

TRAVELCONSUMERDAILY

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

It's no Dubai, but Guam finds its place in the sun

■ GUAM isn't exactly Dubai or Singapore, but the western Pacific US territory has carved out a niche doing what the big Asian hubs are doing on a much smaller scale.

In the past decade Dubai has made its name as a high-class resort destination and shopping mecca purely because of its geographic location, seven hours flying from both Europe and eastern Asia, but also within non-stop flying range of the US and Australia.

Before Dubai, Singapore came into its own with the release of the Boeing 747:400 in 1989, which could fly non-stop in both directions be-

tween Singapore and any city in Europe, when it had previously needed a Middle East fuel stop.

Dubai and Singapore are now weaving their aerial networks with planes of up to 560 tonnes, but Guam has found its niche using the extended range of Boeing's popular narrowbody jet, the Boeing 737:800, with just 160-180 people aboard.

Continental Micronesia has become the airline of choice for many Japanese outside of Tokyo as a way to get to the Australian tropics, which has been a large market for Japa-

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Aussie title fight

■ IT'S NOT exactly the gunfight at the OK Corral but next Wednesday's announcement of 2008-09 annual financial results for Qantas holds more interest than whether the Australian national carrier continues its stellar profitability through thick and the biggest thin the airline has ever experienced.

At the end of April, Qantas cut its profit forecast to between \$100 and \$200 million from an earlier estimate of about \$500 million – less than half what the airline was used to in the good times that ended last September, when it was turning over more than \$16 billion a year.

But there's another line in the sand – not only Qantas versus the world, where it competes directly with dozens of other airlines, but Qantas versus the competition on the Australian home turf.

Since January this year, it has been possible for the first time to directly compare the Aus-

PRELIMINARY MONTHLY TRAFFIC AND CAPACITY STATISTICS: DOMESTIC							
MAY 2009							
	Month			Financial Year to Date			
	2008/09	2007/08	Change	2008/09	2007/08	Change	
QANTAS	Passengers carried ('000)	1,296	1,360	(4.7)%	15,108	15,815	(4.5)%
	Revenue Passenger Kilometres (m)	1,865	1,955	(4.6)%	21,945	22,953	(4.4)%
	Available Seat Kilometres (m)	2,395	2,606	(8.1)%	27,658	28,412	(2.7)%
	Revenue Seat Factor (%)	77.9	75.0	2.9 pts	79.3	80.8	(1.4) pts
VIRGIN BLUE	May 2009			Financial Year to Date (Year ending 30 June 2009)			
	May-09	May-08	Change	YTD May-09	YTD May-08	Change	
	Passengers carried	1,262,770	1,258,117	0.4%	14,870,888	14,143,036	5.1%
	Revenue Passenger Kilometres (m)	1,369	1,334	2.6%	16,184	15,335	5.5%
	Available Seat Kilometres (m)	1,761	1,830	(3.8)%	19,878	18,868	5.4%
Revenue Load Factor	77.7%	72.9%	4.8 pts	81.4%	81.3%	0.1 pt	

lian domestic performance of Qantas with its growing head-to-head rival Virgin Blue.

It should always have been simple but, whether through lack of resources or because it

acceded to commercial pressure, the Avstats division of the federal Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics does not release even the simplest market

share figures in the domestic airline industry.

(Compare that to American Government figures that, for example, reveal micro-sta-

CONTINUED PAGE 2

QF, DJ in title fight

FROM PAGE 1

tistics such as, not only who is the the most punctual airline in the US, but the flight numbers of services that are chronically delayed and by how many minutes or hours, as well as full market share information.)

A remarkable thing happened in January and February this year when, for the first time, Virgin Blue separated its domestic and international statistics in the information it supplies to the Austrakian Stock Exchange: in the Australian domestic skies, the Virgin Blue brand – not Qantas’s main brand – had become the biggest airline brand in the country. It was the first time since the early 1990s that the Qantas brand has been headed as the nation’s No. 1 carrier (by Ansett).

Qantas only ceded its crown because of the dynamics of the Christmas-New Year low season, when part of its fleet is normally parked for maintenance as the business community is at the beach for the holidays.

The global financial crisis had also imposed itself on the festive season and, without the suits, Qantas really struggled and threw out some fabulous discounts. At times in January and February, it was cheaper to fly Qantas – with meal and frequent flyer points thrown in – than its own low-cost subsidiary Jetstar.

Normal transmission was resumed in March when Aus-

tralian business went back to work and Qantas went back to No.1. But a statement had been made. With its heavy dependence on corporate support, Qantas had gone backwards and is still 5% behind on the domestic traffic it was pulling this time last year (on May numbers).

Virgin Blue — network-wide including international – is 5% ahead of where it was last year, the growth due to international expansion. But its domestic network appears to have more than held its own.

At times in January and February, it was cheaper to fly Qantas than its own low-cost subsidiary Jetstar.

Virgin Blue probably won’t catch Qantas quickly. Its domestic numbers dived in June and those figures are now more than 13% below their March monthly peak of 1.35 million passengers. (Qantas will release its June figures next Wednesday.)

In May, however, Virgin’s 1.26 million passengers were only a shade behind Qantas’s 1.29 million (see P.1 table), while the No.3 brand, Jetstar domestic, had 624,000.

Considering it has only small Boeing 737s against Qantas’s much larger domestic 767s and A330s, it will be a turn-up indeed if the upstart eventually becomes the champ, even if it’s only for bragging rights. ■

A Twin Otter aircraft on the airstrip near Kokoda village.

13 feared dead in PNG crash

FROM PAGE 1

nese outside of Tokyo as a way to get to the Australian tropics, which has been a large market for Japanese holidaymakers for more than three decades.

Continental flies to Guam daily from Adelaide on a flight that

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TCD BEST FARES

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
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

Great value, but be alert to fare quirks that can cost a packet

There are some funny things that happen with the best fares we list on these pages. The first thing that must be said is to shop carefully with a calculator. You will find great value on some routes and not on others. On international routes, not every fare in the market is listed.

There are some strange anomalies you need to be alert to, particularly some fares offered by Virgin Blue affiliate Pacific Blue for travel to the South Pacific islands from either Sydney or Brisbane. Just make sure the fare quoted, particularly if it's a multi-sector journey, is no greater than the sum of of the two sector best fares.

We'd like to hear of your experiences (letters@travelconsumerdaily.com) with the airline industry and air fares in particular. Questions welcome. We've spent a long time working out how this system works.

All fares are one-way unless designated 'rtn'. Best fares exclude credit card charges, are sometimes bettered by sale fares and are sometimes unavailable. Carefully check multi-sector fares against the total of best fares for each sector. 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 — Australia) TR (Tiger Airways — international) ZL (Rex) D7 (Air Asia X) UA (United Airlines) NZ (Air New Zealand) VA (V Australia). QZ Indonesia Air Asia XR Skywest

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
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

TCD BEST FARES

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 rtn
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

from PERTH

Adelaide QF 159 DJ 149 JQ 119
Alice Springs QF 313
Albany XR 129
Albury DJ 309
Apia 992.70
Auckland QF 584 DJ 479
Ayers Rock QF 305
Brisbane QF 275 DJ 269
Broome QF 245 DJ 219 XR 159
Buenos Aires QF 2138
Cairns QF 454 DJ 340 JQ 209
Canberra QF 292 DJ 240
Carnarvon XR 222
Christchurch QF 581 DJ 449
Coffs Harbour QF 383 DJ 290

Darwin QF 339 DJ 279 XR 199
Delhi QF 1133 rtn
Denpasar DJ 195 JQ 239 QZ 217
Devonport QF 294
Dunedin DJ 449
Esperance XR 162
Frankfurt QF 1865 rtn
Fraser Coast QF 369 QF 315
Geraldton XR 135
Gold Coast DJ 249
Hamilton DJ 409
Hamilton Island DJ 335
Hobart QF 339 DJ 290
Hong Kong QF 877
Honiara DJ 3897
Honolulu QF 1645 rtn
Jakarta JQ 209
Johannesburg QF 1810 rtn
Kalbarri XR 163
Kalgoorlie QF 119 XR 163
Karratha QF 229 DJ 199 XR 192
Kuala Lumpur D7 135
Kununurra XR169
Launceston QF 352 DJ 290
Learmonth XR 222
London QF 1968 rtn
Los Angeles QF 1507 rtn VA 762
Mackay QF 414 DJ 325
Melbourne QF 219 DJ 215 JQ 179 TT 128
Mexico City QF 2216 rtn
Mildura DJ 289
Monkey Mia XR 222
Mumbai QF 1115 rtn
Nadi QF 504 DJ 520.20
Newcastle DJ 250
Newman QF 229 DJ 189
New York QF 1713 rtn
Noumea QF 559
Papeete QF 1783 rtn
Paraburdoo QF 215
Paris QF 1888 rtn
Port Hedland DJ 199
Port Macquarie DJ 309
Port Moresby DJ 1664
Port Vila QF 680 DJ 459
Queenstown QF 643 DJ 559
Rockhampton QF 399 DJ 320
Rome QF 1881 rtn
Santiago QF 2124 rtn
San Francisco QF 1552 rtn
Singapore QF 567 JQ 189 TR 124.64
Sunshine Coast DJ 310
Sydney QF 244 DJ 209
Tonga (Nuku Alofa) DJ 724
Tokyo QF 1100 rtn
Townsville QF 318 DJ 290
Vancouver QF 1981 rtn
Wellington QF 573 DJ 439
Whitsunday Coast
(Proserpine) DJ 325

*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
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