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## Newsletter April 2014

SPECIALIST AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

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### NEW ZEALAND

#### WELLINGTON AIRPORT HOTEL TO BE A RYDGES

RYDGES is named as the operator for a 120-room 4/4.5 star hotel as part of Wellington Airport's \$250 million redevelopment.

#### QUEENSTOWN TOPS AGAIN

Queenstown is the most popular destination in New Zealand and second in the South Pacific, behind only Sydney. Behind Queenstown in the South Pacific category are Melbourne and Brisbane in third and fourth place. Rotorua is the second favoured New Zealand destination and fifth favourite in the South Pacific, according to TripAdvisor travellers' choice.

#### 100 PER CENT MIDDLE EARTH FACTOR DRIVES NZ TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The filming of the Hobbit trilogy and the associated "100 per cent Middle Earth" branding are doing wonders for visitor numbers to New Zealand. Total international arrivals to New Zealand in the first two months of 2014 totalled 9.5 per cent higher than the same time in 2013. Up to February 2014, there were 2.77 million visitors, a 7.3 per cent increase on February 2013. Statistics New Zealand data also shows that New Zealand brand is performing strongly in key growth markets, with Australian visitors up 12.1 per cent, China up 15.9 per cent and Germany 26.2 per cent. The 100 per cent Middle Earth brand is to be used throughout 2014 and 2015.

#### CROSSING THE COOK STRAIT WITH BLUEBRIDGE

has got a lot more comfortable with their new sleeper service. Passengers can board the service early in downtown Wellington and get comfortable

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before the ferry departs at 2.30am. Once on board they can enjoy the luxury of their private cabin with it's own bathroom and awake refreshed before sampling the express breakfast menu. A great option for travellers on a tight New Zealand itinerary.

#### LUXURY HOTEL FOR AUCKLAND'S VIADUCT

A 200-room luxury hotel will be built on the western edge of Auckland's Viaduct Harbour by 2017, thanks to a partnership between Waterfront Auckland and Chinese developer Fu Wah International Group.

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### AUSTRALIA

#### THE GRACE HOTEL (OZ) – SPA UPDATE

The Grace Hotel have closed the spa (which was located on the rooftop beside the swimming pool and fitness gym) due to ongoing maintenance issues. Therefore the spa facility will no longer be available. This is effective immediately.

#### TIGERAIR EXPANDS QUEENSLAND PRESENCE WITH NEW DAILY BRISBANE – CAIRNS SERVICES

Tigerair Australia in April officially launches its new daily return services between Brisbane and Cairns, providing 30% growth in Tigerair's existing services to Cairns as a result of consumer demand within the important budget and leisure travel markets. The welcome news for the Queensland tourism industry closely follows the launch of Tigerair's Brisbane base which opened in March, including two brand new aircraft – the second of which commences operations from the Brisbane base today to facilitate new services and take the airline's fleet in Australia to 13.

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#### **QANTAS: ROBB REALISES FLYING KANGAROO CAN NO LONGER FLY SOLO**

Australia's Trade Minister, Andrew Robb, will speak to the chairman of Emirates Airways about investing in Qantas to shore up the carrier's bottom line. The Qantas Sale Act currently prevents majority foreign ownership of Qantas' international or domestic arms, however Mr Robb said that the Abbott government would still push for changes. Some aviation analysts think that Qantas would have no chance in getting an equity boost from Emirates even if it benefits from regulatory changes, because Qantas is a loss making business and it is not part of Emirates strategy to make strategic equity investments.

#### **JETSTAR NEW ZEALAND TO BOOST QUEENSTOWN PRESENCE**

Jetstar Airways will boost its presence in Queenstown, adding 5 flights or 1600 seats to the Sydney to Queenstown from July. It also means that Jetstar will now fly six times a week into Queenstown through July, the peak period for tourists wanting to stay at Queenstown popular Coronet Peak and Remarkables ski resorts.

#### **ACCOR OFFICIALLY ARRIVES IN KAKADU**

Australia's largest hotel network, Accor, is now also the Northern Territory's largest accommodation provider, in April officially taking over management of the iconic Crocodile Hotel in Jabiru and Cooida Lodge at Yellow Water Billabong. Operated by Kakadu Tourism (formerly Gagudju Dreaming), the Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel and Kakadu Lodge Cooida, managed by Accor complement Accor's portfolio of hotel and resort product available to travellers in the Northern Territory. The 110 room Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel is located at Jabiru, some 2½ hours drive south east of Darwin, and offers the only deluxe accommodation in Kakadu. Renowned for the crocodile shape of

the hotel design, the hotel is built around a large, landscaped swimming pool and features extensive leisure and business facilities, including conference space for up to 250 delegates. Kakadu Cooida Lodge, managed by Accor, is located next to the Yellow Water Billabong and is part of a hotel/tourism operation that includes the 48 room Lodge as well as a large camping site, the award-winning Yellow Water Cruises, Yellow Water Fishing, Gagudju Adventure Tours, a general store, fuel station and the Warradjan Cultural Centre.

#### **BAROSSA LUXURY ACCOMMODATION JOINS PRESTIGIOUS RELAIS & CHATEAUX**

The Louise Barossa Valley and Appellation end of March joined international hospitality group Relais & Châteaux as one of only four Australian properties to be a part of this prestigious group. Known for its opulent rooms and culinary destination restaurant Appellation, The Louise Barossa Valley joins Relais & Châteaux alongside premier properties including Hamilton Island's Qualia Resort and Spa and Sydney's Tetsuya's restaurant.

#### **RITZ-CARLTON BACK IN AUSTRALIA**

The way has been cleared for the development of two luxury hotels in Perth. Ritz-Carlton has announced the development of a 204-room hotel as part of the new Elizabeth Quay riverfront, with construction set to commence in 2015. Marriott International Asia president and managing director Simon Cooper said Ritz Carlton hadn't been active in Australia for close to 15 years and this would be the first purpose-built Ritz Carlton in Australia. Meanwhile, James Packer's Crown Limited will start construction of its \$570 million third hotel at its Burswood casino complex within weeks.

#### **GROUNDBREAKING ONLINE KIT HELPS AUSTRALIAN TOURISM SECTOR**

Australian tourism businesses have benefited from

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the creation of a new Tourism e-kit, in their marketing and promotional activities.

The tourism e-kit features 60 tutorials across nine topics, including how to build a website information and content featuring specific examples including online bookings and distribution. In response to a number of Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs), the e-kit is now being licensed by the government for use by tourism businesses all over the world. It has been downloaded more than 350,000 times and earned National and State awards including recognition at the recent Australian National Tourism.

#### **SYDNEY CONFIRMS SECOND AIRPORT**

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott has confirmed that Badgerys Creek will become Sydney's second airport for the west of the city. The long overdue decision was approved by the federal cabinet at a meeting in Canberra.

Abbott says planning and design work will begin immediately and he expects construction to begin by 2016.

#### **ALOFT PERTH RIVERVALE WILL OPEN IN LATE 2016**

Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, announced that its rapidly expanding Aloft Hotels brand will soon enter the Australian market for the first time. Aloft Perth Rivervale will open in late 2016, featuring 224 loft-like rooms, leading-edge technology and a lively social atmosphere.

Located in the suburb of Rivervale, just east of Perth's CBD, the Aloft hotel is part of a redevelopment project that will transform riverfront land into a commercial and residential precinct.

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#### **SOUTH PACIFIC**

#### **NEW IN BORA BORA! NATURA DISCOVERY CULTURAL TOUR**

A new 4x4 excursion is available for sale in Bora Bora. This tour stands out from the others thanks to its itinerary focusing primarily on history and culture of the island, aspects which have remained fairly unknown throughout the years.

Indeed, there are over 300 Marae on Bora Bora; but since they are located on private family lands, they have not been restored and the vegetation has reclaimed. A carefully organized tour, brightened up by some real 4x4 sessions, very comprehensive and enriching, on Bora Bora in the days of the Kings, in new and very comfortable Land Rover Defender vehicles, perfect for all types of customers, whether small budget or upscale.

#### **'FIJI' PRIVATE CRUISE LUXURY AT IT'S FINEST!!**

Explore the Mamanuca & Yasawa Islands Group upon your private vessel "Unique" – snorkel pristine reefs, discover deserted beaches, join village life or simply relax and enjoy yourself with a cool drink on the sundeck...- suited to families, couples, or groups of friends travelling together.

The "Unique" – Vessel Overview

- 55 foot high performance luxury sailing catamaran
- 4 Double cabins, 2 bathrooms (max. 8 guests)
- air-conditioned salon with huge wrap around windows
- roomy deck space & large cockpit table

Please contact us for sample itineraries

#### **FIJI AIRWAYS AND ETIHAD AIRWAYS SIGN GROUNDBREAKING INTERLINE AGREEMENT**

Fiji Airways and Etihad Airways, the national airline

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of the United Arab Emirates, today announced a new and far reaching interline agreement between the two carriers.

This agreement will allow reciprocal sales from and to 12 cities in Europe, 17 cities in the Middle East, 5 cities in Africa, 5 cities in North America, 29 cities in Asia and 3 cities in Australia to and from Fiji. The agreement comes into place with immediate effect and is the starting point of further negotiations between the 2 airlines. Stefan Pichler, Managing Director and CEO of Fiji Airways commented: "We are proud to be part of the global Etihad Airways network and this partnership will help us to put Fiji on the map in countries where we had no presence before. Etihad Airways will help us to reach out for new customers and to diversify tourism streams for our country. It is definitely a major step for Fiji Airways."

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