter said the

presenting suppliers found the series to be one of the best roadshows they had attended.

"There was a mix of videos, powerpoint presentations with plenty of humour and comedy.

"There were not too many no-shows...in Adelaide, we even had 101% attendance," Potter added.

On offer at each event was a major prize of an African safari, with flights courtesy of South African Airways, and another prize of eight nights in Mauritius, which was won by Liz Kelly of Cruisesavers Narrabeen Travel, pictured right with Lynn Bradley, Compass Travel & Cruising and Susie Potter from Africa Safari Co.

## Choice expands again

**MANAGEMENT** rights for seven new properties in NSW, Vic & WA have been secured by Choice Hotels Australasia as part of a continued growth strategy.

The group's newest NSW hotels will be located in Parkes and Beaumont, as well as Grafton and Lismore in the state's north.

Two new properties in Victoria are situated in Geelong and Ararat, while a new hotel in the Margaret River region make up the group's WA expansion.

Choice ceo Trent Fraser said the new acquisitions form part of the group's plan to boost its mid-range room inventory by 10% in 2013.

## MU scales back CNS

**CHINA** Eastern Airlines will fly two weekly services to Cairns during its Northern Summer timetable period of 31 Mar to 26 Oct - down from three weekly initially slated by the carrier.

The third weekly flight was set to run between 01 Jul-26 Oct.

Flights from Cairns to Shanghai will operate on Tue and Sat each week during the seasonal service.

## EK Joy for WA agent

**LUYI** Yap from Joy Tours in Northbridge, WA has been named as the 8th and final winner of a bonus prize in the 2013 Dubai Tourism mega-famil incentive, run in conjunction with Emirates.

Yap said Dubai's classic souks & traditions would be a highlight of a visit to the city if she received a place on the mega-famil, adding she often recommended EK's Economy Class cabin for clients.

Wednesday 27th Mar 2013

## Open Space '14 date

**MELBOURNE** Convention and Exhibition Centre has announced its Open Space Business Forum this year was a success and will return next year on Thu 20 Feb.

## AFTA UPDATE

The latest insights from AFTA's Chief Executive, Jayson Westbury



THE last week has definitely brought on some incredible events in Canberra.

I am actually writing this from Brazil while attending meetings with WTAAA and IATA and the international media have had a field day reporting on the events in Canberra. It is amazing how this has been perceived and reported in such a negative way toward the country.

I was even asked a question at a press conference about the stability of Australia. Can you believe that! Wow, let's hope that this leadership issue of who should be the Prime Minister of the current government is now resolved until the people get to decide on 14 Sep.

On top of this, the Tourism Minister Martin Ferguson has resigned from his ministry. Martin has been the Minister for Tourism for the entire time I have been at AFTA and in fact he was the opposition Tourism Minister for many years prior to the electoral win by Kevin Rudd in 2007.

So Martin has been part of the travel and tourism industry for a very very long time. Over the years we have not always agreed with him, but for the things that have been important to AFTA Martin has provided his support, guidance and opinion which has been welcomed.

Over the past few years his main goal has been to build on the Tourism 2020 National Long Term Tourism Strategy & support Tourism Australia in getting more people to come to Australia. It is for others to comment on this success, but I can say that Martin definitely understood and respected the outbound travel industry which for those of us in the travel industry is important.

As to the new Tourism Minister, The Hon. Gary Gray a member from WA has been sworn in (**TD** Mon).

It's notable that his portfolio has had small business added. But given Minister Gray will have Energy, Resources, Tourism and Small Business he has been allocated a Minister Assisting on Tourism in Don Farrell.

In fact, the tourism industry gets two ministers for the time being, & we shall see how this will work over the coming weeks.

So a big week in politics. A big week for the country and a big week for the tourism and travel industry in that we have a new Minister.



## Intl boosts Eurostar

**TICKET** sales on Eurostar trains from international passengers made up 9% of overall ticket sales in 2012, Eurostar has reported.

Overall, the high-speed service transported 9.9m passengers for the full year - a 2% climb y-on-y.

Sales of Business Premier class tickets from the APMEA market (Asia Pacific, South America, Middle East and Africa) exploded by a whopping 59% from 2011.

A series of refurbished and brand new Eurostar train carriages are on track for delivery by 2015.

## TA photo walk record

**TOURISM** Australia's 'photo walk', held last weekend (**TD** 20 Mar) resulted in a new world record, with 395 photographers, bloggers and tweeters walking with US snapper Colby Brown from Bronte to Bondi and sharing their experiences online.

The record attempt, which was sponsored by Destination NSW, was aimed at boosting the social media profile of Tourism Australia to its international followers, and beat the former record held by Melbourne, with 295 attendees.

## WIN A 2-NIGHT BREAK AT PALMER COOLUM RESORT

This week, **Travel Daily** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a 2-night break at **Palmer Coolum Resort** on the Sunshine Coast.

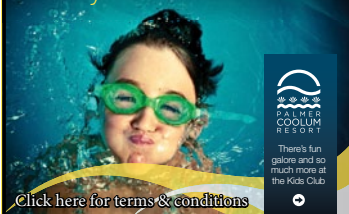
The prize includes two nights accom in a 2-bedroom Woodland Suite and flights from any Australian capital city.

Palmer Coolum Resort's Kids Club is considered one of the best holiday destinations for kids in Australia. Providing a comprehensive range of facilities and activities, Kids Club caters for children from 6 weeks to 10 years.

For your chance to win this great prize, email your answer to the question below by COB on Thursday to: [pcrcomp@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:pcrcomp@traveldaily.com.au).

*In 50 words or less, tell us which of our activities or fun holiday programs planned and coordinated by our qualified child workers would your kids like to take part in and why?*

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## CH incentive closing

FIVE days remain for entries for Creative Holidays' Ultimate Beach Breaks mega-incentive, closing on 31 Mar, with three \$1000 cash prizes or one of ten places on a trip to Hawaii up for grabs.

All bookings made for Bali, Fiji, Thailand or Hawaii will earn an entry into the draw for a place to Hawaii, with every five bookings earning a chance at the cash draw.

More info [www.bit.ly/ultbreaks](http://www.bit.ly/ultbreaks).

## Copa Club San Jose

STAR Alliance carrier Copa Airlines has opened its newest Copa Club in San Jose, Costa Rica.

The facility has a capacity of 160 guests, and joins other Copa Clubs in Panama, Guatemala, Santo Domingo and San Jose.

## AA/MAS codesharing

MALAYSIA Airlines is offering services to five US cities through a new codeshare agreement signed with oneworld partner carrier American Airlines.

Passengers will be able to reach Chicago, Dallas, New York, Miami and Raleigh from Kuala Lumpur after transiting from an MH flight via London, Paris or Frankfurt.

## Strictly ballroom reno

RENOVATIONS will be carried out to the Grand Ballroom at the Shangri-La Sydney this winter, to begin in Jun for completion in Oct.

Works will include installation of new technology, a new ceiling design and an increased capacity.

The project is not expected to impact at all on hotel operations.

Wednesday 27th Mar 2013



**TOURISM NT** last night held the first of its two roadshows, again titled NT Muster, showcasing the wondrous variety of experiences, products and services available in a visit to the Northern Territory.

In attendance were 26 suppliers both based in and selling the Territory, including hotel groups as well as individual properties,

## Luxury sought in WA

RESEARCH from online travel firm Lastminute.com has found an increasing number of Aussie travellers are heading to Western Australia for a luxury holiday.

The study found bookings for five-star retreats in WA leapt 44% year-on-year, with the top five resorts in the state being Crown Metropolis Perth, Berkeley River, Cable Beach Resort in Broome, Cape Lodge & Injidup Spa Retreat.

## Refurbished Mantra open

MANTRA French Quarter on the Sunshine Coast town of Noosa has reopened to guests following the completion of a \$5m renovation and refurbishment project.

The property has undergone a rebrand from its former Breakfree moniker and now boasts a new reception and a new look lobby.

All one- and two-bedroom units have been fully refurbished following a redesign of the interior, new kitchens and appliances, new furniture, fittings and technology throughout.

car rental firms, attractions, wholesalers including AAT Kings, Infinity Holidays, Qantas Holidays and Territory Discoveries, and the NT Muster's gold sponsor, Great Southern Rail.

Director of domestic tourism marketing operations for NT Tourism Tony Quarmby said the repositioning of the organisation to focus more on the trade was already seeing positive results.

"We're looking after our operators, who are crucial to us moving forward and making sure they have heads on pillows and bums in seats," Quarmby said.

**Pictured** above at the roadshow from left is Melissa White, Tourism Top End; Phil Haines, Tourism NT; A reptile handler with "Princess" the black-headed python; Sally Garnett, Tony Quarmby, Julieta Vallance, Rebecca Dawes, Nicole Mitchell and Meg Potter; Tourism NT and Jaclyn Thorne from Tourism Central Australia.

# WANTED

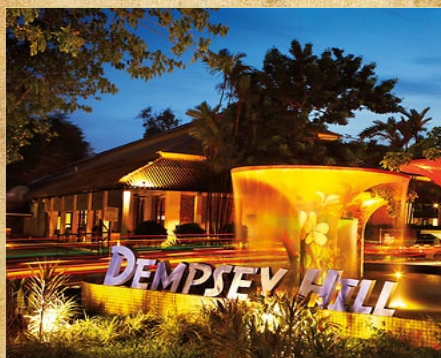
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Email your answer to: [singaporecomp@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:singaporecomp@traveldaily.com.au)



**Q.19: Dempsey Hill, tucked away in a lush corner of the Tanglin area, is home to chefs, artists and designers today. What was it formerly?**

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[Click here for Terms & Conditions and to view all questions](#)

**SHANGRI-LA**  
HOTELS and RESORTS



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**MEL + ADL - SALARY PACKAGE TO \$70K (OTE)**

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**HOLA AMIGOS!**

**RESERVATIONS CONSULTANTS**

**MELBOURNE (INNER) – SALARY PACKAGE DOE**

This boutique travel company specializing in all things South American is on the lookout for a passionate travel specialist to join their team. Personal travel experience of the region in addition to previous experience selling South America is preferred. Here is your chance to work for a company that looks after staff & provides ongoing training & support to develop you product knowledge. Call AA to find out more.

**CALL OF THE WILD - WHOLESALE ROLE**

**RESERVATIONS TRAVEL CONSULTANTS**

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Opportunities in wholesale are definitely the flavor of the month. So if you are looking to make you next career move now is the time to move into wholesale. This specialist travel company is seeking a consultant with minimum 2 years industry experience to join their team. Selling a range of travel packages throughout Africa, you must have travelled to Africa to be eligible for this position. Call AA today to find out more!

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