



MTA RENEE MCLENNAN

Travel Daily on location aboard Norwegian Prima

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line, aboard the christening voyage of its new *Norwegian Prima*.

AS IF having this new ship officially named by pop megastar Katy Perry wasn't enough, guests on board *Norwegian Prima* will tonight enjoy a musical blast from the past in the form of a live onboard concert by none other than 70s and 80s funk legends, Kool & The Gang.

Two performances will take place, with the second one live streamed throughout the ship for any who miss out on tickets.

Not just a 'Ladies Night', it's sure to be a massive 'Celebration', which lucky agents will 'Cherish' for a long time.

Korean buy unopposed

QANTAS and Jetstar services between Sydney and Seoul launching in Nov will provide enough competition to satisfy a probe by the ACCC into Korean Air's proposed acquisition of Asiana Airlines (**TD** 17 Jan).

This morning the competition watchdog said it would not oppose the acquisition, following initial concerns earlier this year about the move combining the only two providers of direct flights on the route between Sydney and Seoul.

"We consider that the Qantas Group offering flights on the Sydney to Seoul route with both its full-service and low-cost carriers means that there is likely to be effective competition whether or not the acquisition proceeds," ACCC Chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb said.

The competition body also noted that some market participants had raised concerns

that if Korean Air was the only provider of air passenger services on the Sydney/Seoul route it could increase prices and lead to a reduction of service levels, however, it found that a substantial lessening of competition is not likely to result from the proposed acquisition.

Under the deal, Korean Air will acquire about 64% of its competitor Asiana, with the latter an active player in the Australian market, also offering passengers codeshare services on Singapore Airlines flights between Perth and Singapore.

Aside from taking into account increased competition from Qantas, the ACCC also noted that in its opinion, Asiana was not in imminent danger of failing if the merger didn't go ahead, a conclusion the Korea Fair Trade Commission also reached.

An ACCC decision was originally scheduled for Mar.

Today's issue of *TD*

Travel Daily today features eight pages of news plus a full page from **CAPA**.

Solo Japan returning

JAPAN is set to welcome back self-guided travellers from 07 Sep as part of its careful border reopening strategy.

The popular Aussie outbound market has only allowed a small number of group tours so far this year, with the move tipped to precipitate a surge in bookings.

Skyscanner has already revealed an 18% increase in searches to the country from Aussie travellers, with Japan also announcing it will be removing the requirement for pre-trip and PCR tests upon arrival.

There is no formal update yet regarding whether visas will be needed in advance of any trips or if they will need to be booked with a licensed tour operator.



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ATEC calls for WHM

THE Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) will put forward a key request at this week's Jobs Summit for three months of work in the tourism and hospitality sector to be included in the eligibility criteria for Working Holiday Makers (WHM) visitors to qualify for a second-year visa.

The export group believes there is a "dire need" for unskilled labour in the tourism sector, and it is using the forum of the Summit to make its case, arguing the criteria should be expanded to include areas beyond the current 'northern or remote and very remote Australia' qualifying regions to instead include all tourism work across the country.

ATEC Managing Director Peter Shelley said securing a greater volume of unskilled workers is crucial to the rebuilding the shattered industry.

MEANWHILE, AFTA is currently advocating for the simplification of the visa process and an increase in the funding for trainee and apprenticeships, demonstrating a diverging hierarchy of need between travel and tourism - see [page 6](#) for the latest AFTA column from CEO Dean Long.

Win a Vanuatu villa

MELBOURNE-BASED charity, The Salter Foundation, is offering the chance to win a five-star, luxury villa located on Vanuata's beachfront worth \$380,000, with all transfer duties and legal fees included in the prize.

To be in the running, buy a raffle ticket (\$50 for one entry), which are on sale now [HERE](#) - the winner will be drawn on 31 Dec.

Way out in Weymouth...



FLIGHT Centre's Kate Moulton and Rebecca McDermott were among the Aussies on board *Norwegian Prima* today when she docked in Portland, UK.

Along with many other passengers on board, the pair made the most of a special shuttle bus between the port and the local seaside holiday town of Weymouth, where they explored the sights.

Weymouth is located in Dorset on the English Channel coast of England, the type of destination where Aussies perceive Brits as enjoying crabbing, drinking beer and spending time on the beach with knotted handkerchiefs on their heads and rolled up jeans as they enjoy a few brief moments of sunshine.

The new Dean is in

NATHAN Dean has joined Vista Hospitality Group as Cluster General Manager of voco Brisbane City Centre and Hotel Indigo Brisbane City Centre.

With almost 20 years of hospitality management experience across a range of brands and properties, Dean joins Vista from Ovolo Hotel Group, where he was Area General Manager for Ovolo Hotel Brisbane, Ovolo The Valley Hotel and The Inchcolm Hotel.

Dean will oversee operations for both properties - more appointments on [page 8](#).

CAPA invites Akmal

AKMAL, one of Australia's favourite comedians, is set to entertain guests at the CAPA Australia Pacific Aviation Summit and CTC Corporate Travel Summit Gala Dinner on 13 Sep, at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

From his hilarious performances on *Thank God You're Here* to the world's biggest comedy festivals, Akmal has been in the business of laughter for 25 years.

The summit is considered the pre-eminent strategic aviation and travel event for the APAC region and will feature speakers like VA's CEO Jayne Hrdlicka and Bonza's chief Tim Jordan - see the [back page](#) for more details.

TA webinar on Mon

JOIN Tourism Australia's (TA) Aussie Specialist Warm Up in Queensland's Islands webinar scheduled for this coming Mon, with trainers Caroline and Addie Brooks from Tourism & Events Queensland to host the event.

The 30-minute webinar will take place at 11am, with attendees getting the chance to win a three-night stay on K'Gari.

There are also three \$100 Visa gift cards up for grabs - see [HERE](#).



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Window Seat

A SO-CALLED “cyberflasher” has enraged a Southwest Airlines pilot in North America, who threatened to turn a flight around if the mischievous passenger didn’t stop sharing naked pictures via the Apple AirDrop “send to all” feature.

The incident, which has gone viral on TikTok, occurred on a flight to Mexico, with the pilot heard on the intercom before departure saying “so here’s the deal...if this continues while we’re on the ground I’m going to have to pull back to the gate, everybody is going to have to get off, we’re going to have to get security involved and your vacation is going to be ruined”.

“Whatever that AirDrop thing is, quit sending naked pictures and let’s get you to Cabo.”

Radisson growth plans

RADISSON Hotel Group has announced its intentions to substantially widen its Australian footprint by 2025, with a newly expanded brand portfolio, strategic partnerships and diverse business models.

The hotel chain will focus on growth in capital cities and popular regional destinations across Australia and New Zealand, including Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, with its mid-scale brands, Country Inn & Suites by Radisson and Radisson RED, at the forefront of growth plans.

The group also revealed it would seek opportunities for mergers and acquisitions, and will provide “attractive, cost-effective” options for property conversions.

Chief Development Officer, Asia Pacific, Ramzy Fenianos, is confident that the company’s expansion plans are well-timed, in light of the market’s strong recovery, emphasising rising

demand from inbound tourists, and Australian visa applications already reaching 80% of pre-pandemic levels as of May.

“Our ambitious plans in Australia and New Zealand are a testament to our success in the market and the relevance of our products to both inbound and domestic travellers seeking a diverse range of hotel and resort experiences.”

Evie charges Hertz

HERTZ renters who hire a Polestar 2 electric vehicle will briefly enjoy complimentary charging with Evie Networks.

The partnership between the two companies will see the complimentary charging offered across Australia until 27 Oct.

Hertz Vice President APAC Eoin Macneill said the partnership was an important step to empowering Australians to make the switch.

VN extends Sabre

VIETNAM Airlines has extended its long-standing relationship with Sabre, as the airline continues to play a significant role in the country’s tourism resurgence.

VN will continue to distribute offers through Sabre’s extensive global travel marketplace, further cementing the two companies’ relationship.

Rocky ETG savings

ENTIRE Travel Group (ETG) and Rocky Mountaineer have joined forces to promote the rail-tour company’s “All Aboard 2023” promotion, which has been extended to Aussie travellers until the end of the month.

Australians can save more than \$1,000 per couple on next year’s Rocky Mountaineer journeys if they book before 30 Sep.

The promotion is also available across a range of two- and three-day journeys.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

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Nib Travel refresh

NIB travel has unveiled a refreshed brand, featuring an updated colour palette, contemporary photography style and the addition of new illustrations and logos.

Designed by Landor & Fitch Australia, the rebrand is part of a push to remind travellers the brand can be relied upon in a time of need.

“Landor & Fitch Australia have created a fresh, warm and human brand for nib and it perfectly reflects what we’re trying to achieve as a business and a brand,” nib’s Head of Marketing Chris Donald said.

“We want to reach more people, help them better understand their health, the choices they can make and support them along their journey.”

The rebrand coincides with a strong sales result for its travel insurance division for the final quarter of the last financial year (**TD** 31 Aug).

SYD shows off glamour

SYDNEY Airport has flexed its luxurious muscles this week by opening the first phase of premium retail outlets on offer for travellers in its T1 International terminal.

Brands joining Australia’s largest air hub for the first time include Balenciaga, Bottega Veneta, Loewe, Prada and Saint Laurent, with Cartier, Celine, Dior, Gentle Monster, Louis Vuitton, Valentino and Versace to follow soon.

“We know that their incredible collections, and the ability to put products aside for in-store collection, will be well received by passengers, delivering a truly unique shopping experience only available at Sydney Airport within Australia,” Sydney Airport’s Executive General Manager Commercial Mark Zaouk said.

“I’m delighted to see our revitalised vision for T1 taking shape as we firmly position Sydney Airport on the world



stage, and with a further nine luxury brands to launch by mid-2023, I’m looking forward to seeing passengers enjoy the new retail experience as we welcome them back to international travel,” he added.

A number of Australian firsts will also be included in the revamp, such as Louis Vuitton’s first travel retail store in the southern hemisphere, and the brand’s largest stand-alone travel retail store in the world.

Once completed in mid-2023, the luxury precinct will showcase more than 2,700m² of luxury shopping retail space.

CI goes big on 737s

TAIWAN’S China Airlines has ordered 16 Boeing 787s to help replenish its fleet.

The multi-billion-dollar deal will see the aircraft start being delivered in 2025, with the carrier also holding an option for a further eight 787s.

Four routes for KE

KOREAN Air will launch its inaugural Budapest route, and resume flights to United Arab Emirates and Thailand in Oct.

The inaugural service to Budapest will launch 03 Oct, operating with a Boeing 787-900 once a week on Mon.

From 31 Oct, Korean Air will offer the flight twice a week with an additional service on Sat.

Oct will also see Korean resume its routes to Dubai, Phuket, and Chiang Mai.

DXB will be served thrice weekly, while HKT and CNX will be served four times weekly.

WE’D LOVE YOUR VOTE

NCL is honoured to be an NTIA Awards finalist for Most Outstanding Industry Support – Cruise.

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Aussie travellers undeterred

MOST Australians don't intend to cut down their spending on international travel in the 2023 financial year, according to a recent survey commissioned by Money Transfer Comparison.

The survey, which comprised an independent panel of 1,000 Australians, found that three out of four Aussies are prepared to maintain or increase their spending on overseas goods and services, including travel bookings.

Out of five reasons listed, travel was the second-most popular motivation for overseas spending after purchases for goods and services (61%), with around a third of respondents (38%) saying they plan to pay for overseas travel, including tours, accommodation and transport.

Of those who selected travel as their reason for overseas spending, 44% were aged 18-30, followed by 40% aged between

31-50, and 33% aged over 50.

Western Australian residents were the most enthusiastic about spending on international travel at 44%, followed by 41% of NSW residents, 35% of Victorians, 34% of South Australians, and 31% of Queenslanders.

"Our research findings signal a comfortable level of discretionary spending by Aussies - even in light of a projected recession and higher cost of living," Alon Rajic, founder of Money Transfer Comparison, commented.

"Australians are part of a global economy and it is unlikely that an economic downturn will significantly deter our population from participating in it."

In addition to splashing on travel, Australians also intend to send money to family overseas (28%), pay for overseas investments (9%), and make work-related payments to overseas suppliers (8%).

Never tired of meeting stars



MOBILE Travel Agents (MTA) advisor and authorised sales agent for F1 Experiences, Wendy Brockbank, soaked up the electric atmosphere at the Belgian Grand Prix over the weekend.

Brockbank and her husband Phil rubbed shoulders with F1 VIPs, including Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo (pictured with the two), with MTA agent gushing that the Belgian Grand Prix is one of her favourite events.

"I love that my guests get to walk that famous strip of concrete, the F1 Paddock complete with VIP passes, and get to rub shoulders with celebrities,"

Brockbank said.

"It's an experience for all, not just the F1 fanatics to enjoy."

So adept a businesswoman is Brockbank that she may be able to find a ride for Ricciardo next year, who recently agreed with his team McLaren to vacate his seat in next year's car.

Mandurah up for sale

THE Sebel Hotel Mandurah has been listed for sale by CEL Australia, with expressions of interest closing on 04 Oct.

The 84-room waterfront property is located 50 minutes from Perth CBD.



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Travel Daily

Thursday 1st September 2022

Windstar in Oz

WINDSTAR Cruises' *Star Breeze* is heading Down Under from Dec as part of its inaugural season, offering a number of itineraries showcasing the best of Australia and New Zealand.

Guests can sail on the 14-night Tasman Sea Treasures: New Zealand Fjords and South Australia, or the 10-night Deep Diver Down Under, which explores the Great Barrier Reef.

The 312-capacity ship has undergone a complete renovation, and now boasts new public areas and two new dining venues, as well as a new spa, an infinity pool and a fitness area.

Ponant heads North

PONANT has opened up sales for 26 new sailings in the 'Far North' in 2024, including 16 itineraries, six of which are new, exploring the Arctic and North American landscapes.

The new 14-night Wilderness from Greenland to the East Coast of Canada trip departs 25 Aug 2024 on board the *Le Lyrial*, priced from \$18,290 per person.

Meanwhile the 13-night From Québec to the Big Apple: nature and remarkable cities is another new offering, also serviced by the *Le Lyrial*, departing 19 Sep and priced from \$12,030 per person.

For more info, [CLICK HERE](#).



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AFTA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



THIS week I was in Canberra for the Tourism Jobs Summit hosted by the Federal Minister for Tourism Don Farrell, where there was a

united call that the labour crunch is in full effect.

What was clear is the issues faced by travel companies and our professional workforce are different to those requiring less professional skill sets across the broader tourism sector.

So while yesterday's summit focus was on working holiday makers and returning international student to 2019 levels, AFTA's goal remains simplifying the visa lists and ensuring travel is front and centre. This divergent view between travel and tourism is one of the reasons why AFTA works across the major peak groups like ACCI and BCA to ensure travel is recognised economy-wide.

Domestically, we are advocating for increased funding for trainees and apprenticeships and for

micro-credentials delivered in businesses. On the immigration front, we need a simplification of the visa programs, not an exception approach which the current system cannot handle.

These simple requests have broad support across the business and union community and I am hopeful we will see some change.

Meanwhile NTIA judging is now in full swing and the feedback is that the standard of interviews has been fantastic. With the reduction of categories, this will be one of the most competitive years for NTIA. The process for assessment continues to be of the highest standard, independent of any AFTA staff, directors or close contacts. For continuity, we have used the same independent assessor for the initial review as in prior years.

Each application was assessed out of a score of 30. In most cases, the variation between highest and lowest scores was less than four points.

It's truly encouraging to see such a high quality - the finalists and winners really are the best of the best.

ATG showcases

APT and Travelmarvel are hosting showcase events around the country, with great deals and giveaways available.

Taking place until 20 Sep in each state, the events are designed to inspire and excite travellers to embrace the world again.

Featured destinations will be Europe, Canada & Alaska, Australia, New Zealand, and the Exotics (including South America, Antarctica, Egypt, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam & Cambodia).

For more details about how to attend, [CLICK HERE](#).

Pimalai discounts

THAILAND'S Mu Ko Lanta National Park will reopen to visitors on 15 Oct following its annual restoration.

Pimalai Resort & Spa, located in Ko Lanta, is currently offering travellers earlybird discounts of between 10-30% on bookings through to the end of Oct 2023.

The 121-key resort features a kids' club, restaurants, sports centre, swimming pools & more.

Prices start from \$270 a night and include daily breakfast and airport transfers - call 0414 410 968 for more information.

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Peerspace in Oz

PEERSPACE, a marketplace for hourly venue rentals for meetings, productions and events, has recently launched in Australia, offering more than 500 spaces in Sydney and Melbourne.

Guests can use Peerspace to find the right venue for a range of activities, including meetings, corporate events and product launches.

Founded in 2014 in San Francisco, Peerspace is live in over 35 metropolitan areas across the US, and expanded into Canada and the UK last year, and France this year.

Shaq dunks events

A STAR-POWERED business event held last week in South Melbourne at creative co-working hub CreativeCubes.Co, saw basketball icon and business mogul Shaquille O'Neal share personal and professional stories to 260 business delegates, while beloved comedian Dave Hughes stirred plenty of belly laughs.



Allianz opening

VENUES NSW has partnered with experience agency Ritz to create a memorable opening ceremony at Allianz Stadium this weekend, showcasing the capabilities of Sydney's newest sports & entertainment venue.

The free community opening night featured dancers, light shows, large-scale projections and pyrotechnics, headlined by live performances from Australian music icons like Guy Sebastian.

PLACING EVENTS IN THE DEEP END

THE recently launched Events at Sea helps planners host their next event on the water, adding a unique twist and a taste of luxury, while making the planning process simple and seamless.

The new Australian-based cruising business provides an all-inclusive service for meeting & event planners and special interest groups who are organising an event aboard a ship.

The concept was born during the pandemic by Sydney-based Laura Clarke (**pictured**), who has 15 years' experience in developing and managing full ship charter programs at Cruiseco, including music festivals, corporate events, conferences and incentives.

"Of all the types of businesses to develop during the pandemic, it may seem that cruising would

be an unlikely choice, considering where the cruising industry was only a short time ago.

"However, I see a real gap in the market, it's where my experience lies, and there is huge pent-up demand in this area, so we cannot wait to get started."

Events at Sea takes care of all aspects of an event cruise, including ship selection, contract negotiation, professional cruise booking platform management, logistics support and full program management for full-ship charters and large groups.

Clarke, who has worked with over 60 different cruise lines, highlighted her team's "broad and deep knowledge" of the industry, as well as their "expert skills and market-leading experience".

"We're for event planners,



special interest groups, or corporations who would like to charter a full or partial ship to elevate their next event with unparalleled privacy, exclusivity, and event customisation options."

"You only pay for the services that you need, when you need them, providing substantial savings over hiring a salaried employee to complete similar tasks," Clarke said.

Big month ahead for Melbourne

MELBOURNE is gearing up for an action-packed events calendar this month, with 12 international and national business events set to take place in Sep.

The events combined will attract more than 9,400 delegates to the city, racking up almost 18,000 room nights and injecting \$43.5 million into the state's economy.

The line-up includes CODA 2022, the World Barista Championships and World Brewers Cup 2022 as part of the Melbourne International Coffee Expo, and the 2022 National Catholic Education Commission Conference.

Melbourne Convention Bureau Chief Executive Julia Swanson said the city "has an enviable reputation for hosting world class business events...MCB and its partners look forward to showcasing Melbourne on a global scale".

The Skye's the limit for event organisers

CROWN Group's luxury hotel Skye Suites Parramatta has seen an influx of enquiries from local and new businesses looking to host their events and conferences in Parramatta city.

The 72-suite property will offer convenient transport connectivity to the upcoming Western Sydney Int'l Airport, plus a 250-capacity conference centre, meeting spaces, rooftop bar, spa and gym, and more.

"What excites me most about Parramatta...is that there is so much happening here, and I know for conference organisers



the challenge is always finding something new to do," said Skye Suites Area Director of Sales & Marketing, Ari Foo.

Pictured: Ari Foo, SKYE Suites; Linda Na, Roje Adaimy and Keith Baker, City of Parramatta; and Quercy Jouannes, SKYE Suites Parramatta.

Sebel Mel offer

THE Sebel Melbourne Ringwood has announced a MICE offer for spring, offering \$85 daily delegate packages including morning and afternoon tea and lunch, and a complimentary AV package.

The Yarra Valley property features four meeting and event spaces with balconies off each conference room - **CLICK HERE**.

Gran Melia MICE

GRAN Melia Jakarta, a luxury hotel in Jakarta, has opened the new "Jimbaran" event venue & meeting space, which can accommodate up to 300 guests, featuring a pre-function foyer, private VIP lounge, AV system and an indoor smoking area.

APPOINTMENTS

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

Auckland Airport has appointed a new General Manager Corporate Services, **Melanie Dooney**. She will join AKL in early Nov, taking responsibility for a wide range of B2B operations at the facility.

Glenn Thorsen will lead **FCM Consulting's** new sustainability practices unit as its Sustainability Lead. His arrival will initiate a new dedicated customer-facing practice specialising in sustainability, representing the first significant structural change made by consultancy head Jo Lloyd, as she reshapes the business for post-pandemic success.

Tourism Fiji has announced the appointment of **Srishti Narayan** to the role of Head of Global Marketing. She joins Leigh Howard (Chief Operations Officer) and Robert Thompson (Executive Head of Regions) as a Fiji-born professional recently returning to Fiji to work at Tourism Fiji, after gaining significant experience overseas.

Peter Wagner will be stepping into the role of Resort Manager at luxury Malaysian property, **Anantara Desaru Coast Resort & Villas**. Wagner brings two decades of industry experience to the position, including most recently as Director of Rooms at Six Senses Samui.

Two new NZ walks

GREAT Walks of New Zealand has launched two new culinary guided itineraries.

Designed for active travellers who want to learn about (and savour) the produce and wines of the regions they visit, the seven-day 'Food Lovers Waikato' and the eight-day 'Food Lovers Coromandal' can be booked now.

Indonesia eases

THE Indonesian Government has scrapped the requirement for inbound travellers to places like Bali to show a negative COVID-19 test result in order to enter the country, effective 25 Aug.

Other rules remain in place, including the requirement for international travellers aged 18 and over to be fully vaccinated, while those below 18 are exempt.

New Exp Oz booth

TOURS & attractions ticketer Experience Oz has opened a Sydney retail storefront to support the recovery of the local travel industry.

As part of a partnership with Sydney Princess Cruises, the new retail space in Circular Quay will support experience bookings for travellers, especially while the Sydney Visitor Centre remains closed, as does the booking booth for both Luna Park and Taronga Zoo.

Travellers can book more than 150 Sydney experiences at the new storefront, supporting more than 115 tourism suppliers.

The retail opening follows a successful start to the year for Experience Oz, which has seen a year-on-year increase in bookings of 112% for consumers buying experiences in the city.

Flight Centre swings door open



AFTER spending more than 800 days closed, the remaining Flight Centre retail stores will soon reopen again across the country.

Among the 30 revamped store locations are Manuka in ACT, Casuarina and Alice Springs in the NT, Glenelg and Norwood in SA, and a number of other locations across Australia, with Head of Sales, Operations and Network Brent Novak stating "we feel the time to reopen our network

and those hibernated locations impacted through COVID is right".

Flight Centre intends to have all stores reopened and trading again in time for the Christmas period, with the company now on the lookout for team leaders and travel consultants who are "ready to hit the ground running" and "take ownership and be a part of the next phase of the company's history" - **CLICK HERE** to check out the position openings.



Win an eco luxury stay.

Elysian Retreat, Long Island Whitsundays is giving one Travel Daily reader the opportunity to experience first-hand their eco luxury resort with a 3 nights stay for two adults. Included with this amazing prize is return helicopter transfers, three gourmet meals daily, complimentary hot & cold drinks, unlimited use of all water sports equipment plus lots more.

Winner will need to make their own way to Hamilton Island. Full list of inclusions here with the terms and conditions.

To enter please tell us in 25 words or less what makes Elysian Retreat the ideal holiday experience?

Entries to be sent to competitions@traveldaily.com.au



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