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Wednesday 23rd October 2013

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New Syd Harbour resort

THE NSW Office of Environment & Heritage is seeking Expressions of Interest for an "exciting commercial hospitality & tourism opportunity" at nine locations in Sydney Harbour National Park.

An ad in the *Australian Financial Review* today details the project offering the ability for tenderers to "develop, market, operate and manage hospitality, visitor and tourist experiences, including functions, accommodation and

hospitality services."

The precincts are located in the Gap Bluff, South Head and Camp Cove and include the Officer's Mess, Armoury and Cottage, Constable's Cottage, Green Point Cottage and the Head Lightkeeper's Cottage, which is located at the unenviable northernmost tip of South Head, offering 270 degree views across Sydney harbour.

"Proposals for new & alternative uses for all or parts of the precinct are also encouraged," a 35-page presentation for the proposed project details.

Possible uses listed include short stay visitor accommodation at five locations, restaurants and event/conferencing spaces.

More at www.bit.ly/gapbluffEOI.

BLC certified sellers

BLUE Lagoon Cruises has rolled out a new accreditation scheme, rewarding agents who complete the program with discounted cruise options for personal use.

Agents making 10 bookings also earn a cruise for themselves - see **page 11** for all the details.

Win a \$5k holiday

RAIL Plus is enticing agents to book a holiday for their clients by offering a chance to win a \$5,000 "dream holiday" for reservations made between 21 Oct-08 Nov.

For all the details, see **page 10**.


Eight pages of news

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news, including an APT photo page from Canada, plus full pages from: (**click**):

- AA Appointments jobs
- Rail Plus
- Blue Lagoon Cruises
- Bentours

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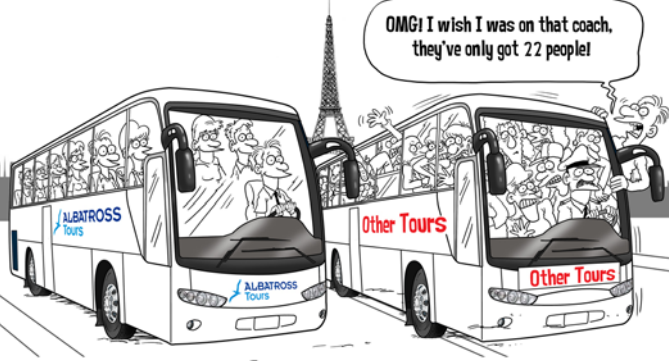
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Agencies to Escape with FC

FLIGHT Centre looks to be hoping to capitalise on unrest within the Jetset Travelworld Group, with the launch today of a new franchise offer for its Escape Travel brand (**TD** breaking news).

The company launched Escape Travel under a franchise model some years ago (**TD** 21 Dec 2005) but the initiative was later axed in favour of company-owned stores, with the network now comprising almost 140 outlets, eight of which are still franchises.

In this morning's announcement, chief operating officer Melanie Waters-Ryan said the company was being approached by agents affiliated to other groups.

"We believe we can offer prospective franchisees an exciting and attractive business

opportunity to become part of the FLT success story," she said.

"As a company we are strong believers in the value travel professionals provide, and are proactively promoting this strength as we develop our blended travel model".

Waters-Ryan said franchising represented a significant opportunity to grow the Escape Travel presence both in cities and regional areas, "where franchising represents an extremely cost effective means of expansion".

Franchisees will be offered a range of benefits including the Escape Travel product range, strong advertising and marketing structures, IT systems and support, centralised air ticketing, training programs, procurement for business products and "wages and incentive structures".

Second SYD decision?

BADGERY'S Creek is likely to be endorsed as the second Sydney airport site within months, *News Limited* is reporting today.

According to cited senior govt sources, Treasurer Joe Hockey may announce the \$6 billion airport before Mar 2014.

\$15 Glebe Is transfer

CRUISE passengers arriving at Sydney's Central Station can now book transfers to the White Bay Cruise Terminal at a cost of \$15 per person each way, *The CruiseLife* blog is reporting.

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Cruise3sixty regos open

CRUISE specialist travel agents and cruising industry stakeholders are now being invited to register to attend Australia's first ever Cruise3sixty conference and exhibition (**TD** 02 Oct), which will take place at Sydney's Four

Seasons Hotel on 07 Feb 2014.

That is the day before the Cruise Lines International Association annual awards, with the event organised in partnership with **TD's** sister publication **Cruise Weekly** and TravelTrends, which runs the successful TravelTech and No Vacancy conferences.

Cruise3sixty Australasia 2014 will feature a day packed with the latest cruise industry updates, with CLIA Australasia gm Brett Jardine saying hosting the event here reflects the massive expansion of our local cruise industry and its huge potential.

Limited sponsorship opportunities are also available - contact Christie-Lee Lachance on advertising@traveldaily.com.au.

For more details or to sign up for the event online see www.cruise3sixty.com.au.

CLIA members get a 30% discount on registration fees, via a special discount code which can be accessed by emailing CLIA on info@cruising.org.au.

Accor Indian new year

TWELVE Accor hotels accredited under the Indian Optimum Service Standards will jointly host a 5-day Diwali Hindu New Year festival commencing from 03 Nov.

Participating properties will be decorated with colourful patterns of Rangoli motifs, while special Indian menus will be provided with staff dressed in Indian attire and Bollywood movies in the bar.

FJ boosts NAN/HKG

FIJI Airways will launch a third weekly service between Nadi and Hong Kong from Dec after taking delivery of its third Airbus A330 next month.

The Fijian flag-carrier plans to progressively roll out the new flight on Mon 09 and 16 Dec, then every Mon from 06 Jan.

"The introduction of this third direct service between Fiji and Hong Kong will offer increased opportunities for our customers to experience and do business in this dynamic Asian gateway city," said md and ceo Stefan Pichler.

He said the new jet would allow FJ to further refine the carrier's long-haul network schedule.

FJ931 on 09 and 16 Dec will depart NAN at 10:30pm & arrive into HKG at 4:00am the next day, with the return FJ392 service scheduled to depart 3:55pm and touch down back in Fiji at 7:10am.

QF bushfire waiver

QANTAS has issued a waiver for flights to Sydney for pax affected by the NSW Bushfires, for tickets issued on/before 22 Oct - more at www.qantas.com.au/agents.

Solstice arrives in Aus

CELEBRITY Cruises' 2,850-pax liner *Celebrity Solstice* has this morning docked in Sydney to commence its second season of South Pacific & Australia/New Zealand cruises.

Solstice arrived after a 18-night Tahiti and Hawaii voyage.



Window Seat

A **NORTHERN** Territory man has been arrested and fronted court charged with possessing a commercial quantity of kava.

Ninety kilograms of the highly potent sedative was confiscated and is one of the largest seizures of the herb in the NT's history.

Kava is perhaps best known as being a ceremonial ingredient in some Western Pacific cultures which is consumed as a drink.

Police sprung the alleged culprit after observing a vehicle blocking lanes at an access road at Darwin Airport last weekend.

QANTAS is once again getting behind the annual Movember fundraising drive for prostate cancer research, fitting out one of its planes with a stylish 'mo'.

This year however, the plane has been renamed in dedication to legendary Aussie cricketer and owner of one of the best nose-neighbours in sporting history, Merv Hughes, **pictured** below leaning out of the cockpit window of "The Merv".



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Sun Island shows off Italy to JTN



THIS group of Jetset Travelworld Network agents travelled with Etihad Airways and Sun Island Tours to Europe earlier this month, where they enjoyed a week-long venture through the Northern Italian countryside.

The itinerary included visits to tourist hot spots including Lake Maggiore, Verona, Venice, Florence, Siena and Milan.

Pictured at San Gimignano from left are: Daniella, Sun Island Tours, Italy; Debra Moore, Travelworld Burleigh West; Aphrodite Nichles, Atlas Travel; Shani Wikaira, EY; Shannon McCormick, Jetset Moonee Ponds; Eleesha Russell, Sun Island Tours; Lyndel O'Shannessy, Jetset Patterson Lakes and Felicia Georgas, Jetset Marrickville.

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Expedia HomeAway jv

ONLINE travel firm Expedia.com has announced a new deal to list HomeAway vacation rentals on its website from early next year.

HomeAway ceo Brian Sharples said the "significant milestone" for the holiday rental market would open the sector to millions of potential new travellers.

Vacation rentals are on the rise in terms of popularity around the world, the companies say, with travellers looking for accom "that offers additional space and amenities beyond a traditional hotel room, coupled with the privacy of a home."

HomeAway represents 775,000 rentals in 171 countries.

Expedia.com vp and gm John Morrey said the OTC was constantly investigating ways to "improve the breadth and depth of the products we offer."

"We think it will be a win-win-win, for Expedia, HomeAway, and - most importantly, consumers," Morrey said of the partnership.

EK, South Africa MoA

EMIRATES and South African Tourism have agreed to partner on joint marketing & promotional initiatives in order to drive tourism to South Africa.

The parties yesterday signed a Memorandum of Agreement to collaborate on promoting the country in the Middle East and globally across EK's network.

Joint ventures include families for trade and media partners.

SAT ceo Thulani Nzima said that by working with Emirates "we can further broaden the appeal and encourage tourists to visit and experience what our country has to offer."

Carnival appointment

CARNIVAL Australia has named Amanda McClelland as its new customer sales & service director, based in Sydney.

McClelland has over 20 years customer service experience in the telecommunications industry.

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Daily	EK434	10:25	06:40

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Toga long stay perks

TOGA Hotels has revised its long stay benefits & inclusions for guests requiring accommodation for 28 nights or longer.

Under Toga's new relocation scheme offered at Medina Services Apartments and Adina Apartment Hotels, guests will be entitled to a welcome gift, complimentary wi-fi, grocery request facilities and late check-out at 12pm.

Other perks include a local area information pack, use of toy chest for families, a waiver on special event surcharges and flexible cancellation terms - full details at adinahotels.com.au/relocation.

TCF's latest additions

THE Travel Compensation Fund has admitted two new travel agency head offices in the first half of Oct, being McNally Travel of Canning Vale in WA and Pacific Travel Centre of Salisbury in SA.

Elsewhere, Flight Centre Limited has opened new branches of Flight Centre in Beaumaris, Vic; Escape Travel in Figtree, NSW and Cruiseabout in Balmain, NSW.

AR finalise 737 order

AEROLINEAS Argentinas has finalised a deal to purchase 20 Next Generation 737-800 aircraft from Boeing, valued at US\$1.8b at list prices.

President Dr Mariano Recalde said the deal "is a key part of a greater plan to renew our fleet and prepare our operations to accommodate growing demand."

Aussie US visits up 8%

THE US Dept of Commerce has today reported an 8% year-on-year spike in the number of Australians entering the United States during the month of Apr.

At 94,560 visits, Apr had the highest tally of Aussie arrivals so far in 2013 - over 11,000 more than in Mar.

Over the same period, five of the USA's top 10 source markets (UK, Mexico, France, Germany and Japan) reported declines, driving overall international visit numbers down 2%.

For the first four months of 2013, Australian arrival figures into the US are up 6% on the corresponding period, to 318,000.

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Club Med rules kitchens in Bali

ONE of the stars from the most recent series of Channel 7's cooking program *My Kitchen Rules*, Scott Gooding, recently enjoyed a Bali holiday courtesy of Club Med and Sydney agency Sabra Travel Bondi.

While enjoying the Indonesian culture and sunshine, Gooding experienced the all-inclusive hospitality of Club Med Bali, with the personal trainer maintaining his health focus during his stay.

Following his appearance on the popular Channel 7 program, Gooding will launch his maiden cookbook in coming months.



Pictured above welcoming Gooding back from his trip from left is Lauryn Bellini, Sabra Travel; Scott Gooding; Erin Kramer, Club Med and Luke Skarbek, Club Med.

VX/EK clarification

EMIRATES has become the fifth airline partner of Virgin America's frequent flyer program Elevate (**TD** yest), joining Virgin Australia, Virgin Atlantic, Hawaiian Airlines and Singapore Airlines.

Wu Northern Glimpse

WENDY Wu Tours has launched a new 5-night Northern Glimpses package through North Vietnam that includes two nights cruising on the stunning Halong Bay.

Priced from \$1,495ppts, the independent touring itinerary also includes three nights at the Hilton Hanoi Opera Hotel.

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We are currently seeking a highly motivated Account Executive with previous travel industry field sales experience to work on a multinational travel account.

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PTM's bi-annual Melbourne meet



HOME-BASED became hotel-based for a day as this group of TravelManagers from Melbourne held their bi-annual regional meeting at the city's Park Hyatt.

The get-togethers allow the group's personal travel managers from each state to meet twice annually with their state business partnership managers and each other to network and discuss developments within the group.

Highlights of the latest regional meetings included a preview of the new company intranet due to be officially launched next

year, social media updates and an interactive discussion on tactics employed to win & retain clients.

A number of the company's preferred suppliers were also in attendance to meet with PTM's, provide product updates and answer any lingering questions.

The latest round of meetings came a few weeks before the company as a whole hosts its National Conference in Sydney and aboard Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* next month.

Melbourne's attending group of Personal Travel Managers are **pictured** above on the grand staircase of the Park Hyatt Hotel.

Thailand arrival levy

A BILL for the implementation of an arrival tax for tourists, to take effect from the beginning of next year is reportedly being considered by the Thailand Govt.

The Ministry of Tourism says it is one of a number of ideas being mooted as a way of encouraging investment in the country.

Thailand's Ministry of Health has weighed in, saying any fee would also help cover the large cost associated by travellers visiting the country for medical procedures and leaving an unpaid bill due to inadequate insurance.

Aussie room rates fall

SUN-CHASING tourists heading overseas to escape the Australian winter resulted in average room rates declining in nearly every Aussie city this past winter, data from HotelsCombined reveals.

The worst hit city was Adelaide, with the median rate falling 20%, followed by Perth at 17%, while 24 of the Top 100 regional ports popular with Aussies last winter fell off the list entirely in 2013.

Room rates in Christchurch saw the largest gain, up 71% to \$188.

Arrivals flying at ZQN

QUEENSTOWN Airport posted a massive 64.7% year-on-year spike in visitor arrivals in Sep, with the jump largely attributed to increased Australian services.

Both Jetstar & Air New Zealand added capacity to Australian east-coast cities, which in turn led to a 78% jump in aircraft movements.

The results were reflected in an overall business update issued by parent facility Auckland Airport, who itself posted a 6% increase in arrivals for the month.

Arrivals from China recorded a climb of 49.2% year-on-year both on direct flights and as a result on onward traffic from Australia.

EY/gW DOT approval

ETIHAD Airways and Jet Airways have been given a green light to begin a reciprocal codeshare agreement on flights between the UAE & USA, and India & USA.

"The joint applicants state that these services may be either nonstop or operated via an intermediate point or points," the US Department of Transportation said in its decision.



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.



Boasting a new environmentally friendly look and feel, the **Accor Vacation Club Busselton**, south of Perth has unveiled its refreshed two and three bedroom apartments in time for the busy summer season. Apartments now offer more efficient fittings while maintaining a modern, elegant and homely aura. The property's location at the gate to the Margaret River wine region is reflected in new artworks and colours.



Situated in the Loyalty Islands - a 45 minute flight from Noumea - is the newly reopened **Le Paradis d'Ouvéa Resort**, now offering 34 newly renovated bungalows for couples and families. The collection of garden, lagoon and spa bungalows have been given a near total redesign, boosting the amount of natural light flowing within. The resort also now offers a conference centre able to cater for up to 70 delegates.

Wotif boost Tasmania

SOUTHERN Tasmania recorded a 7.7% jump in room bookings as a result of a spring sales promo spearheaded by Destination Southern Tasmania and Wotif.

The online campaign featured an interactive destination information page marketing hotel deals starting from \$99 per night.

Travellers from Melbourne and Sydney led what was a 340% spike in Wotif.com flight bookings.

Need for regional htls

DEVELOPING & investing in new hotel infrastructure in regional centres should be a key concern for government and industry, Tourism Accommodation Australia md Rodger Powell has stressed.

Speaking at the Australian Regional Tourism Convention in Margaret River, Powell said climbing costs and a persistently high AUD has led to flat growth over the last five years.

He singled out Queensland as deserving of praise for identifying regional areas as having potential to develop casino resorts capable of attracting Asian travellers.

"Such initiatives are to be applauded, as are operators who invest in upgrading and refreshing their own product, but this is difficult when demand is flat and costs are increasing," Powell said.

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Anantara SiteMinder

MINOR Hotel Group's luxury brand Anantara has signed up with SiteMinder as its online distribution partner.

Using SiteMinder's Channel Manager, Anantara will be able to promote its 24 hotels & resorts to a wider global audience.

Gold-leafing from the mountains to Vancouver

AFTER four nights of absolute luxury in the Rocky Mountains, it was time to keep on the move as APT's group of top-selling Aussie agents excitedly boarded the Rocky Mountaineer for a two-day journey back to the western coast.

Whilst it was quite cold outdoors, upon entering our GoldLeaf carriage aboard the train, we were reintroduced to the warmth and settled into our seats, knowing that with windows practically enveloping us, the picture-postcard views would not be able to escape our eyes.

As the group found out during the journey, the Rocky Mountaineer's GoldLeaf cabin is one of those experiences that, for those who have not already enjoyed it, should be on everybody's bucket-list.



ABOVE: Holly Wright from Jetset Shepparton and Lisa Ioakimidis of Harvey World Travel Eltham trying to stay warm yet enjoying the views on the stunning Athabasca Glacier.

RIGHT: She already has five horses on her own farm at home, but Amelia Goodridge-Gaines of Harvey World Travel Noosa still thinks she can whisper to this one in Kamloops.



RIGHT: At the First Nations dinner in Jasper is Wendy Gunther, Travel Associates Gunther & Turner; Stacey Hill, Phil Hoffmann Travel; Amelia Goodridge-Gaines, HWT Noosa; Jenny Fulton, RACT Travelworld Rosny; Lynne Meads, Travelworld Albany & Natasha Shorten, Flight Centre Loganholme.



ABOVE: Preparing to board the Rocky Mountaineer is Bev Jelsma, Harvey World Travel Terrigal; Nadia Rakiposki and Caitlyn Glazebok, APT; May Comeros, Flight Centre Miami Plaza and Jenny Morris from Coopers Travel.



The dining is superb, the views are breathtaking and over the course of the trip, the staff become all but personal friends - at least, ours did.

Rocky Mountaineer know that to maximise the experience of the journey, it must be done in full daylight, hence an overnight stop in Kamloops - a quaint little town that still offers something for everybody and provides a welcome break in the journey.

Upon arrival into Vancouver and after farewelling our hosts, the APT group headed for the Fairmont Waterfront and the first evening at leisure.

The next morning, a visit to the Capilano Suspension Bridge was a tranquil walk in a temperate rainforest, which was followed by the next Freedom of Choice Sightseeing experiences, offering a choice of a bicycle ride around Stanley Park, a photography tour or a shopping tour for those craving some retail therapy.

The day was completed with a hosted meal at Granville Island, an ultra-trendy inner-city enclave with lots of unique shopping and dining offerings, with the APT group dining at a venue appropriately titled Edible Canada.

For more photos from this period of the trip, see **TD's** Facebook page - and for the final instalment, don't miss tomorrow's **Travel Daily**.



BELOW: Hollie McCann from Bicton Travel & Cruise Centre riding the rails in GoldLeaf comfort with Wade Grierson from Our Vacation Centre.



BELOW: Prior to boarding, APT's Aaron Christian demonstrates how NOT to ride the Rocky Mountaineer.



BELOW: Four of APT's outstanding crew on the trip in Katrina Mackay, Chris Hodges, Aaron Christian and Astrid Adams with the crew from the Rocky Mountaineer.



Hoffmann's lucky Irish charms



HELLOWORLD'S newest signatory Phil Hoffmann has just returned from a 12-day Globus Family of Brands itinerary with 12 of his top-achievers who enjoyed the touring firm's Introduction to Ireland itinerary recently.

The seven-day tour allowed the group to dip their toes into the Irish landscape, in which they explored Dublin before venturing out into many regional centres.

These included Kildare, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford, Ring of Kerry and many more.

Among the many highlights was seeing the Blarney Stone, although no reports of anyone kissing the famed bluestone have yet surfaced.

VN grounds ATR fleet

FOURTEEN ATR-72 turboprop operated by Vietnam Airlines have been temporarily grounded as a precaution after a front tyre fell off one of the aircraft, Vietnam state media is reporting.

The aircraft was operating a routine service from Hai Phong to Danang at the time but landed safely at its intended destination.

Kwang joins The Star

THE Star, Sydney has announced the appointment of tourism and events professional El Kwang as director of sales, commencing in the position earlier this week.

Hoffmann is pictured in front of the Globus coach with PHT chief executive Peter Williams and Globus Australasia managing director Stewart Williams.

Date set for T3 at AUH

JULY 2017 has been set as the planned opening date of a brand new passenger terminal at Abu Dhabi Airport (**TD** 12 Jun), the facility's boss has announced.

To be used by hub carrier Etihad Airways and its partner airlines including Virgin Australia, the 700,000sqm terminal is being built at a cost of AED10.8 billion dirham (AU\$3.2b).

Starwood flash sales

MINIMUM 20% discounts on hotel & resort stays at Starwood Hotels worldwide are available through a new flash sale travel site launched by the group.

Entitled SPG Hot Escapes, the site is updated every Wed with a selection of special offers valid at group properties for stays six weeks in advance, with Starwood Preferred Guest members eligible for additional 5% discounts.

CCC Fiji cruise dates

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises has revealed the 2014 dates for its Four Cultures Discovery Cruise and Colonial Fiji Discovery Cruise.

Both cruises are seven nights in duration and set sail on Tue from Denarau Marina at 1:00pm aboard *MV Reef Endeavour*.

The Four Cultures Discovery Cruise - the first to circumnavigate Vanua Levu - is scheduled to depart on 07 Jan, 04 Mar, 06 May, 01 Jul, 02 Sep and 04 Nov 2014.

The Colonial Fiji Discovery Cruise will operate on 04 Feb, 01 Apr, 03 Jun, 05 Aug, 07 Oct and 02 Dec 2014.

For full itinerary details & prices see www.captaincook.com.fj.

Croatian cruise sale

GUESTS booking on the eight-day Back-Roads Touring Croatia Wilderness Sailing between now and Nov 2014 can take advantage of a \$150 earlybird saving.

The itinerary includes seven nights on a luxury yacht, and is now priced at \$2,845ppts when booked and paid in full by 15 Dec. For bookings, call 1300 100 410.

Manila gets 3rd Tune

TUNE Hotels opened its third property in the Philippines capital this month, the 140-room Tune Hotel Quezon City.

The hotelier expects to boost the number of properties in Metro Manila to seven by mid-2014.

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**.

The prize includes:

- 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

Plus, two runner ups will receive an 'Ireland goodie pack', including Lonely Planet Ireland guide, Lonely Planet Dublin guide, Lonely Planet Irish Language & Culture guide, Lyndey Milan DVD, neck pillow and post-it notes.



Click here for more info and terms & conditions

Q.16: Arnolds Hotel offers golfing, fishing, walking, horse riding on the beach and many other activities. Where is this Irish Country Hotel located?

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