

## Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has four pages of all the latest news.

## CLIA pushes back

**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) has labelled a decision by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to raise the travel level for cruise as “perplexing”, stating that COVID cases identified on cruise ships consistently make up “a very slim minority” of the total population on board.

The CDC recently issued an advisory for travellers to avoid cruises regardless of their vaccination status.

“No setting can be immune from this virus - however, it is also the case that cruise provides one of the highest levels of demonstrated mitigation against the virus,” CLIA said, adding cruise ships offer a highly controlled environment with science-backed measures.

## Industry urged to rise up

**EXCLUSIVE**

A **MAJOR** grass-roots travel and cruise sector rally in Sydney has been confirmed as taking place this weekend, after a massive outpouring of support for organiser Belle Goldie from itravel Penrith.

The initiative was flagged just before Christmas (**TD** breaking news 23 Dec), with Goldie saying she had received a huge response from right across the industry.

Permits have been granted for the gathering at the Overseas Passenger Terminal at 11am this Sun 09 Jan, with significant media coverage expected.

“The time has come for the travel industry to stand up and let federal and state governments and the community know just how serious the crisis has become,” she told **Travel Daily**.

The extension of the current cruise ban was the final straw, with Goldie saying “many travel

agents rely on cruise tourism but no government, state or federal, is prepared to even agree to a plan for the industry’s restart”.

It’s understood that as well as Sydney-based attendees, travel agents, cruise suppliers and other stakeholders are also planning to travel from interstate to take part.

Goldie says she’s one of hundreds of travel agents from across the country who started reopening their businesses in recent months, only to be bit by the extension to the cruise ban.

“[Health Minister] Greg Hunt said Australia would be cruising again by Christmas...instead we were blindsided by this arbitrary two-month extension, and also told there would be no further sector support. This is disgraceful,” she added.

Those planning to attend should wear masks, follow health advice and wear black - more details via [belle@itravelpenrith.com.au](mailto:belle@itravelpenrith.com.au).

## Rex heads to Roma

**REX** Airlines has commenced flying between Roma and Charleville to Brisbane, operating 28 return flights a week.

The latest Central 1 route is one of six regulated services awarded to Rex on a five-year contract by the Queensland Government after a competitive tender (**TD** 24 Nov 2021), including routes to Mt Isa, Birdsville, Winton, Mornington Island and Longreach.

The Brisbane to Roma service was previously operated by QantasLink, which offered travellers 12 flights per week.

## Aircalin revamps

**AIRCALIN** has launched a new version of its website that is designed to improve the user experience on desktop computers and smart devices.

Features include auto-save options, better destination details and real-time fare information.

# Did you know?

Travel & Cruise Weekly’s fortnightly consumer magazine called **Keep Dreaming** is specially designed for agents to send their clients - giving you a reason to reach out to your database.

**Keep Dreaming** is full of destination articles, cruise stories and more to inspire.

Click here to view **Keep Dreaming** magazine

Click here for a toolkit to help you share it with clients



Travel & Cruise  
Weekly

TravelEx is poised to take advantage of a wave of travel confidence and has its eyes firmly set on the Australian market. Read more in the December/January issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

travelBulletin



## Window Seat

THE next time you check in to a hotel, it's important to remember that your habits can potentially impact the happiness of the staff, so here's a brief list of behaviours to avoid if you want to keep the help on your side.

According to a list of grievances compiled by hotel workers published in *The Sun*, overly exuberant public displays of affection is high on the list of infractions.

One hotel worker recently took to Reddit to share their pet hate of guests leaving flowers in the room.

"Please don't do the flower petal thing unless you clean it up, yes it is romantic but no one wants to pick up flower petals you and your partner rolled all over naked on," the anonymous employee fumed.

"Also don't put the flower petals in the jacuzzi tubs. They stain them and are hard to get out of the jets," they added.

Another area of improvement is not to make the bed, as much as guests may think they are doing the staff a favour.

Hotel protocols mandate that staff need to change the bedding anyway before the next guest arrives, so guests tucking in the sheets only makes cleaning rooms harder.

"Who wants to sleep in used bedsheets from the previous person?," one hotel worker questioned on Reddit.

The final big objection are guests who fail to report when something in their room is either broken or missing, with many staff members claiming it only leads to more disgruntled guests, particularly ones who are having a "bad day" and "punish the staff" for it.

## Rottnest Island upgrade

THE Western Australian Government has approved a \$40 million tourism development on Rottnest Island's Lodge site.

Plans include the creation of 102 accommodation rooms, food and beverage facilities, cafes, a wellness centre, and two pools, with a consortium headed up by Place Development selected by the government to lead the development which commences in May this year.

The project will also feature a restaurant with a focus on local produce, a gelato bar, as well as community spaces.

"I am very pleased that the proposal to breathe new life into the Lodge site on Rottnest Island has been approved," WA Tourism Minister Roger Cook said.

"This is an opportunity to re-create the Lodge in harmony with its outstanding natural setting, ensuring that it complements the historic built environment of the precinct, and respects the Aboriginal history of the area."

The WA Govt said the approval of the project was contingent on expectations of an acceptable

Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan for the site, as well as the construction of staff accommodation off-site.

Completion of the development is anticipated by 2025.

MEANWHILE Sealink has introduced a third ferry service between Rottnest Island and Fremantle, representing the largest tourism transport investment in the Perth region since the pandemic started.

## Viking enters expedition space

VIKING has taken delivery of *Viking Octantis*, the cruise line's first of two new purpose-built expedition ships which can accommodate 378 passengers.

Viking took possession of the ship at Fincantieri's VARD shipyard in Norway, and will debut by operating voyages to Antarctica departing from South America later this month.

*Octantis* boasts an integrated bow that creates a longer waterline for the ships, state-of-the-art stabilisers to keep sailings smooth in rough conditions, and ice-strengthened Polar Class hulls.

Expedition equipment available on board will also include a fleet of military pro Zodiacs, a fleet of two-seater Arctic-tested kayaks, as well as two 12-seater convertible special operations boats.

## Dorsett GC opens

THE Dorsett Gold Coast officially opened its doors after Christmas, more than three and half years after plans were flagged for the hotel's debut (*TD* 28 Aug 2018).

The 313-room property is located within The Star Gold Coast's entertainment and leisure precinct, and features a number of eco-friendly features such as paperless check-in and automatic lighting within the rooms.

Dorsett Gold Coast General Manager Michael Foster said the hotel would also offer guests ways to enjoy the Gold Coast like a local resident.

"Everyone who checks in will receive a special Dorsett Discoveries booklet, which will provide insider knowledge to our guests so they can live like a local while visiting the Gold Coast," Foster said.

## Join the Mouserclass

DISNEY Destinations International is offering agents the chance to find out about all of the company's latest updates and changes from Disneyland Resort and Walt Disney World via its Mouserclass Webinar Series.

The first session, which is set to take place on 13 Jan at 12pm AEDT, will focus on the company's new Disney Genie service, new guest functionality built into the My Disney Experience and Disneyland apps.

Register to attend the upcoming session by **CLICKING HERE**.

## Air NZ delays bites

AIR New Zealand is temporarily suspending its onboard food service during flights, instead electing to offer its guests meals as they disembark in order to protect the health of passengers and staff.

"It's anticipated that we will soon see the Omicron variant within the New Zealand community, so we are making this change now to further safeguard our customers and crew," the carrier's Chief Customer and Sales Officer Leanne Geraghty said.

"We know customers look forward to their cookie, popcorn or bliss bites so rather than pause food and beverage service, we have made the decision to offer our popular snacks to our customers to enjoy when they arrive at their destination."

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## Domestic air travel hurdles

**CLOSE** to two thirds of potential air passengers say they are discouraged from flying around Australia at the moment due to the continued risk of COVID-19-related complications, a recent survey commissioned by the Australian Airports Association (AAA) suggests.

AAA CEO James Goodwin said more than half of the survey's respondents indicated they were concerned about being placed into a lockdown or losing money on flights and accommodation.

"There is a real fear among the travelling public that borders could close again as a result of the current Omicron strain and rising case numbers," he said.

"Concerningly, people felt more confident in travelling interstate this time last year (86%) than they do today, with only 72%, suggesting they would be willing to cross state borders these holidays.

"With still so much uncertainty around the pandemic, it's not surprising that 97% of travellers are not booking trips more than three months in advance."

While one in five air travellers told AAA they were "very confident" to travel domestically, a similar number indicated they were either "not very confident" or "not at all confident" to jump on a domestic air route over the summer holiday period.

Leading the list of discouraging factors is the risk of border closures (62%), followed by restrictions/lockdowns (53%), fear of cancellations (49%), perceived health risks (35%) and the cost of flying (31%).

On a positive note however, air travel confidence in Dec 2021 has risen in every state and territory when compared to Aug 2021, with NSW displaying the biggest desire to travel, recording 77% of respondents ready to hop on flights, up from 60% in Aug.

Victorians also demonstrated a solid inclination to travel (74%), followed by South Australia (68%), Queensland (67%) and Western Australia (64%).

Personal car transport topped the safest mode of domestic transport, followed by planes, trains and rental cars.

## Cheers to Italy in 2022



**TRAVEL** agents enjoyed a virtual Italian wine tasting event hosted by Ormina Tours in partnership with The Grand Wine Tour late last year.

The free Zoom session updated travel advisors about Ormina's 2022 program, as well as the many quality wine regions of Italy, with attendees transported virtually to the country to meet the operator's partner, The Grand Wine Tour, and what to expect from the grapes on the vines.

Attendees included The Travel Community Hub, Travel Designers, Out And About Travel and WOW! Travel.

**Pictured:** Ormina CEO Ross Loppolo and Director of Sales & marketing Anna Jones.



## Air still low risk: IATA

**DESPITE** global concerns about the safety of flights due to the rapid spread of the Omicron variant, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) claims the aircraft cabin remains a "very low risk environment" for contracting COVID-19.

IATA's Medical Advisor Dr David Powell said the mitigation of contracting the virus while travelling on planes was due to a variety of health measures, including air filtration, the forward orientation of passengers while seated, well-enforced masking, and enhanced sanitary measures.

The controlled nature of the aircraft cabin compared to other enclosed environments adds a further measure of protection, Powell also noted, with IATA adding that mask wearing is also a key component of air safety.

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## Rick dives right in to help



### MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.720**

**LIGHT** holiday trade continued on the first business day of the year, with major currencies maintaining recent ranges.

The US dollar was mostly steady after it strengthened nearly 7% last year, its strongest annual performance since 2015.

The USD firmed against currencies from Europe and Canada, however the weekend looms large, pending inflation data from overseas.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.720
UK	£0.534
NZ	\$1.060
Euro	€0.637
Japan	¥83.07
Thailand	฿23.95
China	¥4.574
South Africa	11.41
Canada	\$0.918
Crude oil	US\$78.98

**AUSTRALIAN** Travel Careers Council Chief Executive Officer Rick Myatt has been lending a hand this holiday season with the New South Wales State Emergency Service (NSWSES).

A flood volunteer, Myatt (pictured second from left) helped out late last year in northern New South Wales.

Myatt told *Travel Daily* he is extremely proud and fortunate to enjoy the opportunity to serve New South Wales, and will continue to work hard to improve the travel industry's training and skills development policies through lobbying to all levels of government.

### Solomons unrest

**ALL** incoming passenger services to Honiara have been suspended until further notice due to the ongoing unrest in the Solomon Islands.

Some areas of the Pacific island nation have been declared no-go zones, with staff at the Australian High Commission instructed to avoid travel.

### Airbus launches

**AIRBUS** has kicked off the new year with the launch of Airbus Atlantic, a new global player specialising in aerostructures.

The new company, officially established on New Year's Day, groups the strengths, resources, skills, and central functions of Airbus' sites in Nantes and Montoir-de-Bretagne, with the STELIA Aerospace sites worldwide.

This unification is part of the transformation project announced in Apr, aimed at strengthening the value chain of aerostructure assembly within Airbus' industrial setup.

It marks the intention to gain competitiveness, innovation and quality for the benefit of Airbus' programs of today and tomorrow, and will be an essential element in the group's value chain, the company said.

### Vail completes

**VAIL** Resorts has closed its acquisition of Hidden Valley, Laurel Mountain Ski Resort and Seven Springs Mountain Resort.

The company completed the purchase for a final price of approximately US\$118 million, including customary closing purchase price adjustments.

Vail acquired all of the assets related to the mountain operations of the resorts and related base area lodging, conference centre & amenities, and will assume the state land lease for Laurel Mountain, subject to consent from the state of PA.

Operations at the three resorts for the 2021-22 winter season will continue in the ordinary course of business, with Vail planning to add access to them through select Epic Pass products for the 2022-23 North American ski season.

### Sudoku

TRICKY

PUZZLE

**THE** aim of Sudoku is to complete the entire grid using the numbers 1-9. Each number can only be used once in each row, once in each column, and once in each of the 3x3 boxes.

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

www.sudokuoftheday.com - visit them and get a new Sudoku every day!

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