

TABS ON TRAVEL TODAY

Incorporating Tabs on Travel

Tuesday 04 September 2012

Issue 2451

BKK, KUL, SGN & HKT

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Jetstar

Kiwis Contribute To Trafalgar Success

Two years into its relaunch Trafalgar boss Gavin Tollman says Kiwi agents are contributing to the company's overall success.

"When I look at it, we've had a remarkable response globally, from agents and our guests in terms of embracing the Insider guided holidays concept. We're starting to see a shift and a change that's nothing short of remarkable," the Trafalgar global ceo said in Auckland yesterday.

Talking about the rationale behind Trafalgar's offering Tollman said its Insider positioning statement was all about giving its guests bragging rites, and showcasing destinations in a new way, that other companies could not match.

This includes its Be My Guest programme which offers authentic experiences that Tollman says are not normally available to travellers. "We're focusing on engaging our clients and we just didn't want our product to be different, we wanted it to be sustainable," he says. "We wanted our guests to finish and say wow, isn't that amazing, I could not have done that on my own—and it's working."

... Trade Engagement

Tollman (pictured above on right with Scott Cleaver) says 100% of agencies around the globe, including New Zealand, who have actively embraced Trafalgar's Insider messaging



have reported an increase in sales. And while he says agents remain essential to the success of the brand—he also says the successful agents are the ones who take the time to understand the evolving product.

"Agents need to sell the differences proactively and become active not passive sellers," says Tollman. "The successful agents are the ones who are giving their clients the options and actively sell the differences."

Talking to chain heads and top sellers in Auckland yesterday, Tollman said the brand had also looked to see how it could help the trade sell more and be a far better, more engaged partner. "So we now have a very powerful position with a great Insiders product and early booking savings to help agents close sales," he said, adding that its Kiwi team has the tools available to help the trade develop new joint marketing plans.

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fiji me Nadi/Denarau Agents' Incentive

Travel agents or brokers who sell the most Nadi/Denarau product 13Aug-31Oct 12 will earn one of 4 Nadi/Denarau holidays for 2, including air (ex AKL or CHC) and other bits.

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JQ On Kiwi Performance

Jetstar says its services ex Australia to Queenstown have attracted 300,000 passengers in the 12 months to 30 Jun, and chief executive David Hall predicts that number to continue double-digit growth in the coming year.

"You're seeing transtasman double with the new services, you're seeing domestic increase with our weekly Wellington service now, you've got 17 out of Auckland and five or so from Christchurch, so the market's responding well," he said of JQ's performance. Hall predicts FY13 will see 380,000-390,000 passengers travel from Australia to ZQN.

Hall says JQ's strategy is to stimulate travel demand with low fares, and ZQN 'plays to the core' of JQ as a leisure brand. "So we will grow in this market over time."

On the Kiwi domestic front, Hall says the market is 'patchy', but a bright spot is WLG, which 'is responding well to low-fare stimulation'.

New At Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast Destination Limited has appointed Kate Wright (nee Strange) as the RTO's part-time Kiwi representative.

Chief executive Steve Cooper says Wright (pictured) will ensure the region remains an attractive and competitive holiday destination for Kiwis.



He says she is passionate about travel and tourism and has strong marketing and industry experience that will be an asset to the Sunshine Coast. Wright's appointment comes following the inaugural season of direct flights to the region, as SCDL looks to capitalise on the increase in arrivals. New Zealand represents 30% of all international visitors to the region.

The RTO has also appointed Jan Foletta as its trade and international manager.



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Ibis CHC Re-opens

The Ibis Christchurch reopened today, on the second anniversary of the first quake, becoming the first inner-city hotel to do so since the major Feb 11 quake. The property has had 'major' remedial work, including the renovation of all 155 rooms and public areas, as well as structural strengthening. Accor expects the reopening to be a 'major' benefit to the recovery of the city, providing accommodation for those involved in CHC's reconstruction. The hotel is adjacent to the Re:Start Mall in Cashel St and Accor says the re-opening will highlight that CHC centre is now accessible to travellers. First guest Tim Stoaite is pictured with Ibis gm Tim Dearsley.

Antarctica
a small group hosted
cruise/tour

See page 6 **world.**
JOURNEYS

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Antarctica Flight Ex AKL Next Feb

Antarctica Sightseeing Flights will operate its first departure ex Auckland early next year.

The company has offered day trips over the continent ex Australia for 18 years, and the New Zealand addition is in response to consistent growth from the Kiwi market, says the company's founder and director Phil Asker.

The Feb day trip will also be the first commercial flight from New Zealand down to the region since the Mt Erebus incident. The company acknowledges the sensitivity around the flights for Kiwis and adds that the flight path will not include Mt Erebus, or the nearby Scott Base.

"New Zealand has a very rich history with involvement with Antarctica including flying the first flights," says Asker. "We have carried over 1000 Kiwis on our [Antarctic] flights from Australia and given the growing demand we felt the timing was right."

The 12.5 hour day trip ex AKL will operate over one of 19 possible itineraries, depending on the weather conditions, and Asker says the 03 Feb date will offer great views for passengers.

"It's a great time, they'll see a lot of sea ice which has started to break up, and three to four hours south of AKL pas-

sengers will see the first ice. There'll be a few scatter ice bergs, 30 mins of sea ice, and then we'll fly over the coast, Depending on the itinerary sights will include the Transantarctic Mountains, the Ross Sea, Italian and French bases, Mt Minto, Cape Adare and explorers' huts."

While a 12-hour plus flight sounds long, Asker says there's lots of Antarctic-themed onboard activities from movies, commentary from onboard Antarctica expeditioners and interviews with personnel from the Australian ice base.

"It's one day in your life to see Antarctica and the scenery is spectacular," adds Asker. The 03 Feb flight will be operated by a chartered QF 747-400 flying at an altitude of 10,000 feet.

*Travel Today has been a guest on one of the Antarctic flights and it's certainly a 'once in a lifetime' experience. While the flights are at a high, and safe, altitude you can still make out significant landmarks. Being able to chat to people onboard who have actually lived on the ice adds another dimension to the experience.

... 10% Commission

There are seven fare options available on board from Ice Class (first class) at \$9299 right through to economy, from \$1599. With the exception of those opting for a J class centre seat, all passengers are issued with two boarding passes—ensuring a turn in a window seat, or next to a window seat. The fares carry a 10% agent commission and there are no credit card fees or further charges. Ph: 0800 000 766 or see www.antarcticaflights.co.nz or

SB Tactical Fares

Aircalin has New Caledonia airfares from \$605 in economy ex AKL for sales to 14 Sep. Travel ex WLG/CHC is from \$663 return and business class levels ex AKL are from \$1791. Domestic flights are with Jetstar and levels are valid for travel 04 Oct-06 Dec, 21 Feb-31 Mar except AKL-NOU 03-06 Nov and NOU-AKL 27-30 Oct.

thl Camper Merger

Tourism Holdings Limited is proposing to merge its New Zealand vehicle rental business with Kea Campers and United Campervans in response to the 'challenging realities of the current New Zealand market'.

thl chairman Keith Smith says the 'industry player has the scale to market New Zealand tourism and New Zealand campervan vacations to a broad international audience', and is 'best placed' to utilise the additional brands. The merger needs to be approved by a 50% majority of thl shareholders, and bank finance.

The \$69.5 million merger will increase thl's assets to nearly \$350 million, and is expected to result in a \$28.8 million increase in operating earnings in the full financial year after the merger. It's also proposed United Campervans principle Kay Howe joins the thl board, initially as executive director while KEA principle Grant Brady will lead thl's vehicle sales operations and the RVMG campervan manufacturing business.

QF Int'l Sale

Qantas has new international fares for sales to 09 Sep, with inclusive return levels to Los Angeles from \$1599; New York from \$1999; Bangkok from \$1169; Hong Kong/Manila/Tokyo from \$1499; Johannesburg from \$2299; London from \$2599 and Paris from \$2529. Travel dates vary.

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Ipipiri Industry Deal

Fullers Great Sights has industry rates for overnight Bay of Islands cruises in the Bay of Islands, priced from \$225pp s/t for sales to 30 Sep, says Easyway. The Ipipiri departs Paihia daily and the offer is valid for travel to 24 Dec and subject to availability. Easyway can also book Paihia accommodation, with rates from \$51 per night at the Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands. See easyway.co.nz

GO Cruise Week

GO Holidays has National Cruise Week specials from a range of ICCA-member cruise lines, from Celebrity Cruises, to Orion Expeditions and MSC Cruises. Deals include seven-night Italy, France and Spain voyages with MSC from \$789pp s/t, inside, to GO's Romance of the Queens package including a cruise on Queen Elizabeth, Queen Victoria and Queen Mary 2, priced from \$15,559pp s/t, outside with flights and pre-cruise accommodation.

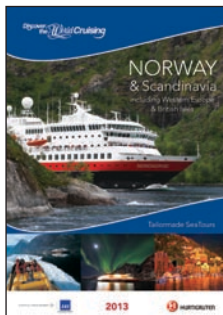
Silversea Sleep Upgrade

Silversea will introduce custom-made Pratesi 100% Egyptian cotton satin linen to every suite from Sep, beginning with Silver Spirit and followed by Silver Cloud in Nov. Bedding has been upgraded with a memory pillow top and dual-side mattress with soft or firm support, a down duvet and a pillow menu with nine options.

Discover the World Marketing and Hurtigruten have released the 2013 Discover the World Cruising Norway and Scandinavia programme—with options from explore Europe's West Coast and the British Isles to the Arctic and Antarctica.

Launched with a new look under the Discover the World Cruising name, the programme offers departures every day in spring, summer and winter.

"Our 2013 Norway & Scandinavia brochure now features more products including a wider range of touring options and accommodation to create an exceptional and unforgettable experience for our clients" says Hurtigruten director Birgit Eisbrenner.



The cruise line has included a number of suggested itineraries for cruises and tours—but it can tailor a cruising holiday to suit each client's style and budget.

On offer is a choice of six, seven, 11 and 12-day sailings with up to 25% early booking, a range of pre- and post-cruise hotel stays plus train journeys and land tours.

SeaTour options include Winter Wilderness Lodge Expedition with dog sled and snowmobile touring, and visiting the home of the Trolls at Herang Tunet. To download the brochure see discovertheworldcruising.com.au

Oceania Recognised

Oceania Cruises (the newest member airline of the International Cruise Council Australasia) has been named Best Premium/Contemporary Cruise Line at the Virtuoso Travel Week conference in Las Vegas, says Cruise Holidays. "Each year we see Oceania Cruises demonstrating innovation, hospitality and solid dedication to serving the travel agency community and their clients," says Virtuoso chairman and chief executive Matthew Upchurch.

MSC Earlybird Extends

MSC Cruises earlybird offers for 2013 have been extended for sales to 17 Sep, says local business development executive Ann Mellor. The offers have received an 'enthusiastic response', says Mellor, with discounts of \$100 per cruise, and \$200pp on Grand Mediterranean combinations. Details, e-mail ann.mellor@msccruises.com.au

Quark's 2014 Antarctica

Quark Expeditions has released details of its 2013-14 Antarctic season, including the first-ever Floating Polar Film Festival, a fly-cruise itinerary that takes passengers across the Antarctic circle and a 23-day 'do it all adventure'.

There are 32 departures on three ships starting 01 Nov, including the new Explorers and Kings sailing in the Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica via Buenos Aires. Clients that book by 29 Sep will receive a 25% discount on suites and 20% off all other cabin categories.

Windstar's Monaco GP

Windstar Cruises has a Monaco Grand Prix package including preferred seating during the preliminaries, Section K seating for the race and special Grand Prix events onboard Wind Surf and ashore in Monte Carlo and in Cannes. Highlights also include a cocktail reception and dinner onboard, and a Sun brunch on race-day. The optional package is priced from USD2299pp s/t, with a USD300 saving for bookings before 27 Oct. Francis Travel Marketing has details.

Tonga Sailings Cancelled

Extreme weather has forced the cancellation of Island Escape Cruises' scheduled Tonga departures in Sep, reports Francis Travel Marketing. Island Passage sustained damage while she was en route to Tonga from Vanuatu, and changed course to Lau-toka, Fiji for repairs. The company's New Zealand schedule remains unchanged, and it is assisting clients with bookings directly.



Cruising With A Conscience On The Amazon

Peruvian luxury Amazon River cruise company Aqua Expeditions has won a *Conde Nast Traveler World Savers* award in the 'Doing it All' category, reports local representative World Journeys. The Aqua Expeditions flagship vessel MV Aqua explores the remote areas of the Pacaya-Samiria Reserve in the upper Amazon and its tributaries. The line's newest vessel, the MV Aria offers floor-to-ceiling windows, a Jacuzzi, sundeck and gourmet food onboard.



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QF Thai Add-ons

Qantas say Thailand domestic add-ons are now available through the GDS when booking QF flights to Bangkok. Add-ons to Phuket, Chiang Mai, Trat, Sukhothai and Koh Samui are available.



Evason B'day Specials

Evason Ana Mandara in Nha Trang, Vietnam is celebrating its 15th anniversary with special deals including USD15 a day resort credit per guest per day for stays 04 Sep-19 Dec. The resort resembles a traditional Vietnamese village and is surrounded by tropical gardens and a private beach, says World Journeys. A four-day package is from \$735pp s/t including breakfast daily and return private transfers from Cam Ranh Airport, Nha Trang.

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Europe Drags Down Premium Travel

Premium travel grew at a faster rate in Jun than May but solid growth in most markets has failed to outweigh weakness in Europe, according to IATA's Jun premium traffic monitor.

Premium travel was up 4.3% in Jun compared to Jun 2011, while it grew

only 1.7% in May, says IATA, but levels have reached no higher than those in Mar.

Signs of faster growth earlier this year have flattened while total international traffic increased—the total number of passengers in Jun was up 6.2%, and economy passengers were up 6.4%.

A shift by business travellers to economy seats could be behind part of the premium weakness but the main contributor is shaky European markets, shows the report.

Meanwhile, world trade and business confidence indicate that weakness will intensify in the coming months, adds the airline body.

... South West Pacific

Premium travel between South West Pacific and the Far East, SW Pacific's largest premium traffic route, grew 8.2% in Jun and is up 4.3% year to date.

Premium traffic to the Middle East is also looking healthy, up 15.5% in Jun and 15.4% year to date.

It was also up 1.3% to Europe in Jun but has fallen 13.9% year to date, and within the SW Pacific premium traffic was down 24% in Jun, shows the report.

Int'l Ticket Endorsement

Air New Zealand advises that international ticket numbers need to be endorsed on YFPLUS tickets issued separately to the international journey similar to the QFL/HFL requirements. This has been updated on the domestic long-term fare rule guide, adds NZ.

Antarctica Savings

Hurtigruten has savings of EUR1250pp on select departures of its Classic Expedition to Antarctica, says GSA Discover the World Marketing. The 10-day departure ex Buenos Aires allows leisure time in Ushuaia before sailing through the Drake Passage to Antarctica on the MS Fram, and is from EUR3995pp s/t with discount. Clients can also save up to 20% when booking 2013/14 sailings.

NZ QLD Wholesale

Air New Zealand has economy wholesale fares to select Queensland destinations for sales to 05 Sep. City pairs include Auckland/Wellington/Christchurch-Brisbane, AKL/CHC-Coolangatta and Queenstown via CHC-BNE/OOL. Travel dates vary. Wholesalers have details.

Industry Diary

SEPTEMBER

New Zealand Travel Industry Awards Gala Dinner

Auckland: Sat 08, The Langham, Auckland.

Adventure World The Exotic Asia & India Roadshow

Tauranga: Mon 10, My Choice Indian Bistro, 20 Wharf Street, 1730-2030.

Auckland: Tue 11, Imperial Sichuan Restaurant, 164 Parnell Rd, 1730-2030.

OCTOBER

Globus Roadshow

Dunedin: Mon 01, Rialto Dunedin, 11 Moray Place, 1800 Sharp, movie ticket, drink, popcorn and choc top is provided.

Wellington: Mon 01, Event Cinemas Queensgate, Wellington, 1800 sharp, movie ticket, drink, popcorn and choc top is provided.

Tauranga: Wed 03, Hotel Armitage, 9 Willow Street, 1800 canapes and presentation.

Timaru: Fri 05, Benvenue Hotel State Highway 8, 0730 breakfast and presentation.

Hamilton: Mon 08, Angelsea Motel, 36 Liverpool Street, 1800 canapes and presentation.

Christchurch: Tue 09, Christchurch Casino, 31 Victoria Street, 1800 canapes and presentation.

Hawkes Bay: Wed 10, Masonic Art Deco Hotel, Cnr Of Tennyson St And Marine Parade Napier, 1745 canapes and presentation.

Palmerston North: Thu 11, Travelodge Palmerston North, 175 Cuba Street, 1800 canapes and presentation.

Auckland: Tue 16, Event Cinemas Newmarket, 1800 sharp, movie ticket, drink, popcorn and choc top is provided.

Invercargill: Thu 18, Shop 5 at The Rocks, 101 Dee Street, 1745 canapes and presentation.

Nelson: Tue 30, Rutherford Hotel Trafalgar Square, 0730 breakfast and presentation.

NOVEMBER

Globus Roadshow

Blenheim: Thu 01, Marlborough Conference Centre, 42a Alfred Street, 0730 breakfast and presentation.

Wanganui: Wed 07, Oggies Cafe 53 Wilson Street, 0730 breakfast and presentation.

New Plymouth: Thu 08, Devon Hotel, 390 Devon St East, 1745 canapes and presentation.

Hogan's Product Update

Napier: Mon 26, Mission Winery, Library Room, 5.30 for a 6.00pm start.

Overwater Fales Back

Coconuts Beach Resort and Spa has started rebuilding the overwater fales which were destroyed in the 2009 tsunami, and the resort hopes to have them completed for the New Year.

Coconuts was the only property on Upolu's South Coast to offer the popular overwater fales.

Six 'bigger and better' fales have been designed, building work is well underway. However, the property is promising that the building process will have little impact on its resort guests.



Self Driving Samoa

Self-drive is a great way to explore Samoa—the colourful houses and beautiful vegetation provide plenty to look at and it's difficult to get lost with one main road around Upolu and Savaii, and a few that cross Upolu.

It takes around two to three hours to drive around Upolu, the most populated island and home to capital Apia, and three to four hours to circumnavigate Savaii, the largest island.

There are plenty of car rental places, and the roads are in pretty good condition. They are quite narrow though and it's a good idea to stick to the

40kph speed limit in town and 56kph out of town, as they are used as walkways by animals and people. Petrol costs about the same, or slightly less, as it does in New Zealand.

Drivers need to get their license validated (WST12) with many rental agencies able to do this.

For those after a true local experience, there are brightly coloured buses which are an experience in themselves. There are no bus stops—travellers hail a bus when they see it, ask the driver if they're on the right one, let them know where they want to go and then pay the fare (anything from WST1 to WST7) when they are dropped off.

On Savaii, the terminal is at the market in Salelologa, and on Upolu it's next to the food market in Fugalei.

Roadside Snacks

Clients exploring the destination, especially those self-driving, should keep some change on them to buy produce at roadside stalls along the way. Villagers sell their excess produce, such as coconuts, pawpaw and pineapple, very cheaply and it's guaranteed to be fresh. The stalls are often manned by children.



The Fale Experience

For those happy to experience a more traditional (and cheaper) stay, Samoa's beach fales are ideal. They are a platform on stilts with a thatched roof, woven blinds that can be pulled down to enclose it, a mattress on the floor and little else. The (usually beachfront) fales are open to let the breeze in, and they definitely inspire afternoon naps.

Wholesalers have noted increased demand for the fales, which usually costs \$30-\$50pp pn, including breakfast and dinner.

"There's certainly a growing interest in the traditional fale-style of accommodation," says GO Holidays' Wayne Deed.

Bedding is included but clients will usually need their own towel. Bathrooms are shared, and everyone dines together on traditional Samoan food at mealtimes.

Teuila Festival Begins

On Mon, the annual Teuila Festival kicked off in Samoa with a speech from the Prime Minister and several song and dance performances. Held on the first week of Sep every year, the festival was created to keep Samoa's traditions alive, including art, music and tattooing. The celebrations traditionally close with Miss Samoa but this year will finish with Ragamuffin—keep an eye on upcoming issues of *Travel Today* to catch the action.

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