

# MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

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look forward to 2017



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## Poor infrastructure sinks P&O's plans, says Cruise NZ



Kevin O'Sullivan

By Lisa Bradley

Poor Kiwi infrastructure is behind P&O Cruises Australia's decision to put the kibosh on plans for a new-build ship for the Australasian market.

The 4200-passenger ship, set to launch in 2019, will now be allocated to Carnival Cruise Line in the US, because infrastructure in the region is not moving fast

enough to cope with a ship the size of the new build, P&O Cruises Australia has announced. Instead, Carnival Splendor, which entered service in 2008, will be relocated Down Under in 2019.

Cruise New Zealand has expressed dismay at the decision. The body's executive officer, Kevin O'Sullivan, cites slow progress in building berths for larger cruise ships in Auckland, as well as even slower decision-making to provide a cruise ship berth in Lyttelton, as major impediments to the growth of the cruise ship industry in New Zealand.

The largest cruise ship to visit New Zealand, Royal

Continued on page 2

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## Poor infrastructure sinks P&O's plans, says Cruise NZ

Continued from page 1

Caribbean Cruise Lines' Ovation of the Seas, arrives in Auckland on 27 December, but it is too long to berth in Auckland, says O'Sullivan, so it will have to anchor in the harbour with passengers ferried on tenders to the Viaduct area.

'The tender arrangements for Auckland are going well, but Royal Caribbean has said it is disappointed the ship won't be able to tie up alongside Queens Wharf this summer and the next.

'It had hoped a mooring dolphin to

enable berthing the new generation of larger cruise ships, off the end of Queens Wharf, would be in place next summer, but a consent application for the structure has been delayed, and it is now uncertain when the dolphin will be in place.'

The Ovation will call into Dunedin, but bypass Canterbury steaming straight to Wellington because there are no berths in Lyttelton,' he adds.

O'Sullivan says New Zealand has huge opportunities when it comes to

growing cruise tourism, but the country was missing out because of delays in providing infrastructure.

'The decision by P&O is a wakeup call that we must get our act together to improve cruise infrastructure if we are to continue to enjoy the benefits that cruise tourism brings,' he says.

'Auckland must provide a berth for larger cruise ships urgently, and Lyttelton should proceed with bringing cruise ships back, to ensure Canterbury does not miss out on this large tourism market.'

## TAANZ Christmas wish is to expand footprint to all

Having an even more inclusive membership base is on Travel Agent Association of New Zealand chief executive Andrew Olsen's wishlist for 2017.

'TAANZ is already the association of choice in an unregulated (travel) marketplace. I would like to think that through 2017 we can expand our footprint to include any brands and groups that are not currently participating.'

Olsen says the association will have four distinct 'pillars' next year – relevant membership services, traveller awareness, governance and productive partnerships.

'We'll have better connection with our members about what they do and what they want. That is something that will follow on from the survey we did this year.



Andrew Olsen... TAANZ will have four distinct 'pillars' in 2017

'The traveller awareness effort will come off the back of the travel agent awareness week we have just completed. That struck a chord with social media and we want to continue that.'

Olsen says the week generated about 10,000 unique contacts, which he felt was a pleasing result for a first effort.

'We will definitely be making that an annual event. We will be more organised and we will ask agents to be better prepared.'

He says shops will be encouraged to present their TAANZ credentials in the consumer communications. 'It comes down to carrying the TAANZ tag line and logos in their paid mediums.'

In terms of governance Olsen says the

refreshed TAANZ Board is 'arguably as connected as it's ever been to all the different distribution channels we have.'

Olsen says a real highlight of 2016 was the National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) and next year's event is already looking like generating more productive partnerships than ever.

'We had three premium sponsors this year and next year we have seven, so organisations are recognising real value around that premium offering'

He says there are also likely to be changes around the relationship TAANZ has with the International Air Transport Association (IATA). 'We are keeping a careful eye on the new Gen ISS programme.'

Olsen is also keen to make progress on the education and qualifications front. 'The Level 7 travel management major looks like being embraced by all of the relevant universities so we are hoping to see it rolled out next year.'

## Asia gets the Christmas tick from Kiwis

White Christmases in Europe have lost favour to long festive holiday runs in Asia, according to data from Cheapflights.co.nz.

The company's records show more than a third of travellers (or 45%) are picking to visit Asia this Christmas. And over 300,000 New Zealanders have been on the hunt for long festive holidays that stretch to an average of 28 days.

Bali, Delhi, Manila, Bangkok, Nadi and Mumbai are the top Christmas 2016 travel haunts for Kiwis says Nathan Graham, regional sales manager at Cheapflights ANZ.

'Asia remains a clear winner. The number of searches to the region this December is up more than 6% on the same time last year,' Graham says.

White Christmases seem to have lost favour with Kiwis – last year one in five travellers chose to take off to Europe, compared to 14% in 2016. However, London is still ranked the fourth most desired destination this festive season.

Closer to home, Cheapflights.co.nz recorded more than 50,000 searches to destinations across Australia this month, while the top domestic hot spots are Christchurch (21%), Auckland and Queenstown (both 18%).



## High mark scores Were high tea

Anna Were from YOU Travel in Tauranga is off for high tea with five of her closest friends after taking out the top spot in the 2016 Rail Plus Eurostar Ambassador programme.

Almost 500 travel agents from across Australia and New Zealand completed this year's Ambassador training module, before answering 30 randomly-selected questions on everything from Eurostar's network and cabin classes to ticketing procedures and travel times.



Mike Thomson from House of Travel Albany secured this year's second prize of six bottles of Champagne, while third-placed Kristen Delugar from Best Travel, Hastings, won a Belgium-themed goodie bag.

All three of this year's winners recorded a perfect score, with final placings decided by their respective answers to a creative question.

Rail Plus Country Manager Kirsty Blows says the strong response to the 2016 Ambassador programme reflects the fact that Eurostar is well established as New Zealand travellers' most popular train journey.

'Travel agents also understand that Eurostar is continually evolving its customer experience, most recently with the roll-out of new state-of-the-art e320 trains and in 2017 with the planned introduction of services between London and Amsterdam,' says Blows.

[www.railplus.co.nz](http://www.railplus.co.nz)

## My Travel Group gains momentum nationwide

The rebranding of helloworld's affiliate agents from the Independent Retail Travel Network to My Travel Group continues to gather strength.

Jess Allan, affiliate network leader with helloworld, and Brett Simon, affiliate network business development manager, called in to Napier and Wellington last week to rollout the change.

Allan and Simon treated agents in Napier to lunch and then meet those in the Capital for after-work drinks to keep them in the loop with the changes. The members also received My Travel Group goodie bags as a small thanks.



Hello Napier (clockwise from bottom left): Donna Holmes Playaway Tours; Brett Simon My Travel Group; Arti Jamieson Hawkes Bay Travel; Hamish Jamieson Hawkes Bay Travel; Maxwell Burns Champion Travel and Jess Allan My Travel Group



Wellington crew (Clockwise from bottom left): Jess Allan My Travel Group; Lee Amor Your Travel; Cameron Dellow Maher Travel; Brett Simon My Travel Group; Josee Amor Your Travel and Rachel Coward Travel Hub.

## Kiwis are on the flight path to destinations new

Argentina, Cuba and Brazil are streaking ahead as fast-growing holiday hotspots for Kiwis alongside a healthy dose of destinations less travelled such as New Caledonia, Mexico and Myanmar.

House of Travel marketing director Ken Freer says the trends are the result of increased accessibility coupled with a desire among Kiwis to tick off remote bucket-list experiences.

Freer says Statistic New Zealand data reveals Argentina saw the most growth this year with a 150% hike in holidaymakers during 2016 compared with 2015.

'We can attribute a substantial amount of this growth to Air New Zealand's direct flight from Auckland to Buenos Aires, which kicked off in December 2015,' he says.

Once a place known for being relatively difficult to get to from New Zealand, Freer says, Air New Zealand's new flight route has been

a complete game changer for travel to South America.

'Brazil and Peru have also grown in popularity with Kiwi travellers, with 50% and 40% growth, respectively. South America in general has rocketed to the top of many Kiwis' travel wishlist, particularly for bucket-list experiences such as Machu Picchu, Galapagos Islands and Iguazu Falls.'

Freer says the second fastest-growing destination for Kiwi travel is Cuba, with Vietnam, New Caledonia, Mexico and Myanmar recording an increase of more than 30% in Kiwi travellers.

'Cuba is a now-or-never destination. It has a reputation for being somewhat untouched by tourists, but with a number of US airlines kicking off daily scheduled flights to Cuba and easier access to Cuba from New Zealand, tourists are flocking there before the Cuban

old world charm disappears. The number of Kiwis who travelled to Cuba this year grew more than 125% compared with 2015,' he says.

Freer says trends in 2016 reveal a lot of what to expect in 2017, particularly in terms of capacity being one of the leading influencers when it comes to destination choice.

'When airlines choose to fly somewhere new from New Zealand, particularly somewhere less-common for Kiwi travel such as Vietnam or South America, New Zealanders are likely to jump at the opportunity of travelling somewhere they maybe haven't been before,' he says.

Accordingly, Freer expects growth will next year continue in South America and Asia, particularly to less explored destinations such as Cambodia and Chile. House of Travel is also anticipating more Kiwis will explore Asia in smaller stopover trips en route to Europe.



# EPIC AFRICA WINNERS!



**world.**  
JOURNEYS

World Journeys have announced the winners of their Epic Africa Sales Incentive, after what has been described as some “highly competitive” sales activity over the past four months.

The winner of the Grand Epic Africa Prize is **Sandra Barclay-Graham** of The Private Travel Company.

“Sandra has done an exceptional job of selling Southern and East Africa” says World Journeys Director and Africa Product Manager Ange Pirie, “so we are absolutely delighted to be able to reward her with this amazing prize trip, she thoroughly deserves it!”

The Grand Prize place is a spectacular 20-night journey for two in Southern and East Africa, including return flights from Perth with South African Airways, and highlights including Rovos Rail, a Gourmet Package at Grande Provence in the Winelands, the Victoria & Alfred Hotel Cape Town, the DaVinci Hotel & Suites in Johannesburg, the Victoria Falls Hotel, the Sanctuary Gorilla Forest Lodge, and luxury safaris with andBeyond, Wilderness Safaris and Great Plains Conservation.

“To say I am blown away is an understatement, 3 months of work finally came together at the 11th hour after itinerary #7 was accepted and travel insurance for 38 people was sorted! I am amazed by the support, knowledge and patience that Ange Pirie at World Journeys has. Many thanks for what has turned out to be an EPIC week for me!”

Sandra Barclay-Graham

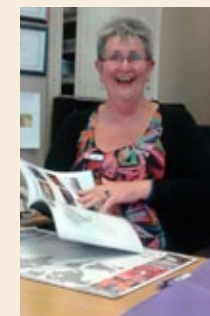


The runner up Epic Second Prize has been won by **Pam Hardy** of YOU Travel Levin. “Pam has achieved amazing results over the past four months, and has worked really hard to drive these sales” says Ange.

The Epic Second Prize is a 9-night journey for two including the luxury Blue Train, the Commodore Waterfront Hotel in Cape Town, a stay at the gorgeous Royal Zambezi Lodge, and an andBeyond luxury safari.

“When Ange called I thought it was a wind up. My heart raced, I grinned like a crazy person, burst into tears, still doing my happy dance, such a mix of amazing emotions. I love World Journeys and the products they represent and they know how much I love the andBeyond product!”

Pam Hardy

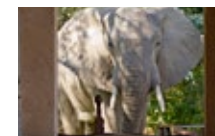


“Our winners will enjoy an amazing time in Africa experiencing some of our absolute favourite high end safaris, hotels and activities. Other agents who were in the running may have missed out on the prizes, but they never-the-

less put through some really good high-value bookings that they might not have otherwise, and now having that experience under their belts, will be well placed to go on and sell more” says Ange. “We’d like to thank all of our partners in Africa who worked with us on this incentive, as their professionalism and exemplary service is at the very heart of what we do”.



Ange Pirie, Sandra Barclay-Graham, Steve Tanner, Judith Wesley, Davina Bicker





## Pacific Islands

Aga Reef Resort



### Agents: discount on Samoa resort

The four-star Aga Reef Resort in Lalomanu, Samoa, is offering agents a discounted rate of \$95 per night in an Ocean View Hotel room.

This price includes a daily continental breakfast plus complimentary use of kayaks and snorkelling equipment.

The rate is valid for travel through to 31 March, 2017, and a minimum three-night stay is required.

For details and bookings please contact Mike Geary.

## Niue to come alive with cultural festival

Niue Island's fifth Arts and Cultural Festival next April will be a major showcase for Vagahau Niue – the island's language.

Niue Tourism chief executive Felicity Bollen says fostering language is key to maintaining a vibrant and rich culture in any nation – and Niue is no different.

'If anything, because of our size and isolation – and the fact the Niuean people are spread over a number of different countries – it's even more important that that we celebrate the Niuean language.'

The Festival runs from 14 to 21 April, and will showcase activities including music, dance, theatre, art, poetry, song-writing, sculpture, textiles (including wearable arts), printing, film, writing, carving and weaving. A number of activities will run in the week preceding the festival, beginning with a performance by cultural groups from Niue High School on 6 April.

Well known Niuean artists including



The Arts and Cultural Festival will next year showcase Niue's language

musicians Che Fu and Malcolm Lakatani, renowned artist John Pule and writer Zora Feilo will take part in the festival, which will feature workshops, performances, exhibitions and competitions at venues across the whole island.

Most events are free to the public but a number are ticketed. Bookings for many of the events can be made at Niue Tourism's offices.

A full programme is available at [www.niuefestival.com](http://www.niuefestival.com)

### Private island getaway for 36 friends

Toberua Island Resort in Fiji is offering groups of up to 36 people the chance to charter their own island for \$10,000 per night, or \$279 per person per night.

This price includes transfers and all meals. The island is located on the eastern side of Fiji's main island Viti Levu and is home to 16 recently refurbished traditional bures, decorated in an authentic

Fijian style.

The package requires a minimum five-night stay and is valid for stays from 1 April to 30 June, 2017, 1 November to 20 December, 2017, and 10 January to 31 May, 2018.

The total island capacity is 50 guests and each extra guest (over 30 people) will be charged \$220 per night. Children can stay at the resort free of charge.

### Qamea's holiday offer

Qamea Resort and Spa in Fiji has extended a 40% discount offer to agents.

And those who book a minimum five nights will also receive a F\$200 spa voucher, return transfers from Taveuni airport and a bottle of Champagne.

The offer, available exclusively for agents' personal travel, is for sale until 31 January, 2017, and valid for travel until 31 March, 2017.

Qamea Resort and Spa is a boutique resort catering to a maximum of 34 adults. [admin@wrd.com.au](mailto:admin@wrd.com.au)

### Merry Xmas from Sinalei Reef Resort

Sinalei Reef Resort & Spa in Samoa is offering agents a 30% discount until 31 January, 2017.

The thank-you offer includes a complimentary villa upgrade (based on availability on arrival) and bottle of bubbly.

Prices start from US\$175 per villa per night (based on two people).

The offer is valid for travel until 31 May, 2017.

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## Africa – Europe

### Kenya cruise port to be built

A dedicated cruise ship terminal is to be constructed at the Port of Mombasa in Kenya.

The estimated cost is about US\$35 million, to be funded in part by Trademark East Africa while the Kenya Ports Authority is expected fund the balance.

The investment is regarded by many in the country's tourism industry as being long overdue and leads to hope that Mombasa will finally break into the international cruise itineraries, similar to what is presently unfolding across the Indian Ocean islands, where cruise tourism boomed in 2016.

Cruise ships, while often in port only for a day or at most for one or two overnights, allow passengers to take in the sights of Kenya's famous national parks through air safaris, road trips to nearby Shimba Hills and Tsavo national parks, and excursions along the coast to see such attractions as Fort Jesus, a UNESCO World Heritage site.



### Train travel on a Swiss roll

Travellers to Europe will be able to savour more of Switzerland with the release of some add-ons to the Swiss Travel Passes.

From 6 January, the Cheese Express (a round trip from Montreux/Zweisimmen – Chateau-d'Chalet – Montreux/Zweisimmen) will be rolled out for a second year.

Passengers will be able to taste cheeses from the Vaud region and see where and how they are made. Operating every Friday, Saturday and Sunday until 30 April, 2017, seat reservations can be pre-booked (via Rail Plus and Rail Europe GSAs) or made locally.

Meanwhile, Wilhelm Tell Express has been renamed the Gotthard Panoramic Express. The journey combines boat and train travel from Lucerne through central Switzerland to Bellinzona in the Italian-speaking region. Agents are reminded that the Gotthard Panoramic Express will remain part of the Grand Train Tour of Switzerland.

Trade is also reminded that from next year, the Pilatus cogwheel (steepest train ride in the world) and cableway will be included in the Swiss Travel Pass.

And the Swiss Half Fare Card Combi and associated passes will be discontinued.

### On the ball for the FIFA Cup

Pacific Attitude has packages to the FIFA Confederations Cup Russia 2017.

Among them, Pacific Attitude, the exclusive sales agent in New Zealand, is offering an All Whites Night Experience. The nine-night programme runs from 16 to 25 June 2017, and follows the All Whites through their three group matches in both Saint Petersburg (where New Zealand will face the Russia for the opening match and ceremony) and the coastal city of Sochi.

The package includes daily breakfast, three return airport/hotel transfers, domestic flights (St Petersburg – Sochi – St Petersburg) and travel assistance.

Pacific Attitude can also source the Official Hospitality Programme that includes guaranteed Category 1 tickets & pre/post-match functions, international flights, domestic transportation from within New Zealand, sightseeing and excursions, including a 'Muscovite Gateway' which includes a two night stay in Moscow.

There is an earlybird discount offer for booking placed before 31 January, 2017.

[www.pacificattitude.com](http://www.pacificattitude.com)

### Who's game for a safari in Zambia?



Wildlife sightings are on the itinerary as part of Adventure World's five-day Royal Zambezi Safari.

The journey, costing from \$2317 per person, includes open vehicle game drives through the Zambezi National Park and a river safari.

The price includes four nights accommodation, all meals, beverages, activities, laundry and domestic flights from Lusaka. For more information, [click here](#).

### Up, up and away...

A&K guests booking the 10-day private journey Out of Africa receive a free hot air balloon ride over the Masai Mara and an extra night free at Angama Mara.

The offer is valid for travel from 5 January to 31 May, 2017 and 1 November to 21 December, 2017, and is priced from \$18,640 per person.





The tarsier

## How to spot a tarsier

Exotic Holidays can help people visiting the Philippines to include tarsier viewings as part of their trip.

The tarsier, the oldest surviving primate on Earth, isn't easy to find. Clients need to travel to the Philippine islands of Bohol, Samar, Leyte, and Mindanao, which the animal calls home.

Tarsiers are popularly known as the world's smallest monkey and fossil evidence shows that the Philippine tarsier is 45 million years old and among the oldest surviving land animal species in the Philippines dating back to the Eocene period.

**CLICK HERE** for details.

## Give back then cruise the Ganges

Uniworld has launched a new pre-cruise voluntary development project for guests on the 13-day Golden Triangle & the Sacred Ganges itinerary.

Available from January 2017, the project run by Me to We and The Travel Corporation's not-for-profit TreadRight Foundation will enable guests to help local families in rural Rajasthan.

Volunteers will lay bricks for a new classroom and help dig a new clean water system to improve irrigation in the surrounding communities. Travellers will participate in traditional craft activities like tie-dying and block-printing as well as sightseeing around the region. They can also begin the day with a morning yoga session, to really embrace the Indian culture.

The five-day experience starts from US\$2375 per person and includes all accommodation, meals and drinks (including wine and beer), a range of sightseeing activities, internal flights, group transportation and a professional facilitator.



Uniworld is aiming to help families in Rajasthan

The 13-day cruise and land itinerary from New Delhi to Kolkata is priced from US\$13,739 per person. Next year's cruise departures begin on 20 January 2017 and continue throughout January, February, March, September, October, November and December 2017.

## Getting to grips with Japan

Adventure World has added new sightseeing options in Tokyo and Kyoto to enable clients to immerse themselves with locals on a tailor-made itinerary in Japan.

The options include a half-day sumo-training experience in Tokyo, from \$305 per person; full-day Tokyo by Bike tour, from \$259 per person; a half-day home visit with tea ceremony in Kyoto, from \$345 per person; and a half-day character bento making class in Kyoto, from \$355 per person.

**adventureworld.com**

## Raffles undergoes major revamp



No guest feathers will be ruffled when Raffles is refurbished

The historic Raffles Singapore will be undergoing extensive renovations from early 2017.

Restoration of the 129-year-old hotel, which had been declared a national monument in 1987, is to be done in three phases, starting with its shopping arcade area in January.

Holidaymakers who have booked the Courtyard and Palm Court suites from 16 January to 30 June, 2017, will be assigned rooms away from the construction noise.

The swimming pool and spa and gift shop will still be operating. No bookings will be accepted from July 2017 as three-quarters of the hotel will be closed.

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## SEASON'S GREETINGS

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**PROSPEROUS 2017**



## Cruising

### Sales on sailings around Norway

Bentours, in partnership with Hurtigruten, has released a flash sale on two of its Norwegian coastal voyages.

Those who book before 31 December will receive no single supplements on the 11-day Classic Norwegian Discovery and 12-day Classic Round Voyage for selected departure dates January to April and September to October, 2017.

Prices start from AU\$1950 per single traveller for the Classic Norwegian Discovery and AU\$2050 for the Classic Round Voyage.

The voyages include full board and fuel surcharge. There are also more than 60 shore excursions to choose from, ranging from dog sledding with huskie dogs to participating in a Viking feast. [res@bentours.co.nz](mailto:res@bentours.co.nz)

### European cruise: looking ahead to 2018



Pre-registrations for are now being taken for 2018 Scenic Europe, France or Portugal River cruises.

Those who pre-register get first choice of departure dates, suite category and a refundable deposit of \$250 per person.

Scenic advise its 2017 suites are almost sold out.

[www.scenicnz.com](http://www.scenicnz.com)

Roald Amundsen – on the Antarctica trail next year



### Hurtigruten spreads out in Antarctica

Hurtigruten has expanded its Antarctica operation for next year's season to three expedition ships, spearheaded by a new hybrid vessel, Roald Amundsen, due to be finished in July 2018.

The confirmation of these vessels will allow Hurtigruten to up its sailings into 32 new destinations and provide increased opportunities for trips to Antarctica.

The company will offer tailored experiences that extend from exploratory sailings with Midnatsol to nature-immersive expedition trips for a restricted number of guests on Fram. Roald Amundsen will combine the fjords of Chile and the Falkland Islands with Antarctica.

Hurtigruten's expeditions can be paired with land experiences from Bentours.

### Win a cruise

Royal Caribbean is giving wannabe cruisers a chance to win an eight-day cruise aboard Ovation of the Seas, which arrives for the first time in New Zealand this month.

To enter, competitors must take a selfie with the ship when it's in port and post it to the Ovation of the Seas' New Zealand Facebook page with the tag @RCLOvation.

The ship, the largest cruise vessel to sail Kiwi waters, will be in Dunedin on 22 December; Wellington, 23 December; Picton, 24 December; Tauranga, 26 December; Auckland, 27 December and Napier, 5 January, 2017. Entries will close on 6 January next year.

 Alaskan Dream Cruises

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## Airlines

ANA goes for fuel efficiency



### Japan carrier's changing fleet

ANA, Japan's largest airline, has become the country's first carrier to take delivery of an Airbus A320neo

ANA is scheduled to begin operating it on short-haul international routes from mid-January.

Compared to its predecessor, the A320ceo, the new aircraft achieves 15% better fuel efficiency and has a maximum range about 7% longer, while also possessing extensive interior space and sufficient cargo capacity for a small aircraft.

In March 2014, ANA placed orders for seven A320neo aircraft, and all of these orders are scheduled to be delivered by mid-2018.

### Organic spa in Brisbane Airport

The world's first organic, Wellness Spa, has landed in Brisbane Airport, providing travellers with a range of natural massage treatments.

To mark its arrival, the spa is offering Plaza Premium Lounge guests who booked online a complimentary 15-minute Hand or Foot Therapy until 31 January.

All products at the spa are sourced from Australian-owned Jasmin Organics. Some treatments for sale include the Organic Hand and Feet Therapy, De-Stressing Back, Neck and Shoulder massages and a 20-minute Express Facial for those short on time.

The Wellness Spa is open daily from 8am.

## Emirates launch second flight to Florida

Emirates has launched its 11th destination in the United States with the start of a daily nonstop passenger service between Dubai and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport today.

Fort Lauderdale is Emirates' second destination in Florida, after launching Orlando more than a year ago. The new service, operated by a GE-powered Boeing 777, marks the first scheduled commercial service from the Middle East to Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport serving the South Florida area of Fort Lauderdale, Miami and West Palm Beach.

The new service will operate as flight EK213, departing from Dubai International Airport at 3:30am local time and arriving at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL) at 10:55am. The return flight, EK214, will depart FLL at 8:20pm, and arrive in Dubai at 7:40 p.m the next day, with a

flying time of 14 hours and 20 minutes.

The route will be operated by a GE-powered US-built Boeing 777-200LR aircraft in a three-class configuration offering eight First Class suites, 42 Business Class lie-flat beds and 216 Economy Class seats for travellers, and up to 15 tonnes of bellyhold cargo for shippers.

Passengers wishing to travel beyond the Fort Lauderdale-Miami area to onward destinations can take advantage of Emirates' partnership with JetBlue Airways (B6) that offers connection options to 32 destinations in the US and connection to destinations in Bahamas, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Ecuador.

The airline has been serving the US since 2004 and currently operates 119 passenger flights per week between Dubai and the America. Since 2004, Emirates has carried more than 16.1 million passengers on its US flights.

### Cathay Pacific passenger numbers down

Cathay Pacific Airways has released combined Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon traffic figures for November 2016 that show a decrease in the number of passengers carried and an increase in the amount of cargo and mail uplifted compared to the same month last year.

Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon carried a total of 2,636,525 passengers last month – a decrease of 5.1% compared to November 2015. The passenger load factor dropped by 1.4

percentage points to 83.5%, while capacity, measured in available seat kilometres (ASKs), decreased by 2.3%. During the first eleven months of the year, the number of passengers carried rose by 0.7% compared to a 2.5% increase in capacity.

The two airlines carried 167,520 tonnes of cargo and mail in November, an increase of 4.6% compared to the same month last year. The cargo and mail load factor rose by 1.1 percentage points to 68.1%.

## Singapore Airlines: the party continues

Just when you thought the Singapore Airlines' party year wouldn't end, the airline is gearing up for yet another two anniversary events.

The carrier, which celebrated a 40-year history with New Zealand this year, and 30 years of services to Christchurch, next year marks its 70th birthday and 50th Australasian milestone.

Also celebrating a milestone is Simon Turcotte, who has now been in the New Zealand general manager's chair for a year. He agrees there has been much to celebrate, not least the launch of the Capital Express from Wellington.

TRAVELinc chats with Turcotte about the carrier's successes in 2016, and what lies ahead for him and the airline next year.

[www.travelinc.co.nz/content/component/k2/item/4205-a-canadian-at-our-table](http://www.travelinc.co.nz/content/component/k2/item/4205-a-canadian-at-our-table)



Simon Turcotte

## Terminal 4 takes shape

Construction of the new passenger Changi Airport terminal building, Terminal 4, is completed.

Work will now get under way on the interior.

The two-storey terminal features two multi-storey car parks providing 1700 parking spaces, a two-storey taxi holding area, as well as three vehicular and pedestrian bridges.

A 68-metre high ramp control tower has also been constructed to enhance air traffic controllers' management of aircraft movements.

The terminal is expected to open in the second half of 2017.



## Americas

# STA travel agents explore trending Costa Rica

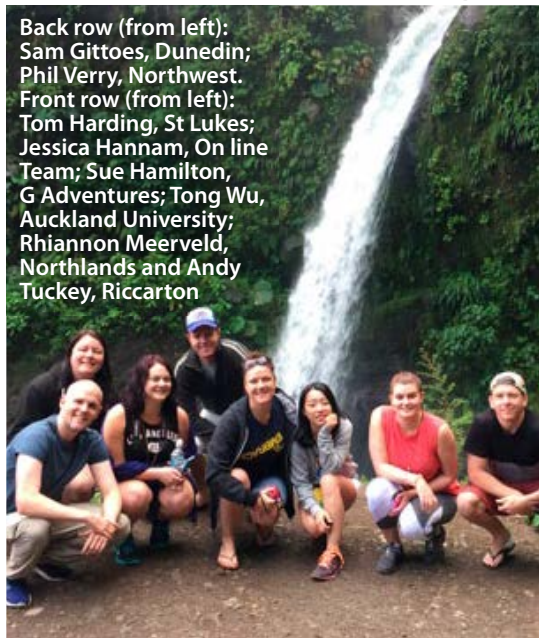
G Adventures expects Costa Rica to be on the list of must-see destinations for New Zealand travellers in 2017 with sales on the rise and interest at an all-time high.

New Zealand travellers are heading to central America in droves, according to the adventure travel company, and as new airlines launch flights from New Zealand, making it more accessible and cost-effective for Kiwis to visit, the region is expected to grow in popularity.

To mark the trend, seven STA Travel agents representing the top sellers of G Adventures' product in 2016, plus three 'wildcards', have just returned from a nine-day Costa Rica Quest where they had the opportunity to explore the travel hot spot.

The adrenaline-fueled tour had agents ziplining above the trees, hiking, canyoneering, horseback riding in the hills and soaking in volcanic hot pools. It also included a visit to G Adventures

Back row (from left):  
Sam Gittoes, Dunedin;  
Phil Verry, Northwest.  
Front row (from left):  
Tom Harding, St Lukes;  
Jessica Hannam, On line  
Team; Sue Hamilton,  
G Adventures; Tong Wu,  
Auckland University;  
Rhiannon Meerveld,  
Northlands and Andy  
Tuckey, Riccarton



not-for-profit Planeterra project in the region, a coffee plantation that provides locals with jobs and skill development.

Rhiannon Meerveld, from STA Travel Northlands, says the highlight of the

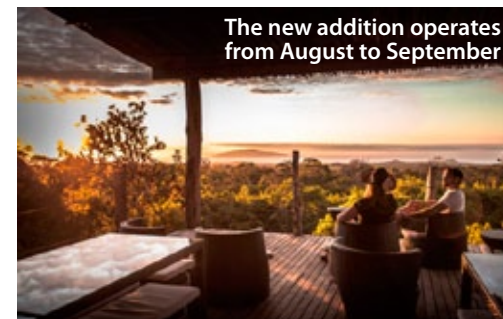
trip was seeing firsthand the positive impact tourism can have on overseas communities.

'The Planeterra project was amazing, seeing the passion they have for their work and hearing about the benefit the project has for the community. Also having local drivers, guides and hotels gave us an appreciation for the people of the country and the effect that tourism has on them,' she says.

G Adventures managing director Adrian Piotto says agent incentives and famils are a great way to reward agents, while providing them with a chance to experience the products they are selling.

'Our hard-working agents often don't find time to take a holiday and sign up for the amazing travel experiences they sell every day. Incentives like this allow them to enjoy themselves while also gaining valuable insights for their customers.'

[www.gadventures.com.au](http://www.gadventures.com.au)



The new addition operates from August to September

## Chance to see the lights

Adventure World has added a five-day Golden Aurora Circle itinerary to its 2017/18 Canada, Alaska & High Arctic brochure.

The itinerary provides travellers with opportunities to view the Aurora Borealis.

It is priced from \$2095, which includes accommodation, many meals, transport and sightseeing. Call 0508 496 753.

## Brand USA celebrate top year

Brand USA ushered in the festive spirit last Thursday with a Christmas party at Johnny Barr's in Auckland.

The event, attended by around 80 people, was designed to celebrate a top year for tourism between the two countries, thank trade for its support and to discuss incentives in the year ahead.



(From left) Elaine Beuke and Mario Santander from American Airlines; Brand USA account manager Wayne Mitcham; Hawaiian Airlines Lindsay Morgan and Brand USA Australia and New Zealand director Matt Fletcher



Mike Hearn, the American Chamber of Commerce president; Brand USA Australia and New Zealand director Matt Fletcher and Mario Santander from American Airlines

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## Australia

## Christmas opening for Mercure

New-build hotel Mercure Tamworth is ready to open its doors on 23 December.

To mark the occasion, the 4.5 star hotel is offering an opening special rate starting from A\$169 per room per night, including wifi.

The three-storey, 52-room hotel is 12kms from the music capital's regional airport and five hours drive north of Sydney.

Chief operating officer, AccorHotels Pacific, Simon McGrath says the hotel reflects the company's confidence in regional NSW's tourism sector.

## Port Stephens partner with airport to pull in more visitors

Improving the quality of tourism product and luring more overseas visitors through Newcastle Airport are on the agenda for the newly appointed members of the Board of Destination Port Stephens (DPS).

Chairman Andrew Macdonald says he is looking forward to promoting Port Stephens' \$400 million-a-year visitor economy.

'I'm keen for us to take a strategic approach in the year ahead to building on Port Stephens as a compelling, stand-alone brand,' Macdonald says.

'We boast outstanding natural assets in Port Stephens but by developing and evolving our product and lifting its

quality, we can take our brand to the next level and attract higher-yielding visitors.

'In partnership with Newcastle Airport, we're also focused on leveraging the airport to open up new domestic and international markets for our region.'

Meanwhile, the new destination marketing manager, Danny Eather, says the organisation will also put a focus on building an, all-year events calendar and lure more corporate conferencing business to Port Stephens.

'Port Stephens is always popular in summer but our mission is to ensure there is always something to see and do here year-round,' Eather says.

[www.portstephentourism.com.au](http://www.portstephentourism.com.au)

## Free trip to Barossa or Kangaroo Island

Captain Cook Cruises is offering day-trip bonuses to the Barossa Valley or Kangaroo Island, worth up to A\$635 per person, for those booking and travelling on its Murray Princess cruises in January or February 2017.

A three-night Discovery cruise starts from A\$926 per person twin share and will include a wine tour or a Barossa & Hahndorf tour worth \$139 per person.

A four-night Outside Cabin on the Outback Heritage Cruise starts from A\$1694 per person twin share and includes a wine tour and two nights at The Sage Hotel in Adelaide.

A seven-night Murraylands and Wetlands Cruise in an inside cabin starts from A\$1888 per person twin share and earns guests two nights at The Sage Hotel Adelaide and a one Day Kangaroo Island Experience, worth \$439 per person.

The Jupiters tower will be completed by 2020



## Jupiters get the green light for 200-metre tower

The Queensland Government has approved The Star Entertainment Group's application to construct a new 200-metre hotel and apartment tower at Jupiters Gold Coast.

Construction of the new 700-key complex at Broadbeach is expected to start in 2017.

The tower is the first of up to five within a future development plan for Jupiters.

The development will be undertaken by The Star Entertainment Group in a joint venture with Chow Tai Fook and Far East Consortium.

Included in the tower construction will be a restaurant and bar and a luxurious day spa.

An eighth floor recreation deck with ocean views will include a resort pool for hotel guests and residential facilities.

Construction will add to the existing building activity at Jupiters where a six-star,

## ... and adds a couple of eateries to the mix

Jupiters has opened two new food outlets, Mei Wei Dumplings and M&G Café and Bar, as part of the Gold Coast property's \$345 million transformation.

The new additions follow the success of Kiyomi, Cucina Vivo, and Garden Kitchen

17-storey luxury hotel tower is being built at the front of the property.

The two projects are part of a combined investment of A\$850 million at the Broadbeach site which will increase overall accommodation to almost 1400 rooms.

The Star Entertainment Group managing director Queensland Geoff Hogg says the new tower will continue an extensive and

& Bar, and will offer more relaxed dining alternatives for visitors and guests.

The Star Entertainment Group managing director Queensland Geoff Hogg says the outlets will cement the property's reputation as a dining and entertainment destination.

ongoing redevelopment project, which will lead next year to the rebranding of the Jupiters property to The Star Gold Coast.

'The existing transformation is going well. By the end of the year we'll have completed the refurbishment of the almost 600 rooms in the existing 31-year-old hotel, together with the addition of new food and beverage outlets,' Hogg says.



## Happy times for Mt Ruapehu family skiing

Happy Valley will be relaunched as a family-area snow park next year under a \$100 million investment plan earmarked for Mt Ruapehu's three ski areas.

Under the plan, there will be three new surface lifts into the area. Two of these will feature covers to keep guests dry. The existing lift will remain for those who wish to learn to ride a chairlift before moving up the mountain to the new Rangitira Express Quad at the Whakapapa Ski Area.

The upgrade also includes more than \$4 million in new snow-making technology at Happy Valley as well as the Whakapapa and Turoa skifields.

Happy Valley will be the first ski area in New Zealand with a Techno Alpin SF210 all-weather snowmaking system. This technology can make snow in above-zero temperatures guaranteeing the park will open for Queen's birthday weekend on 3 June, 2017 – a month earlier than usual.

The snow park will also feature a dedicated snow play zone with a covered surface. And the chairlift is to be replaced by two 26 person high-speed elevators to make that transition from the carpark faster and easier.

Whakapapa general manager Steve McGill says the area is being positioned as a place for families to enjoy their first snow experience.

More than \$21 million has been committed to the revamp in the past 18 months. A \$37 million gondola project is expected to begin in earnest early next year.

## TIA looks forward to working with new tourism minister

Tourism Industry Aotearoa looks forward to working with new Tourism Minister Paula Bennett and associate Minister Nicky Wagner on some of the big issues facing the tourism industry.

'Paula Bennett has ably supported former Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism John Key for the last two years in her role as Associate Tourism Minister. We are pleased she is continuing her involvement with the industry as the new minister,' TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

'The tourism industry has benefited enormously from having Key as Tourism

Minister for the last eight years. We are pleased the portfolio is remaining with a highly ranked Cabinet Minister, reflecting the industry's importance to New Zealand's economy.'

TIA will seek meetings with Bennett and Wagner early in the new year, to discuss the challenges facing the fast-growing tourism industry.

Roberts says the annual tourism revenue has grown from \$28 billion to \$34.7 billion in just two years. Strong growth is expected to continue over summer and throughout 2017, and the medium-term outlook is very promising.



Chris Roberts

## Blooming success for Hamilton Gardens

Hamilton Gardens won the Outstanding Park Award at the New Zealand Recreation Association conference held in Queenstown last week.

Judges say the gardens have gone from a local asset to a national and international tourist attraction.

Today Hamilton Gardens is the region's leading tourist destination, pulling in more than a million visitors a year.



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## Report shows 'overtourism' is harmful

As global tourism grows rapidly, with 2016 experiencing an increase in worldwide outbound trips by over 4.1% annually, the problem of 'overtourism' is starting to cause concern, according to a report by Canadean.

The company's latest study, *Tourism Demand and Flow in Iceland, 2011 – 2020*, found that although tourism has the potential to improve millions of lives through increased employment, it also poses serious challenges for places that cannot deal with increased visitors in terms of infrastructure and environmental strategies.

Canadean analyst Gillian Kennedy says: 'In numerous cities around the world such as Reykjavik, Amsterdam, Venice, Barcelona, and Zanzibar City, the negative consequences of increased tourism numbers have already been felt with government authorities struggling to curtail the problem while retaining their profitability.'

The market research company also found that particularly in Iceland, which has witnessed a growth of 163% for inbound tourism between

2010 and 2015, there are problems of overcrowding and pollution in major tourism sites.

Beyond environmental concerns, Iceland is also undergoing a housing crisis driven by the rampant surge in Airbnb properties, particularly in Reykjavik where there are not enough hotels to accommodate the increase in tourism flows.

Kennedy says that to combat these issues, the Icelandic government has recently hinted it will soon introduce entrance fees for tourists – money that will be invested in infrastructure and hotel capacity.

'In Barcelona, for example, the authorities have said they will fine vacation rental websites Airbnb and Homeaway US\$633,000 each for offering lodging that does not have the required permits, in a clear move to curb overtourism in the popular Spanish destination.

Meanwhile, Venice is suffering from damage due to cruise ships entering the area because of the fragile structure of the city, according to UNESCO.

## Lions' tour packages now available

All Black Tours' DHL NZ Lions Series 2017 packages have gone on sale.

The packages range from single test match options to a full 39-day tour, including tickets to each game.

International and national demand is expected to be strong for the packages, says general manager David Caldwell.

'There will be some great opportunities for

Kiwis to take some time off and explore their own country while taking in some world-class rugby and a new option for international visitors to the biggest rugby event of 2017,' says Caldwell.

The packages are available for agents at a commissionable rate of 10%.

More than 20,000 Lions supporters are expected to arrive in New Zealand for the series.

[www.allblackstours.com](http://www.allblackstours.com)



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## HoT, Hawaiian Airlines reach out for Kaikoura

House of Travel has joined forces with Hawaiian Airlines to offer three packages to Hawaii with a \$1 reserve on Trademe to raise funds for the Red Cross Kaikoura Earthquake Appeal.

The packages include accommodation for six nights and return flights from Auckland to Hawaii. The flights are to Waikiki, Maui or Hawaii Island.

House of Travel Marketing Director Ken Freer says donations from the public are still crucial for supporting communities worst hit by the earthquake. 'Donations to Red Cross came in thick and fast in the aftermath of the earthquakes to provide essentials such as clean water to those immediately affected,' Freer says. 'Red Cross is still in great need of donations for Kaikoura.'

Meanwhile, Hawaiian Airlines country manager Russell Willis says the airline is proud to support the work of Red Cross in Kaikoura and the surrounding area.

'Getting communities back on their feet and providing psychosocial first aid to those suffering emotionally post-quake are the next steps for the amazing response team at Red Cross, and we want to do everything we can to encourage Kiwis who are able to keep giving.'

The auctions, which run until Sunday, can be found on House of Travel's Trademe page:

**[www.trademe.co.nz/Members/Listings.aspx?member=5992998](http://www.trademe.co.nz/Members/Listings.aspx?member=5992998)**



**Have a great break – see you in the New Year**

Many of our readers and advertisers will be approaching the holiday season feeling more in need of a break than ever. While the statement may seem to have negative connotations it also has a silver lining – people in the travel and tourism sectors have been busier than ever because business (to put it simply) has been good.

New air services have not only added capacity to existing routes but also opened up new destinations this year – Philippines, Vietnam, Houston and USA's south and east, and South America spring immediately to mind. There is more choice than ever to China, Asia and beyond, Australia and The Pacific.

Prices are competitive, prices are attractive and consumers are responding.

At the trade level, travel agents are still seen as a valuable link in the distribution chain and this has led to more famils, trade show invites, and functions (breakfast, lunch and evening).

At TRAVELinc Memo we're predicting

more of the same in 2017, so we're hoping you can all put your feet up for a while and have a well earned rest and catch up with family and fiends. That's certainly what we're doing. This is our last Memo of 2016 but we'll be back, bright and chirpy with our first Memo of 2017 on Friday, 13 January.

See you then,  
**Stu Freeman**  
**Publisher**

Happy holidays from our travel family to yours (back from left): Andrew Denton; Gary Covich; Kate Wemyss; Stu Freeman. Front (from left): Allyssa Eastaugh; Ruth Scott; Lisa Bradley; Trish Freeman and Julie Cleaver. Absent: Amelia Lowe; Cherie Final

## Mysteries solved – our three final winners of 2016

It's the last memo Tuesday for 2016, which also means we have the final winner for our mystery shop competition for this year.

The store was STA Queenstown. Congrats to Rebekah Hensman from helloworld 5 Mile who recognised the shop from being from her neck of the woods. Well done Rebekah – a Lonely Planet's book, The World, is on its way.

Meanwhile, last week's mystery travel identity (the lady in the shadez) was Air New Zealand's Hylda Bloomfield.

To spread some Christmas cheer – and due to the overwhelming amount of entries we received – there are two winners this week: Bonnie Lynch from Gilpin Travel and Claire Gilbert, helloworld Tauranga. Copies of National Geographic Traveller, courtesy of Adventure World, are on their way.

Stay tuned for a new round of competitions in 2017.

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**MEMO**

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