



CLICK [www.ttgasia.com](http://www.ttgasia.com) NOW!

Experience The Difference Today



No. 1632/April 29 – May 5, 2011



**Serviced Residences**  
More choices soon  
**PAGE 6**



[www.ttgasia.com](http://www.ttgasia.com)  
**BOOKMARK**



**Airlines**  
Heating up competition  
**PAGE 8**



**Australia**  
Glowing prospects  
**PAGE 13**

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

# Trade in Japan push

Outbound agents begin directing traffic back to the country with sweet deals

By Karen Yue, Ellen Chen, Sirima Eamtako and Prudence Lui

**SINGAPORE** Massive Japan promotions have started to hit the market since mid-April, with the private sector leading the push to help the destination get back on its feet after the disastrous tsunami.

Rock-bottom prices of packages sewn together by outbound agents from Indonesia to Hong Kong, coupled with a statement

issued by UN organisations that radiation levels posed no travel risk to Japan (*TTG Asia e-Daily*, April 18), are raising hopes recovery would be quicker than they dared wish for only recently.

In Singapore, agencies such as CTC Travel, Nam Ho and Hong Thai Travel Services have launched tours which depart in May at prices that are almost half the price of Japan tours before. For instance, a seven-day tour

to Hokkaido is going at S\$1,288 (US\$1,044), from S\$2,388 usually. A six-day/four-night tour to Okinawa can be had for S\$999 per person.

Singapore Airlines, too, has leapt in with a two-to-go promotional fare of S\$50 (excluding taxes and surcharges) per passenger to Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Fukuoka. The fare is valid for travel till May 31 and must be ticketed by May 6.

CTC's senior vice president (marketing & PR), Alicia Seah, said: "We have received about 20 bookings for Hokkaido packages and we are confident of forming three groups (of 20 travellers each in May)."

Stella Chow, Hong Thai's assistant manager, advertising & marketing division, outbound tour department, said such cheap tours act as the "push factor" for travellers who have some confidence in Japan but are still indecisive about visiting.

"These prices are made possible with the help of airline and hotel partners and other suppliers. We won't make much money from selling these tours. Our motive is to encourage travellers to go and see Japan for themselves, so they will know that other parts of Japan are functioning as normal," said Chow.

Over in Malaysia, agents said that was precisely the kind of commitment they needed in order to revive business.

*Continued on page 2*

## TTG Asia e-Daily

Most popular news  
(as of April 26, 2011)

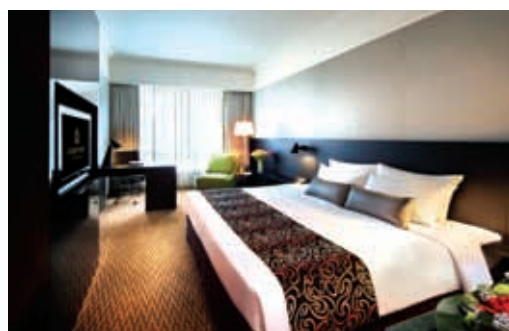
- 1 Royal Plaza on Scotts ventures into serviced residence
- 2 Bangkok Airways offers special airfare for Koh Samui
- 3 AirAsia Kuala Lumpur-Kochi flights lift India inbound business
- 4 Lion Air receives new aircraft
- 5 Best Western Plus opens in Bangkok
- 6 Malaysia has to innovate to capture Islamic travel market
- 7 Diethelm Events sees "hazy" times ahead
- 8 Rural tourism takes root in India
- 9 MAS previews promotion in Jakarta
- 10 Bali gets first Holiday Inn Express in Indonesia

To read these news, go to [www.ttgasia.com](http://www.ttgasia.com)

## TTG celebrates award, promotions



TTG Asia Media is pleased to announce the promotion of Karen Yue to editor, *TTGmice*; Gracia Chiang, editor, *TTG Asia*; and Brian Higgs, assistant editor, *TTG Asia online*. Celebrating the promotions and the latest PATA Gold Award for *TTGmice*, in Beijing recently, are (from right) Gracia, Brian, group editor Raini Hamdi, Karen, creative designer Redmond Sia and editorial assistant Lina Tan.



Featuring Week:  
9May - 15May



Featuring Week:  
16May - 22May



CLICK [www.ttgasia.com](http://www.ttgasia.com) NOW!

Join our TTG Asia e-Daily mailing list today  
Simply **register** or **update** your existing details

**Stand a chance to WIN a 4D3N stay for 2**

\*Each reader is limited to win only 1 prize for the entire promotion period.  
Terms & Conditions apply.





**Vietravel**  
INTERNATIONAL TOUR OPERATOR

**INDOCHINA LEADING TOUR OPERATOR**  
*Quality is always our first priority*

- LEISURE TRAVEL
- GOLF TRAVEL
- MICE & BUSINESS TRAVEL
- EVENT & TEAMBUILDING
- AIRPORT SERVICES
- TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
- and more.....

[www.vietravel-vn.com](http://www.vietravel-vn.com)

HEAD OFFICE  
190 Pasteur, Ward 6, Dist 3, HCMC, Vietnam  
Tel: (84.8) 38 22 8898 - Fax: (84.8) 38 299142  
Email: [info@vietravel-vn.com](mailto:info@vietravel-vn.com)  
Website: [www.vietravel-vn.com](http://www.vietravel-vn.com)

## Samui pulls out the stops

It's water under the bridge, as the island courts tourists anew

By Sirima Eamtako

**KOH SAMUI** Tourism stakeholders have launched a series of measures to lift dismal occupancies and load factors in post-flood Koh Samui, where operations are now back to normal.

The island was hard hit by rainstorms during March 26 to 29, which caused the airport to close for two days and some areas to be under water. This is no longer the case, as witnessed by *TTG Asia* during the Samui Big Cleaning Day on April 24.

Samui hotels, however, have been left with about 35 per cent occupancy, down from their normal March-April occupancy of around 80 per cent, according to the island's travel trade.

Bangkok Airways, which operates most flights to Koh Samui, is also seeing a 10 per cent drop in bookings, said its corporate communications vice-president Nandhika Varavarn.

The airline is expected to finish April with a 70 per cent load factor, down from an earlier forecast of around 85 per cent that was pegged to its good performance from December.

In order to restore travellers' confidence, Siranee Anuntamek, managing director of Glory Worldwide Travel and Kirikayan Luxury Resort Group, said hotels were launching tacticals, offering up to 30 per cent off contract rates between April and May.

This, coupled with constant updates on the island's return to normalcy, had yielded a pick-up in bookings towards the Easter holiday period, she said.

Bangkok Airways on the other hand is offering a return airfare of 4,300 baht (US\$143) nett on the Bangkok-Samui route between May 12 and July 31, and will be launching more summer promotions, said Nandhika.

She expects passenger num-

bers to return to normal by end-July through August, the typical high tourist season for Koh Samui.

Meanwhile, as part of a broader strategy to help the eight southern provinces affected by the floods, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will host an Amazing Coasts South consumer fair at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center in Bangkok from May 26 to 29.

Some 40 out of 150 booths will be available free of charge to hotels and tour operators on Koh Samui, Koh Phangan and Koh Tai, said Saiphayom Som-suk, chief of Koh Samui Tourism Coordination Centre, TAT.

Other recovery activities include table top sales to be held whenever TAT's overseas offices bring in agents for fam trips. The first will be for hosted buyers at the Thailand Travel Mart Plus in Bangkok from June 8 to 10.



### A look at tomorrow's tourism

The recent PATA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Conference in Beijing saw lively discussions on the role the association should play in attracting young talent into the industry, renewing and expanding membership, advocacy and information sharing.

Above, Tavalea Nilon from Samoa receives her award for 2011 PATA Face of the Future from PATA chairman Hiran Cooray. Left, interim PATA CEO Bill Calderwood. Visit [www.ttgasia.com](http://www.ttgasia.com) for pictures and stories.

## JNTO to resume promos

By Ellen Chen

**KUALA LUMPUR** Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) will be resuming promotional activities by May, its Singapore office director Shimizu Yasumasa said during a seminar in Kuala Lumpur on reviving Japan inbound tourism.

At press time, no details were available. Yasumasa said JNTO was in the midst of re-allocating its budget to concentrate promotional activities on reviving tourism to Japan.

"The first stage of our recovery plan is to provide updates to industry partners and the public, the second stage is to resume activities, and the third stage is to hold familiarisation trips for media and industry partners. We will also be having a Japan promotion in Singapore's Takashimaya (department store) in

September," he said.

This prompted Matthew Cheah, director, J-Horizons Travel, to call for a similar Japan fair in Kuala Lumpur utilising the joint efforts of agents and suppliers (see story, right).

Apple Vacations and Conventions' managing director Koh Yock Heng added: "We strongly believe that Japan will return. People go to South Korea once or twice and that's it. But travellers are very likely to make repeat visits to Japan after the first time.

"If they've visited Tokyo one year, they'd head for Kyoto or Hokkaido the following year. We have customers who have been travelling to Hokkaido five years in a row. This is simply because Japan is a fantastic destination! There is so much variety in shopping, dining, sights, experiences and hotels."

Continued from page 1

## Commitment needed for Japan revival

"Japan's tourism revival requires a three-party commitment, from suppliers, operators and government authorities," said Koh Yock Heng, Apple Vacations and Conventions' managing director during a Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) seminar on reviving Japan inbound tourism held at the Malaysian Association of Tour & Travel Agents office on April 21.

The 50 tour operators who attended called for a 30 per cent discount from suppliers. "We understand airlines used to have 85 to 95 per cent load factors for Japan destinations; now reduced to 30 to 50 per cent. And the problem is compounded by rising oil prices. But if we want to kickstart tourism again we must have hefty discounts and positive support. Since March 11, there has

not been a single advertisement selling Japan from all operators.

"We are starting our advertisements from next week. As an agent, if we are not comfortable or confident in selling Japan, how can we convince our customers to go?"

Malaysians travellers to Japan have been steadily increasing over the decade, from 72,445 in 2004 to 114,500 Malaysians last year, with a 20 per cent increase expected this year. Since the March 11 Tohoku-Pacific Ocean earthquake and tsunami, however, agents have had to deal with mass cancellations. Apple refunded RM5 million (US\$1.7 million) worth of bookings.

In Thailand, agents are planning a fam trip to Japan in the first week of May to get a firsthand account and rebuild the

confidence of Thai tourists.

Surapol Sritrakul, chairman of Jalpak Tour and Travel (Thailand), said the plan was initiated by agents who operate mainly tours to Japan and had seen business plunging since the crisis.

In Hong Kong, EGL Tours and Worldwide Package resumed Japan sales on April 16, while the top five outbound agents Morning Star, Hong Thai, Miramar, Sunflower and Wing On have suspended them till end-April.

EGL organised a 30-seat, four-day media fam to Hokkaido and Osaka during April 20-23 and slashed prices in April/May by at least 40-45 per cent with the help of airlines and hotels. Executive director Steve Huen said: "The market suffers from negative signals. In fact, only the north-eastern part of Japan is affected."



# Muslim market huge, wide Hajj cost a deterrent

De-stereotyping, product innovation needed for a bigger slice

By Ellen Chen

**KUALA LUMPUR** Malaysia must push out new products and cast its net wider if it wants to capture a larger slice of the Muslim market, tour operators were told during the fifth International Conference on Muslim Tourism, Hajj and Umrah 2011 in Kuala Lumpur.

"Islamic tourism has long been defined as merely umrah and hajj tours when there are many avenues to expand on such as halal food trails, historical and cultural journeys, and modern Muslim cities," said Zainuddin Abdul Wahab, director-general of the Islamic Tourism Centre, which is organising the second International Islamic Tourism Conference and Travel Mart in Kuala Lumpur from October 13 to 16.

"There is much potential for Islamic tourism in Malaysia due to contributing factors such as liberal policies offering comfort in food, beverages, personal needs and facilities," he added.

At the conference, examples were raised of how China and Australia have been success-



Iskandar: sell the difference

The Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) former president and group president of the Mitra group, Tunku Iskandar, said Malaysia is "barely scratching the surface".

He explained that the Muslim market is far larger than just the Middle East, highlighting North Africa and China as possible sources.

"Malaysia's greatest strength is our diversity of cultures which makes our destination different from Dubai or Egypt. This aspect is what draws Muslim travellers to our country and we should capitalise on it," he said.

Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tengku Abdullah, managing director of Two One Holidays Malaysia, said Malaysia's other advantage is

ful in wooing Muslim travellers by ensuring the convenience of prayer rooms and halal food in airports and along scenic routes.

its "successful example of a modern Islamic nation that is not radical".

However, he said the country urgently needs to upgrade its existing tourism products and introduce new attractions.

"Many Middle Easterners vacation with their families; they seldom travel alone. As far as family entertainment goes we are already losing out to Singapore's Sentosa island which has been aggressively introducing interesting products.

"We started wooing the Middle East market since the first Visit Malaysia Year in 1990 yet we have not kept ahead of the competition. Many families visit year in, year out. They will be bound to be bored with the same old experiences."

MATTA president Dato Mohd Khalid Harun said: "It is time to review our strategies in keeping up with the times."

He pointed out that the NTO also needs to carry its weight as Malaysian operators do not have the licence to sell to overseas agents. "That is Tourism Malaysia's job," he said.

By Ellen Chen

**KUALA LUMPUR** The ever-escalating hajj tour prices are discouraging many Muslim pilgrims from making the journey but operators are mixed on whether introducing more competition will help.

In Malaysia, only some 28 operators are authorised to offer hajj packages and there is an average 20-year waiting list.

"A package costs an average of RM19,000 (US\$6,290), which is the entire life savings for some pilgrims," said Prof Dr Abdul Rahim Said, adviser to Rahman Brothers Travel and Tours.

The overwhelming demand for places has also outstripped supply, resulting in hotel rates being hiked up to 10 times their usual price.

Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) president Dato Mohd Khalid Harun said two- or three-star hotels are needed instead of the crop of luxury hotels.

"The government also needs to allow more airlines to fly pilgrims instead of just Malaysian Airlines and Saudi Arabian Airlines. More opportunities can be created when there is competitiveness."

Mohammad Adzri Othman, executive director of Wira Saujana Travel & Tours was less inclined to believe this. "Competition can create good value but it means we no longer control the quality of the tours," he said.

Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tengku Abdullah, managing director of Two One Holidays Malaysia and MATTA Bumiputera representative for Umrah and Hajj, said: "Restrictions are to safeguard pilgrims in ensuring they perform their duties and come home safely."

He also said rising costs are inevitable due to inflation and development in Makkah.

However, he pointed out that Malaysians had the benefit of a government-linked organisation to help them save for hajj.

"The fund invests these accumulated savings and gives out dividends. Many countries do not have such a fund to help pilgrims."

Former president of MATTA and group president of the Mitra group, Tunku Iskandar, added that a hajj package is often reasonably priced as it covers every aspect of the pilgrimage for three weeks.

Behind every relaxing moment, there are people who care.



## At the Garden.

Come, luxuriate at The Garden Hotel Guangzhou, where everything, from tension-banishing massages at our renowned Angsana Spa to perfectly appointed bedrooms, all exist for only one thing: your comfort in an elegant, 5-Star garden setting. Come and experience South China's famed "lingnan" hospitality on a truly higher scale. At The Garden.

岭南集团  
LINGNAN  
品质生活 | Quality Life

花园酒店  
THE GARDEN HOTEL  
GUANGZHOU  
岭南集团旗下品牌  
Brand of LINGNAN

A PLATINUM 5-STAR HOTEL



368 Huanshi Dong Lu, Guangzhou, 510064. The People's Republic of China. Tel : (86-20) 8333 8989 Fax : (86-20) 8335 0467 Website : www.thegardenhotel.com.cn





Haven't been to our new home?

Here's what you've missed

## Gallery



Couldn't make it to PATA's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Conference or IT&CM China 2011? View the action here.

## Hot Jobs

Hotel Equatorial Penang is inviting applications for both a MICE and a marketing communications manager, while Sofitel So Bangkok wants a senior director of sales.

## Ask the Expert



Now in session

**Bruno des Fontaines** is vice-president of business solutions at Amadeus Asia Pacific. Quiz him on corporate travel, duty of care and even hotel distribution, an area he used to oversee.

**Q** Should I manage travelling employees in-house or consider outsourcing?

**Q** How do I keep my cost-cutting boss happy yet meet travel requests from staff?

Log on to view answers and to post your own question

## Hot Moves

Kevin Bossino is now area GM in-charge of Accor's four hotels in Singapore and Bangkok-based Khiri Travel makes senior appointments.

## Adam Tan

Join our mystery man as he flits from Beijing to the Maldives to bring us travel news exclusives.

# Time for JNTO to act

JAPAN National Tourism Organization (JNTO) has a lot going for it as it rolls up its sleeves to promote Japan again.

Firstly, it has the United Nations (UN) to thank, for UN organisations monitoring the effects of the damaged Fukushima Daiichi Plant have all sent a responsible, rational statement clarifying radiation levels pose no travel risk to Japan.

Secondly, it has outbound agents in the region on its side. Many are only eager to rebuild confidence, for Japan has been – well, nothing short of the land of the rising sun in tourism. JNTO's effort in changing Japan's image as a conservative, expensive, language-hurdled destination, in South-east Asia in particular, is a feat in itself.

Now a new feat awaits, ie, to put to rest negative perceptions among travellers that it is unsafe for them to travel to Japan and/or that it must be awful to holiday in a place that is experiencing so much sorrow – the so-called “psychological factor” that holds back “book” from “look”.

JNTO must act fast because the private sector – airlines, hotels, ground operators, etc – are now slashing prices in the face of empty seats, rooms and coaches.

The organization has kicked off a series of agent seminars in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. It's clear, from the seminar in

“Now who wouldn't be terrified with such advice?”

Kuala Lumpur, that what agents want to see are not just discounts to stimulate the business, but a drive to educate travellers on Japan today. Shen Nordin, Japan Travel Bureau (Malaysia) corporate and retail outbound division manager, pointed out the official travel advisory by the Malaysian foreign ministry still reads: “Malaysians who travel to other parts of Japan are advised to exercise a high degree of caution due to the prevailing situation regarding the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear

Power Plant.”

“Now who wouldn't be terrified with such advice?” Shen said. “Whose responsibility is it to update and coordinate with the government on the actual situation? Even the US, Australian and British embassies have updated theirs.”

Visitors to Japan in general are more discerning travellers who value quality. As Apple Vacations and Conventions' managing director, Koh Yock Heng, said: “For RM1,000 (US\$334), they head for Bali or Thailand; RM2,000-RM2,500, Taiwan and China; RM3,000-RM3,500, South Korea, and RM4,000-RM6,000, Japan or Europe.

“Japan visitors are generally more educated, take a keen interest in current affairs and expect to be well-informed.” Now that's the third factor JNTO has on its side.

Changing perceptions is a JNTO forte. After all, this is an NTO which has been able to change Japan's image to a desirable destination. Now's the time to put this strength to good use.

## Sound bites

“My mother used to come to PATA.”



**Chanin Donavanik**, CEO, Dusit International, during a panel session at the recent PATA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Conference, alluding that PATA had become a ‘my parents’ association rather than a current grouping and that it must get younger people in

“They range from entire *onsens* being washed out to sea, to tour guides lost to waves!”

**Micky Gan**, managing director, Alpha International Service Corp in Tokyo, aghast at what he describes as “rumours and fears flying unchallenged”, when everything is as normal as it can be in Tokyo. Gan calls for accurate information to be disseminated, saying no country takes safety issues as seriously as Japan

**CORRECTION**  
Thai-based tour operator Asia World has forged a 50:50 joint venture with Ho Chi Minh City-based Transviet, called Asia World Vietnam, and did not acquire Transviet as the standfirst in the *TTG Asia* April 15 story implies.

## Most commented on www.ttgasia.com

## Malaysia's incentives to woo returning professionals throw up questions

OUR story “Hoteliers mixed on new programme to woo back expert Malaysians” caused a stir among locals. We reported that the government had unveiled a slew of incentives to entice its professional citizens working abroad to come home.

While some industry members saw this as a good way of alleviating the shortage of management-level staff, readers felt that the real issue was a lack of opportunities on home ground.

Kuala Lumpur-based Harmesh Singh said: “Many Malaysians choose to work abroad due to the low income and career advancements. They are neglected when it comes to promotions as the hotel owner or the group prefers to hire expats. For instance, take a good

look at all the four- and five-star hotels and resorts in Malaysia. You can actually count the number of local GMs, DOSMs and VPs. Will this change? Will the tax rebate lure local talents back to Malaysia? I seriously doubt.”

This was echoed by Mohamad Arif Talib. “The government should know the reason why locals, especially management staff, have gone overseas. You can see jobs in Malaysia being offered to foreigners, and some have been here for a few decades.”

Still others wanted stayers to be given equal attention. “It may work, but how about the ones who are still here and contributing to the industry? Are we being thought of too?” said Patricia Yap.

## It's a war out there

IN our Ask the Expert section, Shanghai's Pudong Shangri-La director of revenue management Ofelia Blanco dished out advice on avoiding price wars by knowing one's unique strengths and capitalising on them in client communications.

Manila-based John Eric Mendoza agreed but had other worries on his mind. “That's true, but things are complicated right now. It's not only with the price wars of rates, but the online booking engines you have to deal with. How can this be addressed?”

## Japan needs your help

COMMENTS poured in for our Japan-related coverage from pledges of support to examples of its resilience. Responding to our story, “CNN's Richard Quest defends the role of media in crisis reporting”, Patrick O'Brien from the US disagreed with the news presenter who said: “The travel industry blinds itself to certain impracticalities and realities. Would you really want to go on a holiday in a country where there is a civil war or disaster?”

O'Brien said he and his wife were planning a two-week holiday to Kyoto in June, just like how he visited Phuket the year after it was hit by a tsunami. “That's when tourist facilities need help that we can give them. We would encourage anyone to do the same.”

On “Leads return to Japan”, Tokyo-based Cy West said: “Tokyo Disneyland did not close due to dwindling visitor numbers, it closed due to potential power cuts and in order to save electricity. The more than 10,000 people who were outside the park waiting for it to open are testament to its enduring popularity.”



### EDITORIAL

**Raini Hamdi**  
Group Editor (raini.hamdi@ttgasia.com)

**Amees Enriquez**  
Senior Sub Editor (amees.enriquez@ttgasia.com)

**Gracia Chiang**  
Sub Editor (gracia.chiang@ttgasia.com)

**Brian Higgs**  
Sub Editor (brian.higgs@ttgasia.com)

**Sirima Eamtako**  
Bureau Chief Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos (sirima.eamtako@ttgasia.com)

**Karen Yue**  
Senior Reporter, Singapore (karen.yue@ttgasia.com)

**Mimi Hudoyo**  
Senior Correspondent, Indonesia (idmfasia@cbn.net.id)

**S Puvaneswary**  
Reporter, Malaysia (s.puvanes@ttgasia.com)

**Ellen Chen**  
Correspondent, Malaysia (ellen.chen@ttgasia.com)

**Sim Kok Chwee**  
Correspondent-at-large (viasian.images@gmail.com)

**Prudence Lui**  
Correspondent, Hong Kong (prului@yahoo.com)

**Amy Fabris-Shi**  
Correspondent, China (amy@scribesoftheorient.com)

**Anand and Madhura Katti**  
Correspondent, India (anmkatti@mtl.net.in)

**Vivian Lee**  
Correspondent, South Korea (wei\_wei\_cheng@hotmail.com)

**Faith Chang**  
Correspondent, Australia (faithchang26@yahoo.com)

**Redmond Sia, Haze Loh**  
Creative Designers

**Lina Tan**  
Editorial Assistant

### SALES & MARKETING

**Michael Chow**  
Publisher (michael.chow@ttgasia.com)

**Katherine Ng, Marisa Chen**  
Senior Business Managers (katherine.ng@ttgasia.com, marisa.chen@hk.china.com)

**Fiona Heng**  
Marketing Services Executive (fiona.heng@ttgasia.com)

**Carol Cheng**  
Assistant Manager Administration and Marketing (carol.cheng@hk.china.com)

**Betty Loo**  
Advertisement Administration Executive (betty.loo@ttgasia.com)

### PUBLISHING SERVICES

**Tony Yeo**  
Division Manager (tony.yeo@ttgasia.com)

**Agnes Loy**  
Senior Production Executive (agnes.loy@ttgasia.com)

**Nancy Lee**  
Production Co-ordinator (nancy.lee@ttgasia.com)

**Carol Wong**  
Circulation Executive (carol.wong@ttgasia.com)

**TTG ASIA MEDIA**  
**Darren Ng**  
Managing Director (darren.ng@ttgasia.com)

### OFFICES

**SINGAPORE** 1 Science Park Road  
#04-07 The Capricorn, Singapore Science Park II  
Singapore 117528  
Tel: (65) 6395-7575 Fax: (65) 6536-2972  
contact@ttgasia.com; www.ttgasia.com

**HONG KONG** 11/F ING Tower  
308-320 Des Voeux Road, Central, Hong Kong  
Tel: (852) 2571-9333 Fax: (852) 2806-0646

TTG Asia is published by TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd. It is mailed free on written request to readers who meet predetermined criteria. Paid subscriptions are available to those who do not meet the criteria. Annual airmail subscriptions are US\$180 to Asia and US\$199 elsewhere. Cover price US\$5. MICA (P) 039/09/2010 PPS 619/02/2012(022706)

Printed by Times Printers Pte Ltd  
16 Tuas Avenue 5, Singapore 639340

## Travel Hall of Fame



The Travel Hall of Fame, displayed in the Raffles Hotel Museum on the third level of Raffles Hotel Singapore, showcases accolades, artefacts and memorabilia of the region's most exceptional travel organisations.

Since 2002, luminaries who have won the prestigious TTG Travel Award at least 10 times have been conferred the title of Travel Hall of Fame Honorary.

Singapore Airlines and Singapore Changi Airport are the Travel Hall of Fame's pioneering honorees, having been voted by Asia-Pacific's travel trade as Best Airline of the Year and Best Airport of the Year respectively, for more than a decade. Hertz Asia-Pacific joined this elite family in 2005. Recently inducted were Star Cruises, Royal Cliff Beach Resort Pattaya, Abacus International and SilkAir.



# Treat Yourself with Asia Best Deals!

This offer is valid from Now – December 31, 2011

Celebrate your holidays season with Best Western Best Deals rates starting from US\$49 at participating hotels:

China | India | Indonesia | Japan | Malaysia | Pakistan | Philippines | South Korea | Thailand | Vietnam

Visit [bestwesternasia.com](http://bestwesternasia.com) or call toll free +800 0013 1779



THE WORLD'S LARGEST  
HOTEL CHAIN®



PLUS PREMIER



# More choices soon

The region will see a boom in serviced residences over the next few years. **Karen Yue** finds out

## Who they are

## What's coming up

### The Ascott Limited



The Ascott Limited is an international serviced residence owner-operator, with over 22,000 apartment units in 170 properties around the world. The company runs three distinct brands – Ascott, Citadines and Somerset – that cater to the different lifestyle needs of business and leisure travellers. The flagship Ascott-branded properties are premier serviced residences that offer discreet service in an exclusive environment. These properties frequently welcome top executives, government dignitaries and industry leaders. Citadines-branded properties cater to savvy, independent travellers who want high-quality accommodation that comes with a great location and the flexibility to pay only for services required. Somerset-branded serviced residences are ideal for those who travel with families, often featuring children-friendly facilities such as playgrounds, indoor playrooms and children's swimming pools.

The Ascott Limited will add around 30 properties, offering over 5,000 apartments units, from now till 2015. These new properties, still in the pipeline, are mostly located in 20 cities across Asia and Europe. In China, The Ascott Limited's expansion will cover emerging commercial and tourism cities, including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Ningbo, Hangzhou, Suzhou and Xi'an. Other new properties will be added to Ho Chi Minh City, Hai Phong and Danang in Vietnam; Kuala Lumpur, Kuching and Cyberjaya in Malaysia; Jakarta and Bali in Indonesia; Manila in the Philippines; and Hamburg and Frankfurt in Germany. By 2015, the group will be present in more than 70 cities worldwide.

### Frasers Hospitality



Frasers Hospitality, which started in 1998 with two flagship properties in Singapore, now has four brands – Fraser Suites, Fraser Place, Fraser Residence and Modena. Fraser Suites is positioned as an indulgent product located in key business and entertainment districts. Fraser Place exudes a vibrant character with units featuring designer décor and furniture. Fraser Residences offers contemporary units located in quieter environments. The youngest brand, Modena, appeals to the new generation of road warriors and is positioned as a boutique hotel residence. Frasers flags are present across the globe, in key cities such as Singapore, Bangkok, Beijing, Manila, Hanoi, Nanjing, Kuala Lumpur and Sydney, as well as in the European cities of Paris, London and Edinburgh.

Frasers Hospitality kicked off its ambitious expansion plan of 25 new properties worldwide over the next two years with the opening of its 72-unit Fraser Residence Orchard in Singapore on March 24. The new properties will open in destinations such as Suzhou and Chengdu in China, Jakarta in Indonesia, New Delhi in India, Doha in Qatar, Istanbul in Turkey and Budapest in Hungary. China is said to take on the bulk of Frasers Hospitality's new openings. These will add 4,300 units altogether to Frasers' inventory, totaling 64 properties across 37 cities.

### Oakwood



A division of Oakwood Worldwide, Oakwood Asia Pacific has its regional headquarters in Singapore. Oakwood manages serviced apartments for business and leisure travellers, as well as luxury vacation resorts. It now has 22 properties in Asia-Pacific, in China, Japan, India, Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand. Guests can choose from three brands – Oakwood Premier, Oakwood Residences and Oakwood Apartments – to fit their lifestyle needs. The Oakwood Premier brand marries elegant apartments with luxury hotel service, and is designed for the upscale international traveller. Locations are prime city centre sites. The Oakwood Residences brand represents serviced apartments that combine the spacious comfort of a private home with many services of a hotel, in residential or business locations. The Oakwood Apartments brand offers a world of style, comfort and value. Oakwood has been in business since the 1960s.

Oakwood will build an additional 16 properties with 2,868 units across China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand by 2015, bringing the total number of Oakwood properties to 38. China will see the largest increase of Oakwood serviced apartments over the next four years, closely followed by India. Oakwood Residence Funder Chengdu will open in the second quarter of this year, followed by Oakwood Premier Guangzhou and Oakwood Residence Tianjin in 2012, Oakwood Premier Beijing and Oakwood Premier Chengdu in 2015. This year will see Oakwood marking its entry in Hong Kong, with Oakwood Apartments Mid Levels East slated to open in the second quarter. It will be followed by Oakwood Residence Harbour View in 2013. Malaysia will also welcome the first Oakwood property by 2014, when Oakwood Residence Johor opens.

### Pan Pacific Hotels Group



Headquartered in Singapore, Pan Pacific Hotels Group (PPHG) owns, manages and/or markets over 30 hotels, resorts and serviced suites in Asia and North America, including those still under development. PPHG comprises two brands: Pan Pacific and Parkroyal. The group's extended-stay products Pan Pacific Serviced Suites and Parkroyal Serviced Suites closely follow the positioning of their respective brands. Pan Pacific is positioned as a luxurious product in key cities, catering to the well-discerning traveller who expects sophisticated yet discreet service. Parkroyal is an upscale regional brand that promises a lifestyle approach to hospitality, catering to the guest who is more casual, financially prudent and seeks authentic local experiences where he travels. There are three serviced suites under the Pan Pacific brand, one each in Singapore, Ningbo (China) and Bangkok (Thailand). There are two Parkroyal serviced suites, one in Singapore and one in Kuala Lumpur.

The 200-key Pan Pacific Serviced Suites Ningbo will open end of this year, while the 325-key Parkroyal Serviced Suites Green City, Shanghai will open in 2013. A spokesperson with PPHG said the extended-stay segment in China represented "huge opportunities" for both brands. To achieve maximum synergies for both hotel and extended-stay product in China, the group has designed each development to comprise both products. For instance, the upcoming Pan Pacific Serviced Suites Ningbo sits with the 430-room Pan Pacific Ningbo in a mixed-used complex.

# When hotels enter the serviced apartments turf

**8 on Claymore** The newest player set to join Singapore’s serviced residences scene in July is 8 on Claymore. The 85-unit residence on 8 Claymore Hill is adjacent to the Royal Plaza on Scotts hotel, which manages the property. It is also the first serviced residence project under Summit Residences of the Preferred Hotel Group. “The opportunity was there. The potential is there. There are a lot of

apartments for rent (in Singapore), but serviced apartments are few,” said Royal Plaza on Scotts general manager, Patrick Fiat, when asked about the venture. With business trips becoming much shorter, Fiat said that the market for serviced apartments is growing. 8 on Claymore was designed with business travellers on short-term assignments, the medical tourism market,

expatriates and holiday travellers in mind. In addition to its prime location near the Orchard Road area, what will distinguish 8 on Claymore from competitors are amenities, like the fastest Internet connection on the island and the award-winning service that Royal Plaza on Scotts is known for, Fiat said. He added that 8 on Claymore will have “one-stop service, 24/7, which I

believe no other serviced apartment has in Singapore”. “Typically, serviced residences in Singapore don’t offer daily housekeeping or daily breakfast,” said Evelyn Dy-Sharma, business development manager of 8 on Claymore, adding that residents can leverage on the hotel’s amenities, like room service. “That’s quite unique about the property.” – **Amee Enriquez**



Artist’s impression of 8 on Claymore

.....

**Amari Residences** Two are now in operation, the 128-unit Amari Residences Bangkok and the 144-unit Amari Residences Sukhumvit. The first is drawing “huge” medical tourism business from the Middle East, Africa and Asia, thanks to its location adjacent to Bangkok Hospital in the New Petchburi Road district. The second also boasts easy access to Bumrungrad International Hospital. Onyx Hospitality Group Thailand describes its Amari Residences as modern and tastefully-furnished with first-class facilities, combining home-style living with Amari’s legendary service. CEO Peter Henley said the serviced apartments sector was another area the group was focusing on. Its acquisition of serviced apartment company Shama last October gave it insights into serviced apartment operations. It also gave Onyx inroads to expand into China, the Shama portfolio comprising seven serviced apartments in Hong Kong, four in Shanghai and one in Dalian, Henley said. The co-founder and CEO of Shama, Elaine Young, is now managing director of Onyx North Asia, with Onyx having offices in both Hong Kong and Shanghai. With Amari Residences as upscale and Shama as “boutique luxury”, completing Onyx’s serviced residences line is the luxurious Saffron brand. The flagship, Oriental Residence Bangkok, A Luxury Experience by Saffron, a 31-storey building with 145 serviced apartments and 44 condo units located on Wireless Road, opened recently and is a showcase of Onyx’s five-star international brand. Henley said plans were afoot for a Saffron in Mumbai and Shanghai. – **Raini Hamdi**



Amari Residences Sukhumvit



Private Mini-Bar



Make Yourself at Home

**Take time to unwind, for a few nights or more.** Being away doesn’t mean you have to miss the comforts of home. Feel free to stock up the fridge and indulge your kids with their favourite snacks. In major cities across the world, award-winning Ascott serviced residences welcome you with luxurious amenities, elegant living spaces, and unforgettable personal experiences. **Because life is about living.** To enjoy our Best Rate Guarantee, visit [www.the-ascott.com](http://www.the-ascott.com) or call our global reservations at (65) 6272 7272



The Ascott Limited is a member of CapitaLand. It is the largest global serviced residence owner-operator in Asia Pacific, Europe and the Gulf region, managing the *Ascott*, *Citadines* and *Somerset* brands in over 70 cities across more than 20 countries.





# Heating up competition

Middle Eastern carriers have become a force to reckon with over the years, analyses **Sim Kok Chwee**



In the 1980s, the European carriers, as well as Qantas Airways, kept a wary eye on Asian airlines like Cathay Pacific Airways, Malaysia Airline System, Singapore Airlines and Thai Airways International. These Asian airlines were seen as siphoning traffic between Australasia and Europe via their home bases.

When Dubai's flag carrier, Emirates, was established in 1985 with two aircraft and a start-up capital of only US\$10 million, it hardly warranted a second look. Its first routes linking Dubai to Karachi, Mumbai and Delhi were seemingly aimed at carrying migrant workers headed to Dubai. Beyond negatively impacting the fortunes of Gulf Air, Emirates' expansion to Colombo, Dhaka, Amman and Cairo initially appeared of little consequence to airlines competing for the Australasia-Europe routes.

The first sign that Emirates was emerging as a competitor may have been when it began operating to London-Gatwick, and further expanded to the Far East. In 1996, Emirates launched three weekly flights between Dubai and Melbourne, while continuing to add new destinations in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

The airline's expansion in Europe went beyond key capitals, and included secondary cities such as Birmingham, Glasgow, Newcastle, Hamburg, Dusseldorf, Nice, Geneva and Venice.

By 2010, Emirates operated 70 weekly services to Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth), with many services extending to New Zealand.

the destination. The number of visitors from the United Arab Emirates arriving in Australia grew from 6,100 in 1996 to 290,000 in 2010.

Elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific region, Emirates, Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways were also providing valuable connectivity to cities such as Kathmandu, Hanoi, Cebu, Phuket and Dhaka. Qatar Airways provides a one-stop service between Singapore and Houston or Sao Paulo, albeit with a change of aircraft in Doha.

Emirates is planning to service Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires in January 2012, and will offer a similar one-stop service between Asia and South America.

While Australia and most Asian countries have been relatively keen to facilitate the expansion of these Middle Eastern carriers, some countries have been less enthusiastic about granting these airlines services they apply for.

Canada, Germany and now, Austria, have each argued that existing services are more than adequate for origin-and-destination (O&D) traffic, and felt it was unfair to grant more services that go towards feeding traffic beyond the three airlines' home bases in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha.

Air Canada's CEO, Calin Rovinescu, cautioned that "they connect on to other countries and by dumping excess seats into the Australian market, Emirates tilts the playing field, depriving other airlines a chance to serve those routes directly."

Austrian Airlines' co-chairman, Peter Malanik, said: "The Dubai hub is being

## Emirates' success quickly inspired new entrants from the Middle East, such as Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways

Not only was Emirates emulating the successful formula of Asian carriers when it developed Dubai as a hub, it was also offering more convenient, one-stop connections between the Australian and Asian cities it served to most European cities.

A traveller in Sydney bound for Glasgow will transfer only once in Dubai. This is a more attractive connection than those offered by Qantas, British Airways and the Asian carriers, which required transfers in two cities. Emirates' success quickly inspired new entrants from the Middle East, such as Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways, which joined the fray in 1993 and 2003 respectively.

All three carriers were soon the toast of aircraft manufacturers in every air show since 2003, as they announced record orders for new aircraft. Today, Emirates, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways operate to 105, 67 and 100 destinations respectively, and new routes continue to be added.

According to Andrew Parker, Emirates senior vice president, the airline carried 11 million passengers to Australia in its first decade of operations there and spent A\$45 million (US\$47 million) promoting

expanded regardless of the project's profitability. It's just about the location. The owner is also the lawmaker and regulator. It owns the airline and the airport and is in charge of air traffic monitoring. It also provides the kerosene. Money doesn't matter."

Malanik claimed that competition from Emirates had already caused Austrian Airlines to terminate services to Mauritius and Australia, and added that "Emirates' next target is to kill our link to Bangkok".

Emirates president Tim Clark countered the claims, saying: "It has taken European carriers donkey's years to adapt their business models to the changing dynamics of global civil aviation. They haven't been able to align their traffic flows to what is going on, whereas we have."

But all is not lost for the Asian carriers and Qantas. With Boeing 787 Dreamliners and Airbus A350s due for delivery in the next few years, they too will have the right-sized aircraft to operate a one-stop service from their hubs to secondary cities in Europe – that is, if they are able to look beyond major European capitals and launch services to such cities.



**FINNAIR**

DESIGNED FOR YOU

“With over 50  
daily connections  
to Europe,  
Finnair gets  
my standing  
ovation.”

**Min Lee**, violinist  
Singapore

Having conquered the world stage, Min Lee is no stranger to applause. Fresh and energetic, her flawless performances have mesmerised audiences around the world. Such is the spirit of excellence we share with Min Lee. For years, we've been renewing our fleet to bring you the latest in technology, comfort and fuel efficiency. Come 31 May, be the first to fly our new younger fleet from Singapore to Helsinki. And as the faster route to over 50 destinations in Europe, you'll love an encore.

#### DAILY FLIGHTS

SINGAPORE DEP. 23:30 - HELSINKI ARR. 06:35\* . HELSINKI DEP. 23:40 - SINGAPORE ARR. 16:10\*

Fast connections to Amsterdam • Barcelona • Berlin • Brussels • Bucharest • Budapest • Copenhagen • Dusseldorf • Geneva • Gdansk • Gothenburg • Hamburg • London • Madrid • Manchester • Milan • Moscow • Munich • Paris • Prague • Riga • Rome • St.Petersburg • Stockholm • Tallinn • Warsaw • Vienna • Vilnius • Zurich and 20 other cities.

Visit [www.finnair.sg](http://www.finnair.sg) or contact your local travel agent for more information.

\*following day



# Qatar CEO: No anomaly or unfairness

The CEO of Qatar Airways, Akbar Al Baker, was displeased about comments made by the secretary general of the Association of European Airlines, Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus, regarding the dramatic rise of Gulf carriers and their impact on the global aviation industry.

He labelled Strathaus' remarks, delivered during a gathering of the International Aviation Club in Washington on January 18, as "factually incorrect and unfounded".

He released a statement to the media in February with his counter-arguments. Here are excerpts of the more important points he raised:

I recently came across the remarks made by a colleague of ours, Mr Schulte-Strathaus, secretary general of the AEA, about how global competition needs to be addressed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation, similar to what the industry is calling for in the domain of the environment.

Mr Schulte-Strathaus focused on the competitive pressure that airlines from the Gulf are posing on their counterparts elsewhere. Usually, I would choose not to comment directly on calls to find ways to limit the growth of the Gulf carriers, including Qatar Airways.

However, because Mr Schulte-Strathaus chose to address one of the august fo-

rum of aviation visionaries in the world, I thought I needed to put the record straight. Mr Schulte-Strathaus in his remarks included a number of "facts" which I beg to disagree with. The so-called facts that he alluded to were as follows:

**1 The geographical proximity of Doha, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi gives rise to an anomaly in aviation.** The fact of the matter is that it is quite common to have a multitude of hubs in close proximity: Singapore and Kuala Lumpur; Paris, Amsterdam, and London; Frankfurt, Zurich, and Vienna; the airports of New York and so on. Therefore, having three major hubs within a 280 miles radius is not a novelty in aviation.

**2 The issue that the governments of the UAE and Qatar consider the airlines of the Gulf as part of national strategy and as a "tool of a vertically integrated economic chain".** Again, he is trying to highlight a norm rather than an anomaly in the current geopolitical structure.

I would like to pose a question to Mr Schulte-Strathaus: Can he tell me of any country of the world which does not consider its air transport industry, be that an individual airline or a multitude of them, as part of national interests? Was it not the case that the US government provided its airlines with cash outlays and tax breaks,

as well as war insurance subsidies after September 11 in order to ensure the continuity of the US air transport industry?

And on the other side of the Atlantic, doesn't Mr Schulte-Strathaus consider the billions of euros that are allowed under the EU laws to pump into airlines for "restructuring purposes" as a manifestation of the strategic national interest in supporting national airlines and what they represent economically and socially?

**3 Mr Schulte-Strathaus is comparing the aircraft order book of Gulf airlines with that of the US carriers in the longhaul wide body arena as if those airlines plan to dump capacity.** The comparison itself is extremely erroneous!

The backbone of the US air transport industry is domestic operations. The portion of the capacity deployed internationally as a ratio of the total capacity deployed by the US airlines is minimal. Of course, geography and population spread requires such a structure.

The airlines of the Gulf operate from small countries and they are operating regionally in an area which is three times the size of the US, and internationally with a network that stretches across the globe. We operate with the minimum cost per seat mile in mind.

We operate with the minimum environmental footprint in mind as well. The average age of our fleet is around five years only. We do not keep airplanes operating for 20 to 30 years.

Therefore, you will find that in order to maintain the lowest cost in seat mile, and the greatest appeal to customers, our order book is higher than elsewhere because we maintain a young fleet.

**4 Mr Schulte-Strathaus goes further in saying that two of the Gulf airlines have never made a profit.** First of all, I would like to ask him how does he know that since Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways are not publishing their financial reports as yet? But from the principle standpoint: If profit was the only reason why airlines buy airplanes, as he is insinuating, then the net result of buying new airplanes in this whole industry should have been negative during the last decade.

**5 The crux of the matter in what Mr Schulte-Strathaus is saying lies in his remark that "these (Gulf) airlines are efficient, they have extremely low unit cost yet deliver consistently high service quality.** They have clarity of vision and decisiveness of action. They also have the full and enthusiastic support of their domestic political institutions."

I couldn't say that better! Is it a mistake to be efficient and to have a low unit cost? Is it wrong from governments to be supportive to their national interests? Is Mr Schulte-Strathaus advocating that airlines which have high unit cost and do not deliver consistently high service quality should be protected from efficient low cost and high service airlines?

**6 Mr Schulte-Strathaus is saying that we are driven by a "policy which is not compatible with that of the US, Europe, Australia, China, Canada, and so on".**

I'm really lost here! Most of these governments are signatories of the Agenda for Freedom brokered by IATA, which calls for free market access. In fact, even the director general of IATA, Mr Giovanni Bisignani,



**"They should accept competition and that the customer is in the driver's seat."**

**Akbar Al Baker**  
CEO  
Qatar Airways

nani, recently called upon the Canadian government to respect the liberal market access principle and avoid protectionism. Does Mr Schulte-Strathaus advocate that this policy of liberalisation should only apply when his member airlines are the beneficiaries and not vice-versa?

**7 Mr Schulte-Strathaus is requesting governments to prevent additional market access in the short term!** Perhaps Mr Schulte-Strathaus should also ask governments to forego liberalisation policies, deregulation and why not foregoing market economy and resort to protectionism, inefficiencies, cartel price fixing, and anti-consumer behaviour.

Where would protectionism end if his calls are heeded by the governments? Isn't it the right of any consumer to get access to the best prices and the best value for money?

**8 Finally, we have no problem whatsoever for ICAO to create a multilateral system along the lines of how the World Trade Organisation handles free trade.**

I would go even further: Why won't we apply the WTO principles on aviation to ensure that first and foremost, the rights of the consumers and free competition apply across the board?

The European airlines were pioneers in a large number of areas. We in the Gulf airlines community have learnt a lot from them. They should accept competition and that the customer is in the driver's seat.

**THE STATE OF EXCLUSIVITY & FASCINATION**

4 Hotels | 11 Restaurants | 11 Bars | 6 Swimming Pools | 2 Exclusive Beaches | Health & Fitness Centre  
7 Tennis Courts | 2 Squash Courts | Golf Pitch & Putt | 2 Spas | Beauty Salon | Cooking School  
Kid's Club | Catamaran | 53 Meeting Rooms | 2 Helicopter Pads | Convention Centre

**ROYAL CLIFF HOTELS GROUP**  
THE STATE OF EXCLUSIVITY & FASCINATION  
www.royalcliff.com

For more information and reservations please contact:  
Royal Cliff Hotels Group 353 Pua Tannuk Road, Pattaya, Chonburi 20150  
Tel: +66 38 250421 | Fax: +66 38 250844 | e-mail: info@royalcliff.com | www.royalcliff.com



حدث واحد - وجهات غير محدودة  
One Event, Unlimited Destinations  
Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre



# Register now for Arabian Travel Market 2011 to win an iPad\*



## The Leading Travel Exhibition for the Middle East Region

Register now for the opportunity to meet over 2,000 exhibitors from more than 60 destinations.

Establish new business prospects, meet key contacts and discover developments that are driving the travel industry today.

### Features include:

- Educational Seminar Programme
- Industry Debates
- Social Events
- Careers Day – Thursday 5th May
- Travel Agents Day – Thursday 5th May
- Consumer Day – Thursday 5th May

Discover solutions to improve your future...

Register as a visitor at  
[www.arabiantravelmarket.com/ttgasia](http://www.arabiantravelmarket.com/ttgasia)

For all other queries, contact the Arabian Travel Market Customer Service Helpline:  
E: [arabian.helpline@reedexpo.co.uk](mailto:arabian.helpline@reedexpo.co.uk)

\* If you pre register and attend Arabian Travel Market, you will be automatically entered into our free prize draw to win an Apple iPad. Terms and conditions apply.



## Advancing **MICE** and **Business Minds**

Bringing Together Chinese and International MICE Exhibitors  
& Buyers In One Dynamic Marketplace

# See You Next Year

# 17 to 19 April 2012

## Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center

FOR THE FIRST 10 IT&CM CHINA 2012 EXHIBITORS

### Catch Our Super Early Bird Special

worth  
over  
USD6,000

- Early Bird Savings of **USD 230 Off** Every 9sqm Shell Scheme Booth Taken
- Plus! **Bonus Publicity** And Airtime With Buyers, Media And MICE Professionals
  - **Half-Page Full Colour Ad**  
In The IT&CM China 2012 Show Directory For Confirmed Booths 36sqm And Larger
  - **Logo Feature (Black & White)**  
In The IT&CM China 2012 Show Directory
  - **IT&CM China 2012 On-site Announcement**  
Highlighting Your Booth Number And Presence At The Event

Super Early Bird Special **Ends 30 April 2011**

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

Contact:

For International Delegates: [itcmchina@ttgasia.com](mailto:itcmchina@ttgasia.com) | (65) 6395 7575 • For Chinese Delegates: [info-shg@mpshanghai.com](mailto:info-shg@mpshanghai.com) | (86-21) 6295 9990

ORGANISED BY



SUPPORTED BY



IT&CM China 2012 is proud to be part of the Shanghai Business Events Week.

Where The MICE Industry Comes Together In Shanghai. In An Exciting Week Of Business, Education and Networking Events.





Three Sisters, Jamison Valley, Blue Mountains

Mimi Hudoyo

# Glowing prospects

New flights, hotels and unique events give a fresh twist to Australia. By **Mimi Hudoyo**

**NTO** New South Wales (NSW) will be getting a new tourism body and additional funding. Speaking at the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) this month, NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell said: "A new tourism body called Destination New South Wales will be created, bringing together the expertise of Tourism NSW and Events NSW, so that we have one body charged with marketing the state to interstate and international visitors."

The state government is setting aside AUD\$40 million (US\$42.25 million) for the tourism budget, targeting to double overnight visitor expenditure by 2020. International Visitor Survey data showed that last year, total expenditure, excluding prepaid package expenditures, was AUD\$5.9 billion.

**Airlines** Qantas is seeking to strengthen its low cost carrier (LCC) subsidiary Jetstar's network in Asia. Qantas CEO, Alan Joyce, said: "Jetstar's Asia operation will grow by 46 per cent this year."

LCC Virgin Blue is also set to become a full-service carrier, with its launch slated for May.

Virgin Blue manager international market Gordon Young said it needed to be less dependent on the fluctuating tourism market. "Airlines these days need to be able to balance the cabin."

China Southern Airlines is increasing its presence in Australia, planning to provide 100 weekly return services to major cities by 2015. Last year, it increased services from Guangzhou to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane from 10 services per week to 24, capturing 53 per cent of mainland China traffic to Australia.

This is part of the airline's goal to make Guangzhou a transit point for passengers between Australasia and Europe, the US, Korea and Japan.

**Hotels** Sydney and other Australian cities have been enjoying high occupancy rates. Aside from leisure, the destination's robust economy continues to draw business and MICE visitors.

Hotels are investing in major renovations. The Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel in Circular Quay is under an AUD\$20 million refurbishment, with its 550 suites ready this month, and public areas in September.

The iconic Hydro Majestic



"All we can do as a destination marketer is to make our place so compelling and so desirable that money, while it is always important, is less the worry."

**Andrew McEvoy**  
Managing director  
Tourism Australia

Hotel in Blue Mountains will reopen in 2012 after a multi-million-dollar facelift. New facilities include 115 rooms, two restaurants, its Majestic Ballroom, a 300-seat multi-purpose function room and four smaller function rooms.

Accor's new properties include Mercure Sydney Potts Point, formerly The Crest, which reopened with 227 rooms after closing for renovations for two years, as well as the 150-apartment Grand Mercure Apartment Cable Beach Resort on Cable Beach. The Fairmont Resort, which is undergoing major renovations, has new owners and is also newly managed by Accor.

**MICE** Melbourne won the bid to host the largest Indian incentive in Australia's history, Amway India's Leadership Seminar, for more than 4,000 delegates in 2012. Victoria Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Louise Asher, said: "This is a significant coup for Victoria."

Sandra Chipchase, Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau CEO, said the event would generate an estimated AUD\$20.98 million in revenue.

For Sydney, O'Farrell an-

nounced a plan to develop a new convention centre to attract major international conferences, exhibitions and events.

He said the city is aiming to host the 2015 IMF/World Bank conference, which will be attended by some 10,000 delegates. "We cannot afford to continue to lose the opportunity to host events because there are no sufficient facilities," he said.

**Events** Sydney will launch its first floating stage opera, Handa Opera on the Harbour 2012, from March 24 to April 15, 2012. The inaugural opera, set to become an annual event, will feature Verdi's *La Traviata*.

The city will also host Parramasala, an Australian festival of South Asian arts, in November 2012. The event covers traditional and contemporary arts, with international performers expected to participate.

South Australia will hold the Adelaide Festival on March 2 to 18, 2012, which includes opera, theatre, dance, classical and contemporary music and cabaret.

It will also host Tasting Australia, showcasing the best in Australian food and drink, from April 26 to May 3, 2012.





BEST WESTERN CARES!

By Glenn de Souza  
Vice President International  
Operations –Asia & Middle East

I recently talked about the Best Western ‘I Care’ campaign that was launched back in 2007. Despite the recession in 2009, Best Western continued to expand its folio throughout 2009 – 2010 through Improved Customer Service and Harnessing Diversity as Strength.

Best Western ‘I Care 1’ training initiative provides a comprehensive program designed to improve customer service and how to handle complaints, while the second phase aims to offer our valued guests a problem-free experience.

“I Care 2” focuses on executive involvement where general managers will be trained to become more effective in their leadership role with a focus on how to prevent problems in order to eliminate possible complaints. The program identifies key common issues found in a hotel that have the highest impact on guests and develop preventive practices to enhance guest’s satisfaction for their stay at the hotel. This includes improving the level of cleanliness and offering opportunities for guests to customize their hotel experience to their match preference.

With Best Western ‘I Care 2’, each region has its own strategies from one country to another. This is simply because this program is based on customization. Each area has different key issues that might not be found elsewhere, so it is very much tailored-made to best fit the diversity of our over 4,000 hotels and resorts worldwide.

As Asia is known for its diversity, developing customized training program isn’t the easiest job. What we share in common is the “heroic hospitality” – the service culture we’re introducing to our members where we encourage our staff to look for opportunities to be a hero and consistently strive to exceed guest expectations with the aim to deliver superior customer service. It is the little things that count!

Best Western hotels in Asia and the Middle East are now going through the training and it is expected that we will complete both ‘I Care 1’ and ‘I Care 2’ modules for all properties by the end of 2012.



AUSTRALIA: BRIEFING/INSIDER

Asia reigns Down Under

Continent is fast becoming a key source market for Australia, reports Mimi Hudoyo

Asia and the Eastern Hemisphere countries have now become important source markets for Australia. Tourism Australia (TA) managing director, Andrew McEvoy, said: “The latest international arrival figures continue to highlight the growing importance of Asia as a key driver of Australia’s future international tourism growth.” The destination is seeing a shift in arrival patterns, with neighbouring countries edging out the once-dominant Western Hemisphere source markets. The Eastern Hemisphere, which now accounts for 47 per cent of inbound business to the country, is expected to grow to 58 per cent by 2020, with Asia playing a dominant role. Australia enjoyed double-digit growth from North-east Asia, South-east Asia, India and Japan last year. Arrivals from North-east Asia were up by 14 per cent over 2009, while South-east Asia booked an increase of nine per cent.

Arrivals from South-east Asia — Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam — reached 790,400. Total international arrivals to Australia last year was 5.9 million. TA general manager South/South-east Asia and Gulf Countries, Maggie White, said: “Singapore, together with Malaysia, is a mature market for us. If we look at population numbers, and the fact that they were hit by the economic crisis (in 2008), we would think the number of arrivals would have been down. Now, they keep going up.” Similarly, Malaysian arrivals have been on the rise in the last five years, thanks in part to the introduction of AirAsia X services from Kuala Lumpur to the Gold Coast, Perth and Melbourne. There were big opportunities with Indonesia and Vietnam, but Thailand did not grow much. The table below illustrates market figures for South-east Asia and how TA plans to grow these markets.

	Country arrival profile	Tourism spend	Why they choose Australia	Marketing 2011/2012
	Total arrivals for 2010 was 308,000, an increase of eight per cent over the same period in 2009. Singapore was Australia’s sixth largest inbound market. TA is forecasting 314,000 arrivals for the year, with a 3.1 per cent average annual growth until 2020.	Travellers from Singapore contributed AUD\$1.2 billion (US\$1.2 billion) to Australia’s total tourism revenue in 2010, with 86 per cent from repeat travellers. The figure is five per cent of international expenditure. Average spend was AUD\$4,442 per visit. Average length of stay was 21 nights.	Closest Western destination. Offers a diverse range of experiences. Australia consistently ranks high on satisfaction among repeat travellers, generating positive word-of-mouth and a desire to visit again.	There’s Nothing Like Australia (TNLA) campaign to continue showcasing unique experiences, as well as highlight what’s new with the destination. Co-ops with airlines and agents to showcase experiences and drive sales.
	The total number of arrivals to Australia in 2010 was 236,900, an increase of 12 per cent over 2009. Malaysia ranked seventh in inbound arrivals. TA is expecting 234,000 arrivals for 2011, with a 3.9 per cent average annual growth through 2020.	Visitors from Malaysia spent AUD\$1.05 billion in 2010, accounting for four per cent of total expenditure, 83 per cent of which was from repeat travellers. The average spend per person was AUD\$4,916. By 2020, Malaysia is targeted to generate between AUD\$2 billion and AUD\$2.6 billion.	Closest Western destination. A diverse range of experiences and cuisine, including <i>halal</i> options. Warm and friendly people.	TNLA brand and co-op campaigns to strengthen Australia’s brand position. Similar campaigns with airlines and agents, with the aim of increasing awareness and driving sales.
	Indonesia booked 124,000 arrivals in 2010, an increase of 14 per cent over 2009. TA is forecasting 141,000 arrivals for 2011, with an average annual growth rate of 7.3 per cent through 2020.	Indonesians spent AUD\$608 million in 2010, two per cent of all international expenditure, of which 81 per cent was from repeat visitors. Average spend per person was AUD\$5,432 per visit. Indonesia is expected to contribute between AUD\$1.4 billion to AUD\$1.7 billion by 2020.	Closest Western destination. Improved visa issuance has resulted in positive perception change. Close proximity. Diverse experiences.	In Indonesia, the TNLA campaigns with airlines and agents focus on increasing destination awareness, growing the market through cooperation with agents, and driving sales. A dedicated sales mission to Indonesia is planned for next year.
	Thailand arrivals in 2010 was 84,100, an increase of three per cent over 2009. This year, the number of arrivals is expected to grow to 88,000, with an annual growth rate of 4.3 per cent until 2020.	Thais spent an average of AUD\$6,102 per visit last year, contributing AUD\$478 million, or two per cent of total international spending. First-time visitors contributed 31 per cent of total expenditure totalling AUD\$149 million.	Closest Western destination. Numerous choices of food and wine. More affordable than Europe. Unique natural wonders. Warm and friendly people.	Targeted marketing activities.
	Vietnam is a growing market for Australia, with 37,400 arrivals last year, an increase of seven per cent over 2009. Vietnam does not have a specific growth projection breakdown for 2011, as it is classified under the Rest of Asia category.	Vietnamese visitors spent a total of AUD\$384 million in 2010. Average expenditure was AUD\$10,864 per visit.	There is currently no reliable information source for competitor information for Vietnam, so TA did not include competitor-related insights as part of Vietnam’s current market facts.	In Vietnam, the activities include TNLA co-op campaigns with agents and airlines to increase destination awareness and to drive sales.



Test drive

# An underworld trek at Jenolan Caves



Aside from adventure, Australia's famed caves offer an incomparable auditory experience. *Mimi Hudoyo* explores

**WHY** The Jenolan Caves, estimated to be about 340 million years old, is considered as one of the oldest open cave systems in the world. Part of Australia's popular Blue Mountains region in New South Wales, Jenolan attracts both first-time and repeat visitors.

There are 10 cave routes that offer various difficulty levels, from the easier paths to the more strenuous adventure treks. The caves are well-lit and have good pathways that make them safe to explore.

One of Jenolan's unique characteristics is the Cathedral Chamber found in Lucas Cave. Now used as a concert hall, it has a natural acoustic quality that would rival that of the Sydney Opera House. Live concerts are periodically held here.

**WHAT** I joined a guided tour that took me through Lucas Cave, where the largest and highest chambers are located.

The 860m-long trek up and down 910 steps is considered one of the attraction's more challenging ones.

However, it is not as bad as it sounds: While some steps were steep, most were short and easy to navigate. More importantly, these steps led to cave chambers and magnificent rock formations that made all the effort worthwhile in the end.

Some of the more stunning formations were the Statue of Liberty, Home of the Fairies, The Broken Column, the Bishop and the Three Sisters, and the Curtains.

The best, however, was the Cathedral Chamber. A sound system was installed to complement the altar, organ pipes and cathedral windows fashioned out of rock.

When classical music was played, there was no doubt in my mind that it sounded heavenly.

**HOW** Guided tours of the cave of your choice are available daily. These last anywhere from one to two hours.

Also, special events like underground concerts, and the Jenolan Caves Food

and Wine Festival, are held from time to time. Check the attraction's website for the schedule.

There is a variety of accommodation available near the attraction, from back-

packer hostels to the Grand Victorian Guest House.

**VERDICT** An awesome underworld tour that's definitely worth the trek.



Mimi Hudoyo

**Name** Jenolan Caves  
**Rates** From AUD\$28 per person  
**Contact details**  
Tel: (61-2) 6359-3911  
Email: reception@jenolancaves.org.au  
Website: www.jenolancaves.org.au

## PATA TRAVEL MART 2011

September 6-9, Pragati Maidan  
New Delhi, India

**PATA**<sup>®</sup>  
Pacific Asia Travel Association  
CELEBRATING  
60 YEARS

India, one of the fastest growing tourism markets in the world, is hosting the PTM2011 in its capital city, New Delhi.

After the recently concluded Commonwealth Games, there has never been a better time to visit New Delhi – a melting pot of religions and cultures. Renovations of the capital's heritage buildings and major improvements to infrastructure make New Delhi even more welcoming than before. The city is a hub for visitors who wish to explore the north of India, serving as the starting point of a world-famous tourist circuit that includes Agra and Jaipur, as well as the famed hill stations of the Himalayas.

### Why PATA Travel Mart?

As the leading travel event in the Asia Pacific region, PATA Travel Mart offers abundant opportunities for travel industry stakeholders to network and gain new contacts throughout the region. PTM brings together hundreds of international buyers and sellers in one place. Choosing the right platform from which to showcase your company is essential to success, making PTM an event you don't want to miss.

### Sellers

PTM is the perfect platform for showcasing your products and services, increasing your customer base, and reconnecting with current customers. Come and discuss the latest business trends with worldwide buyers from the travel and tourism industry.

### Buyers

PTM offers remarkable sourcing opportunities from the Asia Pacific region including attractions, inbound operators, hotels, resorts, national tourism organisations, airlines, cruise lines and travel media.



## REGISTER NOW

**Sellers – register now to ensure prime space location**

**Buyers – register now for the limited hosted programme**

**Register online at [www.PATA.org/mart2011](http://www.PATA.org/mart2011) or email [PTM@PATA.org](mailto:PTM@PATA.org)**

Host:

Official Carrier:

Official Publication:







**ASEAN TOURISM FORUM**

**9 - 15 January 2012**

**Manado • Republic of Indonesia**



**Tourism For A Global Community Of Nations**

The ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) is a cooperative regional effort to promote the ASEAN region as one tourist destination where Asian hospitality and cultural diversity are at their best.

## The Best Of ASEAN Travel Trade Business

### More than 90% of Exhibitors

expect **orders over the next 6 to 12 months**  
ranging from **USD 50,000 to USD 250,000**

### 90% of Buyers

rated the quality of **exhibitors and their business appointments** as **Excellent and Good**

"The event was a great opportunity to renew and reinforce relationships with existing as well as new operators."

**Asia Escape Holidays, Australia**  
*Marilyn Lynda Milner - Product Buyer*

"I found lots of potential buyers for this year and we look forward to the same next year."

**Rajah Tours Philippines Inc, Philippines**  
*Jennylyn Paabilona*

"I was exposed to very interesting new products and ideas. The event was a rich source of contacts."

**Meeting & Congressi - Trend, Italy**  
*Luciano Riella - Journalist*

*Based on ATF 2011 Post-Show Feedback*



**Register Today!**

**ATF 2012 TRAVEX | 13 to 15 January 2012**

#### Exhibitors

Be part of the ATF 2012 exhibitor delegation and represent your country to some 500 Buyers and Media! Open to travel trade suppliers from the 10 ASEAN destinations only: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

#### Buyers

HOSTING PROGRAMME AVAILABLE

Keen to buy into ASEAN? ATF 2012 showcases the largest contingent of ASEAN destination products and services. Come gather the latest information on ASEAN tourism products and services, establish new business contacts and learn about the region's tourism trade.

#### Media

HOSTING PROGRAMME AVAILABLE

Get the latest scoop on ASEAN travel trade news, developments and trends! ATF is ASEAN's foremost annual travel trade event, well-attended by media from around the world. Editorial representatives from established travel trade media publications are eligible for the hosting programme!

Participation Details, Hosting Programme and Online Registration Available At:

**www.atfindonesia.com**



HOST COMMITTEE



Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
Republic of Indonesia

Ministry Of Culture And Tourism  
Republic Of Indonesia  
Sapta Pesona Building  
Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No. 17, Jakarta 10110  
Tel: +62 21 383 8167 • Fax: +62 21 384 9715  
Email: [promosiluarnegeri@gmail.com](mailto:promosiluarnegeri@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.budpar.go.id](http://www.budpar.go.id)

TRAVEX SECRETARIAT



TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd  
1 Science Park Road #04-07  
The Capricorn, Singapore Science Park II  
Singapore 117528  
Tel: +65 6395 7575 • Fax: +65 6536 0896  
Email: [atf@ttgasia.com](mailto:atf@ttgasia.com)  
Website: [www.atfindonesia.com](http://www.atfindonesia.com)