

TABS ON TRAVEL TODAY

Incorporating Tabs on Travel

Monday 30 May 2016

Issue 3318

6.45am every weekday Auckland to Christchurch ✈

Jetstar

We Need To Change The Thinking; HoT

House of Travel wants to change the way Kiwis view the role of a travel agent with its new brand campaign—and chief executive Mark O'Donnell is hoping other retail brands will follow.

HoT has launched its first new brand campaign for five years, airing a somewhat reflective television commercial designed to inspire Kiwi travellers to focus on the moments and how an agent can complement their travel planning.

"It's about making House of Travel stand out in the currently 'homogenous range' of travel advertising—but it's also wider than that, it's about getting New Zealanders to think about travel agents differently, they can do their on-line research then come into a travel agent and we think the best holidays are created together with input from the agent and the consumer," says O'Donnell.

Air NZ's Leanne Geraghty welcomed the new campaign which she said was a refreshing approach to get Kiwi travellers re-thinking the way they use

an agent. "We are also proud to be the launch partner in this new innovative brand campaign," she added.

... Adapt Or Lose

O'Donnell says the days of travel agents as the gate keepers of travel are well-passed, thanks to the internet. "Most travellers are now doing research on-line and the industry must adapt or travel agencies will get left behind," he says. "This is about getting people to bring their ideas to us, and travel agents as a whole, and get that message across that the best holidays are done together with an agent."

The HoT boss says the new approach has the potential to attract more people back to the travel agency distribution. "There is a misconception that agents only sell package holidays—to stay relevant we've got to change that thinking."

... TAANZ Reaction

TAANZ boss Andrew Olsen has welcomed HoT's new approach which he says will also put the agent distribution model in the lounge of non-agency using travellers. "TAANZ and all its brands are in their own way reclaiming the non-agency using traveller and we hope HoT enjoys success from this campaign and in a wider context, the desire for more [Kiwis] to plan 'that' journey and do so with a travel agent," says Olsen. For the ads, [CLICK HERE](#).

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GO HOLIDAYS!

Luxon: Carrier To Cows?

Air New Zealand boss Christopher Luxon is tipped to take over as the new Fonterra boss, according to speculation on both sides of the Tasman.

Current Fonterra chief executive Theo Spierings has not actually resigned, and the Fonterra board has today said the media speculation on the matter is 'completely untrue'.

However that hasn't stopped the market chatter around Luxon.

Unnamed market commentators are convinced Spierings is on his way out and Luxon is 'the one to watch' as his replacement.

Under Luxon's leadership, NZ's value has almost tripled. Granted that's in part due to the lower fuel costs and fleet efficiencies already in place, but in his tenure at NZ there's no arguing he's made significant market gains. It's not the first time Luxon has been rumoured to be on the move, last year he was said to be in the mix to step in as the new Woolworths Australia boss.

Missing Travel Today?

Over the past 10 days, a few *Travel Today* subscribers have not been receiving their daily *Travel Today* fix, due to issues involving spam filters.

It was established that one of the several overseas servers from our international spam filter supplier had been blacklisted, so we implemented an alternative service provider last Thu.

However, we have also had major problems with that new provider and IT techos on both sides of the Tasman have been frantically looking for the cause of the outages.

They believe the problem has now been fixed. Let's hope so.

The backlog of stalled e-mails was finally released this afternoon, and we'd like to hear from anyone still missing editions of *Travel Today*.

Many, many apologies to subscribers and advertisers for this issue.

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TAANZ Awards Finalists

The finalists for the 2016 TAANZ National Travel Industry Awards have been announced, with the winners set to be revealed at a gala dinner hosted by Urzila Carlson in Auckland on 10 Sep.

There's 22 categories in this year's awards, 13 of which will be judged (including 12 agent categories and one supplier category). For details of the finalists, and to purchase tickets to the gala dinner, [CLICK HERE](#)



NEW ZEALAND
OLYMPIC TRAVEL

New Zealand Olympic Travel, the only Rio 2016 Authorised Ticket Reseller for New Zealand residents, have a range of premium accommodation options available in Rio over the Olympic Games period.

Availability is limited and includes the popular NCL Getaway Cruise Ship docked in Port Maravilha, the 4.5 Star Sheraton Barra Hotel and a variety of other 3-5 star options across the zones of the Games.

Premium event tickets are still available for NZ residents to purchase through New Zealand Olympic Travel directly by registration at www.nzolympictravel.co.nz

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Vanuatu Launches Winter Campaign



The Vanuatu Tourism Office today rolled out its first-ever destination campaign in the New Zealand market, imploring Kiwi travellers to 'discover what matters' in a bid to stimulate interest and bookings going forward.

VTO's local representative Jacquie Carson believes the \$570,000 campaign will 'definitely inspire travellers to consider Vanuatu as a great winter holiday escape'. "There are some fantastic deals in the market place at present to Vanuatu to accompany Air Vanuatu's amazing \$500 return inclusive of taxes airfare," she says.

Targeting couples and families in particular, the campaign will be spearheaded by a television commercial drawing on the 'importance of taking time out and slowing down', and supported by a new consumer-facing website discovervanuatu.co.nz, social media activity, and co-operative campaigns with wholesalers, traditional media and digital influencers.

"Whether it's to slow down to a tropical pace; reconnect with friends and nature on a pristine white beach; or share laughter with the friendly locals, Vanuatu's new campaign will inspire visitors to uncover what's important to them and in turn, reveal how they can experience these important life tenets in Vanuatu," says VTO general manager Linda Kalpoi. "We want to

bring friends, family, health and happiness to the forefront as these are the things that really make a holiday special."

The two phase strategy will begin today with an 'aspirational and tactical approach', while the second phase, including social media and a competition element, will run in Jul.

... Trade Element

The activity complements ongoing trade activity, including a recently launched trade website, vanuatuspecialists.com, famil deals and opportunities and an upcoming agent roadshow, adds VTO.



CX's First A350

Cathay Pacific has taken delivery of the first of its 22 A350 XWB aircraft, one of which is due to start flying the Auckland-Hong Kong route by the end of the year. The newly-delivered A350 is due to launch on flights to Manila from 01 Jun, before taking on the new Hong Kong-Gatwick route from 02 Sep.

"We are looking forward to seeing the A350 on the New Zealand route which will be one of the first in our network to have the aircraft, and it is set to be the first A350 to operate in our market," says CX country manager New Zealand and Pacific Islands Mark Pirihi. "In the meantime, from Sep Kiwi travellers making their way to Europe will have the option to experience a completely new business, premium economy and economy class, with all new seats and the latest in entertainment and technology."

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Mauritius Demand Strong

South African Airways has experienced 'significant growth' in demand for travel to Mauritius, with passengers increasing by 9.5% last year to more than 100,000 passengers a year, and has added an additional flight per week, ex Johannesburg, in response. In turn, Australasian customers can now fly overnight to South Africa and connect with its Mauritius flight, arriving mid-afternoon that day. It offers 11 weekly flights to the destination in total. See flysaa.co.nz

Agents Stoked With Tahiti Cruise



A group of Kiwi agents has just returned from a family to Tahiti, each having had 'their expectations exceeded' after cruising aboard Island Escape Cruise's Island Passage.

Hosted by the boutique vessel's sales manager Steve Parker, the group enjoyed a five-night variation of the seven-night Tahitian Affair cruise, with highlights including a river safari in

Raiatea, a 4WD eco-tour of Huahine, lagoon cruising and snorkeling safaris in Taha'a and Bora Bora.

"The feedback has been tremendous and the private yacht-style nature of the product, which isn't available in this destination, is a winner," says Parker. "... Their expectations were exceeded by the destination, the boutique nature of the M.V. Island Passage, the fabulous crew of 10, oversized staterooms and suites and exceptional onboard dining experience." Parker adds that 2017 rates and dates are available now, with momentum gaining for FIT, groups and charters. See islandescapecruises.com

Pictured enjoying the cruise is: Poul Nielson, Hawthorn Travel Melbourne; Alicia Sutton, HoT Matamoras; Michelle Williams, Calder & Lawson Hamilton; Lee Broadbelt, HoT Orewa; Rob Thompson, Tahiti Tourisme; Erica Banks, HoT Newmarket; Carl Sutton, HoT Morrinsville; Melissa Ferguson, Mary Rossi Travel Sydney; Sharon Waipouri, HoT Whangarei; Katrina Stewart, Travelcom Mount Manganui; and Jacqui Kennedy, HoT Product Cruise.

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Portland's Art Offering

Portland officials are setting up a designated space for art vendors to sell their wares on days when cruise ships visit the city. The Waterfront Marketplace, to be located in a green space between Maine State Pier and Ocean Gateway, will be used on days when ships with more than 1000 passengers are scheduled to be in port.

APT Myanmar Options

Clients can now book APT's Myanmar 2017/18 river cruises, with four itineraries on offer; and for the first time, the cruise line is offering a combination itinerary featuring Myanmar and India.

Also on offer is a combination Myanmar and Mekong cruise, as well as two itineraries that focus purely on Myanmar.

Sailing onboard the newly-built, 60-guest RV Samatha, clients will have the chance to see local craft industries such as a silk and lotus weaving factory, a silver smith workshop and more.

The cruise line is also offering special fares on flights for bookings by 30 Sep. See aptouring.co.nz for full details.

Europe River Savings

Tempo Holidays has early booking bonuses on a range of Lueftner 2017 cruises, with a saving of 50% for the second passenger and no single supplement for solo travellers. Clients who book and deposit their 2017 Europe river cruise before 31 Aug can save up to \$1947 per couple, while solo travellers will save up to 30%. E-mail res@tempoholidays.co.nz for full details.



Dream Cruises On Sale

Dream Cruises, an Asian luxury cruise line, is officially on sale in New Zealand. Onboard Genting Dream, which is currently undergoing a fit-out and will enter service 06 Nov, itineraries include destinations such as Singapore, Vietnam and Hong Kong. Genting Dream will accommodate 3400 guests and features 35 restaurant and bar concepts, personalised shopping experiences, pools, rock climbing, mini golf, onboard speakers and more; while clients will also have the chance to explore underwater thanks to two submersibles (pictured). See dreamcruiseline.com

Free Punta Arena Night

World Journeys is offering one free hotel night in Punta Arena for clients booking an Australis Cruise in Patagonia by 31 Jul. The offer applies to specific departures in Oct and Dec this year or Jan and Mar in 2017. E-mail info@worldjourneys.co.nz

Royal, Celebrity Orders

Royal Caribbean Cruises has placed an order to build a fifth Oasis-class ship, for delivery in 2021; whilst Celebrity Cruises has made an order for two Edge-class ships, billed to be a step up from its Solstice-class. The two ships are scheduled for delivery in 2021 and 2022.

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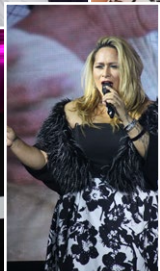
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HAWAIIAN
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New HoT Adverts Launched



House of Travel has launched its first brand campaign for five years—and the retail chain gave its owner operators and key suppliers a sneak peek of the first brand adverts last Fri evening, ahead of last night's official campaign launch last night.

The retail chain admitted the initiative was one of the industry's worst kept secrets—but while the muted tone and slower pace of the television commercials surprised a few at the event, all agreed it would stand out in the clutter travel space.

HoT boss Mark O'Donnell says the brand was thrilled with the level of support for the campaign, the industry turn-out at the launch and the positive feedback.

The campaign ads feature real consultants, helping real travellers to create enriching holidays, adds HoT marketing manager Ken Freer. "The right holiday at the right time has the

power to enrich people," he added. "Our brand promise is that the best holidays are created together...and this is just the beginning."

1 'HoT Stuff': House of Travel's Ken Freer with Colenso's Nick Worthington and HoT boss Mark O'Donnell are hoping the new campaign will differentiate the brand and see Kiwis engaging with travel agents more than ever before. **2** Air New Zealand's chief commercial officer Cam Wallace and House of Travel owner and founder Chris Paulsen. **3** HoT's Dave Fordyce with Nick Worthington from Colenso. **4** Tanya Aitken from HoT Papamoa with APT's Anne Waterhouse and Chris Hopkins from HoT Papamoa. **5** Orbit Auckland's Brendan Drury, with Glen Armstrong from HoT Ellerslie, HoT's Jayne Thornley and Cam Wallace from Air New Zealand. **6** Susie Bernard from HoT Lakers Gore who is one of the consultants who stars in

the new brand campaign. **7** Allianz travel insurance trio, Selina McGowan, Will Ashcroft and Lindsay Stott. **8** Avis/Budget's Guy Robinson with HoT's David Beattie and Chris Hamill from Driveaway Holidays. **9** Tourism Fiji's Wayne Deed and

Kate Strange from Visit Sunshine Coast. **10** Destination NSW's Sam Cameron with Adele from Air New Zealand and Francis Travel Marketing's Tony Smith. **11** Air New Zealand's Leanne Geraghty and HoT boss Mark O'Donnell.

New Vanuatu Tour

What is described as a fun new tour at The Summit and trails through the gardens, into a sandalwood plantation and along jungle tracks and includes a lookout post over Mele Bay, Hideaway Island and Port Vila. The tour departs twice daily and takes 1.5 to 2 hours. Cost is AUD99 adult/AUD49 child (10-12 years). Participants must be at least 10 years old and weigh at least 40kg. Prices includes pickup from Nambawan Cafe in Port Vila at 1000 and 1315.

Mickey Ups His Game

Mickey's Royal Friendship Faire will open at Magic Kingdom Park on 17 Jun. The live show on the Cinderella Castle Forecourt Stage will have special appearances by Tiana and Naveen from The Princess and the Frog, Rapunzel and Flynn from Angled and Anna and Elsa from Frozen. Goofy, Donald and Daisy also appear helping Mickey to organize a 'joyous festival of fantastic costumes, lively dancing, special effects magic and memorable musical moments'.

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QF Asia Fares

Qantas has tactical fares from Bangkok, Phuket, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur from \$999 return, available for sales until midnight 04 Jun. See qantas.co.nz/agents for details.

Industry Diary

MAY

STA 'Beautiful Samoa NZ Roadshow'

Wellington: Tue 31, The Boatshed, 1730-1930.

JUNE

STA 'Beautiful Samoa NZ Roadshow'

Christchurch: Wed 01, Hagley Oval, 1730-1930

Auckland: Thu 02, Aotea Centre, Lower NZI Room, 1730-1930.

Korea Road Show

Auckland: Fri 10, Rendezvous Hotel, 1800.

Starwood Expo

Auckland: Mon 20, The Maritime Room, 1500-1930.

Globus family of brands, Rocky Mountaineer 2017 "The Americas" Season

Auckland, Central: Mon 27, Novotel Hotel, 1745.

Auckland, North: Tue 28, Takapuna Boating Club, 1745.

Wellington: Tue 28, Lone Star Café, 1745.

Nelson: Wed 29, Lone Star Café 1745.

Blenheim: Thu 30, Ten Pin Bowling, 1745.

JULY

Globus family of brands, Rocky Mountaineer, 2017 "The Americas" Season

Invercargill: Mon 04, Kelvin Hotel, 1745.

Dunedin: Tue 05, Lone Star Café, 1745.

Christchurch: Wed 06, Lone Star Café, 1745.

Hamilton: Mon 18, Hamilton Gardens Café, 1745.

Tauranga: Tue 19, Macau, 1745.

Napier: The Crown Hotel, 1745.

AUGUST

SPANTO roadshow

Palmerston North: Tue 09, The Distinction Hotel. Time tba.

New Plymouth: Wed 10, The Novotel. Time tba.

News & Product

NZ IAH Flights The 'Motherlode'



Air New Zealand's direct flights to Houston have been described as the 'motherlode' by Brand USA boss Christopher Thompson, as the organisation looks to grow international visitation to 100 million by 2021.

Speaking at the conclusion of the Brand USA and Air NZ megafam in Houston on Fri, Thompson says new services like the NZ flights are critical to the organisation reaching its goal, particularly when it comes to directing visitors further throughout the country.

"New services like the Houston flights open new opportunities for both [Australia and New Zealand] markets to access not just Texas but new destinations and new parts of the country," says Thompson.

"Houston is the motherlode—it opens up a whole other part of the country to a whole new market."

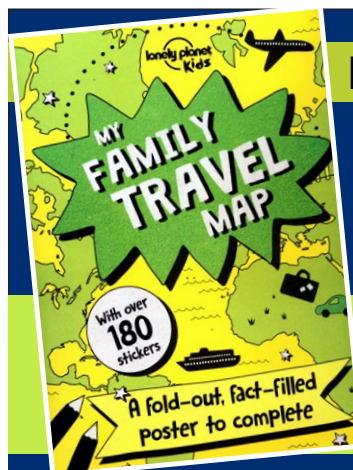
The flights have been a 'phenomenal success' for Air NZ, added the carrier's head of leisure sales for Australia Blair Catton, who said a lot of that is 'thanks to the people in this room'.

Both Catton and Thompson paid special mention to Brand USA's Kiwi rep Wayne Mitcham for organising the Taste USA megafam, which saw 60 agents from across Australia and New

Zealand eat their way across six states. Planning is already underway on the 2017 megafam.

A key part of the fam is showcasing USA's cuisine, which often doesn't get the respect it deserves, says Brand USA. Pictured: **1** VIPs: Brad Smyth, Texas Tourism; Mike Waterman, Visit Houston; Brand USA's Cathy Dominaco; Jo Palmer, Gate 7/Brand USA; Christopher Thompson, Brand USA; and Blair Catton, Air NZ. **2** Team Maine and Massachusetts: Natalie Frowde, Travel Managers; Colleen Tyree, NZ Travel Brokers; Kate Costello, NZ Travel Brokers; Jeffrey Benfell, You Travel Bethlehem; and Leisa Steele, helloworld Ponsonby. **3** Team Louisi-

ana: Jo Foster, Travel Managers; Carolyn Smith, HoT Morrinsville; Sandy Ramage, World Travellers Waikanae; Andrew Parke, World Travellers Fuzi-on Travel; Nadia Finlayson, Helloworld Hamilton; Sally Mallory, HoT Richmond; and Karen Kidd, You Travel Whangarei. **4** Christopher Thompson and Wayne Mitcham, Brand USA with Jorge Franz, Visit Houston. **5** Team Florida: Sofie Myers, First Travel; Carla McKinnon, HoT Wanganui; Aaron Ardern, HoT Te Awamutu; Dani Schildenfeld, Air NZ; and Nicola Fair, NZ Travel Brokers.



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Or, if you miss out on a free copy, Travel Today readers can access Lonely Planet titles at 20% off RRP. [CLICK HERE](#) for details



Houston Heats Up For Super Bowl



The growing numbers of Kiwis heading to Houston will find a completely new city as it undergoes a 'renaissance' ahead of its hosting the Super Bowl next year, says Visit Houston.

While there are no official statistics yet, Texas Tourism director Brad Smyth says the state has noticed an increase in visitors from New Zealand and Australia in the six months following the launch of Air New Zealand's new direct flights.

"What we've been hearing is a lot of anecdotal information from our partners around the state about getting a lot more New Zealand visitors," he says. "We understand NZ is going

daily in Dec and that's a very good representation of how successful this flight had been."

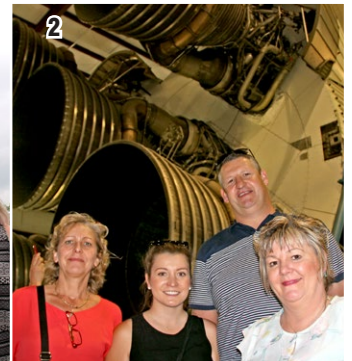
Many Kiwi visitors travel through Houston, an 'amazing city and a great gateway' offering amazing nightlife, museums and tax-free shopping. Repeat visitors next year won't recognise the city, adds Visit Houston boss Mike Waterman. "We're going through a major renaissance, there's so many infrastructure improvements going on to accommodate the super bowl," he says. Houston is the 'city of the future' because of its diversity, and with no ethnic majority there's a hugely diverse range of dining options, he adds.

1 Team Texas at the most instagrammed spot in Houston: John Stewart, Air NZ; Stephanie Huijs, HoT Stephen Parsons; Leonie Paul, HoT; Jessica Turley, helloworld Henderson; Meetesh Patel, Flight Centre Parnell; and Lara Gieseke, Flight Centre. **2** Agents on the megafam were treated to an evening at the baseball. Watching the Houston Astros win the game is Team Texas' Lara Gieseke, Flight Centre; Wayne Mitcham, Brand USA; and Jessica Turley, helloworld Henderson. **3** An official welcome at the Minute Maid Stadium. **4** Cheering on the Astros: Leisa Steele, helloworld Ponsonby and Kate Costello, NZ Travel Brokers.



Buffalo Soldiers

Leisa Steele, helloworld Ponsonby and Natalie Frowde, Travel Managers, pictured with Brand USA's Wayne Mitcham, won special Buffalo Soldiers Museum jackets as top sellers in the incentive. The Houston museum is the only one in the USA dedicated primarily to preserving the legacy and honour of African-American soldiers. See buffalosoldiermuseum.com



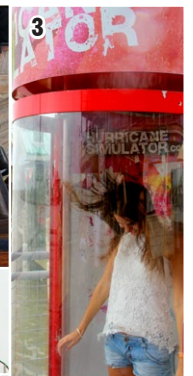
NASA's Space Centre A Top Houston Attraction

Space Centre Houston is the official visitor centre for NASA's centre for human spaceflight activities, and draws thousands of visitors each year keen to explore the fascinating history of human space exploration. A highlight of the centre is the new Independence Plaza exhibit, which opened in Jan and allows visitors to wander around a replica of the shuttle Inde-

pendence as well as the converted Boeing aircraft that carried it. See spacecenter.org

1 Pictured in front of the shuttle and aircraft is Dani Schildenfeld, Air NZ; Sofie Myers, First Travel.

2 Karen Kidd, You Travel Whangarei; Paige Haeata, NZ; Andrew Parke, World Travellers Fuzion Travel; and Sandy Ramage, World Travellers Waikanae.



Riding The Kemah Boardwalk Coaster

The Kemah Boardwalk is a 60 acre theme park built on the shores of Galveston Bay and Clear Lake, around 50km from downtown Houston. Considered one of the top boardwalks in the US, it includes more than 10 restaurants and of course plenty of rides, including a pretty terrifying wooden roller coaster called the Boardwalk Bullet. See kemahboardwalk.com

Pictured is: **1** Debby McRobbie, HoT Jenni Nilsson Hastings, on the carousel. **2** Buzz Thomson, HoT Albany and Nicola Sorensen, NZ Travel Brokers on the roller coaster. **3** Bex Farnell, Willimments tries out the Hurricane Simulator. **4** The Boardwalk Bullet. **5** On the Kemah Boardwalk: Aaron Ardern, HoT Te Awamutu and Sofie Myers, First Travel.