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## SPF40 – The 3rd Annual South Pacific Fest

It is coming close to that time of the year again when the South Pacific meets the US in the 3rd annual SPF40 to be held in Long Beach, California, from 20-22 September.

The 3-days conference is focused on educating travel agents, tour operators, reservation staff and media on the South Pacific destinations. These destinations include Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tahiti, Tonga, and Vanuatu. The program consists of a travel agent training event, a mini trade show, reservation staff training and a media event. Under each country participating, a selected number of suppliers are also invited to present, promote and sell their specific products. This year's event is once again organized by Mvent Group in collaboration with the SPF40 Organizing Committee, which consist mainly of South Pacific NTO reps



based in the US. The event is sponsored by the participating NTOs as well as certain corporate sponsors, which include Air Tahiti Nui, Air New Zealand, Air Pacific, Bridal Media, Questex Media and south-pacific.travel. south-pacific.travel works closely with the SPF40 Organizing Committee and will be represented at this year's event. For more information, check the SPF40 website <http://www.spf40.com/>

## Pacific Blue Airline to Expand in Pacific

**T**he Australian-based airline, Pacific Blue, says it would like to expand its services to other Pacific countries.

Pacific Blue currently serves Tonga, Vanuatu, the Cook Islands and Fiji, and in its venture with Polynesian Blue it flies to Samoa. Pacific Blue's commercial general manager Adrian Hamilton-Manns says expanding into places like the Northern Marianas and Kiribati would boost their economies. "Because we'd promote personal tourism and travel to those islands we'd like to service the Pacific Island communities, obviously in a profitable sense, and to be able to do it



economically so we can bring low fares but also to obviously encourage the trader and the travel between" (Source: Radio New Zealand News 23 August 2007)

## Samoa Yoga Retreat in November

**C**oconuts Beach Club Resort & Spa, located in that rare remaining slice of paradise known as Samoa, will host a five-day yoga retreat this coming November.

Featuring vinyasa flows, meditation, and other indoor and outdoor activities, retreat participants will seek to synchronize the rhythms of the body and the mind. Guidance by internationally trained yoga instructor Taialofa will encourage circulation of energy through the channels of the body and help attendees feel fully refreshed with a rejuvenation of mind, body, and spirit. A trained sivananda yoga teacher, Taialofa has studied virtually every form of yoga and uses a blend of this knowledge in her classes, based primarily on vinyasa flow. Her retreats were recently included in the London Times online edition list of the Top 5 Adventure Retreats, as well as receiving a very complimentary write-up in yoga and travel writer Caroline Sylge's new book, Body and Soul Escapes. Those interested in participating in this retreat can learn more about it on the Coconuts Beach Club Resort & Spa website at [coconutsbeachclub.com](http://coconutsbeachclub.com), or contact the resort directly for a booking at [reservations@coconuts.ws](mailto:reservations@coconuts.ws). Packages based on this retreat are also being offered by several New Zealand and Australian travel wholesalers.

(Source: Coconuts Beach Club Resort & Spa)



## Air New Zealand and US Airways Code Share

**A**ir New Zealand customers will soon have the East Coast of the United States opened up to them as a result of a proposed codeshare agreement with US Airways.

The new agreement between the two Star Alliance members will enable Air New Zealand customers to fly simply from Los Angeles and San Francisco to Charlotte, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. These three major US Airways hubs connect with another 97 other destinations throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Air New Zealand General Manager of International Airline Operations John Whittaker says the codeshare will give customers enhanced and convenient access to and from the East Coast of the US. "Approximately 30,000 people from the eastern states of the US visit New Zealand every year; this codeshare with US Airways will potentially grow this figure even more.

It's a fantastic opportunity to open up both markets to a wider audience," says Mr Whittaker. In return, US Airways will codeshare on Air New Zealand services between the US and New Zealand, giving their customers greater access to New Zealand, the Pacific Islands and Australia. They will be able to connect on Air New Zealand's direct services from Los Angeles and San Francisco into Auckland, or from Los Angeles directly into Rarotonga, Fiji or Samoa. The proposed codeshare agreement is currently awaiting Government approval in both New Zealand and the US.

*(Source: Air New Zealand Media Release 15 August 2007)*



Port Vila markets



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