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Win with Colorado!

COLORADO Tourism is offering the opportunity for a lucky *Travel Daily* reader to win a \$100 gift card just in time for Christmas.

Inspired by all the lockdown games and puzzles this year, Colorado in association with Aspen and Denver, has created a "Where's Wally?" style game in the form of the industry staring down COVID-19 with the message "this industry ain't big enough for the both of us!"

For more details and to enter the competition check out the intriguing image and questions on **page two** of today's *TD*.

NT opens up

TWEAKS to COVID-19 requirements for visitors to the Northern Territory will mean fully vaccinated travellers can now access key locations such as Uluru, Kakadu, Nitmiluk and Litchfield National Park, as well as previously announced high vaccination zones of Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs.

Travellers must complete a Border Entry Form, download the special G2G Now app and return a negative PCR test 72 hours before arrival, with additional tests within 72 hours of entry and again on day six.

The changes have seen the introduction of 66 "Exclusion Zones" protecting remote communities that have a vaccination rate of less than 80% for residents aged five and up.

The new arrangements are effective from today, with children aged 15 years and under also considered to be vaccinated for the purposes of entry into the Northern Territory only.

Swagman Tours to close

EXCLUSIVE

COVID-19 has claimed yet another travel industry victim, with Swagman Tours majority owner Wayne Hamilton confirming that the business has been placed into liquidation.

Long-time Africa expert Hamilton joined Swagman almost a decade ago as its 70% majority shareholder (*TD* 13 Apr 2012), and significantly expanded the operator's portfolio to encompass India, Sri Lanka, the Middle East and South America.

More recently the ATAS-accredited and AFTA member company, which has been in operation for 30 years, had

pivoted to also offer trips in Australia and New Zealand.

However in a heartfelt message sent to industry partners late on Fri, Hamilton advised that "we fought a good fight but just could not see the light at the end of the tunnel".

Geelong-based Scott Andersen from Worrells Solvency & Forensic Accountants has been appointed as liquidator.

"Swagman has been a great passion since me joining them as Managing Director and majority shareholder, but sadly comes to an end today," Hamilton said.

"I have enjoyed many years of both business and personal relationships...today one door closes for us all," he added.

Hamilton paid tribute to his fellow shareholder and director Soula-Jane Burgess as well as Marketing Manager Treacey Dowd-Hamilton for the "outstanding job they have both done to continue to operate Swagman and try and keep the business going through this pandemic".

"I know this is a terrible blow, and a tragic end to not only my business, but my whole passion and career, we are truly devastated, we have fought for so long to keep it going.

"This pandemic has wrecked so many lives and businesses, all of which has been completely out of our control," Hamilton added.

QF Rome request

QANTAS has formally lodged a request with the International Air Services Commission (IASC) for a capacity allocation allowing it to operate its recently announced seasonal non-stop services between Sydney and Rome via Perth (*TD* 15 Dec).

The carrier is seeking a five year allocation of three weekly frequencies on the Italy route, with the request detailing Boeing 787-9 departures from Sydney effective 22 Jun 2022 at 1755, arriving in Perth at 2050 and then onward to land at Rome's Leonardo da Vinci International Airport in Fiumicino at 0845 the following morning.

The flights will operate in addition to QF's existing code share services to Italy.

The IASC is now inviting other applications for capacity on the Italy route, with submissions sought for lodgement by 05 Jan.

Canada is calling...

DESTINATION Canada has enhanced its Canada Specialist Program training scheme for travel advisors, with the addition of a new Sales Companion.

The platform gives consultants 24/7 access to a comprehensive set of tools to help them retain knowledge, promote and sell Canada, as well as giving current information on the latest global travel conditions - more on the **cover page** of *Travel Daily* today.

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Today's issue of *TD*

Travel Daily today has four
pages of news plus a special
cover wrap from **Destination
Canada**.



More support for airlines

THE Federal Government this morning announced a series of grants programs for Australian airlines and airports, as part of a wider package which also extends the Regional Airline Network Support Program until 31 Mar.

The new Aviation Recovery Framework includes up to \$29 million to improve the safety and accessibility of airports, a further \$15 million to upgrade remote aerodromes across the country, and a further \$4 million to fund initiatives aimed at increasing the number of females working in the aviation sector.

Deputy PM Barnaby Joyce noted that since the onset of the pandemic the Government had committed more than \$5.3 billion in assistance to the aviation sector "in recognition of the critical role it plays in supporting jobs, driving economic growth and transporting people, goods and commodities to where they

need to be".

"The Government responded to calls for support throughout the pandemic, and now we are going a step further, ensuring the sector has the right policy and regulatory settings for aviation to thrive again," he said.

The Framework aims to help reduce red tape and costs for the industry, with a new Strategic Aviation Advisory Forum set to advise the Government on the progress of recovery as well as issues affecting the industry.

Peak body Airlines for Australia & New Zealand welcomed the announcement, with Chairman Graeme Samuel particularly highlighting the Government's commitment to regulation reform.

"History has shown that airlines do not just bounce back from global economic events, and the scale of losses from COVID-19 dwarfs everything that has come before," he said.

Gap year with AA

THE Accommodation Association (AA) says its new "Gappa" gap year program will be a game changer for job-seekers & the hospitality industry.

The scheme has been created to help solve the huge skills and workforce issues faced by the sector, matching job seekers and properties to provide 10 months of real-world paid experience.

Participants who relocate interstate also receive a \$50 per week allowance, and there's a \$500 completion bonus and a "Gappa Weekend" experience for the person doing Gappa plus three friends at the property.

Accommodation Association Chief Operating Officer, Cassandra Champion, said there were already more than 100 locations participating in the scheme.

"It's a unique way to focus on the fun and experience of working at all levels of a hotel," she said, with more info and regos available at aaoa.com.au.

EK ups BNE & PER

THE easing of Queensland Government restrictions on international travel has seen Emirates flights now operating at full capacity to Brisbane, while similar moves in Western Australia will see a return to 100% Perth capacity from 05 Feb.

EK is also boosting the frequency of flights to both cities from Dubai, with the services set to increase to five times a week.

"Emirates is excited to increase our inbound capacity to Brisbane and Perth as part of the continued return of international travel across the country," said Divisional Vice President Australasia Barry Brown.

"As the demand for international travel grows by the day, we're offering greater connectivity for eligible Australians looking to return home and be reunited with their loved ones," he said.

EK also recently restarted daily SYD and MEL flights.



As we head towards 2022, telling COVID "This industry ain't big enough for the both of us" couldn't be more timely as we gear up for border openings and international travel resumption. And Colorado Tourism echoes this message in this fun illustration starring the local team and plenty of the state's hidden gems that are waiting for Australians to rediscover them.

Colorado Tourism Office and partners, Aspen and Denver, are offering TD readers a little Christmas cheer with one \$100 Mastercard e-gift card up for grabs, as well as five bespoke Colorado puzzles.

To enter the prize draw, correctly answer the three questions below and send to comps@traveldaily.com.au

Can you spot Denver's outdoor natural amphitheatre? What's its name?

How many rocks can you count around the natural hot spring pool?

How many destination logos are in this Colorado scene?

Omicron forces travel rethink

CONSUMER confidence in travel has plummeted in recent weeks, with almost three quarters of Australians reconsidering their plans, according to a new survey conducted by TTF Australia.

The poll, reported in today's *Australian*, looked at the responses from about 1,500 people about whether they would be going away over the upcoming holiday season.

Just 2% of those surveyed said they planned to head overseas, while more than 50% of respondents had "no confidence in making any interstate travel arrangements," the poll found.

Asked about which states and territories were most likely to have an extreme reaction to the outbreak and shut their border at a moment's notice, about

52% voted for Western Australia, followed by 19% for Queensland.

"I don't think there's any doubt that there's a huge trust gap for people in terms of certainty around borders and what governments may do," said TTF CEO Margy Osmond.

The rise of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 had seen 20% of respondents postpone planned trips altogether.

Rex now flying "golden triangle"

REGIONAL Express will operate its first jet flight from Sydney to Brisbane this afternoon, completing the key route network which connects Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane as the busiest services in Australia.

Rex will operate triple daily SYD-BNE services and a double daily service on weekends, with fares leading in at just \$59 including 23kg of checked baggage, carry-on and refreshments.

A celebratory event at SYD this afternoon will include a special presentation to Kay Hull AO, who was Member for Riverina when Ansett collapsed and was "instrumental in getting Rex in the air in 2022".

Her role as a champion of Rex as an essential transport service for regional Australia will be honoured with the unveiling of a caricature which adorns the aircraft operating the route.

Ponant insurance

PONANT has introduced a new COVID-19 evacuation and luggage repatriation insurance policy, giving passengers worldwide coverage for medical costs and repatriation if they contract the virus during a cruise.

The commissionable initiative complements the existing mandatory travel insurance requirement, and is valued at \$45 per person to cover trip components booked with Ponant.

Skal Melb caps off its year



THE Skal Club of Melbourne hosted a Christmas Dinner on Thu, which coincided with the Club's 60th anniversary.

Held at the city's elegant Athenaeum Club, Melbourne, many former Skal Presidents, as well as Honorary World President Max Kingston, were in attendance.

The event saw the inaugural awarding of the 'Skalleague of the year' which went to industry icon Jane Tanti for her contributions to the Club in the last 12 months.

"This sold-out event was

the perfect way to end what was a challenging year for the industry" said Club President Tara Strickland, adding that despite the pandemic it had been a "very successful year for the Club which attracted a record number of new members."

Pictured top: Tony Geraghty, Ian Murton, Denise Scrafton, Kevin Dale, Kingston, Strickland and Mark Windsor, while **below** are Bruce Fox, Craig Farrell, Julie Pratt, Emma Whiting, Rob Cecconi, Pete Rawley and Ingrid Berthelsen.



Self-isolation easier

INTERNATIONAL travellers arriving into NSW and Vic will no longer be required to self-isolate for 72 hours, under updated protocols which from tomorrow will require them to only isolate until they receive a negative COVID-19 PCR test.

SQ sells plane parts

PIECES of retired Singapore Airlines aircraft will have a new life with 15 Singapore-based retail brands as part of a new Upcycling Project which aims to repurpose items to create unique retail products and art pieces.

New Aer Lingus regional operation

IRISH flag carrier Aer Lingus has announced a new franchise agreement with local carrier Emerald Airlines which will see the reintroduction of about 11 regional UK and Ireland routes.

Operating as Aer Lingus Regional, from 17 Mar 2022 the initiative will utilise ATR72-600 aircraft, flying passengers on many routes formerly served by the now defunct Stobart Air which was placed into liquidation in Jul this year.

Services will connect Dublin to Glasgow, Edinburgh and more.



Window Seat

WHEN you think of the world's best surf spots, destinations such as O'ahu, Jeffrey's Bay and Tahiti come to mind, but somewhere which probably doesn't is Lake Tahoe.

Located in the United States' Sierra Nevada Mountains, Tahoe is known to be quite frigid, especially this time of year, but that does not stop the freshwater lake's loyal surfers.

The conditions are only "right" a few times per year, and last week was one of those occasions.

Donning their neoprene, surfers chased waves for five bone-chilling hours, and by the end of the day, were fighting through a near-blizzard to get their barrels in.

One wonders why the residents don't just head for nearby Coastal California, but at least if you're surfing Tahoe, you don't have to worry too much about socially distancing!



UA serves Bondi

UNITED Airlines has announced that Beach Beer Bondi XPA is now available on all of its flights from Sydney to San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The boutique craft beer will be offered until Mar, with the pale ale locally brewed with a special yeast sourced from UA's hometown, Chicago.

The new Aussie on-board offering complements the newly announced alliance between United Airlines and Virgin Australia (**TD 14 Dec**) which becomes effective in Apr 2022.

Be polite on board

THE Australian aviation sector has launched a joint campaign and code of conduct to promote respect for frontline airline staff.

The "No More Carry On" initiative follows an "increase in disruptive and abusive behaviour towards airline crew, airport teams and other passengers during the pandemic," with the campaign backed by Jetstar, Qantas, Rex, Virgin Australia and Australian airports alongside the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and the Australian Federal Police - for more info see a4anz.com.

IT LOOKS like corporate specialist Orbit World Travel has been on Santa's "nice" list!

Orbit heads Michael Chase-Smith and Lisa Story recently hosted lunch at the Breakfast Creek Hotel for the team.

In attendance was Santa Claus himself, who will hopefully be bringing some positivity to the travel industry ahead of next year - as opposed to the lump of coal the sector has received the past two years!

Free US pax tests

INCOMING passengers at some US airports are being offered free at-home COVID-19 test kits, under a new Centers for Disease Control initiative aimed at helping travellers comply with requirements.

Currently available at Miami, Chicago, Dallas and Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, the tests are also set to roll out on a wider basis in the coming weeks, according to the CDC.

At present CDC guidance urges that vaccinated arrivals get tested three to five days after travel "to help identify imported cases of COVID-19 and stop the spread of the virus".

Unvaccinated travellers flying into the country who are not US citizens are required to have a compulsory test unless they have recovered from the virus in the previous 90 days.

Pandaw floats again

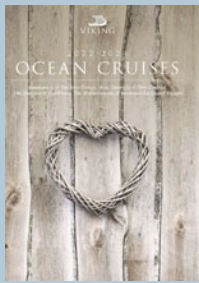
PANDAW Cruises, which seven weeks ago announced it would cease trading (**TD 26 Oct**) has risen from the ashes, having secured sufficient funding to keep afloat until Sep 2022 when it hopes to restart operations.

CEO Paul Strachan said the Southeast Asian river cruise specialist had been "inundated with hundreds of goodwill messages from regular passengers" after revealing it would not be able to continue, while "several would-be investors emerged, keen to acquire this iconic brand".

The money secured will help cover lay-up and maintenance costs, with Strachan saying bookings for the 2022/23 season were strong, with many departures already sold out.

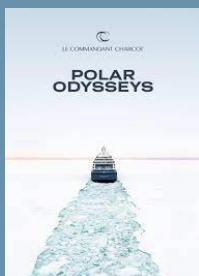
BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Viking - 2022-2024 Ocean Cruises

Viking's 2022-2024 Ocean Cruises brochure offers a glimpse into the world of the cruise line, revealing enriching itineraries covering some of the most fascinating locations on the planet. Detailed in the brochure are all of Viking's published ocean cruises for the next three years, including Australia, as well as the Americas, Asia, the Mediterranean, New Zealand, and Scandinavia. Guests can also experience one of Viking's Grand Voyages - the 37-day Far East & Alaska cruise, the 79-day Australia, Asia & Alaska sailing, and the 93-day Grand Pacific Explorer journey.



Ponant - 2022-2023 Le Commandant Charcot

Ponant's new 2022-2023 *Le Commandant Charcot* 'Polar Odysseys' brochure details landscapes that defy description, exclusive experiences & activities aboard the ship, and travelling with scientists researching the extreme polar regions. The 180-page brochure provides an in-depth look at the expedition experience, onboard facilities, innovative technological features and trailblazing itineraries available on the world's first hybrid-

electric LNG-powered luxury polar exploration ship. The brochure is now available to peruse online.