

UK OFFICE
MAY 2011 REPORT
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UK Director

TOUR OPERATORS

Jetsave/TUI Specialist

A meeting was held with Sarah Lax and Suzanne Harvey as per a request to meet with them. We were due to participate in their 2012 Florida brochure launch but have been advised that the brochure has been scrapped due to a change in direction from their marketing department. We were advised that all marketing activity will now be directed through the trade. We have advised Jetsave that we would be keen to look at working with them in this capacity but that the trade budget has been finalised for this year and we will look to work with them in the new fiscal. Requested up to date room night stats which we are currently awaiting.

Funway Holidays

A meeting was held with Casey Hurford, Product Manager at Funway Holidays for a general update. We were advised that January was a very busy month for Funway although February and March sales tailed off slightly. Florida in general is selling well (and is on a par with 2010) especially as they have just launched their 2012 preview brochure. Product within our area remains the same for 2012 and our area will now be the first destination featured within their brochure on the Gulf Coast. Room night stats for our area as at the end of April are showing a 14% decrease year on year with a total of 314 room nights having been booked so far. They hope the launch of the preview brochure and the main brochure launch in June will help room night stats improve.

Titan Travel

A meeting was held with Emma Jordan Product & Operations Executive at Titan Travel/Titan HiTours. Titan Travel/Titan HiTours specialise in escorted touring and offer a Worldwide programme with the USA being one of their largest markets. They are looking for a resort in the St. Pete Beach area to be near to the culture in downtown St. Petersburg as their customers are normally older couples and prefer the cultural elements to a vacation. We had been asked to introduce them specifically to the Sirata Beach Resort and Tradewinds Island Grand/Sandpiper Resorts, which we have now done. We also provided Emma with details of how to obtain area images so that these can be updated for their 2012 brochure as well as up to date literature. Discussed the possibility of training their call centre staff and currently waiting to hear back regarding this.

Pow Wow

Attended Pow Wow, San Francisco where meetings were held with the following operators:

Premier Holidays – advised that Florida was up 4% year on year, however our area was up 7% year on year. 2011 started very strongly but there was a dip in March, however Premier are now seeing an increase in bookings since the middle of May. We are currently awaiting the results of our co-op campaign.

Expedia – discussed the ongoing co-op campaign. Florida is one of their strongest destinations from the UK. Advised that a recent \$100,000 campaign that they held with the California tourist board shifted market share by 7%. They are keen to try and work with Visit Florida.

Tour America – discussed co-op opportunities including the opportunity to be involved in their television slots. Co-op money for this year has already been assigned but we will review for the new co-op budget. Currently awaiting room night stats.

Spies, Denmark – Part of the Thomas Cook group and featuring our area contracting through Allied Tpro and Global Hospitality. Their focus is on Florida with 60% of their bookings coming direct from the consumer and 40% via the trade. Requested guides, images and copy.

Travelbag – Bookings to Florida are up 10% year on year. Travelbag are the direct sales arm of Stella Travel and are looking to increase their co-op marketing with US destinations. Awaiting a proposal from them.

Thomas Cook Charter – advised that they have just had their best ever April in terms of bookings for Florida. Also advised that marketing has now been streamlined, brought in-house and is much cheaper and flexible than previously. Will arrange a meeting with marketing in the UK to discuss further.

Tropical Sky, Ireland – part of the Lotus group, Tropical Sky have revamped their programme and are currently changing their product offering to increase their numbers to Florida which currently stand at 6000 per annum. They contract through Hotelbeds and Allied Tpro. Requested images and copy.

JB Travel, Sweden – This contact was not too familiar with our area and wanted an update on what to see and do.

Virgin Holidays – reporting that bookings for this year are down but so are most of their coastal destinations with Orlando flat on last year. Early booking figures for 2012 however show that we are substantially up. Discussed the product spread and the possibility of adding more self-catering options as the Orlando villa product is selling so well. Follow-up meeting scheduled in June.

Nyhavn Rejser, Denmark – used to do quite good business to the area but this has declined in recent years. Contract through FM Tours and Allied. Requested images and copy and training will take place during the Scandinavian Sales Mission in February 2012

BA Holidays – joint meeting with Tampa Bay & Co to discuss the forthcoming UK campaign in conjunction with BA, launching on 13th June 2011.

Nordmans Resjer, Norway – wanted information on properties on Clearwater Beach and to discuss co-op options. Advised that co-op for this fiscal year had been allocated but will discuss when new budget year starts. Also requested updated copy and images.

Mark Travel – met with US head office contact as nobody from the UK had travelled. Discussed co-op marketing options as well as previous brand affinity campaigns that Mark Travel had run in the UK

American Holidays – Florida is down for 2011 due to the economic conditions in Ireland and increase in airfare costs. Requested video content for their website and link has been sent through.

Billetkontoret, Denmark – met for update further to sales call held in January. Florida is selling well this year and they are finding the Gulf Coast doing particularly well for them. They do not need further information at this time but would be interested in participating in any future fam trips.

TUI Specialist – met to discuss co-op activity and opportunities. TUI are changing their direction for their Jetsave brand to target trade rather than consumer in their marketing activity. Hayes & Jarvis brand will target consumer direct although room night stats for this brand make it hard to justify co-op activity.

Other Meetings

British Airways Holidays – Attended the Florida training day in Newcastle at the British Airways call centre. A total of 110 reservations agents and after sales staff were trained on our area and also provided the staff with up to date literature including visitor's guides, area maps, key selling points and giveaways. A selection of Florida suppliers including attractions, hoteliers and CVB's attended the event and feedback from the staff has been very favourable.

TRADE LIAISON

- Details and meetings for DT Minich's and David Downing's trip to the UK have been finalised. Meetings have been scheduled with Virgin Holidays, BA and BA Holidays, Fleishmann-Hillard and also a meeting to go over UK sales initiatives.
- Details and arrangements for VIP tour operator event in conjunction with Busch Gardens have been finalised. The following operators will be attending:

Travel City Direct
Jetsave
Cosmos
Virgin Holidays
BA
Attraction Tickets Direct
BA Holidays
Trailfinders
Premier Holidays
Funway Holidays
Do Something Different
Miki Travel

- Barrhead Travel – The co-op marketing activity with Barrhead Travel in conjunction with SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment has now ended and we are awaiting campaign results which will be available in time for our next monthly report. We also received a brochure and giveaway request from Kelly Hillman, Marketing Executive at Barrhead Travel to provide literature etc for their annual consumer show which is held at their main retail branch in Glasgow City Centre. They estimate a total of 100+

consumers attend this event and visitor's guides, area maps, posters and giveaways were duly sent.

- Virgin Holidays – Approved and signed off various elements of our joint co-op marketing activity with Virgin Holidays. Activity that has recently been approved includes Real Radio advertorial to be read on air. Copy approval for the online element of the Real Radio promotion, the Real Radio micro site and Key 103 radio ads. Also provided Virgin Holidays with up to date imagery and logo's to utilise in this activity.
- Tour America – Continued to work on our joint co-op marketing campaign with Tour America Ireland. Activity confirmed and already approved includes the radio adverts, Sunday World publication advertisements and on- line banner ads.
- British Airways Holidays – Provided BA Holidays with images, logos, area copy etc to utilise in the forthcoming joint marketing campaign focusing on Florida. Activity includes online elements (Digital Creative's), a campaign splash page, a campaign e-mail to include copy and images, a holiday's homepage feature, paid search activity and PR.
- USAirtours – Our trade promotion with USAirtours which ran during the month of April has now finished and we have been advised that USAirtours are showing a 20% increase on sales to our area year on year. A total of 980 room nights were booked in total during 2010 and they are already at a total of 489 room nights up to and including April 2011. During the promotion they made 10 confirmed bookings for St. Pete/Clearwater which is a 50% increase over the previous month. USAirtours expect this trend to continue and improve over the next few months as their partner agents are now fully aware that they sell Florida Beaches especially as the promotion included posters, postal mailings and email shots.
- VSPC/Virgin Atlantic/SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment Familiarisation Trip – Finalised preparations for the forthcoming tour operator reservations staff/travel agent familiarisation trip that is taking place to our area in June 2011. The itinerary includes a night in Orlando and a visit to SeaWorld, four days in both St. Pete Beach and Clearwater Beach as well as a day at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. Tour Operators attending are as follows:
 - American Holidays (Ireland)
 - Tour America (Ireland)
 - Funway Holidays
 - Jetsave Holidays
 - Premier Holidays
 - Kenwood Travel
 - USAirtours
 - Thomas Cook Signature
 - Travel 2
- Black Tomato – The meeting with scheduled with Black Tomato was again cancelled and will now take place during the month of June. We plan to discuss the area in general and offer assistance where necessary.

- Ocean Florida – We have again chased Ocean Florida who are based in London to try to re-schedule training for their staff after the last confirmed appointment was cancelled. We are yet to receive a response. TBA.
- THG Holidays – A request was received from John Bowden at THG Holidays for literature and giveaways to be sent for a consumer show in Swansea that they were attending. Visitor guides, area maps, augmented reality cards and giveaways were sent. Over 75 welsh consumers had been confirmed to attend the event.

ENQUIRIES:

Telephone/website enquiries for information and/or literature

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MARKET INTELLIGENCE:

02 May 2011 – Source TTG

Expedia profits fall despite revenue boost

Online giant Expedia has seen its pre-tax profits fall by 19% for the first three months of the year despite increasing revenue by 15%. Pre-tax profits fell to \$74 million for the three months to the end of March compared to \$92 million during the same period last year. The US-based company was hit by increased interest and legal payments as well as a fall in the number of flight bookings.

04 May 2011 – Source TTG

Cook challenges TUI by going early for 2012

Thomas Cook has today thrown down the gauntlet to TUI Travel by breaking with tradition and launching all of its summer 2012 brochures in one go. The big two usually release the following year's brochures in batches staggered over several months with preview editions coming out in the spring. But Cook has tried to steal a march on Tui in the early booking market by releasing all 18 summer 2012 brochures across its Thomas Cook, Airtours, Sunset and Manos brands today. TUI by contrast stuck to tradition by launching five brochures for next summer on Thursday, including the first two featuring **First Choice** as a purely all-inclusive brand. The bulk of the summer 2012 brochures follow later in the year. Richard Calvert, Cook's managing director for tour operations, said the earlier release of brochures was to allow customers to book across all of its mainstream product. "We wanted to get all of our portfolio out at the same time so customers can choose from our entire offering," Calvert said. "We're also going out three weeks earlier than last year. "We believe people are willing to book this far in advance to secure the holiday, hotel and destination they want. We have already had good early sales from our long-haul brochures which launched four weeks ago." As part of a major revamp of its brochures, Cook is also scrapping its traditional Summersun brochure. "Customers are more savvy – they know where they want to go and what type of holiday they are looking for. We don't feel we need a huge Summersun brochure," Calvert added. TUI said it would launch the rest of its First Choice and Thomson brochures for summer 2012 in July but could not confirm how many brochures it would be producing. Communications director Christian Cull denied that Cook's move would allow it to get a head-start over TUI on early bookings for 2012. He said offering the best resorts and products was more important than the range of brochures. Cull added that many of the operator's exclusive or "differentiated" resorts were featured in the brochures

released this week. “With the repositioning of First Choice there is a clear sense of identity for both First Choice and Thomson. It’s the beauty of having two clear brands that our competitors are trying to counter,” he said.

05 May 2011 – Source TTG

Brisk sales follow four-day weekend

Agencies have reported a brisk return to trading following the disruption of the extended bank holiday period. Global Travel Group managing director Dave Clayton said the holiday had meant “a good start to April and a poor finish to it”, but that trading had bounced back immediately, shifting up by 64% on Tuesday. Others reported a boost from the royal wedding weekend, with Advantage’s sales 8% higher than the same period in 2010, as good weather and the long break brought customers into shops. Barrhead Travel opened its agencies on the wedding day, and chairman Bill Munro said they were busier in the morning than in the afternoon. He said sales were “better than expected”, but that long-haul sales had fallen as customers had bought more expensive European holidays. Bath Travel managing director Stephen Bath said that losing two working days had not helped the month, but that the company was up 5% in the past six months, year-on-year, with cruise accounting for more than half of its business. TTA Worldchoice group marketing director Eleanor Sheppard said it was a mixed picture: “It would appear that the agents who were busy were those specialising in higher-value long-haul.”

06 May 2011 – Source Travel Daily

Virgin Galactic nudges closer to launch after successful re-entry test

Virgin Galactic has completed its latest test flight, with the VSS Enterprise spaceship demonstrating its ‘feather’ re-entry configuration for the first time. The flight was completed on Wednesday in the skies about the Mojave Desert and lasted just over 11 minutes after a 45 minute climb attached to VMS Eve. VSS Enterprise has now flown solo seven times since its roll-out in December 2009, along with ground tests. “This morning’s spectacular flight by VSS Enterprise was its third in 12 days, reinforcing the fast turnaround and frequent flight-rate potential of Virgin Galactic’s new vehicles. We have also shown this morning that the unique feathering re-entry mechanism, probably the single most important safety innovation within the whole system, works perfectly,” said George Whitesides, CEO and president of Virgin Galactic after the test. “This is yet another important milestone successfully passed for Virgin Galactic, and brings us ever closer to the start of commercial operations.”

08 May 2011 – Source TTG

Branson still travel’s richest person

Sir Richard Branson has maintained his position as the travel industry’s richest person for another year. The Virgin entrepreneur has an estimated fortune of £3.1 billion according to *The Sunday Times*’ annual Rich List which puts him in 19th place in the UK. The report estimates that his wealth has increased by £485 million in the last year. Also among the travel industry’s richest people is former Saga owner Roger De Haan who together with his brother Peter has an estimated fortune of £800 million. While EasyJet founder Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou has seen his wealth fall by £140 million to £680 million over the last year. One of the highest risers in the study is Southall Travel’s Kuljinder Bahia whose family’s wealth is estimated at £184 million – up by £124 million on 2010. This has catapulted Bahia to 372nd place in the 2011 list compared to 1,037th last year. The Bourne Leisure founders Peter Harris, John Cook and David Allen all make the list again with estimated fortunes of £400 million, £330 million and £165 million respectively. Other notable travel figures in the list include Travelex’s founder Lloyd Dorfman who is worth

around £570 million, while Abercrombie & Kent's Geoffrey Kent has a fortune of £213 million and Trailfinders boss Mike Gooley £235 million. Also featured are Lord Glendonbrook, formerly BMI chairman Sir Michael Bishop, with £200 million, Airtours founder David Crossland £160 million and Gold Medal founder Ken Townsley £118 million. Ryanair's chief executive Michael O'Leary is ranked 20th richest in Ireland with assets estimated at around £338 million.

09 May 2011 – Source TTG

Cook blames capacity cut on co-op delay

Thomas Cook has blamed its cut in summer capacity on the delay in completing the retail merger with the Co-operative Travel. The merger, which was announced in October, is currently being considered by the Competition Commission with a decision due in August. Cook's chief financial officer Paul Hollingworth said the failure to complete the merger in time for this summer had been one of the factors which led to a trimming of its UK capacity for summer 2011. The operator had originally intended to increase summer capacity by around 3% from the UK but Cook was now looking at a 1% year-on-year reduction for summer 2011 due to the lack of extra distribution from the Co-op shops as well as the weak UK economy. "We had hoped to complete the merger with the Co-op which would have stimulated demand," said Hollingworth. "The completion of the Co-op deal is going to be a lot later than we had expected." Cook also admitted it had been forced to cut margins for its holidays in the UK due to the poor consumer environment in order to maintain volumes over the last few months. Chief executive Manny Fontenla-Novoa said he had "a lot of hope about the outcome" of the Competition Commission's review of the merger. Cook's struggling UK business accounted for £159 million of the company's overall £166 million losses for the six months to the end of March. The UK operation lost an extra £42.4 million in the six-month period year-on-year compared to an overall increase in group losses of only £36 million.

10 May 2011 – Source Travel Daily

TUI on target for 2011 but remains cautious

TUI Travel has announced that its outlook for 2011 is within expectations after its half year results posted an improvement in operating losses. The tour operator recorded an operating loss of £307 million, down £15m and its revenue increased 5% to £5.205 billion. The news comes after rival Thomas Cook yesterday announced its operating losses had widened by £36m and TUI said its 'differentiated' product had helped it outperform. Bookings with the tour operator have fallen 3% compared to last year taking into account the ash cloud and cancellations to Egypt and Tunisia. The latter cost TUI £29m, £7m higher than Thomas Cook. Meanwhile the tour operator said customers were generally shortening their holiday stay, as its seven and 10/11 night breaks increased 6% and 24% respectively, while the number for 14-night holidays sold fell by 7%. It said it remained cautious for the year due to the "uncertain economic and geopolitical outlook". "I am pleased to report an improved first half operating result, particularly given the significant headwinds from political events in Egypt and Tunisia, the weak UK economic environment and the shift of the Easter peak period from Q2 to Q3 this year," said Peter Long, chief executive of TUI.

12 May 2011 – Source TTG

BA and cabin crew reach deal to end strikes

The two-year dispute between British Airways and its cabin crew could be over after a deal was struck between the two sides. Cabin crew union Unite presented BA's latest offer to its members at a mass meeting held near Heathrow today. It will now be put to a formal ballot in

the next month with Unite recommending that members approve the deal. The union also confirmed it would not be calling any more strikes using its current mandate for industrial action. Unite's general secretary Len McCluskey said: "We always said that this dispute could only be settled by negotiation, not by confrontation or litigation. And so it has proved. "We are delighted to have reached an agreement which I believe recognises the rights and dignity of cabin crew as well as the commercial requirements of the company. "This agreement will allow us to go forward in partnership together to strengthen this great British company - good news for BA, its employees and its customers alike." McCluskey added that full travel concessions for cabin crew would be restored which had been one of the major sticking points in the dispute. BA said in a statement: "We are very pleased the threat of industrial action has been lifted and that we have reached a point where we can put this dispute behind us. "Our agreement with Unite involves acknowledgement by the union that the cost-saving structural changes we have made in cabin crew operations are permanent. "We have also agreed changes that will modernise our crew industrial relations and help ensure that this kind of dispute cannot occur again." The dispute over pay, staffing and working conditions has been going on since 2009 and last year cabin crew went on strike for 22 days costing the airline more than £150 million. Cabin crew again voted for industrial action in March but the union did not set any strike dates as negotiations continued between Unite and BA. Talks are believed to have gained momentum following the departure of former BA chief executive Willie Walsh who has moved up to become boss of International Airlines Group, the new holding company for BA and Iberia following January's merger.

12 May 2011 – Source TTG

Cosmos goes for year-round Florida

Cosmos has launched its first year-round Florida programme after seeing strong demand for the destination. The operator, which is part of the Monarch Travel Group, will continue to use Monarch Airlines charter flights to Orlando from March to October, but is introducing British Airways and Virgin Atlantic flights to Orlando in the winter, alongside BA's year-round services to Tampa. Florida product manager Denise Hodge said: "Florida has enjoyed excellent sales this summer, and we now feel the time is right to offer our programme year-round. "Teaming up with market-leading scheduled carriers to the destination, while maintaining our strong charter offering, has given us the opportunity to offer our most flexible programme." Cosmos said that adding the scheduled flights would allow it offer durations ranging between seven and 21 nights, including fly-drives as well as single and multi-centre holidays. The operator is trying to entice customers with a range of early-booking offers, including airline-cabin and car-hire upgrades, free travel insurance for children and pre-bookable attraction tickets. Cosmos is offering deposits of £50 per person for summer 2012 bookings made by July 31, with customers not having to pay anything further until 10 weeks before departure.

16 May 2011 – Source TTG

Monarch Group returns to profit following strong summer sales

Monarch Holdings, parent company of Cosmos Holidays, saw a financial recovery last year as it turned a heavy 2009 loss into a profit. The group made a pre-tax profit of £1.5 million in the year to the end of October 2010, compared to a loss of £30.4 million the previous year. The result was achieved despite a 4% drop in turnover to £757.5 million and a year that included the volcanic ash cloud eruption. Monarch said the challenging first half of the year had been offset by strong summer trading. The airline saw record load factors in peak season, with 94% being achieved on Monarch Scheduled services in August. The Cosmos Holidays brand saw a 10% drop in passenger numbers and an 8% fall in its turnover.

However, margins rose to 5% due to a reduction in the cost of sale. The group's aircraft broking division, First Aviation, saw a near three-fold increase in profits before tax to £913,000 on turnover of £17.2 million.

16 May 2011 – Source TTG

Agents urged to widen customers holiday choices

Four countries still account for more than half of British holidaymakers' choice of overseas destinations despite consumers having the world to pick from, a new survey has confirmed. Spain, Greece, Turkey and the US make up nearly 53% of all packages sold in the UK, according to a poll by Co-operative Travel, which found conversely that 93% of people wanted to travel more widely. The agency chain analysed almost nine million bookings and asked customers why they did not experience more destinations. Cost was given as the main reason, but the Co-operative said that this "doesn't always stand up to scrutiny". Lebanon and Brazil were given as examples of countries which were not getting their fair share of attention. Lebanon ranks 137th in the Co-op's list of most-visited countries despite the average price of a package, £577, being similar to Cyprus, at £543. Lebanon was also cheaper than Egypt, which at £645 is in fifth position in the Co-op's chart. Similarly, Brazil was named by 21% of those surveyed as a place they wished they could visit. The average cost of a package, at just over £1,000, was estimated to be 35% lower than a similar stay in Barbados, which is 34 places higher in the Co-op's league. Trevor Davis, Co-operative Travel retail distribution director, said consumers wanted to ensure holidays would be successful and so stuck to tried and tested destinations. He said he believed cost was a factor, but added: "However often this is perception rather than reality. What's more likely to be holding these countries back is the failure of the mainstream holiday market to offer them as viable alternatives." Turkey's surge in popularity was an example of how the trade could support a destination, he said. "If travellers are saying that they wish to be more adventurous in their holiday choices, maybe the travel sector should be doing more to support them." He added that many people "would be surprised by the full scope of the holiday advice and support a high street travel agent can provide". "The Co-operative Travel helps people travel to 142 different destinations across the world and yet most people only really think of their high street travel agent as a gateway to a handful of these locations."

The top ten overseas destinations identified in the survey were:	
Spain	29.05%
Greece	9.94%
Turkey	8%
USA	5.99%
Egypt	4.89%
Cyprus	4.14%
France	2.94%
Portugal	2.84%
Italy	2.62%
Tunisia	1.45%

17 May 2011 – Source Travelmole

Virgin pilots threaten summer strikes

Less than a week after British Airways resolved its long-running dispute with cabin crew, Virgin Atlantic pilots are threatening strikes over the summer which could hit families' holiday plans. The British Airline Pilots Association, which represents 85% of Virgin's flight crew, said it will begin balloting members next week after pay talks between the union and

the airline broke down. The result of the ballot will be announced on June 21 and, if pilots give the go-ahead, the first strikes could take place seven days later. BALPA claims that the pilots have not received a pay rise since 2008 and that the airline's latest offer of 4% this year and 3% in 2012 and 2013 will not keep pace with inflation. BALPA general secretary Jim McAuslan said: "With inflation running at 5% and likely to remain high, pilots would, if they accepted these increases, be in effect voting themselves years of wage cuts. "We do not want a dispute but to date there has been no meaningful movement by the company and even the involvement of ACAS (the conciliation service) has not broken the logjam. The airline claimed the offer was "fair, affordable and sustainable" and in line with the rest of the industry. It said it was still open to talks with the pilots, who are paid between £58,000 and £110,000 a year, depending on seniority. Virgin pilots threatened to industrial action last year over how many days they could take off, but the dispute was resolved. If the latest threatened strike goes ahead, it will be the first in the airline's history.

17 May 2011 – Source Tourism Review Weekly

THE GLASS ENIGMA – NEW HOME FOR DALÍ MUSEUM

St. Petersburg in Florida has been known especially to fans of the Spanish surrealist Salvador Dalí. It is now beaming with pride even more, as 2011 has brought a brand new gem of a sculpture, the new home for local famous Dalí collection. The 'Glass Enigma' sounds like a place worthy to house Salvador Dalí's works. This fascinating building housing the new Dalí Museum is the creation of Yann Weymouth, and took nearly two years to complete. It was created to house a spectacular collection of Dalí's art, which until then had been on display in another local museum. However, there never seemed to be sufficient light and space to house such an extensive collection and eventually, the museum leaders took up the challenge to raise enough money to build a brand new home for it. The project was very complicated, but with many generous donations from both state and the public, the much needed \$36 million was raised. **The** result is a mesmerizing glass structure which resembles a giant rain drop and consists of more than a thousand triangular-shaped glass panels, none of which is identical. The interior is dominated by the Helical Staircase. This element is rather significant as Dalí believed the helix to be evidence of the divine in nature. The new structure brings more light and space; it is double the size of the former museum and finally, hundreds of the master's paintings and other works of art may be on display at the same time. Also, they are much safer there as the building was designed to withstand a category 5 hurricane. Local Café Gala, named after the maestro's wife, features delicacies of the Spanish cuisine; there is also a separate student gallery, theatre and a classroom. The Glass Enigma was officially introduced in January 2011 and with its rather impressive collection and wonderful setting, it is likely to become a great hit of Tampa Bay.

17 May 2011 – Source Travel Daily

Travelodge survey 'confirms' late booking trend - Hotel chain and Pitchup.com anticipate stycation year...

A third of Britons will not book their main summer holiday until June at the earliest, according to a new survey. Data from Travelodge has revealed that 41% of Brits are still feeling the pinch this year but a quarter were willing to sell items on eBay to ensure they go on holiday. In addition, a fifth of adults were making cutbacks at home such as spending less on consumer goods or eating out less to pay for travel. "It has been a tough year for many British adults with rising household costs and Government cutbacks but our research shows that cash strapped Britons are clinging onto their annual holiday; in order to add some cheer into their lives," said a Travelodge spokesperson. Meanwhile, its study has found that the British tourism industry will be boosted by £7.2 billion with 35% of Brits holidaying across

the country. In addition, Pitchup.com has seen its traffic double to one million unique page views in the first four months of 2011. These statistics suggest that the staycation trend will continue to be popular in 2011, with Cornwall and the Lake District continuing to be the top domestic travel destinations. "A growing thirst for the outdoors, investment in 'alternative camping' options, and Met Office predictions of a hot summer are all contributing to higher camping and caravan bookings this season, against a background of increasing reluctance to travel abroad, higher exchange rates and persistent economic uncertainty," said Daniel Yates, managing director of Pitchup.com.

19 May 2011 – Source Travel Daily

APD rise could reduce UK flight traffic by 3m a year, says report - Prediction says UK GDP would drop £2.6bn a year...

The up-coming increase in Air Passenger Duty could reduce the number of UK passengers by three million per year, a new report said yesterday. An independent report by Frontier Economics and commissioned by EasyJet predicts that the rise in APD would reduce the UK's GDP by £2.6 billion a year and yearly reduce tourism spend in the UK by £475m. It is thought that although the number of flights would decrease, CO2 emissions would be up to 360,000 tonnes a year as EasyJet believes the higher tax encourages more long-haul flights. "APD has already risen by 140% since 2007 on short haul flights. This report provides convincing evidence that the Government should not impose further increases in APD on short-haul flights and should rethink its policy on aviation taxation," said Carolyn McCall, CEO of Easyjet. Virgin Atlantic said the long-haul market was in more danger and the airline shared concerns on the impact of APD.

26 May 2011 – Source Travel Daily

UK outbound numbers to return to pre-recession levels by 2017 – forecast pushed back three years

UK outbound figures will not return to pre-crisis levels until 2017, according to forecasters. Euromonitor International had originally said that expenditure would return by 2014 in a press statement but pushed it back to a further three years in a speech to WTM Vision Conference delegates yesterday. Caroline Bremner, head of travel and tourism research at Euromonitor International said that the number of travellers in three years would be 10% lower than figures in 2008 but outbound receipts would total US\$38.6 billion, US\$2 million more than 2008. "In 2017 we should see a return to pre-crisis levels [of travelling overseas]," revealed Bremner. "Figures are 10 million down but this could be that consumers are switching to domestic travel, which has been performing well with four to five percent increases." Euromonitor's latest report has predicted that 56.2 million Brits will travel overseas this year (up from 50m in 2010) and this is expected to increase to 58.3m, 58.7m and 59.6m in the next three years respectively.

31st May 2011 – Source Travel Daily

Nearly 2m fly overseas over bank holiday weekend

Around 1.9 million Brits headed overseas this bank holiday weekend, which was left unthreatened by the ash cloud or cabin crew strikes. Statistics from ABTA has shown that Spain continues to be a firm British favourite and that Amsterdam, Paris and Dublin were popular destinations for city breaks. Dubai and Florida have sold well in the long-haul market. Of the UK's departure points Heathrow remains top with 400,000 passengers flying out of the airport, while 275,000 will depart from Gatwick and 161,000 from Stansted. In the north, 140,000 will fly from Manchester, 60,000 from Birmingham and 54,000 from Edinburgh.