

# Travel Daily First with the news

#### Vintage Rail profile

**NEW** rail tour operator Vintage Rail Journeys is now providing "slow" travel experiences throughout rural New South Wales aboard its sleeper trains.

Travel agency commission is payable on the product, with more details on **page seven**.

#### SQ cooks up storm

**SINGAPORE** Airlines has today launched an agent incentive, with a prize of two Economy class tickets to Singapore and three nights at the Fairmont Hotel Singapore.

Participants are invited to recreate some of the carrier's more "famous" onboard meals, post them on social media with the #cookyourwaytoSIN hashtag and in 50 words or less describe their ultimate Singapore Airlines on-board travel experience.

Recipes are online at singaporeair.com, and the promo runs until 30 Sep.

# HLO reports \$70m loss

HELLOWORLD Travel Limited's full year result reflects the "perfect storm" of COVID-19, with the virtual shutdown of the global travel industry seeing it report a \$70 million statutory loss after tax (TD breaking news).

The result included non-cash writedowns of the value of its Australian wholesale and inbound operations (\$51.8 million), as well as a \$13.7 million impairment in the value of corporate travel business TravelEdge, which was

#### Awards are so hot!

THE inaugural *Travel Daily* Awards have received more than 10,000 individual category nominations from over 500 respondents, with the awards program now moving onto the next phase of judging and voting.

Finalists in the voted categories will be announced this Fri - more info at awards.traveldaily.com.au.

acquired by Helloworld on 01 Oct 2019 for \$22.6 million.

CEO Andrew Burnes said the company was working to manage its response to the crisis, cutting costs, extending its liquidity and continuing to manage refunds.

"We are confident that when they can travel, our customers will need the help of their travel professional more than ever", he said - more from HLO on **page 4**.

#### NZ events funding

**THE** New Zealand Govt has announced about \$10 million in funding for 200 events across the country, as a way of stimulating cash flow to the sector.

As well as going to organisers, half of the money will be passed on as early payments to the supply chain, with a Govt spokesman saying the support aims to "allow events in NZ to endure through this challenging time".



#### Today's issue of TD

www.traveldaily.com.au

Travel Daily today has six pages of news including our PUZZLE page, plus a product profile from Vintage Rail Journeys and full pages from: • Viking Cruises

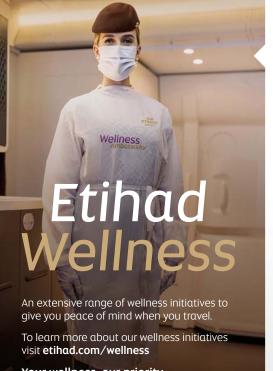
• Tourism Authority Thailand

#### **MAI targets Aussies**

**CVFR** Travel Group continues to go from strength to strength, this morning announcing the appointment of its offshoot Airline Rep Services as the GSA for Myanmar Airways International (MAI) in Australia and NZ.

"With its fleet of new A320 aircraft, the airline has a huge growth potential in this region," said CVFR CEO Ram Chhabra.

A call centre has been set up to specifically service local travel agents, with the airline planning to double its fleet by the end of 2020 and existing routes serving Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, China, South Korea and India.



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Tuesday 1st September 2020

#### CAPA almost here

**TIME** is running out to grab your place at the upcoming CAPA Australia Pacific Aviation Summit, which takes place virtually this year for the first time tomorrow.

High profile speakers who will be beaming in from all over the world include Qantas CEO Alan Joyce, Tourism Australia MD Phillipa Harrison and Flight Centre CEO Graham Turner - register to attend **HERE**.

#### Jetstar Asia flexible

JETSTAR Asia will soon launch its new Fly Well Program which includes assurance measures pre-flight & on-board, with pax able to make one change on all bookings made by the end of Oct.

#### Do it the Viking way

VIKING is inviting pax to "explore the Viking way" which commits to delivering "profoundly enriching experiences" - see page eight. **REGIONAL** Express (Rex) has managed to boost revenue by 1% to \$328.82 million for the 12 months to 30 Jun, despite challenging headwinds posed by ongoing travel restrictions.

The result was bolstered by a significant government cash injection of \$62.09 million during the period, funding that Rex Executive Chairman Lim Kim Hai believes was crucial to the regional carrier's survival after being "brought to its knees" by the effects of COVID-19.

"The COVID-19 pandemic devastated almost every industry with aviation being hit the hardest," he said.

"I would like to place on record our gratitude to the Morrison Government...for their swift and decisive actions that have saved Australia's regional aviation industry," Hai added.

Rex also recorded an underlying profit before tax of \$250,000, but

lamented a statutory loss after tax of \$19.4 million, a significant decline from the \$25.2 million net profit posted during the same period last year.

Rex shapes for expansion

Anticipated funding provided through the sale and leaseback of aircraft within its existing Saab fleet is expected to pave the way for Rex to pursue its expansion into domestic operations from Mar 2021.

"We believe that Australia deserves an alternative domestic carrier that is safe, reliable... and more importantly, can go the distance against the Qantas Group," Hai enthused.

## QR halts bookings

QATAR Airways has announced the cessation of accepting any new bookings for flights to Australia until the current government mandated passenger cap is relaxed.



THIS month will see one of Australia's favourite furry critters receive a monthlong birthday bash, with the quokka's big day being marked in Western Australia with free ferry travel for children and a new collectible coin.

The state is also running a month's worth of free entertainment events, such as a treasure hunt and family slumber party on the quokka mecca of Rottnest Island.





Vintage Rail Journeys is excited to announce the launch of the autumn 2021 season with an exciting new series of rail tours on board our newly restored, iconic

1960's ex-Southern Aurora sleeping train, travelling along lines normally closed to the public.

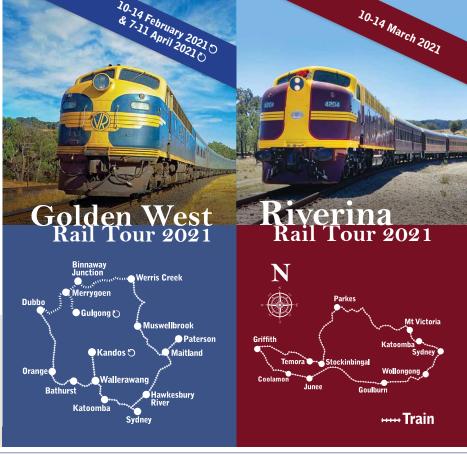
#### \$3,995 pp ex Sydney

Choose a 5 day/4 night experience including 10 meals, off-train excursions and sleeping on-board in your own cabin.



For more information and a full copy of the itinerary, please visit **vintagerailjourneys.com.au** 

10% Agents Commission Call Simon Mitchell **0418 985 142**.





Tuesday 1st September 2020

## **Event suffers profit slide**

**EVENT** Hospitality and Entertainment has posted an \$11.4 million loss for the 12 months to 30 Jun, with its hospitality division revenue down 21% to \$277 million across the Rvdges, QT Hotels and Thredbo Alpline Resort brands.

During the COVID-19-impacted period, occupancy and Revenue per available room in the group's hotels was 35.9% and \$53.70 respectively, a decline of 62%.

Bushfires and travel restrictions also impacted the bottom line of popular ski destination Thredbo, with the resort's earnings falling by 14% to \$24.87 million for the year to 30 Jun, with revenue also down 9.7% to \$73.91 million.

The result was mitigated by a strong H1 performance, as well as good momentum achieved through the brand's growth strategy which included boosting capacity through projects like the

#### Salt Lake City rebuilds int'l hub

**SALT** Lake City International Airport will officially open to travellers from 15 Sep, following a major revamp which includes better technology efficiency, local art installations and a variety of new local shops and restaurants.

Salt Lake City is one of Delta Air Lines' major American hubs, with the new airport to connect Australians via Los Angeles.

widening of the Dream Run Slope at Thredbo and the build of the new Merritts Gondola in Jun. Responding to the crisis, the group said it significantly reduced

costs by \$140m (including govt subsidies). moved to secure scarce revenue, and implemented minimal operational models, which the company said meant it was able to generate better financial results than simply closing the properties.

A plan to upgrade a number of its hotels will remain in place, however, Event said it would have to be delayed in line with the challenging operating conditions.

The report also noted intentions to expand the budget accommodation brand Jucy Snooze into Australia "in the near future", after purchasing a 50% stake in the business, while other upcoming expansion includes QT Auckland, Rydges Gold Coast Airport & the Adelaide Oval Hotel.

#### Air India adds 13

AIR India has added 13 flights from Australia to New Delhi. Beginning Fri, the new SYD-DEL route will operate until 01 Oct, as part of the country's Vande Bharat Mission to repatriate Indians from around the world. Tickets are available for sale

now via the Air India website, and the full schedule can be viewed by CLICKING HERE.

#### **Q: WHERE IN** THE WORLD **IS FLANDERS?**

A: A fantastic region in Europe with gorgeous medieval art cities, history & culture, cycling, fries, beer, waffles, chocolate, fries, beers, waffles, chocolate, fries, beers (repeat).

VISITFLANDERS



## **AFTA UPDATE**

from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents

OF TRAVEL AGENTS

#### IT HAS been a very busy Aug.

AFTA Chair, Tom Manwaring and AFTA CEO Darren Rudd had the opportunity to appear in front of the Senate Select Committee into COVID-19 on Thu AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION 20 Aug, where they argued a strong case

for the need for on-going tailored support for Australia's travel agents.

They covered a range of other key priorities for travel agents including the reality of the payment ecosystem including money flow and refund challenges; the devastating revenue reality for agents; the critical need for international travel to resume; and the compelling case for tailored, ongoing financial support and business relief measures for travel agencies.

You can read the full transcript of the hearing - CLICK HERE.

AFTA's grassroots campaign, where we bring travel agents together with their local MP, continued throughout Aug and is delivering for members.

Just last week Member for Wentworth Dave Sharma raised the plight of travel agents in Federal Parliament. You can read about it at afta.com.au or watch his speech to the House of Representatives HERE.

In Aug, AFTA visited the electorates of Kingsford Smith, Warringah, North Sydney and Blaxland, bringing together AFTA travel agent members and their local MP.

This brings AFTA's total co-ordinated visits with local Members to nine, and we have provided the opportunity for 26 travel agents to share their stories directly with political influencers.

Also last month, AFTA launched an exciting new Micro Credentials Program for the travel industry. Through the program, AFTA is allowing businesses - and their staff - to learn new skills or cross skill during this challenging time.

The program has been enabled through a strategic partnership with Learning Vault, AFTA's online digital education partner.

There are over 60 courses to choose from and more are added each and every week. After completing each micro

#### credential, AFTA

members will be issued with a 'digital badge' for their achievement in completing the course, which can be used on CVs, LinkedIn pages and more, making the AFTA

credentials visible, valuable and verifiable.

You can learn more HERE. AFTA held a Board meeting on 28 Fri Aug, and it was highlighted that since the start of the pandemic, AFTA has delivered over 80 webinars reaching 35,000 travel agency owners, managers and their staff as part of ensuring that members have the necessary support to navigate COVID-19.

We recognise however, that, in addition to business support, members need assistance with the emotional and financial stresses that has been brought on by COVID-19.

Because of this AFTA launched a Resilient Mind Program in partnership with Paul Taylor and the Mind Body Brain Performance Institute.

The scientifically-based, fourweek mental wellbeing program is designed to boost the resilience of travel agents in a fun and proven way.

Paul is a Neuroscientist, Exercise Physiologist & Nutritionist who is currently completing a PhD in Applied Psychology, developing and testing resilience strategies with the Australian Defence Science Technology Group & The University of Tasmania.

As a Former British Royal Navy Aircrew Officer Paul underwent rigorous Military Combat Survival and Resistance-to-Interrogation Training and has gone on to help thousands of individuals enhance their resilience and become better versions of themselves.

In a single day of launching the program we had over 150 businesses and 500 individuals register to take part in the challenge, which runs from o7 Sep until Sun 04 Oct and we look forward to sharing the results of the challenge with the industry.

If ever there is a time to improve the way we each deal with the challenges that life throws at us, and our ability to cope, it is now.

You can learn more about the initiative HERE.



Tuesday 1st September 2020

## Helloworld plans for future

HELLOWORLD Travel (HLO) has pledged to continue to support its supplier partners across the globe, boasting of its "outstanding network of leaders and business development personnel who are working on our post-COVID strategies for 2021 and beyond".

The company, which reported its annual results last night (see **page 1** and **TD** breaking news), noted that despite the impact of coronavirus it continues to invest in technologies driving its corporate, wholesale and retail offerings "to ensure we have growth and productivity drivers in place as we emerge from the COVID-19 period".

Operationally, Helloworld has so far paid out full or partial refunds worth more than \$800 million in Australia and New Zealand, "with ticket refund turnarounds down to under seven weeks and wholesale and cruise refunds





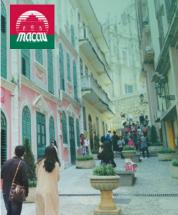
under control," according to an ASX release from the company. Over the last three months HLO's corporate business in Australia and New Zealand had recovered to about 35% of previous year volumes in Jul, "and we expect this to increase from Oct as state borders open up again," the company said.

Through the downturn, the company had also managed to generate some revenue by using its call centres to perform contact tracing services on behalf of state health organisations since Apr.

CEO Andrew Burnes said he believed that after the pandemic passes travel experiences will be even more treasured.

"We have been providing professional travel services to our customers for over 60 years.

"And we will be there on the other side of this for our customers for the next 60 years and beyond," he promised.



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## Long HLO runway

AGGRESSIVE pursuit of cost reduction targets through the COVID-19 period has seen Helloworld Travel reduce its net operating cash outflows to about \$2 million per month, excluding one-off costs.

According to the company's full year results announcement, savings include the elimination of a wide range of discretionary variable expenses across the business, renegotiations with landlords which have saved about 25% on occupancy costs, and a 35% workforce reduction in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and India, with the remaining personnel working reduced hours or placed on stand-down.

The recent \$50 million equity raising has helped boost the company's cash balance to \$174.8 million, giving Helloworld an "extended liquidity runway beyond end 2022", even if there is ongoing disruption to international travel markets.

Helloworld's bankers have agreed to suspensions of certain financial covenants, and the pricing of existing loan facilities has not changed.

#### Network growth

HELLOWORLD Travel says its retail network expanded over the last year by 49 across Australia & NZ to a total of 2,496 members.

Australian members numbered 1,900 as at 30 Jun 2020, alongside 596 in NZ, with growth in both countries driven by strong increases in the home-based segment (MTA and Travel Brokers) prior to the advent of COVID-19.

In Australia 21 member agencies have closed, while a further 23 "have indicated they will put their business into hibernation until travel demand returns," the company noted in last night's financial results announcement.

The update also noted that over 400 external independent agents were being serviced by HLO's air Tickets ticketing division.

## Catch up on the news of the week

CLICK HERE TO LISTEN

#### No future guidance

HELLOWORLD Travel is unable to provide any meaningful future profit forecasts at this stage, due to ongoing uncertainties about the reopening of state and international borders, according to the company's financial results announcement last night.

Despite the difficulties of the situation, "what we can say is that we will continue to process the billions of dollars of refunds and credits due to customers for pre-booked, pre-paid travel arrangements, we will continue to support our corporate, entertainment and wholesale customers, [and] continue to help the travel agents in our six networks in Australia and four networks in New Zealand," the company said.

"We are confident we can continue to adapt the business to the circumstances that confront us, ride out this 'perfect storm' and take advantage of opportunities as they arise and emerge from this crisis in a very strong position."

#### Gain on US sale

**THE** recent sale of Helloworld Travel's US wholesale division (*TD* 01 Jul) has seen the company book a \$1.1 million gain, with the deal including the disposal of USbased entities such as Concorde International Travel Inc and Helloworld Travel Services USA Inc.

The US wholesale operation contributed a \$2.8 million loss for the year prior to its sale.

#### **NZ** restructure

HELLOWORLD Travel has undertaken a major restructure of its operations in New Zealand, further cutting staff numbers by 160 at a cost of NZ\$2.4 million, including all entitlements.

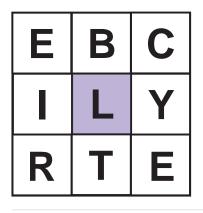
The cost of these latest cuts will be reflected in the company's 2021 financial results, in addition to \$6.9 million which have already been accounted for in last night's FY20 announcement.



Tuesday 1st September 2020

## Unscramble

**HOW** many words can you make out of these nine letters? Every word needs to include the centre letter, have four letters or more and not be a proper noun or a plural. You can only use each letter once.



Good – 18 words Very good – 27 words Excellent – 36 words

NOTE: We've used Chambers Dictionary to decide what words are acceptable.

## Whose flag is this?



**THIS** flag belongs to a country who for a long time didn't actually have an independent state of their own.

The flag was initially proposed to be a rainbow in the 19th century by one scholar, but the people couldn't agree which particular colours to include. In 1918 the country declared its independence and the constitution officially sanctioned the above flag with its red, blue and orange colours.

Do you know whose flag it is? Check tomorrow for the answer.

ANS	WE	RS 3:	1 AU	IG

Where in the world: Ponte Vecchio, Florence, Italy

6	9	8	2	1	3	4	5	7
1	5	3	9	4	7	2	6	8
4	7	2	5	6	8	1	3	9
3	8	6	1	7	5	9	2	4
2	4	5	8	3	9	6	7	1
9	1	7	4	2	6	5	8	3
5	6	1	3	8	4	7	9	2
7	3	4	6	9	2	8	1	5
8	2	9	7	5	1	3	4	6



# **Fish and Chips Day**



NATIONAL Fish and Chips Day is a fairly recent celebration in the UK, only initiated in 2015 to celebrate what is seen by many as the nation's favourite dish. Previously the day was celebrated in Jun but this year has moved to 04 Sep.

Although we're not in the UK, Australia is also an island nation with a range of delicious seafood, so we think it's fine to jump on the fish and chips bandwagon this Fri.

## Pub quiz

- 1. The red kangaroo is the emblematic animal of which Australian state or territory?
- 2. Which Australian town is located at the crossing of the Barrier and Silver City highways?
- 3. A hybrid travel agency-coffee shop has just launched in which Brisbane neighbourhood?
- 4. Daniel K. Inouye International is the principal airport in what city?
- 5. 1,000 of what animal are said to have helped in the construction of the Taj Mahal in 1623?
- 6. What city is often amusingly proposed as the world's next city-state, with a secession bill even introduced into city council in 2003?
- 7. What company, which also operates several chain movie theatres, also runs Thredbo Alpine Village?
- 8. The "Big Four" fashion weeks are hosted where?
- 9. The Art Gallery of South Australia, the South Australian Museum and the University of Adelaide all occupy which well-known Adelaide cultural precinct?
- 10. Australia is classified as a "megadiverse" country, meaning it harbours the majority of Earth's species and high numbers of endemic species. How many other nations are also megadiverse?



Keep your clients inspired with *keep dreaming*....?

Tuesday 1st September 2020

#### G Adv out to Nov

G **ADVENTURES** has further suspended its global tour departures through until 31 Oct, as well as the Nov and Dec 2020 departures of its G Expedition ship, with existing bookings offered a 110% travel credit.



## A-LEAGUE TOP TIPPER Congratulations

#### GLEN MACALISTER

from Captain Cook Cruises

Glen is the top tipper for Travel Daily's A-League footy tipping competition. He's won a trip to Manchester to see Manchester City play, courtesy of sponsor Etihad Airways and a \$2,000 voucher from ReadyRooms.

Thanks to all A-League tippers for your participation. Thank you to Etihad Airways, ReadyRooms and Breakaway Travel Club for your support.



# We're now back on track

**THE** wheels were once again in motion for The Ghan passenger train service on the weekend, pulling out of the Adelaide Parklands Terminal following the longest shutdown in its history.

The iconic locomotive left the South Australian state capital bound for Darwin on Sun with 97 excited passengers on board, a welcome return to service after COVID-19 travel restrictions forced the suspension of services in late Mar.

Journey Beyond Chief Commercial Officer Peter Egglestone (**pictured**) said the departure marked a key moment in the company's history, demonstrating the resilience of the brand in the face of extremely challenging conditions.

"We've seen significant shifts in booking lead times and markets this year which has been challenging and I want to thank all our loyal partners for their support and commitment over the past months," he said.

"While this has tested our industry, it's also demonstrated our resilience and we've seen a promising increase in bookings since the announcement that The Ghan services would be recommencing," Egglestone added.

The train service implemented its new JourneySafe program prior to relaunching, which includes set times for passenger meals, temperature checks in Darwin and Adelaide, as well as the removal of Gold Single cabins to ensure guests have access to private ensuites.

The Ghan is all-inclusive of accommodation, food, wine and destination experiences. Call 13 21 47 for bookings.

#### CATO News summit

Travel & Cruise

eekly

**THE** Council of Australian Tour Operators last week continued its media engagement program with participation in a Tour Operators Forum 2020 with News Corp.

The gathering brought together a host of tour operators with senior News Corp execs, discussing the need for balanced reporting around refunds and travel credits, consumer confidence, border reopenings and keeping audiences engaged in travel during COVID-19

## MONEY

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

#### AU\$1 = US0.735

**THE** Australian dollar reached two-year highs ahead of the GDP announcement tomorrow.

The Aussie reached levels overnight not seen since Jul 2018, before slightly easing back, ending the session up a moderate 0.1%.

The local currency also jumped to a 15-month high against the yen, but was weaker against other currencies, ending slightly down against the Euro.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.735		
UK	£0.550		
NZ	\$1.088		
Euro	€0.616		
Japan	¥77.08		
Thailand	ß22.73		
China	¥4.991		
South Africa	12.40		
Canada	\$0.955		
Crude oil	US\$45.10		

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# Travel Daily

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## **PRODUCT PROFILE** RAIL





# Vintage Rail Journeys, a new rail experience

Vintage Rail Journeys is a new rail tour operator providing slow rail travel experiences throughout regional and rural NSW aboard their own vintage sleeping train.

YOUR customers will love being able to unpack only once, and enjoy a 5 day/4 night experience on board Vintage Rail Journeys fleet of ex-Southern Aurora sleeping carriages. This train will be familiar to your customers - with many of them aspiring to travel on it when they were younger, or in many cases, having fond memories of traveling on board when it was THE way to travel overnight from Sydney to Melbourne from 1962-1986.

Vintage Rail Journeys have painstakingly restored their fleet of ex-Southern Aurora carriages back to their original 1960's first class styling and re-named it the 'Aurora Australis'. The fleet includes roomette (or single) sleeping carriages, with brand new spacious shared bathrooms and no single supplement. Twinette (upper and lower bunk) sleeping carriages have a typical railway ensuite to each cabin. Two Dining and Two lounge carriages are normally included in the 380m long, 16 carriage, shiny stainless steel train. The train will normally be hauled by two vintage 'streamliner' diesel locomotives, and accompanied by a 1947 vintage Flxible Clipper bus.

The train is ideally suited to travelling in a COVIDsafe world guests have their own compartments - with 136 guests spaced across 7 sleeping carriages, this train has been socially distancing since 1962!

Two five day and four night rail tours have been developed which take guests from the city and into regional NSW. A key feature of the tours is that the train is stationary at night so that guests get the best nights' sleep possible, without missing any of New South Wales' amazing scenery. With train travel done during the day, a good amount of time is spent at each new location. Guests will visit gardens, museums, galleries and attractions using both the vintage bus and local bus companies. Time is also spent with the locals where possible, all within COVIDsafe best practice.

The rail tours have proven very popular with solo travellers, with the roomette (single) cabins booking out very quickly.

#### FOR MORE INFO

Vintage Rail Journeys welcomes the opportunity to work with you and looks forward to welcoming your customers aboard the Aurora Australis soon. They are delighted to offer a 10% agents commission (100% of tour price is commissionable) for each travelling guest.

Please contact Vintage Rail Journeys Director, Simon Mitchell on 0418 985142



Website: www.vintagerailjourneys.com.au Facebook: vintagerailjourneys Instagram: @vintage\_rail\_journeys





#### NO KIDS | NO CASINOS | NO NCFS | NO COMPARISON

The Viking Way is our commitment to delivering profoundly enriching experiences while placing your client's comfort, wellbeing, and safety above all else, always. Our perpetual promise of 'no kids and no casinos' has become more than just a point of difference — it is now a point of reassurance in this new era of global travel.

When it comes to forward-thinking cruising, there is no comparison.

#### WHY YOU CAN TRUST THE VIKING WAY FOR YOUR CLIENT:

- You're backed by the industry's best Risk-Free booking policy
- Which means, your clients can change their plans up to 24 hours before departure
- Our ships are spacious with all-outside staterooms, natural light and no more than 930 guests
- ✓ The famous Viking Inclusive Value means everything your client needs is included in the fare
- No NCF ensures you get commission on all components of the fare
- 2023 itineraries are now open forward planners rejoice
- We're investing in the future with new ships and itineraries
- And, we're investing heavily in marketing to get your phones ringing

Our commitment to you is unwavering, and our brand new Explore The Viking Way campaign is here to help drive sales from 1 September to 30 November 2020 with offers saving your clients up to \$4,600\* per couple. Click below to download the e-catalogue or visit our Travel Agent Portal for more assets and information.

#### CLICK HERE

## MARKETING TOOLKIT

Visit our Travel Agent Portal to access a comprehensive suite of marketing materials designed to support you and your business.

Have you got what it takes to be an Amazing Theiland Specialist

Sign up to our new learning platform where you can complete a series of modules to increase your destination knowledge and take your Thailand skills from good to great.

With new modules released each fortnight, you'll go on an educational journey spanning all corners of Thailand, picking up some great tips and hints on how and what to sell.

Available now to Australian and New Zealand Travel Agents with quizzes to test your knowledge and prizes up for grabs.

#### **TO LEARN MORE AND TO REGISTER CLICK HERE**



Ko Phi Phi Don, Krabi