

Press contact: Chris Lazarus Associates, LLC
(503) 867-1370
chris@chrislazarus.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Avanti Set to Launch FIT Offerings for South Pacific Region;
Eight Recommended Vacations, 280 Experiences/Tours, 222 Hotels
In Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji
to Create Tailor-Made Itineraries for Independent Travelers and Custom Groups**

Portland, OR, August 23, 2023 – Wholesale tour operator Avanti Destinations announced that on September 12, 2023 it will be launching its latest region – the South Pacific, including **Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji**, with a total of eight recommended vacations, 280 tours and experiences, and 222 three-, four-, and five-star hotels and resorts in **more than 50 locations**.

Avanti has been selling custom-crafted **independent travel** vacations **exclusively** through travel advisors, not directly to consumers, since 1981. The South Pacific now joins Avanti’s lineup of Europe, Asia, North Africa, the Middle East, Central and South America that advisors can book for their FIT* clients.

There are **three suggested itineraries in Australia, three in New Zealand, and two in Fiji**. Agents may custom-tailor each client’s itinerary, selecting the destinations, experiences, transfers, number of nights and hotels that match each client’s interests, timeframe, and preferred type of accommodation. An **e-brochure** will be available on Avanti’s travel advisor portal <https://book.avantidestinations.com> on September 12, 2023 and a **webinar** covering the entire region is scheduled for August 31, 2023 at 1pm Eastern, 10am Pacific (register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4649617403722322009>). Additional webinars on the individual countries are scheduled for October, November and December (see Avanti’s advisor portal).

Advisors requested high quality vacations to these destinations

“Our travel advisor partners have been asking us to offer Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific for some time because these places are very high on most people’s travel bucket list. Advisors specifically requested vacations with the same high quality that we provide for Europe and

our other destinations,” said Paul Barry, Avanti’s CEO. “All three countries are ideal for independent American travelers since English is the predominant language.

“These destinations offer spectacular scenery, abundant opportunities for active travel, wildlife-spotting, fascinating indigenous cultures, and renowned food and wine.

“With flight capacity returning to pre-pandemic levels, the opportunities for direct flights from cities around the US are greatly improving. It is also a region that will give advisors repeat bookings. Once clients take one independent vacation there, they will want to return, and Avanti’s wide array of outstanding experiences ensures that each vacation you create is different from the last,” said Barry.

Best times to go to Australia, New Zealand, Fiji

Barry noted that the best time to visit the South Pacific region varies. Australia has a wide range of climates, including tropical, subtropical, desert, and temperate, so travel can take place all year long, depending where clients go. Traveling to New Zealand is best planned for November through March since American winter coincides with New Zealand summer and vice versa. In the tropical paradise of Fiji, April through October is the optimal time, heaviest rains are January through March.

“You can see from the more than 40 South Pacific destinations we have added that we offer not only the most popular, iconic ones, but also smaller, off-the-beaten-path places that other tour operators don’t offer, but are extremely worthwhile seeing,” pointed out Barry. “In our product selection, we always strive to give advisors the opportunity to help their FIT clients develop an in-depth appreciation for the countries that they visit and their cultures, and not just tick the best-known sights off their list. With this launch, we are giving advisors a staggering range of components they can use to build unforgettable vacations.”

More than 50 destinations

In **Australia**, Avanti provides hotels and tours in **25 locations**, including: **Sydney**, with its iconic multi-venue Opera House, widely regarded as an architectural masterpiece; **Melbourne** with its 150 mile-long scenic Great Ocean Road; **Brisbane**; **Perth**; **Adelaide**, whose Stokes Bay garnered the 2023 Best Australian Beach award; **Kangaroo Island**, a 45-minute ferry ride from Adelaide and home to koalas, dolphins, sea lions, as well as kangaroos; **Cairns** and **Port Douglas**, the two gateway towns to the Great Barrier Reef and Daintree Rainforest, both on UNESCO’s list of natural heritage sites; **K’gari**,

formerly known as **Fraser Island**, the world's largest sand island, where rainforests grow on sand dunes; car-free **Hamilton Island** in the Whitsundays – fringed by the coral reefs and covered in bushland filled with koalas, kangaroos, and kookaburras; **Uluru**, formerly known as Ayers Rock, the massive sandstone monolith that changes colors with the time of day and is sacred to the indigenous people, whose ancestors date back 60,000 years; **Darwin**, the multi-cultural tropical capital of the Northern Territory with a small-town feel, Crocosaurus Cove, and aboriginal art; **Katherine**, famous for its natural hot springs, waterfalls, and 13 stunning gorges; and **Hobart** in the wildlife haven of Tasmania with its unique animal species - wombats, wallabies and pademelons.

In **New Zealand**, Avanti's **17 locations** include **four on the North Island: Auckland; Wellington**, home to Te Papa (National Museum exhibiting many Maori artists) and considered New Zealand's culinary capital with more eating and drinking establishments per capita than New York City; **Rotorua**, center of Maori culture and geothermal activity with bubbling mud pools, spas, age-old forests, pristine lakes, cycling, hiking, fishing, and golf; **Hawke's Bay**, referred to as the "hidden jewel" of the country, has pastoral scenery, Art Deco buildings, wineries, craft breweries, and the national aquarium with endemic local species of wildlife. On the dramatic mountain- and fjord-filled **South Island**, Avanti offers hotels and tours in: the two cities of **Christchurch** and **Queenstown**; **Franz Josef**, a small town with natural hot springs near the 7.5 mile long UNESCO World Heritage-designated glacier of the same name (recently renamed to honor the Maori legend about its formation, Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere); **Fox Glacier**, near Franz Josef Glacier and surrounded by the mountains of the Southern Alps; **Tekapo**, a small village on turquoise-colored Lake Tekapo, framed by the Southern Alps and New Zealand's tallest peak, Mount Cook (now called by its Maori name, Aoraki), which sits in the middle of the world's largest Dark Sky Reserve.

In **Fiji**, an archipelago of 333 islands that defines the term "tropical paradise", locations of Avanti's hotels, resorts, and tours include: **Nadi**, on Viti Levu, is Fiji's main island, transit hub and largest town with kayaking, river rafting and zip-lining adventures for the whole family; **Denarau**, a small island west of Nadi known for its high-end resorts, 18-hole golf course, 40 restaurants, and many entertainment options; **Coral Coast** on the southern shore of Viti Levu, has 50 miles of white sand beaches, family-friendly resorts, a vintage sugarcane railway, snorkeling, and scuba diving; the quiet, remote **Mamanuca** Islands are a small archipelago, considered a snorkeler's dream with pristine reefs, tranquil lagoon, and good surf; **Yasawa**, an isolated island with forests, mountains,

caves (*The Blue Lagoon* was filmed here); **Savusavu**, on the island of Vanua Levu (second largest island), is home to waterfalls, hot springs, coconut and sugarcane plantations, pearl farming and chocolate makers that offer tours, and the Namena Marine Reserve, Fiji's premier scuba diving site; **Taveuni**, Fiji's third largest island, has many natural attractions, such as waterfalls, a natural water slide, forests, but is most famous for the Rainbow Reef that runs between Taveuni and Vanua Levu and is one of the South Pacific's top scuba sites; **Suncoast**, an unspoiled, idyllic region on the north side of the main island; two small islands east of Vanua Levu – one, the private island of **Laucala** with luxury resorts (Oprah stayed there) and to the west, **Wakaya** with dense forests, beautiful beaches, surrounded by a protected marine area filled with coral reefs and marine life; **Suva**, the capital of Fiji is where clients can learn about the history of the island nation (the Fiji Museum) and how modern Fijians live, including what they eat – at the two-story municipal market; **Pacific Harbor** to the west of Suva is the “adventure capital” of Fiji, where activities include **diving with sharks**, , zip-lining, jet-boating, whitewater rafting, river tubing, surfing, and **watching native fire-walkers**.

290 experiences and tours – wildlife, glacier-walking, food and wine, indigenous painting

Avanti offers 153 experiences and sightseeing tours in Australia, 109 in New Zealand, and 28 in Fiji. Some are private, some shared, some for small groups.

These tours and experiences run the gamut from: bushwalking; visits to indigenous villages, including learning about tribal traditions, such as “bush tucker” lessons (plants and animals used for food and medicine in Australia); “secret Sydney” lunch cruise and behind-the-scenes tour of the Opera House; 10-hour **private** Wildlife in the Wild tour (including nighttime spotting); farm, market and tasting tours in several locations; Yarra Valley wine tour; small group Tasmania Wilderness and wildlife tour; small group “vines and eco adventure” (Adelaide); eight-hour Great Barrier Reef Adventures (from Hamilton Island); 11.5 hour shared tour of Cape Tribulation (where the rainforest meets the reef, named by explorer James Cook), Daintree (rainforest) and Mossman Gorge; sunset sailing cruises; dot-painting (aboriginal style) workshop; Uluru sacred sites and sunset tour; glacier hiking and helicopter ride (from Tekapo and Auckland); indigenous evening experience at Te Po National Museum; **private** Art Deco vintage car tour in Hawke's Bay; small group workshop experience at renowned special-effects company, Weta; 10-hour Transalpine train ride and private guided walk in Arthur's Pass National Park; small group helicopter **volcanic tour** landing on Mt Tarawara, site of the last eruption in 1886; driving tour from Christchurch to the Hundalee Hills and

whale-watching cruise; **private** lakeshore, forest, and birdwatching walking tour (from Queenstown); stargazing from Mount Cook (New Zealand's highest mountain) in the world's largest Dark Sky Reserve, surrounded by the Southern Alps; **private** helicopter tour of spectacular Milford Sound; small group tour of "Lord of Rings" filming locations on Lake Wakatipu from Queenstown to the small village of Glenorchy.

Eight recommended vacation packages

The new customizable recommended vacation packages range in length from 4 to 16 days:

- **Australia Essentials - 10 days/9 nights** in Sydney, Ayers Rock/Uluru, Cairns (or Port Douglas). Includes: half-day tour Sydney, Sydney Opera House tour, all-day excursion to Blue Mountain World Heritage Area; "Field of Light" night experience at Uluru with indigenous peoples' performances; Uluru sacred sites and sunset tour; Outer Barrier Reef cruise (time to dive, snorkel) from Cairns; Cape Tribulation, Daintree Rainforest, Mossman Gorge shared tour where clients learn aboriginal skills such as throwing a spear, preparing "bush tucker" food and medicines, and participating in a traditional smoking ceremony to ward off evil spirits. Includes daily breakfast, choice of accommodations, private arrival and departure transfers.
- **Australia Discovery – 16 days/15 nights** in Sydney, Adelaide, Kangaroo Island, Melbourne, Ayers Rock/Uluru, Cairns (or Port Douglas). Includes: Secret Sydney lunch cruise; Opera House tour; private "wildlife in the wild" tour including nighttime spotting; private "Boroughs of Melbourne" tour; Great Ocean Road tour; Uluru "Field of Lights" experiences; Uluru sacred aboriginal sites and sunset tour; snorkeling cruise visiting three sites on the Great Barrier Reef; Daintree Rainforest and Mossman Gorge tour (see above); sunset catamaran cruise; choice of accommodations, private arrival and departure transfers, daily breakfast.
- **Australia Escapes – 10 days/9 nights** in Sydney and Port Douglas. Includes: Sydney essential tour; Opera House tour; private "wildlife in the wild" tour; snorkeling cruise; Daintree Rainforest and Mossman Gorge tour; choice of accommodations, private arrival and departure transfers, daily breakfast.
- **Best of New Zealand (self-drive)– 8 days/7 nights** in Auckland, Rotorua, Christchurch, Queenstown. Includes: Waitomo Glowworm Caves tour; entrance to Deluxe Lake Polynesian spa-bathing experience (hot mineral rock pools overlooking Sulphur Bay); tour of Te Puia geothermal park with Maori arts and crafts institute and kiwi (bird) conservation center; Te Po indigenous evening experience with Maori feast, traditional welcoming ceremony, war dance performance; coach tour from Queenstown to Milford Sound followed by cruise of Milford Sound; rental car, choice of accommodations, private arrival transfer, daily breakfast.
- **New Zealand Discovery (self-drive) – 14 days/13 nights** in Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington, Christchurch, Queenstown, Franz Josef. Includes: Waitomo Glowworm Caves tour; Deluxe Lake spa-bathing experience; behind the scenes tour and chance to meet the collections staff of the Maori treasures at Te Papa/National Museum; tickets for interisland ferry from Wellington to Picton; tickets for Coastal Pacific train from Picton to Christchurch; coach tour from Queenstown to Milford Sound followed by cruise of Milford Sound; TranzAlpine train tickets from Greymouth to Christchurch; rental car, choice of accommodations, private arrival and departure transfers, daily breakfast.
- **New Zealand Essentials (self-drive) – 10 days/9 nights** in Auckland, Rotorua, Christchurch, Queenstown, Franz Josef. Includes: Waitomo Glowworm Caves tour; Deluxe Lake spa-bathing experience; behind the scenes tour and chance to meet the collections staff of the Maori treasures at Te Papa/National Museum; coach tour from Queenstown to Milford Sound followed by cruise of Milford Sound; TranzAlpine train tickets from Greymouth to Christchurch; rental car, choice of accommodations, private arrival transfer, daily breakfast.

- **Fiji Paradise – 8 days/7 nights** in choice of Coral Coast, Nadi or Denarau plus Yasawa. Highlight: Sigatoka river safari tour. Includes: choice of accommodations in Coral Coast, Nadi, or Denarau, on first and last night; Yasawa Island Resort & Spa for five nights; private arrival and departure transfer, daily breakfast.
- **Fiji Short & Sweet – 4 days/3 nights** in choice of Coral Coast, Nadi or Denarau. Highlights: Malamala Beach Club day cruise, Sigatoka river safari tour, snorkeling opportunities, Indo-Fijian culture and cuisine. Includes choice of accommodation for three nights, daily breakfast, private arrival and departure transfers.

For more information on independent travel in Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji or to book custom-crafted, multi-destination FIT travel 365 days a year throughout Europe, Asia, North Africa, the Middle East, or Central and South America, log onto the recently revamped advisor portal <https://book.avantidestinations.com> or call 1-800-422-5053 to speak with an expert travel consultant.

Since 1981, Avanti Destinations has been selling **independent travel** products and custom-crafted vacations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Central and South America and now the South Pacific, exclusively through travel advisors. The Portland, Oregon-based wholesale tour operator offers a wide range of FIT components **to travel advisors only**, including air, rail, rental cars, hotels, sightseeing/attractions, transfers and hard-to-find experiential travel options. Avanti specializes in hand-picked, locally-owned hotels in both large and small cities and in **connecting all the pieces of complex, multi-destination itineraries**. The company also creates complete packages for custom groups of 15-100 passengers. For more information: <https://book.avantidestinations.com>.

***NOTE: FIT=Foreign Independent Travel**

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Electronic photos available at https://1drv.ms/f/s!AjdZmJ2b7j-YhKoFR3_n45k2w1qb1A?e=wIN5aH

Caption: Wholesale tour operator Avanti Destinations launched its new region for FIT and custom small group vacations, the South Pacific, including Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji with a lineup of eight recommended customizable vacations, 280 tours and experiences, and more than 200 three-, four- and five-star hotels.

Shown: Sydney Opera House (Australia); Koala in the forests of Kangaroo Island near Adelaide(Australia); colorful coral of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, near Cairns; paddleboarding on crystal-clear Lake McKenzie, a 'perched' lake, filled only with rainwater that does not drain out, on K'gari/formerly Fraser Island (Australia); Uluru (formerly Ayers Rock) glows red at sunrise and sunset and is sacred to the indigenous people of Australia; New Zealand's 7.5 mile long Franz Josef glacier; stunning Milford Sound on the South Island (New Zealand); Maori meeting house in Rotorua, New Zealand is one of many indigenous sights travelers will see in the South Pacific; kayaking in the idyllic Mamanuca Islands, Fiji; soft corals on the Rainbow Reef, a top scuba diving site, that runs between Taveuni and Vanua Levu in Fiji.