



## **Tahiti Takes Off as Australians Zero in on Direct Flights**

Australia has become Tahiti's fastest-growing travel market, largely on the back of non-stop flights between Sydney and Papeete launched midway through last year.

More than 9600 Australians chose a Tahiti holiday in 2005, almost 2000 more than 2004, as Australians discovered the convenience of the new direct services by national carrier Air Tahiti Nui.

"This is a marked turnaround on what took place when air capacity was cut back in early 2000, and shows there's still a great deal of affection and demand for Tahiti and her islands," said Tahiti Tourisme CEO Dany Panero.

In Sydney to launch new marketing initiatives to drive yet more growth out of Australia, Ms Panero said Tahiti Tourisme had taken the cutbacks on the chin and continued to apply an aggressive marketing strategy led by its Sydney-based Regional Director Jonica Paramor.

"When the Air Tahiti Nui flights began last year, Australia was perfectly positioned to capitalise on them - so much so that Air Tahiti Nui has just announced a third Sydney-Papeete service from March 26 and says it wants daily departures."

"We also continue to get excellent support from Air New Zealand, which operates four Boeing 767-300 services into Papeete from Auckland with connections from Sydney, Brisbane, Perth, Cairns and, from the end of March, Adelaide. Air New Zealand has been committed to the South Pacific and Tahiti for more than 50 years."

Ms Panero said growth of 70-80 per cent out of Australia in recent months had catapulted Australia to Tahiti's fifth largest source market after the US, France, Japan and Italy.

"The challenge now is to keep the growth going, and to that end we have put together a new marketing thrust designed to change long-held perceptions of Tahiti from a 'romantic, once-in-a-lifetime' destination to a 'nearby holiday destination with something for everyone'."

She said new marketing initiatives for 2006 included:

- an integrated advertising, public relations, online and promotional campaign to generate bookings and position Tahiti as having 'something for everyone';
- the start-up on March 1 of an all new, fully interactive website with a catchy new call to action - [www.tahitnow.com.au](http://www.tahitnow.com.au)
- an online version of Tahiti Tourisme's popular Tiare specialist travel agent training program equipped with a 'Holiday Bank' to reward sales, and;

- inclusion in a world-wide integrated marketing study to better understand what Australians want and expect from a Tahiti holiday.

Ms Panero said Tahiti had continued to mature as a broadly-based destination, with two new luxury spa resorts – an Intercontinental/Thalasso and a St Regis – about to open on the beguiling island of Bora Bora.

Providing extra information about the marketing campaign, Jonica Paramor said her Australian sales team aimed to work even more closely with its partners to expand the market from the current level of 10,000 visitors to 12,000 in 2006.

“We have a very solid team of committed companies, from Air Tahiti Nui and Air New Zealand to our invaluable Tiare agents, very active and committed wholesalers and key hotel operators like Pearl Resorts, Accor, Intercontinental, Starwood, Orient Express Hotels, Trains and Cruises and Radisson.

“Tahiti and her islands have the product range and can deliver wonderfully on the three main elements people look for in a holiday destination – relaxation, romance and adventure. The new, seven hour direct flights place her close enough to qualify as a short break destination, especially when the extra direct service begins on March 26.”

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