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Travel awards: 'We'll be back,' say past winners

The mercury is starting to rise in the lead up to the New Zealand travel industry's big awards.

Nominations are set to open for TAANZ's National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) in just 10 days on 27 March and will close soon after on 7 April. The awards have fast become the leading indicator of excellence in the industry. Accordingly, a number of past winners and finalists say they are already geared up for 2017's competition.

Past winners Guy Flynn and Steve Lee, of NZ Travel Brokers, say they will be happy to put their name forward again for Best Broker Brand (which they won last year), and will also make a nomination for Best Broker.

Flynn says the value an NTIA win – or even a nomination – can have on a business and its reputation is significant, given it is a stamp of approval from the wider travel industry.

'We have strived to stand out from our competition whether that's through innovation, growth, support services, investment in people or creative thinking. So NTIA has helped us think about ways that we could do things better



Guy Flynn, NZ Travel Brokers: 'we've found tangible benefits from the awards'

Continued on page 2

SANTORINI: SIMPLY STUNNING

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New Zealand travel awards: 'We'll be back,' say past winners

Continued from page 1

and identify areas for improvement – in many ways, that is probably more valuable than the award itself.'

Troy Ackerman, of the Golbus Family of Brands, says the group places considerable value on the TAANZ awards having taken the award for Best Tour Operator in 2016. 'We are exceptionally proud to be past winners. While sales results and passenger growth provide the ultimate barometer to the success of our business, we view the TAANZ awards as an important yardstick in our annual quest towards this.' Ackerman says Globus will again 'be putting its best foot forward for the 2017 awards'.



Andrew Olsen

TAANZ chief executive Andrew Olsen says the association is well advanced with planning for the NTIA event.

'This is the time when the rubber hits the road and the awards process starts, when our industry's best businesses and people are put forward. This is what NTIA is about.'

Olsen says while the awards night is a calendar event for contestants, the process starts with this month's self-nomination and is followed by campaigning, voting and judging.

Entrants must engage from the beginning, he says, calling on all agency

and supplier business to be ready before the self-nomination process begins.

Meanwhile, Olsen reminds trade the awards are available to non-TAANZ members. 'Our standing invitation to "the Flighties" and the Travel Managers Group remains and we look forward to their participation and seeing them go head to head with TAANZ brands and groups in NTIA 2017.'

This year's Awards gala dinner will be held on Saturday, 30 September.

CLICK HERE For self-nominations.

• **TRAVELinc Memo is again the media sponsor for the TANNZ NTIA and will have more coverage next week in the lead up to the nominations.**

Full steam ahead for shot at European famil

Rail Plus is giving travel agents a chance to win a spot on a European famil as part of its revamped Rail Expert training programme.

Consultants have until 28 April to complete the programme, which has 10 modules themed around major European rail networks such as TGV France, Swiss Travel System and Eurail.

The programme is open to all qualified travel agents, who must achieve a 60% pass rate to receive a certificate and an 'I'm a Rail Expert' banner for their email signature.

The top two graduates from New Zealand will win a spot on a European famil. Rail Plus is also awarding Visa gift cards to the top scorers on the 10

individual training modules.

Rail Plus commercial director Ingrid Kocijan says New Zealand travellers are continuing to embrace rail travel in record numbers, while at the same time European rail networks are evolving at a rapid pace. 'That's why it is vital that consultants regularly refresh their European rail knowledge,' says Kocijan.

More than 1000 agents across Australia and New Zealand registered for the programme last year.

'This year we expect to see even more consultants take the opportunity to enhance their understanding of an important travel sector.'

To take part, go to <http://bit.ly/2n17vdY>

Register for Argentinian famil

Agents must register today to be in for a chance to win a place on a Buenos Aires and Iguazu Falls famil.

Agents who sell the most flights on Air New Zealand to Buenos Aires from 13 March to 13 April will receive an invite to join the famil, which is being run by Viva Expeditions and Chimu Adventures in conjunction with the national carrier.

The group will visit districts of Buenos Aires by bike and enjoy a dinner and tango show, before heading north by Aerolineas Argentinas to Iguazu Falls.

Register here: <https://goo.gl/forms/ybrmOq2TALoiVtw1>

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PR shortlife specials

Philippine Airlines has released special 76th anniversary shortlife fares from Auckland to the Philippines, Asia, North America, London and Cairns.

Fares are on sale until 24 March 2017 and valid for departures 1 June to 30 November 2017.

A sample of the all inclusive round trip fares on sale are Auckland to Cairns from \$593, Manila from \$786, Bangkok/Singapore/Hongkong/Ho Chi Ming from \$549.

Also available for travel from 1 September to 30 November 2017 are special fares to Los Angeles/San Francisco from \$869, and London from \$983.

New GM at Yatule

Janette Vuki is the new general manager of Yatule Resort & Spa, Fiji, effective 27 March, 2017.

Vuki has over 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry and has worked in various international hotel management and leadership roles in Australia, Canada



Janette Vuki

and Fiji, including a four year tenure as resort manager at the world famous Wakaya Club and Spa, one of Fiji's premiere luxury boutique resorts.

Vuki replaces Robin Maivusaroko, who had led the Yatule team through the resorts pre-opening and subsequent operations until February 2017.



Lucky viewers took home brand new LG TVs and adventure packs. From left, winner Penni McDonald, Cruiseabout; Luke Ingram, South Sea Cruises; Annemiek Van Bommel, Flight Centre Cambridge; Margaret Burns, guest; Liz Grimshaw, Our Pacific and Carl Amos, South Sea Cruises



Charlotte Baigent and Penni McDonald, Cruiseabout and Cassandra Knight, Flight Centre Cambridge

Four winners at South Sea Cruises screening

On Wednesday South Sea Cruises hosted a screening of the new film Gary of the Pacific at Event Cinemas in New Market, Auckland.

Carl Amos, the marketing services manager at South Sea Cruises, went through the company's brands and promotions before the film started.

He says two new vessels will be joining the fleet in the middle of this year, allowing clients greater access to the Pacific. He also says a new brochure

came out last week and will be entering stores across the country in New Zealand dollar value within the next 10 days.

Amos reminded agents of the Blue Lagoon Cruise promotion where guests can receive a free room upgrade (conditions and travel period dependent).

Also before the film started agents were asked to check under their chairs for a USB, and the three people who found them were the recipients of a new LG television.

Mandy moves to the event sector

Mandy Veale is now marketing manager of Lemongrass Productions in Auckland. The company organises high profile events such as Taste of Auckland, Winetopia, Street Eats and Auckland Restaurant Month.



Mandy Veale

Veale was most recently marketing manager with First Travel, but is better known for her roles with Mondo Travel – campaign manager from July 2010 to August 2014 and marketing manager for a year after that.

She was also South Pacific product manager with Infinity Holidays for just over two years.

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Adventurer Andy – turning travel into a lifelong passion

Andy Kibby has surely set some kind of record when it comes to the Big OE.

The Cambridge-born Kiwi set out into the world as an outgoing young man in his 20s, and about 25 years on he's still on the travelling trail.

Sure a couple of things have changed... Kibby is now the owner of his own company, The Safari Company NZ, and he's running the ship rather than being a tour participant. Plus, these days, the people he travels with are a bit more mature than the party types he used to trip the globe with.

However, one thing is the same – Kibby is as much in love with travel and the African experience today as he was when he first stepped out into the big wide world. 'When I first got to Africa, I knew it was where I wanted to be,' he says.

Kibby was a guest speaker during a series of Innovative Travel presentations held throughout New Zealand this week to celebrate the company's launch of its new brochure Ancient Kingdoms.

In Auckland on Tuesday, after addressing 20 trade representatives and members of the public, Kibby revealed his dad 'flicked him out into the world' in 1987 to keep him out of trouble's way.

After getting a taste for adventure



Andy Kibby and his trusty sidekick Nico

'doing an overland' from Kathmandu to London, he worked for African safari tour companies taking 18 to 35 year-olds on the safari trail.

In 2005 his focus changed, and he set up his own firm. That was when Kibby's mum, Gay, asked him to run a tour for her and 21 friends... 'customers who didn't want to do it on a budget and who wanted flushing loos and nice beds'.

So Kibby designed a trip for them: 'And I've been doing it ever since.'

These days, he's running six tours a year (with his trusty sidekick Nico), which cater for intrepid Kiwis aged in their 50s to early 70s.

Kibby, now 50, says the more mature adventurer is by far a much better travel companion than those in the flush of youth – and for reasons that may surprise you. 'They just want to give everything a go.'

And when it comes to giving everything

a go, the sky is no limit for Kibby. In fact, he's running a Climb Kilimanjaro trip later this year after previous customers asked him to put it on the schedule. And, yes, he will go the distance – for a second time.

Kibby says travel to Africa has 'slacked off' in the last two years, pummeled by a run of violent incidents in eastern Africa and the resulting poor press.

'Also, coming to Africa is not cheap. And South America has become popular and more affordable.'

Kibby says he's found it is the older travellers these days who are the ones willing to take a punt on the destination as well as try something that takes them out of their comfort zone.

Auckland Leith Matthews, who travelled on a 12-person adventure with Kibby two and half years ago, agrees. She says there is really nothing finer than an African safari.

'I've got my eye on Zambia Namibia and Botswana next,' she says.

The Innovative presentations, during which Robyn Galloway also gave a rundown on the company's range of Greek, Egypt and Morocco products, stopped at Hamilton, Wellington, Palmerston North this week and calls in on Christchurch on 21 March.

[Click here for brochure](#)

– by Lisa Bradley



Erica Banks and Anita van der Mespel from House of Travel



Andy Kibby with Travel Managers' Kristina Parkinson



Innovative Travel's Robyn Galloway with the company's brand ambassador Jane Daniels



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Whitsundays breaks its visitor records

The Whitsundays welcomed 248,000 international visitors in the year to 31 December, 2016 – the highest number recorded for a 12-month period.

The figure represents an increase of 19.2% on the previous year, which is the biggest percentage increase of any destination in Queensland.

The Whitsundays experienced strong growth across all markets, with the region's top five source markets all up significantly and, together, recording a 26.3% increase year-on-year.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Craig Turner says the region has a focused approach to the continued growth in its international markets.

'When you look at our percentage growth across all our international markets, we are in a very strong and robust position,' Turner says.

'We don't rely on any one particular market, which ensures security for our tourism industry going forward.'

Double-digit growth was seen in four of the Whitsundays' top five source markets – China was up 62.3%, the USA by 29.4%, New Zealand rose 19.1% and the UK numbers grew 14%.

Visitor expenditure was also up by 5.8%, to A\$204.4 million for the year, and the average length of stay was up slightly and stood at 6.7 nights for the 12-month period.



Barangaroo switches on to Vivid Sydney

Vivid Sydney will dominate the Aussie city more for more than 23 days from 26 May, lighting sculptures and illuminating buildings stretching from the Opera House precinct, Taronga Zoo, Martin Place, Darling Harbour, Chatswood, Kings Cross and, for the first time, Barangaroo.

A giant yellow tree frog will light up the Sydney skyline, glowing kiwi birds will forage in the Botanical Gardens and all manner of 'audio creatures' will be projected on to the sails of the Opera House.

Highlights this year will include a trail

of light installations threading through Barangaroo and a large-scale mural created by US contemporary artist Shepard Fairey in the CBD. There will also be steampunk-themed installations in Chatswood.

Highlights of the Vivid Live programme include French electronic stars Air, US singer Beth Orton, Fleet Foxes and electronic duo Goldfrapp.

The event, which kicked off in 2009, ploughs A\$110 million in the Australian economy annually. Last year it drew about 2.3 million visitors as well as music and art programmes.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Easter at Port Stephens...

Port Stephens is hosting a family-friendly Easter Blues & Brews festival at the Murray's Craft Brewing Co. Visitors can enjoy a dual line-up of once-a-year holiday brews – Murray's Chocolate Easter Egg Beer and Hot Cross Bun Beer – while listening to blues musicians.

... and at Whitsunday

BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort is running a Chocolate Week from 1 to 7 April. Activities include chocolate treasure hunts, chocolate cooking in Kid's Club, chocolate-themed movies and chocolate crafts. Other action around the resort includes pony rides, horse riding lessons, poolside massages, daily animal feeding and a super-duper disco night.

www.adventurewhitsunday.com.au/chocweek

Melborne set to bloom

The five-day Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show kicks off at the World Heritage Listed Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens on 29 April – the biggest annual flower and garden show in the Southern Hemisphere. Evening visitors will be able to stroll through the show until 9.30pm on 31 March.



Gold Coast famil

Sun, surf, superheroes – agents on tour in Australia



'Roo whisperer', Kaitlyn Moulder from House of Travel Barrington at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary



Brittany Day, Orbit World Travel Hamilton gets the hang of Stand Up Paddle Boarding – go girl!



Spread your wings: Amy Dixon from Galaxy Travel World Travellers Rotorua does just that at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary

The eagerly awaited Gold Coast VIP famil is currently under way in sunny Queensland.

Twenty-two agents from around New Zealand are experiencing some of the destination's most popular attractions, sporting events and leisure activities.

Around half the group are first time visitors to the region, including Michelle Sanders from Inspire Travel.

'While our office is mainly corporate, we do have incentive business and the Gold Coast is on the cards for these clients. Coming on this trip is not only beneficial for me, but my staff as I will relay all the things we did as well as the ease of getting around and the standard and location of accommodation. I was excited to hold a koala at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, but also humbled to see first-hand the amazing work these people do in rescuing and looking after the wildlife. I also enjoyed paddle boarding – it took me out of my comfort zone.'



He's a bit snappy today, but Terry Wakefield, Virgin Australia puts the croc at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary in his place

Another first timer, Bryce Read from Travel Managers, says he has been selling the Gold Coast for years and thought it was time he experienced what his clients love about the place. 'I enjoyed Movie World, being bit of a Wonder Woman fan, but also the rides are great fun and the park has an easy to navigate layout.'

For the remaining duration of the trip the group goes behind the scenes at the Quicksilver and Roxy Pro surfing tournament, has VIP access to a Gold Coast Titans vs Eels NRL match (the money is on the Eels, the group's been told), will explore the new NightQuarter and get their teeth into a show at Dracula's before taking to the hills to visit the TreeTop Challenge at Tambourine Mountain.

The five-day famil has been organised by Gold Coast Tourism in conjunction with local accommodation providers and tourism partners, Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia.

– by Ruth Scott



Whatever happened to Linda Carter? That's the question Bryce Read from Travel Managers ponders as he strikes a pose with Movie World's Wonder Woman



It was the first time holding a Koala for Larissa Welford from Orbit World Travel Christchurch

Meet Aussie's fussy little eaters

How much does a Koala eat?

Quite a lot, according to the handlers at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary. And they are also very fussy as to which particular species of gum tree they prefer.

The average koala chows through 1000 trees per year and Currumbin puts in 'special orders' to the growers for the fussy eaters. And it is often only the tender tips they eat – and no matter if they are hungry, they are stubborn marsupials and will not eat the rest of the leaves.

There are more than 300 species of gum trees and the keepers often have to search out gum plantations for a particular type. Not only does the sanctuary look after its resident koalas, but also each year it takes in around 300 sick and injured wild ones that also need feeding and care. So every day there are fresh gum tree deliveries to cater for all palates.

Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary has recently rolled out a 'Tree to Me' fundraising campaign which plants a gum tree for every A\$5 donated.

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Laos famil



Heather Blackburn, helloworld Howick discovers 'Lasy Air Ticketing Service' at the Luang Prabang morning market

Left: Gina Courtier, NZ Travel Brokers; Heather Blackburn, helloworld Howick and Andrew Kemp, HoT Timaru offer alms to the monks



Wendy Wu Tours guide Si Sinsouvong talks silk worms with Danielle Caldwell, helloworld Napier and Davy Chen, Flight Centre Mt Eden

Loving Laos... agents fall for the destination's charm

Agents who remember sleepy Asian villages some 20 years ago will find the same experience now in the northern village of Luang Prabang in Laos.

Hugging the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers, the village was the highlight for Kiwi agents on a Wendy Wu Tours Singapore Airlines famil to Laos last weekend. From offering alms to the monks, cruising the Mekong, heading inland to waterfalls and visiting a craft village, the agents discovered that Laos caters to all travellers.

Rising at dawn to offer alms to the monks proved so enjoyable for Andrew Kemp, House of Travel Timaru, and Davy Chen, Flight Centre Mt Eden, that they did it again the following day, while the peculiarities of the early morning food market attracted Heather Blackburn from helloworld Howick for a second visit.

Danielle Caldwell from helloworld

Napier also thought the monk experience was memorable. 'I found it quite special and I appreciated the opportunity.'

Kemp and Chen were also attracted to climb Luang Prabang's Mt Phousi twice for not only the scheduled 'sunset over the Mekong' visit but also to view the sunrise. The around 300-step climb to the summit can be tackled two ways – a direct route starting at the night market or a more leisurely ascent through a temple and Buddhist shrines where an 'imprint' of Buddha's left foot can be found.

A cruise along the Mekong to the sacred Pak Ou Caves was an opportunity for Andrew Kemp to 'sit back and enjoy watching life on either side of the river'. The cruise included lunch. 'I've been impressed with the food, and lunch on the river was no exception,' says Kemp who joined others in the group to sample a Laos staple – buffalo meat – on the trip as well as rice wine and whiskey.

A visit to a craft village to observe traditional paper making and silk and cotton weaving was part of the Mekong cruise excursion.

'It was interesting to see the cottage industry at the craft village,' says Caldwell, who was not the only person in the group who purchased an exquisite hand-woven silk scarf.

The picturesque pools at Kuang Si Waterfalls were worth the visit, but can get busy with locals and tourists alike swimming and picnicking on the weekends.

The agents were impressed with SilkAir's new round-trip service from Singapore to Vientiane and Luang Prabang. 'The service and food is just as good as Singapore Airlines,' says Gina Courtier, NZ Travel Brokers. 'And the overnight stops in Singapore break up in the journey.'

– by Trish Freeman



Andrew Kemp, HoT Timaru at the Pak Ou Caves



The Mekong adventure begins

Silk Road by camel

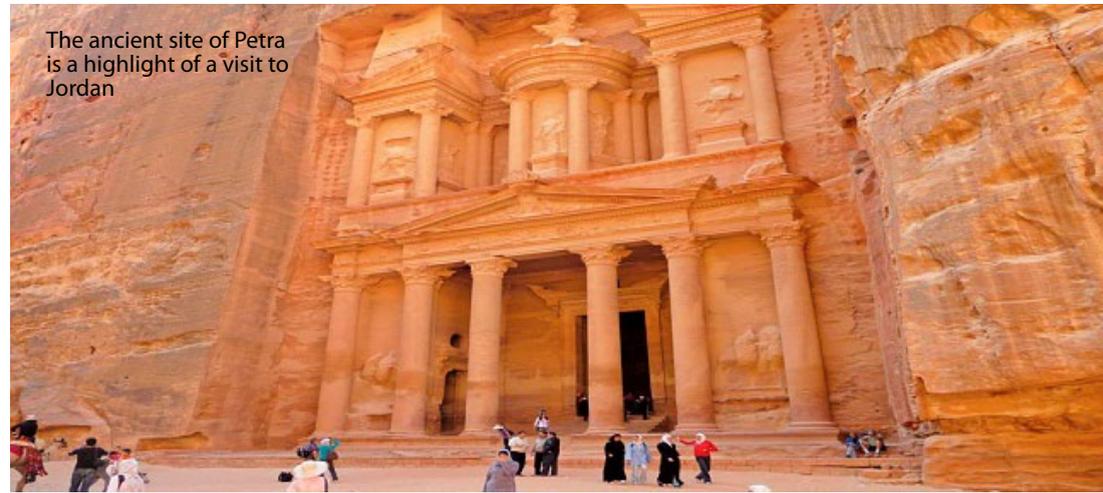
Exotic Holidays is offering a four day Iran Silk Road tour.

Managing director Rahul Sharma says it takes people away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and has them travelling by camel just like merchants did for thousands of years across the Silk Road in a caravan.

Clients will eat camel kebab, pass across the salt lake and see local desert wildlife and plants.

They will also visit remains of the Sefidab Caravanserai, see the Kings' Harem, camp in the desert and stay at the Caravanserai after seeing Kavir National Park.

<http://www.exoticholidays.co.nz/destination/packages/Iran/32>



The ancient site of Petra is a highlight of a visit to Jordan

Jordan's many possibilities

Exotic Holidays is promoting its range of Jordan (and beyond) packages, emphasising the appeal of the destination to history buffs.

Clients can explore Amman (the capital of Jordan), the ruins of Jerash and Petra and the desert of Wadi Rum. From there they can tour around the Holy Land, visiting Jericho (the most ancient city in the world), Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus was baptised.

The holy places where it is believed that the prophets performed their miracles and addressed the people have been identified and protected, and are now open to the public, points out Exotic managing director Rahul Sharma.

These include Bethany on the east bank of Jordan; the place where Jesus was baptised (Al-Maghtas), Nazareth, where Jesus was conceived by the Virgin

Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit, and also Jerusalem, where he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

Sharma says the Roman amphitheatre is a must-see in the middle of downtown Amman.

In addition to its historical sites, Jordan offers adventure tourism such as rock climbing in Wadi Rum. Clients can hike Jordan's northern mountainous region or scuba dive in Aqaba's coral reefs. Pop-culture tourism is also evident in Jordan because many western films have been filmed there. Shopping tourism is gaining traction in Amman, Irbid, and Aqaba.

The Jordan River and the Dead Sea are also popular as are the numerous medieval mosques and churches.

<http://www.exoticholidays.co.nz/destination/packages/Jordan/14>

Japan: tourism on a roll

The number of visitors to Japan in 2016 was 24.04 million people, the Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) has announced.

The number is the largest on record since the tourism body starting keeping statistics in 1964.

During the last three years, the number of visitors has grown by 2.4 times.

Tourism growth is expected to soar when Japan hosts the Rugby World Cup 2019 and the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. The country has a goal of welcoming 40 million inbound visitors in the lead up to 2020.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Aircalin sale

Aircalin has released the Escape to Paradise Sale, flying direct from Auckland to Noumea from \$615 return, including taxes. The sale period is from 14 to 27 March and the travel period is from 1 May to 31 October. Closeouts apply.

<http://nz.aircalin.com/en/auckland-noumea>

Loyalty milestone

Global Loyalty Company (GLC), the loyalty business of Etihad Airways Group, this week announced it has passed the milestone of 20 million members across its four airline frequent flyer programmes: Etihad Guest (used by Etihad Airways, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles and Etihad Regional), JetPrivilege (Jet Airways), MilleMiglia (Alitalia), and topbonus (airberlin and NIKI). Collectively, the programmes have members in 150 countries, and India boasts the highest number of members with five million.

North America sets sail

Royal Caribbean has unveiled North American itineraries in 2018-19, with the addition of its fourth Oasis Class ship, named Symphony of the Seas and new PortMiami. Its Alaska itineraries and year-round Caribbean and Bahamas sailings are available for booking now, while the seasonal Caribbean and Northeast itineraries start on 30 March. All itineraries are available to book one day in advance for Crown & Anchor Society loyalty members.

Santa is spending July on the Murray River

Captain Cook Cruises is celebrating Christmas in July on-board the PS Murray Princess on its three, four and seven night Murray River cruises between 7 to 27 July.

The cruises include a traditional Christmas dinner or lunch, a range of Christmas-themed activities and games, Christmas music, eggnog and a visit from Santa.

In between celebrating Christmas, guests discover Australian history, culture, and wildlife on the newly refurbished PS Murray Princess. There are trips to historic ports, sacred Aboriginal sites, a sheep station and woolshed, a native wildlife shelter and guided nature walks to learn about the ecology of the river.

The three-night Christmas cruise



All aboard for an early Christmas

leaves on 7, 14 and 21 July. The early-bird fares start from A\$803 per person, twin share. And the four-night trip departs on 10, 17 and 24 July, with an earlybird price of A\$1099 per person, twin share. Meanwhile, the seven-night cruise combines the three and four night trips. Fares start from A\$1639 per person twin share.

www.murrayprincess.com.au

Munich wins best airport terminal

At the 2017 World Airports Awards Munich Airport's Terminal 2 was named the globe's number one terminal. The rankings are based on a survey of 14 million passengers worldwide.

Terminal 2 opened in 2003 and has expanded to include new satellite technology that went into operation last April. This upgrade has increased Terminal 2's capacity from 11 million to 36 million passengers per year.

The terminal achieved top ratings for its entertainment options and quiet zones where guests can relax, read

or work. The décor was also widely praised, with many details inspired by local sights and culture. Terminal 2 is jointly operated by Munich Airport and Lufthansa as a 60/40 partnership.



Munich Airport and Lufthansa won the best airport terminal

Air New Zealand introduces Dreamliner on Adelaide route

Air New Zealand will begin flying the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft to Adelaide from October 2017.

The aircraft will increase capacity on the Auckland to Adelaide route by up to 23% over the peak season, which runs 26 October, 2017, to 25 March, 2018.

Using the Dreamliner also means Business Premier and Premium Economy will be offered on the route for the first time.

Air New Zealand chief revenue officer Cam Wallace says the service, to run in combination with its Airbus A320 aircraft flights, is significant for the South Australia market.

'This change is really going to enhance the experience we offer our customers travelling between New Zealand and South Australia with more choice about when and how they fly,' says Wallace.

South Australia is an important market for Air New Zealand. Six months ago it launched its Better Way to Fly campaign designed to encourage more Australians to choose Air New Zealand for long-haul travel by connecting through Auckland to North and South America.

The move follows Air New Zealand's decision to offer self-service kiosks at Adelaide Airport.

New attractions

New world to open in New York

Gulliver's Gate – a huge miniature world – is rising up in Time's Square.

The US\$40 million attraction is an interactive display of 300 small-scale scenes, including more than 1000 miniature trains, 12,000 wagons, 10,000 cars and trucks as well as planes in simulated flight.

There are monuments from US, Europe, Asia and South American sites as well as landmarks depicting

the wonders of the world such as the Parthenon, Colosseum, Pyramids, Panama Canal and Great Wall of China. The past, present and futuristic mini-scenes include horses, elephants, hot-air balloons, space shuttles, the International Space Station and a replica of Mars.

A soft opening is planned for next month and a grand opening is timetabled for May.

England welcomes 'Disneyland'

Forget the rides and rock candy at Brighton – theme parks are about to go up a whole other level in England.

Branded the UK version of Disneyland, Paramount is shelling out £3.5 billion on an attraction that will open in 2022. As well as 50 rides, the venue will include a 2000-seat theatre for shows.

The Paramount London Entertainment

Resort, as it is now being called, is expected to pull 40,000 visitors a day and will cost £57 for a full-priced day ticket. It will be opening in Kent.

Areas within the park will be themed around Paramount films and are planned to include a cartoon circus, Starfleet Command, Action Square, Port Paramount and Entertainment City.

Insight on board with flight deal

Insight Vacations is offering return Emirates flights to Europe from \$1299 for those who book a premium escorted journey of eight days or longer before 31 March.

A variety of Insight Vacations Summer 2017 departures are included in the offer, which is applicable for trips from 1 April to 30 September with an early payment discount available (the deal is not combinable with the discount).

The economy class flights are available

from Auckland into a variety of Emirates' European ports.

Qualifying trips include the 18-day Romantic Britain & Ireland tour, from \$6425 per person, and the 15-day Highlights of Europe journey, from \$6175 per person.

Agents who have already arranged their airfares can still take advantage of Insight Vacations' early payment discount to save 5% on selected tours booked and paid in full by 27 April.

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See pages 16-17

Pacific Islands – New Zealand

Dinner in a village

Pacific Destinations has launched a new village dinner experience, which managing director James Sowane says appeals to the modern traveller's desire to see how the local people really live.

'We visit a chiefly village in Nadi so that the clients get a feel of village life after sunset. For example, the village rugby team might be training when they arrive, they get to see a lovo unearthed and get serenaded onto the village. What's more the income directly benefits the village.'

Sowane says the product is ideal for incentive groups, most of whom just want the traditional experience. However, if they are looking for something different, a professional theme can be brought in. Groups also have a choice of two professional caterers – taste Fiji or Chefs Catering.



Sierra O'Donnell, Wanganui; Fearn Reid, Infinity Holidays; Korinna Soldatova, Browns Bay; Tracey Gray, Milford; Sally Pepermans, New Caledonia Tourism New Zealand; Princess Roldan, Queensgate; Amanda D'Souza, St Luke's Mega; Andrea Davoine, Upper Hutt; Lisi Pone, Manukau and Theresa Smith, Hamilton

Flighties make the French connection

A group from Flight Centre has been getting the lowdown on New Caledonia on a six-day famil, which ended today.

The trip kicked off in Bourail, where the agents enjoyed activities such as kayaking,

trekking and horse riding.

The group then headed to Noumea from where they enjoyed a raft of activities including a tapas party, a day trip to Amedee Lighthouse and time on Duck Island.

Kiwi holiday parks wage war on rats, stoats and possums

Hundreds of Kiwi holiday parks may soon be free of rats, stoats and possums after the organisation that represents them signed up to Predator Free New Zealand this week.

The Holiday Parks Association of New Zealand (HAPNZ) and its 300 member holiday parks are forming a partnership with the Predator Free New Zealand Trust to help rid New Zealand of predators by 2050.

HAPNZ chief executive Fergus Brown says a predator free New Zealand is an aspirational vision for our country that



Being predator free will pay dividends for New Zealand's tourism industry, campaigners say

our sector is proud to champion.

'The consequences of New Zealand being rid of possums, rats and stoats will be that our wonderful native species flourish. This will have far-reaching benefits, making

New Zealand an even more attractive place people want to visit. The holiday park sector is excited to be able to do its part in making it happen.'

Predator Free New Zealand Trust chairman Sir Rob Fenwick says the campaign will pay a massive dividend to the tourism industry. 'I'm delighted and not surprised that holiday park owners see real value in this and I expect other tourism operators to join. Air New Zealand is already deeply involved in predator related conservation work with the Department of Conservation.'



#TasteNewCaledonia

All around Noumea you will find traditional French fare, from local crêperies with authentic flavours, to luxurious patisseries and boulangers - where you can smell the delicious aroma of authentic French butter before you even see the store!

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MYSTERY PERSON



It's a mystery

We caught up with Jamie Bishop and Wendy Kaufman from APX at The Langham function in Wellington last week, but we cannot identify the gentleman in the middle. If you think you know, send the answer to competitions@promag.co.nz and remember to put Mystery Person in the subject line.

Last week we had plenty of correct entries identifying the mystery person as Alison Kearney from House of Travel Howick, even one from California. We drew Carolyn Mackay from HoT Product from the pile. Well done and a copy of National Geographic Traveller, courtesy of Adventure World is on its way.

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AccorHotels' Millar is New Zealand bound

Gillian Millar has been appointed AccorHotels new senior vice president New Zealand, Fiji and French Polynesia from 1 April.

Millar, who is to relocate to Auckland for the role, replaces Chris Sedgwick.

She has worked at AccorHotels' Darling Harbour hotels and Sofitel Melbourne, and rejoined AccorHotels in 2012 after its merger with Mirvac Hotels.



Gillian Millar

At the time, Millar was regional general manager Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia for Mirvac and was subsequently appointed general manager for the Sebel and Citigate Albert Park Melbourne (now Pullman and Mercure Albert Park).

Following a number of appointments, Gillian was appointed to her current role of vice president operations Western Australia in April 2015.

New trips expand USA and Canada brochure

Contiki has released its USA & Canada 2017-19 brochure, adding new Hawaii and Canada trips to its collection of 30 itineraries.

It has added an island hopper Hawaii trip and an adventure through British Columbia, Alberta and the Rockies to the brochure, which covers 36 states across the two countries.



The nine-day Hawaii trip, The Big Kahuna, takes in Oahu, Hawaii and Maui.

Highlights include the beaches of Waikiki and Punchbowl Cemetery. It also offers Contiki ME Time options such as surf lessons in Oahu, a sunset cruise and a sailing trip from Maui to Lanai.

Also new is the nine-day Northwest Passage journey through Vancouver,

Victoria, Tofino and Whistler. Surf lessons and a private sunset dinner cruise are among the ME Time options.

Canada & the Rockies is a limited edition SNAP trip combining travel with photography in British Columbia, Western Alberta and Canadian Rockies.

The programme is now on sale with 10% savings available on trips booked and paid in full by 1 June. contiki.com

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Win a gift card

Agents who book a minimum of four consecutive nights at either Ramada Hotels & Resorts in Noumea or Vanuatu can win a \$20 Farmers gift card.

The offer covers Ramada Hotel & Suites, Noumea and the newly opened four star Ramada Resort Port Vila, Vanuatu.

Email chris@coconutsmarketing.com for the gift card.

Roadshow dates

Registrations are now open for the SPANTO New Zealand roadshow.

The roadshow dates are: Taupo, 9 May; Tauranga, 10 May; Timaru, 13 June; Christchurch, 14 June; Nelson 11 July and Blenheim, 12 July. Register here: info@spanto.org.nz

PEARL'S PEARLER

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