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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Tuesday 16th September 2014

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## Virgin Australia style

**VIRGIN** Australia is inviting flyers to discover more about its people who are a key part of the carrier's "dynamic offering".

It's part of a campaign which includes a new TV commercial linked to the front cover page of today's *Travel Daily*.

## THC debuts Ultiqa Resorts

**SOUTH** African hospitality group The Holiday Club (THC) has flagged an "intensified growth phase throughout Australia," with the launch today of a new **ULTIQA** Resorts brand.

THC Pacific, headed up by Mark Henry, currently has six properties: two on the Gold Coast, one in Brisbane, another on the Sunshine Coast, the Village Resort in Port Macquarie NSW, and the Fiji Palm Beach Club in Pacific Harbour, Fiji.

The properties are marketed under a timeshare arrangement, with the THC parent group boasting more than 100,000 members who can access around

4,500 resorts around the world.

All of the THC Pacific properties will now be combined under the Ultiqa brand - a name derived from the concept of "ultra-modern boutique apartments".

Henry said THC would continue to "actively seek opportunistic accommodation management rights purchases and management contracts for product that meets our brand offering and promise to business and leisure markets."

## REX slams subsidies

**REGIONAL** Express says the government's reinstatement of a new Enroute Charges Payment Scheme only represents 15% of the assistance formerly offered.

The carrier said it is looking at routes which might qualify for the \$1m scheme to assist eligible regional commercial passenger services on low volume and new routes with less than 15,000 pax.

## Club Med winter deal

**DISCOUNTS** of up to 25% on Club Med's Snow Early Booking Bonus are set to expire on Thu.

The promotion is valid at Club Med's 23 resorts in Europe, Japan & China, valid for travel between 28 Nov through until 30 Apr.

For info, see [clubmed.com.au](http://clubmed.com.au).

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# NEW PATAGONIA

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**Today's issue of TD**

*Travel Daily* today has nine pages of news, including a front cover page from **Virgin Australia** plus full pages from:

- inPlace Recruitment jobs
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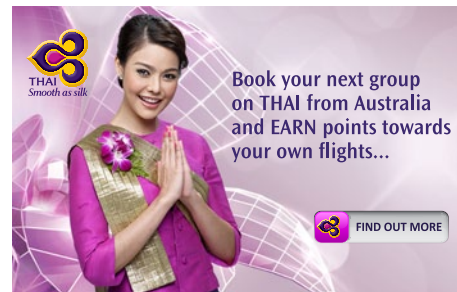
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## QF nonstop to Vancouver

**QANTAS** will induct seasonal services to Vancouver early next year, offering new competition to perennial favourite Air Canada on the Sydney route during Jan.

The new services (**TD** breaking news) have been introduced to cater for demand during the peak holiday season and enable Aussies easier access to some of Canada's most popular ski resorts, said QF International ceo Simon Hickey.

Six return services operating on Sat & Wed from Sydney between 03-22 Jan will be operated by QF using three-class re-configured Boeing 747s, flying as QF75/QF76. "North America is key market for

Qantas and these direct services reinforce our commitment both to this market and to taking advantage of seasonal peaks, including to destinations that aren't necessarily on our network all-year round," Hickey added.

Qantas' SYD/YVR services will also be able to feed off domestic flights in Canada operated by the Australian flag-carrier's new codeshare partner WestJet.

### VA cancellation error

**VIRGIN** Australia has admitted fault for a "system error" that saw codeshare flights with Delta Air Lines to/from Los Angeles on DL metal cancelled from 14 Sep until Aug next year.

The glitch resulted in bookings on VA6551/VA6552 being axed and passengers rebooked onto VA1/VA2 flights.

VA said the cause of the error has since been determined and original flights between 17 Sep and 10 Aug will be reinstated into PNRs in the GDS today.

Agents can use the waiver code of 'SWF113709VADL' to reissue affected bookings FOC by 31 Oct.

### Scenic incentivises

**AGENTS** who book and deposit five Scenic Tours European river cruises between 05 Sep - 31 Oct will earn a 14-night 'Space-Ship' cruise of their own under a new travel agent incentive.

The prize is valid for two people sharing a cabin, sailing between 01 Mar-30 Apr or 16 Oct-31 Dec 2015 & valued at over \$20,000.

To enter, travel agents must be members of Scenic Rewards.

### Frequent flyer probe

**THE** US Dept of Transportation has confirmed it plans to conduct an audit of airlines' frequent flyer program practices, due to commence this month.

Currently, there are close to 650 million members enrolled in airline loyalty schemes globally, which include Star Alliance, oneworld and SkyTeam.

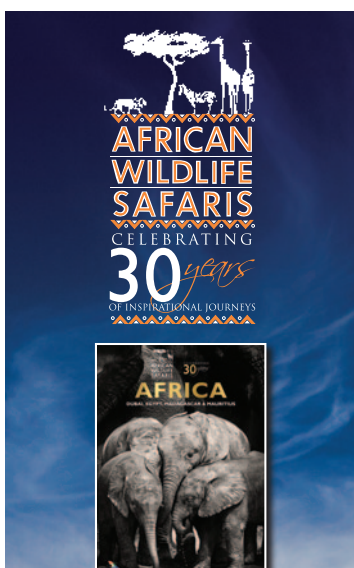
The assessment aims to address concerns about the lack of transparency for consumers when airlines change their frequent flyer program terms & conditions.

"Failure to adhere to DOT's guidance could constitute an unfair and deceptive practice in which enforcement actions can be pursued against the airlines," a Memorandum from the regulator to the General Counsel warned.

### HAL names new ship

**HOLLAND** America Line has gone back to its roots in naming its next new Pinnacle Class of cruise ship, revealing the vessel will be named *ms Koningsdam*.


Slated for delivery in Feb 2016, the 2,650 pax ship takes its name from the cruise line's rich Dutch heritage, the company said.



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## VA lounge straight to gate

**VIRGIN** Australia has opened its first 'Premium Exit' service from its Melbourne lounge, offering a dedicated private security screening point (**TD** 12 May).

The service will be available to Velocity Platinum and Gold Frequent Flyers, lounge members and travellers in Business class.

Velocity Frequent Flyer chief executive officer Neil Thompson said the feature will minimise travellers' connection times to the gate at Melbourne Airport.

"Following the success of Australia's first kerbside Premium Entry in Sydney, the introduction of a dedicated and exclusive Premium Exit service in Melbourne will ensure a more seamless travel experience for our valued members and Business

Class guests and will allow them more time in the state-of-the-art lounge in Melbourne."

The carrier said a new Galaxy Research study found the most popular ways for guests to spend time in lounges was eating and drinking (82%), working (68%) or reading a book or magazine (54%).

## Win a Carnival cruise

**TODAY'S** issue of **TD's** sister publication **Cruise Weekly** sees the launch of a new competition in which a lucky reader will win a *Carnival Spirit* cruise to the Melbourne Cup - sign up free at [www.cruiseweekly.com.au](http://www.cruiseweekly.com.au).

## THAI First for Sydney

**THAI** Airways International has updated its network plan for the northern winter scheduling period, with Boeing 747-400 aircraft once again set to operate the Sydney-Bangkok route.

This means that contrary to previous GDS displays the carrier will continue to offer Royal First Class on the route.

## Fresh brand for FBI

**MELBOURNE** travel firm FBI Travel has launched a new brand, redefining the business soon after it celebrated its 21st birthday.

Among the changes are a

new-look website, customer collateral, advertising & tagline.



FBI Travel marketing manager Kimberley Nikora said the rebrand and new tagline was "a reflection of the journey we've been on for the last 21 years...perfecting the art of Intelligent Travel".

## APT river incentives

**TWO** new agent incentives have been launched by APT relating to its European river cruise journeys.

The 'Book Five and Cruise Free' offers a free self-family cabin for an agent on an APT river cruise in 2015 for five Royal Collection bookings deposited by 31 Oct.

Further, agents booking an APT or Travelmarvel river cruise with SQ flights by 12 Oct will go into a draw to win a spot on a Nov famil.



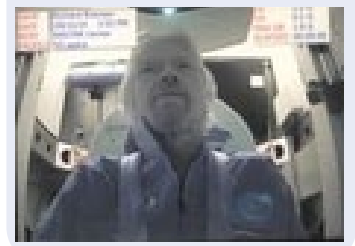
## Window Seat

**SIR** Richard Branson knew what he was getting in for when he launched Virgin Galactic and committed himself to be aboard the inaugural flight next year.

To prepare for his journey, Branson underwent the Future Astronaut training course at the NASTAR Centre in Philadelphia.

As part of the training, the Virgin Group founder strapped himself into a centrifuge gondola (**pictured**) to put his body to the G-Force test by spinning at increasing speed, a successful exercise although he did report some chest pressure.

After some more medical tests, Branson's doctor said the billionaire was "more fit than seven years ago".



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**SHANGRI-LA** Hotels & Resorts teamed with British Airways to co-host a trip to London & Paris for a lucky group of Sydney Virtuoso agents at the end of Aug.

The trip showcased the newly opened Shangri-La Hotel at The Shard London and the Shangri-La Hotel Paris and gave agents a chance to experience BA's Club World (Business) product.

The London property is located on levels 35-52 of the iconic Shard and offering stunning 360 degree views over the city, while Shangri-La Hotel Paris (formerly the Palace of Roland Bonaparte) provides the unique experience of staying in a private residence

with unsurpassed views of the Eiffel Tower.

**Pictured** at Ting on Level 35 of The Shangri-La Hotel at The Shard London from left, back row, are John Chekian, Concierge Traveller; Fay Cohen, Travelphase; Jenny Williams, Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts; Jamie Cassidy, BA; Jesus Lopez, Shangri-La Hotel at The Shard, London and Peter Dick, Travel Beyond.

Front row: Lisa Story, World Travel Professionals; Kathy Lette (Australian expat and London resident who welcomed the Aussie agents to London); Karen Harrison, British Airways, Sydney and Tina Killeen, Spencer Travel.

# Sonaisali shuts for major reno

**OWNERS** of Sonaisali Island Resort in Fiji have announced the property will close for extensive renovations for five months, with the doors closing to guests in Nov.

The shutdown is the result of a change in ownership of both Sonaisali and Tadrai Island Resort (**TD 07 May**)

Director of sales & marketing Charmaine Tale informed industry partners via an email blast that a stop sell would be placed on all dates between 01 Nov and Mar 2015, effective immediately.

"If there are reservations that fall during our renovation period, we will be in touch regarding relocation to comparable facilities," Tale told trade partners.

During the renovation, Sonaisali's sister property, the five-star Tadrai Island Resort will remain fully operational.

This year Sonaisali introduced wi-fi for guests across the island, carried out a soft refurb to its conference facilities and had its tennis court resurfaced.

Sonaisali is earmarked to reopen under the management of Vision Group which operates the Fiji Beach Resort & Spa managed by Hilton on Denarau Island - a property it fully acquired in May.

In May, chairman of Vision Group Dilip Khatri said "This investment significantly expands our engagement in the Tourism Sector and is a further demonstration of our confidence in the Fiji Economy."

## Europe lease savings

**GLOBALCARS** is trimming rates by up to \$800 and offering bonus free days on 2014 prices on 21-day+ leases of new Citroen vehicles in Europe when booked by 17 Oct for travel next year.

Vehicles are priced from \$29.90 per day - phone 1300 789 992.

## Cameroon consulate

**THE** Australian Government has opened a Consulate in The Republic of Cameroon, headed by an Honorary Consul.

The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade advises the consulate provides only limited assistance and is located at Les Manguiers, BAT Compound Bastos, BP 7063 in Yaounde.

## ONYX representatives

**GREAT** Southern Outbound has been appointed as sales and marketing representatives in Australia & New Zealand for ONYX Hospitality Group.

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\* Skytrax is acknowledged around the world for being the only truly global, independent aviation industry monitor. Results of the 2014 World Airline Awards are derived from millions of passenger surveys involving travellers from 160 different countries.



## Atlantis expansion

**THE** luxurious Atlantis, the Palm in Dubai is set to go even further lux after Kerzner International & Investment Corporation of Dubai announced a US\$1.4 billion expansion of the current resort.

The Royal Atlantis Resort and Residences will consist of close to 800 new rooms and suites and 250 five-star Residences.

Positioned on the crescent of The Palm and next door to the iconic Atlantis resort, The Royal Atlantis Resort will stand 46 storeys high and is set to feature “new, never before-seen marine experiences” and a ‘Sky Pool’ that will soar 90 metres above The Palm.

“The success of Atlantis, The Palm has continued to exceed our financial performance expectations year-on-year and the time is right to usher in the next phase of this iconic development,” ceo of Kerzner International Alan Leibman said.

The project will further assist the emirate as it seeks to add more room inventory in the lead up to the Expo World Fair in 2020.

## New Tahiti packages

**TAHITI** Travel Connection has released new holiday deals in collaboration with Starwood properties in the idyllic nation.

Packages inclusive of TN airfare, transfers, tours and special bonus inclusions valid at resorts on Papeete, Moorea or Bora Bora including Le Meridien & St Regis are priced from \$2,580ppts.

Phone 1300 858 304 for details.

## Taj hotel off contract

**TAJ** Hotels Resorts & Palaces confirmed late last week it had ceased managing the Taj Palace Marrakech in Morocco from 10 Dec after parting ways with hotel owner, JK Hotels.

The 161-room property opened under the Taj branding in 2011.

Taj said it will “continue to pursue their individual goals and vision.”

## FCTG lines up its putt

**FLIGHT** Centre has released a range of travel packages in line with the 2014 Australian PGA Championship golf tournament on the Gold Coast from 11-14 Dec.

The retail travel giant is the official travel partner of the event and is offering packages designed for families & twin-share patrons.

Package details can be found at [www.championship.pga.org.au](http://www.championship.pga.org.au).

## Bloom’s BA endorsement



**HOLLYWOOD** heartthrob Orlando Bloom shared some of his top travel tips at a British Airways event in Sydney yesterday, marking the end to a 10-day stint Down Under.

In his role as BA ambassador, Bloom plugged the airline’s enhancements and its 777-300ER service from Sydney to London before taking some time to ponder a series of travel questions from the media.

When asked what kind of items are essential for long haul travel, Bloom (**pictured**) said a good book, an iPad, headphones and a scarf often come in handy.

He also commented that culture was central to the appeal of travel, noting travel “broadens

the horizons and the mind”.

But Bloom was out of ideas when asked for tips when travelling with children: “Pray... Prayers are what you need when travelling long haul with children,” he said.

“It’s the only time I’m happy for an iPad to come out for a while to save you through those challenging moments.”

Bloom also gave Australia the thumbs up as a travel destination, labelling it as a “mesmerising” destination that feels like a “home away from home”.

British Airways is offering savings of up to 10% on its daily flights between Sydney and London to celebrate Bloom’s time in the country - see [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com).

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# Early rising Rising Stars



**MANTRA** Group whisked some of its future leaders away to the Gold Coast to take part in the annual Rising Stars Development Week at Mantra Legends Hotel.

The 20 employees, who have been identified for their career potential within the group, have a range of roles from corporate reservations managers through to front office staff and digital marketing executives.

As well as training and professional development - with participation from Mantra's

executive team including ceo Bob East - the week included a healthy dose of activities such as a trip to the Treetop Challenge Centre at Mount Tamborine and a dawn surfing session (**above**).

## Aegean adds 23

**STAR** Alliance member Aegean Airlines will launch 23 new routes for the summer 2015 season, with destinations across France, Germany, Scandinavia and Austria to be served from bases in Corfu, Irakleion and Rhodes.

## TA appointment

**TOURISM** Australia has named Adele Labine-Romain as its new executive general manager of strategy and research, replacing Nell Anderson who announced her intention to resign recently.

Labine-Romain is currently executive director at the Tourism & Transport Forum, where she has spent the past five years.

She possesses extensive experience working in tourism policy, strategy & research and will commence in her role at Tourism Australia in late Oct.

## Back-Roads BOGOHP

**A RANGE** of buy-one-get-one-half-price offers have been made available on select Back-Roads Touring winter trips, on sale from now until 30 Sep.

The deal applies to tours such as the Amazing Northern Lights and Vienna Ball Season.

Passengers pay in full for the five-day Amazing Northern Lights itinerary departing on 23 Feb and receive a 50% discount on the five-day Vienna Ball Season trip which precedes the tour on 03 Feb - representing a saving of more than \$1,300.

Discounts apply to the cheapest tour - [CLICK HERE](#) for more info.

## Dubai hop-on hop-off

**MIDDLE** Eastern travel provider dnata and City Sightseeing Worldwide have combined to offer new hop-on, hop-off bus tours in Dubai, starting 02 Nov.

The City Sightseeing Dubai tour will focus on aspects of the emirate's past and present, visiting Old Dubai, Dubai Creek, Downtown Dubai and the Palm Jumeirah, while offering stops at Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa.

Tours can be booked in advance online, direct from the bus or from any ticket booth in Dubai.

## BNE/Shanghai pact

**BRISBANE** Airport has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Shanghai Airports Authority aimed at boosting aviation links between Australia and China.

The MOU outlines steps to be taken by both parties to develop air route networks and provide quality services to customers, Brisbane Airport said.

"The establishment of a friendly relationship with SAA is based on information sharing, personnel exchanges and working together on collaborative projects that will ultimately benefit travellers in Shanghai and Brisbane," Brisbane Airport Corporation ceo and md Julieanne Alroe commented.

Alroe said the tie-up will aim to establish Brisbane & Shanghai as the "major gateways for services between China and Australia".

BNE is the first Australian airport to ink an MOU with Shanghai Airports Authority.

## Crystalbrook 4-for-3

**LUXURY** Lodges of Australia's Crystalbrook Lodge in Queensland has a Stay 4, Pay 3 deal on offer for stays until 15 Dec, representing a saving of \$2,300 per couple.

Also included is five days free car hire to self-drive to the Lodge from Cairns - call (07) 4046 3344.

## LAX T2 work begins

**WESTFIELD** has commenced renovation works at Los Angeles International Airport Terminal 2 as part of the facility's terminal-by-terminal transformation.

New retail and dining outlets will be added, with work tipped to be complete by next year.

## Abercrombie & Kent Product Manager

Here is an exciting opportunity to join the Australasian Head Office of international travel company, Abercrombie & Kent, widely regarded as the leading luxury travel company in the world. Based in South Melbourne, this opportunity is for a Product Manager. Abercrombie & Kent believes in designing the most inspiring travel experiences in a personalised, intelligent style throughout the world. Our mission is to provide travel that enhances and changes lives.

We are seeking a highly motivated **Product Manager** with sound knowledge of Africa, India and the Indian Ocean. Applicants should have the following attributes, creativity in product design, attention to detail, the ability to multi-skill and problem solve, organisational and analytical skills. Contact A&K for a full Job Description.

Please submit your CV by email to Leigh-Ann Farrant at [lafarrant@abercrombiekent.com.au](mailto:lafarrant@abercrombiekent.com.au) by Monday 22 September.



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## AFTA UPDATE

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

I SEE the consumer media - television, radio and print - have had a slow news day again, as the drop by \$0.03 of the AUD exchange rate against the USD appears to have made news.

While the drop is not insignificant and these movements do occur, we have had another strong dream run with the AUD holding above \$0.90 for some time.

In the lead up to the coming festive/holiday season, exchange rates do enter people's minds, particularly if they have something to book.

I don't believe a \$0.03 drop has any impact on those who may not as yet have booked their overseas holiday. I recall when the dollar first hit parity and all of the consumer media could not get enough of it to make stories out of the fact that this had happened. Result - nothing.

Sure, the fact that the AUD has been high I am sure has helped influence travellers' decisions to go on a trip and more than likely it has had a bigger impact on their length of stay, level of quality, destination or how much spending money they will have rather than the actual decision itself to book the holiday.

The dollar will continue to float up and down. That is the nature of a currency that is floated and I know the travel industry is well versed in dealing with this and keeping a watchful eye on this to ensure customers get the best result they possibly can when booking.

But I still can't help but be a little amazed that a \$0.03 drop creates headlines and lead stories on the 6pm news bulletins, particularly when the country has just sent soldiers into harm's way in the interest of democracy and global freedoms.

There are plenty of things going on in this country that are going to present the travel industry with some challenges and if this slide in the exchange rate results in an impact upon interest rates as flagged by some commentators overnight, then this is more likely to impact travel than the actual exchange rate itself. Keep a keen eye on the movement, who knows what is ahead of us all.



### Tonga seats approved

**THE** International Air Services Commission has approved a renewal of a determination for 360 seats per week for Virgin Australia on the route to Tonga.

The determination renewal is valid for five years.

### Aircalin spring sale

**DISCOUNTED** 'Spring Sale' fares departing Australia to New Caledonia have been released by Aircalin, valid for travel to 31 Mar from all three Australian cities.

Gross W-Class fares, protected in the GDS for sale by the trade, start from \$580 ex BNE & \$599 from Sydney and Melbourne and are valid for sale until 05 Oct, with minor surcharges on sectors taken over peak travel periods.

### Savoy Butler training

**ETIHAD** Airways has sent its first crop of 13 Butlers for three weeks of intensive training ahead of deployment on The Residence by Etihad on the carrier's maiden A380 flight to London on 27 Dec.

Training will be carried out by the University of West London in collaboration with London's Savoy Hotel Butler Academy.

### CX Aug results strong

**CATHAY** Pacific and regional subsidiary Dragonair have both recorded year-on-year growth in passenger numbers for Aug.

Combined, the two carriers carried nearly 2.85m pax, a jump of 3.6%, pushing average loads up by a slight 0.5% to 87.2%, while capacity for the month grew 7.1%.

### WS charges bag fee

**WESTJET** has imposed a new CAD\$25 fee for the first checked bag on 'Econo' fares sold from today for travel within Canada or to/from the US from 29 Oct.

## Australia on a global platter

**TOURISM** Australia continues to roll-out its 'Restaurant Australia' campaign, this month hosting a series of high-profile events promoting local cuisine in a variety of key global markets.

Once fully phased in, the campaign will target visitors from 17 major markets to enjoy fine foods, wines and tourism experiences in Australia.

Launch events have this month taken place in Hong Kong, with festivities planned for later this

month in the UK, Singapore and Korea and starring a smorgasbord of top Australian chefs.

TA managing director John O'Sullivan said friendly people and fresh produce went hand-in-hand and sat at the heart of the Restaurant Australia campaign.

"Our aim is to demonstrate Australia's culinary credentials on a global stage, and what better way to do it than harnessing our country's best chefs, freshest produce and finest wines, all served up in the most iconic of Australian venues overseas."

In the UK, Australia House will be transformed into a 'pop-up' restaurant where diners can enjoy six chefs promoting dishes from different states and territories.

They will include Maggie Beer (SA), Skye Gyngell (NSW), Luke Rayment (Qld), Matt Stone (WA), Shannon Bennett (Vic) and Rachel O'Sullivan (NT).

International culinary celebrities will also feature, with Tetsuya Wakuda to cook up a "Tasmanian Seafood Seduction" at the Singapore launch event.

### Serko on health kick

**TRAVEL** booking and expense management firm Serko has developed and launched products to help customers manage health and safety risks while travelling.

The new products are a reaction to changes in health and safety legislation requiring corporations to be more proactive in taking health precautions for travellers.

In partnership with Intelligent Travel, the products will launch with City Safe, a mobile app rating the health and safety risks of cities around the world.



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## LH pilot strike off

**THE** union representing pilots at Lufthansa has at the last minute called off a strike, which was set to see Frankfurt-based crew off the job for eight hours today.

## Contiki call centre service

**YOUTH** tour specialist Contiki has increased its call centre hours to better cater for consultants in Western Australia, home-based agents and those 'burning the wick' late into the night.

The company has extended its hours of operation from 9am to 1am AEST, Mon through Fri, and added a further five hour booking window on Sat between 5-10pm to accommodate weekend enquiries, Contiki md Katrina Barry told *Travel Daily*.

A solution to a four-hour "gap" on Sat afternoon between 1-5pm is under review at the moment.

"We are extending our hours to make it easier for agents to deal with us - our Perth agents will love that."

"The goal is to go 24/7 and we are hoping to do that within the next calendar year," Barry said.

Currently under a trial basis, the initiative to provide agents longer hours of service involves calls after 6pm being diverted to Contiki's call centre across the Indian Ocean, in South Africa.

"It means if you are an agent and you work late at night, you can always be assured you can talk to a Contiki specialist."

Barry said consultants can have the same confidence in the team in South Africa as they have in those locally, with the overseas staff having recently been in Sydney for training on Contiki's Australian product.

## Oman guru training

**OMAN** Tourism has unveiled a refreshed online agent training program designed to support trade partners with destination knowledge and aid with itinerary planning for clients.

The program is comprised of four concise modules covering the geographic location of Oman and how to get there, fast facts, tours & activities, key destinations, natural wonders, touring routes and more.

Agents can access the program via mobile and tablet devices, with the course taking around 30 minutes to complete.

Once completed, consultants can also have their agency details added to an 'agent directory' on the Oman Tourism website.

For more information and to register, **CLICK HERE**.

## 15m Tigerair travellers

**TIGERAIR** Australia has today celebrated flying its 15 millionth passenger since launching in Nov 2007 and is marking the occasion by offering 1,500 fares priced at \$15 on a select range of domestic routes on Tue, Wed and Thu when booking between 1500-2400.

## 'The Heart of Asia' in Australia



**ABOVE:** Taiwan Tourism Bureau officially launched its 'Taiwan - The Heart of Asia' promotional campaign to the trade in Sydney and Brisbane last week.

The two city roadshow included workshop presentations by some of Taiwan's best local tour companies including Edison Tours, Golden Foundation Tours & MyTaiwanTour, and supported by Scoot, China Airlines, EVA Airlines, Marriott, Accor and Starwood who donated prizes to some lucky winners (**pictured**).

## NEXT first opening

**SILVERNEEDLE** Hospitality's first NEXT branded property will open next Wed 24 Sep in Brisbane's Queen Street Mall.

The 304-room flagship property will offer a club lounge, Shower Pods and Sleep Pods and NEXT Technology allowing guests to control lights, temperature and TV as well as order room service via their smartphones.

Introductory prices in a NEXT Standard Room start at \$179.

## Money

**WELCOME** to *Money Talk*, TD's Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

## \$1AUD = US\$0.90

**MAINSTREAM** media made a massive meal of a 3c drop in the Australian dollar yesterday, which saw the currency briefly dip below US90c.

However according to an analyst update this morning "the little Aussie battler finally staunches the bleeding in overnight trading."

Traders are concerned about a big drop in iron ore prices which could impact Australia's export income, particularly from the fast-growing Chinese economy.

The drop in the Australian dollar is good news for the inbound industry, while the Reserve Bank is expected to keep interest rates at their current historic lows for some time yet, which will help to maintain consumer confidence

*Wholesale rates this morning:*

US	\$0.900
UK	£0.554
NZ	\$1.096
Euro	€0.696
Japan	¥96.47
Singapore	\$1.133
China	¥5.372
South Africa	R9.836
Canada	\$0.991
Crude oil	US\$92.92

## aotinbound

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- Strong attention to detail, time management and organizational skills
- Effective communication both written and verbal (including conflict resolution/negotiation)
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To apply, email [careers@aot.com.au](mailto:careers@aot.com.au), ref **PE 64/14**  
**Applications close Friday 26 September 2014**

## Aussie agents part of first famil



A GROUP of agents from Flight Centre, Student Flights and STA Travel joined their counterparts from New Zealand and the UK recently on the first global famil hosted by Busabout.

The freestyle travel firm whisked the group of 26 on an eight-day tour through Eastern Europe, with plenty of highlights on land and sea packed in throughout.

Starting in Belgrade, the group headed to Zagreb in Croatia via the Plitvice National Park before boarding a luxury cruiser in Split.

After drifting to the idyllic ports of Hvar, Korcula and Dubrovnik,

## Creative cruise famil

CREATIVE Cruising has launched its second travel agent incentive, offering a place for an agent and their travel partner on an eight-night South Pacific cruise aboard *Celebrity Solstice*.

The prize cruise departs Sydney on 14 Mar 2015 and includes \$500 in onboard credit.

Each Royal Caribbean Int'l, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises booking made and deposited before 31 Oct will earn agents an entry into the draw.

## Dewa names its rep

THAILAND boutique property Dewa Phuket Resort, north of Phuket Airport, has named EnticingAsia as its General Sales Agent in the Australian market.

## Record signing year

CHOICE Hotels has reported a record financial year in terms of new properties signed, with 24 new locations joining its Econo Lodge, Comfort, Quality, Clarion & Ascend Hotel Collection brands. CEO Trent Fraser said a number of new sales initiatives has seen the group tap into new domestic leisure traveller markets.

He added the firm's Choice Privileges loyalty scheme is tipped to surpass 200,000 members by the end of the year.

## SATC Stayz shack up

SOUTH Australian Tourism Commission has unveiled a new promo campaign encouraging visitors to the state to holiday in a shack for their summer getaway.

The campaign is in partnership with holiday rental group Stayz and will run from 10 Oct - 31 Nov.

## Touring Trails Guide

COFFS Coast Marketing has launched an online Touring Trails Guide promoting popular tourist drives to self-driving travellers as well as off-road 4WD tracks.

Drives include Waterfalls Way, which takes travellers to view 15 different waterfalls in the area.

## UnionPay rolled out

CHINESE preferred payment method UnionPay will be rolled out to tourism businesses in the Margaret River region of WA.

The Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association said a change in banks to NAB to facilitate the rollout will appeal to the growing number of Chinese visitors.

UnionPay has around 3.9 billion cards on issue and allows Chinese visitors to purchase product overseas in their own currency without incurring conversion fees.

the group returned to dry land where they ventured on to Mostar and Sarajevo.

A final night was spent in Belgrade before boarding flights back to their home countries.

Pictured above fresh off the plane ready to go from left is the Australian continent in Leah McDonald, Greg Lawson, Amanda Castle, Glenn Barrington and Rowena Lyrijis.

## AA axe paper manual

AMERICAN Airlines says it will be able to save up to US\$1 million in fuel and printing costs a year by introducing electronic flight attendant manuals.

Following a six-month trial, the carrier has now rolled out the manuals on Samsung tablets.

## TUI merger agreed

TERMS of a merger between European tour operator TUI Travel and majority owner TUI AG (TD 30 Jun) have been agreed.

The all-share combination will see the creation of the world's largest tourism group, valued at EUR€6.5 billion (AUD\$9.3 billion).

## WIN A TRIP TO VANUATU

In September, TD is giving readers the chance to win a holiday to Vanuatu, courtesy of Vanuatu Tourism Office.

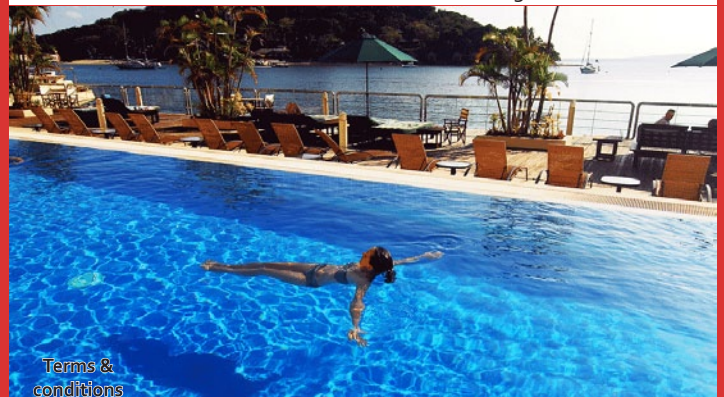
The prize includes return economy class fares to Port Vila with Air Vanuatu, airport transfers, five nights accommodation at Grand Hotel and Casino and a Glass Bottom Boat Trip, for two.

Every day this month TD will ask a different question about Vanuatu. The subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this holiday.

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

Q12: How many rooms and suites does the Grand Hotel and Casino have?

Hint: [www.grandvanuatu.com](http://www.grandvanuatu.com)



Vanuatu  
DISCOVER WHAT MATTERS

Air Vanuatu

Vanuatu  
Adventures in Paradise

GRAND  
Vanuatu

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Postal address: PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia  
Street address: 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia  
P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) F: 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan and Lisa Martin

Email: [advertising@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@traveldaily.com.au)

Business Manager: Jenny Piper

Email: [accounts@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accounts@traveldaily.com.au)

Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

Publisher/Managing Editor: Bruce Piper  
Editor: Guy Dundas

Assistant Editor: Matt Lennon

Contributors: Jenny Piper and Barry Matheson

Email: [info@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:info@traveldaily.com.au)

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Cristina Gines

## Part time Online Customer Service - Sydney

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This progressive company is expanding and seeking consultants with great customer service to support their customers with the booking process of tours & activities to exciting destinations worldwide.

You will be working only 7 nights a fortnight. Mon to Sun 11pm to 8am then you will have the next 7 nights off.

To successfully apply for this role you will require:

- ▶ 12 months travel or hotel reservations experience
- ▶ Experience working night shift
- ▶ Great customer service focus
- ▶ Strong computer skills
- ▶ The ability to work unsupervised

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to make a real change to your work life balance and enjoy the benefits that this highly successful, forward thinking and flexible company has to offer.

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## Leisure Consultant - Sydney Eastern Suburbs

- ▶ Monday to Friday
- ▶ High end repeat travel clientele
- ▶ Excellent salary package for experienced consultants

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## Travel Manager Wholesale & Retail - Sydney

- ▶ Sydney CBD - Monday to Friday
- ▶ Iconic product destination
- ▶ Salary pkg up to \$80K depending on exp.

Opportunity to manage & develop existing reputable travel agency with a focus on unique products and improved profitability. Must have mgt, staff development & domestic exp.

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## Sales Coordinator Part Time - Sydney South

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- ▶ Promote a unique travel experience

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Departs 22 December 14



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^ Conditions apply: Prices are per person, based on twin share accommodation. Seasonal surcharges and blackout dates apply depending on date of travel. Deals and offers are subject to availability and may change without notice prior to reservation confirmation and due to currency fluctuations. All prices advertised are inclusive of 10% discount. Cancellations will incur the following charges, based on days prior to ex-departure date: 91+ days = loss of deposit, 90-61 days = 50% total cost or deposit (whichever is greater), 60-0 days = 100% total cost of package. A deposit of \$800.00 per person is required within 7 days of booking date to secure your place. Final payment is required at least 90 days prior to ex-departure date. Single supplements are extra and applicable to travellers in single rooms. Offers valid for new bookings only and not combinable with any other offers. Prices are accurate as at 04 Sep 14. All airfares are excluded. Payments made by credit card will incur a surcharge. **Golden Mandalay (Yangon to Mandalay)** -10% discount: is valid for sale until 20 Mar 15 and travel on 02 & 20 Mar 15. Advertised price is based on a Mauham Stateroom aboard the Irrawaddy Explorer. **Mekong Discovery (Siem Reap to Ho Chi Minh)** -10% discount is valid for sale until 22 Feb 2015 and travel on 28 Dec 14, 25 Jan 15 & 22 Feb 15. Advertised price is based on a Superior Suite aboard the **Mekong Navigator**. **Christmas Cruise on the Rhine** – 10% Discount is valid for sale until 22 Dec 14 and travel on 22 Dec 14. The advertised price is based on a C-4 Haydn Cabin aboard the MS Amadeus Princess. **Portraits of the Rhone (14D/13N)**-10% discount: is valid for sale until 30 Mar 15 and travel on 23 & 30 Mar 15. The advertised price is based on a C-4 Haydn Cabin aboard the MS Amadeus Symphony for departure on 23 Mar 15. Tempo Holidays Pty Ltd ABN 51007331213

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