

Travel Daily First with the news

Wendy Wu incentive

WENDY Wu Tours has launched a Chinese New Year incentive offering a hefty \$20,000 grand prize as well as \$1,000 per week for six weeks.

To be in the running, agents need to make a booking worth more than \$2,500 before 31 Mar, with each booking going into a draw to win the weekly prizes.

The grand prize will go to the top seller of Wendy Wu product between 14 Feb and 31 Mar.



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Alliance JTB charter deal

ALLIANCE Airlines has struck a three-year agreement with Japan's JTB Corporation to provide air charter services in Australia, backed by a destination campaign aimed at boosting levels of Japanese tourism.

The deal was signed yesterday

USA, AA challenge

BRAND USA and American Airlines have officially kicked off their competition for Australian and New Zealand travel agents (*TD* yesterday), offering the chance to win a \$10,000 trip to Las Vegas, Los Angeles and New Orleans. The online competition asks travel agents to share their idea for a three-week dream USA itinerary, with five finalists to then join an event in Sydney with their suitcases packed and a travel buddy on hand.

The winner will be whisked away the following day to experience American's 787-9 *Dreamliner* service to the US. Entries close on 14 Mar - for more details, visit AA's microsite www.aa.com/americandream.

> ndividual Du are

in Tokyo and will capitalise on Alliance's fleet of Fokker jets able to transport groups of up to 100 passengers at a time.

Alliance Airlines ceo Lee Schofield said the agreement provided an opportunity "to work with one of the world's great travel companies".

"The partnership will allow JTB to develop a range of tours throughout Australia visiting some wonderful and unique destinations in every state.

"The tours will range from oneday opportunities such as visiting Uluru to multi-day tours visiting major tourist attractions and cities throughout Australia," he said.

The first tours will commence in Apr, involving visits to Uluru from points including Cairns, the Gold Coast and Brisbane with sameday return flights.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has nine pages of news and photos, plus full pages from:

- One&Only Royal Mirage Dubai
- AA Appointments jobs
- Hotel Connection

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www.traveldaily.com.au Thursday 15th February 2018

SAVINGS of up to 25% and a free day pass to Aquaventure Waterpark are on offer if staying three consecutive nights at the One&Only Royal Mirage in Dubai - see **page 10** for more details.

Victoria Palace info

TODAY'S issue of *Travel Daily* features a Product Profile of the Victoria Palace Hotel Paris on the city's Left Bank - see **page 12**.



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Mantra's record revenue

The result is an increase of \$10.1 million or 2.8% on the first six months of last financial year and also involved a record RevPAR (revenue per available room) of \$145.07.

The group's acquisition of the Art Series Hotel Group boosted the period, with available rooms up 2.6% in the six months to Dec.

Seven Art Series properties joined the group, in addition to other new hotels including Mantra Sydney Airport, Mantra Macarthur Canberra and FV by Peppers Brisbane.

"This result was driven by a number of factors including the acquisition of 10 new properties, continued growth in domestic & int'l travel, increased business travel to some CBD locations, an increase in the total number of rooms available across the Group's resorts and CBD operating segments, as well as improved RevPAR," said Mantra Group ceo Bob East. "We are pleased with the performance of the properties



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that we transitioned into the portfolio; in particular the seven Art Series Hotels have transitioned smoothly and performed ahead of expectations," he said.

Underlying EBITDAI was \$56.6 million, down 3.6%.

Mantra was also hit with \$2m in costs associated with its proposed acquisition by AccorHotels.

Si ups commission

WHOLESALER Si Holidays has raised agent commission to 12% across all destinations, effective 01 Mar, as well as offering 10% commission on instant purchase rates, the firm has announced.

The change comes as Si Hols revamps procedures following recent feedback from agents.

Si Holidays will also no longer impose any surcharges for credit card payments.

Payments will be accepted via direct deposit and eNett, with Si promising to process and return refund claims for land bookings within two week of being issued. Deposits on cancelled bookings

will be transferable for a credit, to be used within six months.

Si Holidays is also introducing a new cancellation policy, under which any booking cancelled within 15 days of travel will incur a 100% cancellation fee.

Deposits will now be charged at an increased level of \$165 per person, the company said.

AY boosts AA pact

FINNAIR and American Airlines will expand their codeshare pact from Oct, with the AY code to be placed on AA flights from Miami to Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco & more.



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LIVN expands supplier network

LIVN Group, the "superaggregator" of instantly bookable tour and activities product, says it is on track to reach its goal of 45,000 products by Jun this year. Livn's platform has now reached 30,000 products in 3,000 cities



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across almost 200 cities and continues to expand its global network of suppliers.

Livn is fully integrated into the Amadeus GDS (*TD* 06 Sep) and the company is also a preferred Flight Centre Group partner.

CEO Mark Rizzutto has confirmed an extension of the company's reservation support team in order to address the growing industry demand.

He also announced the launch of a nationwide Flight Centre incentive, with \$50,000 worth of prize giveaways ranging from cash cards to travel vouchers, packaged tours and more.

Every time a registered agent books a tour or activity via the Livn Reservation Platform they will automatically be entered into the draw, Rizzutto said.

See agents.livnholidays.com.

Albatross sales soar

ALBATROSS Tours has reported a record sales growth for its 2018 European summer period, surpassing all previous figures.

"Both agents and their customers are seeking out our unique European tour programs and are loving our style of touring with inclusive pricing," said national sales manager for Albatross Tours, Stephen York.

"It's clear we are doing something Australian travel agents and their clients are looking for."

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Last Chance to Save on Travel Insurance! From the 19 February, Travelclub insurance premiums will be increasing. Year-round, multi-trip cover starting from \$134*pp <u>Click here</u> to see the plans & book online! It's not to late to get a great deal!

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McGeary honoured



APT founder Geoff McGeary has again been recognised for his contribution to the travel industry and the greater community, having been awarded the Old Haileyburians Association (OHA) Medal from his former school.

The OHA medal was originally initiated in 2007 by Jamie Harris, a fellow Haileybury almunus who currently works for APT.

McGeary's three grandsons are the third generation of the family to attend the school.





OF COURSE we would never encourage contraband smuggling, but you'd have to give some grudging admiration to the creativity of a drug mule who was caught at Lisbon Airport this week with a pair of false buttocks.

The inventive posterior appendage contained about 1kg of cocaine, with Portuguese police releasing a photo (**below**) showing the fleshy items attached to a pair of brightly coloured underpants.











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Discover the big island of Hawaii in the February issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK HERE to read

Thursday 15th February 2018

Fiji Holidays launch

FIJI Airways has launched a new online holiday package platform called Fiji Holidays.

The new digital portal is essentially a one-stop-shop for travel to Fiji, offering holidaymakers the chance to purchase flights, accommodation, transfers and local excursions all in the same transaction.

"By offering this new way of booking entire holiday packages, we hope to enhance their Fiji experience and ensure every guest has the best experience, from start to finish," said Fiji Airways managing director and chief executive Andre Viljoen.

To celebrate the launch of the site, the airline is offering introductory specials across 12 Fijian properties such as the Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa and Shangri-La's Fijian Resort & Spa, with five-night resort bookings starting from \$1,060 per person. Check out the new Fiji Holidays

site by **CLICKING HERE.**

Qatar Airways showcases Q Suite to agents



QATAR Airways demonstrated its new Business class Q Suite hardware to a group of travel trade partners on Mon as the carrier marked the launch of its Doha-Sydney-Canberra route.

The inaugural flight featured the revolutionary product aboard its Boeing 777-300ER, which Qatar Airways ceo Akbar Al Baker says is exclusively trademarked by the **one**world carrier and is unable to be replicated by other airlines. The 42-seat Q Suite comprises

sliding privacy doors, with the middle seats able to be converted to a double bed, while the 21.5" video screens separating the rows is able to be slid back to produce a family room for four travellers.

Some 35 Sydney travel agents and 20 corporates joined QR's inaugural 30-minute flight down to Canberra, and were joined by 20 agent counterparts in CBR to see the Q Suite product firsthand while on static display.

The troupe are **pictured** above at Canberra Airport, hosted by QR commercial manager Justin Kestel (front and centre).

On Tue, Al Baker revealed Qatar Airways' would utilise Q Suite-equipped 777s on the daily Canberra service from Jun, pending aircraft availability.



*Terms and conditions: Advertised fares are for Business and Economy Class return travel departing from Melbourne inclusive of taxes and surcharges, correct as of 24 January 2018, subject to currency fluctuation and availability. Fares require a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 9 people travelling together on all flights. Offer ends 27 February 2018. Business Class Fares are for travel commenced between 21 February and 30 November 2018. Economy Class fares are for travel commenced between 6 February and 27 March, 16 April and 23 May, and 24 September and 30 November 2018. Higher levels apply for other travel periods. Flight restrictions, day-of-week surcharges, inbound blackout periods, amendment and cancellation fees apply. Additional travel periods, destinations and fares are available from Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Perth. Further terms and conditions apply. For full terms and conditions, please refer to your GDS, visit emiratesagents.com/au, or call Emirates on 1300 303 777. Offer subject to change.



United is just the ticket



UNITED Airlines hosted an event at Sydney's Australian Museum on Tue night, showcasing the huge array of onward destinations connecting to its new Sydney-Houston nonstop flights (TD yesterday) such as Atlanta, Cancun, Havana, Baton Rouge and Memphis.

As well as plenty of southern fried chicken, Cuban cuisine and good old American music, the

evening included a prize draw. Scott Darlow from Magellan Travel Group was the lucky winner of two confirmed business class tickets from Sydney to Houston and beyond.

He's **pictured** receiving his giant novelty boarding pass from UA country manager Julie Reid, along with marketing manager Tommy Lindblad and Marcel Fuchs, UA vp of Atlantic & Pacific Sales.

QR SYD capacity boosted

THE introduction of Doha-based Qatar Airways' Canberra service this week not only means a growing source market from the Australian capital and southern NSW, but more flight options for travellers from Sydney.

Speaking exclusively with Travel Daily this week in Canberra, QR senior manager, Australasia, Adam Radwanski said the tag-on flight to Canberra through Sydney Airport meant the airline now offered a highly-sought double daily option from the NSW capital.

Inbound from Doha to Sydney on a Boeing 777-300ER, flight QR906 arrives at 0615 (before connecting onto CBR, departing at 0725).

It complements QR's daily twoyear-old flight QR908, currently operated by Airbus A380s, which arrives into SYD at 1845.

Flight QR907 on the 777 (which originates in Canberra) departs Sydney at 1555, landing in DOH at 2330, and connecting to Qatar Airways' network of destinations across Europe, Africa and beyond.

It complements QR909, the A380 service ex SYD which pushes back at 2200.

Radwanski told Travel Daily the new afternoon flight out of Sydney to Doha was "what our customers wanted, especially corporate customers," he said.

"They were asking to have that evening departure flight out of Europe, arriving back into Sydney early morning."

"For our Sydney customers it's a fantastic offering because you now have an end of the business day option," he said, referring to the connecting Canberra service.

MEANWHILE, Queanbeyan City Travel & Cruise (QCT&C) says the airfares ex Canberra on QR's new tag-on service are extremely competitive through to Europe.

According to GDS displays, it's a whopping \$302 cheaper to fly out of Canberra to London Heathrow with QR, compared to Sydney.

An airfare quote priced in the GDS yesterday for travel between SYD and LHR via DOH in late May is priced at \$1,721, whereas a like-for-like airfare ex Canberra (via SYD and DOH) is just \$1,419.

Interestingly, the actual fare component is only \$535, while taxes are \$884.

"When the fast train finally arrives for travel between Sydney and Canberra, it will be cheaper for Sydneysiders to fly from the nation's capital," QCT&C owner Jenny Cooper told Travel Daily.

On Tue, Radwinski said Qatar Airways has witnessed a "very strong response from the local market" in Canberra to the route.





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USA incentive

DELTA Air Lines, Virgin Australia and USA destination partners have collaborated on the reboot of the Sell Your WAY to the USA incentive program for 2018.

The competition will be available to travel agents nationwide with registration of interest needing to be completed by 31 Mar.

Agents will receive one point for each Delta or Virgin booking to the USA between 28 Feb and 15 Jun, with the top 12 performers securing a spot on one of four exclusive self guided, air inclusive famil adventures.

Agents interested in getting involved should contact Lara Kamionka on email **HERE.**

Rezidor name drop

HNA Tourism Group is set to rebrand its Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group to Radisson Hotel Group commencing 05 Mar.

The Chinese-based conglomerate made the decision following a leadership restructure at the company which precipitated a refreshed business hotel development strategy.

As part of the new investment model, HNA will look to open 13,000 new rooms and channel millions of dollars into hotel fixtures, furniture & equipment.

CZ plans CAN/FCO

CHINA Southern Airlines will launch additional routes between China and both Rome and London this year, GDS displays indicate.

A thrice weekly Wuhan-London Heathrow A330-200 service is set to launch on 30 May, and a Guangzhou-Rome thrice weekly 787-8 service will begin on 12 Jul.

Dreamliner enters dreamtime



QANTAS has decked out its fourth Boeing 787-9 *Dreamliner* in a unique livery honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (*TD* 18 Jan). Inspired by the work of the late indigenous artist Emily Kame Kngwarreye, the new design is intended to encourage more travellers to embrace a curiosity about Indigenous culture.

"We're thrilled to showcase another piece of Indigenous culture on one of our aircraft, and to reiterate our ongoing commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people," said Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce. The latest livery marks only the second time in the carrier's history that the iconic flying kangaroo was changed to incorporate a new design, with its red tail colour tweaked slightly to match the earthy red tones and white dots.

The aircraft will fly to Sydney and Melbourne for crew familiarisation flights in the first instance before formally entering service on international routes from late Mar.

This is the fourth *Dreamliner* to be introduced to the Qantas fleet, following the arrivals of Great Southern Land, Waltzing Matilda and Quokka previously.

Check out the new livery in closer detail by **CLICKING HERE.**

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Travel Daily

Thursday 15th February 2018

HA spreads some cheap love



HAWAIIAN Airlines was feeling the love over Valentine's Day and made its feelings known by announcing a special airfare sale to mark the occasion.

The "Take Your Other Half for Half Price" Valentine's Day Sale ends 16 Feb and was introduced to travel agents around Sydney and Brisbane in person along with bright leis, purple balloons and boxes of Lindt chocolates.

"We love to spread Aloha," said HAL regional director, Gai Tyrrell. The 50% off companion fare

applies to the air component not to taxes. **Pictured:** Hawaiian Airlines

staff on the streets delivering the romantic news.

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We're looking for someone who is customer focused, with exceptional communication & time management skills. Must have a Driver's License & car, flexibility to travel interstate, good attention to detail, enjoy networking opportunities, have a minimum of 12 months experience in a similar role with a good comprehension of the travel industry and present immaculately. Above all, we're looking for passion & a vibrant positive attitude.

If you tick all these boxes, then we'd love to hear from you. To apply, please forward your resume and cover letter to employment@livn.world by Friday 23rd of February.

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.

G Adventures has announced a new Director of Marketing in **Louise Laing** who joins from the marketing department at Visit Ballarat. She will be based out of the company's Melbourne office.

Former Etihad Airways marketing manager **Adam Vance** has taken on a new position as General Manager Product & Marketing at **Cruiseco**. Vance arrives with more than 20 years of strategic marketing experience in the travel and hospitality space.

Giselle Radulovic has been appointed as the new Country Manager Australia for **Hawai'i Tourism Oceania**. She will be responsible for driving the performance of Hawai'i within the Australian market.

The "I Love NY" tourism program has a new leader after **Empire State Development (ESD)** promoted **Ross D. Levi** to the role of Executive Director of Tourism. He will be expected to drive tourism and awareness of New York State.

Luxury resort company **Alba Wellness** has revealed **Roland Svensson** as its new Group General Manager, Alba Hospitality and General Manager, Alba Wellness Resort Hue in Vietnam.

SeaLink South Australia has appointed **Sally Zollner** as its new Business Development Executive for its Adelaide Sightseeing and Youth and Adventure brands. Zollner will be charged with promoting Kangaroo Island Tours to South Australian hotels and key agents.

Matt Maddox has replaced the embattled Chief Executive Officer Wynn Resorts, Steve Wynn. Wynn has recently been the subject of criminal allegations and has tendered his resignation to mitigate the negative publicity. Maddox was the President of Wynn Resorts.

Ticket forger arrest

AUTHORITIES in India have arrested a passenger as well as his travel agent, after the traveller allegedly tried to fly from Mumbai to Kolkata on a forged airline ticket.

The passenger needed to travel urgently and the agent had already issued a ticket to another client who had asked him to cancel it.

However instead he sold it to the new traveller and forged his name on it so it would match the details on his identity card.

The trickery was picked up on boarding when his name did not match airline booking records.

VA/VS codesharing

VIRGIN Atlantic will begin codesharing with Virgin Australia on 13 services from 25 Mar.

The arrangement spans select services between the UK and Australia, along with a handful of domestic routes.

The VS designator code of Virgin Atlantic will be placed on VA flights from Brisbane to Adelaide, Cairns, Los Angeles, Melbourne and Sydney; Melbourne to Hong Kong, Los Angeles & Sydney; and Sydney to the Gold Coast & LAX.

Virgin Australia will place its two-letter code on VS's London Heathrow-Los Angeles route.





PX TSV withdrawal?

AIR Niugini is understood to be considering dropping flights to Townsville from Port Moresby unless more travellers support the service, according to the *Townsville Bulletin*.

Air Niugini regional sales mgr Annemarie Rhodes told the newspaper the route could be on the chopping block if local pax don't starting picking up.

Rhodes added that Townsville seemed unaware that PX flew to many int'l ports via Port Moresby. If dropped, it would remove the city's one-stop flights to HKG.

BA A380 ORD rejig

BRITISH Airways has adjusted its planned A380 operations from May 2018 to Chicago O'Hare.

The **one**world carrier will now operate the flight from London Heathrow as BA297/296 instead of BA295/294, according to GDS.

BA295/294 will remain as a Boeing 747 jumbo operation.

Blue Train shuffle

NEW Zealand tour operator World Journeys is advising of disruptions on South Africa's Blue Train between 30 Jul and 08 Aug.

The Blue Train has had to cancel its Cape Town/Pretoria (and vice versa) journeys departing Pretoria 30 Jul and 06 Aug; and departing Cape Town 01 and 08 Aug.

The rail line between Kimberley and De Aar in South Africa is undergoing maintenance.

New Amex chefs

AMERICAN Express has added four new chefs to its Global Dining Collection.

Chefs include Dominique Crenn of Atelier Crenn and Petit Crenn in San Francisco; The Roca Brothers of El Celler in Can Roca, Spain; Virgilio Martinez of Central in Lima and Michael Solomonov of Zahav in Philadelphia.

The program gives special dining experiences and reservations to Platinum card members.

Rhyming Rottnest winner

HEATHER Testro

from Hawthorn Cruise & Travel is on top of the world right now after being crowned the winner of a recent competition in **Travel Daily**, courtesy of Journey Beyond.

As the winner, Testro will jet off to Western Australia on a trip for two staying at Esplanade by Rydges Fremantle, with two nights on Rottnest Island staying at Karma Rottnest, transfers with Rottnest Express, island touring and bike hire for two. Participants were

asked why they wanted to holiday on Rottnest.

Testro's winning answer was, "My motto when travelling to Rotto, if you really want the best, is to take the Rottnest Express, and stay at Karma Rottnest."

Pictured above is Heather Testro holding a stuffed quokka with Matt Dommenz, bdm national sales for Journey Beyond.



CX ferry codeshare

CATHAY Pacific has signed a codeshare agreement with Cotai Water Jet, an operator of highspeed ferries between Hong Kong and Macau, effective 28 Feb.

The deal is designed to improve the connectivity between the two special regions of China.

The airline will place its CX code on six daily services from HKG.

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US Govt new build supersonic aircraft

AN EXPERIMENTAL supersonic jet that could fly from New York to London in just three hours halving flight travel time - has been approved for full funding by US President Donald Trump.

Dubbed the Low-Boom Flight Demonstrator (LBFD), the NASA aircraft is proposed to reach top speeds of 1,728kph without creating a deafening sonic boom.

NASA will now receive the full funding required from the Government, following the approval of Trump's budget.

The White House said the project would open a new market for aviation, including reducing cross-country flight times.

If the aircraft takes flight on a commercial bases, it would reduce the flight time between Sydney and Los Angeles to as little at seven hours.

NZ emoji travel tips

AIR New Zealand will now allow people to explore the best New Zealand has to offer using emojis.

Users will be asked to comment on Air New Zealand #EmojiJourney Facebook or Twitter posts with a combination of emojis which would best

describe their perfect NZ getaway. This will automatically generate a link to a personalised map of NZ for them, with emojis highlighting points likely to be of interest.

Info about the destination such as activities will be shown on the personalised map.

Ola rideshare debut

INDIA'S ride-hailing Major Ola has finally made its international debut by launching a trial service in Australia, in Perth.

Ola's launch promotion will be offering Perth customers two free rides (up to \$10) per ride.

Join the team at Business Publishing Group

We are looking for a talented go getter to join our team of writers on a part-time basis to produce content for our portfolio of publications – *Travel Daily, Pharmacy Daily, travelBulletin, Cruise Weekly* and *Business Events News*.

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Return flights to Bangkok and seven nights accommodation at Centara Grand in Bangkok and Krabi for two.

How to win

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2 Send us your 3 favourite Centara selling points along with a picture or meme of you enjoying your ultimate Centara moment. The most imaginative entry will win. Send your entries to centara@traveldaily.com.au

ENTARA

OTELS & RESORTS

Norwegian mulls UK-Latin Am boost

LOW-COST airline Norwegian is planning further expansion of its long-haul flight network from London Gatwick with more routes to Latin America and Asia.

The carrier's first direct flight to South America departed this week to Buenos Aires from LGW.

Norwegian chief Bjorn Kjos told *The Guardian* that new routes to Brazil, Chile and Uruguay could soon be available on low-cost flights from Gatwick.

Kjos added that the airline would set up a subsidiary in Argentina in Jun, which would be licensed to fly up to 152 routes around the continent.

"It's going to be very interesting to see the onward connections we can offer from a Buenos Aires hub," he said.

Sabre FY results

OUTIQUE COLLECTION

SABRE has reported a 6.7% increase in revenue for the full year to US\$3.598 billion.

Adjusted EBITDA grew 2.7% to US\$256.7m in the final quarter of 2017 and 3.1% to \$1b for the year.

Cash provided by operating activities totalled US\$678 million over the course of 2017.

Sabre president & ceo Sean Menke said result reflected the team's strong work over the year.

"We have built a strong foundation that will help to carry our momentum forward."

SIN arrivals up

SINGAPORE has reported a record year of tourism for the second straight year in 2017.

Visitor arrivals jumped 6.2% to 17.4 million, with 13 of the top 15 markets showing growth.

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PRODUCT PROFILE HOTEL



The Victoria Palace Hotel Paris

IF YOU thought there were no large rooms on the Left Bank of Paris, think again. The charming Victoria Palace Hotel is in the hipster heart of the City of Lights, offering comfortable, classic hospitality with many interconnecting rooms, personal service and a true French experience.

According to the hotel's Director of Sales, Michael Erwin, a recent renovation of the public areas has made them "look older than they did before," with the authentic restoration maintaining the timeless style of this stunning property.

The location is ideal, with guests able to take a stroll through the nearby Luxembourg Gardens, visit Saint-Sulpice or spend their days shopping at the exclusive Bon Marche department store.

The privately-owned Victoria Palace Hotel is tucked away off the bustling Rue de Rennes, in between Montparnasse and Saint Germaine des Pres. So trendy is the area that it now even boasts a vegan restaurant - an affront to many of the locals for whom "a day without cheese is a day without sunshine".

Guests can treat themselves to the hotel's privately curated "Foodies Discovery Trail," losing themselves in local streets sampling the culinary delights of the neighbourhood. Agents who tell the Hotel Connection about their booking can have a personal welcome note and small dish of chocolates in their client's room on arrival.

A four-night stay promotion offers reduced rates and 15% commission for stays in 2018: 1st of January – 22nd of March, 14th of July – 2nd of September & the 26th of October – 27th of December. Conditions apply.

LOCAL CONTACT

For enquiries in Australia contact the Hotel Connection: **contact** @thehotelconnection.com.au





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