

- Vanuatu Destination Showcased in Noumea
- New Zealand voted 'hip' by British
- SPF 40 Event in Orange County, U.S.A.
- French Polynesia Opening of Chinese Consulate

## Vanuatu showcases products, destination in neighbouring Noumea

**O**ver a dozen Vanuatu business stakeholders have showcased their products, services and more generally their destination in New Caledonia's capital Nouméa at the weekend.

The three-day showcase, which was generally well-received, involved Vanuatu manufacturers, the national tourism office.

It was also perceived as an opportunity for Vanuatu authorities to promote themselves as an attractive investment destination, capitalising on its "tax haven" status.

An estimated three thousand visitors from the general public and local business leaders came to the trade fair. But Vanuatu business community also expressed frustration at what it still regards as a major stumbling block to any business expansion in New Caledonia: the local import duties, which they believe remain



very high, sometimes topping the 45 per cent mark-up.

Vanuatu manufacturers are currently capitalising on the global "fair trade" movement to get their products duty exempt exported into the French Pacific territory, local daily Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes reports. The Vanuatu Trade Show was jointly organised by the Nouméa and Port Vila chambers of commerce, New Caledonia's Economic Development Promotion Agency (ADECAL), Vanuatu's Tourism Office and also received financial support from the European Union. It is expected to become an annual event, as part of growing relations between New Caledonia and the former French-British condominium of the New Hebrides, which became independent Vanuatu in 1980. Vanuatu is also, some 500 kilometres Northeast, New Caledonia's closest neighbour.

(Source: Oceania Flash 12/09/2006)

## NZ voted 'Hip' by Britons

**N**ew Zealand is the world's coolest travel destination, according to some of Britain's most esteemed fashion police.

A poll by British style project CoolBrands has ranked the land of the long white cloud as the hippest place on the planet. New Zealand edged out Morocco and Fiji for the top spot, leaving Australia wallowing in fifth place. The poll was judged by a panel of 23 style experts from the arts, fashion and entertainment sectors, and included the results of an online survey.

Tourism New Zealand chief executive George Hickton said the poll was aimed at Britain's coolest trendsetters. Britain was New Zealand's second- biggest inbound tourism market after Australia. Its visitors contributed more than \$1 billion last year.

(Source: Travelmole News 26/09/2006)



## Successful South Pacific Fest 40 Event in Orange County USA

**T**he SPTO Marketing Coordinator represented the Organisation at the second SPF (South Pacific Fest) 40 Event in the USA between 21st and 23rd September 2006 and was very impressed with the way the event has been coordinated and hosted by the Organizers.

SPTO was one of the key sponsors of the 2006 SPF 40 and also participated and rendered support during the event, which was attended by seven of its member countries and about 40 private operators / suppliers from the region.

The suppliers were made up of mainly resort and spa reps as well as hoteliers. The three days event started on Thursday 21st September with a hosted Media luncheon during which the suppliers and NTOs were given 10 minutes presentations of their products and destinations.

This was followed by a Trade show on the same day at the Hyatt Regency Orange County Hotel for a captive trade market of more than 150 travel agents and reservation staff from the California area. During the Trade show, all suppliers and NTOs were allocated a table each and the Travel Agents moved around the Royal Foyer of the hotel to discuss and collect promotional materials.

The day ended with a sponsored dinner by Air New Zealand during which prizes given by the suppliers were drawn. The whole of Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd September were basically dedicated to Product Appointment and Tour Operator & wholesaler training sessions, which were done on rotational basis.

The rotational format was proven very effective and had received positive responses from all participants (especially suppliers). Wholesalers / tour operators were seated at numbered tables within the venue and the suppliers rotated around between the various tables to present their products and discuss with their buyers. With this format, it enabled all suppliers with the opportunity to present their products and destinations to as many buyers (wholesalers, etc) as possible within the two days.

These news items have been compiled from SPTO (South Pacific Tourism Organisation) and VTO (Vanuatu Tourism Office) news updates, as well as other travel-related sources. Worawia Holiday Haven is a paid member of SPTO and member with VTO.



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The presence of SPTO and its support through its sponsorship was highly appreciated by its member countries that participated. Many participants have observed that SPTO should take a more leading role in organizing and hosting the SPF 40 event and would like to see more or all SPTO member countries to participate in future events.

*(Source: SPTO Weekly Newsletter 39)*

## French Polynesia plans opening of Chinese Consulate in October

The government of French Polynesia is planning to open its first Consulate for the People's Republic of China in October.

Final preparations are reported to be processing, in close consultation with the French government, local daily newspaper La Dépêche reports. For the past few years, French Polynesia and the People Republic of China have consistently built ties, especially on the trade side.

This includes trade facilitation for French Polynesia to export black pearls into China. French Polynesia is also seeking the People's Republic of China's approved destination status. The French Pacific country is also home to a strong Chinese ethnic community which, over the generations, has successfully mingled into the local population.

*(Source: Oceania Flash news 21/09/2006)*

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