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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news plus a front page from **Royal Caribbean Cruise Line**.

Royal on sale now

ROYAL Caribbean International (RCI) is offering discounts and bonus offers on its 2023/24 Australian season, which will see *Ovation of the Seas* and *Quantum of the Seas* operating out of both Brisbane and Sydney.

Itineraries will kick off in Oct, with RCI MD Gavin Smith saying after already hosting more than a million guests worldwide since the pandemic's onset "now we can't wait to bring the magic back to Australia".

See the **cover page** for more.

AIME kicks off today

THE biggest event in Australia's MICE calendar has kicked off today, with Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) 2022 opening to attendees at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The two-day gathering will see 225 exhibitors from the Asia Pacific and 1,500 visitors in attendance, themed around business innovation, engagement and human connection.

AIME will also host an online version of the event from 28 Mar to 01 Apr - register **HERE**.

More details on AIME in **Business Events News** this Thu.

TTC confirms new structure

THE Travel Corporation (TTC) has today unveiled the leadership team for its reorganised TTC Tour Brands division in Australia (**TD 04 Mar**), with the restructure seeing the departure of long-time Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold Head of Sales, David Farrar, and Insight MD Karen Deveson.

The newly created combined Australian and NZ entity will serve as a single source for sales, marketing and operations of brands including Trafalgar, Insight Vacations, Contiki, Luxury Gold and Costsaver.

Andrew Young has been appointed as GM of Sales, leading 12 sales managers across Australia and New Zealand.

Tomas Malmberg is TTC Tour Brands new National Manager for Key Accounts and Development, focusing on key consortia and agency networks "with an emphasis on those with a product mix dedicated to the luxury segment".

TTC Tour Brands will also have a newly formed "marketing centre of excellence" headed up by Anna Neville, whose existing responsibilities for marketing Trafalgar, Costsaver and Contiki will also expand to cover Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold.

Her team will include Claire Haggerty as Head of Marketing and Partnerships; Jayesh Kesry as Head of Media and Communications; and Kate Tate as Head of Marketing Operations

and Special Projects.

The overall TTC Tour Brands business will be led by Toni Ambler, who has been named MD after over a decade of association with TTC, including roles at Contiki in Australia and more recently at UK creative agency BS&T as the youth brand's London-based Chief Marketing Officer under the so-called "Contiki Marketing Lab".

Ambler said "the creation of this dynamic new team will enable TTC to better service our trade partners and customers, providing them with a portfolio of travel brands for every age, style and mindset of traveller".

"Never before has the ease and simplicity of guided touring been so sought after, and we look forward to working with all our partners to ensure our customers' experience is the very best in touring," she said.

MEANWHILE Ulla Hefel Bohler, formerly Insight Global CEO and now TTC Tour Brands Chief Operating Officer, paid tribute to Deveson and Farrar.

"Karen and David have both been exceptional leaders during their tenure - their passion, commitment, drive and love for Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold, our partners and our team have been nothing but incredible," she enthused.

oneworld SAF deal

MEMBERS of the oneworld Alliance have flagged plans to purchase 757 million litres of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) a year from Colorado-based renewable fuels producer Gevo.

The airline cooperation has signed a five-year contract with green fuel to be delivered to members including Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, British Airways, Finnair, Japan Airlines and Qatar Airways.

oneworld has previously committed to a 10% sustainable aviation fuel target by 2030.

MU 737 crashes

A BOEING 737-800 aircraft operated by China Eastern Airlines has crashed in China, with all 132 people on board believed to have been killed.

MU flight 5735 was flying from Kunming to Guangzhou when it apparently plunged to the ground from about 29,000 feet, smashing into a remote forest.

It's the biggest air disaster in China in more than a decade, with China Eastern Airlines grounding its entire 737-800 fleet as a precautionary measure while an investigation proceeds.

Shore power deal

CARNIVAL Australia has signed an agreement with the Port Authority of NSW for its cruise ships docking at White Bay Cruise Terminal in Sydney to connect to shore power derived from certifiable renewable energy.

Carnival brand P&O is a major client of the White Bay Cruise Terminal, which has a fleet comprised entirely of shore power-ready ships.

"The use of shore power is now routine for our ships at 21 locations around the world such as Alaska, other North American ports in the US and Canada and also in Europe and China," Carnival Australia President Marguerite Fitzgerald said.

"Having our shore power ready ships access this new capability in Sydney will be seen as another sign of our global and local commitment to protecting the marine and natural environment."

Own a slice of QF

QANTAS has become the latest brand to jump on the non-fungible tokens (NFT) wave, revealing plans to release unique pieces of digital artwork for people to buy and collect.

"The initial buyer of a Qantas NFT will be able to earn Qantas Points, with more exciting future benefits for Qantas NFT holders underway," the carrier said.



NT Summer Sale. Win a holiday to the NT.

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*T&Cs apply.

Virtual Launch Event

If you missed out on our in-person Quark 23/24 season launch event, it's not too late!
Together with Travel Daily events join us for a virtual launch event.

29 March at 11am & 4pm (EST)

11am
REGISTER HERE

4pm
REGISTER HERE

Quark Expeditions
The Leader in Polar Adventures



Princess webinar

REGISTER now for an exclusive Princess Cruises webinar about the cruise line's return to service program aboard *Coral Princess*.

Sailing from Brisbane later this year, Princess' David Craven and Shaun Kavanagh will host the info session - register [HERE](#).



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Bonza banks on Tamworth

EXCLUSIVE

BONZA has announced two new routes from Tamworth Regional Airport, marking the airline's 17th destination.

Flights to Tamworth from Melbourne and the Sunshine Coast - Bonza's 26th and 27th services - have now joined the airline's route map, just one month after it was initially announced (*TD* 15 Feb).

Bonza will introduce two round-trip flights per week on both routes, with Chief Executive Officer Tim Jordan telling *Travel Daily* the airline's goal is to stimulate a year-round market between Tamworth and its regional hubs, with pricing between \$50 and \$100pp.

Jordan said existing fare levels into Tamworth mean very few fliers choose to visit the NSW town by air.

"With existing pricing levels, it's just not possible when the entry point for flying between Melbourne and Tamworth is, if you're lucky, \$500, and if you're unlucky at \$600, \$700 or even more," he said.

"You're not having families doing that."

Prohibitively expensive fares on rural and underserved routes are common in Australia, and Jordan said part of Bonza's business plan is to take prices typically targeted at last-minute fliers and "the top 1%" and lower them to the bottom of the market - typically "teachers, tradies, children, and

carers".

Jordan added that based on the demand from Melbourne and the Sunshine Coast, he was "absolutely confident in terms of both of the markets.

"In fact, we'd like to see, perhaps in the future, more markets or more frequencies.

"We certainly have confidence in the market and confidence in the region," Jordan added.

An Enchanting debut

ROYAL Caribbean International has revealed its 2,446-passenger *Enchantment of the Seas* ship will make its Australian debut in the 2023/2024 season.

Part of Royal's big return plan to the local market after a two-year cruise ban, *Enchantment* will depart from Sydney for its first Aussie deployment, offering guests eight- to 11-night sailings of the South Pacific visiting destinations such as French Polynesia, Isle of Pines and Mare.

The vessel will also call at new destinations for Royal such as Kangaroo Island and Gladstone in Western Australia, as well as operate a special 11-night Christmas cruise visiting the Top End and the west coast, including Darwin, Exmouth and Fremantle.

The 2023/23 season will also feature *Quantum of the Seas* sailing out of Brisbane, and *Ovation of the Seas* out of Sydney, with half-priced deposits now on offer before 05 Apr.

HK lifts flight ban

HONG Kong will lift its flight ban on Australia and disband its quarantine protocols from 01 Apr.

From next month, services from nine countries, including Australia, will be able to carry Hong Kong residents back home, so long as they are vaccinated.



News TRAVEL NETWORK

Jul - Dec 2022

TREND FORECAST

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New Marriott brand

MARRIOTT International has signed an agreement to debut its Marriott Executive Apartments in Australia.

The agreement with Sunnyland Investment Group will see the first Marriott Executive Apartments debut in Melbourne in 2026.

Located on St Kilda Road, three kilometres from downtown Melbourne, the all-suite hotel is slated for 180 keys, and will be part of a mixed-use development.

Offering an elevated serviced apartment experience designed to meet corporate travellers' long-stay lodging needs, the elegant studios, one-bedroom, and dual-key apartments provide separate sleeping, living and working areas, as well as gourmet kitchens.

With parkland bordering either side of the precinct, the site offers close proximity to typical corporate and leisure demand in the city, including MCEC and the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The \$170 million hotel's mixed-use project's construction is due to commence in 2024.

Brad and Tina take off



ENTIRE Travel Group's Managing Director Brad McDonnell and Head of Product & Marketing Tina Heyer recently sampled the helicopter transfers on offer as part of some of its Fiji holiday packages.

The spectacular aerial jaunt is something guests can enjoy between the luxurious Likuliku Lagoon Resort - a wilderness island retreat offering over-water burees in a natural ocean lagoon - and the tourism meccas of Nadi, operated by Heli-Tours Fiji.

The helicopter tourism company also offers a range of scenic flight options for visitors.

Pictured: McDonnell and Heyer preparing for lift off.



Window Seat

ONE of Tasmania's most revered aircraft, a 1930 Desoutter Havilland Gipsy named 'Miss Flinders', has returned to the air.

Unfortunately, with the aircraft now more than 90 years old, it was decided safest to achieve this by affixing it to the roof of the terminal of Launceston Airport.

Miss Flinders enjoyed a remarkable career in its day, flying regular passenger services to Flinders Island.

The aircraft is only one of three of its kind in the world, and originally flew out of Western Junction in Tasmania.

Intrepid partnership

INTREPID Travel has partnered with Taungurung Land & Waters Council in the development of the Cultural Tour Guide Program.

It will provide the skills and capacity for the Taungurung tour guides to tell their story through immersive tourism experiences.

Fifteen participants, both elders and youths, will embark on the initial program, in collaboration with Koorie Heritage Trust and Visit Victoria.

Seven more in Japan

MARRIOTT Bonvoy's Fairfield by Marriott brand is planning to open seven new properties in Japan during the course of 2022.

The company will open hotels in the prefectures of Nara, Hokkaido, Hyogo, and Okayama, with the expansion strategy to position hotels near by to roadside rest stations called "Michi-no-Eki", which are also close to national parks and UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Road trips are tipped to increase in popularity in Japan, with the country boasting some of the best interconnected highways in the world.



ScoMo delivers \$60m

THE Federal Government has announced a new \$60 million tourism funding package to help parts of Australia still licking their wounds from the two-year travel shutdown to recover faster.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison revealed earlier today that the bulk of the funding will go to Tourism Australia to help promote the historically strong tourism destinations of the Gold Coast, the NSW far north coast, the Sunshine Coast, the Great Ocean Road, The Whitsundays and the Hunter region.

Overall Australia's peak tourism body will receive \$45 million of the total package after the Federal Government conducted a round of consultations with tourism sector stakeholders.

"I have been listening to tourism industry operators about what they will need to rebuild their international tourist businesses and this funding boost will deliver

on those needs," Morrison said.

The breakdown of TA funds will see \$15 million set aside for advertising in overseas markets, \$25 million for direct partnership activities with trade wholesalers, airlines and the media, as well as \$5 million to extend Business Events Australia's bid fund.

The rescue funding will also see Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) awarded \$15 million to help the region's \$1 billion international visitor economy rebuild.

"Morrison understands the unique impact of border closures for this region, he listened to TTNQ's recovery proposals, understood the issues, and had the confidence to back us," CEO Ken Chapman said.

"Tropical North Qld is the nation's most tourism dependant region and this funding will ensure it continues to be a world-class Australian destination."

Secret judgements

AN INVESTIGATION by consumer group Choice has slammed accommodation platform Airbnb for not being transparent enough with users about its algorithms.

The group claims Airbnb has been using opaque data harvesting technology on users, surreptitiously collecting data to determine if they are a suitable client to rent or host properties.

"The data the algorithm uses to assess your 'trustworthiness' includes social media accounts of yourself and your friends, what you do for a living, your education level and any online data it can find," Choice's Kate Bower said.

"People use Airbnb to find a place to stay, the last thing they expect is that the company is secretly collecting their personal data and judging whether or not they are a good person."

The consumer group is now calling for a ban on the use of such social scoring algorithms.

No one size fits all

DFAT has warned Australian travellers that there is no "one size fits all" approach to assessing the risk of a holiday to Europe, encouraging Aussies to contact their airline or travel agent to confirm bookings prior to departure overseas.

The government department said with restrictions and requirements changing frequently, it was important to check arrangements regularly, prepare for disruptions and take out travel insurance where possible to minimise risks.

Educated angels

TO BETTER engage Aussie trade partners, Los Angeles Tourism has launched an on-demand webinar detailing what's new in LA across accommodation, dining, attractions, and experiences.

Prior to 2020, around 400,000 Aussies visited LA each year. View the webinar **HERE**.



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NT tourism progress

THE Government of NT's *Destination Management Plans* have shown the Top End tourism industry's progress of recovery.

Released today, the first phase of the annually planned report highlighted infrastructure upgrades in Nitmiluk National Park; accommodation enhancements in the Barkly region; work with traditional owners to expand mountain biking experiences in Alice Springs; and enhancements to adventure tourism offerings in Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

MEANWHILE, a new International Restart Fund is now also available to NT businesses.

Our belated day in the sun



THE who's who of tourism converged on the Novotel Sunshine Coast Convention Centre in Qld this week to award the winners of the annual Qantas Australian Tourism Awards.

The event, sponsored by heavy hitters including Tourism Australia and Qantas, saw 75 awards handed out across 25 categories.

Gold winners on the night included Qld's Spirits of the Red Sand as the best Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Tourism operator, Victoria's Wilsons Promontory Cruises as the best new tourism business, and Qld's Red Cat Adventures as the best Adventure Tourism operator.

Meanwhile Katherine Outback Experience took out the gong for Best Tourist Attraction, Ballarat Heritage Festival was honoured in the Best Festivals & Events category, while the Best Tourism and Marketing Campaign award was bestowed on Destination Gippsland.

Australian Tourism Awards Chair Daniel Gschwind said the

nominees and winners were testament to the Australian tourism industry's ability to adapt to the changing environment caused by major crises such as the pandemic.

"The businesses that are here tonight have led the way in reimagining their products so they can continue to provide quality visitor experiences throughout the pandemic," Gschwind said.

"With our open borders and international tourism resuming, tonight is a timely reminder of the vast range of exceptional tourism products and services available and to focus on a strong tourism future for Australia."

Other key note addresses at the event were delivered by Federal Tourism Minister Dan Tehan (**pictured**), and Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk.

"It's been a joy to celebrate a sector that has shown determination and innovation in the face of a global pandemic," the Qld Premier enthused.

Disneyland shuts

SHANGHAI Disneyland has paused operations as the city tries to control its biggest COVID-19 flare-up in two years.

MEANWHILE, the cities of Changchun and Jilin have begun another round of citywide testing.

MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.737

THE Australian dollar was lower overnight, as the United States' Federal Reserve System admitted it must move "expeditiously" to control spiralling inflation.

Reserve Chair Jerome Powell reset market expectations about future rate hikes, and suggested a 50-basis point increase remained a possibility.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.737
UK	£0.560
NZ	\$1.066
Euro	€0.669
Japan	¥88.26
Thailand	฿24.63
China	¥4.652
South Africa	10.96
Canada	\$0.925
Crude oil	US\$115.9

Travel Daily Events

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Tue 29 Mar 2022

Meet the Quark Expeditions team and their new *Ultramarine* in two sessions, one at 11am and one at 4pm. To register **CLICK HERE**.

Thu 07 Apr 2022

Abercrombie & Kent - more details coming soon.

Tue 03 May 2022

Silversea Cruises - more details coming soon.

Thu 12 May 2022

Executive interview with Livn Group - more details soon.

RECENT EVENTS

Missed an event? Watch the recordings via the links below.

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