



Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has five pages of news

Cruise360 locked in

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has selected a new date for its twice postponed Cruise360 Australasia conference (**TD** 01 Feb), with confirmation the biggest meeting on the local cruise calendar will now go ahead in Sydney on Thu 25 Aug.

This year's event will focus on the global recovery of the cruise sector and the opportunities the resurgence will provide travel agents and industry stakeholders.

Full details and speakers will be announced in coming months, with existing registrations to be automatically transferred to the new date.

LATAM plots return

LATAM Airlines has revealed plans to resume flights from Australia to South America from the end of next month.

After almost two years of pausing its passenger services from Australia due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LATAM has announced it will resume its passenger operations between Sydney and Santiago beginning 29 Mar.

Sing your way to Oklahoma!

THE travel industry is being invited to sing and win their way onto a return trip to Oklahoma.

The state's destination management organisation, in partnership with Brand USA, United Airlines and Grapevine Texas, is putting on a one-performance-only talent show on 18 Mar with four brave members of the travel industry, highlighting the songs from Rodgers & Hammerstein's classic musical, *Oklahoma!*

CLICK HERE for details on how to be a part and win a famil spot.

Promoted to the world

THE Federal Government has today revealed a new branding push designed to help home-grown businesses better sell Australia to the world.

The development of Australia's new 'Nation Brand' was created in consultation with Australia's Nation Brand Advisory Council, as well close to 500 senior industry stakeholders, with Federal Minister for Tourism Dan Tehan this morning spruiking the marketing announcement as a major step forward for the country's economy.

"A strong nation brand and tagline will reinforce Australia's reputation as an internationally competitive investment destination and a great place to visit," Tehan said.

Along with a new indigenous-inspired logo (**pictured**) and tagline "Only in Australia", the government will also release access to more than 300 marketing resources to help sectors like tourism better promote its services to prospective overseas visitors.

"Australia's Nation Brand is



more than just a logo and tagline, it is a holistic approach to selling what is unique about Australia to the world, backed up by a suite of marketing assets and research that is available for free to all Australian industry groups and businesses to help them grow and to support more Australian jobs," Tehan added.

The Nation Brand Advisory Council has several representatives from the travel & tourism sectors, including Qantas CEO Alan Joyce, Virgin Australia CEO Jayne Hrdlicka, and Tourism Australia board member Bob East - for more information on the branding push, **CLICK HERE**.

Four seasons Melb

MELBOURNE property developer Beulah and Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts have announced a new hotel in Victoria's capital.

The new \$2.7 billion precinct, STH BNK by Beulah, will include Four Seasons Hotel Melbourne, as well as the world's tallest vertical garden, with guests arriving via a Sky Lobby situated on the 63rd floor.

The brand new 210-room property will offer a world-class integrated health and wellness experience, a sprawling rooftop restaurant & bar, and multiple event spaces, creating an ultra-luxurious urban resort in the sky.

Four Seasons Melbourne will also boast panoramic views over the city's skyline.

Survey reminder

TOURISM New Zealand (TNZ) is reminding members of the Australian travel industry to take part in a new feedback survey to better shape future policy.

Time is running out, with the short 10-minute survey to close at 5pm AEDT on Mon - to make your voice heard, see **HERE**.

Singapore cuts PCR

TRAVELLERS arriving at Changi Airport in Singapore will no longer need to take a PCR test or isolate on arrival from 22 Feb, with one supervised self-administered swab test at an official testing centre within 24 hours of arriving in the destination to replace previous protocols.

The new rules are applicable to all fully vaccinated travellers whose country of origin is part of the Vaccinated Travel Lane such as Australia, and so long as the test is negative, travellers are free to move around Singapore.

MEANWHILE Japan has announced it will raise travel caps and cut quarantine times from next month, but in the initial stages will not apply to tourists.



Click to read



Window Seat

ALTHOUGH we would never advise getting purposefully lost while on your next adventure holiday, perhaps there is a moral to store in the memory banks when you hear about how an Aussie survived being lost in Western Australia's Cape Le Grand National Park.

Mature age archaeology student Glynn Sherris was searching for an ancient site in Esperance when he suddenly found himself lost and dehydrated, but it was then he remembered the wise words of celebrity survivalist Bear Grylls.

"People are going to laugh about this but he recommends that if you're out of fluid, with no water and no prospect of having water, then you can resort to your own pee - and that's what I did," Sherris chuckled.

"I had like a camel water container and yeah, you fill it as best you can and use it while you're walking or throughout the night", adding that slurping on his own urine helped to quell the burden of feeling "parched".

"My throat was dry as, I didn't drink a lot of it, it was really just to wet the inside of my mouth," the accidental adventurer added.

Outside of guzzling his own pee, Sherris also recommended burying oneself with sand to avoid the extreme heat.

G'day adds Lake Argyle

THE owners of Discovery Rottneest Island have added another tourist attraction to its burgeoning property portfolio, with G'day Group this week purchasing the family-owned Lake Argyle Resort in the Kimberley for an undisclosed amount.

Referred to as the "Jewel of the Kimberley", the resort overlooking the large Lake Argyle offers a range of activities including boat cruises, bush dinners, fishing and aquatic hire.

In addition to the acquisition, G'day Group has foreshadowed plans to significantly upgrade the property, including the expansion of rooms on offer, sealing

surrounding roads and creating a new reception area.

"The Sharpe family has done an incredible job in creating a very special experience at Lake Argyle," G'day Group CEO Grant Wilckens said.

"From luxury villas and a stunning infinity pool and helipad to affordable campsites, it's a holiday experience that will leave an impression on even the most travelled of visitors," he added.

The Argyle Resort joins a string of acquisitions made by G'day Group over the last 12 months, including fellow WA attraction El Questro Wilderness Park (TD 23 Feb 2021), Glen Helen Lodge in Alice Springs (TD 27 May 2021), golf courses in South Australia & the Sunshine Coast (TD 03 Jun 2021) and the Undara Experience in Cairns (TD 03 Dec 2021).

Borders boost sales

THE International Air Transport Association (IATA) has noted an 11-percentage point increase in international air tickets sold in the last six weeks when compared to 2019 sales, an improvement the body attributes to border restrictions beginning to loosen around the world.

IATA's latest figures also show that 18 markets are now open to vaccinated travellers without quarantine or pre-departure testing requirements in place, while 37 markets are open to vaccinated travellers under varying conditions.

On the down side, IATA said that 13 of the top 50 travel markets still don't provide easy access to all vaccinated travellers.

Niue knocks on Wood for tourism

THE Niue Tourist Authority Board has recruited Gaye Wood to be its Destination Manager looking after the New Zealand and Australia markets.

In her new role Wood will be charged with leading marketing and sales promotions in the two countries, where she will ply her more-than-20 years of experience working for brands such as Regency Tourism and Hilton in New Zealand, as well as Conrad Hotels & Resorts in the Maldives.

A roof with a view

SCENIC World in the Blue Mountains has introduced a new experience to its stable of adventure rides, with visitors now able to soak up the sunset view by sitting atop one of its famous cable carts.

Beyond Skyway opens this Tue and is available after the normal business closure time of 5pm, where four guests at a time can strap themselves in to enjoy the view 270 metres above the rugged tree line below.

Scenic World said the new experience is suited to people celebrating a special occasion, outdoor enthusiasts or "aspirational travel seekers".

A cap of 16 people can book each evening, with tickets costing \$349 per adult & \$329 for a child.



Ovolo's Grey Goose

OVOLO Hotels is offering 39 guests the ultimate Grey Goose vodka accommodation experience, teaming up with the The Inchcolm Bar in Qld to launch a luxury package including a Grey Goose martini tower, five hours of drinks, a three-course dinner and live DJ for \$49,999 per night.

For more details, **CLICK HERE**.

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Fijian efforts paying off

IT WOULD appear the efforts of Fiji's tourism bodies have paid dividends in the Australian market, with the latest figures from the ABS showing the island nation was the most visited overseas destination in Dec.

Confirming comments made by Tourism Fiji CEO Brent Hill in early Dec that the country was experiencing "astounding demand" from Australia (**TD** 02 Dec 2021), the latest government data showed Fiji led the way by accounting for 15% of all short-term resident returns.

More than 8,000 trips were taken to Fiji, which headed off traditionally more popular markets such as the United States (6,640 trips) and the United Kingdom (5,610 trips).

Across the board there was a general improvement in outbound travel when compared to the same period in 2020 driven

largely to the opening of much of Australia to leisure tourism.

Other popular outbound markets for the month included India (4,360 trips), Singapore (2,770 trips), New Zealand (2,580 trips), the UAE (1,750 trips) and Thailand (1,620 trips).

Despite the improvements made on 2020, the figures were still markedly down on pre-pandemic volumes, with the 750,000 short-term trips made in Dec 2019 dwarfing the 53,000 taken in Dec 2021.

MEANWHILE close to 200,000 travellers arrived in Australia during Dec 2021, close to three times the amount that were recorded in the prior month of Nov and more than five times the volume noted in Dec 2020.

Most arrivals came from the UK with 12,440 trips made, followed by Singapore (9,180), India (7,520) and the US (7,390).

Raffe appointment

RAFFE Hotels & Resorts has appointed a new Director of Sales & Marketing, Raumati Barbara.

She has a long history with the group, having represented its properties as a sales & marketing consultant under Coconuts Travel Marketing from 2011-2020, and had previously sold rooms for the brand during positions within Flight Centre Travel Group, and Island Weddings.

Hornblower closes

SAN Francisco-based Hornblower Group has formally completed its acquisition of Australia's Journey Beyond revealed last month (**TD** 13 Jan).

Commenting on the purchase this week, Hornblower CEO Kevin Rabbit said that adding the operator of The Ghan and Indian Pacific rail experiences "aligned perfectly" with its mission of growing its global experiential tourism portfolio.

Jetstar cans WA

JETSTAR Airways has cancelled its Perth flights over ongoing uncertainty relating to Western Australia's borders.

The budget carrier has imposed the moratorium until at least Apr to create more certainty in its flight network, with WA Premier Mark McGowan hinting there will be an update regarding the borders later this month following a review of its health policy, with no dates yet forthcoming.

Vic tourism rebuild

THE Victorian State Government is "supercharging" tourism in the Alps, creating more trails and visitor facilities along the Great River Road.

The Lake Hume Masterplan will be delivered by Towong Shire Council, with community input to guide a strategy that will attract more visitors to the area by identifying future accommodation options.

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CORPORATE UPDATE

ATPI expands Amadeus

TRAVEL management and events company ATPI has selected Amadeus to be its primary global technology partner.

The new multi-year partnership will see ATPI add an additional 15 countries to Amadeus' cloud-based booking fulfilment platform, Amadeus Selling Platform, providing ATPI's offices access to content such as full-service and low-cost carriers, hotels and ground transportation providers from around the world.

ATPI will expand upon its current use of Amadeus technology initially in the United States and select European markets, before rolling the capability out in other markets over the course of 2022, including Australia and New Zealand.

"With remote working

becoming the new normal, Amadeus Selling Platform Connect will allow our travel experts around the world to work from anywhere, increasing efficiency, productivity, and further build on our excellent service levels to clients," ATPI Group CEO Ian Sinderson said.

"Combined with the most comprehensive content from the Amadeus Travel Platform, the latest in robotics technology and Amadeus' wealth of expertise in the marine and energy sector, we are confident we will be able to continue to grow our customer base and deliver excellent customer service, while also meeting our ambitious efficiency objectives," he added.

Meanwhile ATPI has also revealed it will implement several of Amadeus' robotics solutions to drive efficiencies across its organisation, including Amadeus Auto Queue Sorting, Auto Quality Control, Auto Ticketing Time Limit and Auto Ticketing.

Nth America fuels

THE rebounding North American market has been a key driver of Corporate Travel Management's (CTM) financial turnaround, with the company reporting a 213% increase in revenue to \$92 million in the region for the first half of the financial year.

Total Transaction Value was also back above pre-COVID levels in North America, with CTM posting \$949 million for the period, fuelled by a large swathe of corporate client wins and a continued lowering of restrictions.

In its report released to the ASX earlier this week (**TD** 16 Feb), CTM listed increased penetration of its Lightning online booking tool, a soon-to-be-completed client system integration, and market share gains as key drivers toward achieving future profitability in North America.

The company also noted that it would be actively seeking acquisition opportunities that would support the global strategy to create more leverage for long-term organic growth.

CTO appointed

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group has appointed former Amadeus Product Development Director Roy Goldschmitt as its Global Chief Technology Officer for its corporate division.

He brings with him more than 20 years of experience and will be responsible for looking after shared services products for Flight Centre's FCM and Corporate Traveller brands.

Products include the business rule and automation platform, the traveller profile, API platforms, as well as sales and marketing automation.

"[Goldschmitt] has a key combination of in-depth knowledge of the travel tech industry combined with extensive experience in leading customer projects and organisational transformation," Flight Centre Global Chief Experience Officer John Morhous said.

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Saying g'day to Dallas



AFTER close to two years of absence due to pandemic restrictions, Qantas resumed its services from Sydney to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport this week, operating three non-stop return services per week between Sydney and DFW using a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner.

Qantas International Chief Executive Officer Andrew David said that the Dallas route represented a milestone moment in the return of the Flying Kangaroo's global network, with the popular service seeing bookings more than double in the days after the Federal Government's announcement to open to tourists on 21 Feb.

"We know Americans are keen to travel again and rediscover all that Australia has to offer, with the United States currently performing as one of the strongest inbound markets across the Qantas network," he said.

"Dallas Fort Worth has always

been a key route for Qantas and the service will play an important part in enticing American visitors to Australia for the first time in nearly two years."

David added that the route would complement Qantas' existing flights to Los Angeles, providing business and leisure travellers with a network of connecting flights for travel within the United States.

Qantas cooperates with American Airlines on the Dallas Fort Worth route and connects more destinations across the Americas from Australia than any other airline in the Pacific.

Dallas Fort Worth currently provides travellers from Australia with connections to more than 100 destinations across the United States from Sydney, representing a major gateway to broader American travel options.

Pictured: A Qantas jet touches down in Dallas for the first time in almost two years.



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BA podcast takes off

BRITISH Airways has launched a new podcast allowing its employees to take centre stage.

Providing an insight into what's happening behind the scenes at BA, each episode is hosted by four of the airline's employees, as well as guests from different areas of the business.

Episode one is available to download now, with a focus on British's BA Better World sustainability program - **CLICK HERE** to listen.

Ascent maiden cruise

DETAILS of Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Ascent's* maiden voyage have been revealed, with the fourth ship in the Edge Series departing 03 Dec 2023.

After leaving Fort Lauderdale, *Ascent* will explore the waters of the Caribbean for the first time, as well as exploring Philipsburg, St. Maarten, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Puerto Plata, and the Dominican Republic.

See the entire 2023-2024 Caribbean season **HERE**.

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

Discover the Arabian Peninsula with **MSC Cruises'** two-for-one deal. The newly released northern 2022 Autumn sailings will see the second passenger only pay port charges of \$175. All future cruise credits are welcome, but hurry, this two-for-one deal expires on 07 Mar - call 1300 028 502 for more details.

Limited time low fares are available on **Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection's** European spring sailings. The cruise line has also included airfares, with deals available from \$4,999 per person - view more details on the offer **HERE**.

Savings are available on a 2023 Croatian island voyage aboard Tradewind Voyages' *Golden Horizon* through **Cruise Traveller**. Those booking by the end of the year can save more than \$2,500 per couple, and will only pay a low deposit of \$400 per person until the end of next month. Fares for Australians now also include all-day beverages, wi-fi, and laundry services. Call 1800 507 777.

Read about 5 key issues facing travel businesses, the industry says enough is enough, Journey Beyond on a new track and more in the February issue of *travelBulletin*.

travelBulletin

CLICK to read



One giant leap for travel



IN ONE small step for man and one giant leap for mankind, Virgin Galactic has announced that ticket sales to become one of its astronauts have opened to the general public this week.

The pioneering space travel company said it plans to have 1,000 customers on board by the start of commercial service later this year, providing a strong foundation for regular operations of its fleet.

Taking off from New Mexico, tickets for the 90-minute space journeys also include several days of spaceflight preparedness activities, stays at forthcoming

custom accommodations, bespoke itineraries and world-class amenities.

Marking its formal launch to the general public, Virgin Galactic also revealed a new consumer-facing brand identity, which the company said was designed to "capture the love, wonder and awe of the experience of viewing Earth from space, and to inspire generations of future astronauts around the world".

Reservations will set travellers back US\$450,000 in total, comprised of an initial US\$150,000 deposit before a final payment prior to take-off.

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