

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news.

OAG flight alerts

GLOBAL travel data provider OAG has announced the launch of Flight Info Alerts, a "new detection and notification product that delivers changes to flight schedules in real time".

The new platform is claimed to be the only product on the market that enables customers to get instant updates, so they can handle data volatility on demand.

"Alerts is a much needed solution for our customers who manage bookings or operations, and anyone who relies on the accuracy of these vital changes to drive their business," said OAG CEO Phil Callow.

"Volatility of this data over the last 18 months has become an increasing challenge," he noted.

The new data will shortly be available via OAG's Flight Info API - more details at oag.com.

Flybe rebirth

BRITISH regional carrier Flybe, which was placed into administration in the early stages of the pandemic (TD 06 Mar 2020), will relaunch early next year and be based in Birmingham.

The carrier's new CEO is Dave Pflieger, who headed up Fiji Airways between 2010 and 2013.

Pflieger said Flybe planned to operate a fleet of Dash 8-400 turboprops to a range of European destinations.

Virgin holds the 33% line

VIRGIN Australia says it's spent the last year "clearly focused on retaining 33% domestic market share," as it now stands up all staff, ramps up capacity with seven new 737s and recruits 600 more roles (TD breaking news).

"We are really positive about travel restarting as borders open more fully," CEO Jayne Hrdlicka told the carrier's employees in a live streamed event yesterday.

"We have used our time well while the industry was quiet, and are well advanced on all aspects of our transformation strategy.

"We fully intend to continue growing with demand to ensure we operate at roughly 33% of the domestic market...this enables us to continue to deliver the right mix of destinations with high frequency to support both our business and leisure guests.

"It also means continued jobs

growth at Virgin Australia, and our team are delighted to be welcoming new family members to the organisation," she said.

Hrdlicka noted that VA had announced 12 new domestic routes since Sep, with short haul international operations resuming next month to Fiji, followed by scheduled flights to New Zealand and Bali in 2022.

TTC groups push

THE Travel Corporation (TTC) says it's experienced a surge of enquiry for group travel, with the TTC Groups division seeing a range of trends including group itineraries focusing on a single country including the Nordics, Canada and the UK.

Other popular requirements include increasing demand for extended family groups and reunion travel, trips that offer authentic interaction and have a positive impact on communities, as well as agents hosting their own group departure to give clients extra peace of mind.

TTC Head of Groups, Robyn Brown, also cited the rise of new emerging group specialist agents, with many enquiries coming from non-traditional partners who are benefiting from the company's guaranteed pricing in local currency, ongoing logistical support and opportunities for strategic collaboration across multiple agents selling into a single departure - 1300 780 283.

Crown offer upped

CROWN Resorts Limited this morning confirmed an unsolicited and non-binding proposal from funds advised by Blackstone Inc to acquire all of its shares by way of a scheme of arrangement for \$12.50 in cash per share.

Previously Blackstone had offered \$11.85 per share (TD 22 Mar) and then \$12.35 per share (TD 10 May), with the suitor already holding 9.99% of CWN.

The Crown Board said it had "not yet formed a view on the merits of the proposal".

GBT unveils low-carbon initiatives

AMERICAN Express Global Business Travel (GBT) has announced a new service which promises to "put corporates on the pathway to reduced business travel emissions, while still enabling travel".

Dubbed Green Compass, the offering incorporates a dashboard to give travel managers "granular insight" into the factors that drive emissions from corporate travel, and help to identify the best actions for decarbonising their travel programs.

Suggested options, which vary depending on a company's individual travel patterns, can include shifting to sustainable hotels, flying on lower emission aircraft, substituting rail for air, procuring sustainable aviation fuel and carbon offsetting.

Consultants from Amex GBT's Global Business Consulting arm will work with travel managers to help develop a strategy to achieve the targeted reductions.

"The world needs to travel and trade again, and we want to help businesses do so in the smartest and greenest way possible," said GBT Global Business Consulting VP Julie Avenel.

She noted that most CO2 products only indicate emissions produced by travel, whereas Green Compass "enables companies to set targets, track progress and take action".

More corporate travel news on **page seven** of today's TD.

WHITSUNDAYS

Big Island Day Tour

SEALINK

COMING SOON!

✓ Bookings Open 26 November 2021 ✓ Travel dates from 11 December 2021 ✓ Departing from Shute Harbour



Window Seat

THOSE planning their next surf trip in Australia should hang 10 for a moment and check this totally bodacious package out.

To celebrate a recent partnership between Airbnb and Surfing Australia, Aussie pro surfer Owen Wright will host a family for a gnarly summer getaway, a special four-night family beach stay at his Byron Bay Paradiso Property, from the 04-08 Jan 2022.

The stay includes a surf session at one of Wright's favourite local surf spots with the man himself, as well as the chance to follow a specially curated list of his favourite hidden gem surf spots.

Bookings open at 12pm AEDT on Wed 24 Nov, so try not to wipe out with anticipation when scrambling to get your spot.

Travelex eyes growth plan

EXCLUSIVE

AFTER a lean period of sales due to the pandemic, foreign exchange company Travelex plans to ramp up its expansion ambitions in the Australian market over the next 12 months.

Speaking with **TD** earlier today, the company's MD for Australia and New Zealand Darren Brown said there was an opportunity for the brand to expand its footprint in the local market and take advantage of the predicted rebound in international travel.

"We plan to expand in a very prudent and constructive manner but we are talking with our partners, that being Helloworld in Australia, about how we can strengthen that partnership for expansion and we are also talking to Australia Post...they have over 3,000 locations so the question is how do we power more Australia Post services," Brown said.

"Then for the Travelex

stand-alone stores, we are in conversations with landlords about how we can enhance those shopping experiences in malls and airports - so we are definitely looking to expand and where we see a gap in the market we want to be there to fill it - both online and offline".

Travelex has also used the pause in travel to reevaluate its digital appeal, with Brown revealing the company is working on launching enhanced click and collect services in 2022, allowing travellers to order currency online and pick up from one of its 50 ATM locations in Australia.

After falling into administration just over 12 months ago (**TD** 07 Aug 2020), Brown believes the company, which has since been restructured under a new ownership model, has put the business in better shape to cope with the challenges associated with disasters such as COVID.

"We have some very sophisticated and financially viable shareholders who are very focused on managing a business that reflects both customers, employee and shareholder interests, and so strategically, probably for the first time in years, we are having conversations at a board level about how we can expand, provide value...and we are energised with recovery," he said.

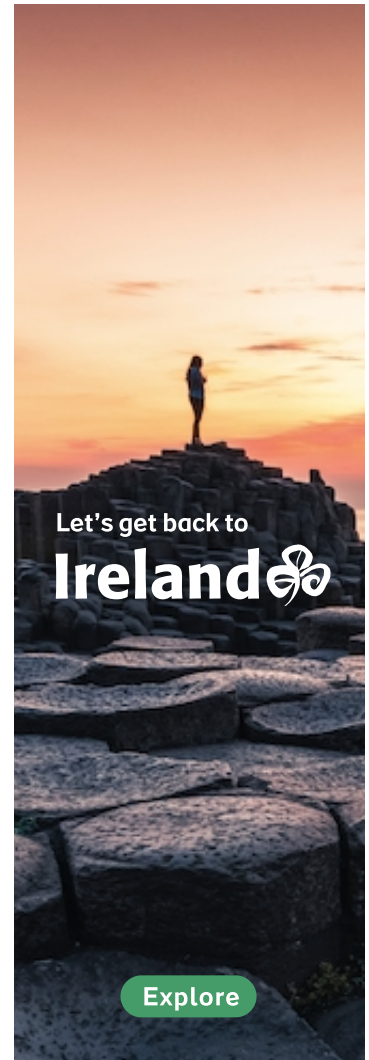
Meanwhile, while crypto currencies have disrupted many sectors, Brown said Travelex has recently received board approval to explore crypto opportunities in Australia, with the plan to launch new services in the market in either Q1 or Q2 of next year.

Closure on the nose

SUPPORT for international border closures has fallen significantly over the last year, according to the latest Ethics Index report for 2021.

While in 2020 Australians showed strong support for closing up shop, 2021 showed the mean score dropped from 67 to 42.

The same report flagged the biggest ethical challenge in the next year would be balancing freedom of movement with efforts to contain COVID-19.



TWO Golden Tickets to be won!

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For your chance to win 2 tickets to our event send in a 'Still Standing' themed - photo, video or poem to competitions@traveldaily.com.au

Winner will be announced on Friday 26th November

*All guests must be fully vaccinated in line with NSW Government mandate.

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Tourism jobs fair

TOURISM Accommodation Australia (TAA) will be on the hunt for workers at the National Tourism & Hospitality Virtual Jobs Fair next week.

To be held on Thu, TAA Chief Executive Officer Michael Johnson said the virtual jobs fair could not come sooner.

He claimed the hotel, hospitality and tourism sectors have more than 300,000 vacancies, and without international students and working holidaymakers, the industry is relying on locals.

"The event will target people displaced by COVID-19, job seekers, school-leavers, and anyone who might want to consider a career in tourism and hospitality," Johnson said.

"It is free for anyone to jump online and all our big hotels will have virtual booths where you can talk to staff about the opportunities in our great industry," he added.

CX Two Together

CATHAY Pacific is inviting travellers to fly greener with its Green Friday, Two Together promotion.

Available for Australian travellers, Cathay Pacific is offering up to 50% off the second passenger and complimentary carbon offset when engaging with the promotion on flights purchased directly until 29 Nov.

Up to 30% off Business class is also available.

For further information, see cathaypacific.com.

Finnair goes all in

FINNAIR will operate all of its Singapore flights with vaccinated travel lane (VTL) status, from 29 Nov to 26 Mar.

Those who have an existing booking on a flight to Singapore as of 29 Nov will be contacted by Finnair about their options after the VTL application process has been finalised.

Fiji's Rebel yell



AUSTRALIAN actress Rebel Wilson has been announced as the new face of Tourism Fiji ahead of the country's reopening.

After being closed to international travellers for almost two years due to COVID-19, Fiji is finally set to reopen its borders next month, and Wilson has joined the crusade designed to

boost international travel.

"The campaign is called Open for Happiness, and reflects exactly what Fiji does like nowhere else in the world - welcome our guests with a genuine warmth and Bula spirit that will leave you in love with Fiji and its people," Tourism Fiji Chief Executive Officer Brent Hill said.

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SQ, MH boost codeshare

MALAYSIA Airlines and Singapore Airlines this morning unveiled a major expansion of their codeshare partnership, including a reactivation of joint services between Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

The boosted pact also includes 15 onward domestic points in Malaysia, seven destinations in Europe and two in South Africa.

The move follows the announcement of a new Vaccinated Travel Lane arrangement between the countries effective 29 Nov, with the airlines noting an ongoing increase in demand for travel.

"Partnerships with like-minded carriers are an integral part of Singapore Airlines' strategy," said Singapore Airlines CEO Goh Choon Phong, with the expanded cooperation to offer enhanced connectivity and greater convenience for customers.

Effective 29 Nov, Singapore

Airlines customers will be able to progressively connect on Malaysia Airlines services onward to Alor Setar, Bintulu, Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Terengganu, Kuantan, Kuching, Labuan, Langkawi, Miri, Penang, Sandakan, Sibul and Tawau.

Then from 01 Jan 2022 Malaysia Airlines customers will be able to connect on SIA services from Singapore to Barcelona, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Moscow, Munich, Rome and Zurich, as well as Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Other points in both carriers' networks will be progressively added to the codeshare arrangements, the airlines said.

The codeshare deal is part of a wide-ranging commercial agreement between MH and SQ signed in 2019, which will see them undertake a joint business arrangement between their respective countries, subject to regulatory approvals.

US tourists fined for Colosseum coldies

TWO American travellers have been fined a whopping €800 for illegally entering Rome's famous Colosseum after hours.

The pair, aged in their mid-20s, were spotted by passers-by drinking beer on the second tier of the iconic attraction at about 5.30am local time.

Italian police confirmed the offenders had climbed a high railing and then walked up the 2000-year-old steps to enjoy a birds-eye-view of the city while they sank a few cold ones.

Bedgood joins VA

BRIDGET Bedgood has taken a new role as Partnership Manager for Velocity Frequent Flyer.

Bedgood, who previously worked at Hamilton Island and was most recently Tourism Sales Executive at Taronga Zoo, was also NSW Branch Chair of Young ATEC.

Wyndham Fiji open

CLUB Wyndham Denarau Island in Fiji will open on 01 Dec, just in time for the resumption of Fiji Airways flights from Australia.

The pandemic downtime has seen significant upgrade work at the resort, including a transformation of the Dua Tale pool restaurant and bar, replacement of in-room whitegoods, a new Sugar Shack serving beachfront treats and a new inflatable screen for Sun Dive-In Movie nights.

Refreshed activities on offer include kayak and stand-up paddleboard safaris, basket making, kava demonstrations, coconut leaf weaving, volleyball and Fijian language classes.

There's also a kids' club, day spa, gym, swim-up pool bars and a number of restaurants and bars across the property.

The timeshare resort is utilised by the almost 60,000 members of Club Wyndham South Pacific.



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We're Here for Allstralia

SOON-TO-LAUNCH budget Australian carrier Bonza has revealed the phrase "Here for Allstralia" will be injected into its upcoming advertising and marketing campaigns.

The airline has flagged plans to launch campaigns in the coming months as it prepares to formally introduce itself to the market next year, and open up ticket sales in the first quarter of 2022.

Bonza has also revealed the details of a new customer survey, which canvassed the opinions of Aussie travellers about where they would like to see air routes launch across the country.

Top responses included a service from Hobart to Broome and Busselton to Cairns, as well as links to destinations like Albury, Tamworth, the Whitsunday Coast, Uluru, Bundaberg, Newcastle, Hervey Bay, Townsville, Cairns, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Orange, Ballina Byron, Port



Macquarie, Toowoomba, Coffs Harbour, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Darwin, Launceston, Karratha, Alice Springs, Mildura, Broken Hill, Exmouth, Devonport, Mount Isa and Hamilton Island.

"We've had requests for flights to all corners of the country proving that Aussies are keen to explore their own backyard," CEO Tim Jordan said.

"Our focus is firmly on providing leisure travellers more low-cost options for discovering new and especially regional destinations."

The survey also asked Aussies about what they thought of Bonza's impending arrival, with phrases "about time" and "beauty mate" topping the list.

APT puts pedal to the metal



TRAVELMARVEL has launched its first dedicated small group 4WD program, offering two new outback journeys in Qld to Cape York and the Gulf Savannah.

Trips are capped at 20 people and are led by expert guides, with the brand stating its familiarity with taking travellers through outback Australia made the new tours a great fit.

"We have more than 50 years' experience of travelling into outback Australia and it is exciting for us to be moving into 4WD journeys," Product Manager Cher Lontok said.

"We are still seeing strong demand for domestic travel, especially to remote outback Australia, so we're confident these two new tours will be very popular," she added.

The seven-day Cape York and the Tropical North by 4WD tour first travels from Cairns along the Bloomfield Track, driving through North Queensland rainforest on route to the historic Cooktown.

An Indigenous guide then takes guests through Quinkan Country to discover the area's best rock art sites.

Meanwhile the eight-day Gulf Savannah Discovery by 4WD tour, explores the Undara Lava Tubes, the 190,000-year-old site that was once described by Sir David Attenborough as the eighth wonder of the world.

The trip also includes a cruise on the Gulf of Carpentaria from Karumba, and a visit to rugged Cobbold Gorge.

Savings of \$400pp are on offer for bookings made soon.

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Silversea docks with agents



SILVERSEA Cruises recently invited a contingent of travel partners and supporters along for some early Christmas festivities at the Museum of Sydney.

The cruise line's NSW team was in attendance, as was a 60-strong band of agents who not only enjoyed the drinks and canapes, but were also treated to an update on Silversea's latest product developments.

Obviously no night would be complete without the chance to win some prizes, with a splattering of lucky advisors walking away with gifts from giveaways conducted throughout the night.

Pictured: Silversea's Director of Sales ANZ Steve Richards, with itravel Business Travel Manager Megan Catterall and Penny Spencer from Spencer Travel.

VA selects Etihad

ETIHAD Engineering has been selected by Virgin Australia to manage the heavy maintenance contract for its Boeing 737 fleet.

The terms of the contract covers maintenance and modifications on more than 30 nose-to-tail aircraft for the carrier, and is timed as the airline prepares to reboot its overseas operations.

"As domestic and international flying ramps up from an Australian perspective, VA is as focused as ever on safety and on ensuring our aircraft operate at, and are maintained to, the highest possible standard," VA's Chief Operations Officer Stuart Aggs said.

Etihad Engineering said it continues to develop its technical capabilities with both Boeing and Airbus aircraft.

FX fees a decisive factor

THREE quarters of travellers have reported paying unexpected foreign exchange (FX) charges when purchasing a flight, according to a new report released by Amadeus.

The same study also found that many travellers contemplate abandoning travel plans when FX costs reach 5% of the cost of a flight, with 14% of travellers admitting they have paid more than 10% of a flight's total cost in the past.

Using a dummy airline website to conduct the research, Amadeus enlisted the help of psychological research firm Innovationbubble to study traveller behaviour from both a conscious and subconscious level to gauge reactions to different levels of FX fees.

The experiment showed that travellers begin to notice FX fees

when it reaches 3% of the total ticket price, with "alarm bells" sounding as the fee approaches the psychologically important threshold of 5%.

The research also demonstrated a pattern of preference in favour of airlines over banks, with 59% of travellers stating they would prefer an airline to handle the currency conversion rather than a bank, while 43% indicated bank-leveled fees were too high.

"Whilst the overall flight price and product attributes remain paramount, our research demonstrates that getting FX wrong can be a real turn-off for travellers," Innovationbubble Strategic Customer Insights Director Jamie Halliday said.

"When the rate reached the 5%... travellers began to actively seek alternative travel options."

Read the full report [HERE](#).

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CORPORATE UPDATE

CTM rolls out tech tools

CORPORATE Travel Management has announced the rollout of an enhanced technology suite, including a new CTM Approve global approval system. Showcased at this week's 2021 Global Business Travel Association conference in Orlando, Florida, the proprietary system captures global PNR data from multiple sources, collating them into a feed for CTM's risk management systems "allowing for duty of care no matter where your travellers are," the company said.

"We know that having visibility into travel in one place will be vital for our customers to meet duty of care requirements in a post-COVID environment," said CTM Global Chief Technology Officer, Mike Kubasik.

"It extends CTM's global capabilities and global solutions in response to that environment, and - as international travel begins to increase - creates a targeted solution for travel managers in need of a global view," he said.

The new CTM Approve pre-trip approval system provides a

Sabre NDC addition

SABRE has today announced the launch of NDC content in its GetThere booking tool, allowing business travellers to select policy-compliant NDC offers in addition to traditional content.

Sabre Travel Solutions Senior Director of Product Management, Saunvit Pandya, said the availability of NDC via GetThere "demonstrates our commitment to broadening access to leading content for our customers, no matter how they want to connect."

Under the update hotel and ground transportation elements can also be easily added to bookings in a unified shopping flow, while corporate travel agents also have the ability to fulfil, ticket and service NDC bookings via the Sabre Red 360 point of sale solution.

single global view of all approvals anywhere in CTM's 100+ countries including the Americas, Europe, Asia and Australia/NZ.

The ability to source PNR data from anywhere in the company's global operations within minutes is "cutting edge in the corporate travel industry," Kubasik said.

One large client is already using the system, leveraging data from 25+ countries to enable a standardised and globally consistent approval process, the company confirmed.

The new system was developed by CTM's global and North American tech team, which continues to focus on client migration from the recently acquired Travel and Transport (TD 29 Sep 2020) to CTM technology.

Proud GBT moment

AMERICAN Express Global Business Travel (GBT) has become a member of Pride in Diversity Australia, a national non-profit employer support program for LGBTQ workplace inclusion.

GBT says it's the first Australian TMC to join the organisation which specialises in HR and organisational change.

"As the first TMC to become a member of Pride in Diversity Australia, we are signalling to our industry peers it is time to step up and challenge each other to embrace individual uniqueness and create a more inclusive industry that we can all be proud of," said David Carceles, GBT's VP Global Services & Traveller Care for Asia-Pacific.

MEANWHILE GBT has also announced the expansion of the functionality of its mobile app to include expense management for clients using the Neo travel and expense management suite.

The company claimed the move made it the only global TMC to offer a "proprietary end-to-end travel and expense management solution on mobile".

Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly's fortnightly consumer magazine called *Keep Dreaming* is specially designed for agents to send their clients.



CWT shuffles deck

CWT has announced the departure of its President and Chief Operating Officer, Niklas Andreen, as it restructures some of its senior executive roles.

Nick Vournakis has been named as Chief Customer Officer, while Derek Sharp will become CWT's Chief Traveller Experience Officer.

Both positions will report to CEO Michelle McKinney Frymire effective from 01 Dec.

Vournakis was formerly MD of Global Customer Development at CWT, while Sharp was Chief Operating Officer for CWT's Roomit hotels division.

Frymire said "separating Customer and Traveller Experience into distinct functions will flatten our leadership structure and bring focus to our strategic initiatives going forward."

She paid tribute to the departing Andreen, saying "the transformation that he and his team have achieved positions us for ongoing success".

BCD alert app

BCD Travel has launched a new BCD Alert app which aims to meet "rising demand for 24/7 traveller security".

The smartphone app has been created for travel and security managers, giving real-time coverage of active travellers mapped against destination risk and incidents to enable managers to monitor and respond remotely.

The app delivers emergency alert levels via push notifications, giving a list of impacted travellers who can then be contacted directly from the device via SMS, email or click-to-call.

"BCD Alert is an example of our overarching strategy to push targeted insights and intelligence to travel managers based on specific thresholds and criteria," said BCD VP of Travel Data and Insights, Woody Tatum.

BCD Alert is globally available to customers of the TMC, on both Apple and Android mobile phone platforms.

Win a Balcony stateroom on the Azamara Onward Pre-Inaugural Cruise!

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Prize includes Balcony stateroom for 2 on the 5 night pre-inaugural cruise. Minor Prizes will be awarded each week of one x \$100 VISA e-gift card.

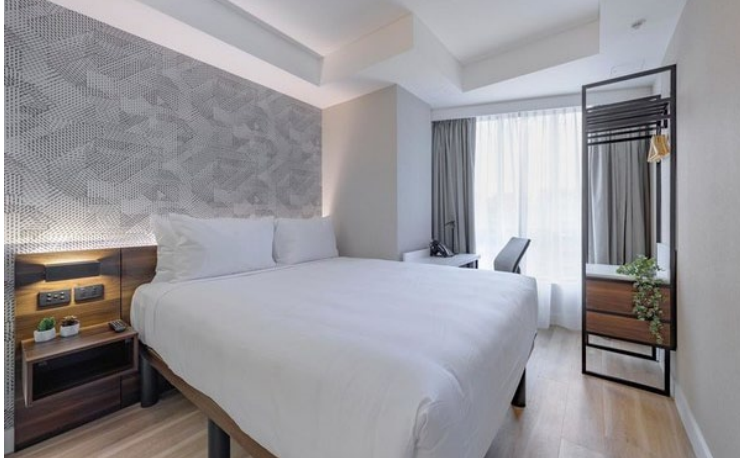
So get your entries in early. To enter please tell us in 25 words or less why you need to win an Azamara cruise in Europe? Creativity counts!

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Hotel Kith Darling Harbour debut



SINGAPORE-BASED hotelier MetroResidences has opened the boutique Hotel Kith Darling Harbour in Sydney this week.

The launch marks the company's debut in the Australian market, describing its first local property as offering an "experience that sets itself apart from the cookie-cutter formula".

Customisation is a major pillar of the brand's value proposition, offering guests the ability to select preferred check-in methods (online or in-person), and submit special room or amenities requests in advance, with customers also receiving a personalised itinerary recommendation prior to arrival.

Guests will also receive a secure digital key through their emails before arriving, dispensing with traditional keys in exchange for smart device access.

"Recognising the new age travellers' desire for unique travels and building meaningful connections, we are conscious about creating a purposeful space

set to offer endless inspirations for guests seeking an exciting city getaway," MetroResidences Australia Country Manager Riley Heng said.

Over the last six years, MetroResidences has built a strong presence in Asia, with the company stating Sydney is the perfect city to take the company into its next expansion phase.

Pictured: A suite at the new Hotel Kith Darling Harbour.

The beach is back!

THE location made famous by Hollywood film *The Beach* starring Leonardo DiCaprio will soon open up again to tourists.

Maya Bay in Thailand will allow travellers to visit from 01 Jan 2022, with Thailand's Department of National Parks making the announcement this week following a lengthy closure for environmental reasons starting back in 2018.

Infrastructure has now been installed to better protect the area's natural ecosystem.

The first official interview with new AFTA CEO Dean Long, the disunited states of Australia and more in the November issue of *travelBulletin*.

travelBulletin

CLICK to read



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

Savings of up to US\$2,260 per couple are currently on offer with **American Queen Voyages** for an all-inclusive 15-night cruise package departing next year. Bookings need to be made by 31 Dec through Cruise Traveller and the sailing visits the Mississippi, Ohio and Tennessee rivers, to name a few. Call 1800 507 777 for further information.

Huge discounts of \$5,600 per couple are available with **Viking** on select cruises departing next year. Voyages include the 13-day London to Bergen cruise sailing along the coast of Norway. Bookings must be made by 24 Dec. Call 138 747 and ask for the deal "email only".

Take advantage of 10% discounts on parking at **Sydney Airport** when booking before 26 Nov. To action the promotion, choose a time and space **HERE** and quote the phrase "BOOKNOW10OFF".

Where in the world?



LISTED as a world heritage site for 30 years, this incredible palace and grounds represents one of the most impressive achievements in 17th century art.

It was initially just a hunting pavilion when it was first built by one of France's monarchs, but was expanded and extended by

his son and became the seat of the government.

Over successive years, various kings embellished the building and today it contains 2,300 rooms spread over more than 63,000m².

Do you know where in the world this is?

Answer: Château de Versailles, Versailles, France

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

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