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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Wednesday 16th October 2013

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## Virgin boosts NZ domestic

VIRGIN Australia and Air New Zealand today announced a significant expansion of their trans-Tasman alliance, with the addition of 17 more domestic routes across New Zealand.

The pact already included Virgin Australia codeshares to all Air NZ destinations in New Zealand, but today's boost "means that customers now have more choice than ever before on how to get

to their destination," according to Virgin Australia chief commercial officer, Judith Crompton.

She said the move followed the recent reauthorisation of the Virgin Australia-Air NZ alliance.

"We are committed to being the alliance of choice across the Tasman and we will continue to actively review our network and schedule to ensure we are meeting the needs of our customers," Crompton said.

MEANWHILE, Macquarie Bank analysts have released a report which suggests an increasing likelihood that Virgin Australia will end up being privatised.

Ethihad and Air NZ both recently lifted their stakes in the airline, with Singapore Airlines also a significant shareholder.

The report suggests that SQ and NZ are the most likely to end up acquiring VA in the medium term.

### A380s for QF107/108

QANTAS has announced that flights 107/108 between Sydney and Los Angeles will be operated by A380 aircraft each Fri and Sun over the upcoming holiday peak period between 03 and 26 Jan.

The service is normally operated using a 747-400, with the upgrade lifting capacity by almost 2000 extra customers over the school holidays.




QF107/108 between Los Angeles and New York will continue to be operated using a B744 aircraft during the period.

To accommodate the larger plane, QF108 will arrive into Sydney 15 minutes later at 0955.

### Six pages of news

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

- AA Appointments jobs
- Consolidated/QF promo



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## APAC meetings to decline

**GLOBAL** business & travel giant American Express has released its Meetings and Events Forecast for 2014, in which it predicts the number of events and meetings to be held in the Asia-Pacific region will experience a downturn.

The study predicted a 1.2% drop in the number of meetings held in APAC overall, a 3.6% cut to event spending per organisation and a 2.4% fall in attendee numbers.

Four major regions were studied, with APAC the only one forecasted to decline, Europe and South America expected to remain flat, and growth expected in the USA.

Despite the less than positive forecast, which comes after two years of growth, demand for

meetings in the APAC region is still expected to climb by 4% - the highest of the four regions.

Sydney was ranked third in a list of the top five event destinations, behind Shanghai and Singapore and ahead of Hong Kong.

A greater emphasis on spend control by companies was cited for the poor Asia-Pacific outlook.

### Emerald Sky preview

**EVERGREEN** Tours has released a short video providing a sneak-peek of its brand new European river cruise product, *Emerald Sky* which took to the water for the very first time late last month.

GM Angus Crichton told **TD** seeing *Emerald Sky* come to life is "very exciting and backs up strong interest and demand we've seen so far from the cruising market."

*Sky* and sister-ship *Emerald Star* are slated to start operating on the Rhine, Main, Danube & Moselle Rivers from Apr 2014.

Artist impressions are brought to life in the clip using innovative 3D projection and advanced camera mapping techniques.

**CLICK HERE** to view the video.

### Trafalgar groups head

A **NEWLY** created National Groups Manager role at Trafalgar has been filled by Paul Groves-Berry with immediate effect.

The firm says the appointment comes in response to growing demand for group bookings.

Groves-Berry was previously Custom Groups Manager for The Travel Corporation in Europe.



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## Modern QF fleet what pax want

**QANTAS** Domestic ceo Lyell Strambi has emphasised having modern aircraft is a "strategic priority" and is fundamental to customer satisfaction.

Strambi made the comment yesterday as the carrier this week

### Nguyen extends

**APT** Ambassador celebrity chef Luke Nguyen has announced he will continue to support the firm's Vietnam & Cambodia program into 2014/15.

The partnership will see Nguyen host two 20-day tours and create a special banquet for guests on APT's *RV AmaLotus*.

Two new tours have been added to the latest Vietnam & Cambodia brochure - a three-day voyage on Ha Long Bay on Indochina Sails Premium & six-day Upper Mekong cruise on the *Mekong Sun* in Laos.

The program contains 12 itineraries with a lead-in 12-day tour priced at \$4,395ppts.

added its 68th next generation Boeing 737-800 jet to its fleet.

In the past four years, Qantas has taken delivery of 123 new aircraft resulting in an average plane age of 7.9 years - the lowest level since privatisation.

"We know that a modern aircraft like the B737, with the latest in technology & design, is a major draw-card for our customers.

"In fact, this year customer satisfaction with our aircraft has reached a record high," he said.

Further, Strambi reiterated that simplifying QF's fleet and taking advantage of the increased flexibility of the 737 makes Qantas "the airline of choice for domestic travellers."

### TNZ appointment

**TOURISM** New Zealand has appointed Andrew Fraser to the newly created Auckland-based position of Director of Marketing (**TD** 04 Oct), commencing 21 Oct.

## TripAdvisor purchase

**HOTEL** "tell-all" review website Oyster.com has been purchased by TripAdvisor.

Oyster claims to have "special investigators" who visit, photograph, review and rate each of the hotels listed on the site in 150 cities around the world.

TripAdvisor co-founder and ceo Steve Kaufer said: "Oyster has created some wonderful photo and editorial content of hotels in popular destinations and it will be a strong addition to the TripAdvisor brand."

## Canada campaigning

**THE** Canadian Tourism Comm has launched a cinema, online video & print material campaign in partnership with Travel Alberta, Destination British Columbia and Edmonton Tourism to entice Australians to visit Canada during the spring and summer months.

The promo comes as latest CTC data shows Australian arrivals in Aug were up 12% year-on-year.

## Bookabed winner

**CONGRATS** to Kristen New from Cruise & Leisure Travel in Nambour as the winner of last week's Bookabed mini-comp that featured exclusively in **TD**.

Kristen was first to correctly guess Roy's height as 6'7" and has won a \$100 Woolworths voucher.



## Window Seat

**CHICKEN**, beef, fish...or worms?

An investigation has begun into how a passenger aboard an Air India flight from New York to New Delhi found a number of worms in an in-flight sandwich.

The carrier has described the incident as "rare", adding that they are speaking to their US caterer and that they maintain strict hygiene standards on all food products served onboard.

**NOW** this is what we call a long-term project.

Bruno, an Italian restaurant owner in the city of Treviso has finally put the finishing touches on an amusement park he built entirely by hand - a job he started 40 years ago.

After learning to weld in the 1960s, Bruno started building a collection of swings, slides, see-saws and roller-coasters in a cleared section of the woods to try & bring in more customers.

The hand-made rollercoaster has proven a hit with customers - **CLICK HERE** for more details.

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## Wyndham surf challenge champs



**WYNDHAM** Vacation Resorts Asia Pacific took out the Brisbane Airport and Hawaiian Airlines corporate surf challenge, held Fri at Duranbah on the Gold Coast.

The annual surf challenge is designed to 'bring the surfer out of the suit', and raised over \$27,000 in funds for the Royal Flying Doctors Service.

Former World Surfing Champion Mark Occhilupo was auctioned off to surf in one of the teams, which happened to be Wyndham VRAP.

The winning Wyndham team (pictured) from left included Barry Robinson, Tom Scantlebury, Britney Nicholls, Brad Conroy, Andrew Shields, Julian Blachard, Regan Roberts and Tait Whitelaw.

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## Bumper Sydney w/end

THE NSW Govt says the Oct long weekend saw hotel occupancy at record levels in Sydney due to an extensive list of events.

The International Fleet Review, NRL Grand Final, Spring Carnival Racing, Parramasala Festival and three performances by "super group" One Direction were among the entertainment options on show in the NSW capital.

NSW Tourism and Major Events Minister George Souris said the events lead to "an unprecedented influx of visitors, making it one of the busiest periods since the 2000 Olympics."

Sat night hotel occupancy in the CBD was at 98.7%.

## OTG Asia expansion

ON The Go Tours has released its 2014/15 Asia program which for the first time includes tour options to Thailand, Borneo and North Korea.

The new destinations join China, South Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Burma.

## Lady Liberty reopens

ONE of America's most iconic landmarks, New York's Statue of Liberty, has reopened to tourists, 12 days after it was forced to close due to the partial US gov't shutdown (TD 02 Oct).

New York State will tap into its tourism budget to fund Liberty's opening for the next few days to the tune of US\$61,600 per day.

## QH Disney extension

QANTAS Holidays has extended the sale period of its Disney Your Way deals in Anaheim, Orlando and Hong Kong until 31 Oct.

## A350 XWB on track

AIRBUS this week confirmed the first delivery of its A350 XWB is on track for delivery to Qatar Airways in the second half of 2014.

The state-of-the-art A350 XWB has won 725 firm orders from 37 customers worldwide.

Since its first test aircraft launch in Jun, the XWB has accumulated some 330 flight test hours on around 70 flights.

## OPERA HOUSE ANNIVERSARY CONCERT TICKETS



This week TD is giving 3 lucky winners the chance to receive a double pass to the exclusive Sydney Opera House 40th anniversary concert on October 27, courtesy of Etihad Airways.

Etihad Airways is a major partner of Sydney Opera House and this year is delighted to be part of its 40th anniversary celebrations. By connecting Sydney Opera House to its vast global network, the Abu Dhabi-based airline is proud to bring international artists and overseas visitors to experience the magic of the World Heritage-listed performing arts venue.

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# Asia

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## Build on McEvoy legacy: TAA

**TOURISM** Accommodation Australia managing director Rodger Powell has called on the industry to continue building on the many initiatives overseen by outgoing Tourism Australia md Andrew McEvoy.

The TA boss yesterday confirmed his departure from the firm, effective the end of 2013.

Powell said McEvoy had been at the helm through many challenges including a consistently high dollar, world economy downturns and strong int'l competition.

"Under Andrew's direction, Tourism Australia concentrated heavily on opening up new markets, attracting new airlines, stimulating tourism investment, encouraging an events based tourism culture, and embraced new innovative, digital communication channels which have had demonstrative benefits for the industry.

"He has really driven a major cultural change in the way Australia pursues its tourism objectives," Powell added.



## 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).



Breathtaking views of Sydney Harbour await at the soon-to-open Sky Terrace rooftop bar, set to open at **The Star** from the beginning of next month. Situated on the balcony of the Event Centre, the new facility will open on Fri and Sat nights initially, increasing to nightly from Jan, with free CBD transfers also available. Several pop-up gourmet food stations will complement an extensive beverage selection.



An isolated oasis in the desert, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park in Botswana is now home to two new luxury desert camps - **Rooiputs** and **Polentswa**. Camp operator Ta Shebube has recently put the finishing touches on both, accessible by road or a two-hour flight from Cape Town and Jo'burg. Both offer unique accommodations in the form of luxury tents with plunge pools and common relaxation areas.



Each of the eight luxury tents at the **Nairobi Tented Camp** have reopened after a major renovation, now offering brand new decor. Maintaining a classic rustic look yet exhibiting new levels of exotic luxury, the tents include a private bath and shower, low-watt LED lights that run from rechargeable solar sources and much more. A romantic candle atmosphere awaits after a busy day of game driving.

## Natural way to experience India



**EIGHT** Aussie travel agents recently ventured to the southern regions of India on a luxury famil.

The top-selling consultants were being hosted by Dan Maher from Natural Focus Safaris and were flown to India courtesy of Singapore Airlines.

Enjoying warm Indian hospitality throughout their journey, the group took in many of the popular sights of the region from the start in Bangalore through Mysore and the growing state of Kerala.

Unanimously voted as one of the trip's major highlights was a

houseboat adventure through the scenic backwaters of Kerala - an experience many described as being a true example of the state's relaxed and chilled vibe.

**Pictured** above at one of the attractions visited is the group, which comprised Coleen Radford, Kate Sanders, Dan Maher, Glenna Geeves, Tracy-Ann Pacsoe, Lauren Venn, Marianne Drapes, Jim Drapes and Brigid Kelly.

## Thai AAX eyeing Aus

**LONG-HAUL** destinations such as Australia and North America could be on the cards for Thai AirAsia X upon receipt of its Air Operators Certificate, expected by the end of the year.

The newest arm of the low-cost long-haul airline received its Air Operating Licence from Thai authorities last week (**TD** Mon).

AirAsia X boss Azran Osman-Rani said the new carrier, to be based at Bangkok's Don Muang Airport, is expected to significantly boost inbound arrivals to Thailand.

## Evergreen \$1k winner

**THE** first \$1000 winner in Evergreen Tours' Eastern Europe River Cruise incentive has been named as Kelly Gray from RACQ Travel Eight Mile Plains.

More chances to win are still available, with entries into further prize draws offered with bookings of the line's river cruise product.

For details on how to enter, see [www.bit.ly/evergreencash](http://www.bit.ly/evergreencash).



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## EVA Air with Orbitz

**ORBITZ** Partner Network has announced a partnership with EVA Air to power the carrier's online hotel booking function across 10 international websites.

## Fiji Airways treat for corporates



**TOURISM** Fiji hosted 12 agents to a corporate suite experience at Skilled Stadium on the Gold Coast last weekend to cheer on the Flying Fijians who were defending their title at the Gold Coast 7's.

The Fijian side had previously won the rugby event the past two years, but were unsuccessful in their 2013 defence despite still managing to win The Plate.

**Pictured** at the stadium from left are Adrian Lawson, Zirconevents, Gold Coast; Merrilee Howard, Corporate & Leisure Events, Brisbane; Debra Grandidier, Omniche Holidays; Marie Edwards, Corporate Traveller, Brisbane; Cameron Armstrong, Essentials Events, Brisbane; Kylie Hadcroft, Zirconevents, Gold Coast; Carlah Walton, regional director Aust, Tourism Fiji; Dene Harris, Experiences, Brisbane; Luisa Finiasi, Tourism Fiji and Nicci Pawlowski, Events Extraordinaries, Gold Coast.

## GDS hotel booking up

**A STUDY** of 650 travel agents from around the world who use Amadeus, Galileo, Worldspan and Sabre has revealed an increase in the number of agents booking hotels through GDSs.

The TravelClick 2013 Bi-Annual Global Travel Agent GDS Study showed agent hotel reservations via global distribution systems was up 14% in two years.

According to study data, in 2013 the GDS is on track to produce 58 million hotel bookings - up 5 million from 2011.

More than 80% of agents said it is very important that GDS rate parity is offered, while nearly 1 in 4 indicated they would book away from a hotel that is not in full rate parity within the GDS.

Almost 60% said they will book a hotel room based on best available or promotional message over any other issue.

## Burma bomb incident

**DESTINATION** Asia says it is working with hotel partners and authorities in Myanmar to ensure its guests are safe after a series of bombs exploded in the country.

Two explosions were reported on the outskirts of Yangon on Sun, one at the Traders Hotel in Yangon on Mon and in a carpark of a Pagoda in Saigang yesterday.

## JetBlue adds Detroit

**JETBLUE** Airways has confirmed Detroit as the carrier's 85th hub in the Americas, with a new thrice daily Embraer 190 service from Boston set to launch from 10 Mar 2014.

The new route will debut on the same day alliance partner Emirates inaugurates services between Dubai and Boston.

## WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO IRELAND

Throughout October, **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a fabulous holiday to Ireland, courtesy of **Tourism Ireland, Etihad Airways, Avis, Ashling Hotel- Dublin, Manor House Hotels & Irish Country Hotels** and the **Beech Hill Hotel - Derry-Londonderry**.

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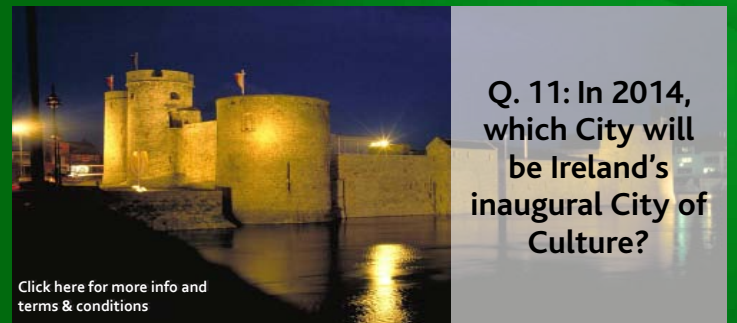
- Return economy airfares for 2 people to Dublin flying Etihad Airways;
- 9 nights' accommodation (twin share) including breakfast daily;
- 7 days Avis standard car hire in Ireland (pickup & return to Dublin).

Every day **Travel Daily** will ask a different Ireland-related question - just read the issue and email us your answer. There will be 22 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 fantastic holiday to Ireland.

Email your answers to: [irelandcomp@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:irelandcomp@traveldaily.com.au)

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Travel Daily CRUISE PHARMACY  
WEEKLY DAILY



business events news

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**YOUR TICKET TO THE TOP  
TICKETING CONSULTANTS  
BRISBANE CBD – \$50K OTE ++**

Fancy yourself a fares guru? Looking for a new role you can sink your teeth into? Then check out this hot new position. Working for a market leader you will be responsible for handling all aspects of ticketing. This is the rare opportunity to jump behind the scenes and do something you love. Top \$\$ are on offer along with ongoing training, realistic career progression and development plus much more. All you need is previous travel consulting experience, GDS skills and a positive attitude. Call today to find out more.

**STYLE & GRACE  
HIGH END LEISURE TRAVEL CONSULTANT  
GOLD COAST – UP TO \$45K PKG + BONUSES**

Here is your chance to join a well established agency as a senior travel consultant. Handling tailor made itineraries for high end leisure clientele you will enjoy time to consult with clients and use your extensive product knowledge. This team has a strong background in travel and is amongst some of the best consultants on the Gold Coast. You will earn a strong salary plus have a generous bonus program. Min 2 years international travel consulting experience required along with superb customer service skills.





# THE 2011 G'DAY LA!

# G'Day LA!

Qantas and Consolidated Travel are giving you the opportunity to secure a seat in January at the annual G'Day LA black tie gala dinner in Los Angeles plus many more surprises!

## ★ ★ 8 X GRAND PRIZES ★ ★

Achieve the highest sales between 30 Sept – 08 Nov 2013 & you could be walking the red carpet and rubbing shoulders with Worldwide recognised Celebrities at G'Day LA including a Qantas A380 flight to LAX and 4 nights' accommodation to enjoy the very best of LA.



## ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### WEEKLY PRIZES

\$1,000 QF Travel voucher per week for the highest producing agent

### DAILY PRIZES

\$100 voucher for every five return tickets issued

Valid for tickets issued by Consolidated Travel or via Quikticket between 30 September and 08 November 2013 on QF itineraries ex Australia plated on QF (081) ticket stock on the Consolidated Travel IATA only. Infant, Group Sales, Wholesale and Cancelled or Refunded tickets are not eligible. \*The Top 8 (eight) agents Nationally with the highest sales will win the grand prize, a minimum of \$40,000.00 in ticketed sales during the promotion plus 20% growth from the previous year is required to qualify and the minimum qualification for the Weekly prize is \$10,000.00 in ticketed sales during the promotion plus 10% growth from the previous year. This offer is open to all full time international selling agents only. Vouchers are capped, please email your local CTG state sales representative to claim your vouchers, claims will only be accepted by COB 15 November 2013. Consolidated Travel and Qantas Airways reserve the right to alter or cancel the promotion any time. Redemption of the Air Ticket and land content to be made through Consolidated Travel and is subject to seat availability and subject to the terms and conditions stated on the suppliers' certificate. The Grand prize includes one Economy class ticket for the winning agency from their nearest Qantas port to Los Angeles. The prize also includes connecting domestic flight from the winning agencies nearest Qantas or Qantaslink airport. Four nights' accommodation, in a twin share standard room at a property in Los Angeles and one ticket to attend the G'Day LA black tie gala dinner on 08 January 2014. Air tickets cannot be reissued and are non-transferable, and cannot accrue frequent flyer miles. It is a condition of accepting the prize that: the prize winning agency accepts any conditions of use of the various components of the prize. Prizes must be taken as stated and no compensation will be payable if a winning agency is unable to use a prize as stated. Receipt of a prize may have Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) implications. To the extent that there is any FBT liability, this will be paid for by the employer of the recipient. The grossed-up value of a prize and any other Fringe benefits the recipient receives during the course of the FBT year may be reported on the recipient's annual PAYG Payment Summary as required by taxation law. All prizes include GST where applicable and taxes are included in the price of the ticket and land content. Consolidated Travel Group ABN 60 004 692 791. Date of issue 27 September 2013.

