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See the big smoke

IN A bid to lure more Aussie travellers back to the country's big cities, Tourism Australia has launched the latest iteration of its Holiday Here This Year campaign fronted by power couple Hamish and Zoe Foster-Blake.

The City Escapes multichannel marketing push will focus on the allure that each city offers in the way of restaurants, bars and cultural attractions, with the campaign to be supported by key partners including Qantas Holidays, Mastercard, Ticketek and Trip.com Group.

The new TVC can be viewed at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

Aurora unveils more

ANTARCTIC Ross Sea & Commonwealth Bay voyages will operate round-trip from Hobart aboard *Greg Mortimer*, the first time an X-BOW passenger ship will sail Australian waters, Aurora Expeditions has announced.

Revealing details of some of its itineraries and activities as part of its inaugural Australian season (TD 01 Mar), Aurora's program for the season includes sea kayaking, clearbottom kayaking, scuba and shark diving, climbing, helicopter rides, and snorkelling with sea lions in Hopkins Island, & dolphins in Kangaroo Island.

Running from Jun to Mar, the season begins in northern Australia on 08 Jul, before heading to the south coast of the country in Oct, and rounding out with Antarctica in Dec.

TA chief quarantine push

TOURISM Australia MD Phillipa Harrison has today called on the country's travel and tourism sector to lead the conversation around opening up international borders, suggesting measures which may facilitate more inbound and outbound passengers as COVID-19 infection rates decline.

Speaking at the organisation's 7th annual Destination Australia Conference in Sydney, Harrison noted that despite global vaccine rollouts, "quarantine will be with us for some time yet" and it is vital to come up with alternatives.

"We must find solutions, like a tailored quarantine system for a cohort of long-stay travellers such as working holiday makers, business travellers or students.

"We need to consider how we might free up capacity at hotels and have returning Australians quarantine at home," she said.

She said if 'travel bubbles' or 'green lanes' are implemented, "let's consider solutions where we allow travellers from other markets with appropriate vaccinations to directly enter Australia after quarantining in these bubble markets first."

Harrison also addressed the thorny issue of recalcitrant state leaders, saying "on the

assumption that snap decisions on state borders continue without a nationally consistent approach, maybe we should consider green lanes just to those states who are ready and can provide certainty to international travellers".

While noting these are all potential solutions ultimately in the hands of the country's political leaders, "what we can do, as an industry, is start the conversation," she said.

"My rally cry is this - talk to people about what COVID normal looks like and what the benefits will be to the tourism sector and Australia more broadly."

Harrison warned it was highly likely that "the rest of the world will be open before us" meaning it was vital for Australia to remain in focus for prospective travellers.

When the pandemic fades, "competition will be fierce, and we must be ready to capture that pent up demand," she concluded.

Princess S America/ Antarctica season

PRINCESS Cruises has announced its 2022-2023 South America & Antarctica season, which goes on sale 10 Mar.

Highlights of the new season include the Andes & South America, with *Sapphire Princess* set to visit 19 destinations in 10 countries on six itineraries.

The season also features an overnight in Lima with an optional overland tour to Machu Picchu; and the Antarctica & Cape Horn, which offers four days cruising around the continent and a special holiday sailing that covers both Christmas and New Year's Day.

Further highlights feature Princess' 32- and 33-night Grand Adventure, which overnights in both Buenos Aires and Lima; and the Cape Horn & Strait of Magellan, including an overnight in Buenos Aires, and scenic cruising of the Amalia Glacier.

For more info, call 13 24 88.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news including our PUZZLE page and a photo page from **Atout France**.

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Mississippi Cruises



62 DEPARTURES

Expedition Cruises



62 DEPARTURES

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Tehan promises "bridge"

TOURISM Minister Dan Tehan today acknowledged the pain that Australia's travel and tourism operators are going through, and confirmed that the Government continues to look at targeted measures to help the sector.

Speaking at Tourism Australia's Destination Australia conference at Sydney's International Convention Centre this morning, he stopped short of detailing a timeline for any plan, only saying discussions were ongoing with his parliamentary colleagues and that he would make an announcement "in the next few weeks".

Tehan noted recent economic data which indicated a strong rebound in many sectors.

"But we know parts of our economy are hurting through no fault of their own...it's the result of the international border having been closed for 12 months, and also the impact of state border closures and economy-

wide lockdowns in states and territories," the Minister said.

"That hurt, that pain is going to continue for a little while yet, but there is light at the end of the tunnel, there is hope.

"What we want to do as a Federal Government is work with you to make sure we're building that bridge to get you through the next three, four, five months until we've had the vaccine fully rolled out across the nation and we can really begin to open up," Tehan said.

He confirmed that JobKeeper had been assisting the sector over the last 12 months, but reiterated that the program will be terminated at the end of Mar.

As well as possible Federal support, Tehan is engaging with state and territory leaders to "make sure that border closures are a last resort," as well as ensuring they play their part to help the industry survive.

QF seeks govt funds

QANTAS is actively campaigning for a special support package for the aviation sector when JobKeeper ceases on 28 Mar.

"We currently hope that there are a range of measures introduced in a very targeted way for our sector and our employees that will get us through," Qantas Head of Government Relations Andrew Parker said.

The airline has also warned it will be forced to lay off more staff if domestic borders continue to be shut and international borders remain closed beyond Oct.

SA tourism park

SOUTH Australia will soon have a new \$9.6 million water and holiday park attraction in the town of Mannum.

The development is being pushed ahead by Landn Pty Ltd and will include flyboarding, water slides, rapids & 100 cabins. The park will open in late 2022.

Riviera VIP program

RIVIERA Travel River Cruises will debut new VIP benefits for premium river guests next year.

Offering premium suite passengers luxury additions, Riviera Plus is targeted at guests who book in deluxe and superior suites, as well as all other upper-deck cabins on offer.

Benefits include the use of a smart handset with maps, a translator and many more.

Oceania gets exotic

OCEANIA Cruises has opened its Tropics and Exotics collection 2022/23 for sale globally, boasting a range of curated sailings including a special 35-day Australian circumnavigation.

The Aussie Adventure departs Sydney on 12 Dec 2022 and voyages around the continent stopping off at plenty of popular cruise ports like Port Arthur, Albany and Cairns, with prices starting from \$10,660ppts.

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Sydney hotel dips

SYDNEY hotel occupancy rates are struggling to get above 35%, according to Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW CEO Michael Johnson.

Speaking at a special briefing of the sector in Sydney this week, Johnson said his organisation is continuing to lobby for more govt support as hotels are still impacted by border restrictions.

Wyndham Rewards

WYNDHAM Hotels & Resorts has expanded its loyalty program to include an additional 15,000 properties where its guests can redeem stays for points.

Wyndham Rewards members can now access more than double the number of accommodation provided through its relationship with North American vacation rental platform Vacasa.

Properties on Vacasa's platform currently span North America, Belize and Costa Rica.

All smiles at Journey Beyond



LAST night this quartet of lovely ladies experienced Sydney Harbour in style, aboard the Journey Beyond Cruise vessel.

Today's Destination Australia conference has seen some of the Adelaide-based Journey Beyond team come to the NSW capital, providing the perfect pretext for a pre-event evening experience

of the group's Sydney all-inclusive premium dining experience.

The 78-foot, 90-passenger vessel currently operates dinner cruises four nights a week, as well as three weekly lunch cruises.

Journey Beyond's Alicia Triggs, Fiona Watson and Justine Lally are **pictured** with Sophie Treasure from Tourism Australia at **left**.



Window Seat

WITH so few flights taking off on Earth at the moment it's hard to even contemplate trips going further than country to country, but that's just what eccentric Japanese businessman Yusaku Maezawa is planning.

The ambitious entrepreneur is putting out the feelers for eight people to join him as the first private passengers on a trip around the moon aboard one of Elon Musk's SpaceX flights.

The journey is scheduled to blast off in 2023 and is billed as going further away from Earth than any previous human being.

Maezawa is no stranger to unusual projects, having last year launched a documentary to find a new girlfriend to go into space with him, only to pull the pin because of "mixed feelings".

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2022/23 Cruises

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MTA back on the road



MOBILE Travel Agents (MTA) was out in force last week, attending a much-awaited Virtuoso event on the Gold Coast.

Postponed multiple times due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gold Coast leg of Virtuoso Travel Week Australia saw a team of 22 attendees from MTA, which included co-founders & Managing Directors, Roy and Karen Merricks, who are **pictured** flanking Virtuoso Senior Vice President Global Operations Michael Londregan.

Held at the InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort (**inset**), the event gave travel advisors the opportunity to meet with many new domestic suppliers and learn about the variety of product now available through Virtuoso.

Advisors also enjoyed face-to-face catch-ups with colleagues



and suppliers.

“A huge thanks to Virtuoso for persevering and making sure this event took place,” Karen Merricks enthused.

“The event was well-received with our advisors enjoying the opportunity to learn about such a quality range of domestic suppliers as well as the bonus of meeting up in person after such a long time.

“The last time we all met up was our MTA 20th anniversary conference exactly one year ago,” Karen added (**TD** 02 Mar 2020).

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Travel Daily

ATPCO adds COVID

ATPCO has unveiled new content on its Routehappy platform which aims to give the industry information on which countries and airlines require proof of negative COVID-19 tests and/or vaccinations.

The dataset is now available to all integrations of the Routehappy content, “to ensure that it instantly serves the industry as flight shopping requirements evolve,” the company said.

Currently the content is standardised for 102 airlines covering over 75% of global ASKs.

Las Vegas sell-off

LAS Vegas Sands Corp has announced the US\$6.25 billion sale of The Venetian Resort Las Vegas along with the Sands Expo and Convention Centre.

The company said it was pivoting its focus into its Asian portfolio including a significant presence in Macao & Singapore.

The Venetian’s operating company is being purchased by private equity firm Apollo Global Management for US\$2.25 billion, while the land and real estate assets of the Venetian is acquired by VIVI Properties for US\$4b.

Voyages wows the crowd



YESTERDAY afternoon Voyages hosted a special event in Sydney to launch its new “Just Wow” brand campaign (**TD** 16 Feb).

The world-first initiative includes close collaboration with the traditional owners of Ayers Rock Resort, challenging the perceptions of Uluru as “just a rock” by highlighting the abundance of other experiences on offer.

Voyages Indigenous Tourism CEO Matt Cameron-Smith told **TD** it’s the first time that the local Pitjantrara language had been used in an advertising campaign, with the tag line translating literally as “welcome to our beautiful country”.

The Anangu community has been closely involved in many aspects of the campaign, which

focuses on not just what visitors can see and do in the Red Centre, but “how it makes you feel,” Cameron-Smith said.

Voyages Chief Marketing Officer Ana Sofia Ayala, who is **pictured** with Cameron-Smith at the event, said the new brand platform aimed to actively drive a sense of urgency to encourage visitation.

“By showcasing the multitude of things to do and see from five-star culinary experiences to stargazing with an Indigenous guide, and sunset heli-tours to exploring Uluru on a Segway, we are also letting our audience know that this is a destination for all ages and interests”.

One of the new TVCs, with music composed specially by the Anangu Iwiri choir, is now live at traveldaily.com.au/videos.

It's time to seas the Tahitian moment

PAUL Gauguin Cruises, Atout France and Tahiti Tourisme hosted Sydney's top travel agents and media at a Tahitian luncheon at the Sofitel Darling Harbour's exclusive Club Millesime last Fri. Fifty guests were treated to an elegant luncheon celebrating the French Polynesian Islands and its culture through a typical Tahitian menu.

Complete with Mumm Champagne and Mai Tai cocktails, attendees enjoyed performances by traditional Tahitian dancers, before being enchanted with a video presentation showcasing the luxurious Paul Gauguin Cruises, announcing its new 2022 schedule to sail the pristine lagoons of Tahiti islands.



PATRICK Benhamou from Atout France surrounded by Tahitian dancers.



FAMED French chef Guillaume Brahimi with Deb Corbett from Paul Gauguin Cruises.



TINA Heyer from Entire Travel Group, Caroline Brunel from Tahiti Tourisme and Brad McDonnell from Entire Travel Group.



GLORIA Chiu & Corry Fung from Chung Pak Travel with Maxime Farrenq from Paul Gauguin Cruises.



JULIE Donaldson, Cruise Traveller; Sharon Godden & Gail Kardash, TravelView; Pamela Spencer, Travel the World and Juliana Higgins, Luxury Escapes.



TAHITIAN speciality, King Fish ceviche à la Tahitienne served in a coconut.



GRAHAM Wilson from Accor and Greg Brady from Sofitel Darling Harbour.



SARAH Elfassy, Sophie Almin and Claire Kaletka-Neil from Atout France flanked by Tahitian dancers.

Where in the world?



THIS stunning island in the Celebes Sea is the second largest in this Marine Park.

Though an overnight stay on the island isn't possible, it's a popular day trip for birdwatching enthusiasts, trekkers and divers.

But what truly sets it apart from other islands is the majestic view

of archipelago from its highest peak - that view alone draws tourists year-round.

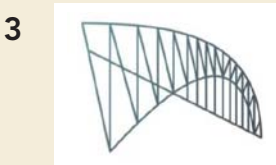
The island is the home of the nomadic local tribe also known as the 'Sea Gypsies', with their settlements being the only visible small cottages in the area.

Do you know where this is?

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.



Today's puzzle page is brought to you by Malaysia Airlines



Malaysia Airlines search

C	O	M	P	E	T	I	T	I	V	E	F	A	R	E
M	H	G	R	O	U	P	P	O	R	T	A	L	I	Y
R	V	D	R	A	C	T	I	D	E	R	C	Q	B	H
M	W	T	E	N	D	T	O	E	N	D	R	D	G	U
P	Y	M	F	O	C	T	I	C	K	E	T	S	H	B
N	V	B	O	F	C	S	N	Z	A	G	Q	J	B	U
N	A	D	H	O	C	R	E	Q	U	E	S	T	R	R
R	I	N	F	A	N	T	F	A	R	E	C	F	P	W
Y	T	Q	G	R	O	U	P	T	R	A	V	E	L	X
D	R	A	O	B	H	S	A	D	M	B	I	N	Z	Z
M	M	F	C	U	S	T	O	M	R	E	P	O	R	T
X	Z	C	A	U	T	O	M	A	T	I	O	N	X	C
F	L	E	X	I	B	L	E	D	A	T	E	S	S	J
S	T	E	N	P	A	S	S	E	N	G	E	R	S	Y
A	Z	Q	U	I	C	K	R	E	S	P	O	N	S	E

SEE if you can find these words. They are hidden horizontally, vertically and diagonally, forwards and backwards.

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GROUPTRAVEL
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Whose animal is this?

THE komodo dragon has inspired numerous myths and folklore and is the largest lizard in existence.

Part of its massive size comes from being the apex predator on the islands that they are native to, and having no other predators to contend with.

They are only found in one place in the world in the wild, and not surprisingly are the national animal of this country.

Do you know whose national animal is the komodo dragon?



ANSWERS 03 MAR

Pub quiz: 1 Universal Studios Hollywood, 2 Netherlands, 3 Paraguay, 4 b) Almost 500, 5 Building (by floor area), 6 Las Vegas, 7 Boston, 8 c) Marrakesh, Morocco, 9 MGM Grand Las Vegas, 10 Chopsticks

Seen it at the movies: Predator

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

Digging in for hotel boom



PRO-INVEST Group has commenced construction on the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Sunshine Coast.

Located in the heart of downtown Maroochydore, the upcoming nine-storey hotel on First Avenue will feature 181 rooms, a roof-top swimming pool, a bar & dining venue, conference & function facilities, parking and ground-level retail space.

"We believe Holiday Inn Express & Suites Sunshine Coast is a great addition to Maroochydore," said Co-CEO Jan Smits.

"Particularly as the region transitions from a largely leisure-based to a more diversified market with major growth in businesses establishing themselves in the city centre to take advantage of the large-scale infrastructure projects currently underway," she added.

"The Holiday Inn Express brand is ideal for the destination as its mid-scale positioning will make it highly-suitable for targeting business, meetings and leisure

travellers."

Pro-invest and IHG Hotels & Resorts has partnered on 11 Holiday Inn Express hotels in the past, as well as the new properties of Hotel Indigo and a voco, both located in Brisbane.

Pictured: the sod is turned on Holiday Inn Express & Suites Sunshine Coast.

McGowan says no to unified approach

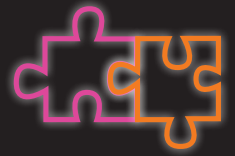
WESTERN Australia's Premier Mark McGowan has rebuffed suggestions made by The Business Council of Australia that the country needs a national framework on borders to avoid any further economic damage.

"I think they are wrong, we have the strongest economy in the nation and have recovered virtually all of the jobs lost during the pandemic," he said.

There is a National Cabinet meeting in Canberra tomorrow where border controls are tipped to be a hot button topic.

NEED A DISTRACTION AMID THE DOOM AND GLOOM?

Check out our daily puzzle page.



Travel Daily

Best COVID airports

THE recently announced Airport Service Quality awards run by Airports Council International handed out 33 inaugural winners for Best Hygiene Measures.

The winners were selected on the basis of a new hygiene questionnaire submitted by passengers, with Australia missing out on securing any gongs for the Asia Pacific region.

Instead China, India and Indonesia were the big winners for APAC, with Beijing Daxing International Airport, Soekarno-Hatta International Airport and Chandigarh Airport all winning.

Spain was awarded with the most recognition in Europe, walking away with six awards from a pool of 15 gongs.

Japan pleads with China to stop tests

JAPAN has formally asked China to cease conducting anal COVID-19 tests on its citizens upon entry to the country.

Many Japanese nationals have complained the procedure had caused them "psychological distress", according to government officials, after China started carrying out anal swabs at the start of the year.

Last week, China also denied it had required American diplomats to undergo such tests after US media reported some had complained about the procedure.

The practice is not known to be used anywhere else in the world, with health experts denying the tests are any more effective.

APPOINTMENTS



WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Outrigger Hotels & Resorts has named **Markus Krebs** as the General Manager of **Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort** in Honolulu. Krebs was most recently the General Manager of the 400-room Waldorf Astoria Monarch Beach.

Inspiring Vacations has appointed **Carolyn Giblett** as its new Head of Customer Experience. She joins the company after a long and successful stint in sales and customer experience leadership roles at Flight Centre Travel Group.

Annabel Sullivan has taken on a new Executive Officer role with **Cultural Attractions of Australia**. She brings 30 years of sales, marketing and senior management experience within the tourism and business events industry to the role.

Dorsett Hospitality International has announced the appointment of **Michael Foster** as the General Manager of **Dorsett Gold Coast**, the brand's debut hotel in Australia. Set to open in the last quarter, Foster will be leading the direction for the hotel's pre-opening.

For confidential tip offs, connect with *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)

