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## Travel Daily

on location in  
**Barcelona, Spain**

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Virgin Voyages.

**THIS** week *Travel Daily* has been invited on board Virgin Voyages' *Valiant Lady*, the cruise line's second ship and follow-up to *Scarlet Lady*.

Passengers on the 'Irresistible Mediterranean' cruise will embark from Barcelona and sail through destinations such as the French Riviera in the southeastern corner of France.

*Valiant* will dock at Toulon, one of the largest ports on the French Riviera, which in addition to its status as a fascinating naval, fishing, and winemaking destination, also offers access to Marseille and Saint-Tropez, where guests will head on shore excursions.

## Rex real-time upgrades

**REX** Airlines is claiming an "Australian first" with the introduction of real-time bidding for Business class upgrades on its domestic jet services.

The initiative will see Economy pax invited to bid for a Business class seat a week before flying, with offers able to be adjusted whenever they are outbid to offer the best chance of success.

"All passengers love an upgrade...this new element of gamification in the bidding process will be a fun and economical way for our Economy passengers to experience our amazing Business class product

and service," said spokesperson Michael Venus.

Other planned enhancements in the lead-up to the launch of Rex's new loyalty program will include a new neighbour-free seating Economy option, and new or expanded lounges in Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

## Tokyo modules live

**TOKYO** Tourism is urging the travel industry to upskill on Japan with the release of new modules in its popular Tokyo Tourism Expert agent training program along with the opportunity to WIN a trip for two to Tokyo.

Six new updates cover basic knowledge required to visit Tokyo and Japan in the "new normal" along with sustainable tourism, disabled accessibility, new areas and options for digital nomads.

See [tokyotourismexpert.com.au](http://tokyotourismexpert.com.au) with more info on the last page.

## Agents love NY

**AGENTS** can earn up to 12% commission on New York State bookings plus bonus points to I Love NY's year-round incentives and grand prize in Aug 2023.

See **page seven** for details.

## Are we back now?

**THE** Travel Community Hub is gearing up to host the superstar trio of Sonia Jones (Sonia Jones Travel), Shelley Brice (Shelley Brice Travel) and Ann-Catherine Jones (Frontier Travel) to discuss what hurdles remain between the travel sector and the utopia of pre-COVID normality.

It's the continuation of a series of "frank and interactive discussions that have charted the journeys of the travel advisors through COVID," according to host Richard Taylor.

Kicking off at 7.30pm (AEDT) on Wed 12 Oct, people can register to attend the session **HERE**.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of news including our regular **Luxury Page**, a special update from **Topdeck** plus pages from:

- The Travel Junction
- Tokyo Tourism



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## Cruise at full throttle

**THE** revival of Australia's cruise sector is gathering pace this month, with more ships returning to Aussie waters from brands such as Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and Celebrity Cruises - see today's **Cruise Weekly** for data about improving cruise sentiment.

## UA confirms pullout

**UNITED** Airlines has made good on threats to withdraw from New York JFK airport, confirming it will suspend operations there effective from 29 Oct.

The carrier recently told the US Federal Aviation Administration it would halt flights to JFK if it was unable to secure additional slots, with its most recent schedule only including four daily flights.

UA also flies out of New York's La Guardia Airport and Newark, which is one of its major hubs.

The 100 or so UA staff at JFK will be redeployed elsewhere.

## SIA swoops on rule changes

**FOLLOWING** the recent easing of entry requirements in major travel hubs like Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, Singapore Airlines Group has confirmed plans to reinstate flights and increase service across its network in the coming weeks.

The expansion of capacity will be stretched across both Singapore Airlines and budget carrier Scoot, with the former to move to thrice daily services to Seoul from 30 Oct, while from the same date Scoot will reinstate Singapore-Taipei-Seoul services to five-times a week.

From 05 Nov, Scoot will also increase the frequency of flights to South Korea's Jeju to five-times weekly, up from the current thrice-weekly service, while for Japan SQ will add an extra daily service to Tokyo's Haneda Airport from 30 Oct, adding to existing daily services to Haneda & Narita.

The move will see Singapore

Airlines operate four daily services into Tokyo in total, while flights to Osaka will move from once to twice daily from 30 Oct.

Services to Japan's Fukuoka will increase to three flights per week, while Scoot flights to Tokyo (Narita) via Taipei, and services to Osaka will all increase to daily.

Meanwhile SQ services to Taiwan will be rebooted as a four times a week route, while Hong Kong will move to three-times daily services, subject to regulatory approvals.

## Free Oceania land

**OCEANIA** Cruises is offering free land extensions on a selection of 2023 itineraries.

A total of 15 sailings offer the bonus for bookings before 08 Jan 2023, with the add-ons featuring the Blue Mountains, Sydney, Cape Winelands, Taj Mahal, Angkor Wat, Rio de Janeiro, and more.



## Window Seat

**SPAIN** has found a simple way to deal with the crisis of lost and unclaimed airport luggage - donate it all to charity.

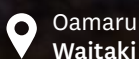
In Spain, there are an estimated 20,000 suitcases still sitting in airport warehouses, enter Envera, a nonprofit group which has dedicated its efforts to giving the bags and their contents new homes.

Staff members of the charity sort the contents, sterilise everything, and then assign prices before selling them, with all proceeds going toward creating jobs for people with mental and physical challenges.

Items fetching good money include scuba gear, ski boots, curling irons, and hair dryers, while the most ubiquitous items are key chains.

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## AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



**WE ARE** less than two weeks out from NTIA and the excitement is building. Last week we released the finalists for three of the

domestically and internationally.

We will be sharing the stories of our five finalists throughout the evening and as someone who has now had the privilege of reading them, some will bring many to tears.

AFTA has also kept up its advocacy activity, meeting with the Federal Financial Services Minister Stephen Jones on the issue of conflicted remuneration.

AFTA has been tracking the outcomes of the Hayne Review, ensuring our industry's needs are recognised and understood especially around travel insurance.

Locally, this morning LJ Loch and I had the pleasure of catching up with the new member for North Sydney, Kylea Tinks, continuing AFTA's bipartisan approach to educating parliamentarians on the role of corporate and international travel.

Lastly, yesterday our new Compliance Manager Nina Hedges joined the AFTA family (*TD* 04 Oct) as we bid farewell to Naomi Menon.

Being able to recruit Nina, who has an extensive travel background, is a major coup for AFTA and strengthens the oversight of ATAS.

four most popular categories. The engagement in these categories to recognise those individuals and businesses was a sign that our recovery is well underway.

I was also pleased to announce the category for Most Popular Travel Support Service by an Individual.

With over 6,000 votes cast, the efforts of these individuals and businesses will be a highlight of the evening.

This week we will be announcing the People's Choice finalists which was managed in partnership with NewsCorp through a public competition.

Unlike the other most popular categories, consumers needed to provide a maximum 100-word entry as to why an ATAS travel agency was their favourite.

Impressively, we had 10,953 stories of agencies going above and beyond to support Australians travelling

## Malaysia LCC ready

A NEW Malaysia-based carrier pledging to offer cheaper fares than AirAsia has been given the green light to commence operations by the end of the year.

MYAirline has been granted its Air Operator's Certificate and now plans on standing out from the crowd through cheaper prices, superior punctuality and better real-time customer support than its competitors.

Kuala Lumpur International Airport will act as the airline's headquarters, launching domestic routes in the first instance ahead of a range of international services after 12 months.

Three second-hand Airbus A320s will service the debut operations, with ambitions of growing the fleet to 50 within the next five years.

## Planes, trains and automobiles

THE AirAsia Super App has expanded its booking capability to allow travellers to purchase ticket bookings for buses, trains and ferries.

In the first move beyond offering flights exclusively, the app is providing the added transport options for those travelling in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines.

## Win 2 million points

FLYBUYS members with a linked Velocity Frequent Flyer account could win two million loyalty points or one of 10 runner-up prizes when transferring at least 1,000 Flybuys points to Velocity Frequent Flyer - see [HERE](#).

## Qatar reminder

**ALL** visitors aged six years and older must have a negative COVID-19 (PCR) test certificate valid for 48 hours or a COVID-19 (RAT) test certificate valid for 24 hours before entering Qatar during the FIFA World Cup.

From 01 Nov to 22 Dec, only Hayaa card holders can enter Qatar - to obtain a Hayaa card you must hold a ticket for the FIFA 2022 World Cup.

Card holders will be able to bring in three friends or relatives who don't hold tickets for an additional fee, DFAT has also confirmed.

## Aircalin adds flights

**AIRCALIN** has announced it will be increasing the number of flights offered between Noumea/Singapore from three to four times weekly, with the added services to take off from 31 Oct.

The New Caledonian carrier will also offer an additional weekly flight on the Noumea/Brisbane route between 20 Dec 2022 and 07 Feb 2023, bringing the number of flights up from four to five weekly during this period.

Aircalin flyers will also benefit from four weekly flights via Singapore between Noumea and Paris with its partner Air France.

## Club Med

Club Med operates 70+ Premium to Luxury all-Inclusive beach and snow resorts worldwide.

### Business Development Manager NSW

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Club Med Founder Gerard Blitz 1950

### Club Med Pacific is looking for their next superstar to join their dynamic team as Business Development Manager NSW.

- The successful applicant will be responsible for driving revenue and sales activities for the region through our strategic partnerships, whilst also exploring new opportunities to increase our brand positioning and awareness.
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All potential applicants must be a permanent resident of Australia.

If this sounds like you? Contact us at [hr.australia@clubmed.com](mailto:hr.australia@clubmed.com)

Applications close 21 October 2022



Content produced in collaboration with Topdeck



**TOPDECK** is back on the road helping young travellers explore the world once more.

During the lockdown period and Australian border closures, young travellers lost out on their rite-of-passage trip to Europe after uni and before starting their career.

During this period, Gen Z became the more dominant young traveller, bringing with them some different behaviours, beliefs and attitudes, contrasting Millennials before them.

After surveying over 500 Gen Z Aussies, Topdeck found that 66% are open to taking a group tour, with many favouring longer trips of three weeks or more.

Trying local food and drink was by far the most popular thing on the Gen Z to-do list (74%), followed by catching some sun (60%), exploring cities (57%),

visiting museums/cultural places (52%) and enjoying nightlife around the world (45%).

Topdeck also discovered that Gen Z travel to escape their everyday life and help them find out more about themselves away from home.

This fits perfectly with Topdeck's Feel Real positioning, which enables self-discovery in amazing new places within the safety and comfort of a group tour.



## Europe tops the list in 23

**AFTER** two years of no travel, Topdeck customers are eager to get back into the swing of it and are going all out, with longer trips selling fast.

Europe has dominated the interest list with 65% stating that they intend to visit somewhere in Europe the next time they travel internationally.

The 36-day Play & Pause Epic European and the 27-day Get Social: Big European tours have proven to be particularly popular with travellers for 2023.

The Play & Pause adventure visits 18 countries, with highlights including a trip to see the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a Danube dinner cruise, and wine tasting at Chateau du Taillan in Bordeaux.

Other trending itineraries include the eight-day Sail & Swim in Croatia on the pirate-style Moja Maja sailing boat, which includes breakfasts and lunches prepped by an on-board chef, and the 12-day Delve Deep: Japan, which allows guests to discover ancient traditions and local eats.

## A trip style for every traveller

**TOPDECK** offers trip styles for every traveller, designed to cater to the different core needs and wants of the tour operator's young customers.

The Get Social and Sail & Swim styles are ideal for customers who prefer larger groups and wish to socialise.

The Play & Pause option is for those who prefer smaller groups, want more free time and guidance, and need space to recharge.

And finally, inquisitive guests seeking in-depth, local experiences will opt for the Delve Deep style.

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## LA COLLECTION EXPANDS IN ITALY

**TWO** upmarket Italian properties will for the first time ever be directly showcased to the Australian and New Zealand markets, with the appointment of Craig Farrell and Lea Segulier's La Collection (LC) group as their local representatives.

The additions include Borgo Santandrea in Amalfi as well as San Montano Resort & Spa on Ischia, with Farrell saying he was thrilled at the new partnership.

"It's a privilege to be able to introduce these two true Italian gems to the Australian and New Zealand market," he said.

"Borgo Santandrea (pictured) provides a truly unique, luxury experience for guests - there's no doubt this property will become an icon of the Amalfi coast.

"And San Montano is the perfect base to explore the stunning and increasingly popular island of Ischia," he added.

"These two properties are



perfect additions to the LC portfolio as they are family owned, luxurious small hotels where service and authenticity are paramount," Farrell noted.

Borgo Santandrea GM Maurizio Orlacchio said the time was right to appoint representatives dedicated to Australia and NZ.

"We have had a number of Australian guests, including some travel advisors, visit the

properties this summer, and the feedback has been overwhelming - that many more Australians will love to visit," he said.

"This is a very important market for both Borgo Santandrea and San Montano...Lea and Craig know the market intimately and we are looking forward to working with them and the Australian and NZ trade" - see [leaseguier.com/#la-collection](https://leaseguier.com/#la-collection).

### Ponant hoists sails



**PONANT'S** iconic three-masted sailing yacht *Le Ponant* (pictured) has completed major renovations and will shortly set sail in the lead-up to her inaugural Kimberley season in 2023.

The huge makeover at the San Giorgio del Porto yard in Italy has seen the reimagined ship transformed to carry just 32 guests - half the previous number - along with a host of other cutting-edge innovations.

Offering a 1:1 passenger to crew ratio, the 16 spacious staterooms are spread across four passenger decks, and common areas featuring a panoramic gastronomic restaurant, spa, gym, wellness area and relaxing sun lounge area.

Environmental measures include shore power facilities, the use of sails where possible, recycling and more, with *Le Ponant* to cruise the Mediterranean before heading to the Seychelles and then her new home in Australia in Apr 2023.

### Dorchester Bond bar

**LONDON'S** The Dorchester has announced the new Vesper Bar, debuting in Dec ahead of the first phase completion of the iconic hotel's "most comprehensive transformation in over 30 years", with the bar's name honouring The Dochester's many connections with James Bond including regular guest, author Ian Fleming.

### New Thai property is suite news for Marriott

**MARRIOTT** Bonvoy has announced the opening of the new JW Marriott Khao Lak Resort Suites, described as an "all-suite luxury retreat" on Thailand's Andaman Coast.

The family-oriented resort offers a selection of spacious two-bedroom suites, along with an array of activities such as culinary workshops in the JW Garden and educational

activities in a shark nursery and conservation project.

It's located about an hour north of Phuket, and as well as 52 suites and 11 restaurants, the property features Southeast Asia's longest swimming pool, a massive lagoon measuring 2.4km end to end including a water slide, wave pool and aqua trampoline - more details [HERE](#).

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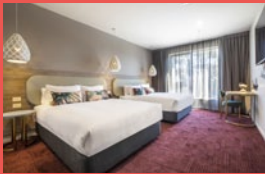


## ACCOMMODATION

**WELCOME** to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to [accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au).



The **JW Marriott Khao Lak Resort & Spa** has announced the addition of 127 rooms and villas, including 76 deluxe lagoon pool view rooms, 28 deluxe lagoon pool access rooms, 20 family pool access studios, two one-bedroom villas and a two-bedroom villa. The beachfront resort has also unveiled an Aqua Play Zone, new dining experiences, and Khao Lak's first large-scale event space, an 800-guest capacity ballroom.



ALH Hotels has opened its second Nightcap Hotel in Victoria, **Doncaster Apartments by Nightcap Plus**. Situated between the CBD and the Yarra Valley, the property offers serviced one- and two-bedroom apartment-style and hotel rooms, as well as meeting and conference rooms and two onsite dining options. Guests receive a complimentary welcome drink, free bottled spring water, 10% off dining, buffet or al la carte breakfasts, and fast wi-fi.



The latest phase in a series of renovations, **Hotel Martinez Cannes** has revealed an expansive new garden area, L'Oasis du Martinez. The garden includes a day spa with seven treatment rooms, a fitness centre, a heated swimming lane, and a pool bar serving wellness drinks prepared with fresh fruits and botanicals. The tropical garden offers shaded and sunny areas with lush trees, wooden decks, and distinctive flora and vegetation.

## Blue Lagoon deals

**GUESTS** can take advantage of South Sea Cruises' new deal for Cruise Month, offering 20% savings on three-, four-, & seven-night cruises in Fiji's Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands, as well as a free cabin upgrade.

Fares start from \$1,390pp and include all meals, selected beverages, a fully stocked mini-bar, and a range of activities.

Book by 21 Nov for travel between 01 Apr 2023 - 31 Mar 2024 - [CLICK HERE](#) for details.

## Ikon adds Sun Peaks

**IKON** Pass has announced the addition of Sun Peaks, Canada's second-largest ski area, to its winter 2022/23 collection, which offers skiers and riders more than 50 global mountain destinations.

Sun Peaks joins the collection's newly-added Grandvalira Resorts Andorra, alongside other recent additions including Chamonix Mont-Blanc Valley in France, Sun Valley in Idaho, Snowbasin in Utah, Lotte Arai in Japan, and Panorama in British Columbia.

## Honey Badger blows them away



**FORMER** star of *The Bachelor* and rugby union player Nick "Honey Badger" Cummins has been recruited by the Hong Kong Tourism Board to help sell the destination to Aussies.

The new campaign sees the heartbreaking athlete take a break from his Tradies underwear ads and playing career as a Hong Kong Rugby Sevens regular to explore beyond the bright lights of Hong Kong Stadium and see what the city really has to offer.

Cummins ventures through the city like a local, checking out the cultural, culinary and natural appeal of the destination - even setting a personal record for sprinting 268 stairs in the process.

"From the restaurants and nightlife, to getting outdoors and exploring, there really is something for everyone - I can't wait for Aussies to explore Hong Kong like I have," Cummins said.

"The people, the culture, the hustle, the bustle - you just can't beat it," he added.

View the campaign [HERE](#).

**Pictured:** Cummins in his usual pose as he meets just another one of his adoring fans.

## Pullman Syd menu

**PULLMAN** Sydney Hyde Park has unveiled a new menu for its on-site bar and restaurant, Bar Thirsty6, which offers modern Australian cuisine.

Using mostly locally sourced produce, the share-style menu features local and international flavours, including inspiration from Spain, the United States, China, Mexico and Japan.

Menu highlights include char-grilled lamb cutlets, salt and bush pepper calamari, a selection of pizza and burgers, and an Australian wine and drinks list.

## Focus & win a cruise

**NATURAL** Focus is giving agents the opportunity to win an eight-day/seven-night UnCruise Adventure sailing of their choice for themselves and a plus-one when they join and attend an upcoming webinar series.

The sessions will take place on Tue 11 Oct and Tue 18 Oct at 9am Sydney/Melbourne time - [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

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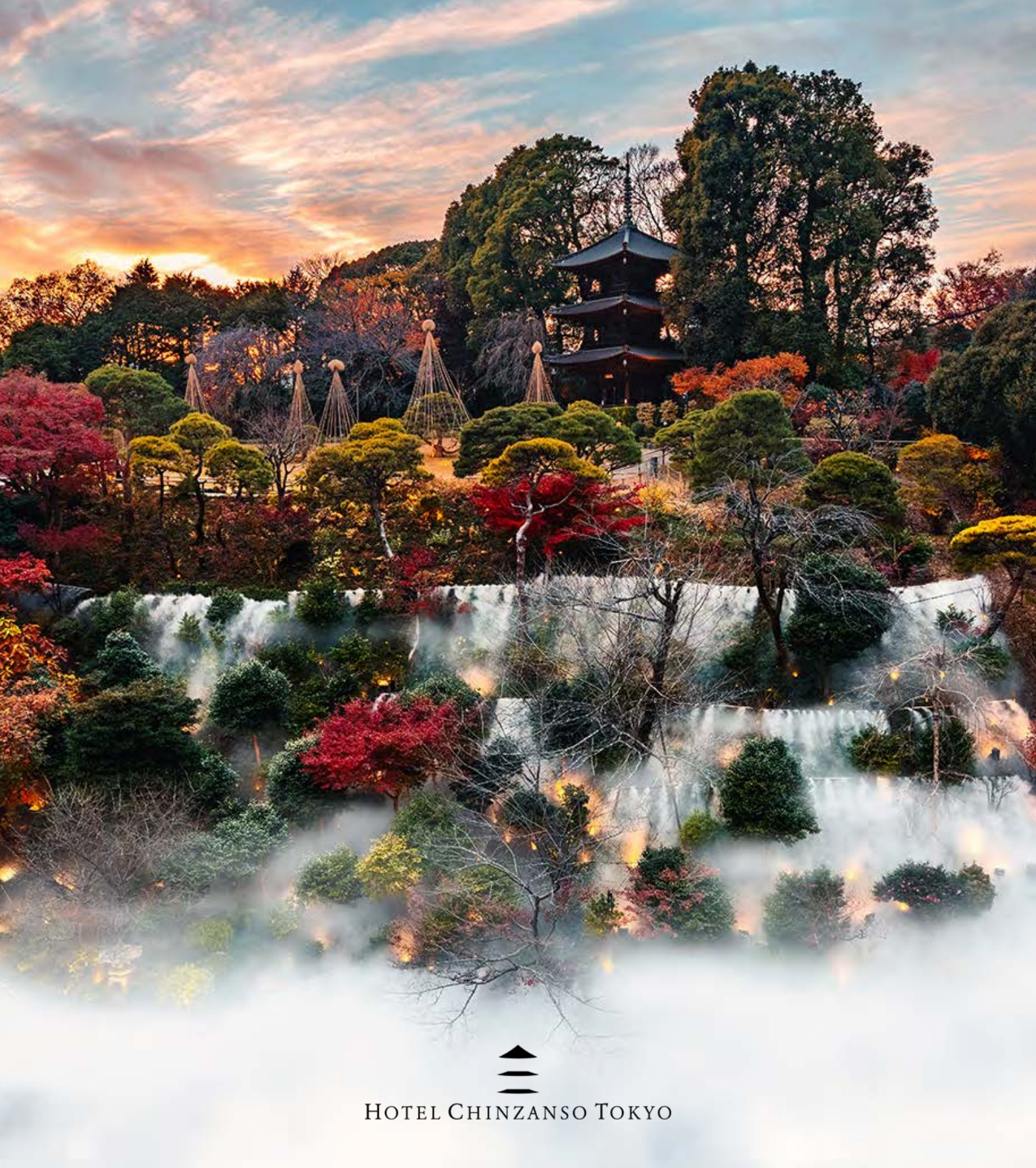
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