

The perfect trip wins

KOREA Tourism Organization (KTO) Sydney has launched its Seoul Travel Itinerary Competition for Australian and New Zealand travel agents and tour operators, with participants in the running for a Samsung Galaxy Tablet.

For a chance to win, agents need to create a seven-day travel itinerary for a client from the South Korea Travel Specialist ANZ Facebook page **HERE**.

The competition ends 15 Aug.



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Agents hold key to luxe

TRAVEL agents will become increasingly important to wealthy travellers as they seek to navigate the bureaucracy and complexities of travelling in a post-COVID world, according to a new survey compiled by Altiant on behalf of luxury travel trade show ILTM Asia Pacific.

Close to half of the Asia Pacific-based buyers canvassed in the study, including a portion in Australia, said they had seen an increase in enquiries for luxury travel from people who had not previously used a travel advisor, citing factors such as knowledge, flexibility and convenience as reasons to seek an agent.

Analysis of the study also suggested travellers are likely to remember the companies who treated them well during the pandemic, which has the potential to be beneficial in the longer-term for agents.

One in four luxury travellers from Australia said travel agents would be an influential factor in planning an international holiday within the next year, ahead of countries like Singapore (23%) and South Korea (17%), but a long way behind luxury travellers in China (53%).

Only 44% of Aussies said they planned on travelling more in the future to make up for lost time, trailing all of the local markets, whereas more than half of local luxury travellers said they intend to do the majority of their travel domestically over the next year, more than any APAC country.

Discussion of the data at the ILTM APAC conference last week also suggested travel agents were in agreement that special

occasions such as weddings and celebratory family trips would be major growth areas when restrictions are relaxed, as well as creating customised itineraries to ensure agents remain a necessary part of the booking process.

On the topic of quarantine, wealthy Australian travellers were shown to be the most averse, with the survey suggesting only 34% are prepared to observe a short isolation period on arrival to another country, well behind markets like South Korea (66%).

Aussies were also less keen on taking a PCR test every 48 hours while travelling abroad than other regional markets (35%), while 70% said they would accept the requirement of a vaccination passport before travelling overseas, trailing all markets except Hong Kong (68%).

The study also found that the 25-49 year-old luxury demographic would be most likely to return to int'l travel first.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news.

Bonailie partnership

BONAILIE, the global travel, tourism & hospitality community platform founded by Julie King of Julie King & Associates, has announced a new partnership with the UK-based Association of National Tourism Offices and Representatives (ANTOR).

ANTOR has 60 members, with the collaboration aiming to provide a forum to help shift the global tourism industry to a 21st century mindset, King said.

Bonailie aims to bring one million purpose-led leaders and decision makers from across the industry together to unite for a common purpose.

Sign up at bonailie.world.

BA carbon funding

FOUR aviation decarbonisation projects supported by British Airways have been short-listed for UK Government funding.

The UK Department of Transport Green Fuels, Green Skies (GFGS) has awarded the funding to develop the country's first sustainable aviation fuel production facility, with a total of £15 million up for grabs to fund feasibility and engineering plans.

Inviting Travel Agents

What does a bright future look like for travel agents in a post pandemic world?



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Source: nib Travel Brands Survey, May 2021, Australians comfort levels around travelling in a plane for up to 6 hours in the next 3 months.

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More cruise canx

CELEBRITY Cruises and Viking Cruises have become the latest lines forced to pull the pin on their upcoming Australian and NZ seasons, with both companies citing ongoing uncertainty around border reopenings - more details in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

"At a tipping point": AFTA

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents has joined a chorus of business leaders and peak bodies, including NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet, calling for the return of the JobKeeper program.

Reiterating its calls to support travel agents and industry businesses (**TD** yesterday), AFTA noted that with half of the country's population currently in lockdown, "it's definitely tougher than when the Government moved to action JobKeeper" 16 months ago (**TD** 31 Mar 2020).

While the support measures announced to deal with the current situation aim to assist individuals, "at an individual business level there is nothing," the Federation said.

"The reality is that there are so many business costs that don't

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Quark Expeditions

Not a LOT of comm

LOT Polish Airlines has turned its back on the travel trade, slashing travel agent commission on long-haul tickets to just 3%, and 0% on other services.

The carrier said its 2022 commission levels "will be decided upon at the end of 2021".

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Skytrans wants Qld

SKYTRANS, the Cairns-based carrier backed by NRL star Johnathan Thurston, has lodged a tender to operate government-funded regulated routes in Qld.

Five routes are up for grabs, with Skytrans challenging incumbent Rex Airlines for the rights in a battle which has erupted into a public confrontation.

Rex Deputy Chairman John Sharp has sent an open letter to Qld communities, accusing local MP Robbie Katter of defamation over comments about the Rex fleet, on-time performance and lack of support for local causes.

stop rolling in the door."

It's understood that the Federal Government's Expenditure Review Committee met yesterday to discuss a range of options, with Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg saying while a return to JobKeeper was not on the table, "we continue to assess all our payments, both business and income support, and determine the right payments for the right circumstances".

More from AFTA on **page four**.

An Inspired webinar

DEB Fox and Susan Haberle from The Inspire Collective will chat with **TD** Publisher Bruce Piper and Richard Taylor on a Travel Community Hub webinar this Thu, discussing the travel sector of the future.

Set to be significantly more fun than home schooling, the session is scheduled for 1pm AEST on 29 Jul - to register **CLICK HERE**.

First hydrogen ship

MSC Group has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with shipbuilder Fincantieri to design and construct the world's first oceangoing hydrogen-powered cruise ship.

A feasibility study will take place initially with the goal of creating zero-emission voyages "in certain areas", as well as the development of the related hydrogen bunkering infrastructure.

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Window Seat

AUSTRALIANS have had a lot of time to spend at home lately, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy is here to help, publishing its first video game.

ITALY: Land of Wonders launched on Fri for iOS and Android, aiming to spread the virtues of Italian art, music and culture for future travellers.

Targeted to both children and adults, *ITALY* is available for free in 11 languages.

The game centres on Elio, a lighthouse keeper who, with the help of the 20 sparks he retrieved the night before, lights up the sun - [CLICK HERE](#).

Tucan Travel IP For Sale



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EOI Closes 2 August 2021
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Half price suites

HILTON Hawaii is currently offering 50% discounts on its suites for stays between 08 Aug and 30 Apr 2022 when bookings are made by 03 Aug.

The sale also includes up to 30% off standard rooms and is available to book now for its Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Alana - Waikiki Beach and Hilton Waikoloa Village properties.

The deals are available on stays of four nights or more, with more information available [HERE](#).

Five years of trips

FLIGHT Centre is offering one Aussie the chance to score five years' worth of domestic or international holidays when they enter its Win Your Next Five Years of Holidays competition.

To be eligible for the prize, participants have to visit [HERE](#) and fill out a form to be in the running to win, which will see the lucky person receive a \$6,000 travel voucher each year for the next five years.

The competition runs until 12 Sep and the winner will be revealed 13 Sep.

Jun orders take off

AIRCRAFT orders last month were reportedly the highest since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

With airlines rebooting their long-term plans again, orders in the first six months of 2021 are 64% higher than during the same period in 2020.

Most of the new orders are for Boeing 737 MAXs and Airbus A320s, with Boeing accounting for the vast majority of the new aircraft demand which were largely placed between Nov 2020 and Jun 2021.

A total of 461 Boeing orders were taken in the first six months of this year, versus 164 for Airbus.

Overall, 632 commercial aircraft were ordered last year compared to 1,542 in 2019, a fall of 59%.

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An industry lockdown read!

EXCLUSIVE

THE Dorchester Collection's local representative Parris Fotias has made the most of the crazy COVID-19 era over the last 16 months, with his regular encouragements to the industry having been published in a new book which "chronicles the frustrations of living through a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic".

Fotias told **TD** that in the early days of the pandemic, as the severity of COVID-19 began to sink in, "I felt compelled to reach out to as many of our clients and partners as possible, just to check in on their wellbeing".

Rather than cluttering up their inboxes as he feared, the recipients of his regular missives strongly encouraged him to continue, and the collated outcome has morphed into *Adventures Through Covid*.

Norwegian is back

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) has operated its first departure in more than 500 days, with a *Norwegian Jade* voyage leaving Athens on Sun for a new sold-out Mediterranean season.

Jade is the first of nine NCL ships to be positioned in the region over the next year, with the cruise line's CEO Harry Sommer saying welcoming guests and crew on board had been "one of the most memorable moments of my over 30-year career".



In Australia the book is available for purchase directly from the author, and is also available globally on Amazon, Booktopia and Book Depository.

Fotias has dedicated the book to "all my friends in the travel industry...despite being routinely undervalued and systematically overlooked, you inspire courage".

"This is just another bump in the road, and this too shall pass."

Check it out at adventuresthroughcovid.com.

Minor Portugal sale

OAKS Hotels & Resorts owner Minor International has sold two Tivoli hotels in Portugal.

The sale and leaseback deal includes a 20-year management agreement for Minor's NH Hotels.

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Kirkhope launches air safaris



VETERAN charter flight touring operator Kirkhope Aviation will later this week formally launch a new Australian Air Safaris touring brand, with the business also expanding its current Moorabbin-based offering to include departures from Sydney's Bankstown Airport and additional Gold Coast operations.

The planned 2022 program will feature more than 100 scheduled tours, with bookings set to open from this Fri 30 Jul.

Kirkhope Aviation has operated tours from Melbourne to the outback for more than 40 years, initially to the Kimberley and Top End, and also to the Red Centre with a fleet of twin-engined aircraft operated by the Kirkhope team (**pictured**).

The portfolio also now features Cape York, Tasmania, the Bass Strait islands, the Pilbara and coastal and outback South

Amadeus China deal

AMADEUS has announced a new partnership with Chinese hotel information systems firm Shiji Group to provide new content from Chinese hotels and hospitality operators to the Amadeus Travel Platform.

Many hotels in China which are not currently in GDS run on Shiji software, with the Amadeus pact said to benefit an "increasing number of travel agents who are looking for richer hotel accommodation options in China".

Australia, while Kirkhope also offers private and corporate air charters across the country.

Founder Tony Kirkhope said all air touring would operate under the new Australian Air Safaris name, while charters will continue to operate under the Kirkhope Aviation brand.

He advised past clients of the change in an email this week, saying "we look forward to having you join us in this exciting new chapter of our business".

The new program will offer early bird discounts for bookings prior to 30 Sep - for more details see australianairsafaris.com.au.

US grants program

THE US travel and tourism sector has welcomed the allocation of US\$750 million in Economic Development Administration grants to help accelerate the recovery of the country's travel, tourism and outdoor recreation sectors.

The funding is part of the America Rescue Plan signed into law by US President Joe Biden in Mar, and includes US\$510 million in non-competitive state tourism grants to help states quickly invest in marketing, infrastructure, workforce and other projects to stimulate travel.

An additional US\$240 million will be available in competitive grants to help communities invest in infrastructure or other projects to aid the industry's recovery.

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AFTA UPDATE

from the Australian Federation of Travel Agents

WITH half the Australian population in lockdown, work continues on seeking finalisation of payments for Grants 1 and 2 plus ongoing support for 2021.

As the calls for the return of JobKeeper or something of a similar ilk grow, including from NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and an expanding list of business leaders and peak bodies including AFTA, the fact is that we are at a tipping point.

We know from our members that it's tougher than it has ever been. It's definitely tougher than when the Government moved to action JobKeeper. The support measures currently in place might work at an individual level but at an individual business level there is nothing.

JobKeeper worked. It provided the necessary structural support to protect jobs. It provided the cash injection to business based on payroll to keep the business ticking over. The reality is that there are so many business costs that don't stop rolling in the door.

"Without a travel agent, you're on your own" has never been truer. It will continue to become even more meaningful as consumers and corporate Australia start looking to plan their travel again and need help



afta
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to navigate not just the current refund and credit tangle but vaccine acceptance, entry restrictions and the rest.

Consumers need us now more than ever to help and,

to support the massive effort being put in right around this country by our travel agents and businesses, we need wider and ongoing government support.

Sydney's lockdown now looks to extend well through Aug if not beyond, while those living in Greater Melbourne and parts of Victoria have spent over six months in lockdown.

We welcome the news and the proof that the vaccine rollout is picking up speed. We are very close to 40% having had their first dose with over 16% fully dosed. For the first time, weekly vaccination doses administered is sitting at a million doses.

The finish line for those Australians who want to be vaccinated receiving protection is in sight. And you know what happens when we reach that threshold of 70/80% or whatever measure National Cabinet eventually agrees on - it means travel restrictions ease, and we can travel again. So let's all #BeTravelReady.

Outrigger aloha

OUTRIGGER Hospitality Group is firmly on the acquisition trail, confirming the revival of its plan to take over the Sheraton Kona Resort & Spa at Keauhou Bay.

The transaction on the 509-room property is expected to settle in Aug, which will then see it rebranded as Outrigger Kona Resort & Spa.

The deal follows this week's Outrigger acquisition of three resorts in Thailand (**TD** 20 Jul).

Southwest + Sabre

US LOW-COST airline pioneer Southwest has begun offering its flights through the Sabre GDS platform for the first time ever, with the rollout meaning Southwest tickets can be purchased in all three major travel agent reservation platforms.

Southwest content is fully integrated within the Sabre system, with the initiative aiming to capture the ongoing rebound in corporate travel in the USA.



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Malaysia air taxis

MALAYSIA Airports will study the feasibility of hosting air taxi services within the country.

The airport company has signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding with vertiport company Skyports and aircraft manufacturer Volocopter, with the parties to conduct a feasibility study examining suitable vertiport solutions to enable the safe take-off and landing of passenger EVTOL vehicles, considering factors such as demand.

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.736

THE AUDUSD is at one-week highs ahead of tomorrow's Australian inflation numbers and the US's Federal Reserve decision later this week.

The Australian dollar rebounded in major markets overnight, recovering from early lows yesterday to gain 0.2% against the US dollar.

The AUDEUR and AUDJY also both recovered from early losses to end flat for the session.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.736
UK	£0.532
NZ	\$1.047
Euro	€0.623
Japan	¥81.36
Thailand	฿24.12
China	¥4.727
South Africa	10.82
Canada	\$0.919
Crude oil	US\$74.50

Taking travel to new heights



FLIGHT Centre's corporate travel division FCM has recently shown the industry how important it is to scale new heights, literally, with the company's logo flying proudly on Broad Peak in Pakistan.

The adventurous team from the company's Belgian arm (**pictured**) hoisted the FCM branding more than 7,000 metres above sea

level on the mountain which is the 12th highest monolith in the world.

Broad Peak is located on the border of Pakistan and China.

Domestic bump

SYDNEY Airport saw 905,000 domestic passengers pass through its gates during the month of Jun, a sizable increase on the 140,000 recorded in the same period last year.

Despite the domestic rally fuelled by a relatively restriction-free month, the numbers were still down by 56.8% on Jun 2019, which saw more than two million domestic travellers pass through the aviation hub.

Jun also saw 83,000 international travellers recorded, with the tail-end impacted by travel restrictions on the trans-Tasman bubble as a result of COVID cases primarily in NSW.

When compared to 2019 numbers, overseas travellers were down 93.3% for the month.

Crystalbrook offer

CRYSTALBROOK Collection is encouraging those in rural New South Wales to book a luxury getaway, as they currently "have their own backyard to themselves".

Those who use the promo code 'LOVENSW' can get a breakfast for two, a late check-out, complimentary bicycle hire, complimentary self-parking, and a free upgrade to a Park or Harbour room, when booking at Crystalbrook Kingsley.

For more information on the promotion, **CLICK HERE**.

Win a \$5k roadtrip

THIS week is the final chance for travellers to win \$5,000 from Nissan toward a roadtrip.

The Great Aussie Road Trip competition, run in partnership with BIG4 Holiday Parks, will allow the winner to spend the cash how they want to, choose from a selection of Nissan vehicles, and spend two nights at any BIG4 park - enter **HERE**.

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