

Travel Daily on location on board Norwegian Jewel

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line.

YESTERDAY was the last day at sea on board the newly refitted & now well-tested *Norwegian Jewel* as we sail up the East Coast of Australia.

Melbourne is far behind and the 13 restaurants and many more bars on board provide every possible gustatory experience.

Activities and entertainment abound and tonight's special shows are the incredible breathtaking gymnasts of Le Cirque Bijou followed by world-profiled comedian Adelaide-born Mickey D.(Dwyer).

We retire well sated in every possible way.

HLO acquires Show Group

HELLOWORLD Limited today announced the acquisition of Show Group Enterprises from the Avis Budget Group Inc.

HLO CEO Andrew Burnes said the transaction, being undertaken as an asset sale agreement, would allow Helloworld to expand in the specialised travel and logistics segment, adding that it "complements our existing corporate business with additional expertise, knowledge and capability".

The deal, for an undisclosed figure, is being funded from cash and existing facilities and will be "earnings accretive" from FY2019.

"With over 30 years' experience, Show Group is a highly respected leading business in its field and will continue to provide outstanding services to [its] many clients across the events, arts, television, movie, sport and corporate sectors in Australia and New Zealand," Burnes said.

Helloworld Group General Manager Corporate, Nick Sutherland, said he was delighted to welcome Show Group to the growing corporate operations of QBT and APX in Australia and NZ.

The companies already had a close association, with Show Group Enterprises joining Helloworld for Business two years ago (*TD* 07 Mar 2016).

Greece reinsurance

GREECE and Mediterranean Travel Centre is reminding agents concerned about bookings with suppliers that are not ATAS accredited to make contact on 1300 661 666.

GMTC MD Halina Kubica noted that bookings could be paid on credit card with no surcharge, adding "We are proud to be ATAS accredited and support the AFTA scheme, giving agents and customers peace of mind".

TD's new recruit

TRAVEL Daily/Business Publishing Group is set to welcome Hoda Al Zubaidi to the role of National Sales Manager, commencing 21 Jan.

Al Zubaidi brings a decade of experience in sales and retail travel to the role and was most recently Area Leader for Flight Centre Travel Group.

Her primary responsibility will be new business development across our digital titles, servicing existing clients and selling custom projects, titles and events.

Al Zubaidi will report to Sean Harrigan, who has stepped into the role of Head of Sales and Marketing.

For more appointments, see **page five**.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news and photos, plus a full page from:

- AA Appointments jobs



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MALDIVES
TRAVEL CONNECTION

"No choice" to shut down Bestjet

THE new owners of collapsed online travel agency Bestjet (**TD** yesterday) say they were left with no choice but to place it into voluntary administration, claiming that representations made by its former owners had "failed to materialise".

Director Robert McVicker said since acquiring the business (**TD** 06 Nov 2018) he had worked with the former owners to improve the business and customer service experience, but despite this administrators had been appointed "to determine the best course of action for customers and suppliers".

He confirmed the appointment of Nigel Markey and Bradley Hellen of Pilot Partners as administrators of Bestjet Pty Ltd and its subsidiaries including Wynyard Travel Pty Ltd and Brooklyn Travel Pty Ltd.

"Tickets issued to customers who have booked and paid

through Bestjet will be honoured by the relevant airlines," McVicker said, adding that customers who had not received tickets should contact their financial institution or travel insurer.

He said no further comment would be forthcoming, telling customers, creditors and other stakeholders to contact the administrator for more info at bestjetgroup@pilotpartners.com.au.

McVicker's family company bought Bestjet last month from Rachel James, whose husband Michael presided over the \$97m collapse of Air Australia in 2012.

MEANWHILE AFTA commented on the Bestjet failure, saying it was a timely reminder to consumers to be careful about booking with any non-ATAS-accredited travel agent, wholesaler or tour operator.

CEO Jayson Westbury reiterated that Bestjet was not part of the scheme and urged affected

consumers needing to make alternative arrangements to contact an ATAS member.

"A full list of professional, legitimate and trusted businesses can be located at atas.com.au," Westbury said.

Flight Centre has also responded to the collapse, with GM Tom Walley saying "Bestjet.com has been plagued with problems for some time, like many other aggregator sites before it.

"News that it has now ceased trading sends a strong warning to customers about the risks of using particular online travel agencies," Walley said.

He said Bestjet's model of trimming service and reducing prices at any cost was not without consequences, "as many travellers are unfortunately finding out the hard way".

Walley estimated that as many as 10,000 BestJet.com customers were impacted by the collapse.

Virgin Darwin-Bali

VIRGIN Australia has announced a new three-times weekly service from Darwin to Denpasar, Bali, which will operate from 10 Apr-20 Oct.

The service will mark VA's first int'l operation from Darwin and it will become the only full-service carrier operating on the route.

NT Minister for Tourism and Culture Lauren Moss said the flights "follow extensive discussions between the Territory Govt, NT Airports and airlines".

Tourism NT will undertake a cooperative marketing campaign with Virgin Australia in Bali to build inbound demand on the route by promoting major events.

There will also be marketing with online travel agencies such as Expedia, Kayak and Odigeo; global social media coverage, activations through Tourism NT's int'l offices and activity around the inaugural flight.

The route will use Boeing 737-800 aircraft.



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Serko in US push

SERKO has taken a step forward in its ambition to become global brand in travel technology with its purchase of US software company InterPlX (**TD** breaking news).

The Minnesota-based company provides business expense management products including cloud-based expense reporting, expense auditing services and payment processing.

Serko Chief Executive Officer Darrin Grafton said the acquisition would provide customer service and technology development capabilities to support an expansion in the Northern Hemisphere.

"It also augments our existing worldwide support centers with global 24/7 support," he said.

InterPlX will continue to be run by its founder Chuck Buckner.

Baillie investment move

LUXURY lodge pioneer Baillie Lodges will embark on a major expansion of its portfolio with the backing of US private equity group KSL Capital Partners.

The group founded by James and Hayley Baillie today announced a KSL affiliate had made "a substantial investment" in the company and that it would now pursue the purchase of other lodges to join its stable.

The Baillies will lead the new venture and the development of their previously announced Remarkable Lodge in Tasmania, which will join existing properties Southern Ocean Lodge, Capella Lodge and Longitude 131.

"KSL demonstrates a unique passion for travel and leisure,"

said James Baillie.

"The investment in Baillie Lodges will allow us to bring our version of wild, experiential luxury to more of Australia's most remarkable destinations."

KSL Partner John Edge said Baillie Lodges had set a high bar for Australian luxury travel, with "truly exceptional properties".

"We recognise the significant long-term potential of the Australian luxury travel industry and are excited to work with James and Hayley to expand to new iconic locations," he said.

No details of the investment or purchase plans have been disclosed, however the Baillies are reported to be planning an expansion to as many as 10 lodges in Australia and potentially New Zealand.

Ovolo Bris joins SLH

OVOLO Hotels' new Brisbane flagship Ovolo The Valley has joined the Small Luxury Hotels of the World (SLH) portfolio and will be available to book via its online platform from tomorrow.

The 153-room boutique property opened at the end of last month (**TD** 30 Nov) and joins sister property Ovolo Woolloomooloo Sydney in the SLH stable.

"We're excited to continue to work with SLH as we believe they're the perfect fit given their customer profile and overall company values and ethos," said Ovolo COO/CFO Dave Baswal.

He said the hotel appealed to an independently minded traveller "with a zest for life".

The hotel will be listed on the SLH site at www.slh.com/ovolo.

Record for CLIAs

THE new-look 2018 Cruise Industry Awards have attracted a record number of nominations, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) has revealed.

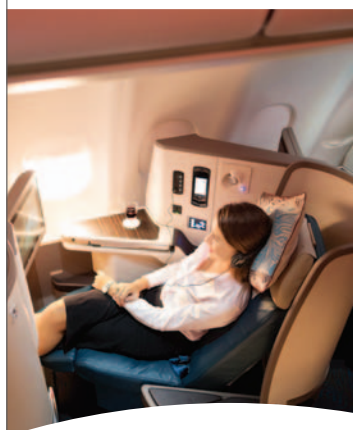
"We know how passionate and hardworking CLIA agents are so it's fantastic to see an overwhelming number of nominations right across the board," said CLIA Australasia MD Joel Katz.

The awards will be announced at The Star, Sydney, on 23 Feb.

SA/EK boost c'share

SOUTH African Airways and Emirates have announced an expansion of their codeshare agreement, with plans to boost destinations for both carriers.

The pair have signed an enhanced commercial partnership in which they will develop new options beyond the existing codeshares on EK's flights to Dubai from Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.



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BNE 05 Feb
MEL 06 Feb
ADL 11 Feb
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Travel Daily

Thursday 20th December 2018

itravel visit NY and San Fran



A GROUP of itravel agents recently travelled to New York City and San Francisco on a famil with United Airlines and Excite Holidays.

Highlights included an "on location" movie and TV tour, a movie and TV walking tour in Central Park, a Broadway show – *Chicago*, Rockefeller Center and some shopping.

With a stop in San Francisco to complete the trip, agents were treated to a private tour around

the city visiting the Palace of Fine Arts, the Golden Gate Bridge, Sausalito, Lombard Street and the Painted Ladies.

The agents were asked what the highlight of the trip was, to which they agreed, "everything was a highlight".

Pictured in front of the Golden Gate Bridge are Pamela Goldsbro, Dee Parkes-Finch, Santina Foscarini, and Linda Hogan; in the front are Sue Milosova, Kathleen Fowler, and Lindall Collins.

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Travel & Cruise
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Cruise WA farewell

LAST week, Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) hosted the Cruise WA committee on *Astor* for their final meeting of the year.

The event included a lunch on board and gave the committee an opportunity to farewell *Astor*, which will be departing the fleet in Mar 2019.

WA passengers can look forward to "enjoying the same boutique, country-club style ambiance and friendly service" on *Vasco da Gama* when she homeports in Fremantle during her inaugural 2019/20 season.

EY 787 Barcelona

ETIHAD Airways is set to introduce the Boeing 787-9 *Dreamliner* on its scheduled services from Abu Dhabi to Barcelona, effective 22 Feb 2019.

The airline said the larger *Dreamliner* would provide better connectivity for Australian travellers out of Syd, Mel & Bris.



Window Seat

WITH Christmas just five short days away, all those last minute gift buyers are scrapping to ensure their present lists are ticked off.

But instead of the traditional "necessities" one might need or in many cases, not need, how about investing in something a bit different this year?

Katikati Naturist Park has recently been put up for sale and advertises itself as a place "for clothes-free recreation and relaxation" in northern New Zealand's Bay of Plenty.

The park even features a golf course, petanque, a swimming pool and spa, along with electronic security gates around the property to keep out those pesky clothed people.

For more information on this special gift, **CLICK HERE**.



AND THE GRAMMY® AWARD FOR TOP DL AGENT GOES TO...

1. Christopher McDermott - Helloworld Travel, Carindale
2. Matthew Chisholm - Chisholm & Turner Travel Associates, Camden
3. Lauren Whelan - Flight Centre, Campbelltown Mall

Congratulations, our winners are off to The Grammy® Awards in L.A. in February with Delta Air Lines.



Virgin new Director

VIRGIN Australia has announced Robin Kamark will step down as Non-Executive Director of the Board, to be replaced by Raymond Gammell, effective today.

Gammell was formerly the Alternate Director and is the Senior Strategic Advisor to Group CEO of Etihad Aviation Group.

Lord Howe addition

THE Lord Howe Island Tourism Association (LHITA) has announced a new boat has joined the destination's raft of operators. "Reef n Beyond", offers a 20-pax boat able to take visitors to landmarks such as Ball's Pyramid.

Sydney Nov traffic

INTERNATIONAL passenger growth at Sydney Airport experienced 3.5% growth in Nov compared to Nov 2017, while domestic passengers dipped 1.1%, the Sydney Airport Traffic Performance statistics show.

Sydney Airport Chief Executive Officer Geoff Culbert attributed the slide to a strong prior corresponding period, in addition to weather disruptions.

"Sydney's fastest growing foreign nationalities included Malaysian (14.9%), American (8.4%), Chinese (7.6%) and Japanese (7.1%) visitors," he said.

Total year-to-date pax numbers were up 2.7%, driven by capacity additions and stable load factors.

APPOINTMENTS



WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Michelle Weideman has been promoted to Senior Marketing Manager Australia and New Zealand at **Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings**. She was previously Marketing Manager for Australia and New Zealand.

Best Western Hotels & Resorts has appointed **Andrew Belsham** as its new Regional Manager New Zealand. Belsham will be tasked with leading the brand's representation in New Zealand and the Pacific when he begins the role in Jan 2019.

Shangri-La Hotel Sydney has announced the appointment of **Philippe Kronberg** as its new General Manager. He joins the hotel following a recent tenure as General Manager at Turkey's Shangri-La Bosphoros.

Kathy Turner has stepped into the role of General Manager at **Goway Travel**. Turner brings more than 20 years' experience working across New Zealand and Australian inbound travel.

QF New Cal request

QANTAS has applied for additional weekly capacity to New Caledonia, with plans to add an extra flight from 31 Mar.

In an application to the International Air Services Commission lodged yesterday, the airline seeks an allocation of 156 extra weekly seats.

It has requested that the allocation be available for use by Qantas or a subsidiary, and that capacity may be used in joint services with Aircalin.

Maldives resort

S HOTELS & Resorts is gearing up to open the first phase of the **CROSSROADS Maldives** integrated leisure and resort destination next year.

The project will encompass three islands in the South Male Atoll and feature two hotels, SAI Lagoon Maldives and Hard Rock Hotel Maldives, plus an 11,000m² lifestyle, retail & dining space.

Air Canada appoints

AIR Canada has appointed Michael Rousseau to the new position of Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, and Craig Landry to Executive Vice President, Operations, effective 01 Jan.

They will both report to the airline's CEO Calin Rovinescu.

&Beyond wildlife

&BEYOND has launched a privately guided tour in India in 2020 which focuses on wildlife conservation.

The 13-day Endangered Eight Impact Small Group Journey ventures to the Kaziranga, Kanha and Gir National Parks, guided by wildlife expert and naturalist Kartikeya Chauhan.

It is priced from US\$7,625 per person (AU\$10,718).

Whitsundays boost

TOURISM and Events Queensland and Tourism Whitsundays will embark on a \$1m marketing campaign to lure more Sydney and Melbourne residents to the Whitsundays throughout 2019.

"The Whitsundays is a jewel in our tourism crown and now is the ideal time to promote the region as the perfect next Qld holiday destination to travellers across Australia," said Queensland Tourism Industry Development Minister Kate Jones.

"Hayman Island and Daydream Island are finalising their renovations after Cyclone Debbie and are due to come back online in the new year," she said.

countdown to christmas with Club Med



WIN!
a Club Med holiday
for two in Asia
or the Indian
Ocean

Club Med loves Christmas whether it's in the sun or in the snow! So to celebrate the festive season, they're giving agents the chance to win a stay at the Club Med resort of your choice in Asia or the Indian Ocean.

The all-inclusive prize includes:

- Five nights for two people in a superior room at the Club Med resort of your choice in Asia or the Indian Ocean
- Gourmet meals and all day snacking
- Premium open bar including beer, wine and cocktails
- A wide range of included sports & activities
- Nightly entertainment

To win, tell us in 25 words or less which Club Med resort you'd love to go to for Christmas and why.

Send your entry to clubmed@traveldaily.com.au



On behalf of Adriana D'Angelis and the AA Team,
we would like to thank all our clients and candidates
for your great support in 2018.

We wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year
and look forward to assisting you in 2019.



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