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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of news, a special update from **Agoda** and a full page from **United Airlines**.

## Kingswell TA GM

**RACHEL** Kingswell was yesterday announced as the new GM of Travel Associates in Australia, effective 01 Aug.

Kingswell has been with the Flight Centre Travel Group for two decades, with her promotion following the recent elevation of Dani Galloway to Global MD for the company's Premium and Independent division (**TD** 29 Jun).

Kingswell's former FCTG roles include being an Area Leader for Flight Centre in South Africa and Retail Leader of Flight Centre NZ.

## WA targeting the trade

**TOURISM** Western Australia is doubling down on travel advisor distribution, today launching a new West Aussie All Stars (WAAS) trade training program to help travel professionals effectively sell holidays in WA.

There are eight modules in the program, each featuring different parts of the state such as Perth and its surrounds, the South West, the Coral Coast, Broome

and the Dampier Peninsula, Kununurra and the Kimberley, the Pilbara and the Golden Outback.

Agents who successfully complete all eight modules before 22 Aug will be in the running to win one of five Broome pearls - including an exclusive famil to the destination to collect it - while the first 50 consultants to complete the training will also receive a \$100 gift voucher.

Qualified agents will also be able to use a digital WAAS badge for inclusion on assets, and receive first consideration for WA famils and east coast trade events.

Tourism WA said the program aimed to boost understanding of the state and help advisors "build inspiring itineraries for clients to tick off their adventure bucket list", with more details online at [tourism.wa.gov.au/tradetraining](http://tourism.wa.gov.au/tradetraining).

The three-night winners famil will take place in Oct and include return flights via Perth to Broome from participants' closest capital.

## NTIAs going off

**AFTA** has seen an "overwhelming response" to the 2022 National Travel Industry Awards, with scores of entries across the newly revamped categories at the end of last Fri's nomination period.

AFTA CEO Dean Long said there were 28 nominations on average for each of the individual categories, along with 22 on average in the business categories of the highly anticipated awards.

This week all nominees will be contacted by AFTA while final guidelines are put in place for assessment.

The industry night of nights will take place at the Sydney International Convention Centre on Sat 15 Oct, with tickets to go on sale next month.

Table Sponsorship packages are also now on offer for anyone wanting to reserve places in advance of general ticket sales - for details **CLICK HERE**.

## Win a trip to the US

**UNITED** Airlines is highlighting a new travel agent incentive today, offering places on a famil in Oct visiting San Francisco, Lake Tahoe and Yosemite National Park.

To win, advisors must complete the United Airlines Training Module and book four UA tickets from Australia to the USA as well as join the Gate 7 Facebook page. More details on the **last page**.

## Traveleague is back!

**CHRISTMAS** Traveleague is inviting the industry to save the date for its annual celebration of the travel industry in Melbourne, which will return to the Crown Palladium on 14 Dec.

Organiser Craig Hunt said he expected tickets would sell fast this year as the industry recovers.

"We know people are wanting to get together and catch up again," he said.

Darren Ross from the Magic Castle Hotel, who is now a part of the event's organisation, said he was confident that demand would be strong, with tickets to go on sale mid-Aug.

To discuss Christmas Traveleague sponsorship opportunities, contact Hunt on 0419 108 860 or [info@christmastraveleague.com](mailto:info@christmastraveleague.com).

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## Caribbean visa?

JAMAICAN Tourism Minister, Edmund Bartlett, is urging a single visa offering visitors the ability to travel across the entire Caribbean region, similar to the system trialled for the 2007 Cricket World Cup - as well as the creation of a common airspace for carriers.

## No wonder fares are high!

INTERNATIONAL airline passenger traffic to and from Australia is still just a fraction of pre-pandemic levels, with the latest figures from the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE) showing total seats available on scheduled operations to/from Australia in May were down 58% on the same month in 2019.

Singapore Airlines held the largest market share in May this year with 16.9% of the total - just ahead of Qantas Airways with 16.8% of passenger numbers.

Emirates was in third place with 10.5%, ahead of Air New Zealand at 9.9% and Jetstar at 9.45%.

Overall Qantas Group, including Jetstar and Jetstar Asia, accounted for 26.5% of total Australian international passenger carriage in May 2022 - compared to 27.3% in May 2019.

The BITRE figures also indicated

a big jump in the market share of low-cost carriers, with AirAsia X, Jetstar, Jetstar Asia and Scoot accounting for 13.8% of the market - compared to 7.2% a year ago and 14.3% in May 2019.

The top city pair in May was Sydney-Singapore, followed by Melbourne-Singapore, Perth-Singapore, Sydney-Dubai and then Sydney-Auckland.

A total of 51 international airlines operated scheduled services to and from Australia during the month - compared to a total of 61 pre-pandemic carriers flying here in May 2019.

## Uber fined \$26m

UBER has agreed to pay a \$26 million penalty for misleading Aussie travellers about fares and cancellation fees.

The fine is the result of legal action brought forward by the ACCC in Apr (**TD 27 Apr**), with the consumer watchdog alleging the popular ridesharing platform was charging cancellation fees to consumers during supposed 'free cancellation periods', and giving inaccurate estimated fare ranges between Dec 2017 and Sep 2021.

More than 130,000 trips were taken in that time frame, with Uber pointing out that 89% of customers were charged a lower fare than was estimated.

The fine was calculated on the basis of \$8 million for the inaccurate fares and an \$18 million penalty for the cancellation messages.

## EK adds to Gatwick

EMIRATES is boosting capacity between Dubai and London Gatwick Airport, with a third daily service in place from tomorrow through until 03 Aug.

The expansion aims to help deal with large pax numbers travelling between Dubai and London.

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Photo credit Greg Snell

## DFAT LHR warning

THE Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has issued an update advising Australian travellers of the current restrictions and passenger caps at Heathrow Airport, which are causing delays and cancellations.

"The restriction on passenger numbers is expected to last for several months," DFAT warned, urging passengers to contact airlines to confirm flights, ensure their travel insurance includes cancellation coverage, and be prepared for long wait times.

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## Structure receives approval



**TRAVELLERS** Choice members from across five cities came together this month for the Members Meeting, marking the travel group's first in-person event since 2019.

Managing Director Christian Hunter and Chairman Trent Bartlett spoke about the company's new multi-tiered membership mode, which was well received by members.

"Members recognise the need

for Travellers Choice to adapt to an evolving trading environment, just as they have adapted their own businesses," Hunter said.

Members also heard about the company's operational strategies and financial forecasts, and had the opportunity to discuss current business challenges.

## Dutton wants Bali's borders closed

**FEDERAL** Opposition Leader Peter Dutton has slammed the Albanese Government for not suspending travel to and from Bali in the face of a foot-and-mouth outbreak in Indonesia.

Despite a raft of enhanced measures brought in at Australian airports (**TD** 07 Jul), Dutton said the country should be blocking travel to tourism meccas like Bali until the threat of the disease has been assessed further.

"I think the Prime Minister needs to explain why that has not happened," Dutton questioned.

However, Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt defended the government's call to keep borders open with Indonesia and not take a zero tolerance approach to returning travellers.

"We have never said that every single passenger returning from Indonesia is being thoroughly screened, taken away for questioning, or having their luggage searched," he said.

## Strike adds to woes

**QANTAS** is among a raft of airlines who may be impacted by mooted industrial action by airport services provider Dnata.

Workers for the UAE-based business are mulling strike action to improve pay and work conditions, with ground crew set to apply to the Fair Work Commission today to get the green light to hold a vote.

Dnata oversees the baggage handling for 20 airlines, including Qantas, Singapore Airlines, Etihad, Air New Zealand, Air Niugini, and Air Canada.

Qantas said it would work with Dnata to head off disruptions caused by potential strikes.

"Dnata handle up to 20 airlines that fly into Australia and this is going to disrupt thousands of people wanting to go on holidays and visit family and friends," the carrier said in a statement.

## Swan 2023 season

**SWAN** Hellenic has released full details of its 2022-2023 cultural expedition cruises, which will explore seven continents and see *SH Vega* embark on its inaugural arctic cruise.

The 2023 season will see *SH Minerva* focused on the Pacific region, *SH Vega* on the Atlantic and West Africa, and *SH Diana* on the Mediterranean, Red Sea and East Africa.

The cruise line is also offering 30% savings on its brochure prices for all bookings made from now until the end of Sep - **CLICK HERE** for more details.

## Peter Sommer back

**TO CELEBRATE** 20 years of operation, Peter Sommer Travels has reinstated its portfolio of European and Middle Eastern tours, and added two brand new adventures to its 2022/23 range.

New trips include the seven-day Walking and Cruising the Carian Coast itinerary in Turkey, which runs from 02-09 Oct 2022 and is priced from \$4,425pp, and the 12-day Exploring Macedonia tour from 12-24 Jun 2023, priced from \$7,895pp.

The two new tours join Peter Sommer's existing collection of 29 tours.

**CLICK HERE** for bookings and more information.



## Window Seat

**SO IT** has finally come to this.

A traveller from Ireland recently purchased a plane ticket with no intention to fly, but rather to gain access to an airport's lost luggage area and claim his misplaced belongings.

Dermot Lennon returned to Dublin from a trip to Australia at the end of Jun, but like so many travellers at the moment, his luggage did not appear on the carousel on arrival.

Leaving Dublin Airport without his bags, Lennon grew frustrated after hearing nothing for more than a week, so as a last resort decided to buy a plane ticket to Glasgow just so he could go foraging around for his lost suitcases.

For security reasons, only a limited number of people are allowed into the zone where the lost suitcases are kept, Lennon said, with the cheapest ticket he could find granting him access from the gate straight to the baggage carousel.

After several hours, Lennon managed to track down his bags in the midst of thousands of bits of luggage, but we're reasonably confident the man took no selfies on this trip.



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# New 'hot markets' for Australia



**IN COMPARISON** to many countries globally, Australia took longer to reopen its borders to international travel – for inbound and outbound travellers.

But with Aussies again choosing overseas destinations such as Bali and Fiji in droves, domestic hoteliers and accommodation providers need to re-engage with international travellers to increase occupancy.

Agoda's data shows that international travellers are now returning, with a 300% increase in searches for Australia, between November 2021 and June 2022.

Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea now feature in the top five origin markets.

Agoda's Oceania Director, Zsuzsanna Janos, reports that Agoda had found ways to help its Australian hotel partners capture a better share of these international tourists.

"We've developed a new initiative that offers a discount to target international travellers, which also helps our hotel partners stand out and secure more bookings from 'hot markets' – those with travellers looking to book and travel now – that accommodation partners might never be able to reach alone.

"This discount is offered at a time when global inflation is rising, which means more travellers are seeking value.

"Asia is Agoda's stronghold, so we have insights into the drivers of the Asian traveller.

"Our accommodation partners are finding this expertise

incredibly valuable in securing and managing bookings and boosting occupancy levels.

"That's because international travellers tend to stay longer than domestic visitors, they're far less likely to cancel, and they check in throughout the week, not just on weekends."

## Who's coming?

**VISITOR** numbers from traditional markets such as Singapore and the US are still strong, but recent search data also shows that South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia are important emerging markets for Australia.

"These travellers are looking for more than just a hotel stay – increasingly, they also want to experience local culture, cuisine and natural surroundings – and it's great value deals which are the catalyst for them to confirm a booking," Zsuzsanna Janos, Agoda's Oceania Director, said.

With Agoda's new discount, offered through the International Rate Channel (IRC), Australian accommodation partners can capture the right markets, maximising yield and revenue by marketing in multi-markets to capture demand from travellers across a range of budget price points.

For more details visit Agoda's Partnerhub [HERE](#).

## Smart solutions for hotels

**IN ORDER** to remain relevant and attract new customers, hotel owners must look to sophisticated marketing strategies that target travellers at the right time, and this is especially relevant for international travellers, Agoda reports.

Therefore, Agoda is working closely with its Australian hotel partners to provide smart solutions, such as the new discount to target international travellers.

This enhances hotels' visibility in the markets that matter and secures them more guests, through Agoda's multi-faceted

marketing strategies.

Agoda's unique product includes dedicated landing pages featuring Welcome Back properties, marketing exposure via push notifications, social media and Agoda Media Solutions banners.

It enables Australian hotels to better target travellers from Asia and beyond, tweaking their offering in ways that will appeal.

"We are able to provide the best prices and use our marketing optimisation to turn travellers' needs and desires into actual bookings," Zsuzsanna Janos, Agoda's Oceania Director (**pictured**) said.



"Our latest products allow our accommodation partners to offer great value deals, with discounts passed on directly to consumers.

"This is a worthwhile investment for accommodation partners because it translates into higher sales that fill empty rooms for longer."

## A perfect view from the Top



**TOURISM** Northern Territory recently gave two travel agents some amazing insights into why they need to be selling more holidays to the Top End.

The pair of advisors from TravelManagers enjoyed five-day famils to different spots of the Territory, with trips including a host of iconic tropical experiences, flights, accommodation and meals.

For Kerrin Poupos (pictured left), from Warragul in Victoria, the trip involved seeing the best of the Red Centre, starting with a visit to the incomparable Uluru, and followed by a trip to the impressive Voyages Field of Light installation and a seat at the Sounds of Silence dining experience.

Fellow travel advisor Erryn Morris (pictured right) from Gooseberry Hill in WA, chose a bit more greenery for her famil

to the NT, starting out in Darwin before venturing on to Litchfield National Park, Tiwi Islands and Kakadu National Park.

“Litchfield National Park really epitomises the Top End,” Morris said, adding its amazing scenery and the chance to cool off swimming in billabongs were something to remember, as were her visits to the Kakadu National Park and the Royal Flying Doctor Facility in Darwin.

### Resources needed

**THE** Federal Government said it is treating the current visa backlog as a matter of “urgent priority”, with Federal Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, Andrew Giles, tasking the Department of Home Affairs with dealing with the backlog as quickly as possible.

The Department has placed nearly 140 new staff in visa processing roles since May, and officers previously focused on travel exemptions have been redirected to visa processing, with key offshore case loads - including temporary skilled, students and visitors - made a priority, so that more people can enter Australia and assist with labour shortages.

Jun saw a 6.5% rise from May in the number of visa applications received, with a 10.6% increase in the number of applications finalised over the same period, Minister Giles highlighted.

### Zimbabwe currency

**TRAVELLERS** to Zimbabwe will soon have the choice of using a new gold coin currency as the African nation’s government tries to think of new ways to curb a crippling inflation problem.

The first batch of Mosi-oa-Tunya coins have been minted to support the Zimbabwe dollar and reduce the demand for US dollar exchanges, with purchases able to be made from authorised outlets such as banks.

## AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



**THIS** week I am back in Canberra with some great meetings to ensure those in the new positions of power are aware of and

respect our industry.

While all things advocacy will continue, today marks the opening of the 47th Parliament.

It is only the fourth time since the Second World War and the fifth time in a hundred years, that Labor has formed government from opposition.

We have meetings with many newly appointed and returning members of Parliament including the Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell, Shadow Trade and Tourism Kevin Hogan, and Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister Tim Watts.

We will be discussing all things passports, Smartraveller, foot-and-mouth disease response and providing an update on the state of our recovery.

We will also be taking the time to reconnect with the many public service agencies that support and regulate our sector.

Most will have heard over the last week that many in the opposition are calling for the border to be closed to Bali.

As I have mentioned previously, AFTA is working very closely with the Department of Agriculture to ensure ATAS travel businesses have access to fact sheets for your clients.

As ATAS travel businesses, we pride ourselves on getting people to travel safely, take out travel insurance and now we must also remind people to declare certain food, plant material/animal items.

So far, the Farmers Federation and other leading agricultural industry groups are supporting an open border.

Now we must make sure all travellers who book with us know what their responsibility is.

Finally and excitingly, NTIA nominations closed last Fri and the response has been overwhelming.

On average in the individual categories, we had 28 nominations and in the business categories, we had 22.

This week all nominees will be contacted by AFTA and final guidelines will be put into place for assessment.

### Discover Malaysia

**AUSTRALIAN** travellers can take advantage of several deals on their next trip to Malaysia, as part of the *Discover Malaysia* campaign launched by global travel services provider, Trip.com, and Tourism Malaysia.

Kicking off last week, the campaign material is being showcased to Sydneysiders on the city’s Light Rail Tram network on *Discover Malaysia*-branded tram cars, up until 15 Aug.

The campaign is offering Trip.com users a selection of discounted promotions on flights and hotels, including return flights from \$488.

Australian travellers can also enjoy up to 50% off stays at select hotels in Kuala Lumpur, such as Sunway Velocity Hotel, normally \$188 per night now discounted to \$94 per night, 49% off Hotel Maya bringing it down from \$130 to \$66, and 40% off at 8 Kia Peng Suites Kuala Lumpur, reduced from \$192 to \$115.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

### People in demand

**BOEING** will need 2.1 million new aviation personnel over the next 20 years in order to meet long-term growth demand, according to predictions laid out in its 2022 Pilot and Technician Outlook (PTO) report.

This year’s PTO represents a 3.4% increase from 2021, with China, Europe and North America comprising more than half of the total new personnel demand.

### India safety audit

**THE** Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in India has commenced a two-month special audit of all Indian airlines, involving an in-depth inspection of airline facilities and equipment.

The audit follows numerous safety-related incidents on Indian flights over the past several weeks (**TD** 19 Jul), with the aviation watchdog conducting spot checks last week and finding that airline staff were failing to adhere to basic safety guidelines.

## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.695**

**THE** USD has slipped as traders pull back while awaiting the Federal Reserve policy meeting this week, with rates expected to rise by 75 basis points.

The Aussie dollar, Euro, British pound, and Japanese yen each saw gains against the weakening US dollar.

Meanwhile, Australian consumer price data is due Wed, and is forecast to hit a three-decade high.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	0.695
UK	£0.577
NZ	\$1.111
Euro	€0.680
Japan	¥94.81
Thailand	฿25.52
China	¥4.692
South Africa	11.674
Canada	\$0.893
Crude oil	US\$94.70

## Game on for Crown

**CROWN** Sydney is gearing up to welcome members and guests to its VIP casino from 08 Aug, after receiving approval last month to commence conditional gaming operations (*TD* 22 Jun).

The Barangaroo property will offer 160 gaming tables and 70 electronic table games as well as premium dining options and outdoor terrace areas spanning two VIP gaming floors, Crystal Room and Mahogany Room, plus 12 exclusive private Sky Salons.

The Crystal Room will open on day one, with Mahogany Room set to open at a later date.

## Biz trips longer than ever

**BUSINESS** travellers have more than doubled the length of their trips this year compared with 2019, according to new figures released by Flight Centre's Corporate Traveller division.

Extended lengths of corporate trips have been most noticeable on international trips, followed by domestic jaunts and trans-Tasman journeys.

Bookings for business travel taken between Jan and May 2022 show the average international trip is 8.7 days this year, compared with 3.4 days during the same period in 2019.

Meanwhile domestic business trips have been around 3.09 days long, compared with 1.1 day in 2019, and trans-Tasman corporate trips have increased

from 1.3 days to 2.6 days.

While the reasons for increasing length of business trips is many and varied, Corporate Traveller Global Managing Director Tom Walley believes at least part of the picture is the rebooting of meetings after an extended length of Zoom interactions.

"Executives may be reuniting with teams for the first time since 2019 and engaging in lengthy operational and strategy meetings in person," he said. "Some businesses are also rebuilding again to focus on their growth and conducting longer sales and recruitment-based trips," Walley added.

The Gold Coast has shown particularly strong rebounding numbers, the data showed.

## New export leader

**EXPORT** Finance Australia CEO Swati Dave has left the govt department, with John Hopkins named as her replacement.

Dave oversaw major relief support for tourism operators.

## COMING EVENTS

*TD Events* is the new way to showcase your product or service to the travel industry.

Livn Group - details coming soon

Missed an event? Don't worry, you can catch up at any time.

## RECENT EVENTS

Amadeus - the latest travel technology trends with Kaylene Shuttlewood and Lance Batty - [CLICK HERE](#) to view.

Switzerland Tourism "Winter Magic Tour" with Livio Goetz and Lisa Maroun - [CLICK HERE](#).

"The Tide Turns for Cruise" with CLIA MD Joel Katz and Jill Abel from the Australian Cruise Association - [CLICK HERE](#).

Norwegian Cruise Line "The Great Cruise Comeback" - [CLICK HERE](#).

Quark Expeditions showcase of *Ultramarine* - [CLICK HERE](#).

AFTA CEO Dean Long Executive Interview - [CLICK HERE](#).

Entire Travel Group with Brad McDonnell and Greg McCallum - [CLICK HERE](#).

To organise an event for your company, enquire at [traveldaily.com.au/events](http://traveldaily.com.au/events)

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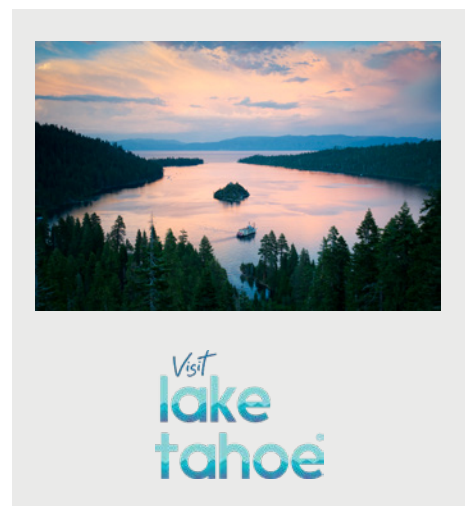
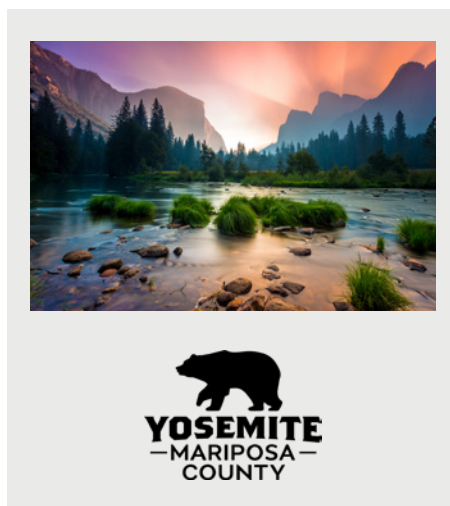
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Agents will be required to make their own ways to departure Cities SYD & MEL.



### Game of Skill

1. Information on how to enter and prizes form part of these terms & conditions. Any entry not complying with these terms and conditions is invalid. The Promoter's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 2. Entry is open to any Australian registered travel agent, travel broker or mobile agent who sells and book United Airlines into SFO as a tourist destination from Australia. 3. The Promotion commences on 18th July - 29th August 4. To enter, Eligible Entrants must during the Promotion Period: Agents must complete the United Airlines Training Modules and book 4 United Airlines tickets from Australia to the USA on UA ticket stock 016. Join the Gate 7 Facebook agent page or resource centre. Agents also responsible to note booking number to provide to UA. • Six Agents will win a trip to San Francisco, Lake Tahoe and Yosemite National Park • Agents must register their details via the registration form, with UA ticket numbers & nights booked in San Francisco/Lake Tahoe/Yosemite Mariposa County. 5. The Promoter reserves the right to verify the validity of entries and reserves the right to disqualify any entrant for tampering with the entry process or for submitting an entry that is not in accordance with these Terms & Conditions. 6. Agents who complete the training modules and qualify in all of the above will go into a draw (with one place for the agent who books the most) will win a place on the fam 8. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Chance plays no part in determining the winning. 9. The Prizes: • Six (6) Places on the 'Breathe with United' retail agent fam trip. • 3 Nights in San Francisco • 2 Nights in Yosemite Mariposa County • 2 Nights in Lake Tahoe • All accommodation, touring and activities • 50% of meals 10. Not included: • Transfers to departure city (Melbourne x 2 and Sydney x 4) • Airline taxes • Incidentals

### Terms and Conditions

Entrants must be free and available to travel to the USA Saturday 15th Oct, returning to Australia Monday 24th October. The prize winners will be responsible for all expenses not outlined in the prize description including but not limited to food and beverage, gratuities, activities, souvenirs, and the securing of and payment for any Visa expenses required for entry into the US. The prize cannot be changed or deferred to another date. No cash alternative. By participating, the entrant agrees to be bound to these terms & conditions and the decisions of United, and agrees to waive any right to claim ambiguity in regard to the contest mechanics and/or the interpretation of these terms & conditions.