

## Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of industry news.

## APT returns serve

APT will continue to sponsor Channel Nine's broadcast of the Australian Open tennis tournament for 2022, extending its involvement with the top tier tournament for a ninth year. The tie-up will see the travel brand feature its logo during the broadcast, run advertisement spots during matches, be featured on billboards, and have a strong video presence on Channel Nine's digital assets.

## NSW events funding

THE NSW Government has unveiled a new emergency funding package for events and festivals which have been forced to cancel or be delayed due to COVID Public Health Orders. The state government said the Event Saver Fund was recognition of how important events are to the state's economy, and will also help organisers feel more confident to push ahead with events in 2022 and beyond. "As we look to rebound from the effects of the past two years, this funding will help support local jobs and ensure major event organisers can plan with confidence to safely deliver their events," NSW Minister for the Arts Ben Franklin said.

## ACCC probes KE, OZ deal

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has announced an "informal merger review" of the proposed acquisition by Korean Air of rival Asiana Airlines (TD 17 Nov 2020). Under the deal Korean Air will acquire about 64% of its competitor, with the ACCC noting that both carriers are global companies which both supply international passenger and freight services in Australia. The ACCC said its investigation was focused on the impact of the deal on competition, seeking input from industry stakeholders on how closely Korean Air and Asiana compete in the provision of passenger and freight services between Sydney and Seoul. The ACCC wants to evaluate whether there are sufficient

alternate suppliers to maintain competition, and to estimate the impact on price of service levels if the proposed acquisition proceeds.

The KE-OZ deal is subject to review in a number of jurisdictions including Korea, Japan the EU, China, the UK and the USA, as well as Australia, with the ACCC saying it is also engaging with international competition authorities regarding their probes of the matter.

Customers of the airlines are being asked whether they consider both direct and indirect flight options when planning travel between Australia and Korea, and if they look at both full service and low-cost carriers.

Submissions to the inquiry are being sought with a 28 Jan deadline, with the ACCC saying it plans to announce its findings on 24 Mar this year.

## Wendy's free singles

WENDY Wu Tours (WWT) has released details of a free single supplement offer on a wide range of popular tours of Japan, South Korea, India, Chile and China, including Vietnam river cruises aboard its *Victoria Mekong* ship. Savings of up to \$3,550 are available offering singles a spot at no extra cost for travel in 2022 and 2023. WWT is also offering \$99 deposits, and unlimited changes up to 75 days before departure, when final payments are due - [wendywutours.com.au](http://wendywutours.com.au).

## TGA ticks Sputnik

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has today announced that the two-dose course of the Russian Federation's Sputnik V vaccine developed by the Gamaleya Institute will be recognised for the purpose of establishing a traveller's vaccination status.

The agency said it obtained additional info last week which showed the vaccine "provides protection and potentially reduces the likelihood that an incoming traveller would transmit COVID-19 infection to others while in Australia or become acutely unwell due to COVID-19".

The supporting information was based on published studies provided by the Russian Government, with the aid of the Australian embassy in Moscow.

The TGA said the recognition of Sputnik would "expand options for the return of international students, travel of workers and travel by business and sportspeople to our country".

## Tweet turning 10

ADELAIDE-BASED Tweet World Travel Group is celebrating its first decade in business with the launch of a new version of its B2B travel agent portal and a \$10,000 cash giveaway.

The company was founded by Thuy Carroll in 2012 initially as a home-based online travel agency focusing on Vietnam and Asia.

After moving to a shopfront the following year, Tweet then expanded to become a tour operator and wholesaler, and launched its own in-house agent booking platform.

Over the pandemic Tweet has continued to develop its tech offering with the launch of Travel Key Gateway (TKG) in Nov 2020 - see [tkgplatform.com](http://tkgplatform.com).

More details on Tweet are at [tweetworldtravel.com.au](http://tweetworldtravel.com.au).

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## Contiki refreshes its brand

**THE** Travel Corporation's youth-focused Contiki operation has released details of a "bold evolution of its brand identity," with a new look encapsulating the social aspects of travelling together and key principles of sustainability, fun, sharing unique experiences and inclusion.

The update comes alongside confirmation that Contiki has now achieved carbon neutrality, following the launch of its Climate Action Plan in Apr last year.

"As the world leaders in youth social travel since 1962, Contiki recognises the need for both travellers and travel businesses to take action on climate change and address its greenhouse gas emissions," the company said.

All Contiki trips from 2022 will be carbon neutral, with the cost of any offsets to be borne by the tour operator.

The sustainability push is one of the planks of the brand makeover,

which "firmly places community at the heart of everything we do at Contiki," according to Chief Marketing Officer, Simon Llanos.

"For 2022 and beyond, we live by our brand philosophy of 'Travel. Together.' which means to travel with one another, the cultures we enjoy and the environment too," he said.

The brand's global CEO, Adam Armstrong, said Contiki had set ambitious goals for the coming year, with the 18-35s market showing encouraging signs of a meaningful recovery in the last two months or so.

"Our travellers are resilient, confident and eager to resume their travels...we look forward to welcoming them back to Social travel with Contiki this year."

Armstrong is one of a host of Contiki team members who appear in a new video showcasing the brand - see it online now at [traveldaily.com.au/videos](https://traveldaily.com.au/videos).



## HKG transit ban

**AUTHORITIES** in Hong Kong have imposed a month-long ban on transit passengers arriving from more than 150 countries across the globe, as the latest escalation of attempts to contain the Omicron variant of COVID-19.

The city has experienced about 50 cases of Omicron in recent weeks, with the small outbreak linked to two Cathay Pacific crew.

Hong Kong International Airport issued a statement yesterday confirming that from 16 Jan to 15 Feb 2022, passenger transfer/transit services via Hong Kong International Airport are prohibited, for any persons coming from the extensive list of nations where COVID-19 is considered to be of high risk.

The list includes Australia, the USA, UK, most of Europe, Africa, South America and the Middle East, and will have further impact on Cathay Pacific which is currently not able to operate any services to or from Australia.

## New Thai travel tax

**FOREIGN** visitors to Thailand will pay an additional 300 baht fee effective from Apr, under measures announced last week by the country's government to help fund the development of attractions as well as cover accident insurance.

Tourism Authority of Thailand Governor, Ythasak Supasorn, said part of the funding would be "used to take care of tourists".

"We've encountered times when insurance didn't have coverage for tourists, which became our burden to take care of them," he told *Reuters*.

The fee will be collected as part of airline ticket costs, and complements other requirements for visitors including pre-payment for COVID-19 tests and having insurance with coverage for COVID-19 treatment of at least US\$50,000.

Thailand is forecasting arrivals of between five and 15 million foreign tourists this year.



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## Shoalhaven funding

**EVENT** organisers can now apply for up to \$20,000 in funding if they can demonstrate the gathering will stimulate a significant spike in visitation to the Shoalhaven area on NSW's south coast.

The Shoalhaven City Council Event Support Program is designed to accelerate the tourism rebound of the region, which before the pandemic saw yearly expenditure exceed \$1b.

"Through attracting events at times that are typically quieter, this program is designed to attract new visitors to the Shoalhaven and increase the supply of year-round local jobs, helping to prevent employers from laying off summer staff," Shoalhaven City Council's Tourism Manager Coralie Bell said.

Applications for the event funding are open until 16 Feb, with a second round also flagged from Jul - for further information on the scheme, [CLICK HERE](#).

## Start planning Japan today



**THE** Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) has pulled out the big guns for its latest marketing campaign promoting the Asian nation as a must-see holiday destination this year.

Launching over the weekend, the marketing push sees celebrity chefs Gary Mehigan and Manu Feildel open up about how important travel is for the soul and why Aussies should start planning their next trip to Japan when borders reopen.

"On my last trip I was able to experience the art of sumo and was lucky enough to

have a training session with professionals," Feildel enthused.

"Skiing in Japan is some of the world's best, but of course the culinary experiences are a big drawcard for me, and I was very fortunate to learn how to make soba noodles in Tokyo."

Approximately 621,800 Australians visited Japan in 2019, representing a 12.5% growth on the previous year.

Watch the campaign [HERE](#).

**Pictured:** The Japan marketing shoot with Manu Feildel, Firass Dirani, Yoko Tanaka Toni Fan from JNTO and Gary Mehigan.



## Window Seat

**WHILE** 2022 has not seen the number of commercial flights take off that we would normally like, here's a little something to paper over the cracks of your disappointment.

Two employees at creative agency Wondros recently constructed a paper plane out of old wrappers from company lunches, and the results are impressive to say the least.

Watch the video below [HERE](#) to see how smooth this recycled paper flight is - if only regular flight plans were as smooth aye.



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## A new year and a new chapter



**HELLOWORLD** Travel Mount Ommaney has kicked off the new year alongside a new manager, with Fruition Globe assuming a new lease and agreement with HLO for the Qld-based store.

"We look forward to creating great memories and long-lasting relationships with the community and trade partners for Mount Ommaney and surrounds," Fruition Globe Managing Director Suraj Hewa Arachchige enthused on LinkedIn.

Arachchige added that the store was ready and willing to be flexible with what it offers the store's clients, whether it's more cruising holidays, domestic or specialty tours.

Fruition Globe took over the lease after the previous owner exited the business, and also operates other Helloworld agency locations, including in Booval, Capalaba, Redbank and Milton.

**Pictured:** The facade of the Helloworld Mount Ommaney.

How has the pandemic impacted the way the travel sector operates, and what will remain in the emerging post-covid world? We investigate taking travel back to the future in the latest *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

travelBulletin

## WA travel demand

**INBOUND** ticket sales to Perth from next month "are strong", Perth Airport CEO Kevin Brown has confirmed, with more than 11,000 incoming international passengers expected in the first fortnight of reopening.

On 05 Feb, just over 1,000 int'l arrivals will touch down in the hermit city, with two Singapore Airlines flights, one Emirates service from Dubai and one Qatar Airways from Doha all scheduled to land on the same day.

## The dream is over

**THE** founder of one of Australia's most famous theme parks has passed away on the Gold Coast at the age of 89.

John Longhurst founded Dreamworld in 1974 and continued to operate the park until 1989, and has been described by his son as "a man who had big dreams and the unique ability to realise them."

## FC marketing move

**FLIGHT** Centre has promoted Clinton Hearne to the position of Global Head of Marketing - Southern Hemisphere, moving up from his previous role as Head of Marketing which he had held since Jul 2020.

Before joining Flight Centre, Hearne was the Head of Marketing for Travel Money Group from 2017 to 2020.

## Neptune progress

The 930-passenger *Viking Neptune* has been floated out at Fincantieri's Ancona shipyard in Italy, with the Viking ship now in its final stage of construction.

Scheduled to debut in Nov, *Neptune* will spend her maiden season sailing in the Mediterranean before servicing the line's 2023-2024 Viking World Cruise, departing Fort Lauderdale for London on a journey spanning 138 days, 28 countries, 57 ports, and overnight stays in 11 cities.

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## Tourism vital to recovery

**WITH** the global economic recovery predicted to “lose steam” in 2022 and 2023, the tourism sector will form a vital component of driving international recovery efforts, a new report tabled by the United Nations suggests.

Drawing on data supplied by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the *World Economic Situation and Prospects* report indicates that tourism is anticipated to lead the economic rebound in every global region, already demonstrating a 5.5% recovery in 2021 after a disastrous contraction in 2020.

Further analysis of the sector shows that tourism-dependent countries have already started to diversify their tourism appeal, a trend that will need to continue throughout 2022 and beyond to

open up new revenue sources.

“Some [nations] are developing domestic and rural tourism which could simultaneously help local economies in rural and depressed areas to boost job creation and protect cultural heritage,” the report noted.

Meanwhile in the United States, jobs in the travel sector have enjoyed a solid rebound, with the unemployment rate declining from 8.1% in 2020 to 5.6% in 2021, while 2022 is expected to see that figure drop even further.

Optimism was tempered slightly however by the prospect of new COVID variants, which the report asserted could significantly curtail travel recovery efforts.

### Taming of the ship

**CUNARD** has collaborated with the Royal Shakespeare Company to bring new theatre productions to *Queen Mary 2's* stage in 2022.

The performances will be available for all guests on board the ship, and will be comprised of a blend of Shakespeare's love scenes in a show called *Boundless as the Sea*, the phrase Juliet used to describe her love for Romeo.

The partnership will also see a fun up-tempo stage production of *Miss Littlewood* created based on the book by Sam Kenyon.

The three-year partnership will commence on 29 May and run through to 12 Aug, before resuming again from 15 Sep to 13 Nov this year.

## Observer on the Orient Express



**THE** first glimpse of what life will be like for passengers aboard a new luxury rail service in Italy (*TD* 13 Dec 2021) has been released, with the interiors paying homage to the classic feel of the 1960s and 1970s.

The Orient Express La Dolce Vita will hit the tracks in 2023, with plans in place for the service to visit over 128 Italian destinations across 14 regions, as well as three international stops in Paris, Istanbul and Split.

The rail service pays its respects to the legacy of original The Orient Express, the long-distance passenger service founded in 1883 by the Belgian company Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits, offering a similar historical feel to the iconic train service which ceased operating in 2009.

Partners in the state-owned slated luxury train service include Accor which has signed on to be the official hospitality provider, with targets set to transport an estimated 80,000 passengers by 2026.

**Pictured** top a render of the dining car, while **inset** is the luxury sleeper rooms on board.



### Ghost flights fiasco

**PRESSURE** to maintain departure and landing times at major European airports has led to several airlines operating flights without any passengers on board to keep coveted slots.

Lufthansa admitted it had operated 18,000 “ghost flights” over the northern winter so that it was meeting essential usage criteria, which stipulates carriers will lose prized departure slots if they fail to use at least 50% of their allocated times.

The practice of flying planes without passengers on board has attracted criticism from environmental groups, who claim the European Union must scrap the rules until aviation reaches normal pre-pandemic volumes.

### New Crown Director

**CROWN** Resorts has announced the appointment of Anne Ward as a permanent Director, effective from 13 Jan, transitioning from a part-time Director role she has held since Sep 2021.

Ward currently sits on the board of several organisations, including as the Chairperson of the independent artist marketplace Redbubble, & a Director of non-profit biotechnology group Foundation for Imaging Research.

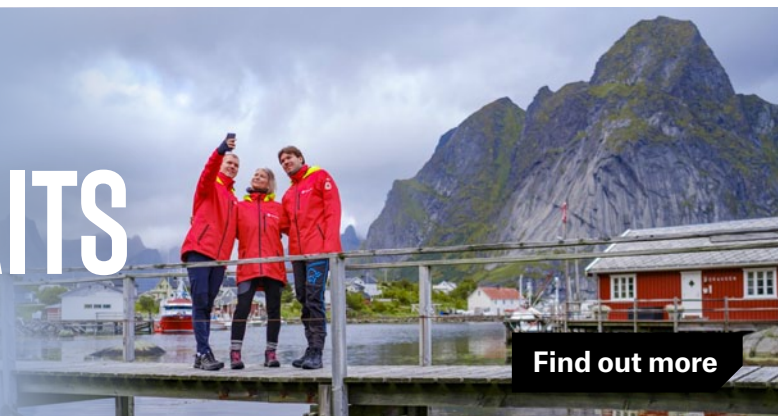
She was also previously the Chair of Qantas Superannuation from 2004 until 2019.

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## Country Inn refresh and expansion plan

**COUNTRY** Inn Hotels & Resorts has refreshed its brand identity, and is also planning to expand its footprint in more than 12 other locations this year.

The company recently launched a brand new logo and identity, with the aim of its expansion to establish 20 resorts by next year, up from its current five.

Planned locations for global growth include properties in Goa, Dehradun, Mussoorie, Varanasi and Vrindavan.

## Cooks opens to NZ

**THE** Cook Islands has reopened its border with New Zealand for vaccinated travel.

The two-way quarantine-free travel bubble lasted just three months last year, before authorities pulled the pin due to Auckland's Delta outbreak.

Air New Zealand Chief Operational Integrity and Safety Officer David Morgan said strong bookings were already noted for Jan, with around 110,000 New Zealanders normally travelling to Rarotonga a year under pre-pandemic conditions.

## Whose animal is this?



**THIS** nation is often more famous for its supposed pirates than for having the leopard as its national animal.

Leopards are not unique to this country, being found across Africa and Asia, but they play an important role in the nation's

environment by controlling the levels of prey.

This country has a wide variety of animals due to its many varied climate areas, from coastal to arid terrain.

Do you know which country's national animal is the leopard?

Answer: Leopard - Somalia

## BROCHURES

**WELCOME** to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to [brochures@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:brochures@traveldaily.com.au).



### Insight Vacations Europe, Asia, Americas 2023/24

Guided tours presented in a simple, enjoyable and affordable fashion are on offer via Insight Vacations' latest collection. Highlights in the Americas section include a nine-day American Parks Trail package, featuring visits to the Yellowstone National Park, driving adventures through the Shoshone National Forest and visits to the Devils Tower in the Black Hills of Wyoming. Meanwhile popular adventures in the Europe section includes the 10-day Easy

Pace Italy tour, with artisan glassblowing demonstrations in Venice and guided shopping in Florence forming part of the adventure.



### APT Canada & Alaska 2023 pre-release

APT has released its 2023 Canada & Alaska pre-release brochure, offering a range of travel styles by both sea and land. The 16-page brochure showcases luxury travel across North America, offering signature experiences such as Gold leaf service aboard the Rocky Mountaineer and create-your-own-light-display on Niagara Falls. Highlights of the brochure includes the 22-day Rockies Odyssey & Alaska cruise, taking passengers to the

Butchart Gardens and to enjoy tours of Whistler by gondola, mountain jeep or seaplane.

## Show me the money

**THE** successor to the defunct Alitalia airline has reportedly held discussions with several carriers in a bid to secure a private equity partner to guarantee its future.

Sources close to the Italian Government-owned ITA Airways have suggested investment talks have been conducted with Lufthansa, British Airways and Delta Air Lines.

"We don't need codesharing or a commercial joint venture, if you put money on the table, you play, if you don't put money on the table, you can avoid asking for access to the data room," ITA Airways Chairman Alfredo Altavilla said.

Altavilla added that the carrier, which commenced flights in Oct last year, was on the lookout for an investor in order to spur its ambitious growth ambitions, starting with its flagship airports in Rome and Milan.

ITA has a fleet size of 52 aircraft and flies to 38 destinations.

## Not fee-ling okay

**RISE** airport fees have been blamed for a Ryanair decision to close its base at Frankfurt Airport.

All of the carrier's routes from the German airport are set to cease by the end of Mar, with affected passengers to receive refunds by the end of this week.

Ryanair currently operates 15 routes from Frankfurt Airport to destinations including Dublin, London, Athens and Barcelona.

"While Ryanair continues to invest in German airports who understand the requirement to lower airport charges to recover traffic, competition in the German market has been massively distorted by the €9 billion of state aid that was pumped into Lufthansa, who continues to cut its fleet, connections, and jobs," Ryanair's Director of Commercial Jason McGuinness said.

"Competitive airport fees provide the foundation from which Ryanair can deliver long-term traffic growth," he added.