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Vietnam reopening

COMMERCIAL flights from Vietnam will resume on 01 Jan 2022 to a range of destinations - but Australia is not on the list.

VN services are currently planned to Beijing, Seoul, Taipei, Bangkok, Singapore, San Francisco, Los Angeles and more.

Aeronology office system

EXCLUSIVE

MELBOURNE-BASED travel tech firm Aeronology has announced an alliance with Danish mid- and back-office system provider TravelOperations Business to launch a "truly seamless front/mid/back office" platform for the travel industry.

The move is seen as providing an alternative to the widely used Tramada system, which was acquired last year by Corporate Travel Management (TD 29 Oct 2020) leading to disquiet among some agents about a competitor owning the platform they use.

Travel Operations is a "global, cloud-based and open-sourced finance system particularly targeted and tailored for the

travel industry," said Aeronology CEO Russell Carstensen.

"It's as good as I've seen - it's scalable, agile and driven by direct API services," he said.

It's based on a Microsoft platform meaning it already has the local financial requirements for Australia and NZ, he added.

TravelOperations Business MD Peter Holm said the partnership with Aeronology "releases synergies and empowers mutual capabilities way beyond the strengths of us individually".

"Together we will be able to deliver a seamless end-to-end solution in the cloud, with Aeronology delivering a leading front office solution connected to the travel administration, and TravelOperations delivering the finance platform," Holm added.

Carstensen said the pact was part of Aeronology's vision to reduce costs and drive productivity for travel businesses.

Abu Dhabi training

AUSTRALIAN travel advisors who become a certified Abu Dhabi Specialist by the end of the month will have the opportunity to win a \$200 Visa gift card, while those who refer a friend to the program also go into a draw to win a famil spot - see page seven.

Save the Date

23/24 SEASON LAUNCH EVENT

Register your interest today for Quark Expeditions 23/24 launch events.

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Today's issue of TD

TD today has six pages of news including a photo page from SeaLink and a full page from Abu Dhabi Tourism.



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Travel Daily

Tuesday 14th December 2021



Window Seat

STORMTROOPERS, Sith Lords and Jedis beware - it is now illegal to carry a light sabre in carry-on luggage in New Zealand.

According to an update last Fri from the NZ Aviation Security Service, light sabres have been banned along with all other "toys" that look like weapons.

That means you are also forced to check your nerf guns and even toy samurai swords, according to the service's fun suckers, who said that if they find them in carry-on "there is a chance the item will need to be voluntarily relinquished at the screening point".

The same goes for "gimmicky gifts" such as plastic grenades and fake guns that hold liquid or toiletries, the agency said.

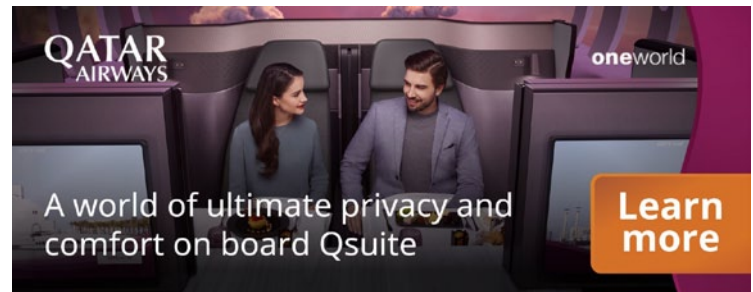
Travellers Choice is ready

TRAVELLERS Choice has emerged from the pandemic with 95% of its network intact and a clear vision for the future, according to MD Christian Hunter.

Speaking to members at the Travellers Choice Annual General Meeting last week, Hunter outlined a host of initiatives which had been undertaken over the last 20 months, including the addition of new marketing and lead generation features to the CT One B2B and B2C online booking platform.

Travellers Choice's marketing team also managed to garner more than \$130,000 in marketing campaign support from domestic tourism offices and preferred partners, while more than 30 preferred supplier promos rolled out via digital channels and support was provided for over 470 local marketing initiatives.

New no-cost legal resources for members were developed



along with new communication channels including a weekly webinar series which notched up 44 episodes in 2020/21.

"These activities have ensured that our company approaches the post-lockdown era with new skills and more efficient processes, positioning us to rapidly recapture lost momentum," Hunter said.

Travellers Choice members received a 100% discount on fees for the year, and Hunter warned that while the easing of some travel restrictions was encouraging, it would be some time until the trading environment returned to normal.

However the uncertainty could create an opportunity for travel consultants, who can "further enhance the value they have always provided and potentially reclaim business that has in the past gravitated to OTAs" by providing customers with the latest and most relevant info.

TTC appointment

THE Travel Corporation has announced that its NZ senior sales manager Damon Schmidt is relocating across the ditch to take the role of NSW Area Sales Manager for Trafalgar, Costsaver and Contiki.

No NZ prosecution over Ruby Princess

NEW Zealand Customs has concluded that Carnival Corporation staff on *Ruby Princess* as well as the company's local port agents made appropriate health declarations when the ship visited New Zealand at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MEANWHILE an Australian Federal Court class action brought against the operators of the ship by Shine Lawyers on behalf of passengers who were on board at the time will proceed to trial in Oct next year, after attempts at mediation proved unsuccessful.



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Abu Dhabi

Travel Daily

TN delays return

AIR Tahiti Nui has announced the further extension of its Auckland-Papeete flight suspension, with the carrier now saying it expects operations not to recommence until 01 May.

The carrier said it made the decision after reviewing the recent NZ Government reopening plan, which does not envisage the lifting of restrictions for foreign visitors until 30 Apr 2022 at the earliest (**TD** 25 Nov).

TN noted that its Papeete flights from Paris and Los Angeles continue to operate as normal.

CDC warnings

AMERICA'S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has added France and Portugal to a list of more than 70 countries listed as being of Very High Risk for COVID-19 infections.

The list of CDC hot spots also includes Germany and the UK - despite US infections also surging.

Cross Hotels signs major Vietnam deal

FLIGHT Centre's Cross Hotels & Resorts hospitality business has signed a deal with Vietnamese property developer Thah Trading & Tourism to manage two new properties with a combined total of more than 700 rooms.

The new Cross Long Hai and Cross Vibe Long Hai are located in Vung Tau, about two hours drive from Ho Chi Minh City, and are currently under construction for a planned opening in late 2022.

The all-villa Cross Long Hai will offer a "boutique resort experience," while the twin-tower Cross Vibe Long Hai will feature 658 rooms along with a spa, meeting facilities, swimming pool and fitness centre.

Other properties in the Cross Hotels & Resorts Vietnamese pipeline include the 470-room X2 Vibe Halong Bay which is currently scheduled to welcome its first guests in late 2023.

Norwegian says aloha to Hawaii



NORWEGIAN Cruise Line is officially counting down until its return to Hawaii, which will take place on 22 Jan with *Pride of America* (pictured).

Following the re-launch of direct flights between Australia and Hawaii this month, *Pride of America* will become Norwegian's 13th ship to return to sailing as part of the line's 'Great Cruise Comeback'.

Norwegian's seven-day Inter-Island roundtrip itinerary will again depart Honolulu every

Sat of the year, with itineraries through to Dec 2025 on sale.

Travellers can currently save up to 35% on Hawaii cruises with Norwegian, and can access USD\$2,900 in bonus value, including a complimentary beverage package, a shore excursion credit, specialty dining package, wi-fi package, with a third and fourth guest sailing at a reduced rate.

In addition, reduced deposits of only AUD\$149pp are available until the end of the year.

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- **Sales Coach** who will be responsible for managing a team of cruise sales consultants, developing individual coaching plans and providing resources and assistance.
- **Silversky Concierge, Asia Pacific (Air/Flights Specialist)** who will be responsible for dealing with guests and agents to coordinate travel arrangements and issue airline tickets for Silversea's air guests. Fares and ticketing expertise and Amadeus GDS knowledge is essential.
- **Trade Reservations Consultant** that will be responsible for trade reservations and selling Silversea Cruises as well as any related add-on products.

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Travel & Cruise
Weekly

CT adds ninth agency for '21



ANOTHER New South Wales-based travel agency has joined the CT Partners network, the group's ninth addition this year.

BTA Travel (formerly Trans Turk Travel) is a well-established family owned and operated travel agency specialising in corporate, group, and leisure travel, run by Yekta and Dilek Gokyildirim.

The pair said CT membership provides the agency with the support and expertise it needs to be successful, given its recent shift in focus to corporate travel.

They added that CT's core value of transparency echoes their own business approach.

Commenting on the addition, CT Partners CEO Matt Masson spoke of the group's delight at

welcoming the new addition.

"We recently surveyed our preferred supplier partners and received confirmation that our model continues to deliver strong value...our suppliers also appreciate our transparency and the integrity of our members" Masson added.

"We are pleased to extend the benefits of these close partnerships and superior buying power to all of our members."

The addition means that the now 28-strong group of independent agencies has grown its membership numbers by more than 45% in 2021 - a growth rate not seen among Australian travel agency buying groups since the early days of the now Helloworld-owned Magellan Travel Group.

Pictured: CT's Victorian members celebrating the company's latest addition with a pre-Christmas dinner at Hilton Melbourne Little Queen Street.

ZQN lounge update

WITH restrictions on travel to and from New Zealand looking to remain in place for some time, Queenstown Airport has rejigged its Manaia Lounge to make it available to domestic travellers.

Usually reserved for international passengers only, the lounge on the first floor of ZQN's terminal is owned and operated by ground handling firm Planebiz.

Kiwi domestic travellers are being offered discounted access priced at NZD\$25 per adult and NZD\$10 per child until 31 Dec.

The price increases to NZD\$30 per adult from 01 Jan until the international border opens and trans-Tasman travel resumes.

DL cuts basic Miles

DELTA Air Lines has announced that customers who purchase its cheapest Basic Economy tickets will no longer earn frequent flyer miles or status credits.

The new arrangements will also see those who book Basic Economy flights which they later need to change, receive a flight credit (minus a change fee) rather than losing the full value of their fare, according to a report in the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*.

Virgin & United partner

VIRGIN Australia is taking flight with United Airlines, with the two carriers to partner from Apr (**TD** breaking news).

The cooperation, subject to government approval, will triple the number of American cities Virgin's customers can reach, while providing United clients seamless connectivity to a range of Australia's most popular destinations.

The codeshare will see United offer Virgin travellers more non-stop flights from Australia, and 92 seamless one-stop connections to points across the US.

In addition to the ability to redeem and earn points & miles, eligible premier MileagePlus and Velocity Frequent Flyer members will also receive priority check-in, boarding, baggage delivery, additional baggage check allowance, and security clearance when flying on Virgin and United worldwide.

The new partnership will also see the two airlines offer reciprocal lounge access, work together to improve customer experience, and share best practices in areas such as innovation and sustainability.

Virgin Australia Group Chief Executive Officer Jayne Hrdlicka said the partnership was an exciting opportunity for the airline's customers.

"The United States is a key market for Virgin Australia, and we know Australians are excited to be able to travel overseas again, so we've created hundreds of new ways they can do that through United's extensive services to and from Australia," she said.

"Virgin Australia customers will have significantly more options for travel from Australia to the States, with more than three-times as many services available to them, which is great news for Australian travellers.

"We are grateful to have such a strong partner in United...

they have proudly been one of Australia's most loyal and long serving aviation partners and their market strength both to Australia and in the United States brings great value to our guests.

UA Chief Executive Officer Scott Kirby said he was especially proud that United was one of the only airlines to maintain a vital link between the two countries throughout the pandemic.

"Looking ahead, Virgin Australia is the perfect partner for United," Kirby enthused.

"Our partnership provides considerable commercial value for both airlines and a shared commitment to offer the best travel experience for our customers."

Enchanted named

PRINCESS Cruises' *Enchanted Princess* has officially been named in an original production, 'Our World, Enchanted'.

The fifth Royal-class ship in the Princess fleet was officially named today in a ceremony hosted by Celebrations Ambassador Jill Whelan and *Enchanted* Cruise Director Dan Falconer.

Our World, Enchanted introduced viewers to *Enchanted's* innovative features, and honoured the three members of The Explorers Club who will serve as the ship's godmothers - Captain Lynn Danaher, Jenifer Austin and Vicki Ferrini - who have been recognised for their achievements in expeditions, oceanography and mapping the world's oceans.

Australian trade partners were invited to tune into Our World, Enchanted with the Princess' local team at a champagne breakfast at Carnival Corporation's local headquarters in Sydney.

The production also included appearances by newly appointed Princess President John Padgett, and Group President Jan Swartz.

SeaLink expands into the Whitsundays

SEALINK has launched a new Whitsundays cruise experience, the SeaLink Big Island Day Tour, with a recent custom photoshoot of the cruise capturing breathtaking footage before the first cruise departs on the 16th December 2021.

Cruising in air-conditioned comfort, SeaLink's Big Island Day Tour takes guests on a scenic cruise through the stunning turquoise waters of the Whitsunday Islands stopping off at the famous Hill Inlet and Whitehaven Beach for a dip in the beautiful clear waters and relaxing on the powder-white silica sand.

The day cruise includes guided tours of both the Hill Inlet and South Whitehaven lookouts for breathtaking views, gourmet lunch, morning and afternoon teas served in air-conditioned comfort onboard, a rooftop observation deck providing 360-degree views, and full bar service throughout the duration of the tour.

Guests have full access to the vessel facilities throughout the cruise with a custom-built tender able to shuttle passengers to and from the vessel at any time. And for guaranteed comfort SeaLink has capped numbers to 85 even though the *Nancy Wake* vessel can carry 280 passengers.

Click [HERE](#) or [HERE](#) for more information.



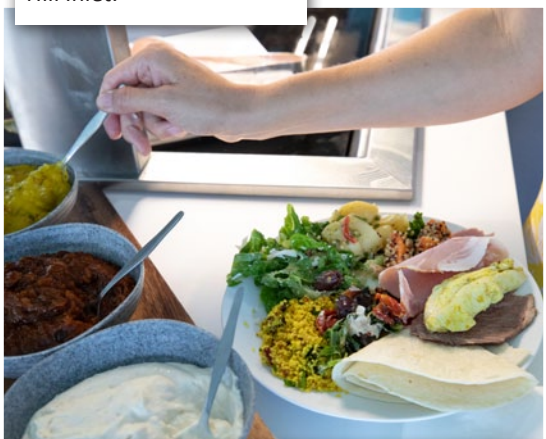
SEALINK'S Nancy Wake on the turquoise waters of Hill Inlet.



GUESTS relaxing on Whitehaven Beach.



SEALINK'S Nancy Wake cruises via Tongue Point.



DELICIOUS gourmet meals are served onboard for lunch and both morning and afternoon teas.



NANCY Wake at stunning Whitehaven Beach.



THE top deck of *Nancy Wake* provides 360-degree views of the beautiful Whitsunday Islands.



A FAMILY enjoying the crystal clear waters of the Whitsunday Islands.



GUESTS disembarking the SeaLink tender at Whitehaven Beach.



VIEWS from Hill Inlet lookout.



GUESTS viewing a stingray at Hill Inlet.



BREATHTAKING views over Whitehaven Beach.

Le Ponant transforms

PONANT'S three-masted sailboat *Le Ponant* is undergoing a major transformation.

Set to be entirely refurbished with a sophisticated new design by Studio Jean-Philippe Nuel, *Le Ponant's* new look sees it offer 16 staterooms - just half of the vessel's previous capacity.

One crew member per guest, a dedicated chef, delightful ports of call and enchanting experiences will also feature on the new *Le Ponant*, the company said.

Dusit animal pact

THAI hospitality group Dusit International has announced a partnership with World Animal Protection which aims to promote responsible wildlife tourism in each of its destinations.

The agreement will see Dusit offer eco-friendly community based activities such as trips to elephant conservation centres and "mindful trekking amongst nature," the company said.

Arches timed entry

UTAH'S Arches National Park in the USA will require timed entry tickets during the 2022 peak season, with the aim of spreading visitation out across the day.

A total of 2,700 vehicles will be able to enter each day, which matches the average during a busy period in 2019, with the move following surging demand.

The system will be in place between Apr and Oct, with the announcement following a similar initiative in nearby Zion National Park which will require bookings to hike its Angels Landing trail.

Peruvian measures

VISITORS to Peru must show proof of COVID-19 vaccination to enter any enclosed spaces, with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade confirming the acceptance of both Peruvian and international vaccine certificates.

A Smartraveller update yesterday also notes that to travel domestically either by land or air all pax over 18 require proof of COVID vaccination or a negative PCR test within 72 hrs of travel.

Know your brands

LOGOS are the main way that companies distinguish themselves, and some logos are so famous that you don't even need to see the company's name to know who it is.

See if you can identify these four logos.

PUZZLE

1



2



3



4



Know your brands: 1 Bundaberg Rum, 2 Chemist Warehouse, 3 Japan Airlines, 4 Reuters

ANSWERS 14 DEC

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.714

STRONG inflation in the USA is putting the Australian dollar under pressure, as investors focus on potential action from the US Federal Reserve which has a key meeting on Thu.

Most currency traders are in a "wait and see" mode, pending meetings by the Bank of England and the Swiss National Bank, while local releases this week include employment and consumer confidence figures.

Wholesale rates this week.

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| US | \$0.714 |
| UK | £0.538 |
| NZ | \$1.044 |
| Euro | €0.631 |
| Japan | ¥80.99 |
| Thailand | ฿23.90 |
| China | ¥4.516 |
| South Africa | 11.353 |
| Canada | \$0.905 |
| Crude oil | US\$71.67 |

Swan Hellenic sets sail for its rebirth

SWAN Hellenic's *Minerva* has set sail for Antarctica via Ushuaia for the cruise line's official rebirth (*TD* 23 Jul 2020), with her maiden voyage a 10-day New Year Antarctic sailing departing 29 Dec.

The ship was delivered on 03 Dec following her christening on 23 Nov, which was preceded by three days of sea trials.

Minerva is the first in a series of three ice-class cultural expedition cruise vessels featuring a 5-megawatt diesel-electric propulsion system, with selective catalytic reduction, and a PC5 ice-strengthened hull with extra-large stabilisers for enhanced passenger comfort.

EK resumes LGW

EMIRATES has relaunched services between Dubai and London Gatwick, with the route now being served on a daily basis using an Airbus A380 and plans to go double daily on 27 Jan 2022.

VisitBritain offers DMC grants

VISITBRITAIN has announced a new £300,000 grant program to assist inbound operators and Destination Management Companies (DMCs) to develop and market itineraries in conjunction with overseas tour operators.

Eligible applicants will be asked to focus on extending the tourism season and see new products incorporated into the 2022 sales effort of international tour operators in the target markets of France, Germany and the USA.

"Our priority is building back demand and visitor spending for those most likely to visit in 2022, and this fund will support the travel trade to sell Britain, driving immediacy to visit and bookings," said VisitBritain CEO Sally Balcombe.

Grants worth up to £40,000 per operator are available, based on 2019 sales of inbound packages - more at visitbritain.org.

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

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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!