

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news, plus a full page from **Abu Dhabi Tourism**.

Embark to Alaska

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has announced a new Embark episode, *Adventure Alaska*.

Highlighting the very best of the state, the episode is the ultimate tool for travel advisors to entice and educate their clients considering a holiday to the world's Last Frontier.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

Borders on track

PLANS to reopen Australia to visa holders from 15 Dec remain on track despite initial concerns about the emergence of COVID-19's Omicron variant, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said.

The PM confirmed the government was committed to implementing the national plan to open the country again.

HA + Amadeus

AMADEUS and Hawaiian Airlines have signed an agreement for the implementation of the travel technology company's Altea Passenger Service System.

Including reservations, departure control, data intelligence, and payment solutions, implementation of Altea will begin in the first quarter of next year.

THL to acquire Apollo

CAMPERVAN and tourism company Tourism Holdings Limited (THL) has entered into a conditional agreement to acquire Australian tourism company Apollo Tourism & Leisure.

THL, which in New Zealand and Australia operates under the Maui, Britz and Mighty rental brands, said the purchase would generate significant cost synergies, as well as a fleet rationalisation that is expected to create in excess of \$38 million of net debt benefit.

The company also noted that merging assets with Apollo would help the proposed combined entity better handle the impact

of COVID-19 by taking stronger advantage of near-term growth opportunities as cross-border tourism ramps up next year.

"THL is proactively moving to build a more resilient business and expand its international reach, rather than seeking to wait out market uncertainty from the pandemic," the company's Chair Rob Campbell said.

THL noted further benefits of the merger include an increased scale in overseas markets such as North America and the United Kingdom, an overall enhanced business portfolio, as well as the delivery of an EBIT increase of between \$16.2 million and \$18.1 million a year.

The transaction is subject to approval by Apollo shareholders, who if give the green light, would own 25% of the merged company.

Full regulatory approval is expected to be completed by the second quarter of 2022.

Sabre gets some Zip

SABRE has announced an integrated agreement with Zip, which will work to ensure simple, global capabilities through the financial company's Single Merchant Integration (SMI).

Using its SMI, Zip has integrated into Sabre's Global Distribution System, which will enable any global travel partner to accept Zip in all countries in which it is available.

Sabre will also serve as a launchpad for Zip as it establishes itself as a payment provider in the travel industry.

The travel software company's Senior Vice President Product Management Jeff Hayward said Sabre was delighted Zip had chosen to work with it.

Veri-fly with Air NZ

AIR New Zealand pax can now upload their domestic My Vaccine Pass to their Airpoints profile, verifying their vaccination status.

The airline's Chief Customer & Sales Officer Leanne Geraghty said from Tue, it will be requiring proof of either full vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test taken within 72 hours of departure to travel domestically.

None of the data verified will be retained by Air New Zealand.

Abu Dhabi expert

BECOME a certified Abu Dhabi specialist through Visit Abu Dhabi's dedicated program.

As international travel opens again, the UAE's capital will be a leading holiday destination, and is perfectly placed for friends and relatives from both hemispheres to "meet in the middle".

All travel advisors who complete the course by the end of the year will go into a prize draw - **page 6**.

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Window Seat

WOW, things really have changed since the start of the pandemic, even the dinosaurs have switched up their style.

Just take the replica tyrannosaurus rex at the Natural History Museum in London (pictured), whose new look looks decidedly less intimidating thanks to a fresh festive wardrobe change.

“There is nothing more funny than a jumper fitted for a dinosaur that has the tiniest arms in the world,” a worker at the museum joked.



Air NZ adjusts commission

AIR New Zealand has adjusted its point-of-sale commission rates in New Zealand from 5% to 1% for long-haul routes and from 3% to 0% for short-haul routes, effective 01 Jul 2022.

While the changes do not apply to Australian agents, Air New Zealand Chief Customer and Sales Officer Leanne Geraghty told *Travel Daily* that the airline did not take the decision relating to its Kiwi advisors lightly, citing a need to ensure the company’s future competitiveness.

“Working through the impacts of COVID-19 across the past 20 months has without a doubt been difficult for the travel industry,” she said.

“Looking at where we’ve come from and what we’ve achieved as an industry, we remain optimistic about the future of aviation and the industry itself in Aotearoa, but we know what’s around the

corner will look different, and that the way we have operated in the past is no longer sustainable as we recover from the impacts of the pandemic and rebuild.”

Despite the cuts, Geraghty added that New Zealand-based agents will still add tremendous value for the airline’s customers in the future given their expertise, and would continue to provide frontline support for advisors through its agency sales team and account managers, commercial agreements and funding for joint marketing and promotion activity.

“We’re committed to being strong supporters of the New Zealand travel industry and its recovery and we look forward to continuing our strong travel agency partnerships as the new travel environment emerges, and we adjust to the changes together,” Geraghty said.

SeaLink hops to it

SEALINK Marine & Tourism has extended its contract with the South Australian Govt to operate ferry services to Kangaroo Island for another 50 years.

In addition to the renewed contract, SeaLink will also be investing \$50m on larger ferries delivering a faster service, as well as upgrading infrastructure to the popular tourist destination.

“SeaLink has made it clear they are in this for the long haul, exploring investment in the rebuilding of tourism accommodation lost in the 2020 Kangaroo Island bushfire in another win for local tourism,” South Australia’s Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Corey Wingard said.

SeaLink SA contributes an estimated \$78 million to gross state product and accounts for approximately 675 full-time jobs through tourism, travel, and corporate operations.



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Optimistic about 22

MORE than half of Australians plan to treat themselves more during their first international trip than they did before the pandemic, new figures from Luxury Escapes shows.

Over a third of Aussies stated they plan to spend more on travel in 2022 than they did before 2020, with 62% of people revealing they have been saving for an overseas trip while being restricted by border closures.

Encouragingly, 84% of Aussies are "optimistic" about the prospects of international travel next year, with nine in 10 respondents stating they have either booked, or are planning to book international travel in 2022.

Mental wellbeing has also emerged as an important factor in planning an overseas holiday, with 90% of Australians indicating travel positively impacts their mental health.

Close to three quarters of respondents also revealed travel would be more important for general wellbeing than it was before COVID.

Fiji topped the list of most sought after overseas destinations, followed by New Zealand, the UK and the US.

VSC treats the trade



VISIT Sunshine Coast (VSC) recently invited trade and development partners to the sunny coast to celebrate the previous 12 months and to say thank you for their support for the region in 2021.

Delegates who attended the familar were from Expedia, TripADeal, Ignite Travel Group, Experience Oz, Tourism and Events Queensland and Pinnacle Marketing, who spent two days experiencing the best the region has to offer, as well as meetings with key operators.

A special sailing with Saltwater Eco Tours also saw the group enjoy the sunshine, while attendees enjoyed a dining

experience at the new venue in Coolool by The Ohana Group, as well as an evening function and stay at the retro style accommodation LOEA.

Pictured at the back: Jenna Marene, Michael Webley, Michael Nelson, Bernadette Grogan, Julia Pavey, Jacinda Passeri, Karlee Baston, Beth Mahoney, Emily Zinowki, Andrew Fairbairn and Andrew Fitzpatrick, at the front is Auntie Bridgette Chili and Rebecca Maitland.

Marriott expansion

MARRIOTT International has announced plans to debut more than 30 luxury hotels in 2022, with Australia listed as one of its key emerging markets.

Brands in the spotlight for expansion include the Ritz-Carlton, Ritz-Carlton Reserve, St. Regis, W, The Luxury Collection, EDITION, JW Marriott and Bulgari.

Tee off with Qatar

QATAR Airways has partnered with Golf Australia to provide travellers with the chance to win two return Business class tickets.

To be in the running to win, Golf Australia members need to complete their details **HERE** and play as many rounds of golf as they can between 16 Dec and 30 Jan 2022, with each round earning an entry into the draw.

Golf Australia members can also save up to 10% on Qatar Airways flights by entering the code "GOLFAU" when booking.

P&O's howling win

TASMANIAN country duo The Wolfe Brothers will headline P&O Cruises Australia's Country Music Festival at Sea 2022.

The Wolfe Brothers secured their spot in the line-up after winning P&O Cruises People's Choice Award at the Groundwater Country Music Festival on the Gold Coast last month.

The band is taking a leaf out of their father's book, after he also won his spot performing on P&O in the 1970s.

Silversea reduces

SILVERSEA Cruises has launched an all-new inclusive fare, with a new wave season promotion designed to benefit both guests and travel advisors.

Passengers will be provided with increased flexibility, additional savings and a limited-time reduced deposit of just 15%, while agents can tailor a more personalised program.

Taguchi wins

TAGUCHIMARKETING has announced its win of an international program from Travelport Accelerator recognising technology innovators in the travel industry.

The travel retailing challenge was launched in collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to drive transformation in the sector, with Taguchi selected as one of only two winners from more than 120 companies across the globe that applied.

AWS and Travelport will now work with Taguchi to develop the solution next year.

"Travelport Accelerator was created to foster collaboration with innovative thinkers who bring revolutionary ideas to the table," the company's Chief Product & Technology Officer Tom Kershaw said, adding "we heard some truly unique concepts and viable product ideas."

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CORPORATE UPDATE

Navigating post-COVID

FCM Head of Account Management Australia Renos Rologas has conceded corporate travel faces many hurdles in its quest to reach pre-pandemic volumes, but believes the recovery signs are strong.

Speaking at CAPA's Australia Pacific Aviation Summit in Sydney this week, Rologas said the emerging travel demand could prove to be a big win for travel management companies.

"We've been talking about the green shoots in the travel industry for a long time and being stood here in front of so many people shows those green shoots really are flourishing now - and we're now seeing that flowing through to enquiries and bookings," he said.

"We will still face challenges in 2022 in our industry but that's why having a travel management company by your side is so vital - having an expert at the end of the phone is like gold dust when there are changes to rules, regulations, and restrictions across the globe," Rologas added.

The FCM executive also noted

that a key aspect to restoring corporate travel confidence will be ensuring travellers are put at ease during their journeys, even if plans change suddenly.

"Being travel-ready is incredibly important and you can be ahead of the game with good preparation," he said

"That all starts with how ready you and your people are; have you updated your policy? Do you have a traveller wellbeing process? These are key pre-trip considerations.

"We're now looking at an omnichannel world where a traveller can be contacted in multiple ways, a world where you need to know the ins and outs of travel insurance policies and inclusions, and a world where there will be more of a focus than ever on safety and wellbeing."

For the Flight Centre-owned FCM, Rologas said the business was now investing in key areas to make this a reality.

These include new tech spend to alert customers in real time, as well as forming partnerships with PCR testing companies.

How has the pandemic impacted the way the travel sector operates, and what will remain in the emerging post-covid world? We investigate taking travel back to the future in the latest *travelBulletin*.



travelBulletin

The allure of the South



TOURISM marketing agency Gate 7 recently represented Australia at the annual Travel South USA International Showcase in New Orleans.

The agency's Senior Account Manager Penny Brand was able to attend in person, along with ittravel's Head of Commercial Annalee Iliovski (pictured), who both learned more about the appeal of Travel South USA's 12 state tourism offices to Australian travellers.

"After being stripped from travel for so long, it was great meeting so many suppliers that are just as eager to welcome Australians back as we are to travel there," Brand said.

"The city of New Orleans has been the perfect host location, and it was a pleasure to attend along with ittravel, on behalf of Australia," she added.

The showcase was attended by over 200 Southern USA suppliers and 113 international buyers, where a range of signature events and hosted lunches were also taking place, showcasing all that US states have to offer.

Travel South USA President and CEO Liz Bittner was glowing in her reception of the Aussie contingent, stating how important Australia was as a source market.

"Australians love the south; so much so, before the pandemic, they visited on average 4.3 states per visit and love road tripping.

"As a result, our region is best placed to offer an exciting mix of rich culture, food, history, entertainment, and memories that last a lifetime," she said.

Sustainability a key factor for hotels

TWO-THIRDS of Australians feel that sustainability is an important factor when choosing a hotel booking, a survey from voco Hotels has revealed.

Key aspects travellers desire in accommodation include hotels using glass instead of plastic (68%), less food waste (63%), less single-use plastic (60%), less unnecessary washing (46%) and more options for lowering water usage (43%).

Access to late night comfort food also rated highly among Aussies, with 34% listing in-room afternoon tea or happy hour deliveries directly to their room as important, while a third of respondents valued personalised welcome packages.

More buffet and self-serve options are also important, as is a variety of cuisine options.

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called **Keep Dreaming** is specially designed for agents to send their clients - giving you a reason to reach out to your database.

Click here to view Keep Dreaming magazine

Click here for a toolkit to help you share it with clients



Travel & Cruise Weekly

ADL expansion

ADELAIDE Airport's new international arrivals hall has opened, as its terminal expansion reaches its practical completion.

The airport unveiled the final stages of its \$200 million terminal expansion project yesterday, with builder BESIX Watpac having now formally handed over the facility to the operator.

Gate 18 is now a permanent international gate, while other international gates will continue to utilise ADL's unique swing gate system to allow both international and domestic ops.

The total area of the retail and dining precinct has increased by more than 80%, with the majority of new outlets having now opened to the public.

Sail Croatia 2022

SAIL Croatia has unveiled its Navigator party cruise program for next year, aimed at 18-39-year-olds.

The full range of party cruises are now on sale for departures between Apr and Oct 2022, available on four small ship types across three itineraries.

A total of 245 seven-day sailings depart from Split or Dubrovnik and call at Dalmatian hotspots including Hvar, Mljet, Korcula and Makarska.

New options available include letting your hair down in Dubrovnik in Culture Club Revelin, a medieval fortress-turned-club; joining a pirate party in a natural cave in Makarska; and partying through Hvar's nightclubs.

TRAVEL SPECIALS

WELCOME to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au

Save now on a Christmas 2022 river cruise down the Mississippi with **American Queen Voyages**. Those booking by the end of Feb can save up to US\$1,500 per couple on one of seven of the all-inclusive sailings. Cruise and stay packages from five to eight nights are also available, and to book, contact Cruise Traveller, on 1800 507 777.

Last-minute travellers can save 30% on **Intrepid Travel's** six-day Whitsunday Islands Explorer itinerary departing on Wed. Priced now from \$1,834 per person twin-share, down from \$2,620, included are accommodation, transport and some meals & activities. **CLICK HERE** for more.

It is your last chance to take advantage of **Viking's** Welcome Back to the World sale, which offers \$8,000 of savings per couple. Ending on Christmas Eve, there are a range of voyages included in the offer, varying from 13 to 44 days. For additional information phone Viking on 138 747.

Adventure Canada has extended its 15% Early Booking Bonus, which is eligible on all 2023 *Ocean Endeavour* Arctic, Atlantic Canada, and North Atlantic Europe expeditions. Now available until the end of May, head to adventurecanada.com for more.

Whose flag is this?



PUZZLE

FUN fact: this country's flag is the only one in the world that includes all five colours seen in the Olympic rings.

The flag was designed in 1994 and replaced one that had been in use since 1928.

The colours were taken from a

previous flag, the Union Jack and the flag of the African National Congress and at the time it was the only national flag to be made up of six colours (not including a seal or brocade).

Do you know which country this flag belongs to?

Answer: South Africa

NZ tourism recovery

NEW Zealand's Go With Tourism has released the first of two plans that offer solutions to improve the tourism & hospitality workforce in the country.

The organisation has suggested creating a tourism and hospitality accord, which will establish a standard for working environments, while forming an industry toolkit to cover business operation, career progression, with wellbeing also touted as a key priority moving forward.

A program to take a deeper look into pathways to working in the tourism sector was also flagged, so that career and training opportunities will be explored more efficiently, while a community engagement program in secondary schools was also put forward as part of an initial plan.

Part two planning will look at additional support needed.

Fiji Airways training

FIJI Airways has launched the Fiji Airways Aviation Academy, a fully integrated training centre, providing world-class instruction for pilots, aircraft & simulator engineers, and flight attendants.

Located at Namaka in Nadi, the Aviation Academy features two CAAF- and EASA-certified full flight simulators across the Airbus A330 and Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

The FJD\$89 million dollar Academy is a first of its kind in the South Pacific islands, and is one of only a few in the Southern Hemisphere to offer pilots the opportunity to train and receive certification to operate on the Boeing 737 Max simulator.

They allow local Fijian pilots across Fiji Airways and Fiji Link to complete their recurrent training program covering mandatory skills and scenario based-training.

Got a confidential tip? Contact *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)

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EDITORIAL
Editor in Chief and Publisher – Bruce Piper
Associate Editors – Adam Bishop, Myles Stedman
Contributors – Nicholas O'Donoghue, Jenny Piper
info@traveldaily.com.au

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING
Sean Harrigan and Hoda Alzubaidi
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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As international travel opens again, Abu Dhabi will be a leading holiday destination and perfectly placed to reunite with friends and relatives from both hemispheres to 'Meet in the Middle'.

All agents across Australia and New Zealand who complete the course by 31 December 2021, will go into the draw for a chance to win a monthly prize of a \$200 Visa Card voucher. Furthermore, any agent that refers another agent to complete the course, both will go into the draw to win a spot on a famil to Abu Dhabi at the end of 2022. Please note both agents have to complete the course by 31 December 2021 to be eligible.

Once completed, email Svetlana on E: sjovanovic@dctabudhabi.ae with the Subject Heading: ADSP Completed!