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Travel Daily

First with the news

Tuesday 25th September 2018

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Rezdy to link with Google

REZDY, the Australian-founded booking and distribution system for tour and attraction operators, has announced a new partnership with tech giant Google.

The alliance will connect merchants across Rezdy's platform with Google's booking capability, creating a new channel for eligible Rezdy clients.

Chris Atkin, ceo at Rezdy, said the agreement would provide more opportunities for operators.

"We're able to further expand our customers' distribution network beyond our already world class reach & provide them incremental revenue through this new channel," Atkin said.

"In turn, our customers are enabled to provide an enhanced user experience for their end consumers."

The partnership will allow travellers to purchase tour and attraction experiences in real time within Google Search, Maps and the Assistant, decreasing the booking journey by up to half.

The initiative is part of a new "Reserve by Google" offering which will also partner with other providers such as Tqets, Accesso, CourseHorse and Musement.

Travel Tech Summit

A **HOST** of high profile speakers are set to take part in the upcoming Travel Tech Summit, with the event the only technology-focused conference for the whole travel and tourism sector taking place in Australia this year.

Flight Centre chief digital officer Atle Skalleberg, Travelport md Scott Barber, AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury and Luxury Escapes ceo Adam Schwab will take to the stage for the conference to be held in Sydney in early Dec.

Savings of 10% are available for **Travel Daily** readers wishing to attend, with earlybird rates online at traveltechsummit.com.au.

More details on the **cover page**.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news and photos, including a front cover page for the upcoming **Travel Tech Summit**, plus a full page from:

- TMS Talent/inPlace

Travel Daily on location in Hokkaido, Japan

Today's issue of **TD** is coming to you from Hokkaido, courtesy of the Japan National Tourism Organization.

WHEN world leaders came to Japan for the 2008 G8 Summit, they enjoyed some of the best views available on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido.

The leaders' meeting took place at the Windsor Hotel Toya Resort & Spa, perched high upon the rim of what was once a giant volcano, overlooking the crater lake of Toya.

Though peaceful now, the area is still home to the occasionally active Mount Usu, where visitors can see the results of its most recent eruptions in the Toyako Volcano Science Museum.

A couple of hours south is Lake Onuma, where the ancient eruptions of other volcanoes have created a series of scenic waterways dotted with over a hundred islands, perfect for exploring by boat as the autumn leaves begin to show their colour.

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UL to drop HKG

SRILANKAN Airlines is set to suspend its non-stop services between Colombo & Hong Kong.

GDS screens indicate the final flight will take place on 27 Oct.

Previous schedules indicated five weekly A320 services during the northern winter 18/19 season.

IASC ticks Tiger International

THE runway is clear for Virgin Australia low-cost offshoot Tigerair Australia to launch international flights, with the International Air Services Commission (IASC) varying a range of determinations to authorise the use of existing VA capacity by wholly-owned subsidiary Tiger International Number1 Pty Ltd. Destinations covered by the

revised rulings include the Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and New Zealand.

Virgin Australia has requested that the transfer of the capacity allocations be made effective from 01 Dec 2018.

However according to VA the applications simply aim to provide "commercial flexibility".

"We have no plans for Tigerair services to New Zealand and the Pacific at this time," a spokesperson said (**TD** 13 Aug).

Virgin Australia International Airlines or its wholly owned Tigerair subsidiary are required to utilise the capacity from 30 Dec.

The IASC said it believes that Tiger International is "reasonably capable of obtaining any licenses, permits or other approvals required to operate on and service" the various routes.

On the Solomon Islands route VA is also permitted to provide Singapore Airlines codeshares.

AirAsia OOL boost

AIRASIA X will operate 18 additional return flights between Kuala Lumpur and the Gold Coast over the upcoming holiday season, adding 13,000 seats by ramping up from the current daily services to 11 weekly rotations from mid-Dec until mid-Jan.

QF rewards saving

QANTAS yesterday launched a "Classic Flight Reward sale" offering 25% off the number of QF frequent flyer points required to redeem flights worldwide.

The discount is available on Economy reward flights operated by Qantas, Jetstar and Emirates with a QF, JQ or EK flight number.

Bookings must be made by Fri 28 Sep, for travel 14 Oct 2018-29 Aug 2019 on QF and EK, or 14 Oct 2018 and 30 Jun 2019 on Jetstar.



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AF Atlanta A380

AIR France will operate daily Airbus A380 superjumbo flights between Paris and Atlanta over the 2019 northern summer.

Effective from 31 Mar 2019 the A380 will replace existing Air France 777 services on the route, according to reservation systems.

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MEKONG RIVER CRUISING 2019/20

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Tourism to aid Japan recovery

JAPAN will attempt to triple the number of visitors to the tsunami-hit region of Tohoku as part of a strategy to disperse its rapidly increasing tourist numbers beyond key destinations like Tokyo and Kyoto.

At the Visit Japan Travel Mart last week, Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) executive vice president Mamoru Kobori said expanding regional tourism was a key part of the country's plan to manage sustainable tourism and spread the economic benefit of international visitation.

"Tohoku is one of the priority areas we wish to promote," Kobori said.

"The Government believes the recovery of tourism in Tohoku is one of the most important tasks for the JNTO...it is a hidden gem that we wish to explore more in the coming years," he said.

Centred around the city of Sendai and surrounding

prefectures, Tohoku is known for its natural landscapes and scenery, including areas popular for spring cherry blossoms and autumn forest landscapes, as well as notable ski areas.

Tohoku Tourism Promotion Organization chairman Maski Ogata said the region's visitor numbers were now recovering, having dropped from 8.6 million in 2010 to 6.2 million in 2011, the year of the tsunami.

Last days for Celine

SINGING superstar Celine Dion has confirmed the end of her long-time Las Vegas "residency" at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, with the final performance scheduled for 08 Jun 2019.

Dion has performed almost 1,100 shows to 4.5 million fans at The Colosseum since 2003, with tickets for the last show and final season on sale this Fri 28 Sep.

Garden Inn Puchong

HILTON Worldwide has opened its second Hilton Garden Inn property in Malaysia, in the Puchong district of Kuala Lumpur.

The 255-room "focused service brand" hotel is located near a range of burgeoning multi-national and local IT companies.

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MEKONG RIVER CRUISING 2019/20

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Getting the Wu Tweetment



THE Wendy Wu Tours team have been hard at work giving away freebies as part of the company's latest "VIP Tweetment" incentive.

The incentive has been running over the last 10 weeks, with the company presenting over 30 prizes and \$300 worth of food and beverage vouchers to travel

agencies across the country.

The prizes have been awarded at random for any booking made during the period.

The excited team from Flight Centre West Lakes are pictured celebrating their win, from left: Patricia Foresto, Chelsea Sherwood, Verity Wood, Leah Colis and Jessica Gray.

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MAURITIUS
AIR MAURITIUS

Tramada appoints

TRAMADA Systems has welcomed Keith Phillips to the role of pre-sales engineer Australia and New Zealand.

Phillips was previously IT ops manager for corporate brands at Flight Centre Travel Group, and also worked with Tramada's implementations through his consultancy, KEPHCON.

Qld pax record

QUEENSLAND Airports has set a new Aug record for passenger movements across its portfolio which includes Gold Coast, Mount Isa, Townsville and Longreach airports.

A total of 709,006 travellers passed through the facilities, with the figure a collective growth of 1.3% and the strongest increases at Mount Isa and Longreach, up 7.9% and 7.6% respectively.

The Gold Coast handled 536,083 Aug pax, despite fewer available seats but with higher loads.



Window Seat

IF THEME parks have a tendency to scare you to death, then you might want to avoid the latest promotion being touted by Six Flags St Louis, in the USA.

The amusement park has called for six brave contestants to take part in its Fright Fest contest, where they will compete to win a \$300 prize, plus season tickets - all they have to do is spend 30 hours inside a coffin.

The ghoulish event, which will take place from 1pm on 13 Oct through until 7pm on 14 Oct will see participants locked inside the 30cm-by-210cm coffins, with the only respite brief hourly bathroom breaks.

But never fear, the coffins are reusable - contestants can keep them at the comp's conclusion.



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- **Darrin Grafton**, Co-Founder, Serko (SKO)
- **David Hammon**, CEO & Director Hammons Holdings
- **Dax Eddy**, Executive Director, Jamberoo Action Park
- **Jamie Pherous**, MD, Corporate Travel Management
- **Josh Oakes**, Director, The Sunshine Tribe
- **Les Szekely**, Managing Director, Grand Prix Capital
- **Nigel Benton**, Publisher, Australian Leisure Media
- **Rachel Wiseman**, Chief Investment Officer, NRMA
- **Robert Halfpenny**, Managing Director, Aurora Expeditions
- **Rod Cuthbert**, Founder Viator, Former Chairman Rome2rio
- **Rob Smith**, Director - ANZ, Merlin Entertainments
- **Sue Badyari**, Chief Executive Officer, World Expeditions
- **Simon Lenoir**, Co-Founder, Rezdy
- **Tammy Marshall**, CEO, The B Hive
- **Vasso Zographou/Michael Simpson**, Savills Hotels

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Any queries, please contact event organiser Bluewater Press on (02) 9882-1575 or email martin@traveltrends.biz.

Travel IQ
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AA Melbourne route

AMERICAN Airlines will begin nonstop flights from Philadelphia to Orlando Melbourne International Airport (MLB) in Florida starting 16 Feb.

The flight will operate using an Embraer 175 jet aircraft.

TravelCar launches

AIRPORT parking and car sharing operator TravelCar.com has launched a global parking reservation platform for agents.

The platform allows travel agents to book commissionable parking for clients at airports, seaports, train stations and city centres in more than 50 countries, along with being able to purchase amenities such as valet service, car wash, gas filling, and lounge passes.

Travel agents can sign up for free access at join.travelcar.com.

Wine workshops

REGISTRATIONS are now open for new wine tourism workshops that are running as part of a \$50 million Federal Government initiative to attract more international visitors to Australia's wine regions.

The Growing Wine Tourism workshops are pitched at businesses wanting to further develop their wine tourism products and services, and will be delivered via live interactive webinars that kick off 09 Oct.

Details at wineaustralia.com.

NZ call centre boost

AIR New Zealand is set to hire 80 new contact centre staff to address customer frustrations around long phone wait times.

CEO Christopher Luxon unveiled the recruitment drive in an email to Air NZ customers last weekend.

Japan scores with RWC



SPORTING fever has already hit Japan ahead of the Rugby World Cup next year, and avid followers in nations like Australia are considered key to achieving ambitious visitor targets (**TD** Thu).

Japan National Tourism Organization executive vice president Mamoru Kobori said the tournament was expected to help drive tourism to regional areas of the country and was an important precursor to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

"When two mega sporting events take place next year and the following year, I hope more and more of the world's attention will be paid to Japan and to regional areas as well," Kobori said at the Visit Japan Travel Mart last week in Tokyo.

Among those working to capitalise on the Rugby World Cup is Okinawa sportsman Takushi Hayashi, **pictured**, who is offering rugby tours to those who want to take part in the action as well as watch the games.

As marketing director of the Yomitan Rugby Football Union, Hayashi was at the travel mart

promoting short tours aimed at visitors from Australia and other rugby-loving nations, providing a chance to take part in friendly matches with other visitors.

The trips will be available in Sep and Oct 2019 and combine games with activities and water sports in Okinawa, before flying to watch Rugby World Cup games in key locations elsewhere in Japan.

Okinawa operator SKS Inbound will handle trade enquiries - see www.rugbytours.jp.

Edge Grand Plaza

CELEBRITY Cruises has unveiled details of The Grand Plaza which will span three decks and be the epicentre of the *Celebrity Edge*.

The Grand Plaza will include restaurants, a Martini Bar and a lighting feature, "The Chandelier".

Celebrity Cruises president Lisa Lutoff-Perlo said she was thrilled to provide another sneak peak at the "transformational new ship" with the Grand Plaza described as the "ever-evolving epicentre of *Celebrity Edge*" - more details in last Thu's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

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Tuesday 25th September 2018

Counsellors chair



THE former ceo of UK supermarket chain Tesco, Matt Davies (**pictured**), has been named the new chairman of Travel Counsellors.

CEO Steve Byrne said Davies had a "transformational impact on the retail sector".

The appointment of Davies comes as Travel Counsellors announced its 12th consecutive year of double-digit revenue increases, with average annual turnover growth of 18% over the past five years.

"I'm delighted to be joining Travel Counsellors as chairman and I'm really looking forward to supporting Steve and the team in delivering world class travel experiences to customers across the globe," said Davies.

Kids free San Diego

TRAVELLERS to San Diego in California next month can access a range of "Kids Free San Diego" offers valid at hotels, restaurants and attractions.

Deals are available at the San Diego Zoo, SeaWorld San Diego, and the San Diego Air and Space Museum, along with free rides on The Hopper hop-on hop-off service for kids under 12.

See SanDiego.org/KidsFree.

South Sea free wi-fi

DAY guests to Fiji's South Sea Island can now access free wireless internet, according to South Sea Cruises.

The island is a 30 minute ferry ride from Denarau Marina and offers snorkelling and diving as well as simply lazing on the beach.

South Sea Island also boasts a new shower and toilet block.

VIA Rail webinar

RAIL Plus is hosting an online webinar featuring Canadian train operator VIA Rail.

A 15-minute online presentation will take place at 8.30am on 27 Sep AEST followed by a Q&A session with Rail Plus bdm for Vic/SA/Tas, Nicki De Jager.

More info on 1300 555 003.



Corporate Consultant

Goldman Travel Corporation, a leading travel management company located in Sydney, is looking for an experienced Corporate Consultant to join our dynamic team in our Bondi Junction office.

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All applications and contact will be treated as confidential.



Are you fur-real?



THERE'S a new reason to get to the airport early.

American Airlines (AA) partnered with Assistance Dogs Australia (ADA) to launch its "EmBark" initiative at Sydney Airport today.

The paw-some tie-up sees friendly service dogs stationed at American Airline's check-in counter from 7.00am-9.15am on Tue and Thu mornings to greet passengers.

EmBark was "an idea that was born by dog lovers and a very strong commitment to caring for people," AA's md APAC Russ Forston told **TD** this morning.

He said it was the first time AA had sponsored such a program and it was designed to help give passengers a more fun and relaxed experience at the airport, and encourage support of the work by ADA.

"Working with them gives customers the added bonus of being able to pet, cuddle and play with some of the best-trained dogs in the world," he said.

"For the two days a week ADA is here, the atmosphere at check-in is noticeably lighter and more relaxed."

Forston told **TD** the airline's daily Sydney flight was "doing well" and that AA was "always evaluating opportunities to grow our presence," noting "multiple opportunities".

"We fly from Los Angeles



to Sydney daily but we also have nine hubs and gateways in the US and Australia is a growing part of the world."

Pictured at today's launch are: Therese Cubitt, puppy educator ADA; Fran Diogo, puppy educator supervisor ADA; Chris Debenjak, trainer ADA; Sam Martin, general manager Australia and New Zealand operations American Airlines; Richard Lord, top dog ADA; Russ Forston, managing director Asia-Pacific American Airlines; Alberto Alvarez-Campos, national programs manager ADA; and Ken Innes, instructor ADA.

In the front row are the lovable pups including Godric, Mocha, Archie, Spex and Barney.

BELOW: The youngest recruit, Petra.



AT YOUR service! The pups prepare for pats.

Picture perfect in South Africa



MONEY

WELCOME to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US0.725

DESPITE a volatile run against the US dollar in the last couple of months, the Aussie dollar has recouped some ground.

Driving the turnaround was Aussie data suggesting the China/US trade war might be about to be dialled down.

Travellers to the UK will also get a little bit more value on the British pound with the Aussie gaining some good ground in the last week.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.725
UK	£0.553
NZ	\$1.092
Euro	€0.617
Japan	¥81.80
Thailand	฿23.50
China	¥4.981
South Africa	10.424
Canada	\$0.939
Crude oil	US\$70.78

THIS group of travel agents have returned from a 12-day famil, hosted by South African Tourism and South African Airways, after nabbing a spot via the tourism board late last year.

Highlights included an encounter with a herd of more than 40 elephants along with sightings of lions, cheetahs, leopards and caracals.

They also took a Cape sidecar tour through Franschoek, rode tuk-tuks in Soweto and zip-lined in Elgin valley.

Pictured are: Tim McLean, Travel Execs; Josh Lawrence, Flight Centre Sydney Airport; Fran Cochrane, TravelManagers; Alex Lee, Bright Travel & Cruise; Shelley McKean, Helloworld Travel Ringwood; Suzan Tan, South African Airways; and Kelly Hutchinson, City Beach Travel.

South African Tourism, along with South African Airways, Taj Hotels, Grotbos Private Nature Reserve and Lion Sands Game Reserve, are offering six places on an upcoming eight night famil - for more information see southafrica.net.

Win a Mekong river cruise worth \$11,000

This month, Travel Daily and Evergreen Cruises & Tours are giving travel agents the chance to win a river cruise for two in a balcony suite along the Mekong river.

The prize includes an eight-day Majestic Mekong river cruise along with return economy flights from Australia.

To win this great prize, correctly answer the most daily questions and have the most creative answer to the final question. Send all your entries to evergreen@traveldaily.com.au

Q16. How many guests can cruise on board *Emerald Harmony*?



KLM direct to Vegas

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has announced the launch of nonstop flights between Amsterdam and Las Vegas commencing Jun 2019.

The service will fly thrice weekly and use a Boeing 787 *Dreamliner*, offering 30 Business class seats, 45 in Economy Comfort class and 219 in Economy class.

Chinese millennials

FINDINGS from Expedia Group and Ipsos' Hotels.com Chinese International Travel Monitor survey suggest Chinese millennial travellers are spending more on new experiences and high tech accommodation.

Chinese tourists born after 1990 have increased expenditure by 80% over the last 12 months according to the study, with social media seen as increasing their appetite for new experiences, hotels with advanced technology, exotic delicacies and "taboo trips" such as visits to Chernobyl.

Volcano park opens

THE Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island of Hawai'i reopened to the public on the weekend following its closure on 11 May due to significant volcanic activity that was deemed a threat to visitor safety.

"We thank everyone for their patience, support and understanding during the last 134 days," said the park's superintendent, Cindy Orlando.

Tauk about Tuscany

TAUCK World Discovery has announced a new Under The Tuscan Sun trip taking place 14-19 Oct 2019.

The six-day journey into the Italian region of Tuscany includes land explorations of Etruscan Volterra, The Alabaster City and a guided walking tour of the Etruscan Acropolis.

The trip is priced from \$6,490 per person twin share.

For more info call 1300 732 300.

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EDITORIAL

Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper

Managing Editor – Jon Murrie

Editor – Jasmine O'Donoghue

Contributors – Adam Bishop, Sarah Fairburn, Anastasia Prikhodko, Jenny Piper, Christian Schweitzer
info@traveldaily.com.au

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Sean Harrigan and Lisa Martin

advertising@traveldaily.com.au

BUSINESS MANAGER

Jenny Piper

accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)

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