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Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2008 2:23 PM
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Subject: Travelweek Online | February 28, 2008



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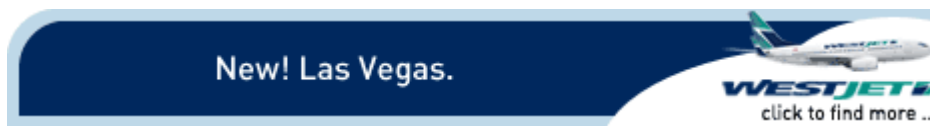


Phil Sproul joins TPI network of home-based agents as exec. vp & COO

TORONTO - Travel Professionals International (TPI), Canada's largest network of home-based agents, has added Phil Sproul in the positions of executive vice president & COO for the company and its operations. [Read more >>](#)

Sunquest re-introduces Caribbean cruising for next winter, detailed in new brochure

TORONTO - Starting next winter (2009), Sunquest will once again offer a cruise product in the Caribbean with cruise line partner MSC Cruises. [Read more >>](#)



Transat Holidays offers short-duration specials to London for Easter

TORONTO - Transat Holidays is offering short-duration Easter specials to London at select hotels. [Read more >>](#)

Escapades brochure a thing of the past as company takes entire lineup exclusively online

TORONTO - Huntington Travel Group's Escapades division has decided to do away with brochures and offer an exclusively web-based product. [Read more >>](#)

Sandals Resorts invites Canadian agents to 'Open the Door to Success'

TORONTO - Sandals' fourth annual promotion - created exclusively for Canadian agents - is back and the prizes are bigger than ever before. [Read more >>](#)

Sunquest's summer & fall 2008 packages now available for sale

TORONTO - Sunquest's 2008 summer and fall program, which runs from May through December, is now available in the system, including pricing up to Dec. 19, 2008. [Read more >>](#)



Bearskin adds flight

Bearskin Airlines will be adding a Saturday service between Waterloo Region and

Ottawa commencing Saturday March 29. Last Oct. 1, Bearskin Airlines launched three roundtrip flights each business day as well as Sunday service between the Region of Waterloo International Airport (YKF) and Ottawa International Airport (YOW). A fourth flight has since been added on Fridays. Up to four hours can be saved on a return trip flight by using this nonstop service as compared to the use of Toronto's Pearson terminal and the associated drive to and from Waterloo Region. For a limited time, these new flights are being offered at fares starting at \$79 one way plus taxes and surcharges.

Hong Kong visitor record

Visitor arrivals in Hong Kong during 2007 reached a record high, according to the **Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB)**. The arrivals figure for the year was 28,169,293, an increase of 11.6% over the 25.25 million arrivals recorded in 2006. All long- and short-haul market regions showed positive gains in 2007. Canada's performance was especially strong, with an annual total of 395,167 arrivals, an increase of 17.7% over the previous year. The Americas region recorded 1,783,609 arrivals in 2007, a figure that translates into a 9.4% increase over 2006. In this region, the United States provided the highest number of arrivals with a figure of 1,230,927, an increase of 6.2% over 2006. Of the more than 28 million visitors who came to Hong Kong in 2007, some 17.15 million (60.9%) stayed overnight. The remaining 11 million were classified "same day in-town" visitors, departing for another destination on the day of arrival. But most long-haul visitors stayed one night or more, including 74.6% from The Americas.

Petro-Points partner

Petro-Points and **itravel2000** have agreed to a partnership whereby Petro-Points members can earn points when purchasing vacation packages, cruises, flights, hotels and other travel needs through itravel2000. As well, members will be able to redeem their Petro-Points towards those same purchases. According to **Jonathan Carroll**, president, itravel2000, "for the first time, members of a loyalty program will be able to earn and redeem rewards on a broad, unbiased selection of competitively priced travel products without the imposed premiums, restrictions, or blackouts typically found in other programs".

Canadians up to Florida

Canadian travel to Florida shot up 10.2% last year as the Canadian dollar hit parity with its U.S. counterpart. The total number of Canadian, overseas and domestic non-residential tourists visiting Florida during the 2007 calendar year was 82.4 million compared to 83.9 million travellers in 2006.

Canadians up in St. Lucia

Preliminary figures released by the **St Lucia Tourist Board** show that the number of tourist stopover arrivals increased by 14% to 24,958 visitors in January compared with 21,887 visitors in January 2007. This substantial gain in arrivals was complemented by a 25.4% increase in the number of cruise visitors to St. Lucia which grew from 81,536 visitors in January 2007 to 102,286 cruise visitors this January. The increase in stopover visitors, which includes all visitors staying for 24 hours or more, was led by a strong 34.9% increase from Canada, growing from 2,902 in January 2007 to 3,915 in January 2008. There was a 22% increase in the volume of visitors from the United Kingdom, which generated 7,663 visitors this January compared with 6,271 in January 2007. The U.S. remained St. Lucia's most important source market generating 32.5% of all stopover arrivals in January and saw the volume of stopovers grow from this market by 3.2% from 7,871 arrivals in January 2007 to 8,119 in January 2008.

Signature adds Valentin

Signature Vacations has added the **Valentin Imperial Maya** to the list of properties it offers. Set amid tropical vegetation on the shores of the Mayan Riviera, this brand new 5-star hotel features five restaurants and international buffet. The property is home to a spa and includes an over-sized marble bathroom with hydro-massage bathtub in 680 Junior Suites. For more product and pricing information, visit SignatureVacations.com.

Fun Sun/Northwest offers

Fun Sun Vacations and **Northwest Airlines** are looking forward to making March a little more fun for travel agents with three promotional offers. Fun Offer 1: For every booking made with Northwest Airlines and Fun Sun Vacations from March 1-15 (with departures up to June 30) you will earn Double Sun Dollars on the air. Fun Offer 2: For every booking made with Northwest Airlines and Fun Sun Vacations from March 1-15, with departures anytime, you will automatically be entered to win two tickets from Canada to Amsterdam with Northwest Airlines. Fun Offer 3: March 14 only, agents will earn a \$25 Sears gift card for every ticket sold with Northwest Airlines through Fun Sun Vacations. Bookings made online and via the call centre qualify. Call 1-800-938-6786 visit www.funsunagent.com for more information.

HIPPO Express
THIS WEEK'S FEATURED BROCHURES

Horizon & Co
Fall Cruise 2008

AAT Kings Goway
Australia & New Zealand

Goway AAT Kings
Australia/NZ

CLICK HERE!
 FOR COMPLETE LISTINGS
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EVENTS

You can start the process to become a Certified Travel Counsellor at the **Toronto Star Travel Show** Thursday, April 10. According to **CITC**, consumers want travel counsellors who can provide them with expert advice and up-to-date destination information. You want to close that sale and earn maximum potential revenue. Earning your professional credential of CTC - Certified Travel Counsellor - can help you attain your goal. Register now for this special certification package priced at \$300 plus GST (save 25%). Pre-registration is required by March 28. The day starts at 2 p.m. with 'Knowledge Exam Prep' followed by performance evaluations at 2:45 p.m. then last minute prep time. The Knowledge Exam is at 4 p.m. followed by a visit with trade show exhibitors at 6 p.m. and then performance evaluations continue. The professional certification package includes: certification enrolment, Study Guide, Knowledge Exam prep course at the Toronto Star Travel Show, Knowledge Exam (to take place at 4 p.m. April 10) and performance evaluation - structured interview to be completed on April 10 with CITC Certification Manager. Note: some pre-trade show work is required to prove your occupational experience. Full details are available at registration time. For more details and options, contact CITC at (416) 484-4450, 1-800-589-5776 or certification@citc.ca.

PEOPLE

Signature Vacations and **Barceló Huatulco Beach Resort** have named **Shelley Letourneau** - Artistic Travel Group - Calgary, **Tamie Brownlow** - Sears Travel (Abbotsford), **Wendy Nixon** - Vision 2000 Travel Group - Burnaby and **Charity Curtis** - Skyland Travel - Vancouver as the winners of the four-week agent incentive. From Jan. 15 until Feb. 14 agents were invited to reserve the Barceló Huatulco Beach Resort to win. Each room booked counted as an entry for a chance to win a one-week all-inclusive trip for two to the Barceló. For more information on promotions and contests, visit just4you.signaturevacations.com (username: Signature / password: SOS).

FAMS

THAILAND **Royal Scenic** *April 10 - 17*

Royal Scenic and the **Tourism Authority of Thailand** are offering agents an opportunity to celebrate Thai New Year in Changmai on a CAS fam trip. Transpacific flight is on Singapore Airlines, with a Vancouver departure but qualified agents across Canada can obtain AD tickets to Vancouver from other Canadian cities. Domestic air is with Silk Air. A stopover in Singapore is also included. Price is \$899 plus taxes for CAS graduates, \$999 for CAS candidates and \$1,099 for non-CAS agents. Limited space is available and the deadline for registration is March 10. For more information visit www.royalscenic.com (Fam Trip section) or contact Rozanne at 1-888-302-8886, ext. 240 or rozanne.crusz@royalscenic.com.

SPECIALS

Villa Premiere Hotel & Spa, the 83-room beachfront retreat on Puerto Vallarta's sand beach on the Bay of Banderas, is inviting travel agents to experience the property first hand with the introduction of discounted travel agent rates valid throughout 2008. The special rates are US\$85 plus taxes, per room, per night based on double occupancy for deluxe oceanfront accommodations for European Plan or \$105 per person, per night based on double occupancy for deluxe oceanfront accommodation on the all-inclusive plan. At least one person must be an active travel agent and present an IATA ID card upon registration at Villa Premiere Hotel & Spa. All travel agent rates are valid through Dec. 19, 2008. Rates include accommodations, chilled towels and champagne upon check-in, a five-minute anti-stress massage on neck and hands at check-in, special in room hotel amenities, complimentary use of gym, yoga lessons, reflexology lessons, meditation workshops and access to the sauna and steam room at Villa Premiere Spa. For reservations, call 1-866-379-7316, e-mail: reservations@premiereonline.com.mx or visit www.premiereonline.com.mx.

TRAVEL UPDATE

Clients renting cars at Orlando International Airport could be facing a new tax as early as this summer. The Greater Orlando Aviation Authority has approved a plan that will impose

a tax of US\$2.50 per day on car rental customers, up to a maximum of five days. The authority plans to use the money raised for an expansion of car rental facilities, including more parking spaces, at Orlando International Airport.

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