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Travel Daily

First with the news

Thursday 21st December 2017

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Branson takes high-speed chairmanship

PROPOSED high-speed travel network, Virgin Hyperloop One, has appointed colourful entrepreneur Richard Branson to the role of chairman.

Branson joined the board in Oct this year & has already personally invested, with a further US\$50m recently secured from Caspian Venture Capital & DP World.

ITG independent

THE Independent Travel Group is today showcasing its comprehensive range of offerings for independent agencies, including Express Ticketing, Express Marketing Tools, Express Performance, Express Hotels, Express Insurance and the newly added Creative Cruising.

The company is welcoming enquiries "to better value your independence" - see the **cover page** for more details.

Emirates boosts London

EMIRATES will increase its services between Dubai and London to 10 departures daily with the launch of new flights to London Stansted from 08 Jun next year.

The extra daily services will be operated by Emirates' new three-class Boeing 777-300ER and will be in addition to the carrier's existing nine daily flights from Dubai to London Heathrow and London Gatwick.

The move is aimed at capitalising on a catchment population of seven million people north-east of London, including an expanding commercial precinct around Cambridge and Peterborough.

"There is a clear demand for this service from both business and leisure travellers and we anticipate that this news will be warmly received both across our global network, as well as by the business community based in the

Stansted catchment area," said Emirates president Tim Clark.

Outbound flight EK33 will depart DBX at 0930, arriving STN at 1400, while the return EK34 will depart STN at 2110 and arrive DBX at 0705 the next day.

The airline's B777 will be fitted with six seats in its newly revamped First class cabin, plus 42 in Business class and 306 in Economy class.

The addition of Stansted will give Emirates a total of seven UK destinations, with others including Birmingham, Newcastle, Manchester and Glasgow.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news, including a cover page from Independent Travel Group, a photo page for **Switzerland Tourism**, plus a full page from:

- AA Appointments jobs

Hainan CNS debut

HAINAN Airlines has launched its twice-weekly direct services between Shenzhen, China, and Cairns, with the first flight touching down yesterday.

The latest launch constitutes the carrier's second direct flight service from Shenzhen to Qld and consolidates a push on the Australian market more generally, notching up its sixth direct flight service to Australia.

"With a travel time of just under eight hours this new flight path will provide the quickest route for Chinese travellers to Australia," said Qld Tourism Min Kate Jones.

Minister sworn in

LUKE Hartsuyker has been sworn in as Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment as a result of the Turnbull Government's cabinet reshuffle.

He assists existing Minister for Trade Tourism and Investment Steven Ciobo.



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Qld's Nudey on top

NUDEY Beach on Fitzroy Island near Cairns, has been named the best beach out of the 11,761 beaches in Australia according to 101bestbeaches.com.

The non-nude beach ticked all the criteria for being affordable, accessible and naturally authentic.

Second place went to Horrocks Beach in WA, which despite being runner up can claim the title as the best mainland beach.

Located near Fingal Head in NSW, Dreamtime Beach was third, followed by Cossies Beach on the Cocos Keeling Islands.

Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast wrapped up the top five.

Princess promotion

CARNIVAL plc has announced Stuart Allison has been promoted to the position of senior vice president, Asia Pacific planning and operations, for the Princess Cruises brand.

Allison will assume the new position immediately.

See more appointments on p5.

ACCC airline warning

AUSTRALIA'S major airlines have been issued with a warning from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) over consumer rights following an investigation into more than 1,400 complaints.

The ACCC yesterday released an Airlines Terms and Conditions report, outlining concerns over 'no refund' statements on the carriers' websites and excessive fees charged for flight cancellations and changes.

The report says the commission will "engage with the airlines to discuss our expectations for change" and that further action might be taken if carriers fail to make improvements.

"Airlines must ensure they comply with the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), avoid unfair contract terms and make sure their terms and conditions are consistent with consumer guarantees," the commission's report says.

Among the ACCC's concerns

are statements that suggest consumers are not entitled to refunds on low cost fares, despite the provisions of ACL.

Its report says although qualifications are often made in terms and conditions, the ACCC may need to take action where "broad and misleading 'no refund' claims are made."

It says consumers consider cancellation fees to be excessive and unfair, and cites examples including a family of four charged \$2,000 to cancel LAX-SYD fares totalling \$3,500.

Consumer advocate Choice welcomed the report and said airlines were under greater scrutiny than ever before.

"We are pleased to hear the ACCC has put Australia's airlines on notice," said Choice head of campaigns Sarah Agar.

ICC Syd anniversary

THE International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) has celebrated its first year of operation, having held 700 events since its opening.

The \$1.5 billion development at Sydney's Darling Harbour has welcomed 1.25 million delegates, visitors and attendees to its business events.

"Our presence has been felt on a global scale and we are well on track to contribute at least \$5 billion to the local economy in the next 25 years," said ICC Sydney ceo Geoff Donaghy.

Airline times slip

FOR Nov 2017, all major Australian airlines recorded an on time performance 80.2% for arrivals and 81.2% for departures.

The result is lower compared to 80.8% for arrivals and 82.3% for departures in Nov 2016.

Virgin Australia recorded the highest level of on time departures at 86.0%, followed by Qantas with 80.7%.

Cruise passengers in fatal bus crash

A BUS carrying Royal Caribbean Cruises passengers has crashed in Mexico, leaving 12 people dead and more than 18 people injured.

The majority of the pax were holidaying on the *Celebrity Equinox* and the *Serenade of the Seas* and were out on a bus tour at the time of the accident.

"Our hearts go out to all those involved in the bus accident in Costa Maya...we are doing all we can to care for our guests, including assisting with medical care and transportation," RCI said in a statement today.

CI A350 to Aus

CHINA Airlines will deploy its Airbus A350 aircraft to Australia and New Zealand, replacing its current A330 services according to GDS displays.

The daily Taipei-Brisbane-Auckland route will become an all A350 service from 25 Mar.

Likewise, the thrice-weekly Taipei-Melbourne flight will commence Airbus A350 operations from 25 Mar.

China Airlines previously announced that Taipei-Sydney would move to an all Airbus A350 service from 25 Mar when the airline reduces flights from 14 weekly to 11 weekly.

MGallery expands

MGALLERY has announced the opening of three new properties in Europe and the Middle East.

The new addresses include Victory House Leicester Square in London and The Retreat Palm Dubai as well as Tarcin Forest Resort & Spa in Bosnia.

Victory House in London's West End has 86 guest rooms including nine suites, as well as views over Leicester Square.

The Retreat Palm Dubai boasts 255 rooms and suites, while the Tarcin Forest Resort & Spa, Sarajevo in Bosnia has a room count of 55 plus nine villas.



A vacancy exists for a **Inside Sales Support** with Helloworld Travel Limited.

Located in **North Sydney**, in the **Retail Shared Services division** of Helloworld Travel Limited, this role involves quality operational support, liaising with our agents, the sales team & public, managing incoming calls and email enquiries, intranet site loading & assisting with any project work or cross departmental needs.

To be successful in this role you will have:

- Proven experience in providing optimum customer service and problem solving;
- Strong attention to detail and accuracy while delivering work in a timely manner;
- Excellent organisational and system management skills;
- Proactive with the ability to show initiative;
- Results Driven & Goal oriented;
- Self-motivated with the ability to work in a team and/or autonomously;
- Computer skills should include Galileo GDS, Advanced knowledge in Microsoft Windows, Outlook, Word, Excel & PowerPoint; creating EDM's and newsletters
- Flexible with working within all areas of the business as and when required.
- Ability to change and adjust your work day according to new priorities as they arise

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send your resume and covering letter to careers@helloworld.com.au



Get up to date with all the latest hotel openings in the December issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read
travelBulletin

Orphan backlash grows

WORLD Expeditions has stepped up its opposition to orphanage tourism, announcing it has joined an effort to prevent the institutionalisation of children in developing countries.

The operator, together with its school and youth brand World Youth Adventures, has joined the Rethink Orphanages Network which aims to prevent unnecessary institutionalisation.

World Expeditions removed all orphanage visits from its programs in 2013 in response to concerns about increasing numbers of institutions in major tourist destinations.

It is one of several operators to place a ban on orphanage visits.

"There is compelling evidence that orphanage tourism – the practice of well meaning travellers visiting and volunteering in orphanages – is open to abuse from corrupt

organisations operating under the guise of an orphanage and preying on well-meaning but uninformed travellers," said World Expeditions responsible travel manager Donna Lawrence.

Last month volunteer organisation Projects Abroad cut ties with institutions and announced it would instead channel efforts to community based projects, while WA Senator Linda Reynolds recently called for laws to prevent visits to sham orphanages where operators profit from children kept unnecessarily in care.

Argentina warning

DFAT has warned of protests and political tensions in Argentina due to proposed labour reforms.

Its updated Smartraveller advice follows a 24-hour strike on Mon which hit air services.

Bunnik 2018/19

BUNNIK Tours has unveiled its new 2018/19 touring brochure for the Middle East featuring 10 new tours through Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Cyprus, Turkey and Kenya.

Packages are available now with Bunnik sweetening the pot by offering a \$250pp saving when trips are booked before 27 Apr.

Two deluxe 'in-style' packages through Egypt and Jordan are also available in the latest brochure priced from \$13,995pp.

Insight \$999 airfare

INSIGHT Vacations is offering a \$999 return air deal (including taxes) when any of its 2018 Europe and Britain holiday packages are booked.

The promotion is valid for a limited time and will run until 28 Feb 2018, unless sold out prior.

For further info on the deal, call Insight on 1300 727 767 or contact local sales managers.



Window Seat

ROME'S official Christmas tree is shedding so quickly it has become a jolly joke for the city's residents and visitors.

The 21m pine started to die shortly after it was lifted into place on 08 Dec at Rome's Piazza Venezia.

However across town tourists have been left in awe of the Vatican City's Christmas Tree, which appears to be healthy ahead of Santa's arrival.



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PEUGEOT

MTA gets ice & cosy with Switzerland

TEN lucky MTA travel agents recently returned from a luxurious and fun-filled 7D6N visit to Switzerland. Hosted by Switzerland Tourism's Birgit Weingartner and Swiss International Air Lines' Guy Wong, the group visited Zurich, Bern, Montreux, Lausanne, Zermatt, Andermatt, Lucerne and Burgenstock. There was no shortage of deluxe hotels, immaculate service and spectacular views at every location.

Not only did the agents get a taste of the country's first class transportation system with their Swiss Travel Passes, but they also enjoyed the unbeatable world-class hospitality on offer, highlights of which included the spectacular Chedi Andermatt and the recently opened Burgenstock Resort, overlooking Lake Lucerne.

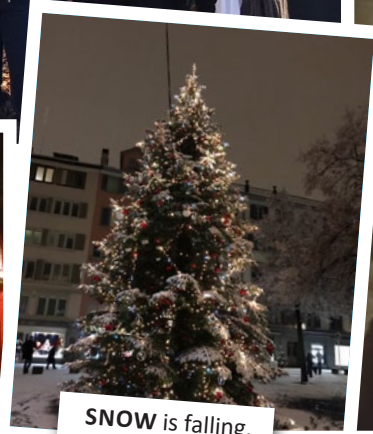
Participating agents included Beate Carr, Diana Cargill, Susan Plos, Michelle Edwards, Charissa Hanrahan, Beverly Dewar, Theonie Bustin, Annie Morrison, Danielle Lawson and Carol Foord.



MARCHE de Noel in Montreux.



MAERLITRAM in Zurich - St Nik is still watching.



SNOW is falling.



SOME couldn't get enough of the snow in the middle of the night.



PICTURE perfect on the Gornergrat.



ZURICH covered in snow with freezing temperatures - keep smiling!

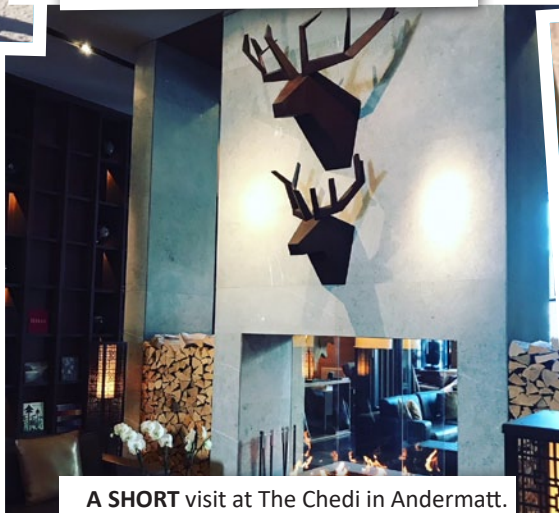


SWISS Travel System between Zermatt and Andermatt along the Glacier Express Line.

SWISS



Switzerland.
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A SHORT visit at The Chedi in Andermatt.



FUN in the snow after a lovely dinner at the Park Hyatt Zurich.

Thursday 21st December 2017

Bench a roaring success



IT'S been a tremendous year for African niche wholesaler Bench Africa, having expanded their team in Australia, added more tours to their collection and conducted multiple agent famils spanning across the entire continent throughout the year.

The company is now on track to achieve a record year of sales for the financial year, thanks largely to these efforts and a surge in popularity for African travel.

Speaking with **TD**, Chris Le Roux NSW/ACT state manager said the firm is seeing strong demand,

particularly from regional and rural based agents whose clients, including farmers, have had a successful season and are now cashing in on bucket list trips.

Bench will celebrate its 50th anniversary in Sep next year when the 2019 brochure is released onto the market.

Pictured presenting **Travel Daily** with a gift to adorn our walls is Lara Behrens marketing manager and Chris le Roux NSW/ACT state manager.

QR St Petersburg

QATAR Airways has reinforced its commitment to Russia with the launch of daily direct flights to St Petersburg.

The airline will operate the service with A320 aircraft fitted with 12 flatbed Business class seats & 120 Economy seats.

The commencement of daily flights ties in with the airline's sponsorship of the FIFA World Cup in Russia next year.



Industry Appointments

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, **Travel Daily's** Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Aurora Expeditions continues to expand its Sydney-based team with two new trade-focused team members. **Alexandra Fayan** has been appointed to the role of Business Development Manager, while **Jennifer Perrotin** has been chosen for the position of Trade Marketing Executive, starting in 2018.

The **Brisbane Showgrounds** has welcomed **Luke Pearl** as its new General Manager, Operations. Pearl will lead a F&B, event planning and venue service operations team at the Royal International Convention Centre and Brisbane Showgrounds.

Erwin van der Veen has been appointed General Manager of **SALA Samui Chaweng Beach Resort** in Thailand. The Dutchman has been part of the pre-opening team since Nov 2017. Van der Veen speaks Dutch, English, German and basic French.

Next Hotels & Resorts has promoted Regional General Manager **Alex Billing** to the new role of National Operations Manager Australia / New Zealand. Billing will be responsible for the success of ANZ hotel operations for Next Hotels & Resorts.

Santiburi Koh Samui has named **Sabine Lamberts** as the five-star resort's new General Manager. Lamberts will be overseeing all aspects of the guest experience as the Thailand resort approaches its 27th anniversary in 2018.

Win with Air Canada

With Air Canada now flying to Vancouver non-stop from Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne it's clear Australian travellers have fallen in love with Canada's beautiful west coast city. If you'd like to know what all the fuss is about, then here's your chance.

Air Canada and Travel Daily are giving away two Economy Class tickets to Vancouver - North America's most convenient gateway to Canada and the USA.

All you need to do is create a fun photo featuring Air Canada and showing how much you love Canada and send it to aircanada@traveldaily.com.au before 31 Dec.



Terms and conditions

ibis Styles London

ACCORHOTELS will launch the ibis Styles London Gloucester Road in Jan.

The hotel will have 85 rooms, as well as a bar and restaurant.

ibis Styles London Gloucester Road is located a short walk from the London Science Museum and the Gloucester Rd tube station.

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CLIENTS & CANDIDATES FOR THEIR SUPPORT THIS YEAR.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE

OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST YOU IN 2018.

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