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## Solomon Islands at the Melbourne Expo

A two-day Travel Expo, held at the Melbourne Royal Exhibition from the 14th – 15th April was regarded as a success for the Solomon Islands.

The trade show was attended by over 200 exhibitors. A Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau (SIVB) official along with representatives from the Uepi Island Resort and Dive Gizo & Munda manned the Solomon Islands booth, fielding an average of 60 enquiries per day. Visitors to the booth showed great interest on snorkeling and diving sites, good fishing spots, kayaking activities and wedding and honeymoon destinations. Over 400 brochures distributed to individuals and agents.

The event was a learning experience with the SIVB picking up some

important points for the industry's future marketing strategy. The SIVB official noted the need for more visual attractions such as pan pipers, artifacts, handicrafts and specially prepared giveaway-packages. The SIVB looks forward for the Bula Tourism Exchange held from 15th to 18th May at the Sheraton Golf and Racket Club in Nadi, Fiji. The Bureau anticipates participation from Tourism Solomons Ltd, a local inbound Tour Operator to join the Solomon Islands booth.

*(Source: Solomon Islands Tourism Online News April 2007)*

## NZ Tamaki Brothers linking Pacific People

**T**he Tamaki brothers say Christchurch essentially marks the final chapter in their story of New Zealand. The brothers' sights are now firmly set upon the South Pacific.

The Tamaki brothers have been working behind the scenes for a long time now to develop an indigenous South Pacific Trail - a terrific offer on the world tourism stage and a great proposition for our target northern hemisphere markets. "We are developing indigenous heritage touchstones throughout the Pacific - each with people, history, stories and values at their heart. Each has very different though equally bold chapters to offer within the stunning Pacific story we are developing", Mr Tamaki says. The plans have gathered

momentum over the past year with approaches by Pacific nations, tourism bodies and fledgling business for mentorship and consultancy. "We see marketing the South Pacific region as a far stronger proposition than simply New Zealand. In an indigenous sense we have a real commitment to supporting indigenous peoples throughout the Pacific in their bid to achieve sustainable economic independence through tourism," he adds. "Our expertise in working with indigenous communities, building strong, unique and...successful tourism businesses stands us in good stead with these Pacific nations. The approaches have been very timely and work very well with our Pacific Trail concept and storyline beautifully".

*(Source: Inside Tourism)*

## White Grass Ocean Resort, Tanna

**L**ocated on Tanna island, Vanuatu, White Grass Ocean Resort hugs the volcanic coastline just two kilometres from White Grass International Airport and is nestled between white sandy beaches, dramatic rock caves and coral formations.

There are 12 oceanview bungalows designed in classic "South Seas" style with tiled floors and en suites. Each bungalow has a double and two single beds.

The main resort complex houses the oceanview bar, restaurant, guest lounge and terrace, which face sensational sunsets. White Grass Ocean Resort is the perfect base from which to explore Tanna and operates its own 4WD safaris and daily adventure tours. Highlights are tours to the mighty Yasur volcano, custom villages and lots more including a 50m2 Turtle Sanctuary.

## Tonga Whale Watching Guidelines

Tonga's Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, its Ministry of Fisheries and the Tonga Visitors Bureau have jointly sponsored a brochure on what to do or what not to do for the ever increasing number of whale watching tourists. Whale watching in Tonga is centred mainly on the Humpback Whale which migrates to Tonga in the winter months (July to October) to breed and give birth. Other species of whales may be seen all year round. All whales and dolphins are protected under Tongan Law. The guidelines for whale watching have been designed to encourage safe, enjoyable and educative whale watching for all people interacting with whales in Tonga. Go to <http://www.tongaholiday.com/tonga/export/sites/TVB/stories/whalewatching/guidelines.html> for more information.

*(Source: Tonga Visitors Bureau Website)*

## Air New Zealand Code Sharing with Air Pacific

**A**ir New Zealand will commence a code-share relationship with Air Pacific between Nadi, Fiji and Los Angeles, United States, effective 7 May 2007.

The relationship will provide customers with daily flights between Fiji and Los Angeles seven days a week. Air New Zealand will operate up to three services per week using B767 and B777 aircraft, with Air Pacific operating up to five B747 services per week.

Group General Manager Short Haul Airlines Norm Thompson welcomed the new relationship and said it would have reciprocal benefits for the customers of both airlines, and direct benefits for Fiji tourism. "This new schedule provides

more choice for our customers as well as ensuring the route remains sustainable for both Air New Zealand and Air Pacific - it's a win-win situation for everyone." Air Pacific Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer John Campbell said, "Air Pacific is delighted to partner with Air New Zealand to cater for the growing market between the South Pacific and North America. "Careful evaluation of the product offerings of Air Pacific and Air New Zealand reflect great synergy in our approach to customer service, marketing and safety and we are confident this partnership will grow," said Mr Campbell.

*(Source: Air New Zealand Media Release 24/04/2007)*

## Tahiti Tourisme opens office in Sydney

**A** surge in demand for Tahiti holidays has prompted Tahiti Tourisme to elevate its Australian presence to a full branch office, replacing the private representation office that existed for the past 22 years.

"This is the first time we have given the Australian market full branch office status with a regional manager for Australia in line with such key markets as France, North America, South America, New Zealand and Japan," said Tahiti Tourisme Chief Executive Dany Panero. Robert Thompson, Tahiti Tourisme's managing director for New Zealand, has been appointed interim director for Australia and New Zealand, Ms. Panero announced. "We have a recruitment drive underway to find the right person to take over the position of

regional manager for Australia, and until that time we are in the fortunate position of being able to draw on our New Zealand manager, Robert Thompson, to keep all our programs operating." Thompson, who has worked for Tahiti Tourisme since September 2001, has taken over from Jonica Paramor, who served as Tahiti Tourisme's Australia representative for the past 15 years. Thompson's office is temporarily located in the Maison de la France office in Sydney at Level 13, 25 Bligh Street. The telephone number is: +61 2 9233 4920. His mobile phone number is: +64 21 767 283.

*(Source: Tahiti Tourisme Weekly Bulletin 05/04/2007)*



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