

TRAVEL CONSUMER DAILY

Friday, August 7, 2009

Growing THY ready for adventure Down Under



TURKISH Airlines has announced plans to become only the third Europe-based airline – and the only one outside Britain – to fly to Australia.

Turkish (THY) isn't daunted by the "last leg" – the second of the two flights required to reach Australia – that has defeated all but British Airways and Virgin Atlantic, which continue to operate daily services to Australia via Asia.

For others such, such

Turkish (THY) isn't daunted by the "last leg" required to reach Australia, that has defeated all but British Airways and Virgin Atlantic

as Lufthansa, Air France, Holland's KLM (now merged with Air France), Austria's Lauda (now part of Austrian Airlines), Greece's Olympic and Italy's Alitalia, the ultra-long haul journey of more than 20 hours to land Down Under was more than they could bear financially.

None could ever get

economic passenger loads between Asia and Australia because the local Asian carriers at popular stopover points like Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore had cornered the business market, leaving the Europeans locals and Australians travelling the Asia-Australia leg on deeply

discounted tickets.

Turkish, virtually alone in Europe as a growing airline despite the recession, is in the process of extending its five weekly Istanbul-Singapore services to Jakarta – a natural cultural fit as Indonesia is the world's biggest muslim country and Turkey is virtually 100% muslim.

Turkish chief executive Temel Kotil says the airline plans to fly to Australia in

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TASMAN DEAL IS ON

A deal "domesticating" routes between Australia and New Zealand is just weeks away with the prime ministers of both countries set to announce a new agreement that is expected to slash air fares.

Australia's Kevin Rudd and NZ's John Key will use the deal as a major plank of the next Closer Economic Relations (CER) agreement, a series of negotiations on trade liberalisation between the two countries that has been underway for the past decade.

The deal is a victory for Jetstar chief executive Bruce Buchanan, who has been championing the removal of government red tape on trans-Tasman flights for the past

Fares to plunge, more routes tipped to flourish

year.

According to Mr Buchanan, "domesticating" the Tasman will save the airlines up to \$60 per passenger per trip in lower airport and government compliance and tax charges that will be passed on to consumers.

By his reckoning, Tasman fares could fall to as low as \$130 one-way leading to a surge in trans-Tasman travel of up to 50%.

The routes between the two countries are already the busi-

est international routes for both countries.

According to Mr Buchanan, lower costs and the removal of red tape could also see the creation of new trans-Tasman routes from regional and other centres, such as Auckland to Newcastle or Canberra and many more non-stop flights from Australia to year-round New Zealand leisure destinations like Queenstown and Rotorua.

Australian and New Zealand Customs last year reached an

initial agreement to streamline travel between the two nations while boosting border security.

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key said this week that he and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would formally announce the changes when they meet in a few weeks to discuss the CER agreement.

"It is a positive announcement which will allow New Zealanders and Australians to cross each others' borders more easily," Mr Key told journalists.

"It's an attempt to streamline the process and to ensure that it's a more seamless and painless process for Australians and New Zealanders." ■

A NATION DIVIDED AS ELDERS DECLARE...

Monte Dwyer's

LOST
OZ
IN

EVERY now and then they decide they're going to stop tourists climbing The Rock. Noises are made by the appropriate bodies which trigger alarm bells in the people most interested who ignite our highly combustible media and the next thing you know the world is about to end. Or at least the Australian tourist industry.

Then someone really important says, why shouldn't people climb it, and the whole thing stops, rock dead.

From start to finish it might only last a week, but in that time most Australians will have a think about where they stand on the matter. Some believe we should leave Uluru to the original custodians who've been quoted for some time as saying they'd rather we didn't climb it. Others feel just as strongly that Ayres Rock is for everyone to enjoy and the blackfellas don't have a mortgage on spiritual ties with the land. Another camp wonders if they're careful to always call it Uluru and buy a didgeridoo from the shop would it be okay if they sneaked up in their socks, just this once with the kids before it does get closed? And at least one person I spoke to recently can't understand why they don't just build an escalator up the side of the bloody thing and be done with it.

Fact is it's our most conten-



Monte Dwyer and daughter Lucy atop Uluru in an image that appeared in his book 'Red in the Centre'.

LET'S NOT ROCK!

Writer, humourist, TV weatherman and former Northern Territorian Monte Dwyer is now a professional adventurer, recording the people and places of Outback Australia for national and international TV—and TravelConsumerDaily.com

tious icon and it probably doesn't do us any harm to reconsider our relationship with it every so often. Indeed I'd even go so far as to say it's something of a litmus test for our dealings with our indigenous community.

In the past we've handed over great chunks of country we didn't really want – until we discovered wealth for toil in the soil, of course, and had to resort to some not-so-subtle reneging – and now we want the world to think we're giving up The Rock, but the truth is

we can't quite manage it.

On paper it's under the joint control of Uluru-Kata Tjuta Board of Management and National Parks Australia. But the fact that the current, contentious Draft Management Plan for 2009-19 has been drawn up by the Director of National Parks would suggest where the real leadership resides.

Which is probably just as it should be because a) there's almost nothing as irresponsible as shared responsibility and b) ruthless commercialism isn't really in the nature of

Aboriginal people and National Parks is proving itself a very quick learner in that school indeed.

But why the current Draft Management Plan caused such a stink I honestly don't know. I read most of the draft in question, and quite apart from being a stereotypically boring public service document, to me it read like it was never intending to change the status quo one tiny red grain of sand.

The media pounced on the mooted possibility of The Rock climb being closed. The television networks had very important news crews climbing all over it, radio jocks nationwide had an original talk-back topic for a whole week and newspapers ran the story nationwide.

Yet the section of the document that sparked the furore was hardly inflammatory. It defined the spiritual significance of "the climb" to the traditional owners as one that should only be undertaken by a wallaby (few who've done it would argue), and addressed

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LET'S NOT ROCK!

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the duty-of-care concerns the original custodians have regarding the health and safety risks. Thirty people have died climbing The Rock since the practice began (in numbers probably not till the 1970s) and the document hinted without actually saying as much that the fat and unfit would soon be actively discouraged from taking the climb (might I suggest a doughnut stand at the base?). And by way of a definitive conclusion it proposed that steps might very well be taken in the not too distant future to maybe one day close the climb altogether. Possibly.

Of course, I'm being flippant (not to mention politically incorrect at every turn), and I've no doubt Mala the ancestral hare-wallaby is an important part of the Aboriginal story for some, just as I accept many Anangu people genuinely fear for our safety. But let's not get blinded by our own desire to see clearly.

In my experience with Aborigines they are about as welcoming as any group of human beings in the world and providing you respect their (relatively few) wishes regarding their sacred sites and rituals they will extend levels of generosity rarely seen in white society. They don't embrace the same concept of ownership that Anglo-Australians do and the very notion of them calling the shots regarding "the climb" is anathema to their thinking. Indeed many I've spoken to aren't precious about the issue at all; they do think we're mad for climb-

ing, but only because "there's nothing up there", not because it offends their spiritual sensibilities.

There is a perception in "enlightened" urban Australia that rural Australians are rednecks who don't understand the "Aboriginal condition". That's sophist nonsense. Indeed when the latest government initiative collapses in a shamble of wasted funds and jobs for the boys, when the health system fails to reach those in dire need (outstation kids still living on the brink of starvation in 2009 Australia to offer just one, shocking example), or perhaps most tragically when even the organisations run by Aborigines for Aborigines succumb to the same fat cat ideology as any other public service department, it is left up to the local communities to deal with the fallout.

I'm not saying there is no racism in the bush – it's no less prevalent than it is in the cities and a damn sight more obvious - but these people are living at the coalface and actually know a thing or two about what's happening out here. Consequently their opinions aren't as academic as they are for the enlightened southerner: they're more organic, and as real as the sight of hungry black kids sitting beside their mothers in the street waiting for them to sleep it off.

Paradoxically, it's these same people who will feed and medicate the black kids out of their own pockets, who battle bureaucracies and go in to bat for the communities at

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China route gets a boost

CHINA Southern Airlines, the largest airline in the People's Republic of China, has introduced a third weekly flight from Melbourne to Guangzhou (formerly Canton), effective from now until the end of March, 2010.

The new flight schedule, which features a Saturday departure, will be introduced in two phases.

In phase one, from now until 26 October 2009, China Southern will depart Melbourne every Monday, Thursday and Saturday morning, flying via Sydney to Guangzhou.

Flight CZ 322 will depart Melbourne at 7.05am, then will continue via Sydney, from where it will depart at 9.50am. The flight is due to arrive in Guangzhou at 5pm local time.

In phase two of the new schedule – during daylight saving in Victoria, from 26 October, 2009, until 25 March, 2010, the three Melbourne – Guangzhou flights will operate nonstop.

During this period, flight CZ 322 will continue to depart Melbourne every Monday, Thursday and Saturday, but at the new time of 10.40am, still arriving in Guangzhou at 5.00pm local time.

From Guangzhou, passengers will be able to connect with onward China Southern flights to destinations throughout China. They can also fly beyond China to other destinations in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

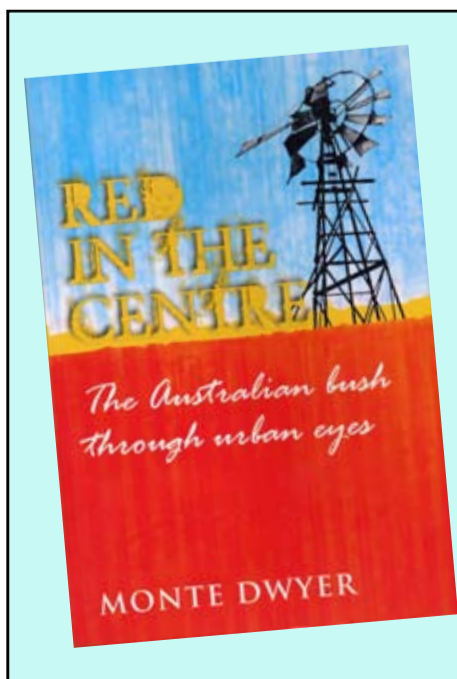
All China Southern flights from Melbourne will be oper-

ated by Airbus A330-200 aircraft, capable of seating up to 264 passengers – 24 in Premium Business Class and 240 in Economy.

NEW FLIGHTS

VIRGIN Blue operated its inaugural Perth-Port Hedland service on Tuesday. The daily service departs Perth at 1610, arriving Hedland 1815, daily except Saturday (Sat dep 1130 arr 1335), departing Hedland 1845 arriving Perth 2045m (Sat dep 1405, arr Perth 1605) Launch fares start at \$99 one way. The service is operated by 78-104-seat Embraer E170s or E190s.

Jetstar will reintroduce a second daily Sydney-Adelaide return service beginning on October 26. Services depart Sydney at 0625 and 1725 and Adelaide 0835 and 1935.



Playwright, author, humourist, TV weatherman — and now lyricist and musical performer — MONTE DWYER spent almost a year travelling Australia and writing about it in his original and entertaining style. This is Monte's book — with optional CD. Go to monte.com.au for more information..

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from MELBOURNE

Abu Dhabi QF 2053 rtn
 Adelaide QF 85 DJ 69 JQ 59 TT 39
 Alice Springs QF 229 TT 98
 Albury QF 211 DJ 189 ZL 105
 Amman QF 2082 rtn
 Apia DJ 469
 Auckland QF 199 DJ 189
 Ayers Rock QF 280
 Bahrain QF 2038 rtn
 Ballina DJ 149 JQ 99
 Bangkok QF 1277 rtn JQ 409
 Beijing QF 1004 rtn
 Beirut QF 2074 rtn
 Brisbane QF 145 DJ 139 JQ 99
 Broome QF 402 DJ 340
 Buenos Aires QF 1738 rtn
 Burnie ZL 124
 Cairns QF 279 DJ 199 JQ 209
 Canberra QF 89 DJ 85 TT 28
 Chengdu QF 1184 rtn
 Christchurch QF 387 DJ 189 JQ 169
 Coffs Harbour QF 219 DJ 170
 Darwin QF 333 DJ 169 JQ 159
 Delhi QF 1137 rtn
 Denpasar DJ 459 JQ 439
 Devonport QF 130
 Dunedin DJ 259
 Frankfurt QF 1869 rtn
 Fraser Coast DJ 179
 Gold Coast DJ 99 JQ 99 TT 78
 Hamilton (NZ) DJ 279
 Hamilton Island DJ 179 JQ 159
 Hobart QF 98 DJ 64 JQ 59 TT 28
 Hong Kong QF 943 rtn
 Honiara DJ 509
 Honolulu QF 1246 rtn
 Jakarta QF 803 rtn
 Johannesburg QF 2184 rtn
 Kalgoorlie QF 349
 Karratha QF 398 DJ 340
 King Island ZL 131
 Kuala Lumpur D7 \$219
 Launceston QF 132 DJ 59 JQ 55 TT 28
 London QF 1941 rtn
 Los Angeles QF 964 rtn UA 931 rtn NZ 866 rtn VA 945 rtn
 Mackay QF 279 DJ 199 TT 88
 Manila QF 976 rtn
 Merimbula ZL 140
 Mexico City QF 1774 rtn
 Mildura QF 117 DJ 99 ZL 99
 Moruya ZL 183
 Mount Gambier ZL 109
 Mount Isa QF 374
 Mumbai QF 1157 rtn
 Nadi QF 315 DJ 349
 Newcastle DJ 69 JQ 69
 Newman DJ 340
 New York QF 1170 rtn UA 1470 rtn
 Noumea 4411
 Papeete QF 1368 rtn

Working the system: sometimes you can teach the airlines a thing or two

It's unlikely we'll ever again see the air fare value that's available in Asia and Australia. We've set about providing useful comparisons for the bargain shopper about who's charging what. It's fair to say Blind Freddie could see the following: there are massive discrepancies in value between carriers and routes. Generally, the more the competition, the less the fare. From Australia, the Middle East and Africa, for example, are generally poor value at the moment, Europe is better, the US is unbelievably good. Secondly, if you're, say, in Adelaide and you want to get to Port Vila, always check the best fares on the individual routes you will use to get there and add them up yourself. The best fare a carrier is quoting may be hundreds of dollars more than the sum of the two sector fares the same carrier is attempting to charge! It's all part of the fun. All fares are one-way unless designated 'rtn'. Best fares exclude credit card charges, are sometimes bettered by sale fares and are sometimes unavailable. All care is taken, but these fares should be used as a guide only. All figures Australian dollars. LEGEND: QF (Qantas) JQ (Jetstar) DJ (Virgin Blue, Pacific Blue) TT (Tiger Airways) ZL (Rex) D7 (Air Asia X) UA (United Airlines) NZ (Air New Zealand).

Paris QF 1892 rtn
 Perth QF 214 DJ 213 JQ 179 TT 108
 Port Hedland QF 409 DJ 340
 Port Macquarie DJ 179
 Port Moresby DJ 399
 Port Vila QF 440 DJ 339
 Queenstown QF 355 DJ 399
 Rarotonga DJ 439
 Rockhampton QF 243 DJ 180 TT 88
 Rome QF 1883 rtn
 Santiago QF 1724 rtn
 San Francisco QF 1053 rtn
 Seoul QF 1633 rtn
 Shanghai QF 965
 Singapore QF 930 rtn JQ 349
 Sunshine Coast DJ 109 JQ 119 TT 88
 Sydney QF 89 DJ 89 JQ 49 TT 39
 Tonga (Nuku Alofa) DJ 379
 Tokyo QF 1103 rtn

Townsville QF 301 DJ 209 JQ 179
 Vancouver QF 1538 rtn
 Wagga Wagga ZL 109
 Wellington QF 239 DJ 259
 Whitsunday Coast (Proserpine) DJ 199
 Xian QF 1184 rtn

from SYDNEY

Abu Dhabi QF 2070 rtn
 Adelaide QF 165 DJ 129 JQ 89
 Alice Springs QF \$255
 Albury QF 99 DJ 82
 Amman QF 2099 rtn
 Armidale QF 122
 Apia DJ 429
 Auckland QF 199 DJ 189 JQ 179
 Ayers Rock QF 271 DJ
 Bahrain QF 2055 rtn
 Ballina DJ 75 JQ 69 ZL 129

Bangkok QF 1282 rtn
 Bathurst ZL 94
 Beijing QF 982 rtn
 Beirut QF 2091 rtn
 Brisbane QF 95 DJ 89 JQ 69
 Broken Hill ZL 198
 Broome QD 426 DJ 350
 Buenos Aires QF 1616
 Cairns QF 239 DJ 159 JQ 169
 Canberra QF 90 DJ 75
 Chengdu QF 1201 rtn
 Christchurch QF 199 DJ 189 JQ 169
 Coffs Harbour QF 107 DJ 89
 Darwin QF 299 DJ 235 JQ 169
 Delhi QF 1154 rtn
 Denpasar JQ 439 DJ 459
 Devonport QF 207
 Dubbo QF 117 ZL 116
 Dunedin DJ 259
 Frankfurt QF 1886 rtn
 Fraser Coast QF 159 DJ 105 JQ 79
 Gold Coast DJ 75 JQ 69
 Grafton ZL 146
 Griffith ZL 135
 Hamilton (NZ) DJ 229
 Hamilton Island DJ 165 JQ 159
 Hobart QF 196 DJ 89 JQ 89
 Ho Chi Minh JQ 389
 Hong Kong QF 960 rtn
 Honiara DJ 479
 Honolulu QF 1124 rtn JQ 459
 Jakarta QF 781 rtn
 Johannesburg QF 2162 rtn
 Kalgoorlie QF 353
 Karratha QF 417 DJ 360
 Kuala Lumpur
 Launceston QF 193 DJ JQ 79
 Lismore ZL 129
 London QF 1958 rtn
 Los Angeles QF 981 rtn UA 931 rtn
 Mackay QF 238 DJ 149
 Manila QF 964 rtn
 Melbourne DJ 89 TT 39 JQ 49
 Merimbula ZL 140
 Mexico City QF 1691 rtn
 Mildura QF 178 DJ 189
 Moree QF 122
 Moruya ZL 126
 Mount Hotham QF 199
 Mount Isa QF 344
 Mumbai QF 1135 rtn
 Nadi QF 285 DJ 289
 Narrandera-Leeton ZL 119
 Newman DJ 360
 New York QF 1181 rtn
 Norfolk Island QF 307
 Noumea QF 363
 Orange ZL 132
 Osaka JQ 429
 Papeete QF 1242 rtn
 Paris QF 1909 rtn
 Parkes ZL 109
 Perth QF 244 DJ 209
 Phuket JQ 409
 Port Hedland QF 437 DJ 249
 Port Macquarie QF 100 DJ 102
 Port Moresby QF 837 rtn

TCD BEST FARES

Port Moresby DJ 319
Port Vila QF 392 DJ 269
Queenstown QF 259 DJ 299
Rarotonga DJ 439
Rockhampton QF 207 DJ 125
Rome QF 1901 rtn
Santiago QF 1602 rtn
San Francisco QF 1031 rtn
Seoul QF 1611 rtn
Shanghai QF 982 rtn
Singapore QF 947 rtn
Sunshine Coast DJ 94 JQ 89
Tamworth QF 122
Taree ZL 126
Tonga (Nuku Alofa) DJ 339
Tokyo QF 909 rtn JQ 429
Townsville DJ 149 JQ 129
Vancouver QF 1455 rtn
Wagga Wagga QF 99
Wellington DJ 249
Whitsunday Coast
(Proserpine) DJ 189
Xian QF 1201 rtn

from BRISBANE

Abu Dhabi QF 2076 rtn
Adelaide QF 176 DJ 149 JQ 109
Alice Springs QF 259
Albury DJ 179
Amman QF 2103
Apia DJ 429
Auckland QF 240 DJ 259
Ayers Rock QF 254
Bahrain QF 2060 rtn
Bangkok QF 1278 rtn
Barcaldine QF 139
Beijing QF 1005 rtn
Beirut QF 2097
Biloela QF 139
Blackall QF 139
Blackwater QF 139
Broome QF 449 DJ 390
Buenos Aires QF 1740 rtn
Bundaberg QF 75
Cairns QF 210 DJ 159 JQ 159

Canberra QF 143 DJ 119
Charleville QF 134
Chengdu QF 1223
Christchurch QF 387 DJ 189 JQ 179
Coffs Harbour DJ 139
Darwin QF 273 DJ 199 JQ 159
Delhi QF 1160 rtn
Denpasar DJ 419 JQ 396
Devonport QF 265
Dunedin DJ 219
Emerald QF 152
Fraser Coast QF 114
Gladstone QF 121
Hamilton (NZ) DJ 229
Hamilton Island DJ 99 JQ 89
Hayman Island DJ 254
Hobart QF 235 DJ 149
Hong Kong QF 991
Honiara DJ 359
Honolulu QF 1248 rtn
Jakarta QF 804
Johannesburg QF \$2185
Karratha QF 351 DJ 380
Kuala Lumpur
Launceston DJ 149 JQ 139
London QF 1964 rtn
Longreach QF 149
Los Angeles QF 987 rtn VA 945 rtn
Mackay QF 122 DJ 89 JQ 79
Manila QF 960 rtn
Melbourne QF 145 DJ 139 JQ 99
Mexico City QF 1797
Mildura DJ 219
Mount Isa QF 262
Mumbai QF 1158 rtn
Nadi QF 283 DJ 269
Newcastle QF 77 DJ 59 JQ 59
New York QF 1293 rtn
Norfolk Island QF 283
Noumea QF 351
Papeete QF 1369 rtn
Perth QF 275 DJ 269
Port Hedland QF 299 DJ 249
Port Macquarie DJ 179
Port Moresby QF 618 rtn DJ 239

Port Vila QF 343 DJ 249
Queenstown QF 346 DJ 399
Rarotonga DJ 439
Rockhampton QF 97 DJ 85 JQ 69
Roma QF 88
Santiago QF 1725 rtn
San Francisco QF 1055 rtn
Seoul QF 1635 rtn
Shanghai QF 1005 rtn
Singapore QF 953
Sunshine Coast
Sydney QF 95 DJ 89 JQ 69
Tonga (Nuku Alofa) DJ 379
Tokyo QF 904
Townsville QF 177 DJ 139 JQ 89
Wellington QF 323 DJ 259
Whitsunday Coast
(Proserpine) DJ 89 JQ 79
Xian QF 1223 rtn

from ADELAIDE

Alice Springs QF 189
Albury DJ 219
Apia DJ 892.70
Auckland QF 449 DJ 389
Ayers Rock QF 330
Bahrain QF 2073 rtn
Ballina DJ 185
Bangkok QF 1292 rtn
Beijing QF 1020 rtn
Beirut QF 2108
Brisbane QF 176 DJ 149 JQ 109
Broome QF 343 J 299
Buenos Aires QF 1953 rtn
Cairns DJ 249 JQ 169
Canberra QF 147 DJ 109
Chengdu QF 1218 rtn
Christchurch QF 422 DJ 369
Coffs Harbour QF 269 DJ 220
Darwin QF 340 DJ 245 JQ 189
Delhi QF 1151 rtn
Denpasar DJ 325
Devonport QF 235
Frankfurt QF 1883
Fraser Coast QF 239 DJ 195

Gold Coast DJ 119 JQ 109
Hamilton DJ 349
Hamilton Island DJ 265
Hobart QF 203 DJ 109
Hong Kong QF 1001 rtn
Honiara DJ 508
Honolulu QF 1460 rtn
Jakarta QF 1320
Johannesburg QF 2177
Kalgoorlie QF 209
Karratha QF 447 DJ 299
Launceston QF 209 DJ 139
London QF 1986
Los Angeles QF 1298 rtn
Mackay QF 295 DJ 249
Manila QF 1203 rtn
Melbourne QF 85 DJ 69 JQ 59
Mexico City QF 2007 rtn
Mildura DJ 159
Mumbai QF 1172
Nadi QF 419 DJ 418.20
New York QF 1504 rtn
Noumea QF 441
Papeete QF 1591 rtn
Paris QF 1906 rtn
Perth QF 159 DJ 149 JQ 119
Port Hedland QF 445 DJ 299
Port Macquarie DJ 199
Port Moresby DJ 388
Port Vila QF 567 DJ 449
Queenstown QF 502
Rockhampton QF 265 DJ 220
Rome QF 1938 rtn
Santiago QF 1939 rtn
San Francisco QF 1367 rtn
Seoul QF 1705 rtn
Shanghai QF 1020 rtn
Singapore QF 945
Sunshine Coast DJ 170
Sydney QF 165 DJ 129 JQ 89
Tonga (Nuku Alofa) DJ 508
Tokyo QF 1138 rtn
Townsville QF 304 DJ 239
Vancouver QF 1772
Wellington QF 418 DJ 360
Whitsunday Coast
(Proserpine) DJ 275
Xian QF 1218 rtn

THY is ready for a southern adventure

FROM PAGE 1

2011, using Jakarta as the stopover – a solution that the European and even Middle Eastern carriers now flooding Australia hadn't thought of since Jakarta has viable business markets to Australia's two biggest cities, Melbourne and Sydney.

However, after years of routing its business travellers via Bali, Indonesia's Garuda this week began three flights each from Jakarta to Melbourne and Sydney. If

Turkish can get the rights to Jakarta-Sydney, for example, that would take the number of non-stop return services to, say, 10 a week if Turkish operated the minimum three to make the service viable.

Turkish might find itself late to the party like the one that's now in progress on the Pacific, where airlines that have been agape for years about Qantas's astronomical profits between Australia and America find themselves in a five-way fight. ■

LET'S NOT ROCK!

FROM PAGE 3

a political level and who ache when yet another ill-conceived attempt to address the problem chokes on its own fat.

So when the locals roll their eyes at all the fuss over "the climb" it makes you wonder whether we're not missing the point.

The Draft Plan puts the number of visitors to the Park who do climb the rock at 30%, and the number who wouldn't come to see The Rock if they couldn't make "the climb" at

5%. I would have put the latter number much higher, given our current lust for "up close and personal" travel experiences, but in any case why risk even 5%? If the local tourist industry suffers as a consequence of stopping the climb then there's a little bit of community support less likely to trickle down to the kids who need all the help they can get. I know it's a long bow I'm drawing but the target is a long way off.

So get out there and climb the bloody thing, I say! ■

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