

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from Emirates.

Abu Dhabi self-guided audio tours

THE Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi has introduced the Voicemap app for travellers, allowing visitors to explore the Emirate through a range of self-paced audio tours.

The first 25,000 downloads are free of charge, and place an emphasis on routes that showcase Abu Dhabi's culture, heritage, history and off-the-beaten track hidden gems.

Launching with an initial five audio tracks are the: Abu Dhabi Skyline Tour; Modern Heritage Tour of Downtown Abu Dhabi; Al Hosn Architectural Tour; Al Ain Nature and History Tour; and the Liwa Forts Tour.

"The state-of-the-art app is a particularly appealing immersive experience, as travellers worldwide opt for more individualised experiences," a spokesperson for the tourism department said.

The Voicemap app can be downloaded via Google and Apple platforms.

Let's wine about Aus

AUSTRALIA has been named the ninth-best country for wine tourism in a new study by luggage storage platform Bounce.

Analysing factors such as wine consumption & production, vineyard totals, wine tours, and the average cost of a bottle, Australia finished below Argentina and above Hungary in the top 10.

The five best countries for wine tourism were revealed to be Italy, Portugal, Spain, France, and New Zealand, with Greece and Chile joining Australia in the bottom half of the top 10.

Italy's wine industry produces around 400 native grapes.

Domestic in good shape

MORE than three in four Australians say they are likely to take a domestic holiday in 2022 despite the onset of new COVID-19 variants, a new study by Savvy has revealed.

"It is encouraging that three-quarters of us wish to holiday in Australia - indicating that we are familiar with living and travelling with the virus. COVID-19 is no longer the new normal, it's just everyday life," Savvy Managing Director Bill Tsouvalas said.

The survey of more than 1,000 Australians also found that 75% of travellers are prepared to spend between \$500 and \$5,000 on their next trip, while only 2% indicated they would be willing to spend in excess of \$10,000.

However, one in 10 travellers admitted they plan on travelling on a shoestring budget on their next domestic holiday, suggesting

to spend less than \$500.

While the majority of Australians say they are either likely or very likely to book a domestic holiday this year, 35% of the same group still expressed "hesitancy" to go ahead with plans if new variants of the virus were to emerge, with only one in four people stating they would have no second thoughts about proceeding with a holiday.

Only half of Aussies said they found it easy to find COVID-19 travel information from state to state, while visiting family and friends is the number one reason for taking a trip.

The next most popular incentives to travel were discovering new parts of Australia (29%), embarking on a road trip (25%), revisiting parts of Australia they like (24%), it being too difficult or expensive to travel overseas (12%), going to an event (8%), taking advantage of no international tourists (7%) and going on a working holiday (4%).

When it comes to the mode of transport, car trips lead the way with 43% of Aussies planning to hit the road, followed by air travel with 34% and motorhomes (6%).

Queensland (24%) was marginally ahead of New South Wales (22%) as the most sought after domestic destination, followed by Victoria (14%), Western Australia (8%), South Australia (6%), Tasmania (5%) and the Northern Territory (2%).

RCI unveils Europe

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) has opened its lineup of European sailings for the northern summer of 2023.

Nine ships will voyage to more than 25 countries in the Mediterranean, Scandinavia, beginning in May 2023.

Travellers can experience the region on cruises that range from five to 12 nights and visit iconic locales, from the Amalfi Coast to the Adriatic islands of Croatia, the British Isles, the Canary Islands and the Greek Isles.

Odyssey of the Seas will cruise in Rome, following up her debut from the city last year, and *Anthem of the Seas* will return to Southampton.

From Rome and Barcelona, Oasis-class ship *Symphony of the Seas* will bring all types of vacationers together with thrilling experiences across seven distinct neighborhoods.

RCI's 35 new northern summer 2023 Europe cruises are now open for sale.

EK is ready for you

EMIRATES is ready to welcome Australian travel agents' clients back on board its flagship A380 aircraft to more than 50 destinations through Dubai.

The airline is reminding agents that their clients will be able to enjoy delicious regional meals, complimentary drinks and access to over 4,500 channels of in-flight entertainment across all of its travel classes.

Emirates is also offering overseas COVID-19 medical travel insurance with every ticket booked by 31 Mar - see the **back page** for more details.

Greater Bay inks Amadeus deal

NEWLY-ESTABLISHED Hong Kong carrier Greater Bay Airlines has signed a global agreement with Amadeus, making its schedules and fares available via the Amadeus Travel Platform.

The airline, which was granted an air operating certificate in Oct last year (**TD** 11 Oct 2021), is aiming to launch its inaugural flight before the end of Q1 2022.

"We are excited that Greater Bay Airlines will be utilising Amadeus' technology as it embarks on its new journey when it begins flights at end of this year," Amadeus Regional VP, Airline Distribution Sales, Asia Pacific Frederic Saunier said.

The airline originally planned to launch its services on 01 Oct 2021 before being hit by delays.

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Window Seat

REVERED for its medieval castles, mountainous national parks and bracing rugged coastal walks, Wales now has at least one blemish against its impeccable tourist reputation.

Stripe the grey squirrel (pictured) recently embarked on a reign of terror in the small Welsh village of Buckley, savaging 18 residents, as well as a number of dogs and cats.

The pesky rodent was eventually captured after it was lured into a cage full of peanuts by a local resident.

Sadly the RSPCA, who picked up the animal from the home, had no choice but to humanely euthanise Stripe as it is currently illegal under Welsh law to release a grey squirrel back into the wild.



IHG Vietnam deal

IHG Hotels & Resorts has announced a four-hotel deal in Vietnam with partner Sun Hospitality Group, delivering the hotelier 2,709 rooms in the country that is experiencing a surge in hotel development.

The agreement includes the 616-room Holiday Inn Resort Yoko Park Onsen in Quang Ninh Province, the 602-room Crowne Plaza Danang Ba Na Hills, the 843-key Holiday Inn Resort Danang Ba Na Hills and the 648-room voco Danang Ba Na Hills.

"As we work through the recovery, we know that domestic leisure business will be a strong driver of growth in the country," IHG said in a statement.

Kiwi travel blow

NEW Zealanders who remain stranded in Australia were barred from applying for the latest round of quarantine rooms released by NZ's Managed Isolation and Quarantine program yesterday.

A statement from the NZ Govt confirmed that flight capacity from Australia was the key issue.

"Due to the delay to the opening of the self-isolation pathway from Australia, airlines do not currently have any red flights scheduled from Australia for Mar or Apr."

The government noted it would be working with airlines on future quarantine room releases.

Avoid King Island

TASMANIA'S health authorities are requesting tourists temporarily stay away from King Island as the destination battles a COVID outbreak.

The island has recorded 60 positive cases in the past couple of days and is tipped to rise sharply over the coming days.

"While confirmed cases on the island are generally experiencing mild symptoms which can be managed in suitable premises, the fact that King Island has a relatively small population means that the outbreak places greater pressure on essential services," Tasmania's Public Health Director Mark Veitch said.

"Public Health Services is asking anyone who was planning to travel to King Island in the coming week to reconsider their need to travel," he added.

New Europe route

SINGAPORE Airlines (SIA) will add a fifth European route to its network later this month, announcing the upcoming launch of the Barcelona (BCN) and Milan Malpensa (MXP) service.

The carrier had previously operated Changi (SIN) to Barcelona flights via Milan but is now sanctioned to sell tickets between the two European cities.



THE travel industry is mourning the loss of former Harvey World Travel (HWT) employee Carmel Gazal, who passed away on 31 Dec at the age of 93.

She joined her daughter Julianne in 1988 at the HWT franchise in Crows Nest after the passing of her husband, where she quickly became known as the company's oldest junior assistant.

Carmel Gazal, who was the mother of TravelManager's Executive General Manager Michael Gazal, learned the ropes quickly from the grassroots level, issuing coach tickets initially

to becoming the company's domestic expert, before moving on to a fruitful stint in international sales.

So successful was she in adapting to the travel industry later in life, that Gazal was featured in the Pope's dedication book *Sharing the Wisdom*, which served to promote the stories and wisdom of elderly people from around the world.

A funeral service will be held at St. Mary's Church in North Sydney on 11 Jan at 10 am, which will also be livestreamed at the following link [HERE](#).

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.

Click here to view **Keep Dreaming** magazine

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



Travel & Cruise Weekly

Talking up Australian tourism



TRAVEL agents in the United States have been trained on why "There's Nothing Like Australia" at an American Society of Travel Advisors Destination Showcase.

Taking place in Georgia recently, hundreds of advisors from across the United States visited the Tourism Australia booth to

learn about the country and the benefits of the recently revamped Aussie Specialist Program.

Pictured at the United States event surrounded by some of his most iconic furry friends was Tourism Australia Distribution Development Manager, Americas Glen Davis.

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

Ring in the new year with up to 35% off a European voyage with **Norwegian Cruise Line**. The cruise line's New Year's Sale can be used in conjunction with its "free" offers, including a beverage package, specialty dining package, shore excursion credit, wi-fi package, and a third and fourth guest sailing at a reduced rate - for more info, [CLICK HERE](#).

APT is reminding Aussies its Boxing Day Sale ends soon. Savings of up to \$7,800 per couple on the classic Magnificent Europe river cruise from Amsterdam to Budapest is on offer. Call 1300 278 278 for more details.

Celestyal Cruises has launched its Escape Back to the Blue wave season campaign, with savings up to 30% off select sailings booked from now through to the end of Mar. Prices start as low as \$649 on the three-night Iconic Aegean itinerary. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

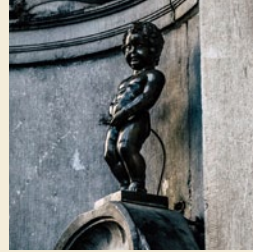
Pick the nation

PUZZLE

COUNTRIES have unique geography, ethnicities and cultures which come together to often form very distinctive symbols.

Based off the four different symbols and famous faces, see if you can figure out which country they represent.

1



2



3



4



Answer: Belgium

Flight attendant's identify fraud charge

A **FLIGHT** attendant for United Airlines has been charged with fraud in the United States, where he stands accused of assuming the identity of a deceased boy for more than two decades.

Ricardo Cesar Guedes, 49, allegedly stole the identity of William Ericson Ladd, who passed away in an automobile accident in Washington in 1979, using his name to apply for a US passport in 1998.

Guedes is also accused of renewing his passport document six times using the alias since 1998, as well as taking out a mortgage and getting married under the false name.

Investigators uncovered Guedes' real name by comparing fingerprints on a govt document he submitted in the early 1990s.

Hurtigruten appoints

HURTIGRUTEN Group has announced the appointment of Steven Taylor as its new Chief Commercial Officer.

A highly respected commercial, brand & marketing leader, Taylor will lead the development and execution of Hurtigruten's strategic commercial initiatives, and he will sit on the company's Executive Management Team.

Avelo cashes up

THE recently rebranded American low-cost carrier Avelo Airlines has raised US\$42 million in Series B funding, taking its capital base to US\$160 million.

The funds will be used to propel the Houston-based airline's growth strategy in 2022, flagging ambitions to double its network and add nine more aircraft to its fleet by the end of the year.

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

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Your clients can relax in comfort to delicious regional meals, complimentary drinks, and over 4,500 channels of entertainment in every travel class. Customers flying in First Class can slide the doors closed on their Private Suite and check in midflight to our Shower Spa.

Safety is always our highest priority, even beyond the flight. We're offering overseas COVID-19 medical travel insurance with every ticket when you book your clients for travel by 31 March 2022.

Flights to Dubai depart daily from Sydney 21:45 and from Melbourne* at 22:30.

Visit www.emirates.com/au to find out more.

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