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VOTE NOW
Japan to appoint rep in NZ as trade interest shows no sign of slowing

By Trish Freeman

Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) is finalising the appointment of a New Zealand representative who should be announced by mid-June.

The news comes as Japan continues to grow in popularity as a holiday destination for Kiwis. The interest this is generating within the trade here was evident last Thursday when the destination saw 140-plus travel agents attend its road show at Auckland’s Pullman Hotel.

It’s no question the Rugby World Cup from September to November has helped the hype but Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) believes interest from New Zealand will continue well beyond the rugby tournament.

The organisation has been working hard to dispel some misconceptions that Japan is expensive, has a language barrier or is crowded.

Flight Centre Meadowbank’s Dylan Joffe is seeing more interest in Japan and says while it is often seen as an expensive country to visit, once people get out of Tokyo they will see this is a misconception. ‘For example, you can pick up a cooked meal in

Continued on page 3
Kiwi trade gets behind A Force for Good event

The New Zealand travel industry has quickly got behind an event that encourages and celebrates diversity and inclusion in the sector.

A Force For Good is being held in Auckland on 9 March 2020 and founder and managing director Helene Taylor says there are already only eight tables left from an original 300 seats.

The event has also quickly attracted a range of sponsors and top notch speakers.

Principal sponsor is Air New Zealand, gold sponsors include Abercrombie & Kent, Flight Centre Travel Group (NZ), Globus Family of Brands, G Adventures, Expedia Group and IHG. Silver sponsors are Intrepid Group and The Travel Corporation.

The after party sponsor is Innovative Travel and media supporter is TRAVELinc Memo.

Among confirmed speakers are Bruce Poon Tip, founder of G Adventures, James Thornton, global CEO Intrepid Group, and Gai Tyrrell, managing director Globus Family of Brands.

Others include Leanne Geraghty, general manager sales Air New Zealand; David Coombes, managing director Flight Centre Travel Group (NZ); Simon Mckearney, executive general manager HelloWorld NZ; Robyn Galloway, managing director Innovative Travel; Sujata Raman, managing director Abercrombie & Kent; Mark O’Donnell, CEO House of Travel; Demi Kavaratzis, director commercial strategy and service Expedia Group; Leanne Harwood, managing director Australasia IHG Group, and many more.

‘Set to be one of the most inspiring days the industry has seen, A Force For Good has prompted companies to contact us and reserve tables before they have even gone on sale,’ says Taylor.

Anyone wishing to be involved as a sponsor should email: hello@aforceforgoodhub.com

• Earlier story TRAVELinc Memo 18 April
Japan to appoint rep in NZ

Continued from page 1

a convenience store for around $5, which
includes meat, rice, vegetable and fish
(amongst other things). A bowl of noodles
or a local dish in a local restaurant or café
can cost $6-$12,’ he says.

The standard itinerary for most people
on a seven to 10-day trip is Tokyo (three
to four days), Kyoto and Nara (three to
four days) and Hiroshima (one to two
days) continues Joffe.

‘If travellers have a few extra days
I recommend an overnight stay in a
Ryokan in Hakone (for views of Mt Fuji), a temple stay at Koya San (in
Wakayama), or side trips to Nikko
(north of Tokyo) or Kinosaki Onsen
(west of Kyoto and Osaka).’

JNTO’s communications and digital
marketing manager, Stephanie Sng
says visitors can be in countryside just
30 minutes from Tokyo and there’s
a wide variety of accommodation
available, from staying ‘simply’ in
temples, to traditional ryokans and
country homesteads that have been
repurposed into accommodation.

‘When people think of Japan they
have two images: Tokyo and Kyoto,’
says Joffe. ‘I advise clients to try
to get out of the big cities for some
authenticity, and enjoy local Japanese
hospitality. A great way to do this is to
do a homestay or temple stay during
your visit in Japan. Tokyo also has a lot
of great attractions that are free.’

At a recent At Marriott event in
Auckland, Ramesh Daryanani, VP
global sales Asia Pacific for Marriott
International, identified Japan as being
‘a destination to watch.’ Twelve Fairfield
by Marriott hotels will open across five
prefectures in Japan – Kyoto, Wakayama,
Mie, Gifu and Tochigi – by late 2020 and
another three by 2021. They will be near
popular roadside rest stations that are
often close to national parks and historic
UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

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New at Trafalgar and Costsaver

Jayesh Kesry has recently joined The Travel Corporation as marketing manager for Trafalgar and Costsaver. Having come from a strong digital marketing background with Fullers 360, Kesry brings industry knowledge from his time working for a global youth touring company in London. After many years of travelling around the world (with favourite destinations so far including Japan and Morocco), he is back in his home town of Auckland and focused on raising awareness of Trafalgar and Costsaver in New Zealand.

TAANZ Town Hall trips continue

TAANZ hosted agents in Nelson at its Town Hall meeting last week.

The association says some late apologies kept numbers down but spirits were high and a wide range of topics was covered.

TAANZ will take steps to put together a remuneration survey anonymising the results to give members a better view on remuneration, benefits and city / region.

“We also discussed the school to agency pathway and what TAANZ and its kindred associations are doing to help focus on travel agent as a career,” says TAANZ chief executive Andrew Olsen. ‘TAANZ has also made a decision to continue with the Town Hall style meeting which will recommence with Hamilton in late November following the TAANZ AGM and Summit in October.’

Exclusive Pacific get-together

Four Pacific Island destinations are banding together for a function targeting specific agents later this year.

Meet the Pacific, at Villa Maria Winery Auckland on 22 October, will be tailored towards travel professionals who book groups and special events (including weddings) and incentives and conferences.

The event is being hosted by New Caledonia, Samoa, Tahiti and Vanuatu and supported by SPANTO (South Pacific Association of National Tourism Offices).

The event will be invitation only and numbers will be limited.

Along with afternoon booth sessions there will be entertainment and wine tasting.

Register interest to: fades@xtra.co.nz

New comms exec at QT

QT Hotels and Resorts has appointed Shandelle Battersby to the position of communications executive for New Zealand. Bringing almost 20 years’ experience as a travel and lifestyle journalist to the role, Battersby joins QT after her most recent position as marketing and communications executive for Fiji marine tourism company, South Sea Cruises.

Since 1997 Battersby has worked in various roles for the New Zealand Herald, including on the photographic desk, the news desk, as a production sub-editor and as deputy travel editor at Travel and Lifestyle and commercial editor at Viva.

Battersby will be based in Auckland and will spend time both in Wellington and Queenstown.

Thank you for nominating Carnival NZ in the 2019 TAANZ National Travel Industry Awards.

Please vote for Carnival NZ for Best Cruise Operator

Vote Now
Indigenous insight in Taiwan

By Kathy Ombler

New Zealand Maori connections with Taiwan’s indigenous tribes were apparent when a China Airlines/Taiwan Tourism Bureau hosted group visited tribal cultural centres and villages in Taiwan last week.

It is widely believed that Taiwan is where the cultures and languages of the Austronesian tribes began, and that the indigenous people of Taiwan and Maori are genetically connected.

You can definitely see the connection, says Flight Centre’s Jerome Gilbert (Te Atihaunui a Paparangi/Nga Puhi). ‘The whare (houses) are similar and I can hear it in the language. When we visited the Atayal people in Leshui Village it felt like being back home with my uncle on the Whanganui River.’

Leshui Village, in Yilan County, hosts a hands-on cultural experience. The group was welcomed as family; dressed in traditional style (including ‘tattoos’), taught a traditional dance, prepared their own ‘hunter’s lunch’ (rice in a bamboo stick), tried a touch of traditional ‘pig hunting’ (as in archery), learned the history of the tribe, and left as friends.

The group also met the Amis people, who settled in Taiwan more than 7000 years ago. At the Amis Folk Centre, near south eastern city Taitung, Amis leader Halusang Cilo explained the design of his bright attire (the short skirt and crop top designed to show off his muscles to his prospective mother-in-law), a cultural show was performed by the Amis Kakeng Musical Group, and traditional lunch was served.

Leshui Village and the Amis Folk Centre are two of many cultural centres managed by indigenous tribes in Taiwan.

Offer at Indonesian resort

Indonesia’s luxury wilderness resort, Nihi Sumba has a special offer for guests booking a minimum five-night stay. The resort is offering complimentary return flights from Bali (via NAM Air, which is owned and operated by Garuda) and airport transfers to the resort.

Nihi Sumba is on the island of Sumba, 400km east of Bali.

The offer includes:
• All meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner, afternoon teas and coffees;
• All non-alcoholic beverages;
• Wifi;
• Tour of the Sumba Foundation projects and mountain biking;
• Stand-up paddle boarding and snorkelling around Nihi Sumba beach (weather permitting);
• Participation in scheduled group yoga classes.

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VOTE
Korean Air has taken delivery of its 200th Boeing

**KE’s 200th Boeing**

Korean Air took delivery of its 25th B777-300ER earlier this month – it’s also the airline’s 200th Boeing aircraft and will sport special livery to show it.

Korean Air first took delivery of a Boeing, the B707-3B5C, in 1971 and currently operates a total of 119 on both international and domestic routes as part of its passenger and cargo fleets.

The new aircraft was first operated on the Incheon-Fukuoka route, and will primarily fly to San Francisco, Osaka, Hanoi and other international destinations along with the 24 other B777-300ERs.

**NZ’s multi-billion-dollar fuel-efficient investment**

Air New Zealand will purchase eight Boeing 787-10 Dreamliner aircraft powered by GE Aviation’s GEnx-1B engines.

The first of these highly fuel-efficient aircraft will join the Air New Zealand fleet in 2022 and together they will have the potential to save 190,000 tonnes of carbon per year.

Air New Zealand currently operates a fleet of 13 787-9 Dreamliners which chief executive Christopher Luxon says have proved to be the ideal aircraft for the airline’s Pacific Rim focus.

‘The 787-10 is longer and even more fuel efficient. However, the game changer for us has been that by working closely with Boeing, we’ve ensured the 787-10 will meet our network needs, including the ability to fly missions similar to our current 777-200 fleet.’

The 787-10 offers almost 15% more space for customers and cargo than the 787-9.

In addition to the eight firm orders, the agreement includes options to increase the number of aircraft from eight to up to 20.

The airline has also negotiated substitution rights that allow a switch from the larger 787-10 aircraft to smaller 787-9s, or a combination of the two models for future fleet and network flexibility. The delivery schedule can also be delayed or accelerated according to market demand.

The new long-haul aircraft will replace Air New Zealand’s fleet of eight 777-200 aircraft, which will be phased out by 2025. Combined with GE’s GEnx-1B engines, they are expected to be 25% more fuel efficient than the aircraft they’re replacing.

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Cruising

Ride the wave of cruising trends says Seabourn

A wave of non-cruisers cruising is a trend that agents can leverage when selling, says Seabourn’s senior vice president, global sales and marketing, Chris Austin, who visited Auckland recently.

‘Anecdotally we think about 50% of our Seabourn passengers have never cruised before, maybe a little bit higher than that. Seabourn doesn’t just appeal to cruise clientele, it appeals to people that just love really good quality travel.’

Combining land-based vacations with cruising is another trend being seen by the company.

Seabourn offers 11 immersive journeys including a safari in South Africa before picking the ship up in Cape Town, and a nine-night Red Centre and Great Barrier Reef experience in Australia.

Tony Archbold, Seabourn senior director sales and marketing, says one of the biggest trends, not just in cruising, is authenticity.

‘We are the official cruise line of UNESCO. People say ‘we go to UNESCO destinations’, but Seabourn goes with UNESCO.

‘Lyricist Sir Tim Rice, chef Thomas Keller and Doctor Andrew Wiel are some of the global experts that deliver product on Seabourn.

‘These partnerships bring in another level of authenticity to the experience and that’s what guests want.’

Austin says consumers that have clear passions around, for example, spa and wellness or culinary seek out Seabourn, and agents should use this to their advantage.

‘Some travel advisors are recommending customers do a cruise on Seabourn because they can have an amazing culinary offering.

‘And that’s a great tip for travel agents – if they’re sitting down learning a little bit more about their client, maybe it’s a new client, they need to understand what the passion points are for their client and then they match them up with the right experience.

‘Another tip is to leverage the videos we have. Agents will close the sale far faster if they use the power of video than if they don’t.’

Austin says one of the hardest things to get across to agents and consumers is that Seabourn doesn’t fit the mould of snobbish luxury.

‘Sometimes when people talk about high end travel they think of stuffiness and formality whereas genuinely Seabourn is a great fun product.’

– By Aleisha Moore

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A blimp of sunrise

Carnival Cruise Line’s #ChooseFun AirShip celebrated the start of summer and the New York debut of Carnival Sunrise last week.

The 128 foot long AirShip’s eastern tour is visiting locations across all five New York boroughs, New Jersey and Philadelphia, flying over many popular landmarks and events.

For every person who posts a photo of the colorful blimp using the hashtag #ChooseFun, Carnival will make a US$10 donation to its longtime charitable partner St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital®, up to a maximum donation of US$20,000.

Carnival Sunrise will spend the summer in New York operating four to 14-day voyages before repositioning to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., for a winter schedule of Caribbean and Bahamian cruises beginning in October 2019.

www.francistravelmarketing.co.nz

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Ireland’s great lighthouse trail

The latest addition to Ireland’s list of Great Lighthouses is the Great Light in Belfast. The 130-year-old optic is one of the largest of its kind ever built and is a rare maritime artefact.

It is now showcased on the Titanic Walkway in the heart of Belfast’s Titanic Quarter, where a series of interpretation panels present the maritime and industrial heritage of the area.

Eight of the 13 designated as Great Lighthouses offer accommodation, while others offer guided tours and interactive exhibitions.

Six of the Great Lighthouses guard the Wild Atlantic Way, among them Clare Island in County Mayo, which has been decommissioned and converted into luxury accommodation that features wrought-iron beds and art deco furnishings.

www.ireland.com

Northern Ireland Open transformed

The NI Open has been rebranded as the ISPS Handa World Invitational, presented by Modern Golf! Management, a new world pro event for women and men golfers.

The men’s tournament stays part of the second-tier European Challenge Tour, while invitations will be offered to the world’s best in the women’s event.

The tournament will take place from 15-18 August and will see the leading male and female players compete in separate tournaments at the same time, with the first two rounds split over Galgorm Castle Golf Club and Massereene Golf Club, both in County Antrim.

The final two rounds will be back at Galgorm, which has hosted the NI Open since it began in 2010.

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Couples to the right… families to the left

Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa is taking on something of a split personality with the imminent opening of its second beach club.

Nadi Coconut Beach Club, for kids only, will feature a 150-metre zipline, splash ‘n’ play area, chill out zone, kids’ café and more.

‘We want the kids to wake up at 6am and beg their parents to take them there,’ says general manager Vincent Macquet.

The opening of the new club comes straight after the opening of the revamped and extended Waitui Club – a successful adults-only area.

‘The right hand side of the resort is now heavily couples orientated, the left hand side is driven by the family market,’ says Macquet.

In other Sofitel Fiji news, the resort’s Breeze bar will transform into a sound proof night club from 10pm through to late, Lagoon Restaurant is being renovated and will reopen September in a market kitchen style with seven different international cooking stations, and Fiji Airways will open a full time ticketing service (it already has a check in counter there) from September.

Resort reconnects

Lalati on Beqa Island used last week’s FTE to reconnect with international markets following a change of ownership in 2018.

Resort manager Olivia Masiverata says four of the 17 rooms in the inventory are currently being upgraded – including the honeymoon suite. Beqa is known for diving but Masiverata says the adults-only resort also has traction in the weddings and special occasions sectors, and attracts repeat visitors just looking for relaxation.

New face at Radisson Blu Fiji

Vara Natuilagilagi is now director of revenue at Radisson Blu Fiji.

She was previously director of sales and marketing at Warwick Hotels for Fiji and Vanuatu. Natuilagilagi will be in contact with the resort’s various distribution channels.

Meantime, Radisson Blu sales manager Jean Simpson reports the resort’s Italian Restaurant Basilico has made great strides since opening a few months ago – leaping to the top of Trip Advisor’s polls in Denarau and close to the top on Viti Levu.

Vincent Macquet

Leanne Goff, Bula Bride; Anita Gatley, Wedding Travel / Travel Managers Group; Gareth Waddington, GO Holidays

Dave Fordyce, House of Travel; Rena Peterson, Mike Hogan, Jyoti Shankar, all Treasure Island Resort; Sharma Smith, Natalie von Dinklage, both House of Travel

Anita Gatley, Weddings Travel / Travel Managers Group; Heather Ewens, Tourism Fiji

Jean Simpson and Vara Natuilagilagi

TRAVELinc Memo 28 May 2019
New Queenstown Marina to streamline group experiences

KJet Queenstown is involved in the redevelopment of the existing Frankton Marina into the Queenstown Marina, due for completion in mid to late 2019.

The marina, on Frankton Road, has long been home to KJet’s operations base and is a popular departure point for large groups. KJet offers exclusive charters for small to large groups of up to 140 passengers at one time and 500 passengers on a rotational basis.

For KJet, the redevelopment means the addition of a new reservations, check in and retail centre with new external bathroom block, ample coach parking, coach wash facilities and a driver rest area.

Company director Shaun Kelly says the revitalised marina will offer a more streamlined experience for tour groups, exclusive charters and conference and incentive groups. ‘Guests will be able to grab a coffee before or after their jet boat trip, and watch private and commercial boats come and go. Coach drivers and tour guides are also well catered for in our new centre.’

New food and beverage outlets are included in the project, and with the existing Frankton walking and cycling track winding through the marina, the location will be a popular destination for visitors and locals.

www.kjet.co.nz/groups

Scenic Auckland’s big refurb

Scenic Hotel Group’s flagship property, Scenic Hotel Auckland is midway through a transformation that will see it emerge in early 2020 with a much-elevated position.

Director of international sales and brand development, Steve Shearer says early guest feedback has been exceptional on the refurbished rooms.

In preparation for some large-scale redevelopments in the lobby and dining areas, operational closures will enable the works to take place in a timely manner that will cause the least amount of disruption to guest services.

MLC Café & Bar will close from Monday 29 July 2019 to Monday 27 January 2020. During this time, there will be no food and beverage outlet available onsite. Information about the hours and location of nearby food and beverage options will be available for hotel guests.

Scenic Hotel Auckland’s full hotel closure dates are Thursday 15 August 2019 to Wednesday 11 September 2019. During this period, the entire hotel will be closed.
Australia

The lights have been switched on for Vivid Sydney, the largest festival of light, music and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere.

Vivid Light will illuminate Sydney's skyline with Lights On! from 6pm each evening for 23 nights. This year's line-up of events includes the Lighting of the Sails on the Sydney Opera House with artist Andrew Thomas Huang's Austral Flora Ballet; the EORA: Broken Spear projection on the Sydney Harbour Bridge's southern pylon; Tumbalong Lights – a precinct of accessibility and inclusion in Sydney turns the lights on

Darling Harbour; and the retro satellite dish KA3323 in the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney. Acts The Cure, Australia's Eurovision hero Kate Miller-Heidke and FKA Twigs create part of the Vivid Music programme that is accompanied by the musical sideshows like the X|Celerate Program: Come Together.

On the Vivid Ideas lineup is New Horizons: The Darkest Web; Vogue Codes Kids; Vivid Art After Hours: You Can't Say That and the already sold-out Game Changers.

www.vividsydney.com

Winterworld in Fremantle

Winterworld is returning to the historic port city of Fremantle, located a 30 minute drive from Perth city, from 29 June to 21 July.

Celebrating all things winter, the event will feature Australia's largest open-air skating rink with falling 'snow,' a snow pit, a giant inflatable slide, art activities and unicorn rides. Guests can get cozy in the Winter Lounge, and a Market Square will showcase local producers and food stalls, with a themed outdoor area scattered with blazing fire pits for roasting marshmallows. Winterworld is a free event however tickets are required for various activities.

New Aboriginal tours at Rottnest

Visitors to Perth's Rottnest Island – known as Wadjemup to the local Noongar people – can experience traditional Aboriginal culture as part of new tours on the island. Go Cultural Aboriginal Tours and Experiences offers visitors a walking tour to learn about Rottnest's history and the spiritual significance to the Noongar people. The 90-minute walking tour includes a Welcome to Country, traditional sand ceremony, and song and storytelling with an Aboriginal guide.

CLICK HERE for details.

Accor Art Series hotel for Perth

Accor will open its ninth Art Series hotel in Perth's CBD, heralding the arrival of the Art Series brand in WA.

Set to open in October 2019, the $90 million hotel is 27 storeys high, with the design concept dedicated to Australia's contemporary artists. The 250-room Art Series hotel will feature contemporary furnishings and original artworks and prints. The hotel will also be home to a signature Mediterranean inspired restaurant on the first level and located around the hotel's pool area. Other features include a ground floor café, gymnasium and a function room.
Contiki launches USA and Canada 2020

Contiki’s latest product release for USA and Canada includes seven new and 13 improved trips for the region, with Alaska and the Pacific Northwest added to the mix.

The new trips feature a collection of North America’s National Parks, with two new dedicated National Park camping trips showcasing Yosemite and the Southwest National Parks: Bryce Canyon, Monument Valley and Zion.

Distinct accommodation is a key feature including glamping in safari-style tents with real beds, luxury bathrooms and café style dining in Zion National Park and the Smoky Mountains.

Other trips in the region include overnights in a Bass Lake summer camp with swimming pool and rustic cabins, and a Banff chalet complete with indoor pool and sauna.

The seven new Alaska, Pacific Northwest, California and Southern USA trips will be joining the ranks of 32 existing trips that Contiki offers in North America, covering popular hotspots New York, Las Vegas, Miami and Los Angeles, plus French-inspired New Orleans and Montreal, hipster cities of San Francisco, Portland, Seattle and Asheville, college towns like Boston and Richmond, the mountain towns of Whistler and Anchorage, and deep south cities of Fort Worth, Memphis and Nashville, as well as off-the-beaten track destinations like the ‘wild west’ towns of Jackson Hole, Cody and Kamloops, and more.

www.contiki.com

New custom camp opens near Yosemite

AutoCamp will open its new Yosemite facilities including clubhouse and pool next month, advises Adventure World Travel.

This property is the brand’s third and largest location to date, located a three-hour drive from San Francisco and 45 minutes from the central valley of Yosemite National Park.

The camp includes 102 custom-designed and fully outfitted Airstream suites, canvas tents, and accessible suites. The property will offer mountain bikes, organic linens, natural bath and skincare products, custom-designed fire pits, complimentary compressed firewood logs to reduce smoke and fire danger, a hammock grove and interactive art installations and s’mores kits.

The 4000 square foot clubhouse will feature a guest lounge with indoor fireplace and seating, self-service taps with craft beer, kombucha, and cold brew coffee, and communal dining table, retail store and restrooms with luxury showers.

It will also host a complimentary continental breakfast bar every morning with fresh squeezed orange juice, coffee, tea and pastries from Sugar Pine Café in Mariposa.

Adventure World Travel recommends a two-night stay at AutoCamp as an addition to any USA Tailor-Made itinerary such as the seven-day Icons of California exploration of Northern California.

This self-drive itinerary includes six nights accommodation in Napa, Lake Tahoe, Yosemite and Monterey with car rental, now priced from $2105 per person.

www.adventureworld.co.nz/west-coast-usa/

Excite gets into heart and soul of America

Excite Holidays has launched its latest campaign, ‘Travel South: Heart and Soul of America’ in conjunction with Travel South USA. The campaign continues a long standing partnership between Travel South USA and Excite Holidays, marketing the region to travel agents in New Zealand and Australia.

The 2019 campaign includes a new destination guide which features itinerary-style guides to three cities in each of the participating states. States featured include Alabama, Missouri, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Georgia.

engage.exciteholidays.com/travelsouth

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www.contiki.com

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AutoCamp will open its new Yosemite facilities including clubhouse and pool next month, advises Adventure World Travel.

This property is the brand’s third and largest location to date, located a three-hour drive from San Francisco and 45 minutes from the central valley of Yosemite National Park.

The camp includes 102 custom-designed and fully outfitted Airstream suites, canvas tents, and accessible suites. The property will offer mountain bikes, organic linens, natural bath and skincare products, custom-designed fire pits, complimentary compressed firewood logs to reduce smoke and fire danger, a hammock grove and interactive art installations and s’mores kits.

The 4000 square foot clubhouse will feature a guest lounge with indoor fireplace and seating, self-service taps with craft beer, kombucha, and cold brew coffee, and communal dining table, retail store and restrooms with luxury showers.

It will also host a complimentary continental breakfast bar every morning with fresh squeezed orange juice, coffee, tea and pastries from Sugar Pine Café in Mariposa.

Adventure World Travel recommends a two-night stay at AutoCamp as an addition to any USA Tailor-Made itinerary such as the seven-day Icons of California exploration of Northern California.

This self-drive itinerary includes six nights accommodation in Napa, Lake Tahoe, Yosemite and Monterey with car rental, now priced from $2105 per person.

www.adventureworld.co.nz/west-coast-usa/
Zimbabwe woos back safari market

New builds and developments, coupled with sharp rates, are giving the trade reasons to re-look at Zimbabwe for safaris.

A Walker’s World’s Jill Grant attended Africa’s Travel Indaba recently and learned that investment in Zimbabwe is on the rise.

Existing camps, The Hide in Hwange National Park and Musango at Kariba are undergoing refurbishments and upgrades.

‘These camps have been around for years and are part of the Classic Safari Camps of Africa,’ says Grant. ‘They pride themselves in upholding the traditions of ‘Africa of Old’.’

The Hide now has an underground tunnel where guests can sit in comfort and see animals just metres away at the waterhole without disturbing them.

There are new camps Verneys in Hwange, Chikwenya at Mana Pools and Changa at Kariba, a sister camp of The Hide.

The Hide and Changa are offering a ‘stay three, pay two’ special for selected dates from July to October, says Grant.

‘There is also a deal at both camps plus John’s Camp at Mana Pools which combines three of Zimbabwe’s best national parks. It includes three free flights in between camps and nine days, eight nights of all inclusive, tented accommodation, meals, drinks and game activities for $9275 share twin.

‘With offers and deals like this, Zimbabwe is wooing back the safari market that was their’s some 15 to 20 years ago.

‘Sorely needed is a scheduled airline to replace expensive charter flights. However, the word amongst safari operators is that an announcement of a new scheduled airline is expected soon which will ease travel between the main safari destinations in Zimbabwe.’

Whanganui weekends with ATRs

Air Chathams will fly its newly acquired ATR 72 on the AKL-WAG route for weekend flights over the next three months due to the popularity of the service.

The ATR 72 can seat up to 68 passengers and is regularly used for charters around New Zealand. The airline says the city’s peak flight schedules are now at a level able to support the higher capacity aircraft.

While charter requirements for the ATR 72 won’t begin again until September this year, the ATR is scheduled for flights into Whanganui beginning 7 June with a 3pm departure from Auckland. For the next few months, Friday afternoon and evening flights, Saturday’s 8am flight departing from Whanganui, all Sunday flights and the 6:45am departure on Monday to Auckland will be with the larger plane.

www.airchathams.co.nz

Southern functions – spaces still open

Pack Ya Bags advises it still has spots available for its travel agent / broker presentations in Dunedin tomorrow night (Dog with 2 Tails) and Chistchurch on Wednesday night Southern functions – spaces still open (Pegasus Arms). The educational functions will cover Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea, volunteering and Europamundo.

RSVP to penny@packyabags.com

PAL mid-year sale

 Philippine Airlines has return fares to the newly reopened Boracay Island from $1109 and to Bohol from $1099 return as part of its mid-year sale. Return fares to Manila start from $859 economy, $1479 premium economy and $2729 for business.

PAL also has fares to destinations beyond the Philippines with premium economy to London from $3249 or business from $4999.

PAL is offering return fares from Auckland to Tokyo from $969 economy, $2389 premium economy or $3839 business. Fares to Hanoi are from $689 or Phnom Penh from $739 return.

PAL flies non-stop from Auckland to Manila three times per week with onward connections to a number of destinations across Asia and the Middle East as well as London/Heathrow.

The mid-year sale is effective 27 May to 9 June 2019 for departures from 24 June to 30 November with travel blackouts 1-11 July and 23 September to 1 October 2019.

Fares quoted are ex Auckland and inclusive of all surcharges and taxes. Additional charges are applicable for stopovers.

Philippine Airlines recently released hotel stopover rates in Manila starting from $95 per person share twin for a three-star hotel in the Makati business and tourist area of Manila or a five-star property from $145pp share twin. Rates include full breakfast.
Viva reports record growth

Viva Expeditions is celebrating its 10-year anniversary with a record year of growth. At the end of the 2018 financial year, Viva’s Latin America and Antarctica sales are up 62% year on year, and significant growth in small ship cruising has seen a 130% increase in Antarctica cruise sales.

And Ocean Endeavour, Viva partner Chimu Adventures’ chartered ship, is already exceeding sales projections.

Viva’s managing director, Rachel Williams, says she firmly believes the success is a result of strong growing relationships with the trade as well as destination expertise.

Williams says agents need first-hand information provided by specialists.

‘This year alone, Viva’s staff are travelling to Antarctica, the Arctic, Northern Brazil, Northern Peru, Bolivia, Patagonia, and the Galapagos.’

Viva also launched the Big 5 webinar series which saw up to 200 agents tune in each week.

The company’s partnership with All Blacks Tours and the NZRU is expected to drive growth in 2020.

‘This year expectations were not so high due to it being a World Cup year. However, our sales were, and we are very excited about the potential for the 2020 game.

‘Viva’s main aim for 2019/2020 is to continue to lead the way as a specialist niche wholesaler.’

Viva has rolled out a number of promotions this year. These will continue and culminate with a grand celebration to be held later in the year.

‘Apparently only 50% of NZ start-up businesses survive past the ten-year mark,’ Williams jokes. ‘We are not just surviving; we are thriving, so we have a lot to celebrate.’

CroisiEurope acquires La Belle des Océans

The luxurious sea cruiser, ex Silver Discoverer, is the second sea going ship for CroisiEurope.

Itineraries for La Belle des Océans include a selection of sailings in Asia (nine and eleven days Singapore to Phuket – October through January), the Middle East, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

In June 2020, La Belle des Océans will arrive at its summer home port in Quebec where it will sail a season of 11-day itineraries on the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.

These sailings from Quebec City to Niagara Falls will operate until October 2020 and will feature stopovers in Montreal, the Thousand Islands, Toronto and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In the same vein as its Croatia and Sicily cruises, the programme will be on an all inclusive basis with all meals, accommodation, drinks and a selection of sightseeing tours included.

The nine days Phuket to Singapore starts from $4520pp share twin in a horizon suite.
Perusing Penang – batik, beach, Buddha wat and more

By Patrea Robson

The metropolis of Kuala Lumpur is not the only vibrant shopping area in Malaysia to promote to clients, a group of Kiwi agents currently on the Exotic Holidays / Tourism Malaysia famil have discovered over the past few days.

The agents have experienced everything the island of Penang is renowned for, including local food specialities such as Char Koay Teow, along with cultural and outdoor experiences.

Shopping at Gurney Paragon Mall and 1st Avenue Mall was followed by the night markets located near the group’s accommodation at PARKROYAL resort, on the beach in Northern Penang.

One of those who made the most of the many bargains in both Kuala Lumpur and Penang was Elna Tempelhoff from Mango Travel. ‘This is my second time in Malaysia and I’ve been impressed by the great value for money in both places and the whole shopping experience. I particularly enjoyed bartering with the locals at the Chinatown Market in Kuala Lumpur.’

The second day in Penang was packed with activities – a visit to Craft Batik to see how Malaysian batik garments are made, and an 830 metre ascent up Penang Hill on the funicular for a panoramic view. The group experienced some of the multicultural history of the island at Kek Lok Si, the largest Buddhist come Taoist monastery in Malaysia; the Thai temple of the Reclining Buddha, Wat Chaiyamangalaram with its 33m gold-plated reclining Buddha; and a Chinese Clan Jetty with houses sitting on stilts over the water. Each of the six jetties are home to a different Chinese clan and date back to the early Chinese immigrants.

The day finished at the capital of Penang and popular UNESCO World Heritage zone of George Town to visit the street art within the quaint streets lined with shops and cafes. Sandie Savage, NZTB loved the history. ‘Penang would be really well suited to a group wanting a great add-on to the shopping experience in Kuala Lumpur with the mix of cultural experiences and street food.’

On their way home now, the agents also shopped it up in Langkawi over the weekend with its many duty free stores.

• More in in this Friday’s TRAVELinc Memo – earlier story TRAVELinc Memo Friday 24 May
**Uniworld releases 2020 collection**

Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection’s 2020 brochure has a focus on wellness.

New to the programme is a three-day stay in Germany’s spa town of Baden-Baden where guests can experience the thermal waters at the Caracalla Thermal Bath or Sea Salt Grotto.

The 12-day Rhine, Moselle and Blissful Baden-Baden itinerary includes a Wellness on the Water programme on every departure, and is now priced from $7199 per person.

Also featuring wellness is the Brilliant Bordeaux eight-day cruise on board the new SS Bon Voyage launched in April. Activities include yoga in the heart of the Blaye fortress with 360 degree views over the Gironde estuary, guided trekking or Nordic walk with a naturalist from the Garonne river banks, through the Bastide of Cadillac or sunrise meditation on Europe’s highest sand dune, La Teste-de-Buch. Brilliant Bordeaux is priced from $4699pp in 2020 with limited availability remaining in 2019.

Uniworld will launch its newest ship on the Nile in Egypt, the SS Sphinx, in January 2020.

Other new super ships include the SS Sao Gabriel in Portugal (new build, March 2020), SS La Venezia in Italy (renovation, March 2020) and the Mekong Jewel, based in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Early booking savings of up to 10% are available for 2020 bookings made before 30 June 2019 with further savings available to River Heritage Club Members.

**Click here** for details.

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**LH agent training**

Lufthansa Group will hold fare and product updates around the country in June and July.

- Auckland North: Friday 14 June, at 8.30am, Spencer on Byron Hotel;
- Christchurch: Wednesday 19 June, 8.30am, Novotel Cathedral Square;
- Wellington: Thursday 20 June, 8.30am, James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor;
- Auckland Central: Wednesday 26 June, 8.30am, Novotel Ellerslie;
- Tauranga: Tuesday 23 July, 8.30am Charthouse;
- Hamilton: Wednesday 24 July, 8.30am Novotel Tainui, Hamilton.

Register at: events.lufthansa.com/427494

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**Peru earthquake update**

Viva Expeditions reports its travellers in Peru have been unaffected by the earthquake that struck over the weekend.

The magnitude 8 earthquake was centred 80kms southeast of Lugunas in northern Peru, at a depth of 140km. It occurred at 2.14am local time, 7.40pm New Zealand time on Sunday night.

The earthquake has impacted the Peruvian jungle with some buildings destroyed in the town of Yurimaguas, a small town in the Amazon basin.

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**TrekAmerica one-week flash sale**

TrekAmerica (Trek) has announced a flash sale for one week only, offering 20% off a select range of USA and Canada tours, departing before 30 September 2019.

Aimed at the 18-38 market, Trek America has savings on 100 small-group departures including:

- Southern BLT is a cross-country road trip from Los Angeles to New York departing 29 June. Reduced from $5859, the trip is now $4687 (save $1172).
- The Westerner 2 is a 14-day loop from Los Angeles departing 4 August. Reduced from $3509, the trip is now $2808 (save $707).
- Canadian BLT travels the Rockies from Vancouver to Calgary and departs 2 September. It was priced at $2779 and is now $2224 (save $555).

The sale ends 31 May 2019.

New brochures can be ordered from Brochurenet at: www.brochurenet.co.nz

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**TRAVELinc Memo 28 May 2019**
MYSTERY SPOT

Can you solve the latest mystery?

This week’s Mystery Spot, visited this week by agents on a shopping fam, is situated in limestone hills and it is the shrine of a Hindu deity.

If you think you know the answer send it to competitions@promag.co.nz with Mystery Spot in the subject line.

And congratulations to last week’s Mystery Spot winner Steve Marshall, helloworld who correctly guessed Chicago. A great prize courtesy of Tourism Memphis and Lonely Planet will be sent out to you.

New director for Brand USA

Liz Glover has joined Gate 7 as the new Brand USA director for Australia and New Zealand.

She comes from more than a decade at Scenic Luxury Cruises and Tours, where she was most recently role director, marketing and strategy for Australia and New Zealand.

Glover’s travel marketing expertise spans media buying, B2B and B2C marketing, digital transformation, content strategy and creation of content, communications, brand change, sponsorships, partnerships, events and promotions. Glover’s trade marketing strategies spearheaded while at Scenic included its worldwide rebrand project to reposition the company as a global luxury travel brand.

Her appointment follows Gate 7’s retention of Brand USA in 2017, for the second term running. In addition to its travel trade marketing and public relations expertise, Gate 7 has expanded into end-to-end social media management, advertising, consumer partnerships, content development and travel industry events.

Fake visa sites

Exotic Holidays advises the High Commission of India is warning agents of an increase in the number of fake websites offering e-visas to the destination. The correct website is indianvisaon-line.gov.in

Viking flash sale

Viking is reminding agents that its flash sale for select river cruise departures in October 2019 has been extended through to 31 May 2019. The eight-day Rhine Getaway and Romantic Danube are from A$2995 (category F stateroom).

PONANT’s new Grand Mediterranean voyage

A new 21-night cruise on board the 244-guest Le Lyrial takes in the Dalmatian shores, Croatia and Montenegro to the Italian and Sicilian coasts as well as Greece.

The round-trip Athens voyage sails from 24 July to 14 August 2020 and is priced at $14,399 per person, twin share in a deluxe stateroom, and includes complimentary laundry and wi-fi.

There is an additional A$400 discount for first time PONANT guests.

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