# Travel Daily First with the news

Thursday 10th October 2019



#### Wolgan challenge

**ONE&ONLY** Wolgan Valley is today highlighting its Wolgan Warrior Adventure Challenge, available exclusively to 10 of its guests each month.

For more information on the offering, see page nine.



#### Viking Expedition Cruises

#### EXCLUSIVE

VIKING Cruises has opened sales of its highly anticipated new Viking Expedition Cruises product (TD breaking news), with past passengers and their travel agents being offered a selection of departures in 2022.

The long-rumoured Viking Expedition product (TD 09 Feb 2018) is based on an initial order for two ships, which the company today confirmed would be named Viking Octantis and Viking Polaris.

The 378-passenger ships will operate itineraries out of Tromso, Norway exploring the Arctic, while Antarctic voyages currently on offer will cruise from Ushuaia and Buenos Aires.

#### **Burnes buys HLO**

**HELLOWORLD** Travel CEO Andrew Burnes has expanded his stake in the company, with the purchase of 10,000 shares on market last week.

An Australian Securities Exchange notice confirmed he paid an average of \$4.67, slightly above yesterday's closing price.

#### Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news, a photo page for Switzerland Tourism, plus full pages from:

- One&Only
- AA Appointments jobs
- United Airlines

Past passengers in the USA received a mailout overnight promoting selected 2022 departures on the new product, with a Viking spokesperson telling TD "we are not providing any additional information at this point, but we will unveil all details about our new Expedition product when it is publicly announced in Jan".

Viking Expedition Cruises is the company's third brand, joining its existing fleet of river ships as well as the highly popular Viking Ocean Cruises product.

#### Thomas Cook shops sold to Hays

**BRITISH** travel group Hays has purchased all 555 former Thomas Cook retail outlets from the collapsed company's administrators, KPMG.

The deal is expected to see many of the 2,500 travel consultants displaced by the massive failure offered new roles within the rebranded Hays stores.

Family-owned Hays Travel transacted about £1 billion in TTV last year at 190 branches, with founders John and Irene Hays saying "Thomas Cook was a much loved brand employing talented people...we look forward to working with many of them".

The price of the deal was not disclosed, with a KPMG spokesperson describing it as an "extremely positive outcome".

#### Hilt joins HLO

**GARY** Hilt has been appointed as State Manager WA/NT for Helloworld Travel Limited.

He joins HLO after his most recent role as Regional Manager WA for Emirates - more appointments on page six.



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#### **Etihad bonus points**

**ETIHAD** Airways is celebrating its 10-year partnership with Virgin Australia by introducing a Bonus Points promotion for Guest & Velocity members, followed by a One Million Points giveaway.

For more, CLICK HERE.



#### Axis fraudster pleads guilty

**ARTHUR** Zacharias, a travel consultant formerly contracted to Adelaide travel agency Axis Travel, yesterday pleaded guilty to multiple offences relating to frauds against the business and its clientele.

The long-running case, which saw Zacharias arrested three years ago (TD 21 Jul 2016) relates to allegations of impropriety

#### **SLC** into Australia

LONDON-BASED SLC

Representation has opened a new office in Sydney, with the local business to be led by former InterContinental Hotels Group executive Kate Sorensen.

SLC Australia clients include hotels operated by the Vietnambased Thien Minh Group (TMG), which has a wide range of interests including a joint venture Mekong River ship with Wendy Wu Tours (TD 06 Jul 2018).

TMG founder Tran Trong Kien is the majority shareholder of SLC, with the group's brands including Victoria Hotels & Resorts, EMM Hotels & Resorts, Mai Chau Lodge, Flower Garden Hotel, Victoria Cruises, Emeraude Cruises, L'Azalee Cruises, Hai Au Aviation & Spice Viet restaurants.

Other clients include new TUI Blue hotel properties in Thailand, Zanzibar, the Maldives and Vietnam, with the Sydney office being SLC's second global location.

under what officers described as an "elaborate fraud" involving the issuing of fake travel documents, in which hundreds of thousands of dollars went astray.

Many Axis Travel premium clients were also left stranded at overseas airports without return flight bookings, with charges against Zacharias including aggravated deception, identification theft and "dishonest dealings with documents".

South Australian Police said there may still be some negotiation with Zacharias over several charges, with the matter to be listed again for hearing in Jan 2020.

Axis Travel Centre owner Max Najar paid tribute to the focused efforts of the police along with Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers and other professional advisors.

"This Zacharias case stained our company reputation and challenged our business integrity.

"As soon as we became aware of what had transpired, we instigated an immediate rescue plan for our bona fide clients to ensure that there was no interruption to their travel plans."

Najar said in retrospect this was the right move, minimising the impact on clients and cementing Axis Travel's reputation.

"Humans who cause fraud, steal identities, conjure masterplans to mislead clients and cause havoc within any company or industry should not be tolerated," he said.

#### Jetstar Beach sale

JETSTAR has today kicked off a beach sale, with fares leading in at \$39 one way from Sydney to the Gold Coast.

There's also one-way fares from Sydney to Nadi from \$169 and Melbourne Tullamarine to Honolulu from \$189.

Sale ends 14 Oct - CLICK HERE.



Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Helloworld's Global STARS event which kicks off tomorrow in Dubai. United Arab Emirates.

**FOLLOWING** on from last year's event on Hamilton Island, this year will see 75 of the company's top selling agents from around Australia and New Zealand rewarded with a weekend of luxury and adventure through some of Dubai's most iconic attractions.

The agenda will see agents attend a lavish welcome event at luxurious The Palace Downtown in the heart of Dubai, enjoy an evening under the stars in the desert, followed by the glamorous Gala Dinner at the famous Burj Al Arab Jumeirah.

The major sponsors of Global STARS 2019 are Emirates and Dubai Tourism.







#### Smith vows to push for pier

**NEWLY** reappointed Royal Caribbean MD for Asia-Pacific, Gavin Smith (TD 08 Oct) has confirmed the company will continue to work on a Port Botany solution to Sydney's cruise capacity crisis.

Speaking to TD yesterday during an official launch function for the Royal Caribbean 2019/20 Australasian season, Smith reiterated the importance of another terminal east of the







#### **BROCHURE OUT NOW**

Sydney Harbour Bridge.

"It's simple - we need another pier if we are to keep growing the cruise industry," he said.

Smith is no stranger to the fight for more Sydney capacity, having previously led the charge when he was head of CLIA Australasia (TD 09 Dec 2010), prior to his more recent appointment as Royal Caribbean's London-based Senior VP of International.

It's understood a very senior Royal Caribbean executive will be in Australia next week to discuss options for additional berthing with authorities in NSW.

Opening the 2020 cruise season for RCI, Smith highlighted the strength of the local market, with 250,000 guests to cruise here aboard five Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara ships over the coming months.

Smith noted that the key challenge for the industry is to attract new cruisers to the market - more in tomorrow's *Cruise* Weekly - cruiseweekly.com.au.

#### **Insight Book-tober**

**INSIGHT** Vacations is giving agents the chance to win a free trip for two every week throughout the month of Oct.

To qualify, agents must book and deposit an Insight Vacations or Luxury Gold trip, with the draw resetting each week.

Winners can choose from one of six options, including the nineday Amazing Spain and Portugal adventure, the 11-day Wonders of Turkey tour, the seven-day Glories of Greece trip, and the eight-day Italian Intermezzo.

For more info, CLICK HERE.



in Japan is completely unique in the October issue of travelBulletin.

> **CLICK** to read trave**l**Bulletin

#### QF, AA update

**QANTAS** has highlighted significant enhancements to the points and status credits awarded on American Airlines flights, as well as improved connectivity with the addition of new codeshare destinations.

As part of the refresh, Qantas Frequent Flyers travelling on services with an American Airlines flight number can now earn up to 3.5 more Qantas points on flights between Australia and North America.

In addition, Frequent Flyers travelling between Australia and North America as well as flights within USA and Canada have the chance to earn up to 4.5 times more Status Credits.

Silver Members can now also earn 50% more Qantas Points than Bronze on eligible American Airlines flights.

American Airlines has also expanded its codeshare network with Qantas, with new routes including LAX-SYD, DFW-SYD, SFO-MEL. SFO-BNE, and ORD-BNE.

New codeshares between AA and Qantas also add more than 50 new city pairs between DFW & ORD - more HERE.



#### Window Seat

**MOST** people spend months carefully planning their dream holiday, but what if you had the chance to take a trip, and had no idea where you were going?

That was the reality for 33 holidaymakers in Washington, DC, last week, who boarded a bus in the US capital bound for a mystery location.

The trip, which took the spontaneous strangers three hours out of the city and into West Virginia, was the result of a tourism campaign initiated by the West Virginia Tourism Office, which invited people to apply for a "fall weekend getaway to a mystery location".

The lucky winners were sent instructions to show up at the departure location at 7am with layered clothing, hiking boots and a "sense of adventure".

The two-day trip was enough to convert most travellers, with one claiming "West Virginia definitely delivered."

A mystery well solved.

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# Travel Daily

Thursday 10th October 2019

#### Champers on shake

**THE** Virgin Voyages Sailor application is set to feature a Shake for Champagne service, allowing *Scarlet Lady* passengers to order bubbly on demand.

With just a shake of their phone, guests can order a bottle of champagne to their location.

The fledgling cruise line, brainchild of human headline Richard Branson, also unveiled Sip, a luxurious champagne lounge and caviar bar for those who wish to sample their champers in a luxe setting.

#### Chamber visa calls

**THE** Australian Chamber of Tourism is urging the Federal Government to reduce visa application costs for working holidays to continue to grow the national tourism market.

Australian Chamber-Tourism Executive Chair John Hart said the nation's price competitiveness ranking of 130th of 140 countries needed to be improved upon.

"Education and holiday were the primary reasons for international visitation to Australia," he said.

"Conducive policy settings such as reduced visa costs, tickets and taxes will boost visitation numbers further, especially in the youth [and working] market."

The International and National Visitor Survey for the prior fiscal year found international visitors to Australia reached 8.6 million with a spend of \$44.6 billion (*TD* yesterday).

#### WWT new brochure

**WENDY** Wu Tours (WWT) has released its 2020-21 brochure collection, debuting new tours and fresh FIT options.

Newly developed itineraries are available in Russia, South Korea and Taiwan, as is a new Mekong Delta deluxe river cruise through Cambodia and Vietnam aboard WWT's first-ever company-owned ship, the *Victoria Mekong*.

The tour operator is also for the first time offering fully inclusive tours to Eurasia and the "five 'Stans", a combined China and Japan tour, and a journey to Japan's south.

For a limited time, a partner can also fly free to China and Japan on over 20 tours and over 70 departures, while those travelling solo can save 50% off the single supplement - book before 16 Dec.

#### NT gallery setback

THE Alice Springs Town Council voted on Mon to reject a Civic Centre site offering for the proposed National Aboriginal Art Gallery from the Northern Territory Government, again stalling the project's construction.

A statement from NT Minister for Tourism, Sport and Culture Lauren Moss and Member for Braitling Dale Wakefield suggested a conflict of interest may be behind the Council's rejection of the offer.

A business case for the project says it would bring 53,000 more visitors to the town each year.

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#### Livn's deep activity insight



**TOUR** and activity operators can reap significant benefits and yield premiums by differentiating their products from the competition, according to a major new research report released this morning by real-time travel booking innovator, Livn.

The Australian-owned business now connects hundreds of thousands of activities from more than 15,000 tour suppliers, offering an API which allows them to distribute their products easily to travel agencies, airlines, hotels, cruise companies and OTAs.

CEO Mark Rizzuto told *Travel Daily* the company was able to leverage its access to "big data" around the experiences sector to provide unique insights to suppliers, who are at the core of its business.

A single database has been created "covering the world of tours and activities," allowing Livn's analysts to look across geographies and product categories and identify key trends.

The results confirm that the sector is thriving, and further that "value-based differentiation"

within each niche can allow suppliers to command a premium price for their products.

The report also highlights the predominance of certain "busy" keywords used to promote products online, reflecting huge customer attention - and that in turn operators should avoid using about 100 words in order to lessen unnecessary competition for search rankings.

In Livn's home market of Australia, most tour and activity products centre on the east coast.

"Differentiation is key, and without this it's harder to charge a premium price," Rizzuto said, citing the example of surf lessons which can range from just \$32 to \$260 depending on the region.

Similarly wine experiences ranged from \$20 to a hefty \$1,650 with the results highlighting the power of unique offerings and authenticity.

The report was detailed by the trio **pictured** above: Livn founder and Chief Commercial Officer, Steve Martinez; Anders Liljeqvist, Head of Global Product; and Mark Rizzuto, CEO.





#### TripAdvisor launch

**TRIPADVISOR** Connect has officially launched on Facebook and Instagram.

The off-platform media solution says it makes it possible for advertisers to reach "targeted and highly engaged audiences" outside of the TripAdvisor website and app.

"We continue to innovate new ways for advertisers to leverage TripAdvisor's global data and trusted brand through new creative formats that deliver audience at scale — either on their own website or app, or to their TripAdvisor business listing," said TripAdvisor VP Advertising Revenue Christine Maguire.

#### **Evergreen special**

**EVERGREEN** Cruises & Tours has released Best of Africa offers.

The 15-day South Africa Explorer is a tour around South Africa's landscapes, from Cape Town to the game reserves and national parks, from \$6,245pp.

The 18-day South Africa & Victoria Falls showcases the spectacular Victoria Falls, and is available from \$9,095pp.

#### Boeing sells a MAX

AN ANONYMOUS customer purchased a business-jet version of the Boeing 737 MAX last month, making it the first MAX sold since Jun.

Overall net sales for the MAX are at a negative 184 for the year.

The Boeing 737 MAX has been grounded since Mar following two fatal crashes and is still undergoing safety reviews (*TD* 26 Aug), with a certification test flight expected to take place later this year.

#### Arizona giveaway

BRAND USA Australia is giving travel trade agents in Aus the chance to win an Apple iPad upon completing the Arizona Specialist Badge, a new training module on the USA Discovery Program.

The interactive online training module is designed to equip agents with knowledge of Arizona's destination offerings, from the best accom spots to all the must-experience activities.

The incentive started on 08 Oct and will run until Thu 31 Oct, with winners drawn on Fri 08 Nov - for more info, **CLICK HERE**.



#### **Key Account Manager**

We are seeking to appoint two highly motivated and skilled Key Account Managers to join our Australian 'Ohana, based in Sydney. The Key Account Managers will oversee account profitability, business plans, long-term objectives and customer satisfaction, whilst closely monitoring developments within their accounts. Other key responsibilities include setting and achieving revenue and cost of sale targets, negotiating and managing commercial agreements and undertaking extensive data analysis.

For more details please visit our careers site at www.hawaiianair.com/careers or click here.

#### **NYC & Co hosts Infinity**



A GROUP of 10 Infinity agents were recently hosted by NYC & Company and Broadway Inbound to see *Chicago* the musical in Sydney.

The agents said the experience reminded them of the magic of Broadway in NYC, with Infinity able to book more than 50 Broadway shows in the city.

Chicago is the longest running American musical in the history of Broadway, and won a Tony Award the same year it debuted in 1996.

Kristin Hellmrich from NYC & Co is **pictured** left with the team from Infinity: Kayleen Wash, Nathan Ndeira, Christopher Nguyen, Sandro Eshu, Teena Beotich, Corina Bonello, Kristy Strachan, Jamie Schuster, Nicole Roberts, Chris Delatorre & Rebecca George, Broadway Inbound.

#### Qatar to Think Pink

QATAR Airways has partnered with HIA, QAS, & QDF to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month with "Think Pink" events and giveaways throughout Oct.

Activities include free mammograms, lectures and awareness workshops for staff, fundraising events, & the relaunch of limited pink amenity kits.



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#### McLachlan 2020

MCLACHLAN European Holidays has launched a newlook 2020 brochure featuring more than 220 tours including short breaks, live events, single traveller specials and its Luxuria Signature Collection.

The operator's 2020 brochure offers Australian guests an increased range of opportunities for their European experience, with accommodation offerings including three-star hotels to boutique villas and historic chateaux on Luxuria Signature Collection tours.

For more information about the 2020 itineraries and departures, **CLICK HERE**.

#### **SC Art of Attraction**

**THE** Sunshine Coast is set to host the first Art of Attraction tourism summit, Driving Change, on 06 Nov.

The event will focus on the growth of art tourism and senior travel in regional parts of the country.

Event organisers aim to arm towns and tour operators with the tools and knowledge to encourage Australians to visit Australia first.

#### A Manhattan Vibe in Sydney



TFE Hotels will open the doors to its new Manhattan design Vibe Hotel Sydney Darling Harbour next week.

The 145-room hotel on Sussex St includes design touches that offer a "New York Loft" feel.

The hotel will feature Sydney's newest rooftop bar and restaurant, Above 319, which will offer sunset views over Darling Harbour and the Inner West.

Guests will be able to enjoy similar views over the city from the comfort of the hotel's rooftop pool area. TFE Hotels Chief Operating
Officer Chris Sedgwick said the
opening of the Vibe Hotel Sydney
Darling Harbour marked "a very
exciting point in the ongoing
refresh" of the brand with
new hotels set to be opened in

The group is offering a 20% discount on bookings as part of an opening special.

Melbourne, Hobart and Adelaide.

**Pictured**: Vibe Hotel Sydney Darling Harbour's Above 319 rooftop bar and restaurant.

**Inset**: the hotel's heated rooftop pool area.

**CLICK HERE** to book.

#### **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.

Quest Apartment Hotels has appointed Jason Travers as franchisee of its upcoming property in Goulburn, which is set to open in Nov. Travers brings more than 20 years of hospitality experience to the role and has spent the last five years as Quest's NSW franchise relationship manager.

Ex-President and CEO of Destination Canada **David Goldstein** has joined **Gusto Worldwide Media** in the newly created role of Chief Operation Officer.

**Hawaii Tourism Authority** has appointed **Pattie Herman** as Vice President of Marketing and Product Development. She will commence the role on o2 Dec, and has more than four decades of managerial experience in the state's tourism industry.

Claire McGuinness has joined ATPI as Project Lead of the Account Management Team in Aberdeen, Scotland for its specialist brand ATPI Marine & Energy. In the newly created role, McGuinness will strengthen ATPI's positioning within Aberdeen and the wider Scottish markets.

#### Regent Alaska

**REGENT** Seven Seas Cruises has launched its Inside Alaska | Luxury Goes Exploring program for 2020.

The line aims to expand guests' knowledge of the region through a blend of local cuisine and cultural activities both on-board and onshore.

The program features on-land tours led by Alaskan natives, while experts in local culture, marine line and geology will provide insights on-board.

Guests will also be able to enjoy Alaskan craft beers aboard.

**CLICK HERE** for more details of the new program.

## SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS

Today's Sustainability Matters is brought to you by Tourism NT



This month marks an important moment in time for tourism in the NT. On 26 October, the

Uluru climb will permanently close. The decision to close the climb has been taken by traditional owners after years of consideration and more recently a polarising national debate. A point often missed by some national coverage is that Uluru and Kata Tiuta and much of the land surrounding it is Aboriginal land and recognised in law as such. The local Anangu people want to and absolutely will continue to share their sacred lands with the world – just in a way that respects their ancient culture.

The National Park and associated resort have seen unprecedented demand for the past few months in the lead up to 26 October. Whilst there is no doubt visitor numbers will likely subdue in the months following the climb closure, the resilience and sustainability of the destination, through the works of operators and traditional owners together, will ensure that this special place will be a feature in travel itineraries for many years to come.

Visit here to learn more northernterritory.com

Scott Lovett, Executive General Manager, Tourism NT





## Travel Daily

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A GROUP of 10 agents have recently returned from Switzerland, where they enjoyed the country's boutique cities of Zurich, Basel, Lucerne and Montreux and the adventurous Interlaken, the Jungfrau Region and Zermatt, all via the spectacular Swiss Travel System of trains, buses, ferries and mountain cableways.

Agents experienced various types of accommodation; e-biking; cruising; wine tasting; and the many museums accessible with the Pass including the FIFA museum and Vitrahaus.

In their exploration of mountains, agents started with Mt Titlis where they walked across Europe's highest suspension bridge.

The Schilthorn and its revolving Piz Gloria restaurant was another highlight, as was Jungfraujoch, Top of Europe, home to the highest mountain railway. Before heading home, agents visited Zermatt, home of the iconic Matterhorn.



Hosted by Birgit Weingartner from Switzerland Tourism ANZ and Lorna Groves from Swiss International Air Lines; with the support of Entire Travel, participating agents included Cyd Bullwinkle, Savenio; Brooke Reid, Travelrite International Heathmont; Rebecca Davis, Flight Centre; Jacqueline Bingham, Helloworld; Lay Pheng Tye, itravel; Sandra Paddick, Kadina Travel; Ashlee Cutting and Danielle Wulf, Travel Associates; as well as Anthony Wieland and Josephine Iacovitti, Switzerland Travel Connection.



ON EUROPE'S highest suspension bridge at Mt Titlis.



**BLOWING** an alphorn

is not as easy as it looks.

FOR soccer fans, the FIFA museum is a must.









JUNGFRAUJOCH, the top of Europe.

# Travel Daily

Thursday 10th October 2019

#### **Grandiosa** events

MSC Cruises has released details of its of celebration for the christening of MSC Grandiosa in Hamburg, commencing 06 Nov.

Featuring artists such as Michelle Hunziker and Mousse T, the events will take place over four days at MSC Village on the banks of the Elbe River.

A gala dinner will also take place on board the ship, with a menu designed by three-starred Michelin chef Harald Wohlfahrt.

The four nights of cheer will be punctuated by ongoing illuminations from light artist Michael Batz.

#### Highlands' biggest

**THE** 59th Tulip Time Festival and the Southern Highlands Food & Wine Festival in Bowral saw the Southern Highlands experience the biggest tourism weekend in its history over the long weekend.

With over 54,500 turning out over 14 days - a 14% increase on last year - the Tulip Time Festival saw its biggest visitation ever.

"Our extensive marketing penetrated markets that we have not witnessed before with a large influx of international expats from Western Sydney," said Destination Southern Highlands Tourism Coordinator Izabella Lane.

#### ibis budget Singapore debut



ACCOR will debut its ibis budget brand in Singapore, with 13 Fragrance hotels to be rebranded under a partnership with Global Premium Hotels Limited.

The hotels started to become available for booking from Mon, with the deal to see Accor cement itself as the largest hotel operator in the country, featuring an inventory of 7,625 rooms across 30 hotels, made up of 3,357 luxury and premium rooms, 1,840 midscale and 2,428 economy.

Two Parc Sovereign hotels will also be renovated and rebranded to one Mercure and one ibis Styles towards the end of the year, to become available by mid-2020.

"With its nifty and modern design, these new ibis budget hotels spread across central and suburban locations in Singapore

are perfect for savvy business or leisure travellers," said Accor Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore & South Asia Chief Operating Officer Garth Simmons.

"Featuring cosy rooms for one, two or three people and conveniently located close to leisure attractions such as Gardens by the Bay, Clarke Quay, Mount Faber and Sentosa Island, these new additions to our network in the city offer wider choices to guests looking for a short break or weekend getaway."

Pictured is the pool deck at ibis budget Singapore Selegie, while inset is one of the property's guest rooms.

### WIN A traise

This month Sun Island Tours and Travel Daily are giving agents the chance to win a seven-night Deluxe Superior Croatian Cruise for two people, valued at up to \$6,713. **SUN ISLAND TOURS** 

To win, simply tell us which fabulous Sun Island Tours

destination is shown in each of our holiday snaps every day during October and have the most creative answer to the final question.

Send your answers to sunislandtours@traveldaily.com.au



Hint: This Game of Thrones southern Croatian city fronting the Adriatic Sea is known for its distinctive Old Town.

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SALES MANAGER

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