

# travelBulletin

OCTOBER 2017



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# FOOTLOOSE VIETNAM

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## From the publisher Bruce Piper

THIS month I have been travelling in America's New England region and the trip has reminded me of how fortunate we are to work in this industry. This is a beautiful part of the world and Jenny and I have been privileged to experience it during the spectacular "fall foliage" season.

Travel and tourism continues to be a key part of the US economy, but interestingly the "Trump effect" is definitely having an impact. The most recent figures for Australian travel to the USA show a slight dip, but on the ground in America I can tell you operators are extremely concerned. In the US north-east there are thousands of tourism businesses, almost all of them highly seasonal operations. In summer domestic visitation is huge, while many hotels close completely for the extreme winter months.

Rather than being worried about dampening demand due to perceptions of President Trump, the key issue for operators here is that of getting staff to work in their businesses. Hoteliers and attractions across Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont rely heavily on imported workers from the Caribbean, who return to their native lands to work in tourism there during the winter months.

The focus on immigration policy by the new administration in Washington means visa arrangements for these seasonal workers are very much under threat. Operators are lobbying furiously to maintain the status quo, with possible changes under Trump having the potential to cripple the sector.

MEANWHILE in the wake of last month's collapse of Reed Holidays, AFTA CEO Jayson Westbury highlighted new legislation regarding the so-called practice of "phoenixing" – where unethical company directors place their businesses into administration and then later recommence operations under a new name, leaving creditors out in the cold.

While Westbury stressed that he was not making specific allegations about the Reed collapse, he noted that the company's ATAS accreditation was not based on full information, with Reed trading through multiple companies which didn't reveal the total picture of its operations. It is the first collapse of an ATAS accredited agency in some time and the scheme will be closely following developments as the administration proceeds.

In my time in the travel industry I can recall at least two instances where it appears failed companies have been magically "reborn from the ashes" and continued operating despite leaving creditors owed millions of dollars – so any move to clamp down on the practice is welcome.

Businesses do fail. What's to be hoped is that if they do collapse it is due to misfortune or mismanagement – not malfeasance.

## This month's contributors

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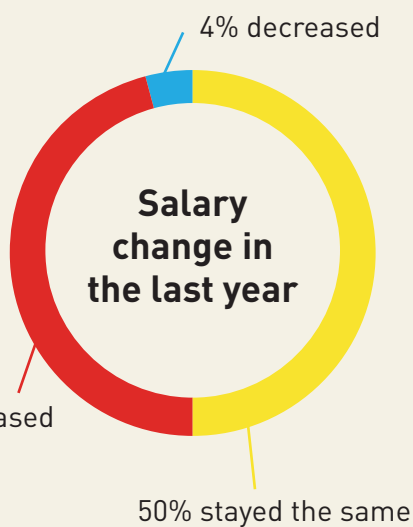
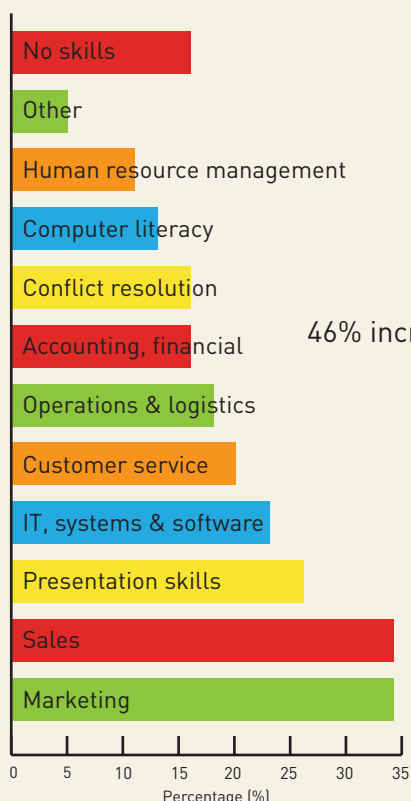


# 2017 SALARY SURVEY

Average travel industry salary in 2017

**\$66,703**

## Skill seeking in the next 12 months



**1,190**  
participants in the salary survey

## United links Sydney to Houston hub

UNITED Airlines will go head-to-head with Qantas in steering Australian traffic through Texas from January, having announced direct flights between Sydney and its key hub in Houston. The daily services will be operated by the carrier's flagship Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner and are aimed at bypassing America's West Coast gateways to provide a swifter and wider range of connections to other US cities.

The new route will join United's existing 787 services from Sydney to Los Angeles, Sydney to San Francisco and Melbourne to Los Angeles, boosting the airline's all-Dreamliner operation out of Australia. United says the new service will shave more than three hours off flight times to Houston and speed connections to eastern points like New York, Washington and Boston. It will also reduce the number of points requiring two stops to access on United, such as Atlanta and Memphis, and will open up easier connections to points in Florida and across the Caribbean. The strategy mirrors that of Qantas with its Airbus A380 flights from Sydney to Dallas-Fort Worth, where oneworld partner American Airlines operates a major hub for onward connections across the US.

## Creditors named in collapse

THE full extent of the Reed Holidays collapse has become apparent, with unpaid debts of more than \$5 million outlined at a recent creditors' meeting. More than 1,500 companies and individuals are owed by Reed, including 981 consumers who booked tours with the company's Australian Air Holidays, Seniors Coach Tours and Young at Heart

## BUSINESS MONITOR

### OUTBOUND MARKET

Top 10 destinations, July 2017

Destination	Trend	Seasonally Adjusted	Original	Trend Jun 17/ Jul 17	Trend Jul 16/ Jul 17
	000	000	000	%	%
Indonesia	100.9	101.3	120.7	+0.3	-4.7
New Zealand	119.8	114.6	120.6	-0.6	+8.2
USA	91.2	91.5	108.2	+0.5	+2.1
UK	51.6	50.9	89.1	-1.2	+8.3
Thailand	50.3	49.6	60.0	+1.4	+9.2
Italy	19.6	20.0	43.8	+0.2	+16.5
China	45.6	45.0	40.5	+0.5	+18.3
Fiji	28.7	28.6	35.8	-0.2	+0.2
Singapore	32.6	31.5	35.1	-0.6	+3.0
Vietnam	27.5	25.9	29.6	+3.0	+25.6
All outbound	884.3	873.5	1,070.4	+0.1	+6.5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

### INBOUND MARKET

Top 10 sources, July 2017

Source	Trend	Seasonally Adjusted	Original	Trend Jun 17/ Jul 17	Trend Jul 16/ Jul 17
	000	000	000	%	%
China	120.5	126.3	149.4	+2.5	+18.0
New Zealand	113.0	115.1	131.1	+0.4	+0.1
USA	68.3	67.5	59.9	+0.7	+12.1
UK	58.7	56.7	40.3	-1.3	-1.0
Japan	35.8	35.6	37.0	-0.6	+3.7
Singapore	37.4	35.9	28.7	-0.4	+1.7
Malaysia	33.8	33.6	27.8	-0.2	-0.6
Hong Kong	23.4	22.7	25.6	+0.4	+13.2
South Korea	23.6	23.2	20.0	-0.6	-0.6
India	25.7	26.0	19.7	+2.0	+14.6
All inbound	745.4	747.8	746.1	+0.6	+7.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

### MAIN DOMESTIC ROUTES

Top 10 domestic city pairs at July 2017

City pair	Passengers YE Jul 16 (000)	Passengers YE Jul 17 (000)	% change
Melbourne-Sydney	8,797.4	8,992.0	+2.2
Brisbane-Sydney	4,622.0	4,700.2	+1.7
Brisbane-Melbourne	3,444.5	3,511.5	+1.9
Gold Coast-Sydney	2,711.7	2,716.6	+0.2
Adelaide-Melbourne	2,375.8	2,414.3	+1.6
Melbourne-Perth	2,100.3	2,049.1	-2.4
Gold Coast-Melbourne	1,908.1	2,001.5	+4.9
Adelaide-Sydney	1,867.2	1,891.2	+1.3
Perth-Sydney	1,756.8	1,734.8	-1.2
Hobart-Melbourne	1,529.8	1,610.5	+5.3

Source: BITRE



brands. Among those owed the biggest sums are Voyages Indigenous Tourism which is short \$120,000, Bayside Coaches (\$138,000) and accommodation providers like Strahan Village (\$61,922) and Ibis Styles Kununurra (\$30,933).

Travel agents are also listed among the unsecured creditors including NRMA Travel (owed \$27,495), RACQ (\$52,865), RACV Hobart (\$12,172), Travel Partners (\$1,255) and Zeppelin Travel (\$1,045).

Liquidators Cor Cordis have said it is still unclear whether creditors will receive any payments. "We are working to understand exactly what has happened, and that includes investigating the conduct of the director and the companies," said Cor Cordis partner Glenn Spooner. AFTA CEO Jayson Westbury has vowed to "push for the truth on what really happened" in the collapse of the formerly ATAS accredited agency.

## Qantas plans Boeing 787 base for Brisbane

BRISBANE is set to host the second wave of Qantas Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners when the aircraft are delivered in mid-2018, creating potential for new international routes out of the Queensland capital. Qantas has confirmed it will create a base for the 787s in Brisbane, creating 470 new jobs. "The 787 offers a step-change for customers in terms of comfort and efficiency and we are pleased Queenslanders will be able to experience them direct from Brisbane," said Qantas CEO Alan Joyce said. Although destinations haven't been confirmed, Joyce said the 787-9 could operate non-stop to cities like Seattle, Chicago, San Francisco and Vancouver, as well as major points in Asia.

Meanwhile, Qantas has announced an

executive reshuffle affecting a string of senior positions from next month. Qantas International CEO Gareth Evans will become CEO of Jetstar Group, replacing Jayne Hrdlicka who becomes CEO of Qantas Loyalty. Former head of freight, catering and airports Alison Webster will become CEO of Qantas International. The role of Qantas Domestic CEO Andrew David will be expanded to include freight, catering and airports. Joyce said the reshuffle was "about making the best use of the considerable leadership talent at the top level of our organisation".

## Tourism Australia names its new board

THE board of Tourism Australia has a new chair in Mantra Group CEO Bob East, who was appointed last month along with deputy chair Anna Guilian, the regional director of sales and marketing for Kerzner International. The pair have been joined on the board by new members David Seargeant, the CEO and managing director of Event

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## U BY UNIWORLD'S STYLISH SOIREE

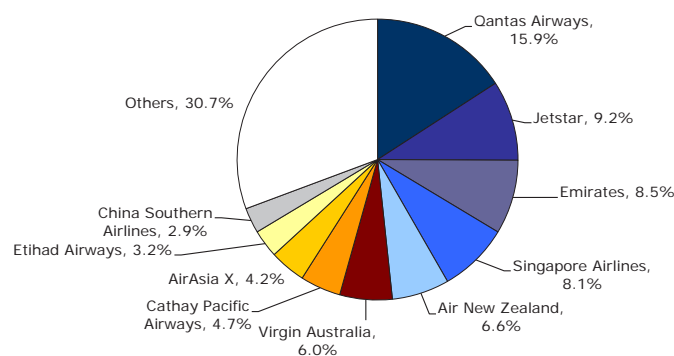


U BY Uniworld, the new youth brand from Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection for 21-45 year olds, tempted Sydney with a "taste of Europe" at its official launch party last month. The brand took over Bar Machiavelli in Rushcutters Bay as 130 trade partners, travel agents, lifestyle media and media personalities walked the "black carpet" and were greeted with a "Night Owl" cocktail. Guests were treated to a range of activities, aiming to bring to life the itineraries the new line will operate, including a French dessert bar representing The Seine Experience, and a pretzel station for Germany's Finest. **Pictured** is the Uniworld Australian team: Kathleen Jordan, Lina Trimarchi, Nola Melamet, Beanca Duluz, Jennifer Pagett, Fiona Dalton, and Tiffany Burgess.

## BUSINESS MONITOR

### INTERNATIONAL AIR MARKET SHARE

International passengers by major airline – year ended June 2017



Source: BITRE

### DOMESTIC AIR MARKET – July 2017

	Jul 16	Jul 17	Growth (%)	Yr to Jul 16	Yr to Jul 17	Growth (%)
Total pax carried	5.19m	5.29m	+2.1	58.44m	59.36m	+1.6
Revenue pax kms (RPK)	6.22bn	6.33bn	+0.4	68.83bn	69.57bn	+1.1
Avail seat kms (ASK)	7.72bn	7.70bn	+0.6	88.76bn	88.62bn	-0.2
Load factor (%)	80.6	82.2	+1.6*	77.5	78.5	+1.0*
Aircraft trips (000)	54.8	54.5	-0.6	636.0	636.3	+0.0

Source: BITRE \* Percentage points difference

### DOMESTIC ON TIME PERFORMANCE – August 2017

	Arrivals on Time		Departures on Time		Cancellations	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Jetstar	5,256	80.1	5,133	78.2	55	0.8
Qantas	7,572	82.8	7,778	85.1	143	1.5
QantasLink	9,031	85.7	9,083	86.2	271	2.5
REX	5,317	79.2	5,502	82.0	98	1.4
Virgin Australia	9,655	82.3	10,031	85.5	301	2.5
All Airlines	39,310	82.0	40,081	83.6	934	1.9

Source: BITRE



Continues from previous page

Hospitality & Entertainment, and Bradley Woods, the CEO of the Australian Hotels Association. Former chairman Tony South has stepped down from the board, along with deputy chair Andrew Fairley.

Tourism Australia managing director John O'Sullivan told travelBulletin East and Guillan were already "very familiar with our organisation and the industry and so will hit the ground running". "Their elevation is great news for Tourism Australia and clear recognition of the outstanding contribution they have made to date as existing board members," he said. O'Sullivan paid tribute to outgoing chair South and deputy chair Fairley, acknowledging their "significant contributions" to tourism.

## Virgin expands HK links

JUST months after launching its first direct flights to Asia, Virgin Australia has announced it will increase its frequencies between Melbourne and Hong Kong, boosting the service from five per week to daily from next month. The carrier had hoped to offer daily flights from the time of the route's launch in July, but had faced difficulty gaining landing slots in Hong Kong. The route is a key plank in Virgin's Asia strategy and provides a connection to its alliance partners among China's HNA group of airlines, which owns a one fifth stake in the Australian carrier.

Virgin Australia has also confirmed plans for flights to Samoa from Sydney, Brisbane and Auckland starting next month. The services take the place of its joint venture operations with the Samoan Government which end on 12 November, and will operate twice weekly from the Australian gateways

and five times a week from Auckland. Virgin general manager network & revenue management Russell Shaw said since 2005, under the Virgin Samoa brand, the airline had carried over 1.4m passengers between Australia, NZ and Samoa. "We want to continue to support Samoa and provide valuable tourism opportunities to the Samoan economy," Shaw said. Government-run Polynesian Airways is also planning to establish services to Auckland and Sydney from next month, under a new brand Samoa Airways.

## US reverses tourism decline

AFTER months of declining visitor numbers from most of its major markets, the US has revealed a sudden reversal of fortune in its latest figures which show 8.4% growth in April over the same month last year. Most of America's top 20 markets provided increases, with the notable exceptions of Argentina, India and Brazil which were down 19%, 17% and 13% respectively. The China market was also soft, slipping 1.6%.

Despite the overall rosier picture, the Australian market continued its run of weakness, slipping 1% to 111,151 visitors during the month of April. The fall followed a year-on-year decline of 8.4% in the first quarter when 246,273 Aussies ventured to the US. America's declining tourism figures have at times been blamed on Donald Trump and the impact of his travel bans, with critics citing a perception of American hostility to foreign visitors. Though several Gulf carriers have conceded an impact on their passenger numbers as a result of Trump policies, the slide in overall arrival figures had begun well before the new President took office.

## Webjet makes a record profit

WEBJET has had another record year, revealing an increase in net profit of almost 150% to \$31.2 million last financial year. The online juggernaut announced a total transaction value (TTV) of just over \$2 billion in the year to 30 June, up 25.3% over the previous 12 months. The company highlighted its Webjet online travel agency (OTA) business among the key drivers of its performance, saying its flight bookings grew at over six times the underlying market. During the year Webjet completed its integration of NZ-based Online Republic and expanded its WebBeds B2B hotel wholesaling business via its strategic sourcing agreement with Thomas Cook. It also launched FIT Ruums in Asia and acquired JacTravel.

"I am delighted with the outstanding performance from both our B2C and WebBeds B2B divisions during the year," said CEO John Guscic. "The continual market share that the Webjet OTA continues to deliver is a credit to the team in its ability to be agile and responsive to market needs". Looking forward, he said the company aimed to grow market share and would focus on bookings growth rather than TTV as a key metric.

## World Travel Alliance unveiled in China

CHINA has instigated the creation of a new international tourism body, launched in Chengdu last month at the 22nd General Assembly of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. Called the World Tourism Alliance, the non-government body will be based in Beijing and will aim to push the global tourism industry forward while

## BUSINESS MONITOR

### INTERNET AGENCY MARKET SHARES

July 2017, compared with June 2017

Rank	Position	Visits Share	Relative Diff	Rank
Website	Jul 17	Jul to Jun	Jun 17	
Webjet Australia	16.16	-4.98	1	
Expedia Australia	11.43	+1.49	2	
Skyscanner Australia	9.03	-3.87	3	
Wotif.com	8.16	-0.57	4	
Flight Centre	6.31	-2.22	5	
Velocity Frequent Flyer	3.76	-7.80	6	
Cheap Flights Aus & NZ	3.01	+1.96	7	
Lastminute.com.au	2.52	+3.84	8	
Luxury Escapes	2.09	-4.44	9	
I Want That Flight!	1.90	+0.75	10	

Source: Hitwise, a division of Connexity

### INTERNATIONAL AIR ROUTES

Top 10 city pairs (at June 2017)

City pair	Passengers YE Jun 16	Passengers YE Jun 17	% of total	% change 17/16
Auckland-Sydney	1,582,520	1,604,956	4.2	+1.4
Singapore-Sydney	1,473,709	1,462,736	3.8	-0.7
Singapore-Melbourne	1,297,679	1,397,996	3.6	+7.7
Auckland-Melbourne	1,168,391	1,219,532	3.2	+4.4
Singapore-Perth	1,128,750	1,144,221	3.0	+1.4
Hong Kong-Sydney	1,047,600	1,072,024	2.8	+2.3
Auckland-Brisbane	968,841	964,570	2.5	-0.4
Los Angeles-Sydney	923,325	883,685	2.3	-4.3
Denpasar-Perth	856,676	869,868	2.2	+1.5
Kuala Lumpur-Melbourne	798,248	847,096	2.2	+6.1
Top 10 city pairs	11,245,739	11,466,684	29.7	+2.0
Other city pairs	24,982,992	27,194,262	70.3	+8.9
ALL CITY PAIRS	36,228,731	38,660,946	100.0	+6.7

Source: BITRE

### SHARE PRICES

at 20 September 2017

Flight Centre (FLT)	\$44.13
Helloworld (HLO)	\$4.54
Webjet (WEB)	\$11.42
Qantas (QAN)	\$5.90
Virgin Australia (VAH)	\$0.182
Ardent Leisure (AAD)	\$1.712
Air New Zealand (AIZ)	\$2.96
Auckland International Airport (AIA)	\$5.88
Sydney Airport (SYD)	\$7.14
Corporate Travel Management (CTD)	\$21.36
Village Roadshow (VRL)	\$3.63
Regional Express (REX)	\$1.30
Sealink (SLK)	\$4.20
Mantra Group Limited (MTR)	\$3.175

## TRAFALGAR HAILS AGENTS



TRAFALGAR chief executive officer Gavin Tollman was in Sydney last month to unveil the guided holiday specialist's 2018 Europe program at an invitation-only event for top achievers from around the country.

Tollman heaped praise on frontline sellers, emphasising "without our agent partners, we are nothing. Our success is down to their commitment and trust in what we do and deliver for their clients." He said that a "real focus" for 2018 was putting agents first, and announced that Trafalgar's Discoveries program for Europe & Britain were 100% definite departures, along with the remainder of the company's Autumn Winter & Spring 2017/2018 guide (for bookings made by 2 November) and Hawaii 2018 program.

Tollman is pictured centre with The Travel Corporation Australia CEO John Veitch, left, and Trafalgar Australia managing director Matthew Cameron-Smith.

## Travel Daily HEADLINES

- 24 Aug** Flight Centre cracks \$20b
- 24 Aug** The Star profits dip 11%
- 25 Aug** Qantas transformation tick
- 25 Aug** Golden age at Cruise360
- 28 Aug** Qantas executive shuffle
- 28 Aug** Skinner to head Tour East
- 29 Aug** Mantra profit jumps 23%
- 29 Aug** Profits take off for Rex
- 30 Aug** QF BNE Dreamliner base
- 30 Aug** NZ wants to slug tourists
- 31 Aug** Qantas rejigs LHR flights
- 31 Aug** QF drops Dubai hub for SIN
- 31 Aug** VTO hopeful for growth
- 31 Aug** Scenic faces \$14m payout
- 01 Sep** \$1.92m for Travellers Choice
- 01 Sep** Scenic to appeal ruling
- 04 Sep** Travel agent facing court
- 04 Sep** VA confirms Samoa intent
- 05 Sep** Tourism Aus board rejig
- 05 Sep** Qantas revamps website
- 06 Sep** Livn product GDS roll out
- 06 Sep** \$40b int'l tourist spend
- 07 Sep** VA daily to Hong Kong
- 07 Sep** USA tips visitor rebound
- 08 Sep** United confirms SYD/IAH
- 08 Sep** Vanuatu eyes China flights
- 11 Sep** Reed owes pax over \$5m
- 11 Sep** TM looks to consolidate
- 12 Sep** Reed \$1.5m trade creditors
- 12 Sep** Hayes joins Sealink Group
- 13 Sep** CostSaver goes dynamic
- 13 Sep** EK ups SYD to four daily
- 14 Sep** Magellan Signature pact
- 14 Sep** MTG TTV up \$42 million
- 15 Sep** GET LUXE in \$30m push
- 15 Sep** Spencer Travel in Top 500
- 18 Sep** Air China KKs Brisbane
- 18 Sep** QF defends Joyce salary
- 19 Sep** Cox & Kings chief leaves
- 19 Sep** Intrepid FIT to go global
- 20 Sep** Magellan looks to NZ
- 20 Sep** Dom spending hits record
- 21 Sep** VA redundancies revealed
- 21 Sep** ABS shift to arrivals data

further facilitating cooperation around the globe. It is comprised of 89 initial members spanning tourism associations, enterprises, research institutions and other fields, with more than half coming from outside China.

The body was founded by the chairman of the China National Tourism Administration Li Jinzao and will be headed by chairman Duan Qiang.

"Following the vision of 'better tourism, better world', and the objective of promoting development and poverty alleviation, the alliance aims to enhance international exchanges and cooperation in the global tourism community," Duan said. The organisation's Australian connection comes via AFTA CEO Jayson Westbury who has been appointed its first vice chairman.

### AUSTRALIAN AIRPORTS

International passengers through Australia's major international airports – June 2017

Airport	Passengers YE Jun 16	Passengers YE Jun 17	% of total	% change 17/16
Sydney	14,542,194	15,559,762	40.2	+7.0
Melbourne	9,278,934	9,949,458	25.7	+7.2
Brisbane	5,322,121	5,600,083	14.5	+5.2
Perth	4,271,111	4,423,833	11.4	+3.6
Gold Coast	1,022,203	1,104,987	2.9	+8.3
Adelaide	857,202	950,943	2.5	+10.9
Cairns	610,023	648,064	1.7	+6.2
Darwin	258,467	284,136	0.7	+9.9
Canberra <sup>~</sup>	n/a	63,932	0.2	n/a
Townsville <sup>^</sup>	30,584	45,206	0.1	+47.8
Sunshine Coast <sup>*</sup>	16,935	13,728	0.0	-18.9
Norfolk Island	10,758	9,258	0.0	-13.9
Port Hedland <sup>~</sup>	8,199	7,556	0.0	-7.8
All Airports	36,228,731	38,660,946	100.0	+6.7

<sup>\*</sup>Scheduled services recommenced September 2015 <sup>~</sup>Seasonal services only

<sup>^</sup>Scheduled services recommenced September 2016 <sup>~</sup>Scheduled services recommenced April 2015

### ATAS ACCREDITED LOCATIONS

at 20 April 2017

New South Wales	995
Victoria	718
Queensland	605
Western Australia	290
South Australia	228
Australian Capital Territory	49
Tasmania	42
Northern Territory	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,950</b>

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## Steve Jones' Say

### SCENIC PAYS PRICE TO FLOOD-HIT CLIENTS

SCENIC'S defeat – for the moment at least – in a Supreme Court class action should act as a warning to tour operators across Australia. The long running case, which surrounded Scenic's handling of flood-hit voyagers in 2013, showed conclusively that consumers – and this should hardly come as a shock – expect to get what they paid for, and to hell with the terms and conditions.

A judge ruled in favour of the lead plaintiff who described his European cruise as a “massive disappointment” after being shunted onto a coach for part of the itinerary.

The industry should take note. Scenic held up its T&C's as a way of absolving itself of responsibility. The judge was having none of it, concluding Scenic breached Australian consumer law by not informing passengers about weather disruptions.

As reported in *Travel Daily*, more than 1,000 passengers will now receive refunds and damages that could cost Scenic

an estimated \$14m. Scenic deserves some sympathy. The tour operator was in an unenviable position, dealing with exceptional circumstances not of its making. Whenever natural catastrophe confronts the industry – unprecedented rainfall in this case – there are challenging situations to deal with.

But deal with them they must and tough, clear and decisive action is necessary. Critically, it is action that must be taken in the best interests of customers.

Scenic is a river cruise specialist. It promotes itself as such and has established a solid reputation as an expert. To that end, it's hard not to draw the conclusion that it surely should have known, or suspected, there was a high chance of severe disruption. Let's not forget, these weren't passing showers in Europe but extraordinary downpours.

As lawyers acting for the plaintiff argued,

Scenic should have known that operating the voyages without major disruption was “inconceivable”. On the face of it, the company seems to have demonstrated poor judgement as well as failing to alert passengers of the possible disruptions.

I have no doubt that had voyages been postponed, some criticism would have followed, particularly from those who had already travelled to Europe. Damned if they cancelled, damned if they didn't to some degree. On balance, however, most passengers, while disappointed, would probably have understood and respected that a decision not to proceed had been made in their best interests.

It may have resulted in a logistical nightmare maybe, but it would have been the right decision.

Instead, there appears to have been a lack of transparency and a substandard experience. Scenic is now paying the price.

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# MAGELLAN DELIVERS RESULTS AND GROWTH

MAGELLAN Travel Group's strategy of focusing on niche areas of high-end luxury and corporate sales helped the group to deliver solid results over the past financial year despite challenging marketing conditions.

Managing director Andrew Macfarlane announced at Magellan's 2017 annual conference held in Perth's Crown Towers that the group achieved total transaction value (TTV) of \$925 million for the FY17 which was an increase of \$42 million on the FY16 result of \$883 million.

Profit for the group dipped by \$1.3 million from the previous period to \$8.7 million with Macfarlane saying that foreseen increases in investments around resourcing meant that costs had risen.

In a signal of growth, the group added 10 new travel agency members

‘Its about having an exclusive competitive advantage that the next agent down the road doesn't have’

members to offer clients at more than 1,000 luxury hotels, resorts, spas and lodges across the globe.

Macfarlane sees this new agreement as a key recruitment driver to entice new members into the Magellan Group declaring “what this is about is having an exclusive competitive advantage that the next agent down the road doesn't have. For our members to say that not only will the rates be competitive, but you will get more added benefits exclusively through us, well that's a real edge.”

A highlight at this year's conference was a keynote speech delivered by former deputy Prime Minister Kim Beazley. His years serving as Australian ambassador to the United States and his take on the current Donald Trump administration captivated the audience.

Sponsors generously provided the record 300 attendees with ample opportunities to network and dine each day with the conference building to a lavish gala dinner and awards event.

Seven Magellan group members won top prizes including business class flights and an expenses paid trip around Ireland next year.

The 2018 conference and 10th anniversary for Magellan will take place in Sydney at the Park Hyatt hotel in October.

to bring the total to 130 overall with Macfarlane optimistic that the group would eclipse the \$1 billion TTV mark for FY18.

The conference saw the announcement of an agreement with US-based Signature Travel Network providing exclusive benefits and access for Magellan



New Magellan members



## AFTA VIEW

Jayson Westbury, chief executive AFTA

I READ with interested the latest tourism data reports which show that the Australian Tourism industry is generating some \$62.6 billion from Australians holidaying at home for the year to June 2017. In addition, the International Visitor Survey has reported some \$40.6 billion over the same period from inbound tourism spend.

It is important to note that while the Federal Government spruiks these two numbers as good news and good for the country – which they both are – it is disappointing to hear nothing being said about the strength of the outbound travel industry. This is now tracking at an estimated value of \$40 billion making the real total number for travel and tourism in, out and around Australia at \$143.2 billion.

It is as if the travel industry is irrelevant to the conversation but of course for us within the industry it is very relevant. Even more so is the role of travel agents in all of these numbers.

Most of the inbound tourism to Australia is generated via the travel agent channel. Sure, those travel agents are in other countries and they are selling Australia, but a great deal of the domestic tourism industry is also sold by travel agents.

When the Federal Government talks about the industry it would be nice to acknowledge the importance of the travel sector in the conversation.

I always roll my eyes when I see politicians making grand statements about the tourism industry and the numbers. It is as if they have done something personally to get the results. Yet from a domestic tourism point of view, the Federal Government has absolutely nothing to do with it.

It is undeniable that Tourism Australia does a fantastic job promoting Australia as a destination internationally. In fact, they are world class, despite the fact the Federal Government can't wait to nickel and dime the TA budget every year. Despite that, Australia remains a very attractive destination and the inbound industry is currently doing very well as a result of that.

Curiously, so too is the Australian outbound travel market. In fact, the 6.9% increase in the international departures by Australians is holding well and despite the strong domestic spending being up it is not at the expense of the outbound market.

In fact, both are up meaning that Australians are spending more money on holidays than they have in previous years. Continued strong consumer confidence is the key driver to Australians making a decision to take a holiday be it within the country or overseas.

Travel and Tourism go together. They must exist to support each other and I am consistently disappointed with governments who try to play one off against the other.

Two-way tourism movement is critical to the success of any industry and that is why AFTA continues to make the point that bilateral tourism policies with our best and largest opportunity markets is key to the success of both the travel and tourism industry.

‘Australians are spending more on holidays than they have in previous years’

**"Wherever you go, go with all your heart."**

— Confucius

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# TRAVELLERS CHOICE TO SELL TRIPADEAL

TRAVELLERS Choice has embraced the rise of the online travel agency, signing an exclusive agreement that will see its members become fulfilment partners for the products of web-based TripADeal.

The partnership gives Travellers Choice members access to the full collection of TripADeal holiday packages as well as a range of value-added products created solely for sale through the independent agency group.

From 9 October, consumers will be able to choose, book and pay for TripADeal packages through any Travellers Choice store. They will also be able to book direct with TripADeal and pay through Travellers Choice if they prefer dealing with a travel agent for transactions.

Travellers Choice managing director Christian Hunter said the venture represented a “pioneering convergence of offline and online distribution channels”.

“Travellers Choice and TripADeal are creating a new business model in which offline and online enterprises combine their respective strengths to generate new business rather than continually competing to shift customers from one channel to another,” Hunter said, adding that the deal gave members access to “unique, highly attractive products” that could not be booked elsewhere.

TripADeal CEO Norm Black said the partnership had been prompted by customer feedback.

“Some people want to take advantage of the attractive cost savings and inclusions our packages offer, but still prefer to book face-to-face through a traditional retailer,” Black said.

“For us, Travellers Choice was a natural partner because it offers a strong and broadly distributed national network of successful, independent travel agents,” he said.

## Trade option for unsold rooms

AT A time when last-minute booking sites were taking all the attention, another option for unsold hotel inventory was quietly asserting a place in the accommodation sector.

Corporate trade – in which companies use unsold stock to pay for media, marketing and other services – is now a mature industry in Australia, according to the Australian managing director of Active International Cameron Swan.

Active has established operations in 15 countries over the past 32 years and has had a presence in Australia since 1994. The company says it helps businesses generate additional value from excess stock and makes their media investment work harder.

Active’s services provide digital media campaigns that can involve custom content on travel booking sites, using retargeting technology to display advertisements after a visitor has left a hotel website or investment in key search terms.

“We are negotiating and paying for the media through a trading system,” Swan said. “We can either partner with a client’s existing agency to top up their budgets, or start the process from scratch.”

The company says in one instance, a Las Vegas hotel was able to increase first-time phone enquiries by 20% through a media trading arrangement that offered an alternative to discounting.



## TTF VIEW

Margy Osmond, CEO,  
Tourism & Transport Forum Australia

WITH record numbers of international visitors flocking to our shores, domestic travel more popular than ever and visitor spending at an all-time high, it is safe to say we are currently experiencing a new golden age of Australian tourism.

The recent release by Tourism Research Australia of the latest domestic and international visitor surveys has seen the continuation of the tourism sector’s record breaking run, with our current tourism spend at a historic \$122.9 billion, which is a very welcome increase of \$6.9 billion on the previous year.

This is fantastic news for Australia’s visitor economy, with states across Australia reaping the benefits of the boom, led by Tasmania where an ongoing investment in destination marketing has resulted in a 14 per cent increase in the number of visitors and a 30 per cent increase in the amount they are spending over the past 12 months.

However, it would be a mistake for the sector to become complacent about these results. Hidden amid the showpiece

‘It is vital that governments at all levels must not take this growth for granted and continue to invest in measures such as destination marketing’

figures are some early warning signs that the spending growth of international tourists is starting to cool, with the slowest pace of growth since 2012/13, and a drop in the average spend per trip from \$5,264 in year to June 2016 to \$5,159 in year to June 2017.

While more Australians are travelling in their own backyards than ever before, the Domestic Visitor Survey found a 0.3 per cent fall in the number of day trips taken by Australians in the year to June 2017 and a modest increase in day trip spending with a 2.9 per cent rise to \$19.7 billion, which suggests that low wages growth could be starting to bite.

On top of this, Aussies are changing their type of break, with more people starting to lean towards taking an overnight trip to visit friends or relatives (6.2 per cent increase) than for a holiday (2.4 per cent increase), which could also be indicative of people watching their household budgets and looking to save on accommodation costs.

As the Australian dollar continues to rise, we can also expect to see more Australians pack their bags and head overseas for their holidays.

With these early warning signs starting to appear it is vital that governments at all levels must not take this growth for granted and continue to invest in measures such as destination marketing to ensure that our domestic tourism market can continue to grow and we can become the destination of choice for more and more international visitors.

Tourism is well and truly on the verge of becoming Australia’s next super-growth sector and with the right support our current record breaking run will extend well into the future.

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New foreshore area

## VANUATU POISED FOR VISITOR REBOUND

A MYRIAD of projects designed to crank up visitation to Vanuatu are currently on the go as the island nation continues to raise awareness in Australia, inviting potential tourists to “Wake up in Vanuatu” – the catch cry of the country’s latest marketing campaign.

“We are starting to see the number of international arrivals pick up,” Vanuatu Tourism Office general manager Adela Issachar Aru told *travelBulletin* at the Vanuatu Tok Tok 2017 trade show held at Iririki Island Resort & Spa in Port Vila.

Aru, who took on the general manager role at VTO 11 months ago after 10 years within Vanuatu Government’s tourism portfolio, said Vanuatu welcomed 95,000 visitors in 2016.

“That’s a build-up on the decline we’d had in the last two years,” Aru said. “We are very optimistic that 2017 numbers will definitely change. With the work we are doing now, we are hoping to see a 20% increase”.

If that level of growth can be achieved, then the arrival number will eclipse Vanuatu’s record visitation of around 110,000 achieved

pre-Cyclone Pam in 2013 and 2014.

Australia dominates as Vanuatu’s source market, accounting for 63-65% of visitation. Over the past 12 months the majority of international visitors came off a ship, peaking at 39,000 in December last year, before winding back to 10,600 in May this year.

A US\$17 million seafront redevelopment in the heart of Port Vila, airport upgrade, cruise infrastructure enhancements and potential new codeshare partners for Air Vanuatu will help realise the goal.

A revamped cruise facility has opened in Santo, while Port Vila is developing a new cruise terminal that will enable two same-time ship dockings and a new Volcano stop at Tanna has been flagged, all aimed at luring more cruisers to ‘discover what matters’ in Vanuatu.

The 1.2km beautification project stretches from Chantillys on the Bay to the Port Vila Central Market in the centre of town, and features upgraded walkways, parklands, gardens and a new handicrafts market. The project not only aspires to lure locals to the harbour but also tempt cruise passengers to disembark their ship when making a port call, and inject funds into the local economy.

Qantas’ reintroduction of Port Vila codeshare services on Air Vanuatu metal in mid-June has had a “significant contribution” to filling aircraft on flights from Australia, general manager commercial Jeff Murdoch told *travelBulletin*. Murdoch believes the New Zealand market is currently underserved, and said a standing invitation to codeshare on flights to Port Vila is on the table. “It’s an open offer,” he said. Other deals with Aircalin and Air Niugini were also flagged.

Tapping into the emerging China market is also on the agenda. Chinese travellers only account for 2% of current visitors to Vanuatu, however they stay longer and spend more. Aru said airport upgrades – which include the tarmac replacement at Bauerfield International Airport next year and the development of a new terminal over the next three years – are crucial to luring Chinese carriers to operate non-stop services to Port Vila, initially as charter flights.

“But it’s a long shot,” Aru admitted.

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# TRAVELMANAGERS UNITE



THE beginning of TravelManagers' conference in Darwin felt more like a high-energy family reunion, as attendees were thrust into the middle of a flash mob featuring a slightly offbeat performance to a medley of pop hits, including "YMCA".

The energetic start set the tone for the three days and personal travel managers (PTMs) threw themselves into the business sessions and social events that followed.

The event was the network's 10th conference, attracting a record attendance of just under 400 delegates – up 40% on last year – to the Darwin Conference Centre and involved a series of creative social events which were always accompanied by a breathtaking sunset.

The conference theme of "one" was weaved throughout, with executive general manager Michael Gazal opening the event by urging delegates to find what "one" means to them.

"One can mean many different things," he said. "One personal travel manager's own business, belonging to one premium network that is TravelManagers, one love, travel, your family or flexibility to work where and when you want."

"Or it could be one aim, to be the master of your destiny and create the perfect work-life balance," he added.

The inclusive and supportive nature of TravelManagers shone through from the outset and was emphasised throughout the program, with just over a quarter of the major presentations by personal travel managers as they openly shared their often very personal and emotional stories.

The infectious community attitude made its mark on the locals, as delegates laced

up their walking shoes to participate in the "Steps Towards Capability" fundraiser for Helping Achieve – an organisation which assists those with a physical or intellectual challenge to attain training and employment.

The two keynotes, Benjamin Roberts-Smith – the most decorated serving soldier in the Commonwealth – and The Shark Tank and RedBalloon founder, Naomi Simpson, both captivated the audience, providing them with perspective and inspiration.

**‘Every single person’s success, how it’s measured, is different for each one of our PTMs’**

Support from suppliers was evident, with the conference playing host to its largest "Show and Tell" session, with over 60 brands taking part in the mini-tradeshows.

In breakout sessions, delegates also had the option to learn about increasing yield, the latest in IT and using Instagram to grow their business. They also heard about the Travel With Kidz certification program, which has been relaunched in partnership with online information platform BoundRound in a move to allow PTMs to leverage and build their business within the family travel market.

Travelmanagers' ongoing focus is on consolidating its new offerings introduced last year, such as the SPLASH internal booking system and app, and embedding them into PTMs processes, the group's chief operating office Grant Campbell told *travelBulletin*.

He highlighted the individuality of the network, saying a key priority was to be flexible and adjust the offering for each individual PTM partnership.

"Every single person's success, how it's measured, is different for each one of our personal travel managers and that's what we're focused on," he said.

TravelManagers is sitting at "just over" 510 PTMs, after reaching 500 last year.

Although numbers may not have grown by as much as previous years, Campbell confirmed sales were still rising.

"Growth is obviously very important to us and we're always looking for growth, but our focus has been on quality," he said.

Gazal told *travelBulletin* "without overstating it, there is a reason why we are the biggest".

"The more we continue to add value to the network, the more we'll continue to lead the market. That's what measures our business, if our PTMs are successful, everything else follows," he said.

The conference wrapped up with a gala dinner under the stars, complete with fireworks and heartwarming sentiments.

"This is really, for me, such a big moment because I really truly believe that we are the best network, the most experienced network but more importantly, we actually really do care about each other," Gazal said on the night.

"When the chips are down, you guys are always there to step up and help each other, which is probably, for me, the thing of which I am most proud."

Next year the TravelManagers family will be packing their swimsuits and leis and heading to Hawaii for the 2018 conference.



# CRACKING THE NUMBERS

IT IS often said how working in travel gets under the skin. It is more a vocation than a job, a passion rather than a profession.

But let's face it, however much we may enjoy working in the travel industry, we primarily do it to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table. And we're all too aware that it's not the best paid industry in the world, particularly at the retail level.

That said, last year's *Travel Daily/travelBulletin* salary survey revealed there was no correlation between higher wages and job satisfaction. Indeed, it was those at the front line – travel consultants – who appeared to be happier in their work, despite a less than bumper pay packet.

Would it be the same this year? The 2017 salary survey, conducted by research firm Stollznow, crunched data from almost 1,200 respondents. Here, *travelBulletin* dissects the numbers...

## Retail remains the poor cousin, but happier for it

It will come as little surprise to learn that humble consultants, who made up almost half the respondents in the pay survey, are still bottom of the pile when it comes to basic salary. According to the data, retailers earn an average of \$54,754, a fraction more than last year but a full \$10,000 less than

### TOTAL SALARY

INDUSTRY	Total income
NET	\$72,003.40
Retail (travel agency)	\$60,444.50
Wholesale	\$67,932.70
Aviation	\$91,405.90
Corporate / TMC	\$73,150.80
MICE	\$73,037.90
Cruise	\$79,526.60
Hotels, Accommodation, Resorts	\$74,250.00
Travel support service:	\$108,063.20
Other	\$92,504.30

the next lowest paid – wholesale staff. It was also \$12,000 below the overall industry average of \$66,702.

Further analysis revealed entry level retailers earn just under \$43,000 and even the few retail respondents who described themselves as middle and senior management were far from handsomely rewarded, earning base salary averages of \$57,304 and \$69,504 respectively.

Those figures compare remarkably unfavourably with other sectors, aviation and travel support services in particular, making it potentially hard for retailers to keep hold of hungry staff who, not unreasonably, want their career progression and additional responsibilities to be matched with a heavier wallet. Yet far from growing disillusioned, it appears that job satisfaction, measured by the Net Promoter Score (NPS), still shows a happy retail workforce. If anything, they are even more content than last year.

The NPS, widely acknowledged as the benchmark system for monitoring performance and reputation, was calculated

by asking respondents, on a scale of 0-10, how likely they were to recommend their company as a place to work.

People answering 0-6 are classified as 'detractors', 7-8 as 'passives' and 9-10 as 'promoters'. The NPS figure is broadly the difference between detractors and promoters.

Retail's NPS was 28.9, up from 23.7, a healthy number only bettered by those working in the meetings, incentive and events sector, which scored 32.1.

Overall, travel brands across the industry will have been encouraged by the scores – with some exceptions. Interestingly, satisfaction in corporate and the world of Travel Management Companies almost halved, from more than 32 in the 2016 study to 17. While still largely positive, the dip could be explained by a sharp decline in the income of respondents who work in the sector, which fell from \$77,000 to under \$68,500.

Aviation, meanwhile, hauled itself clear of last year's negative rating of -10.5, with employees now more likely to recommend their job after the sector posted an NPS of 10.6.

Cruising saw a similar uplift. Job satisfaction in 2016 was at odds with the soaring popularity of the product and the general feel-good factor of the sector, achieving a rating of only 3.5. This year, staff appear more content and ready to talk up their career, with the sector's NPS rising to a healthy 19.

When it comes to remuneration, aviation and cruising sit above the industry average, just as they did the previous year.

According to the data, working for an airline will net an average income of more than \$84,600, while plying your trade in the cruise industry will see you pocket a few dollars above \$74,000.

Unlike retail, those figures climb sharply for middle management – defined as line managers, team leaders, BDMs and senior consultants – and senior executives.

## The gender pay divide – still as wide as ever

It's a debate that just doesn't go away. Once again, the salary survey revealed an alarming disparity between the salaries of men and women who responded to the survey,

While the average income totalled \$66,603, women, who made up 73% of respondents, averaged \$62,003 against

almost \$80,000 for men.

As with last year, the gulf was most pronounced in cruising where female staff earned an average of \$68,880 – 13% less than the sector average – while their male colleagues pocketed 17% more, earning \$94,212. The patterns were similar, if not quite so stark, in all but one of the industry sectors, with male retail and wholesale staff earning 15% and 16% above the average. Women meanwhile took home 4% less than the average in both sectors.

## Satisfied staff - but don't be complacent

Despite the general positivity of the workforce – a sentiment reflected in the NPS data – employers should not be complacent.

The survey revealed a change of job was a possibility for more than half those surveyed if the right offer was on the table. In short, even satisfied staff can be poached.

While 30% categorically stated they had no interest in moving, 54% said they would listen and accept a good offer even though they were not actively searching for a new challenge. A further 12% admitted they were definitely on the hunt for a new job, a quarter of whom wanted to leave the industry altogether. Of those looking for a change, a desire for better pay and benefits and dissatisfaction with management were cited as the key reasons for wanting to leave. A far from surprising revelation.

The most unsettled appear to be those in travel support services with one in five saying they were in the job market, a statistic perhaps driven by the 29% of the sector's respondents who classified themselves as dissatisfied in their current role.

Wholesale and hotel staff were most likely to listen to offers at 62% and 65% respectively.

In keeping with the NPS data, consultants

## GENDER DIFFERENCE

	Women	Men	Women diff %*	Men diff %*
NET	\$66,373	\$87,404	-8%	21%
Retail (travel agency)	\$57,966	\$70,778	-4%	17%
Wholesale	\$64,817	\$80,092	-5%	18%
Aviation	\$79,822	\$101,722	-13%	11%
Corporate / TMC	\$69,289	\$78,116	-5%	7%
MICE	\$74,519	\$60,200	2%	-18%
Cruise	\$68,880	\$94,212	-13%	18%
Hotels, Accommodation, Resorts	\$70,935	\$82,722	-4%	11%
Travel support service	\$55,911	\$155,000	-48%	43%
Other	\$91,380	\$95,842	-1%	4%

\*From the average

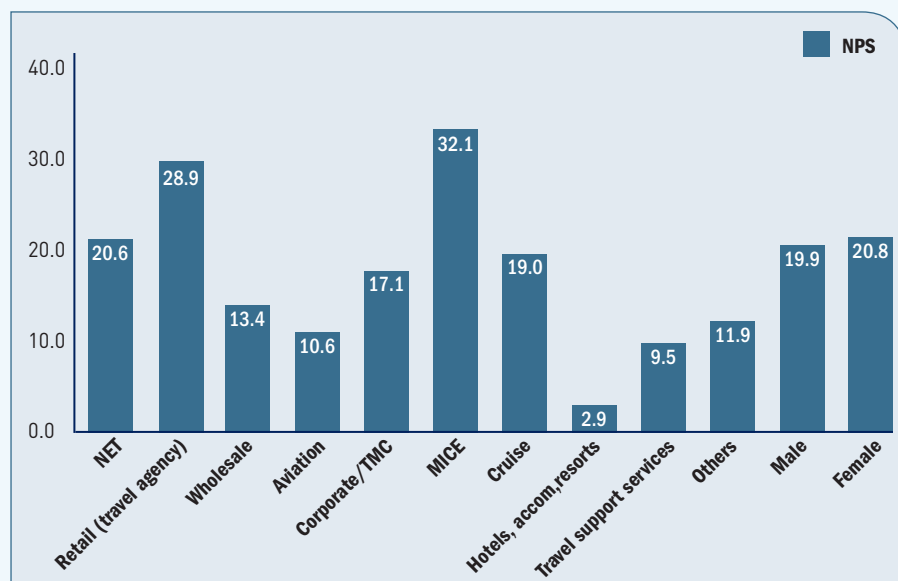
were among the most settled with 85% describing themselves as either satisfied or extremely satisfied.

Yet while fewer than one in 10 confirmed their intention to seek a new position – the lowest among the industry sectors – 50% also acknowledged they would listen to offers, underlining the harsh reality for companies

that even contented staff can be lured away.

The survey also revealed a continuing image problem for recruitment agencies, with job seekers looking for work, and particularly companies using an agency to fill vacancies, not overly impressed with their services. All received heavily negative Net Promotor Scores.

## PROMOTER SCORE



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# TOP DOGS

## The 2017 Million Dollar Club



### TRAVEL AGENCY MILLION DOLLAR CLUB

Name	Company	Base salary	Other payments	Share incentives	Total salary	Dividends	Total income
Graham Turner	Flight Centre managing director	\$380,384	\$294,616	\$ -	\$675,000	\$20,884,957	\$21,559,957
Jamie Pherous	Corporate Travel Management MD	\$448,221	\$231,098	\$ -	\$679,319	\$6,495,000	\$7,174,319
Andrew Burnes	Helloworld CEO	\$455,384	\$27,008	\$ -	\$482,392	\$3,094,436	\$3,576,828
Cinzia Burnes	Helloworld executive director	\$455,384	\$27,008	\$ -	\$482,392	\$3,063,629	\$3,546,021
John Guscic	Webjet managing director	\$815,000	\$728,301	\$58,179	\$1,601,480	\$386,075	\$1,987,555
Dean Smith	Flight Centre EGM The Americas	\$530,331	\$557,958	\$283,854	\$1,372,143	\$3,217	\$1,375,360
Melanie Waters-Ryan	Flight Centre chief operating officer	\$400,397	\$294,603	\$539,753	\$1,234,753	\$117,443	\$1,352,196
Chris Galanty	Flight Centre EGM Europe & South Africa	\$335,775	\$313,352	\$658,271	\$1,307,398	\$2,743	\$1,310,141
Laura Ruffles	Corporate Travel Management COO	\$538,462	\$443,504	\$185,623	\$1,167,589	\$29,607	\$1,197,196
Chris Thelen	Corporate Travel Mgt CEO Nth America	\$625,775	\$242,365	\$40,592	\$908,732	\$271,664	\$1,180,396

Being a senior executive at a publicly listed company is no walk in the park. It requires complete dedication to the job, with little downtime and an endless succession of meetings and presentations along with many difficult – and often unpopular – decisions. The financial markets demand relentless discipline, and those who don't meet expectations can quickly find themselves in the doghouse. But for those who are prepared to devote themselves to the task, the rewards can be rich – particularly when they have skin in the game. Bruce Piper looks at the industry's top earners this year and where they fit in the food chain.



**T**HERE have been some significant year-on-year shifts in this year's *travelBulletin* Million Dollar Club – the list of travel industry executives who made more than a million dollars last year. The biggest changes were in the ranks at

Helloworld, where Andrew and Cinzia Burnes reaped the rewards of their first full year of ownership and the huge turnaround within the business to catapult them into the top echelon of industry earners. On the airline side, Qantas executives benefited from the company's strong share price performance, while there have been several key personnel departures among Virgin Australia's senior staff. And executives among Australia's listed hoteliers also did well, as the sector continues to boom due to strong inbound and domestic demand.

## TRAVEL AGENTS

At Helloworld, having "skin in the game" has been a hallmark of the reign of Andrew and Cinzia Burnes. Since they merged AOT with Helloworld about 18 months ago they have encouraged members and franchisees to take equity in the listed entity, with last year's Owner Managers Conference featuring a share giveaway and an offer by the parent company to take a stake in member businesses. The new approach has seen Helloworld take a 50% shareholding in MTA Travel, as well as sealing equity deals with Hunter Travel Group and Helloworld Mackay. The Burnes' themselves have significant shareholdings in Helloworld, and with the company's performance improving and dividends being paid, they this year reaped a combined \$7 million from the company. Interestingly their base remuneration from Helloworld comprised less than \$500,000 each, with the pair receiving over \$6 million in franked dividends.

Helloworld's list of key management personnel – those whose salary packages are disclosed – has also undergone significant change since last year. Names such as Peter Egglestone, Elizabeth Gaines and Jenny Macdonald no longer appear, while Russell Carstensen, the company's group general manager corporate, took home a total of \$587,413 including dividends – a 26% haircut from last year's \$788,526. The change was largely the fulfilment of a note in the Helloworld 2016 annual report where directors stated that "Russell Carstensen's base salary has been recalibrated" to bring



*Continues from previous page*

it into line with other executives. Other top Helloworld earners included the company's new chief financial officer Michael Burnett, who took home \$643,000 for the year.

Corporate Travel Management was another standout performer, where founder and CEO Jamie Pherous was paid a \$448,000 base salary – slightly less than the \$452,000 paid to Andrew and Cinzia Burnes. However he received a \$231,000 bonus, taking his total remuneration to \$679,000. While that didn't put him into the magic million dollar club, once CTM's 30c dividend on his 21 million-plus shares was paid that boosted Pherous' pay packet into the stratosphere, putting him in second place in the ranking with a total income of over \$7 million – a 50% increase on the previous year. Other Corporate Travel Management executives also did well, with Laura Ruffles receiving a total of \$1.2 million including a base salary of \$538,000, and a \$443,000 bonus. In contrast to her boss, Ruffles holds a relatively small shareholding in CTM so only reaped about \$30,000 in dividends. Corporate Travel Management CEO North America, Chris Thelen, was also in the million dollar club, taking home \$1.18 million for the year.

John Guscic, CEO of Webjet, has had his package increasingly slanted towards remuneration from the company's rising share price and dividends. Last year Webjet lent him money to purchase a larger shareholding and that certainly boosted his earnings in 2017. Guscic has a relatively large base

salary, at \$815,000, and received bonuses and other payments of \$728,000, boosting his income to just over \$1.6 million. On top of that he received \$386,000 in Webjet dividends, with the combination almost making him a \$2 million man this year. Guscic was paid significantly more than other Webjet executives, with group chief commercial officer Shelley Beasley the next in line, taking home just under \$700,000.

**‘Putting that into perspective, that means he [Alan Joyce] effectively earned about \$500,000 per week...’**

As always, Flight Centre dominated this year's rankings, with the company's co-founder and managing director Graham Turner once again unquestionably the top dog in the 2017 Million Dollar Club. His comparatively modest \$380,000 base salary was bolstered by a bonus and other benefits to \$675,000 in total – exactly the same as last year. However that was just chump change compared to his income from Flight Centre dividends. Despite a slow first half and the announcement of a wide-ranging strategic project to remove loss-making units from the business, Flight Centre still made a very healthy profit and declared dividends worth \$1.37 per share – taking Turner's total income from the company to more than \$21.5 million. There won't be too many feeling sorry for him, but it should be noted that was down about 10% or \$2 million on the previous year due to a small reduction in the Flight Centre dividend in 2017/18.

While not in the league of Skroo in terms of their income from Flight Centre dividends, a number of other senior FLT executives also made it into the million dollar club this year. They included chief operating officer Melanie Waters-Ryan, whose \$400,000 base salary was boosted to \$1.2 million through a bonus and share-based payments.

On top of that Waters-Ryan has 85,725 Flight Centre shares which earned another \$117,000, taking her total remuneration from the company to \$1.35 million this year, up 2% on the 2015/16 figure. Other Flight Centre Million Dollar Club members this year included Dean Smith, executive general manager for The Americas, with a total income of \$1.37 million, and Flight Centre executive general manager for Europe & South Africa, Chris Galanty with \$1.31 million.

## AIRLINES

Qantas CEO Alan Joyce this year saw his pay packet really take off, with the company's annual report detailing total remuneration of more than \$25 million. Putting that into perspective, that means he effectively earned about \$500,000 per week – or assuming a five day work week (which of course is not the case in his 24/7 role) about \$100,000 per day. While that prompted some predictable squeals of outrage, it should be noted that more than \$20 million of that was due to the accounting treatment of long-term equity incentives which have hugely increased in value due to the strong performance of Qantas shares. In terms of cash income, Joyce's base salary was \$2.1 million and he also received a \$1.78 million bonus.

Other top Qantas earners included international CEO Gareth Evans whose total package including incentives was worth \$8.2 million; Jetstar CEO Jayne Hrdlicka with \$8.1 million; head of loyalty Lesley Grant with \$5.08 million; domestic CEO Andrew David with \$3.9 million; and chief financial officer Tino La Spina who took home \$3.7 million.

The equity-boosted high salaries at Qantas were in contrast with those at Virgin Australia, where CEO John Borghetti received a still healthy \$6.5 million including a \$1.93 million base salary plus short and long-term cash payments worth \$4 million. Other big earners at Virgin Australia included group executive regional airlines & cargo Merren McArthur with \$1.88 million; head of Tigerair Australia and now acting VA group executive, Rob Sharp, with \$1.42 million and Velocity chief Karl Schuster also with \$1.42 million. The Virgin Australia annual report also revealed that the now departed John Thomas received over \$2 million for his nine month tenure as VA group executive - including a whopping \$990,000 termination payment.

Air New Zealand once again did not disclose the actual pay packets of its senior executives, in line with listing



## AIRLINE TOP EARNERS

Name	Company	Base salary	Other payments	Share incentives	Total salary	Dividends	Total income
Alan Joyce	Qantas CEO	\$2,105,000	\$1,937,000	\$20,542,000	\$24,584,000	\$486,881	\$25,070,881
Gareth Evans	Qantas International CEO	\$1,010,000	\$709,000	\$6,463,000	\$8,182,000	\$61,152	\$8,243,152
Jayne Hrdlicka	Jetstar CEO	\$1,010,000	\$687,000	\$6,433,000	\$8,130,000	\$33,835	\$8,163,835
Christopher Luxon	Air New Zealand CEO	\$1,510,000	\$1,590,049	\$1,565,500	\$4,665,549	\$603,136	\$5,268,685
John Borghetti	Virgin Australia CEO	\$1,930,000	\$4,485,000	\$93,000	\$6,508,000	\$ -	\$6,508,000
Lesley Grant	Qantas Loyalty CEO	\$830,000	\$517,000	\$3,708,000	\$5,055,000	\$25,349	\$5,080,349
Andrew David	Qantas domestic CEO	\$830,000	\$651,000	\$2,409,000	\$3,890,000	\$22,060	\$3,912,060
Tino La Spina	Qantas CFO	\$835,000	\$591,000	\$2,239,000	\$3,665,000	\$77,817	\$3,742,817
Lim Kim Hai	Regional Express Executive Director	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$2,475,386	\$2,475,386
					\$2,210,000		\$2,210,000
					\$1,890,000		\$1,890,000
					\$1,670,000		\$1,670,000
					\$1,410,000		\$1,410,000
					\$1,320,000		\$1,320,000
					\$1,280,000		\$1,280,000
					\$1,040,000		\$1,040,000
Merren McArthur	Virgin Australia group exec regional	\$676,000	\$1,202,000	\$ -	\$1,878,000	\$ -	\$1,878,000
Robert Sharp	Acting VA group executive	\$580,000	\$843,000	\$ -	\$1,423,000	\$ -	\$1,423,000

Air NZ executives – It is unclear who earns what here, but these figures possibly relate to the airline's senior executive team – listed on Air New Zealand website as Jodie King, chief people officer; Cam Wallace, chief revenue officer; Bruce Parton, chief operations officer; Captain David Morgan, chief operations integrity & standards officer; Mike Tod, chief marketing & customer officer; chief financial officer Rob McDonald; Stephen Jones, chief strategy, networks & alliances officer; Avi Golan, chief digital officer; and John Whittaker, chief air operations & people safety officer.

includes the Rydges and QT Hotel chains as well as NSW ski resort Thredbo, farewellled its long-time CEO David Seargeant in fine style, with a total package worth more than \$9.7 million. That included a base salary of \$2 million, a further \$1.97 million bonus, \$3.46 million in share-based payments and a \$2 million termination payout.

And finally this category also includes Dreamworld operator Ardent Leisure, whose now resigned CEO Deborah Thomas was also in the million dollar club with a total package worth \$1.57 million. Thomas, who stepped down effective 01 July 2017, forfeited share-based short term incentive rewards but was paid a cash bonus of \$167,500. The Ardent Leisure annual report notes she donated this in full to the Red Cross after the Dreamworld tragedy which saw the deaths of four people on one of the rides in October 2016.

rules on the NZ stock exchange which only require the chief executive's income to be revealed. CEO Christopher Luxon received NZ\$5.08 million in total, including base pay of \$1.51 million, a \$1.59 million cash bonus and share incentives worth \$1.56 million. It's understood that planned reforms in NZ will see greater transparency introduced in the future, but in the meantime the only detail provided of other top executives is a salary 'band' which sees seven NZ staffers on more than \$1 million a year. The senior executive team listed on the carrier's website includes chief revenue officer Cam Wallace, chief people officer Jodie King, chief operations officer Bruce Parton, chief strategy officer Stephen Jones, chief digital officer Avi Golan, and chief financial officer Rob McDonald. Salaries in 2016/17 for this group ranged from NZ\$2.21 million down to \$1.04 million.

A welcome addition to the airline Million Dollar Club this year was Regional Express executive director Lim Kim Hai. It has been a tough few years for Regional Express but it has now turned the corner and the company declared a dividend for the first time since 2012 "to reward its long-suffering

shareholders". Lim, who is the company's major shareholder and takes no salary or bonus from Regional Express, will receive \$2.475 million as a result, surely a just reward for his patience.

## OTHER LISTED TRAVEL COMPANIES

Sealink Travel Group saw significant expansion during the year, as it consolidated the Captain Cook Cruises operations in Sydney and expanded into Western Australia – at the same time also growing its core Kangaroo Island tourism operations. Chief executive officer Jeff Ellison was once again in the million dollar club this year with a total pay package worth \$654,000 – more than doubled to \$1.427 million thanks to his significant shareholding in the company.

Bob East, CEO of Mantra Hospitality and newly appointed as chairman of Tourism Australia, saw his salary decline by 18% last year due to a lower bonus payout. He still remained in the million dollar club, with a base salary of \$700,000 plus bonuses which took his package to \$1.09 million. Mantra dividends on his shareholding took his total income to \$1.178 million – a significant drop from last year's \$1.32m.

Event Hospitality, the company whose diversified portfolio



# AVIATION DRIVING TECH INVESTMENT

AIRLINES and airports will spend almost US\$33 billion on IT this year as they race to implement cyber security measures, new cloud services and passenger self-service technology.

The investment boom has been highlighted by aviation technology firm SITA in its 2017 Air Transport IT Trends and Insights report, which says airline IT spending is set to rise to about US\$24.2 billion this year, or 3% of their revenues. For airports, the spending is likely to be US\$8.43 billion, or around 5% of revenues.

"The air transport industry is going through digital transformation and focusing its attention on protecting the business and passengers; making it more efficient; and improving the passenger experience," said SITA president of air travel solutions Ilya Gutlin.

"Cyber-attacks are a very real threat in the highly interwoven

air transport industry, so building solid defences is essential," Gutlin said.

"Cloud services provide important efficiencies which play a key role in keeping costs down. Investments in self-service improve passenger satisfaction as they welcome the independence and efficiencies it delivers."

SITA's report says both airlines and airports agree that the number one priority for their investments is cyber security.

**‘The air transport industry is going through digital transformation and focusing its attention on protecting the business and passengers...’**

Ilya Gutlin, president of air travel solutions  
SITA

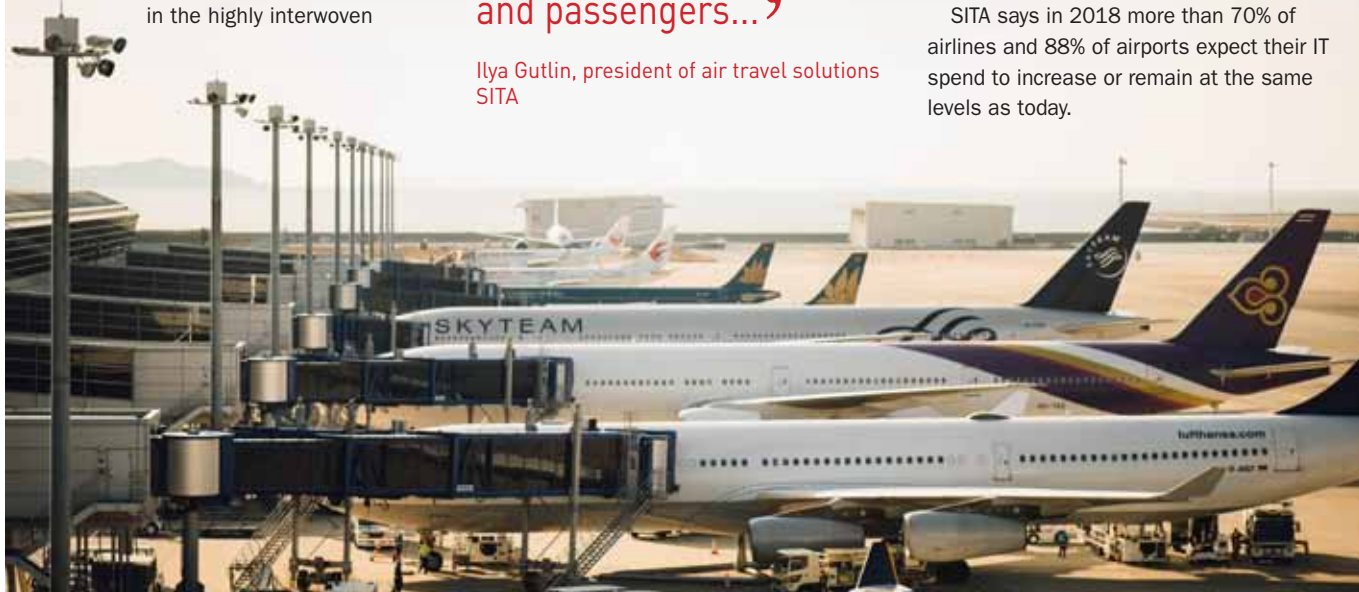
Nearly all – 95% of airlines and 96% of airports – plan to invest in major programs or research and development on cyber security initiatives over the next three years.

Cloud services were another top investment priority with 95% of airlines and 85% of airports planning to invest over the next three years, continuing an upward trend since 2015.

Mobile technology has been a focus for airlines too. SITA says the vast majority of carriers currently provide mobile services for check-in (73%), boarding (70%) and flight status notifications (68%), and that within three years more than 97% of carriers will do so.

At airports, self-service processes at check-in, bag drop and boarding are increasingly popular with passengers and 89% of airports are investing in these processes.

SITA says in 2018 more than 70% of airlines and 88% of airports expect their IT spend to increase or remain at the same levels as today.



## Travelport alliance lures sign-ups

TRAVELPORT Locomote has signed up 75 new customers in Australia after launching a strategic partnership with the ATP Group last year.

Signed in October, the tie-up allows ATP to offer the Travelport Locomote corporate travel platform to new and existing customers. Having made an impact in Australia, the UK market is expected to soon follow.

Travelport Locomote chief executive officer Sandra McLeod said by sharing expertise, experience and technology, the two companies could look forward to more opportunities to meet the needs of corporate travellers.

"Having a partnership with a global TMC like the ATP Group is a huge endorsement of our unique approach to managed business travel," McLeod said. "It's fantastic to see our joint efforts paying off with so many new and interesting customers from multiple corners of the world now using our platform."

ATP Group chairman Graham Ramsey said he had not been surprised by the platform's take-up in Australia.

"With significant business development and acquisitions in the Asia Pacific region, this strategic alliance with Travelport Locomote has been a strong move that's already showing signs of continued growth," he said.

# TRAMADA PARTNERS FOR CHARGEBACK SCHEME

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) has partnered with Tramada to help travel agents manage the risk associated with credit card payments.

The move follows the launch last month of the AFTA Insolvency Chargeback Scheme (AICS) and aims to make it easier for travel agents to apply for the scheme.

Tramada has designed a real-time report for clients to determine current and future creditor insolvency risks. Called the tramada AICS

‘While we've made the report available to all Tramada agents, AFTA AICS members will be advised which suppliers are at risk, so those agents can quickly check their tramada AICS report to assess potential damages and redirect clients proactively’

Susan Enners, country manager Australia and New Zealand, Tramada

advised which suppliers are at risk, so those agents can quickly check their tramada AICS report to assess potential damages and redirect clients proactively,” said Susan Enners, Tramada country manager, Australia and New Zealand.

AFTA chief executive Jayson Westbury said the new product was a terrific benefit for travel agents.

“AICS brings great benefits to ATAS travel agents who choose to participate and with this new tramada AICS report, things just got even easier,” Westbury said.

report, it identifies key elements such as creditor, client, travel dates and amounts already paid to a creditor.

The report is available now in the standard reporting suite for all Tramada clients at no additional cost.

Tramada says the report was designed with AFTA requirements in mind so that agents were not left “holding the bag” when it came to identifying volumes paid to and trips outstanding with various creditors.

“While we've made the report available to all Tramada agents, AFTA AICS members will be



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# EXPO2020 TO CHANGE THE FACE OF DUBAI

MILLIONS of dollars of investment is going into United Arab Emirates' events sector with the Dubai Expo 2020 just three years away.

Sanctioned by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), the Expo will bring over 25 million attendees to the emirate and will be the first "mega event" to take place in the Middle East.

Dubai is aiming to inspire future generations and spark inspiration for ongoing innovation with the Expo, which will run for almost six months between 20 October 2020 and 10 April the following year. It will be located on a site of 438 hectares within the Dubai South District, adjacent to Al Maktoum International Airport and convenient for international visitors stopping over on layovers.

Dubai Business Events (DBE) is planning to capitalise on the Expo to further grow the destination's MICE industry. The event body said the hospitality sector was already booming in Dubai, with hotel inventory reaching the 100,000-room milestone across 681 hotels recently.

At the forefront of Dubai's development strategy has been the question of how to use Expo locations beyond the event itself.

As part of this priority, the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) is developing a large exhibition hall on the site of Expo 2020

which will have over 35,000m<sup>2</sup> of floor area. This will be in addition to the 90,000m<sup>2</sup> of existing conference and exhibition space at the DWTC's main site.

The exhibition space will be part of a project called District 2020, designed to be the Expo's legacy development with 65,000m<sup>2</sup> of residential space and 135,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space. It will include iconic structures such as Al Wasl Plaza, with a Sustainability Pavilion that will live on after Expo as a Science Centre, and the

falcon-shaped United Arab Emirates Pavilion.

Together the facilities will be able to host business events of all sizes and purposes, from small intimate functions to large conferences of up to 10,000 people.

Director-general of Dubai Expo 2020 Bureau Reem Al Hashimy said the emirate had set two clear objectives when it bid to host the event – to amaze the world with the Expo, and to build a lasting legacy with a "global destination that offers a new alternative for urban living".

"[UAE Prime Minister] Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum instructed us to build a site for a permanent legacy and therefore we had to think of ways to capitalise on what was being built for Expo as well as for post-Expo," Al Hashimy said last month as details of District 2020 were unveiled.

"We have created District 2020 to achieve that goal. It has been a key part of our planning from the very start, not just for our legacy team but for the entire Expo organisation."

The architects behind Al Wasl Plaza are from Chicago-based consultancy Adrian Smith & Gordon Gill, whose design partner Gordon Gill said the aim had been to not only create an architectural landmark, but also a venue that could be used long after the six-month event.

"We want Al Wasl Plaza, with its cutting-edge design, to inspire not just our generation but many generations to come," he said.

Dubai hopes that hosting Expo 2020 will build on the three million business event visitors who already attend events at the Dubai World Trade Centre, which contributes \$5.7 billion in annual economic benefit to the city.





## Adelaide unveils convention centre

AFTER several years of construction, the Adelaide Convention Centre has opened the doors of its new East Building as part of a \$397 million redevelopment. The building will increase the centre's footprint to 20,000m<sup>2</sup> of multi-purpose space. South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill said the expansion would "bring an extra \$1.92 billion into the State's economy over the next 25 years".

The East Building has a 3,000m<sup>2</sup> Plenary Hall that can be configured into 15 different layouts or provide tiered seating for 3,500 people. It also contains the world's largest rotating seating drums, which are capable of seating 320 people each. The International Astronautical Congress was the first event held in the new hall last month and was the largest event of its kind ever hosted in Adelaide.

## NSW Premier named BESydney Patron

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian will get behind Business Events Sydney (BESydney) as Patron of its Ambassador Program. In her role, Berejiklian said she looked forward to supporting the program's ambassadors who volunteer to help NSW obtain business events.

"I am proud to become Patron of Business Events Sydney's Ambassador Program, which plays a vital role in increasing Sydney's profile on the world stage," she said.

Berejiklian in the past has worked with BESydney to lobby for the city to host the 2023 World Roads Congress as well as helping to secure the MedInfo conference in 2021, which will bring several thousand delegates to the city.

## Melbourne smashing records

MELBOURNE has set yet another record, winning a bid to host the largest conference ever held in Victoria. The 2022 World Ophthalmology Congress (WOC 2022) will bring over 14,000 delegates from across the globe and generate more than \$85 million for Victoria's economy. The win was revealed last month and comes only weeks after the Melbourne Convention Bureau announced it had secured a then Victorian record of 13,000 delegates for the 2024 Lions Clubs International Convention.

Victoria's Minister for Tourism and Major Events John Eren said WOC 2022 was a coup for Melbourne.

"Business events are the highest yielding sector of the visitor economy - delivering \$9.98 billion and 65,000 jobs annually," Eren said.

# ABU DHABI EVENT SECTOR BOOMING

AS BUSINESS events destination go, Abu Dhabi is making a name for itself. The Emirate is now the fastest-growing destination in the Middle East for attracting conferences and association events.

Abu Dhabi has gone from hosting four international conferences in 2005 to having its most successful year in 2016, having secured 14 conferences and regularly hosted events with over 3,000 delegates.

An Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority spokesperson said the city was seeing an increase in business from Australia, with many Australian companies wanting something new after previously holding incentive trips in Dubai.

To meet demand from the MICE market, Abu Dhabi Tourism will exhibit at AIME in Melbourne next year for the first time as it works to capture a greater share of the outbound pie.

The emirate will also open the much anticipated Louvre Abu Dhabi next month after a series of delays. As well as housing over 600 pieces of art - including 300 on loan from the great institutions of France - the landmark building will also be used to host meetings and events, offering several different spaces suitable for banquets or conferences.

Abu Dhabi will host one of its largest ever conferences in December, when 15,000 delegates from the global medical fraternity attend the International Diabetes Federation 2017 Congress. Next year will see Abu Dhabi continue its momentum with the hosting of the World Roads Congress and the World Energy Congress.



business events news

## HEADLINES AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2017

**24 Aug** Lufthansa's airborne events  
**28 Aug** Final touches for Adelaide  
**28 Aug** NSW after China pie  
**31 Aug** Massive incentive for Cairns  
**04 Sep** Melbourne records smashed again  
**04 Sep** Western Sydney plan

**07 Sep** Bolinger elected AACB head  
**11 Sep** Four Seasons unveils ballroom  
**14 Sep** NSW Premier becomes patron  
**14 Sep** Mackay soaring  
**18 Sep** Brisbane after Silicon Valley  
**18 Sep** InterContinental revamp



# CAREER IN FOCUS

## WENDY WU

Founder of Wendy Wu Tours

### 1. What does your role involve and how long have you been in your current position?

My role now is focused on sharing the vision and aligning the teams. I have been in the current position of WWT Chair Person only for seven months since June 2016, when we found and appointed Joe Karbo, the perfect person to take on the role of Wendy Wu Tours Group CEO.

### 2. How did you start out in your career? Were you always destined to work in the travel industry?

I started as a reservation consultant at Century Plaza Travel in Epping. Barry Alsop was my boss and mentor at the time and he taught me how to treat colleagues, customers and suppliers, which set me up for a great career. Travel is a wonderful and happy industry. I love it, but it is only by accident that I got into travel. The principles of business can be applied in any industry, and I was brought up to love what I do and no matter what I do, so I am glad it is in travel, but I could easily be doing something else.

### 3. Did you complete formal qualifications, and do you think they are important?

Yes, I think formal qualification is very beneficial as it trains you to learn from theory, which is a more abstract form of learning than from real life, which means that you can learn things without really experiencing it. I graduated from Macquarie University in Sydney with Bachelor of Arts degree, and I had a Bachelor of Science degree from a Chinese university.

### 4. What do you love about your job?

I love my job and I am in love with my job. I am one of those lucky people who gets up in



the morning and can't wait for an exciting day at work. The best part of my job is the great people I work with, and the vision, clarity and dedication we share. We drive each other to excel, and we all know that we are doing something quite extraordinary. I have a family with two eight-year-old twin boys, and I love them equally. I often tell them that I love them the most in the world, but I love work just as much. In school holidays they can't ask me to stay home, they know that I can come home when I finish. It's taught them that we all have our responsibilities. I think my work habit is good for them.

### 5. What were some of the greatest challenges you've faced in your career?

SARS in 2003 was very challenging time, when China was wiped off the tourism map and 95% of what we sold at the time was China. The tough experiences and business conditions at the time helped us to become much stronger as a team. We thrived because of it. Another great challenge is complacency. Continued growth and sometimes great growth can bring great

challenges if we are not careful. Wendy Wu Tours has had its fair share of this. I am glad that we manage to wake up on time and start running again, and at even faster speed.

### 6. What factors were central to your success?

I am not sure if I could use the word success, as there is still a long way to go to where we want to be. The people within the business – we select the best people, and we grow together; the partners – we often work with the best, and win together; the industry/market in general – the OZ, UK and NZ industry and market are generally very encouraging and supportive. Another major factor may be the desire to belong to something extraordinary and desire to learn more, to always do better.

### 7. Did you have a mentor, and if so, how did you find them?

Yes, I have many mentors. I have some fantastic people at work, they inspire me in different ways and they are my mentors for those different aspects. I also have mentors outside of business. I got to know them through my friends and colleagues.

### 8. What are the keys to good business?

Good people, good products and good profits.

### 8. What advice would you give to others in the industry who would like to follow in your footsteps?

Work hard, care less about how much you get paid, care more about what you are going to learn. Once you have the skill the world is yours. Work hard, even if it sometimes feels unfair, do not look at others who work less. You will always get what you put in in the long run and the habit of working hard itself and the abilities you will gain, will set you up for a great life. Build a likeable and supportive personality; it will make the journey smoother and more fun for you and others.

# ENCOUNTER WITH A HEAD-HUNTER

TO SOME, a call from a recruitment head-hunter is the holy grail of calls to receive. It means someone, somewhere, is thinking about the possibilities of hiring you.

Though before you announce your resignation and clear your desk in anticipation, there are a few things to consider when you have been approached.

Firstly, if you're unable to take the call, say so. If you arrange for them to call back, be available. Their time is valuable too and you don't want to fall at the first hurdle.

Once you've asserted it's a genuine opportunity, here's your chance to get a little Sherlock Holmes on the head-hunter and ask questions about the job, company, peers and management team.

Typically they'll disclose some details, have a job description and be able to answer most of your questions.

The key for you is to maintain composure.

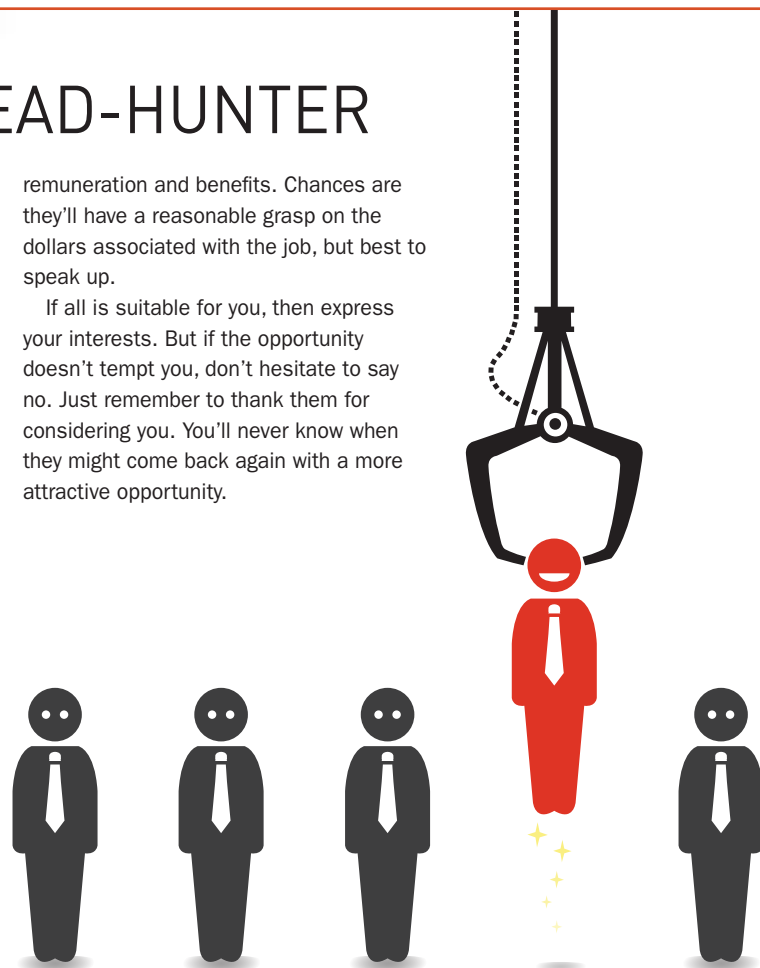
Don't oversell yourself as you'll sound too desperate and don't underdo it either. Just because you've been called upon, doesn't mean the job is yours. There are still plenty of steps to go before you walk into your new role.

You're under no obligation to accept anything on the spot, in fact, best not to. Do your research on the company. If you're familiar with the company and know the people, then of course you can expedite to the next steps but failing that, you'll need to do your research.

If you have any reflective thoughts post the call, arrange another time to call the head-hunter back. This helps to establish rapport which is advantageous for you. Don't be afraid to ask about

remuneration and benefits. Chances are they'll have a reasonable grasp on the dollars associated with the job, but best to speak up.

If all is suitable for you, then express your interests. But if the opportunity doesn't tempt you, don't hesitate to say no. Just remember to thank them for considering you. You'll never know when they might come back again with a more attractive opportunity.



I was with a major retail travel agency for 10 years and finally made the decision to go out on my own. This huge change in my career was made simple with TravelManagers' training and ongoing business support. Switching GDS was made easy and now I run my own successful travel business and haven't looked back.

Denise Dean – Personal Travel Manager



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# CRUISE INDUSTRY TARGETS IN DOUBT

THE cruise industry has witnessed phenomenal growth over the past 10 years, but Sydney's infrastructure constraints are threatening to slam on the brakes.

The ambitious industry target of reaching two million cruise passengers by 2020 is looking to be a pipe dream, a view backed by Adam Armstrong, managing director Australia and New Zealand, Royal Caribbean Cruises during a panel session at Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia's recent Cruise360 conference in Sydney.

"We are not going to get to two million guests by 2020 because those 700,000 (extra) guests are only going to come from additional ships coming to Australia and we've got nowhere to put them," Armstrong said.

Earlier this year Royal Caribbean International took action and became the first big operator to withdraw capacity from the Australian market due to a lack of berths.

The operator scaled back its deployment to three ships in Australia in 2018/19, down from five ships this season.

"We've been talking about it for 10 years and at some point, someone's going to turn away and put a ship somewhere else, so that's the risk," he said.

"We want a solution that's fit for purpose, that's for the future, that's not a compromise, that's going to be able to accommodate big ships every day of the week, potentially two ships, that's going to secure the future of the industry."

CLIA Australasia chairman Steve Odell said the association was still "talking positively" about growth, but cautioned "at this point in time it's very ambitious to say two million by 2020 but who knows, game changing ships can come".

"When big ship after big ship has arrived in the market and that drives volume from the local source market, to get to 2020 we need to get around 14.5% growth every year," Odell said.

"It's not going to be natural growth, that's only going to become available by capacity additions."



# SCENIC TO APPEAL CLASS ACTION CASE

SCENIC will appeal against a decision handed down by the NSW Supreme Court last month in a long-running class action that has the potential to cost the company millions.

The court found in favour of the lead plaintiff in the case, ordering the luxury cruise operator to pay refunds and damages for "distress and disappointment" over a series of flood affected river cruises in 2013.

The class action was mounted by Somerville Legal on behalf of 1,200 customers and relates to 12 European river cruises operated by Scenic and sister-brand Evergreen Cruise and Tours.

Lead plaintiff David Moore had told the court that instead of being provided a "once in a lifetime cruise", he and his partner's experience "was one of being shuffled around Europe, largely by coach". Somerville Legal argued Scenic should have warned about the weather and river conditions prior to their guests' departure from Australia.

In his ruling, Justice Garling said Scenic breached the Australian Consumer Law's Purpose Guarantee and Result Guarantee by failing to provide a "luxury cruise experience"; and the Due Care and Skill Guarantee "by failing to provide information relating to likely disruption to cruises and failing to cancel

cruises when it was obvious that they would be substantially disrupted".

He ruled that Moore was entitled to compensation comprising a full refund of \$10,990 and \$2,000 for damages, plus interest.

Somerville Legal estimated the total bill for Scenic, including refunds, damages, interest and costs to be awarded other Scenic group customers, would be around \$14 million.

But Scenic said estimates of the total liability were "premature" and that not all cruises were affected in the same way as Moore's.

"To put some context around the matter, despite the extraordinary weather conditions in Europe in early 2013, less than 5% of Scenic cruises in the past four years resulted in any itinerary change," a Scenic spokesperson said.

"During that time we welcomed around 200,000 guests across more than 8,300 cruise days, the vast majority of which were unaffected. But while the prospect of schedule interruptions is statistically very low, we take nothing for granted and have continued to invest in our river cruising product."



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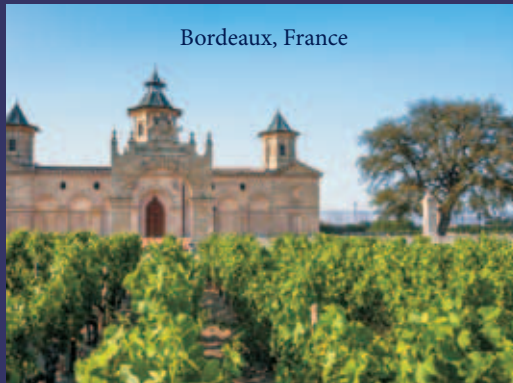
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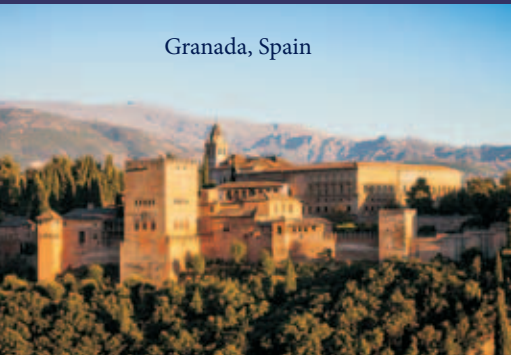
Bordeaux, France



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\*TERMS & CONDITIONS: All fares in Australian dollars, per person, twin share based on lowest available category & including promotional savings, on-board gratuities & port taxes (correct as of 7 September 2017). Valid for new bookings only. All Cruise Tour & Fly Free offers are capacity & availability controlled. Cancellation penalties & conditions apply. Airfares, cruise & accommodation prices based on specified booking classes, airlines, routings & departure dates. Valid for flights to/from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide & Perth. Voyages to Antiquity reserve the right to change, correct errors, withdraw from sale any or all fares, itineraries, excursions & fees. For full terms & conditions visit [www.voyagestoantiquity.com.au](http://www.voyagestoantiquity.com.au) or call 02 9959 1345.



## CORAL EXPEDITIONS TO ADD FOURTH AUSTRALIAN SHIP

AUSTRALIAN cruise operator Coral Expeditions will open bookings this month for its fourth expedition ship, to be introduced in mid-2019.

The company announced last month it had signed a contract for the vessel with Norwegian shipbuilder Vard, with plans to order a further ship at a later date.

The new addition will join Coral Expeditions' existing fleet exploring the Kimberley region, Cape York and Arnhem Land, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and the South Pacific, cruising to areas often inaccessible to larger ships.

She'll be Australian flagged and crewed, carrying a maximum of 120 guests in 60 cabins ranging from outside staterooms of 17m<sup>2</sup> to suites of 43m<sup>2</sup> with outside-facing bathrooms. More than half of the cabins will feature balconies.

Among the ship's features will be two 'Xplorer' tenders mounted on hydraulic platforms that allow all guests to embark and disembark for shore excursions without steps or queues. It will also offer a lecture lounge equipped for daily presentations and briefings by expedition experts, as well as facilities to host scientific research missions.

Communal areas will include a dining room that will seat all guests and several indoor and outdoor bars.

More information on the as-yet unnamed ship will be revealed with the release of sales.

## Silversea firms newbuild order

SILVERSEA Cruises has inked a \$463 million contract with Fincantieri for a new ship that has been tentatively named *Silver Moon*.

It also has options to acquire two more ships as it looks to capitalise on a strong and buoyant cruise sector.

As the line's 10th ship, the new vessel will be a sibling *Silver Muse* which was launched in April. *Silver Moon* will carry 596 passengers and is promised to "raise the bar in the ultra-luxury segment with a wealth of enhancements to the on board experience, while satisfying the uncompromising requirements for comfort, service, and quality of the world's most discerning travellers".

Silversea chairman Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio said, "Based on the high praise *Silver Muse* has earned with our guests, we are eager to build on our flagship's success and move forward with a sister ship, which will bring us closer to fulfilling my father's dream of a 12-ship fleet".

Silversea and Fincantieri will also ensure the ship is a "Green Star 3 Design". This means *Silver Moon* will be designed, built and equipped to prevent air and water pollution and built to minimise noise levels measured on the ship.



## CARNIVAL EYEING BRISBANE PRESENCE



BRISBANE'S plans for a new cruise terminal have already received strong endorsement, with Carnival Cruise Line saying it will deploy a ship to the Queensland capital year-round once suitable terminal facilities become available.

In Sydney for Cruise360, the line's US-based senior vice president of commercial port operations and international Terry Thornton confirmed Carnival would "definitely have a ship in Brisbane".

"We would love to go to Brisbane because that would be a whole new source of customers," Thornton said.

Brisbane's closer proximity to destinations in northern Queensland and the Pacific islands would allow new itinerary possibilities, including seven-day cruises with fixed weekend departures.

He said this would take place as part of a "managed growth" vision for Australia that aimed to avoid sudden capacity increases.

"Right now we have one ship in Sydney year round and one ship that comes to Sydney on a seasonal basis, so the next logical step would be for us to have two year-round ships, hopefully one in Sydney and one in Brisbane," Thornton explained.

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8M09R / RMZ180620-10

**To/From** Vienna Roundtrip

**Dates** 20 – 30 June, 2018

**Days** 10 days

**Fares from US\$5,345pp\***



### JEWELS OF THE RHINE

Crystal Bach  
8R12R / RBA180819-14

**To/From** Frankfurt to Amsterdam

**Dates** 19 Aug – 02 Sep, 2018

**Days** 14 days

**Fares from US\$7,645pp\***



### GRAND EUROPE CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Crystal Mahler  
8D17R / RMH181206-16

**To/From** Amsterdam to Budapest

**Dates** 06 – 22 Dec, 2018

**Days** 16 days

**Fares from US\$6,695pp\***

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# INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS MAY CATCH A BREAK

CHANGE may be afoot for Australia's cruise industry, with a bill introduced into Federal Parliament which proposes to reduce the administrative burdens for certain international ships, including expedition operators.

Last month amendments were proposed to the Coastal Trading (Revitalising Australian Shipping) Act 2012 which would remove the high costs related to the importation of a vessel and reduce the required number of chartered voyages from five to one.

The move follows an outcry from the industry, voiced by Ponant chairman Asia Pacific, Sarina Bratton at both Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia's Cruise360 conference in Sydney and the Australian Cruise Association conference in Mooloolaba.

"We would all love to do more coastal cruising but we can't and we can't get an answer from government about how many days we can do," Bratton said.

"We would love to do 90 days on the coast, we're equipped to have ships in every region of Australia and we'd love to do it, but we can't do it, there's this Coastal Trading Act that's designed to protect an Australian cruise industry which virtually doesn't exist."

Bratton said Australia was missing out on a "huge opportunity" to leverage international guests who want to come to Australia and sail to ports in the country.

"In New Zealand, you can operate for 28 days before your ship needs to go international," Bratton said.

"We've got charters lined up from New Zealand but the current Australian operating environment is way too challenging."

In Mooloolaba, Bratton urged stakeholders within the cruise industry to "lobby Government to change the rules for international vessels of any size to be able to operate without restrictions".



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## Majestic Princess debut coming

IT IS less than a year until *Majestic Princess* sails into Sydney Harbour for a series of 16 cruises across the South Pacific.

The 330m-long vessel will be the largest Princess ship to sail in Australian waters and will operate itineraries to destinations including Fiji, New Zealand and Tasmania as well as two positioning voyages between Shanghai and Sydney, and Sydney and Hong Kong.

Tailor-made for the Chinese market, the vessel offers 13 dining options, including two restaurants with menus designed by Michelin star chefs – Harmony by chef Richard Chen and La Mer by chef Emmanuel Renaut. Over 80% of *Majestic's* 1,780 staterooms have balconies.

## Scenic Eclipse one year away

THE world's first discovery yacht – *Scenic Eclipse* is under 11 months away from making her global debut in Athens on 31 August 2018.

Scenic founder and managing director Glen Moroney said interest in the ship's inaugural season had been high with strong early sales ensuring the first sailing from Athens to Venice, as well as several subsequent departures, had sold out.

Currently *Scenic Eclipse* is under construction in Croatia, and once completed will carry 228 guests to destinations around the globe.

Scenic was recently granted membership of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators and the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators. *Eclipse* will also be built to meet the International Maritime Organization Polar Code Class 6 requirements.

## Anthony Hayes joins Sealink

ANTHONY Hayes has jumped ship from Fantasea Cruising into the newly created role of chief operating officer of SeaLink Travel Group.

Hayes had only been CEO of Fantasea Cruising for the past year. He told *travelBulletin* his departure was "very amicable", with the opportunity at SeaLink "too good to refuse".

In the new role of chief operating officer, Hayes will be tasked with enhancing synergies and building closer working relationships between Sealinks' businesses, trade partners and staff.

Previously Hayes had worked with AAT Kings, Tourism and Events Queensland and two years with Qantas as regional manager of Central Europe. Headquartered in Adelaide, SeaLink operates brands including Captain Cook Cruises and Kangaroo Island Odysseys.



## CLIA VIEW

Joel Katz, managing director  
CLIA Australasia

## PLAN A CRUISE MONTH

OCTOBER is CLIA's annual global Plan A Cruise Month campaign. This multi-faceted campaign unites the cruise community on a global scale and is designed to generate widespread awareness of cruise travel and to encourage consumers to book cruises.

Plan a Cruise Month is the perfect opportunity for travel agents to connect travellers with the right cruise experience. Travel agents are vital to the continual success of the cruise industry and the industry's direct link to prospective cruisers.

Consumers will be encouraged to book a cruise holidays during Plan a Cruise Month by connecting with a CLIA cruise specialist travel agent through the Cruise Agent Search function on the CLIA website.

CLIA is providing its travel agents with the tips, tools and techniques to enable them to engage with clients and help them plan and book the perfect cruise holiday.

We want our entire travel agent member community engaged with and CLIA is offering travel agents a complete toolkit that includes assets to help best leverage the Plan a Cruise Month campaign and engage with new and existing clients. The kit is available to CLIA members at [www.cruising.org.au](http://www.cruising.org.au) and includes:

- Media Materials and Infographics – Customisable press releases that travel agents can send to local media. Also included is a "Five Reasons to Use a Travel Agent to Book a Cruise Holiday" press release and infographic to share as well.

- Social Media Content – Customisable, pre-written posts to use on social media pages (Facebook and Twitter).
- Email – Customisable emails to send to clients and prospects.
- Logos and Visuals – Assets to brand Plan a Cruise Month marketing collateral and digital/social promotion

### Deals and Promotions

Travel agents will have access to exclusive discounts and promotions from a variety of CLIA Cruise Lines. During October travel agents can access the Plan a Cruise Month Travel Agent deals and promotions by logging in to the Members Hub.

### Consumer Twitter Event

Agents are also invited to participate in CLIA's Global Plan a Cruise Month Twitter Event on the 11th October using the hashtag #CruiseMonth. The Twitter event offers consumers an opportunity to learn about cruising and tweet along with CLIA and chances to win prizes.

### Travel Agent Rewards

Once again this year, CLIA is rewarding travel agents who share their most creative (on or offline) Plan a Cruise Month activity on Facebook and/or Twitter and use #CruiseMonth. Every week CLIA will reward an agent with \$1,000 co-op fund.

Best-selling CLIA travel agents also will have the chance to win weekly prizes, including cruises.

For more information on Plan a Cruise Month, visit [www.cruising.org.au](http://www.cruising.org.au)

## CRUISE WEEKLY

- 28 Aug** 2m Oz guests by '20 a pipedream
- 29 Aug** Azamara to scale back Aus visits?
- 31 Aug** Aussies embrace U by Uniworld
- 31 Aug** River cruise revving up
- 05 Sep** Seabourn to target new-to-cruisers
- 05 Sep** Scenic to appeal ruling
- 07 Sep** Vanuatu to seek Carnival rethink

## HEADLINES AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2017

- 07 Sep** Sunshine Coast welcomes ACA
- 12 Sep** Coral Expeditions orders newbuild
- 12 Sep** Silversea firms order
- 14 Sep** Countdown for *Majestic Princess*
- 14 Sep** Coastal Trading change?
- 19 Sep** Peregrine Adv Cruising Asia charter
- 21 Sep** CCL teams up with Signature Travel



# INDUSTRY IN FOCUS

Viking Cruises recently hosted 17 travel agents from Australia and New Zealand on board *Viking Heimdal* and *Viking Delling* to experience the popular eight-day Lyon & Provence itinerary.



Excite Holidays and the Tourism Authority of Thailand recently held two exclusive agent dinner events to celebrate their Create your Thailand campaign. Pictured are top selling agents with their Thai feast.



These agents experienced a trip to Estonia like one of their clients might, hosted by Consolidated Travel, Finnair and 50 Degrees North, with one of the highlights seeing the Aurora Borealis.



Pictured at Sandalford winery are Deb Fox, APT; Andrew Macfarlane, Magellan Travel Group; Susan Haberle, APT; and David Stafford, Magellan Travel Group, at the recent Magellan conference held in Perth.

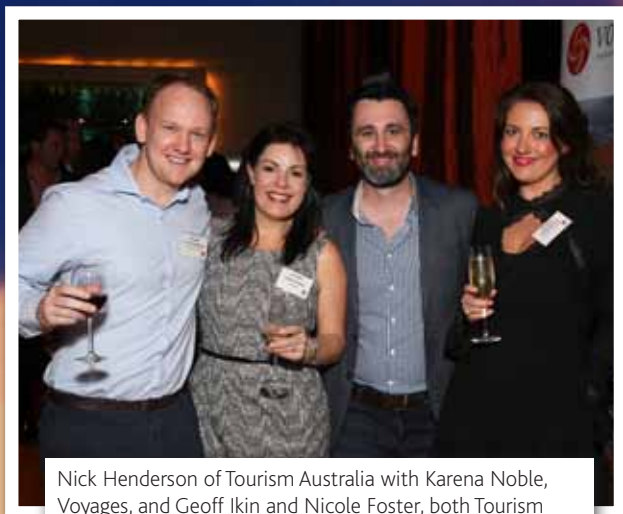
Agents from around NSW gathered at Air New Zealand's rooftop venue in Sydney earlier this month for an intimate Cook Islands event hosted by both Air NZ and Cook Islands Tourism.



Back Roads Touring hosted these Travel Managers on their Burgundy Cruise barge tour travelling from Paris to Besancon.







Nick Henderson of Tourism Australia with Karena Noble, Voyages, and Geoff Ikin and Nicole Foster, both Tourism Australia were some of the guests at the trade events held by Voyages in Sydney and Melbourne.



Pictured at the welcome cocktail party, on board *Genting Dream*, these 35 CLIA accredited agents attended the CLIA Cruise Masters conference last month.

Pictured are the Australian and NZ travel trade contingent attending the 2017 Global Tourism Summit, who joined almost 50 Hawaiian suppliers for a Welcome & Networking reception at the DoubleTree by Hilton Alana.



1000 Mile Travel Group held their very first international conference in Seminyak, Bali last month, with a focus on networking assisting Travel Experts in moving their businesses forward and, of course, getting the team together for cocktails by the beach.



Tempo Holidays recently escorted an agent famil to India to experience the diversity and cultural wonders of the country. The group started their trip in Delhi before visiting the Taj Mahal and a sightseeing tour of Agra.



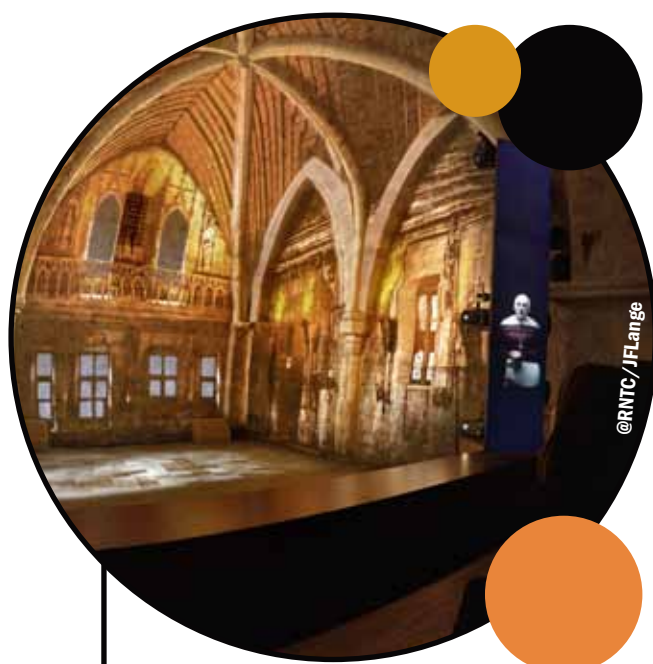
Nexus Holidays' Jenny Li and Ray Han with Dream Cruises' Andrew Loving and Brigita Devries at Event Cinemas in Sydney for their 'Dream Come True' movie celebration event.





# MUSEUMS OF NORMANDY

Museums are an excellent means to understanding a place, a time, a people. Northern France's Normandy region has its fair share of such places and repositories that transport, intrigue and mesmerize – a poignant war museum, a magnificent marine centre and a stunning artistic tribute amongst them. But where to start on such a journey? Donna Demaio gives us some suggestions.



*Historial Jeanne d'Arc*  
Rouen

TECHNOLOGY and history meld, in an engrossing experience tracing the life and tragic times of Joan of Arc, at Historial Jeanne d'Arc (entry from a small laneway near Rouen's Cathedral), where you are guided through a number of rooms in the former Archbishop's residence. You'll find magnificent high ceilings and suitably shadowy, dark corners.

St Joan's valiant campaigns, her capture, her imprisonment, her trial and execution in 1431 are all canvassed. Fine French actors re-enact pivotal moments on film, which are projected onto screens as you wander from room to room, creating the clever and engaging dramatisation of the critical and devastating snippet of French history.

To delve further, Rouen's Musée des Beaux-Arts has a room dedicated to works depicting Joan of Arc and her life. At the nearby Cathedral, an entire chapel honours St Joan. You can also visit the grim spot where Joan was burnt at the stake - marked with a large cross in the Place du Vieux-Marché (Old Market).

■ Visit [www.historial-jeannedarc.fr](http://www.historial-jeannedarc.fr) for more information



*Benedictine Le Palais*  
Fecamp

THE exquisite banquet hall of the Benedictine Palace in Fecamp hosts visitors who may opt to dine on lobster souffle and foie gras. But most head to the grandiose building's distillery cellars to sample the unique Benedictine liqueur which takes two years to produce combining 27 plants and spices, including cardamon, juniper and myrrh. After touring the exceptional grounds, learning of the ancient recipe (it all began in 1510 when monk and alchemist Dom Bernardo Vincelli created a secret elixir) and admiring the copper stills and century-old oak barrels, you can sip on a cocktail and nibble on Benedictine cake, spice madeleines or crepes in the grand glass-walled tea room. The Palace also houses an impressive collection of ancient art which belonged to Alexandre Le Grand, who found the elixir recipe (lost in the French Revolution) amongst his collection of historical books. He then ensured that the mysterious recipe was replicated for the world to enjoy. Merci, Monsieur Le Grand.

■ Visit [www.benedictinedom.com](http://www.benedictinedom.com) for more information

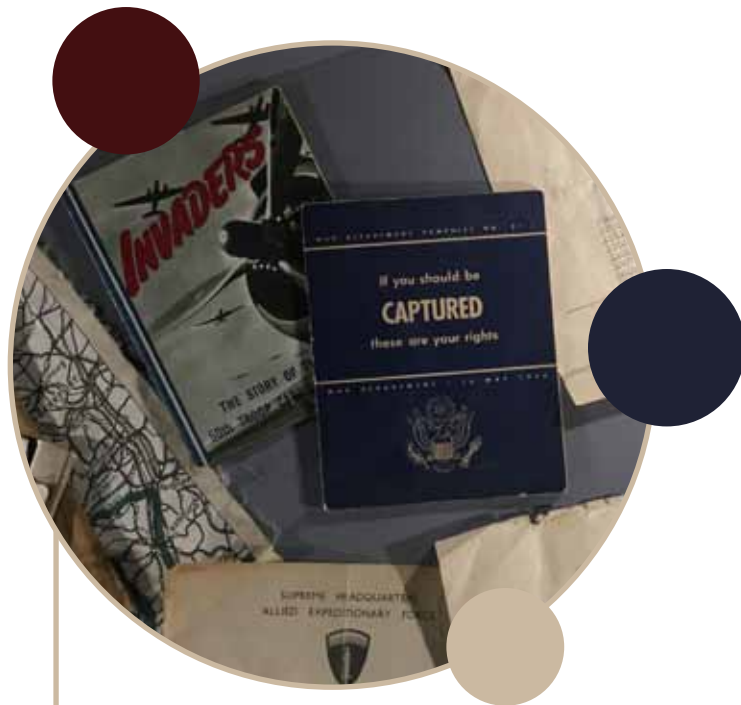


### *La Cité de la Mer* Cherbourg-en-Cotentin

MEANDERING through the sprawling maritime museum within the 1930's former transatlantic liner terminal, you'll likely chance upon the gorgeous Art Deco Baggage Hall, through which hundreds of thousands of passengers have trundled over the decades.

The Abyssal Aquarium, the deepest aquarium in Europe, is also housed at La Cité de la Mer and is brimming with marine life, of course. You can even walk through the decommissioned nuclear submarine of the French Navy, namely, Le Redoutable. It's the largest submarine open to the public in the world - allowing you to peer into the teensy kitchen galley, witness the cramped sleeping quarters and observe the unnerving space where the nuclear missiles used to be.

■ Visit [www.citedelamer.com](http://www.citedelamer.com) for more information



### *D Day Experience Museum* Saint-Come-du-Mont

THIS experience aims to recreate the sensation of flying into the D Day landings (ten days of fighting on the beaches between Allied Forces and German troops in World War II) as a paratrooper on board a real aircraft C-47. You must buckle up with a bunch of fellow visitors to survive a unique simulated ride, replete with shaky take-off, repeated bombings and bumpy landing. The exhibition itself, in a reconstructed hangar, is jammed with an extraordinary collection of war time memorabilia from uniforms to firearms to rations. A highlight is the interactive virtual briefing from a (hologram) Colonel, who with grim authority, addresses visitors (aka paratroopers) about to go into battle.

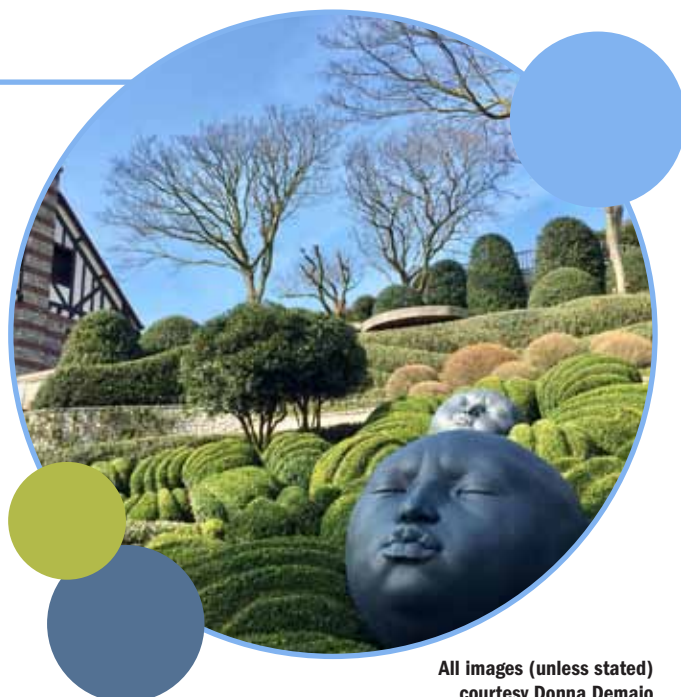
■ Visit [www.dday-experience.com](http://www.dday-experience.com) for more information

### *Les Jardins d'Etretat* Etretat

THE gardens are steeped in artistic history, curated beauty and contemporary flair. The seven thousand square metres of proudly modern gardens are moments away from the stunning chalk cliffs of Amont Cliff in Etretat, near the town of Fecamp. A local landscape artist helped actress Madame Thebault, a close friend of Claude Monet, plant the first tree in 1905. The exhilarating gardens are a tribute to the creativity of local artists. There's a quaint cottage, quirky sculptures embedded in the greenery and spectacular views of the Channel Sea.

It's hardly surprising that for years, Impressionist painters flocked to the site. Atop the hilltop nearby, there's the tiny Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde chapel. Perhaps when you've had your fill of natural beauty and artistic wonder, there's always the nearby cliff-top golf course.

■ Visit [www.lesjardinsdetretat.fr](http://www.lesjardinsdetretat.fr) for more information



All images (unless stated)  
courtesy Donna Demaio



# EUROPE BOUNCES BACK

MANY industry players have hailed Australian travellers as “resilient” following the attacks in recent years in Europe.

It has been suggested Australian travellers were popping Europe in the back pocket in favour of travelling to destinations which were perceived as “safer”, but some operators are now signalling passenger numbers have picked back up.

Rail Plus Australasia commercial director Ingrid Kocijan conceded 2016 was a tough year across the board for Europe after several attacks, however she indicated in 2017 booking patterns had been much stronger.

“We believe travellers are accepting the situation as a ‘new normal’ and continuing to book trips despite a number of incidents,” Kocijan said.

Spain and Switzerland bookings were very strong for Rail Plus, but the company noted France was still a bit quiet.

“There’s definitely pent-up demand after a slow 2016 and low airfares are also stimulating bookings,” Kocijan said.

“However, airfare deals are also feeding into a very late booking pattern, with some travellers making large bookings just a couple of weeks prior to departure once they secure an attractive air deal”.

Similarly, Azamara Club Cruises’ CEO Larry Pimentel told *travelBulletin* the line felt the impact in Europe in 2017.

After the events in Paris and Brussels, Pimentel said he expected that there may be a challenge in 2017.

“I thought this year was going to be a bigger struggle but in somehow, some way, 2 January came and the phone centres blew up with reservations and we’ve had the best European season the brand has had in its history,” he said.

“I think that the industry in general has done very well as a whole.”



## Barge Travel Connection's big debut

THE slow-paced and intimate appeal of cruising down the canals and rivers of Europe on a unique hotel barge has seen demand for the niche bubble up in recent years.

Identifying a budding opportunity, last year French Travel Connection drew on its 20 years of experience in selling the niche and unleashed a sister brand, Barge Travel Connection.

The new arm has just debuted its first brochure, packing in 48 barges offering six-night cruises in Europe.

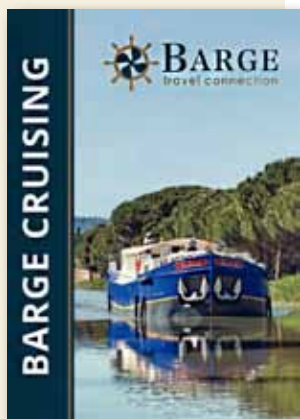
Managing director Brad McDonnell said the release was in response to strong growth in barge sales.

“After numerous requests from the travel industry and independent barge operators, we are excited to offer this all-encompassing brochure for barges across Europe,” he said.

The brochure features individual product pages including information on location, cruise highlights, deck plan, amenities and maps, along with a rating system classifying barges from Ultra Luxe to Charming according to its capacity, amenities and services.

It is also ordered by country and region and offers themed cruises based on interests, such as gastronomy, hobbies (golf) or group size (family).

The whole experience is commissionable to agents and is inclusive of accommodation, all meals and drinks, daily excursions, a crew and local transfers.



## GLOBUS PLACES REGIONAL ITALY ON THE TABLE

THE romance of Italy's fresh pizza, wines and charming country scenery has long lured Australians to the destination, but in 2018 there will be a new array of itineraries on the table.

Globus family of brands has fashioned five new Italy tours, revealed as part of its 2018 European brochure release for the Globus, Cosmos and Monograms brands.

National marketing manager Chris Fundell said the new additions travelled to the south of Italy, to the ‘heel of the boot’ and into Sicily.

“Italy has been part of our Globus and Cosmos itineraries for many years but these new options allow our guests to explore both the must-see areas such as Rome, Florence and Venice, but also go beyond this and experience the sights, sounds and tastes of rural Italy,” Fundell said.

The additions join a line-up of 18 new tours throughout Europe across all three brands.

Other new itineraries venture to destinations including Croatia, Portugal, Switzerland, Spain and Russia.



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**Nexus Holidays Sydney**



# EUROPAMUNDO SETS ITS SIGHTS ON AUSSIE TRAVELLERS

AUSTRALIA has a new player in the coach touring arena, aiming to turn heads with its open approach to flexible travel and a promise of across-the-board guaranteed departures.

Europamundo Vacations – a tour company with its origins in Spain and operations spanning from the US to Japan – has launched its Australian presence through a representative arrangement with trade-only wholesaler Holiday We Go.

Its name might not be well known in the local market, but Europamundo already has an extensive footprint globally. By the end of this year it will have hosted around 150,000 guests worldwide, drawing them from more than 40

different countries. Its full-service guided coach tours operate across Europe, America and Asia, aimed at mid-market travellers seeking tours “at attractive prices without compromising the quality”.

Part of the JTB group, Europamundo has operated for 20 years in Latin American countries and made its first major foray into English-speaking markets in 2016. Basing its product on a successful model that has served its Spanish and Portuguese-speaking clientele since 1997, it introduced 96 new tours and more than 3,000 guaranteed departures with dedicated English-speaking guides.

Now, with its English operations underway, the company says it is ready to turn its attention Down Under.

Europamundo Vacations director of corporate planning Berend Lund Christian said he held high expectations for the Australian market.

“I am fully aware that the Australia market for tours to Europe is very mature and many would therefore

regard our entry as redundant,” he said. “However, this maturity is exactly why our product is relevant.

“The Australian traveller has already experienced several European destinations. The huge number of packages and the flexibility in our tours gives the Australians who prefer the security of travelling with a tour conductor the option to choose the most relevant tour, and then

customise the packages to match their individual requirements,” he said.

One of the company's key selling points will be its flexibility around tour dates, with policies that allow travellers to effectively join or leave a tour when they choose.

“With our concept, we have eliminated the ordinary downside of group travels, where you are forced to join, and pay for, the entire itinerary,” Christian said. “I have no doubt, this is going to appeal to many Australians.

“For all the Europamundo packages, the traveller is allowed to shorten the tour by cutting days in the beginning or in the end,” he said. “If a traveller wishes to make a stop along the tour, it is possible to leave part way through

and re-join one of the following departures.”

Europamundo is also launching a number of “rotative tours”, where travellers are able to start the tour at any day of the journey and continue into the next tour cycle.

“This makes it possible to choose the starting and ending point with the cheapest flight connection and the option to start the tour on the day that matches the traveller's requirements,” Christian said.

Despite the increased possibilities around flexible dates, the company insists pricing is not necessarily more complicated.

“Europamundo is offering a web solution that makes the quotation process very simple,” Christian said. “In addition, the number of available seats is visible online and Holiday We Go is authorised to make the final confirmation when quotations or bookings are received from agents and consumers.”

Although all tours and prices are available on the Europamundo website, bookings could only be made through Holiday We Go, Christian said.

■ Visit [www.europamundo.com](http://www.europamundo.com)



“The huge number of packages and the flexibility in our tours gives the Australians who prefer the security of travelling with a tour conductor the option to choose the most relevant tour, and then customise the packages to match their individual requirements”

Berend Lund Christian, director of corporate planning Europamundo



# STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD

Published in collaboration with  
Holiday We Go and Europamundo

IN A crowded touring scene, Europamundo is keen to differentiate itself from other operators. Director of corporate planning Berend Lund Christian nominates the key attributes the company will be pushing to the Australian travel trade:

- **AGENT ONLY** – Europamundo tours can only be purchased via travel agencies, protecting income for travel agents.
- **GUARANTEED DEPARTURES** – tours will depart on the advertised dates regardless of the number of passengers.
- **GUARANTEED PRICING** – “There will be no exploitative supplements for taxes, fuel, gratuities etc... our prices are reliable,” Christian said.
- **ROTATING TRIPS** – Many tours are circular. Where one trip ends another begins, which means a traveller can start a trip at any point on the tour, for the same price.
- **PICK A SECTOR** – Customers are not compelled to buy the entire tour and can choose whichever sector they want. “This feature gives our clients the possibility of joining any tour, at any time, and for whatever length of time they want,” Christian said.
- **STOP “YES”** – Many tours operate every week, all year round. For an additional fee, guests can take a break from the tour and return later to continue the journey. This stop enables travellers to get to know a country better, to visit relatives or attend conferences.
- **MY TRIP** – From the My Trip web page, travel agents can access the information on the exact itinerary that the customer bought in order to print vouchers, check the hotels confirmed for the booking, and view a detailed itinerary. Travellers

can also start talking to other travellers attending the same tour in “Travel Companions”.

- **VARIETY** – More than 175 English-speaking tours to choose from. Each season will see more tours added to the English program, based on the Spanish/Portuguese selection of more than 1,000 different tours.

The company is also proud of its status as the only coach tour operator affiliated with the United Nations World Travel Organisation.

“Europamundo Vacations is very active in the UN World Travel Organisation and in the fight for sustainable tourism,” Christian said. “Europamundo is running a full-scale CO<sub>2</sub> compensation program and through its Foundation, supporting sustainable tourism projects in developing countries all over the world.”



Holiday We Go's Greg King and Europamundo's Steven Pearson - Regional Head of APAC at the recent TIEC

## Strategy to take a trade focus

MELBOURNE-BASED wholesaler Holiday We Go has been appointed as the Australian GSA for Europamundo Vacations and will drive the brand's expansion in the local market.

“Our main focus will be on creating awareness and marketing Europamundo in Australia,” said Holiday We Go director of sales Greg King. “Our team will be working towards hosting seminars and training conferences across all states to brief travel agents on the product.”

The company has a trade friendly model, which it says is essential in the face of online competition.

“Holiday We Go sells only business-to-business and not direct to travellers,” King said. “Our aim is to protect the income streams of travel agencies and we see this as a vital way to protect a travel industry that is slowly losing travellers to online bookings whereby there's no interaction between the traveller, travel consultants or the operators.”

■ Visit [www.holidaywego.com.au](http://www.holidaywego.com.au)

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## Croatia a hot spot for Aussies

CROATIA'S mix of rich culture and history and spectacular nature and scenery has seen Australians flock to the destination, with Beyond Travel recording a 40% growth in travellers in the region over the last five years.

"The country provides a similar relaxed and laid back Mediterranean feeling that resonates well with Australians, making them feel at ease and at home when travelling through the country," explained Beyond Travel sales and marketing general manager, Bryce Crampton.

For the past three years Beyond Travel has seen double digit growth year-on-year, and forward bookings for 2018 are "already very promising to continue that trend".

Small ship coastal cruises are on the top of the to-do list for Aussie visitors to the region, but Crampton said travellers were increasingly combining their cruise with land, often combining Dalmatian islands with UNESCO listed Plitvice lakes and the capital Zagreb.

## CONTIKI SHAKES UP EUROPE MARKET

CONTIKI'S new Europe program promises to shake the industry up with the company set to target the free independent traveller (FIT) market with the launch of Independent Insider. Independent Insider is designed to allow travellers in the 18 to 30 category to group destinations together to construct and build their own tour from as little as one city to three. Contiki Australia managing director Katrina Barry said the product was designed for flexibility and freedom.

"Strategically we are opening Contiki to a whole new customer and audience, as well as taking a share of the FIT market," she said.

Barry said travellers would be able to design their itinerary by piecing together

three-day building blocks to create a trip ranging from three to 13 days, with the traveller allowed to select their own start and finishing spot. The product follows eight different routes around Europe and offers 35 different combos that can be paired together. Possible routings include London, Paris, Amsterdam and Berlin or Athens, Mykonos, Santorini and Ios. "The big highlight will be that every customer will go to a local family and have dinner with them, which is included on every three-day building block," Barry said.

Independent Insider will also offer experiences that most travellers have not had in a city no matter how many times they've been, such as a Gin tour around London hotspots.



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# HERITAGE AND *luxury*

The charm of Europe for many Australians lies in incredible architecture. Why not allow your clients to have taste of that history by staying in one of these three newly opened hotels.



## HOTEL DE CRILLON, PARIS

HOTEL de Crillon has been a hotel since 1909, but closed in 2013 for a major renovation, reopening this year. The building itself was established in 1758, commissioned from one of the greatest architects of the time, Jacques-Ange Gabriel, by King Louis XV. The palace was built to host ambassadors to the French capital, and later was owned by the Counts of Crillon and used as a private mansion.

Today, the hotel - situated on the Place de la Concorde - offers a range of rooms, suites and signature suites including two designed by Karl Lagerfeld. There is also a range of dining venues, a wellness spa, pool and fitness centre along with all the amenities one expects in a modern hotel.

## NOBIS HOTEL, COPENHAGEN

NOBIS Hotel in Copenhagen only opened last month, so travellers staying in this small luxury hotel will be some of its first visitors. The building it is situated in what was one of the first concrete structures in Copenhagen when it was built in 1903. It most recently housed the Royal Danish Academy of Building, which vacated it in 2008. The hotel has not only maintained the original beautiful facade, but many interior features as well including the main marble staircase.

The hotel is located very centrally, close to the Copenhagen Central Station, City Hall Square and Tivoli gardens. The rooms balance the contemporary and the classic in their Scandinavian design.



## THE NED, LONDON

ONCE home to the Midland Bank, this Grade 1 heritage listed building was bought in 2012 and transformed into the hotel which opens this year. The Ned is located in London's financial district, a stone's throw from St Paul's Cathedral. The property was designed by Sir Edwin 'Ned' Lutyens (from whom the hotel gets its name) in 1924, and retains its original features including the large bank vault just below the lobby, which has been transformed into a club space.

The Ned has 252 bedrooms which range in size and are styled with classic 1920s Edwardian decor including timber encased bathtubs. There are nine restaurants, as well as extensive health and gym facilities which include a full-size boxing ring and a barbershop.

# COSTSAVER MOVES TO DYNAMIC PRICING

TRAFALGAR'S low-cost offshoot CostSaver has moved its European program to online dynamic pricing in a move managing director Australia Matthew Cameron-Smith says is an 'industry first', paving the way for its potential adoption by the parent brand.

As CostSaver doesn't offer early payment specials, the switch to a dynamic cost model is aimed at assisting travel agents to convert quotes into firm bookings before customers leave their office.

"It also helps protect our agent partners from those who want to shop around. Agents get frustrated when they give a quote and the customer walks out and tries to shop around. Dynamic pricing gives agents the ability to close the sale right then and there, saying 'if you don't deposit now, the price could be gone,'" Cameron-Smith said.

Pricing is based on a range of

factors, including the number of remaining seats on the tours and currency, with guests who book early "guaranteed" to get a better price than those who book last minute, Trafalgar CEO Gavin Tollman said.

Meanwhile, to stimulate sales for Trafalgar's 2018 Europe and Britain program, the guided holiday specialist has put a 100% Definite stamp on its range of 16 multi-country Discoveries. Trafalgar is also offering a \$699 return Economy class airfare with 97 of its Europe & Britain trips for travel until 30 November 2017 and from 13 January to 30 November 2018, when booked before 02 November 2017, unless sold out. Tollman said sales for Trafalgar's 2017 Europe program were up an incredible 24% year-on-year, a figure he suggests will increase further in 2018 as "we've only scratched the surface of what we can do in Australia".



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# KING OF

**Kerry van der Jagt samples wines fit for a king on a road trip through Victoria's High Country.**

**D**RIVING through Victoria's King Valley is like travelling through northeastern Italy – where the hills are raked with vineyards, bocce is the sport of choice and bottles of prosecco can be heard popping from every corner. Only the gum trees give the game away.

Following the Second World War the area was settled by a community of Italians, who, on finding the region reminiscent of their homeland started growing Italian grapes among the eucalypt-clad mountain ranges. Along with their pasta makers and cheese graters, the new arrivals also brought their passion for sharing fresh produce with visitors and friends.

Today, five wineries – Brown Brothers, Sam Miranda, Dal Zotto, Pizzini and Chrismont – have banded together to produce a 50km food and wine trail called the King Valley Prosecco Road.

I'd like to say we're driving a red Ferrari (or perhaps riding Vespas), but we're tootling along in a hired Apollo motorhome – more room for the wines that way.

Wangaratta is the gateway town; just off the Hume Freeway, 45 minutes drive from Albury/Wodonga, 2.5 hours from Melbourne or 4.5 hours from Canberra. With its cafes and galleries, riverside parks and dining precinct, it's country cottage meets city cool. Spend a few hours walking the Bullawah Cultural Trail, cycle a section of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail or dine alongside the Ovens River.

Food lovers should make a beeline for the Milawa Gourmet Region, Australia's first official 'gourmet region' centred around the townships of Oxley, Milawa and Markwood. The best way to explore the region is by complementary Peddle to Produce bikes, which can be picked up from Brown Brothers winery for the easy ride into Milawa, famous for cheeses, mustards, olives and beef. Flat as a pizza, the only hard part is working out how to stack the goodies

**‘A road trip is the perfect way to enjoy the region, particularly when your (queen-sized) bed is on your back’**



All images ©Kerry van der Jagt





# THE ROAD

into the bikes' all-too-small baskets.

From Milawa it's a 10 minute drive to the Wangaratta-Whitfield Rd, otherwise known as Prosecco Road, a daisy chain of wineries strung alongside the King River. You could spend a day or a week; stopping at cellar doors, kayaking on the river, dining at trattorias and stocking up at farmers' markets. Accommodation ranges from caravan parks and B&Bs, to motels, pubs and cottages.

Start at Dal Zotto Wines, a sprawling property where family patriarch Otto Dal Zotto pioneered the first prosecco vines in the valley. On the day we arrive the cellar door is buzzing with sales and tastings of pinot grigio, arnei, sangiovese, barbera and other Italian varietals.

Otto's son Christian Dal Zotto hands out the prosecco spritzer and invites guests to join him in a game of bocce amid the gums and vines. "Family, tradition and innovation are our guiding principles," he says. "Origins are just as important as the future."

This philosophy defines the valley, from Pizzini Wines, where Fred Pizzini looks after the vineyard and his wife Katrina operates an Italian cooking school, to Chrismont, where Arnie Pizzini (cousin to Fred) operates a Sicilian-inspired restaurant and a state-of-the-art cellar door. Like all good Italian communities everyone knows (or is related to) everyone else.

A road trip is the perfect way to enjoy the region, particularly when your (queen-sized) bed is on your back. Not just for the sense of freedom, but the flexibility, the chance to swap the highways for the byways, to take the

detours and diversions.

One such detour is the backroad from the King Valley to Benalla, a 60-kilometre drive through the High Country hills, where fields are upholstered in green corduroy and the sky is as blue as a Sidney Nolan painting.

Benalla was the epicentre of the original hipster – Ned Kelly and his gang of bearded bandits. A brochure from the Visitor Information Centre outlines the Ned Kelly Trail, a self-guided route that takes in the major Kelly gang sights in and around Benalla.

Visit the Commercial Hotel, which was used as the police headquarters during the manhunt for the Kelly Gang, the Old Courthouse and Survey Office, where numerous Kelly family members appeared on various charges, and the Benalla Art Gallery, with its tapestry of Sidney Nolan's iconic Glenrowan from his series of Ned Kelly paintings.

For art of a different kind, hit the pavement. Known as Victoria's regional street art capital, Benalla hosts the annual Wall to Wall festival where world class Australian and international artists spend a weekend painting massive murals across the city. Keep an eye out for a kelpie dog by Dviate, a portrait of an Indigenous man by Adhate and a pensive Ned Kelly by Sirum.

From Benalla it's a 30-minute drive back to Wangaratta, where red gums line the banks of the Ovens River, their trunks so robust they were once used by the Bpangerang people for making canoes and baby cradles. The Italians may have brought the wines, but the landscape is 100 per cent pure Australian.





# APOLLO BUYS CANADREAM

LISTED Australian motorhome specialist Apollo Tourism & Leisure has increased its presence in North America through the acquisition of CanaDream as a wholly-owned subsidiary for approximately \$28 million.

CanaDream is one of the largest RV rental and sales businesses in Canada. It offers five RV types from rental locations in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Halifax and Whitehorse and a fleet of about 1,000 rental units. For the year ending January 2017, the company achieved a pre-tax profit of CA\$5.05 million on revenue of CA\$40.29 million.

Apollo, which listed on the Australian stock exchange in November last year, said the deal with CanaDream (and Southeast Queensland company Kratzmann Caravans and Clint's Caravan Warehouse) "support our growth plans" and will make "important contributions to Apollo's business".

"CanaDream is a major strategic acquisition that will support Apollo's growth plans in North America and expand our leadership to include a highly capable senior management team, with deep experience in the North American RV industry," the company said.

Furthering Apollo's expansion locally, at the end of August, Apollo inked a binding agreement to purchase Western Australia's George Day Caravans for \$9.1 million.



## Hertz SuperCover

AN OPTIONAL insurance cover has been introduced by Hertz Australia to provide "extra peace of mind" when renting a vehicle. Hertz SuperCover offers customers reassurance they will have a zero excess to pay during a rental in case of damage or loss to the vehicle and provides the added benefits of personal accident and personal effects cover, premium roadside assistance and no additional fees for extra drivers or young drivers (aged 21-24). Should the customer be involved in an accident, Hertz SuperCover also waives the renter's responsibility for any damage administration charges.

Hertz vice president Asia Pacific Eoin Mitchell said the product is customised to further protect customers against "unanticipated or unforeseen expenses" while on the road and is "just another way we're redefining the rental experience".

It can be purchased online, through the Hertz call centre or at select Hertz locations around the country.

SuperCover excludes fuel, road tolls and administration fees, as well as driving infringements.

## Vivid Camper deployed

A NEW four-berth camper vehicle will be launched across Australia next month by Apollo Motorhome Holidays. At the heart of the Vivid Camper is a Mercedes Benz Vito mini-van, decked out with a pop-up rooftop 2.0 x 1.4 metre 'bunk bed' tent. Accommodating up to four adults or two adults and two children, the vehicle is pitched at the camping market, and is kitted out with kitchen equipment, a sink, gas stove and fridge.

The Vivid Camper will be available from Cairns, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and Christchurch, commencing 01 November.



## NEW ALAMO SPECIALIST BADGE

BRAND USA has developed a specialist badge for Alamo Rent A Car as part of its online training platform, the USA Discovery Program. The badge provides agents with information on Alamo's extensive rental locations across the US, insurance packages and more.

"We are thrilled to be able to work together with Brand USA to further educate agents on our product and the unique selling points that Alamo brings to the market – most recognisably our 'CHOICE' program," said Alamo account manager for Australia/New Zealand, Kylee Kay from APTMS.

Alamo's CHOICE scheme enables customers to collect a vehicle from a variety of makes and models within a certain category type on the lot.

"It really gives the customer the feeling they have a car to suit their personality and their needs and has been very well received with our partners," Kay said.



# DRIVING IN STYLE

When a client says they want to take a self drive adventure overseas, that doesn't necessarily have to mean a matter of simple car hire and hotel stays. Why not suggest that they travel in ultimate style, driving a luxury European car through the foreign countryside?

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Porsche Tour of Tuscany © Porsche



Lime Rock Park event © AMG Academy

## AMG Driving Academy

THE AMG Driving Academy lets you develop your driving skills in high performance Mercedes-Benz AMG's in a safe and controlled race track environment. It's the best way to hone track skills with personal guidance and specifically prepared vehicles on some of the world's most renowned race tracks. Offered in four different locations across the United States, as well as a number of events held in Victoria it offers the opportunity to push the limits of driving in a setting usually reserved for the professionals.

## Land Rover Adventure Travel

LAND Rover Adventure Travel Experiences offer travel that is off the beaten track. In a selection of specifically prepared Range Rovers and Land Rovers, guests explore hard to reach areas in challenging drives down off road tracks. Experienced guides teach guests how to overcome obstacles and difficult terrain, as well as showing how to get the best out of the vehicles. A range of Itineraries are available including the rocky landscapes of Utah, the desert plains of Namibia and snowbound Iceland.



© Land Rover



# Singapore

## the ultimate stopover destination

By Emma Lovell

**S**INGAPORE is a key transit point connecting Asia to the northern and southern parts of the world. As a bustling hub of International activity, it's the perfect place to extend your holiday and have a quick two or three-day stopover. Here's an itinerary to reveal the best of what this tropical country has to offer.

Choosing a place to stay in spectacular Singapore isn't easy. However, I've narrowed it down to suit the two most common styles of holiday – relaxing or city escape. For those who long for the tropical vibes, best

head to Sentosa Island. You'll feel a world away in this mini paradise, while being just a short metro ride from the mainland. Wake up to beautiful warm waters and endless attractions at your door including Universal Studios, lunch at Hard Rock Hotel and Adventure Cove Waterpark to name a few.

For those who crave being at the heart of the action, Marina Bay is for you. Stay at the famous Marina Bay Sands and look down over this gorgeous harbour from the incredible infinity pool. You can also just visit the famous hotel bar and instead stay at one of the many hotels in this area. They too offer breathtaking views of the cityscape and easy access to great food, shopping and historic sites around the city. Don't miss the light show in the middle of the bay every evening.

Now to your itinerary! Our first day was spent on Sentosa Island and we made a beeline for the Megazip. After seeing it on Australian show, *The Bachelorette*, I had to try it for myself. At 75m high, and travelling a distance of 450m on a zip-line to the beach below, this is a truly unique way to see the island of Singapore. Arriving on the safe sands of Siloso beach, we soaked for a while in the tropical waters before opting for another attraction, S.E.A. Aquarium. This first

class marine attraction is filled with exotic creatures from all over the world's oceans. You'll be mesmerized there for hours!

Day two is reserved for the city sights and no Singapore itinerary is complete without shopping. Underground, over ground, malls and markets, this city can wear out even the most dedicated of shoppers. Orchard Road is the place to start your spree and work your way along the 2.2km boulevard to find your bargains and treasures.

The afternoon is reserved for a stroll through the phenomenal Gardens by the Bay. Appearing to be just a beautiful greenhouse and interesting plant structure, you'll quickly have your mind changed as dusk turns to night and a whole new world is revealed. Like something out of *Avatar*, the glowing, coloured structures will blow your mind. A meal or beverage at SuperTree by Indochine will offer 360 degree views of this incredible area and allow you to enjoy a sky high walk among the "trees". It is a truly unique experience



Gardens by the Bay ©STB



Telok Ayer Market ©STB





combining nature and technology, beauty and the future.

Eating out is tough in Singapore – not for lack of choice, quite the opposite! The cultural flavor fusion in this country can boggle the mind and your cuisine choices are endless. The absolute highlights for me were the No Signboard restaurant in Geyland and the Lau Pa Sat Hawker Centre. Night one of our trip was spent enjoying the light show with a drink by the bay and then sampling satay skewers, fried rice, ice cold Tiger Beer and the most amazing dumplings at the Hawker Market, all for a very reasonable price. The No Signboard Restaurant is a local favourite. Although there are a number of different branches of this famous eatery, this is the most authentic. Hands down the best chili crab I've ever had. Fresh, fast and very generous portions.

If you have a third day up your sleeve, then you must add the Night Safari into your tour. It is a truly unique animal experience with its



Street eating Chinatown ©STB

theatre-like atmosphere in a jungle setting. Traveling by toy train through the zoo, catch glimpses of the wild animals in the magically lit animal park. Experience the creatures in a whole new way as well as enjoying the novelty of exploring a zoo by night.

For your final day, it's time for some zen – head to the magnificent Singapore Botanic Gardens. The beauty of this warm and tropical island is demonstrated in the exotic plants and flowers that thrive here. Stroll leisurely through these lush gardens and enjoy panoramic views from the hilltop back over the island. Don't miss the National Orchid Garden, with more than 2,000 varieties, it's a beautiful symbol of this island paradise.

At the heart of Asia, Singapore is the perfect launching pad for an amazing holiday. Make sure to add this quick itinerary into your next overseas adventure.



Orchard Road shopping



Orchard Road Mall ©STB

‘The cultural flavour fusion in this country can boggle the mind and your cuisine choices are endless’



Sentosa beach, ©STB



# SQ BRINGS A350S TO BRISBANE

SINGAPORE Airlines will begin to phase in new Airbus A350-900 aircraft on flights between Brisbane and Singapore from 16 October to meet growing demand for travel between the two cities.

Singapore Airlines regional vice president Tan Tiow Kor said the deployments were in response to growing demand in Queensland.

"Brisbane continues to be an important market for Singapore Airlines on Australia's east coast," he said.

The Airbus A350s are fitted with 253 seats in three classes and will give Brisbane customers an opportunity to experience the airline's new generation Business and Economy class seats. The move will also see SQ offer its Premium Economy product on the Brisbane route for the first time.

Flights SQ235/256 will be the first to change, replacing A330-300 aircraft. Over the following three months, SQ will gradually switch over a second and third daily rotation to the A350-900. By January, three out of four of SQ's daily Brisbane flights will be served by the A350-900. Brisbane is the second Australian city to receive Singapore's A350 product, after Perth received the aircraft in April. Singapore Airlines



had previously moved Brisbane operations to four times a day, or 28 flights a week, up from the previous 24 weekly flights.

Singapore Airlines senior vice president of sales and marketing Campbell Wilson said Australian routes were also likely to see increased Airbus A350 deployment in coming years as demand continued to grow.

Campbell added that Sydney was a favourite to receive the new Boeing 787-10 Dreamliner in 2018.

## HOTEL DEVELOPMENT BOOM CONTINUES



SINGAPORE'S hotel boom shows no signs of slowing down with a string of new accommodation offerings popping up across the Lion City.

Over 1,500 new hotel rooms have come on-line in recent months, including new projects from big chain hoteliers such as AccorHotels, InterContinental and Hilton.

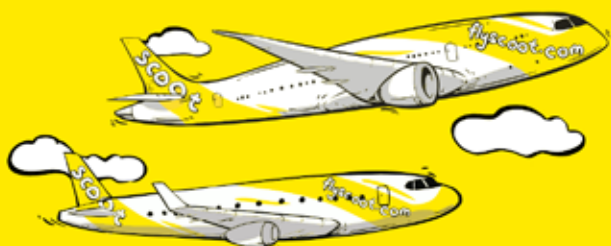
AccorHotels has debuted the Mercure Singapore Bugis, which has 395 rooms, as well as a Sofitel Singapore City Centre, which will open this month. The Sofitel has 50 standard rooms as well as 14 suites and

is in the Tanjong Pagar district.

Hilton recently debuted the Hilton Garden Inn Singapore Serangoon with 328 rooms, which is a short walk from Little India.

InterContinental has opened its second Singaporean property with the 225-room InterContinental Singapore Robertson Quay, which is part of a rejuvenation of the area. It is located where The Gallery Hotel used to be.

Park Hotel Farrer Park and Villa Samadhi, Singapore are some of the other accommodation offerings that have opened recently.



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## NEW BRAND FOR STB

THE Singapore Tourism Board (STB) has partnered with the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) to create the pair's first unified brand, called Passion Made Possible.

The joint brand aims to communicate the country's value proposition in addressing the needs of tourism and business needs as well as helping Singapore stand out on the international stage.

STB Oceania's executive director of international relations, market planning & Oceania, John Conceicao, said Singapore was built on passions that had become reality.

"The new brand celebrates the spirit and attitude of Singapore, and is a story that goes beyond tourism, because it draws on the distinctive qualities of our people and our destination," Conceicao said. "I'm confident that it will connect us with our potential visitor."

The catchcry of Passion Made Possible is derived from strongly associated themes that STB says best describe the Singapore spirit, based on feedback from 10 key markets, including Australia.

The new brand will also be adopted by other statutory boards and agencies under the Ministry of Trade and Industry and be incorporated into their marketing campaigns and tradeshow when reaching out to international audiences.



## Qantas back into Singapore



AFTER five years flying through Dubai, Qantas will shift its London-bound flights back to Singapore from March next year.

The change is part of an "evolution" of the recently extended Qantas-Emirates partnership which launched in 2013 and saw Qantas drop Singapore as its stopover hub for European flights.

Qantas Group CEO Alan Joyce said the changes in the Emirates partnership allowed for the airline to focus more on the Asia boom.

"Our partnership has evolved to a point where Qantas no longer needs to fly its own aircraft through Dubai, and that means we can redirect some of our A380 flying into Singapore and meet the strong demand we're seeing in Asia," Joyce said.

Changes will allow for Qantas passengers to reach London via Perth, Dubai or Singapore on either Qantas or Emirates metal.

The flagship Qantas QF1/2 will now route via Singapore from Sydney on its way to Heathrow. The existing MEL-DXB-LHR flight will be replaced with the previously announced MEL-PER-LHR long-haul route, while one of the two daily Singapore to Melbourne services will be upgraded an A380, providing an alternative for Melbournians to reach London.

## Q&A

**Singapore is a vast, vibrant city, full of travellers, locals and ex-pats. Erin Beckford from Travel Managers explains her top tips on selling this incredible place.**



### Is there much interest from Australians for travel to Singapore?

Singapore is in high demand for Australian travellers for many reasons. It is a hub for inter-Asia and international cruising, the city itself is clean, easy to manoeuvre and most Singaporeans are English speaking which puts Australian travellers at ease. With the number of Airlines flying between Australia and Singapore increasing, it is a quick flight over! And, the icing on the cake – the Australian dollar is strong against the Singapore dollar.

### Which areas are most popular?

I tend to suggest Clarke Quay area to my clients as it is quite a central location and offers many tourism options such as the Singapore River Cruise, City Hop-on hop-off bus and a plethora of amazing restaurants and eateries nearby.

### What are the must see highlights for first time travellers?

For first time travellers to Singapore there are a few 'must sees'. Gardens by the Bay of course. A Singapore Foodies Tour where you can immerse yourself in the local food culture that sets Singapore apart from other Asian destinations. A visit to the famous Marina Bay Sands and going all the way to the top of the property to enjoy views over Singapore and Sentosa from the "Cruise Ship" inspired infinity pool and a variety of dining and bar areas.

### Many travellers see Singapore as a stop-over destination. Should agents be trying to change their perceptions?

I think the term stop-over is starting to almost mean "second holiday" for some travellers. Many opt to spend time in Singapore and then venture to Sentosa and

neighbouring

Bintan Island.

This new style of stop-over travel is providing travellers with more time to enjoy more than one destination during their Europe or UK holidays.

### What should an agent consider when selling Singapore?

There is more to Singapore than Singapore, with many neighbouring holiday destinations such as Bintan Island, Sentosa, Kuala Lumpur only a short transfer, ferry or plane ride away. The ever-growing Cruise market out of and to Singapore is growing exponentially. I think Singapore is becoming not only a prime destination for travellers but also a gateway of opportunities to visit and experience neighbouring destinations.

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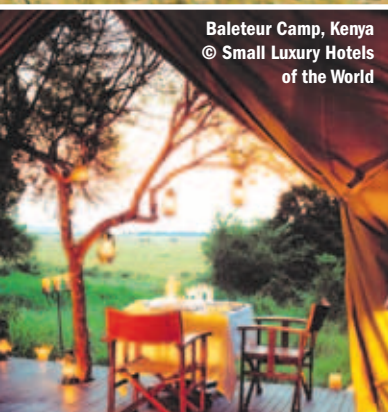
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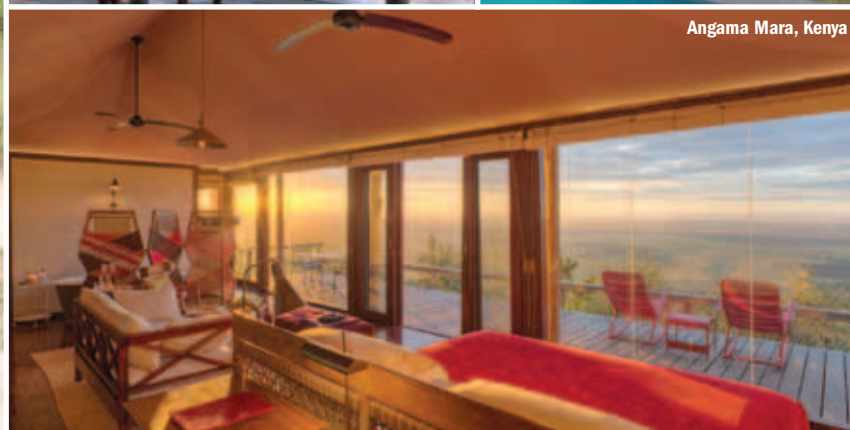


Ulusaba, South Africa  
© Brian Johnston



Phinda Private Game Reserve, SA  
© &Beyond

Angama Mara, Kenya



Burchell's zebras © SAT



# Out of Africa

## African safari lodges

By Brian Johnston

A HUNDRED wildebeest hoofs rumble across a dry riverbed. The cavernous pink mouths of hippos open in yawns on the river. Stately giraffes, long-legged as supermodels, blink lush eyelashes. Lions stretch, and warthogs snuffle. Black hornbills with white wings and bizarre red faces watch you curiously from the roadside.

Each day on an African safari brings new wildlife encounters which you can enjoy at luxury lodges. As the sun sets, you can soak off the dust in a claw-foot bath, or sit with a cocktail as zebras nibble below. At night, the display of stars is extravagant, and your lodge fire crackles. This combination of fabulous landscapes, wild animals and tip-top accommodation makes a safari-lodge stay in Africa one of travel's best experiences.

Each lodge offers its own particular combinations, all different but equally rewarding. The best generally include two daily safaris, accompanied by guide and tracker. These leave early in the morning and just before sunset, when wildlife is most active. Some lodges also have night safaris, which offer a particular thrill.

Nearly all safari lodges promote the 'Big Five' – lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo. Don't set too much store by this legacy of hunting days, since spotting other animals is just as exciting. Other large mammal species include cheetahs, baboons, zebras and giraffes. Birdlife is also spectacular, from red-chested cuckoos to impossibly ugly marabou storks.

While most of us link safaris with the classic savannah of East Africa, alternative destinations can provide quite different wildlife experiences. The floodplains of Botswana's Okavango Delta change dramatically with the seasons, and in the June-to-September flooding period are alive with shimmering dragonflies and kingfishers, eagles swooping on fish, and wallowing hippos. You'll also see elephants and big cats, as well as more unusual creatures such as honey badgers and sable antelopes.

A top spot to stay is Sandibe Okavango Safari Lodge, right on one of the delta's permanent water channels and adjacent to a wildlife reserve; the decks of its eight thatched lodges look right over the wetlands. A less well-known alternative to the Okavango, however, is the recently reopened Ruckomechi Camp in Zimbabwe. It sits in Mana Pools National Park, where significant floodplains provide a habitat for diverse wildlife such as elands and elephants.

In startling contrast, Sossusvlei Desert Lodge in Namibia is surrounded by a parched, haunting desert landscape of huge red sand dunes and rugged mountains, home to unusual creatures such as mountain zebra and oryx. You can watch evening animals at the waterhole below your deck as you sip on a whiskey by the

fireplace. Look up and you'll be rewarded with spectacular stars.

These are particular niche landscapes. Phinda Private Game Reserve in South Africa, though, provides one of the most varied habitats of any lodge. You can paddle along the river to spot hippo and crocodile, scuba-dive among shoals of fish off the nearby coast, turtle-spot on the beach, and bird-watch in World Heritage wetlands. You can even go on an unnerving, specialist white-rhino safari with a tracker and armed ranger.

Even the truly indolent can have wildlife encounters at South African lodges. At Ngala Safari Lodge adjacent to Kruger National

Park, you can spot animals from glass-walled showers that overlook the river: it's hard to know whether visitor or passing zebra is the most startled. At Makakatana Bay Lodge you can hear hippos snort out of the darkness from the restaurant terrace, and

‘At Makakatana Bay Lodge you can hear hippos snort out of the darkness from the restaurant terrace’

at Ulusaba (owned by Richard Branson) you have to barricade your windows against marauding baboons. Elephants and rhinos sometimes wander through the lodge area; an elephant once devoured half the garden flowers.

The wildlife is of course the chief attraction, but some lodges supply landscapes that can be a match in magnificence. It's hard to beat Ngorongoro Crater Lodge in Tanzania, which clings right to the edge of the famous crater, gazing over a vast spread of the Serengeti. The buildings might be in Masai mud-and-brick style with banana-leaf ceilings, but guestrooms are cluttered with antiques and chandeliers. A private butler draws your bath and stokes your winter fire. Unusually for African lodges, you can even get a massage or indulge in aromatherapy. Outside flamingos strut on soda lakes and giraffes lollop across the savannah.

In Kenya, Maasai Mara is another famously scenic destination. Between June and October, a stampede of wildebeest and zebra on their migration offers one of the world's most stunning wildlife sights. One of its newer lodges, Angama Mara, captures the views across the Rift Valley so romantically captured in the 1985 movie *Out of Africa*. Alternatively, Bateleur Camp offers hot-air balloon rides or walking safaris accompanied by a Masai warrior. Bateleur has just 18 tents, though 'tent' doesn't quite describe the leather and wood ambiance, elegant 1930s writing desks, and bathrooms with glass-walled showers. Proof once more that you certainly don't have to rough it to have wild experiences in Africa.



## BENCH PRESSES INTO MALAWI



THE landlocked country of Malawi in central southern Africa can now be explored with Bench Africa as part of its 2018 program.

Sharing its borders with Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, Malawi is one of Africa's smallest countries and offers dramatic scenery, 'Big Five' game viewing and is home to the continent's third largest lake, Lake Malawi.

Bench Africa general manager Martin Edwards said "Malawi offers unspoilt wildlife parks, perfect for those looking for an off-the-beaten-track safari experience. The country also provides an alternative 'beach' experience where visitors to Southern Africa can relax on Lake Malawi post safari".

Bench Africa is offering a six-night itinerary in Malawi which includes three two-night stays in the Majete Wildlife Reserve, Satemwa Tea

Estate and Liwonde National Park. An optional three-night extension to Likoma Island is also available, at the 11-room Kaya Mawa, positioned on the waters of Lake Malawi.

In addition to Malawi, Bench Africa has developed new small group tours in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. The 11-night Classic Namibia Safari is capped at just eight guests, "ensuring personalised attention and utmost comfort", the company said. Based on mobile tented camps, lodges and hotels, the Namibia trip explores Etosha National Park, Damaraland, Twyfelfontein, Swakopmund and Sossusvlei. Similarly in Botswana, Bench Africa has a 10-night mobile camping safari in Botswana for up to seven guests called The Great North Road that traverses the Moremi Game Reserve, Khwai River and Savuti.

■ See [benchafrika.com](http://benchafrika.com)

## Kenya bans plastic bags

TRAVELLERS heading to Kenya will need to hand over plastic bags, including those used to transport duty free goods when arriving into the country, after the East African nation implemented a ban on their use at the end of August.

Kenyans use an estimated 24 million bags a month and they have become an "environmental nightmare," said the country's Environment Minister Judy Wakhungu, causing widespread pollution, blocking drains and deaths of livestock.

The ban applies to the use, manufacture and importation of all plastic bags, with a potential fine of up to \$40,000 or four years in jail facing those who ignore the law.

The move aligns Kenya with nearby African neighbour, Rwanda, which introduced a similar ban in 2008, while more than 40 other countries have already either outlawed, partially banned or taxed their use, including China, France and Italy.

## SUPER SENSORY SAFARI

AFRICAN Bush Safaris has released details of its small group Super Sensory Safari in Zimbabwe scheduled for June 2018. The "deeply immersive" six-night safari explores the Mana Pools National Park and incorporates activities designed to stimulate the senses, while providing a meaningful connection with the environment, the living and natural world.

The company said unlike typical African safaris, the itinerary isn't limited to sitting in a vehicle on a game drive to have animal encounter. It provides opportunities to get out, walk, explore and engage with mother nature on a much deeper level.

Specialist guides takes guests on walking safaris focused on smell and touch, while super sensitive microphones are used to pick up sounds such as the songs of elephants, hyenas, lions, birds, frogs and insects.

"A lot of our guests living in big cities are not really used to the sounds, the smells and the sights of the bush. It's taking the safari experience to the next level," Sales Manager Shaun Stanley said.

Stanley said the Super Sensory Safari was aimed at travellers who had already been on an African safari, and were keen to try



something unique and different. "But saying that, we have had guests on a previous trip who had not been on safari before but were completely blown away by the whole experience," he said.

The itinerary is based on stays at two of African Bush Camps' properties – Kanga Camp and Zambezi Expeditions. The Super Sensory Safari departs 09-15 April and 08-14 Jun 2018 based on a minimum of two and a maximum of 12 guests, priced at US\$3,987ppts.

■ Contact YNOT Concepts for more information.



Adventure World

## AFRICAN CURATED LUXURY UPTICK

ADVENTURE World is capitalising on growth in demand for upmarket products across Africa by promoting a \$49,000 luxury itinerary as the opening product in its new 128-page brochure.

Encompassing seven countries (South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda), the 27-night Grand Africa itinerary includes many bucket-list drawcards of an African adventure – the Big Five, great migration, mountain gorillas and Victoria Falls, to name a few.

Adventure World Australia/New Zealand managing director Neil Rodgers said promoting the luxury tour as its flagship journey was a “bit of a gamble”, but was backed up by the “substantial” number of bookings for luxury product in Africa.

“If ever there was an absolute ultimate trip to Africa, if you are only going to Africa once in your life, this is the one you want. It’s combining

what people are buying individually. It’s Sabi Sabi, it’s Cape Town, the Maasai Mara, gorillas and more,” Rodgers told *travelBulletin*.

Like the majority of tours in AW’s 2018/19 Africa, Egypt and Middle East brochure, the Grand Africa tailor-made trip isn’t bound by group numbers, operating on a minimum of two people.

Building on the popularity of gorilla encounters in Uganda, AW is also offering a new primate experience with chimpanzees in the Mahale Mountains National Park in Tanzania, sold as a three-night encounter as part of the eight-night Tanzanian Chimp Safari and priced at \$13,699 per person.

AW is also ramping up its profile across Botswana where there are eight new journeys, including the four-night Sable Alley & Skybeds discovery program that features a night spent sleeping under the stars on an elevated platform overlooking Khwai Private Reserve.



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Bogotá



Cartagena

# COLOMBIA

# COOL

A new peace accord has opened the doors to tourism in Colombia, and travellers from around the world are rushing in, writes Kristie Kellahan.



Cartagena



Bolívia Plaza, Bogotá

**L**AST November, when a peace deal was struck between the ruling party of Colombia and the revolutionary People's Army, it brought to an end the oldest ongoing conflict in the Americas. For more than 50 years, left-wing guerillas had fought with the government in bloody battles that complicated life for Colombia's almost 43 million residents.

Tourism was a tough sell, amidst dire warnings of danger and kidnapping, not to mention the impact of Netflix's *Narcos* series, which detailed the brutal realities of drug lord Pablo Escobar's empire. Even the admirable assets of *Modern Family*'s Sofia Vergara, possibly the most well-known actress of Colombian heritage, could not shift the anxiety surrounding safety issues in the destination.



‘Be aware before visiting Bogota that it is at high altitude – 2,644 metres – in fact one of the highest in South America’

Today, the sunny country in the northwest of South America is enjoying an influx of travellers intent on relishing *la vida Colombiana*. With peace a reality, a new attitude of celebration and joy is filling the music halls, bars and town squares. The beaches are full, the cuisine is constantly Instagrammed and leading magazines publish stories on the hottest new hotels.

Most visitors will experience one – or all – of the top three destinations: Bogota, Medellin and Cartagena. The capital, Bogota, is cosmopolitan and vibrant, a sophisticated urban metropolis where you'll find big-name luxury chain hotels, boutique shopping and million-dollar homes. Start your walking explorations in Plaza de Bolivar, the main town square. Lined with dramatic landmarks – the Palace of Justice, Lleras Palace and the Primary Cathedral of Bogota – it's the beating heart of the city.

Bogota's cultural epicenter, La Candelaria, the historic downtown area, is filled with former colonial buildings now housing museums, bars and souvenir shops. Don't miss the Botero Museum, the home of one of the most impressive international art collections in Latin America. Colombian artist Fernando Botero, famous for his larger than life sculptures of voluptuous women, donated more than 200 works of art, including 123 of his own making, to form the museum's founding collection. It is open to the public, free of charge.

Be aware before visiting Bogota that it is at high altitude – 2,644 metres – in fact one of the highest in South America. Altitude sickness can be a challenge, so follow doctors' orders, drink plenty of water, go easy on the alcohol and give your body time to acclimate over the first day or two.

In Medellin, the second-largest city in Colombia, life is influenced by Paisa culture. Spanish accents, cuisine and hospitality

are the order of the day here: settle in for a leisurely afternoon of tapas and good wine, followed by a siesta. Hit the streets again in the cool of the early evening and discover several monuments of national significance (check out the mammoth *La Raza* sculpture by Rodrigo Arenas Betancur) as well as beautifully lit churches throughout the city.

Rise early to beat the heat and tick as many museums as you can off the list: there are at least 40 in the city. Time your visit for a December arrival when the city is illuminated with thousands of fairy lights, the famous *Alumbrados* Christmas light display. La Playa Avenue and the Medellin River are top spots to see the lights.

If Bogota and Medellin are the business end of Colombia, Cartagena is where the party starts. Every night of the week. Reigning over the northern coast, Cartagena de Indias is gorgeous, romantic, seductive and beautifully preserved, not unlike Colombian women.

Part of the Caribbean Coast Region, every day feels like Carnival in Cartagena, with street parades, town square festivals and beach fireworks a regular occurrence. The historic port and fortresses of the old town are UNESCO-listed for their monumental significance, boasting the most well-preserved fortifications in South America.

Within the walls of the old town itself is where you want to stay, in charming little family-run inns or glamorous small luxury hotels. Fall asleep to the sounds of horse-drawn carriages navigating the cobblestone streets, then be woken early by the chatter and hum of door-to-door vendors selling fresh fruit salad and hot cheesy arepas.

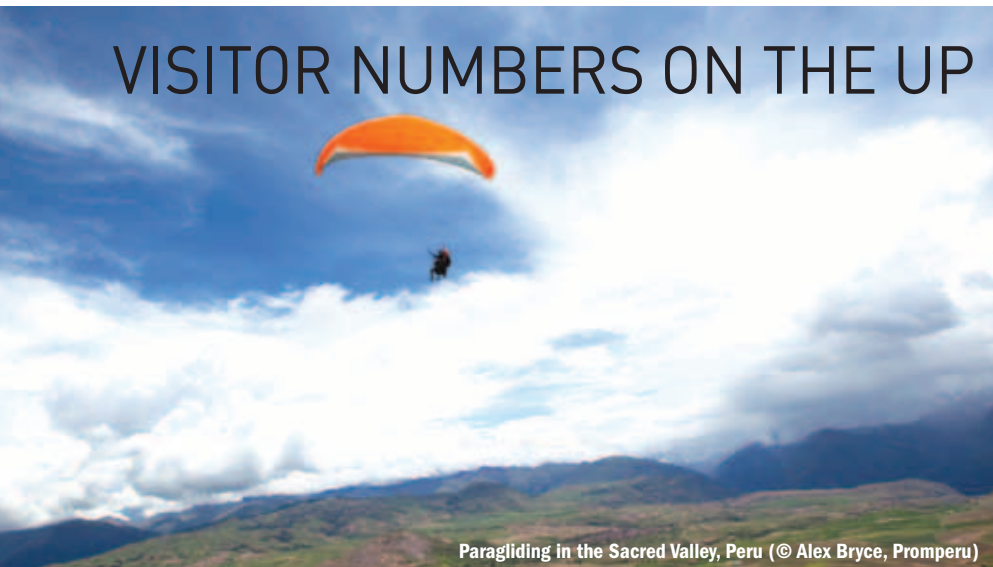
Take every opportunity for an afternoon nap because Cartagena truly comes to life when the sun goes down. Expect to queue at Cafe Havana, the most famous salsa bar in Cartagena, where live bands play until the wee hours for locals and tourists. Musicians are everywhere on the streets, as well, ready to play Colombian classics for a few pesos. They are happy to take requests, even serenading you in a musical convoy as you walk to dinner or a bar.

The choices for dining are seemingly endless in Cartagena, with an abundance of seafood the main attraction. Top notch ceviche is on most menus, but go straight to the experts at La Cevicheria when you want the best. Celebrate at Carmen Restaurant, one of the city's finest dining destinations, or follow the cool kids to El Baron, if you can get a table, where a small menu of comfort food favourites complements a heady list of boozy cocktails built over fresh local fruit. Viva Colombia!





## VISITOR NUMBERS ON THE UP



Paragliding in the Sacred Valley, Peru (© Alex Bryce, Promperu)

SOUTH America is fast becoming a hot spot for travellers with several South American countries reporting strong growth in the number of Australians heading their way.

The Tourism Authority of Chile reported the number of Australians visiting was up 10.8% in 2016, reaching 50,968, with figures expected to grow again this year by at least 10%.

Visitation to Peru in 2016 was also a record high according to PROMPERU, with Australians accounting for over 42,000 arrivals into the Andean nation. This translated into a 3.1% increase from 2015.

PROMPERU Australia representative Samantha Dalla said Australians were visiting Peru in droves in search of the historic landmarks and culture the country had to offer.

"Australians are principally drawn to Peru to visit the Incan Citadel and World Wonder of Machu Picchu," Dalla said. "In search of authentic experiences off the

beaten track, however, lesser-known regions such as Chachapoyas are gaining popularity among Aussies."

Contours Travel director Ted Dziadkiewicz said the numbers were likely to continue to grow in 2018 with Contours already reporting strong bookings for next year, especially with a good exchange rate for prospective travellers.

"The Aussie dollar is strong and Latin America offers so much more value," Dziadkiewicz said. "A luxury hotel in Buenos Aires, for instance, can be up to 50% cheaper than the equivalent in Europe."

"More clients are also asking for off-the-beaten-track experiences beyond the icon attractions," he said.

Chimu Adventures co-founder Greg Carter said business had been booming for South America sales and he expected new air routes to make the destination even more attractive.

## Venture Australis ready to set sail

AUSTRALIS' newest ship, *Ventus Australis*, will set sail in January on her maiden voyage from Punta Arenas to Cape Horn and Tierra del Fuego.

During her maiden season, *Ventus Australis* will operate 22 four-night sailings between Ushuaia in Argentina and Punta Arenas in Chile.

Australis Australia marketing manager Michelle Mohaupt said the addition of *Venture* would double capacity for the company and provide travellers with more choices as well further unique experiences.

"Australis is a small, boutique line – the only cruise operator based in Patagonia – but in Australia, the brand is enjoying more awareness amongst the trade and consumers," Mohaupt said.

"More adventure-seeking Australians are appreciating that Australis can take them to pristine and untouched wilderness areas where no-one else goes."

*Ventus* can carry 210 passengers in 100 cabins and is fitted with the latest environmental technologies to ensure the conservation of the waters she will sail in.



## LATAM TO START FLIGHTS TO MELBOURNE



LATAM Airlines will commence flights between Melbourne and Santiago, Chile from 06 October, in what will be the city's first direct flight to South America.

The route will operate three times a week to the airline's main hub. It will also be LATAM's first direct flight to Australia, as it also operates a daily service to Sydney via Auckland. LATAM will use a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner in a three-class configuration with Premium Business, Space + and Economy class that can seat 313 passengers.

LATAM regional general manager for Oceania Valeria Alvano said it was an honour to offer the first direct flight between the two cities,

and also a record breaking flight for LATAM.

"It will be our longest flight to date," Alvano said. "This route will make travel to South America more attainable and help grow tourism between the two cities."

With South America growing in popularity, the new route will add an additional 75,000 seats between the two continents.

Flights will depart Melbourne at 2040 and arrive into Santiago on the same day at 1955 local time. The return departure will leave at 1330 and arrive into Melbourne the following day at 1840.

oneworld partner Qantas will codeshare on the route.

# CHIMU LAUNCHES BIG 5 CAMPAIGN

CHIMU Adventures has launched a new marketing campaign, Feel Alive at South America's Big 5, designed to present agents with an array of different options when booking their clients on a trip to South America.

The campaign highlights a variety of South America itineraries taking in the continent's big five bucket list attractions: Machu Picchu, the Galapagos Islands, the Amazon, Iguazu Falls and Rio de Janeiro. It is aimed at helping travellers to tick off one, or a combination of these attractions.

Chimu Adventures co-founder Greg Carter said travellers used to see South America as the ultimate bucket list destination, one they could only afford to experience once in their life.

"With air capacity at record heights and airfares as affordable as never before, travellers no longer need to shy away from returning to South America multiple times if they don't want to squeeze in all the big attractions in just one trip," he said.

As part of the campaign, running until 01 December, Chimu will promote a variety of itineraries and specials catering to different travel styles, budgets and tour lengths.

Agents can visit the Chimu Adventures' agent portal I.N.C.A to download a marketing pack including flyers, posters and social media tiles for the Feel Alive at South America's Big 5 marketing campaign.



Galapagos lizard



## EVERGREEN'S NEW PROGRAM

EVERGREEN Tours has launched its new 2018/19 South America brochure featuring Peru, Brazil and Argentina touring, plus cruising in the Galapagos Islands, on the Amazon River and in the Chilean Fjords.

Lead-in pricing for the popular 20-day Best of South America tour is from \$8,195pp including intra-tour flights and deluxe hotels. The new offering also includes a leisurely paced 25-day South America Revealed tour that includes two nights each in Machu Picchu and Lake Titicaca, and three nights in the Sacred Valley and Iguazu Falls, plus a visit to Colca Canyon and Arequipa. Departures are 17 August and 26 October, with prices starting from \$9,895 per person

twin share.

Evergreen Tours general manager Angus Crichton said South America was the trip of a lifetime for most people. This meant the company had developed itineraries to allow travellers to explore the best parts of continent, while also having the opportunity to stay in locations for an extended period, as with the new 25-day tour.

Evergreen Tours is offering two for one airfares including taxes for select tours booked by 02 March, while solo travellers can enjoy half price airfares. There is also an early payment discount of \$900 per couple when a client books and deposits an escorted tour by 02 March.

## Peru cable over Kuelap

A RECENT spike in tourism to the archaeological site of Kuelap in Peru has seen a new 4km cable car system open to make it easier for tourists to access the site.

Local authorities are preparing for tourism to the region to double over the next 10 years. Prior to the cable car's opening, visitors were required to travel a distance of 32km for 90 minutes to see the fortress.

The Kuelap site dates back to the 6th Century and is considered to be the most representative site of the Amazonian Chachapoya people.

The fortress is built entirely of stone blocks and features burial areas, sarcophagi and temples. It is regarded as an alternative to Machu Picchu, being less crowded and similarly stunning.





# SUDOKU

EASY

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3		5				9	1	
6				2			7	3

© Web Sudoku

## Where in the World?



CHERRY blossoms scream Japan and an obelisk makes us think of Egypt. But don't be fooled, this city is in neither of those countries. If you think you know where this landmark stands, send your answer to [comp@travelbulletin.com.au](mailto:comp@travelbulletin.com.au). The first person to answer correctly will win themselves a double movie pass. Good luck!

## UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES

NO ONE would have thought that a crane would be a good spot for a hotel, but in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, that's exactly where one hotelier has set up shop.

Located in the up-and-coming neighbourhood of Amsterdam Noord, Crane Hotel Faralda consists only of three-suites and is located in a converted crane. The outside is painted a bright blue, yellow and red, but inside the hotel pushes design limits with its opulent furnishings.

Each of the suites has a similar layout, with a small lounge and bathroom on the ground floor and steep steps leading to a mezzanine bedroom with king size bed and standalone bath.

As expected, there are spectacular views from the suites, and the crane moves with the wind, offering guests a change of scenery (depending on Mother Nature's whim).

There are no restaurants or bars, and even no reception area (you are met by the hotel's owner or an employee who shows you to your room and hands over the keys). But there is a hot tub on the roof of the crane, so that you can soak you tired feet from the day's adventures whilst enjoying views of Amsterdam.

Prices start from €595.00 per night twin share.



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