

## Viking opens up '25

**VIKING** has opened up sales for 2025 departures on a selection of river voyages, including the 15-day Magnificent Mekong voyage from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City, with savings of up to \$2,000 per couple available.

The launch coincides with the release of the cruise line's new 2023-2025 Ocean Cruises brochure, which features six new itineraries and new 2024 and 2025 departure dates on some of its previously sold-out voyages.

## Easter records tumble

**AUSTRALIAN** carriers and airports are bracing for what is forecast to be the busiest Easter period since 2019, with Qantas Group alone expecting 620,000 customers to fly across its networks over the next five days.

Today will be the biggest day of volumes, with more than 120,000 customers travelling on nearly 1,200 services, while numbers will peak again on Easter Mon as customers return home from their extended breaks.

At Sydney Airport, the hub is anticipating around 2.4 million people to pass through its gates, comprised of roughly 1.5 million domestic passengers and 850,000 international passengers.

Meanwhile, Melbourne Airport is expecting 2.1 million passengers to take off and land over the Easter break, 30% more than last year and very close to parity with 2019 levels.

The Melbourne hub confirmed it will have increased security staff, strategic aircraft bay allocation to spread passenger loads, additional customer service teams across its car parks, and corporate staff assisting in terminals to cater for the major upswing in travellers.

Up north in Qld, Brisbane said it is predicting a post-pandemic record of 69,000 travellers today, getting close to overall record territory, which stands at 83,867 set in Dec 2017.

Air New Zealand is also expecting big gains, with 210,000 customers booked across Easter season, up 68% on 2022.

## FJ acquires aircraft

**FIJI Airways** is adding two more Airbus A350-900 aircraft to its fleet in line with a rising demand for air travel to the Pacific Island nation - most notably Australia.

The airline currently operates two Airbus A350-900 planes alongside four Airbus A330 jets, with the opening up of more Asian source markets also a factor in the latest purchasing decision.

Fiji Airways was unavailable for comment regarding when the new planes will enter service.

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### An egg-citing break

**WITH** the four-day Easter weekend almost upon us, the *Travel Daily* team would like to remind readers that we won't be publishing again until Tue 11 Apr.

The entire team would like to wish everyone a wonderful and restful break, and naturally some well-earned hot cross buns and many, many Easter eggs!

**Today's issue of TD**  
*Travel Daily* today features five pages of news including **Business Events News** plus a full page from **Ponant**.

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## Long-haul makes a return

**TRAVELLERS** are gradually moving toward long-haul travel again, with the final quarter in 2022 seeing a solid shift in favour of destinations further away from home, according to a new *Traveller Insight Report* published

by Expedia Group.

Travellers are also planning trips further in advance as part of a global trend, with the 180+ day search window seeing the strongest quarter-on-quarter growth, increasing by 20% in search share.

The same report also found that bookings 61 to 90 days out from trips were up nearly 15% globally, with double-digit growth seen in the APAC region.

Blended travel (bleisure) is also on the rise, with triple-digit rises noted in the use of the business-friendly filters, while a third of respondents conceded price was still the primary factor in determining where they are choosing to go on holiday.

Travellers from the Asia-Pacific region were most likely to be booking trips to Tokyo, Seoul, Osaka, and Singapore in Q4 2022, with Sydney the highest ranking Aussie city, ahead of Melbourne.

## Travel trust drops

**TRAVEL** and tourism have not fared well in a new trust ranking survey conducted by Roy Morgan, with the industries in Australia falling by three index points behind the chemical and construction sectors.

The drop-off was attributed mainly to a growing distrust of Qantas, which the report noted had endured a lot of negative press coverage over the past year, taking the carrier into Net Distrust territory for the first time in Feb.

Supermarkets and convenience stores were ranked as the most trustworthy industries.

## Ponant does NZ best

**PONANT** promises your clients the best value and superior experiences of New Zealand in 2024 - to check out the full range of benefits see the **back page**.

## STB links with Klook

**THE** Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Klook have partnered to develop tourism marketing campaigns, as well as a range of experiences across cruising, wellness, touring and events.

The new two-year deal will seek to increase inbound visitation from markets such as Australia.

## Hawaii tax mullied

**HAWAII** is once again putting the idea of taxing visitors on the table, with levies to see parks and walking trails being considered by legislators this week.

If the plan moves ahead, the likely date for a tourist charge will be 01 Jul 2025, with funds to go toward preserving Hawaii's natural attractions.

## Canada ups UAE

**CANADA** and the UAE have expanded their air transport agreement, allowing for 21 flights per week for each country.

The deal will permit 50% more flights than previously possible, as well as facilitate new routes, and give airlines greater flexibility to keep up with demand.



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## Hyatt events guides

**HOTELS** Corporation has launched new Event Experience Guides designed to offer meeting planners an easier and more interactive online platform all in the one place.

The new resource offers meeting organisers details on menus, sustainability practices, wellbeing experience options, event spaces, and guest room types - for more info see **HERE** & for more events news, see **p4**.

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## CATO's Earth Day line-up

**THE** Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) has revealed an impressive line-up of speakers for its upcoming World Earth Day lunch (**TD** 28 Mar).

G Adventures Managing Director Sean Martin will emcee the event, which will be held at the Calile Hotel in Brisbane on Fri 21 Apr.

Seated at the expert panel will be Flight Centre Travel Group's Chief Sustainability Officer Michelle Degenhardt, Boeing's Regional Sustainability Lead, Heidi Hauf, alongside Hurlgruten Managing Director, Damien Perry, and Toni Ambler, Managing Director of The Travel Corporation.

CATO Managing Director Brett Jardine believes guests will be inspired by the "thought-provoking and impactful panel discussion", which he says is "designed to educate and stimulate further conversations".

"As the peak industry body for the land-supply sector, it is important that we take a lead

in highlighting the need for a sustainable and responsible approach to travel."

Tickets are inclusive of a two-course meal, beverages and post-event networking, priced at \$135 per person or \$1,350 for a table of 10 - register **HERE**.

## Japan to end all border rules by May

**JAPAN** has announced it will scrap border control measures for all overseas travellers on 08 May, after relaxing rules on visitors from mainland China yesterday.

In line with the country's reclassification of COVID-19 to a common disease on 08 May, travellers will no longer need to present evidence of three COVID-19 vaccination doses or a negative COVID-19 test taken within 72 hours of departure.

Instead, new genomic surveillance will be used at ports to test arrivals for fever and other symptoms of infectious diseases.

## Quark breaks the Shackleton



**QUARK** Expeditions & LATAM Airlines have been touring the country with a series of private travel agent screenings of the new movie *Shackleton: The Greatest Story of Survival*.

Advisors in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and the Gold Coast have had a chance to check out the inspirational film, all going into the draw to win a trip for two

to Antarctica with Quark.

Screenings of the movie are still to be held in Perth on 18 Apr, Adelaide on 19 Apr and Auckland on 26 Apr.

**Pictured** in Sydney: Quark Expeditions Regional Sales Director Robert Halfpenny and LATAM Key Accounts and Operations Manager Shalina Sabar with Sydney travel agents.

## Is this the future of cruising?



**SHIPBUILDING** company Meyer Werft has taken the unusual step of revealing what cruise ships might look like in the year 2100, with the render **pictured** depicting a vessel with futuristic features such as drone landing pads and urban gardening areas.

"The ship is based on global megatrends and is one - but not the only - logical response to them," Meyer Werft's Head of Concept Development Tim Krug said, adding the futuristic ship would only have small restaurant areas that serve more as social

meeting places because in 80 years time, most humans will be consuming their nutrition in the form of pills.

The energy concept on board the design concept relies on wave energy generated through horizontal wings on the hull, solar and fuel cells, as well as wind energy - negating the need for any fossil fuel use.

## Window Seat

**AUSTRALIAN** comedian Rhys Nicholson recently told the story of how he was once able to travel on a plane from New Zealand without his passport, claiming airport staff simply told him "no worries bro".

Speaking on *The Weekly with Charlie Pickering*, the comic described turning up to Auckland Airport before realising he had somehow misplaced his crucial travel document, and after a brief chat with "a guy behind a desk", was able to board a flight home.

"He got on the phone, and he called Canberra, I guess... chatted for a few minutes, he hung up, and god as my witness, he said 'Well, they said it's up to us, so I reckon just go,'" Nicholson laughed.



## Werner off the Bench

**BENCH** Africa has announced Graham Werner as its new Business Development Manager for Qld, NSW & Victoria.

The former APT Travel Group BDM is returning to the travel industry after a two-year break, during which time he grew his photography business to capture industry event launches.

## More Vanuatu delays

**UNFORTUNATELY** for passengers booked on Air Vanuatu flights this Easter break, the aircraft mechanical issue leading to cancelled flights (**TD** 05 Apr) has now forced the carrier to push back restart plans to the middle of next week.

The airline is continuing to offer fully flexible change and refund policies for affected guests, and is scheduling more reservation staff to work over the Easter weekend to further assist travellers/agents. Stay up-to-date **HERE**.



## MC gold for MEA

**MEETINGS & Events**  
Australia (MEA) has announced Olympic Gold and Silver medallist Brooke Hanson as emcee for its annual conference Evolve 2023 over 07-08 Jun.

Hanson, who is a world-class speaker and has presented at thousands of events, will also deliver a keynote address based on the theme of 'Empower - Inspire - Transform'.

Professional conference and event MC Luke Hannan will also take to the stage to emcee at the national 2021-2022 MEA Awards dinner on the evening of 08 Jun.

MEA will announce more speakers soon.

To register for the Evolve conference or see more details, [CLICK HERE](#).

## \$2M FOR MICE RESEARCH

**THE** Federal Government has confirmed it will put \$2 million towards measuring the impact and benefit of business events, marking Australia's biggest-ever single investment in business events research.

The project, which will help establish a long-term framework to measure the sector's contribution, will be rolled out in two phases.

The first phase will see new questions added to Tourism Research Australia's National and International Visitor Surveys, which are already in place and collecting data.

Federal Tourism Minister Don Farrell noted that the business events sector plays a crucial role in the wider economy, injecting around \$36 billion annually in tourism expenditure.

"They encourage high-

yield travel, build networks, support the development of commercial concepts and expand business opportunities," Farrell commented.

"The new business events data project is a critical part of the Government's support for the ongoing recovery of Australia's business events sector."

For the second phase of the project, the Government will collaborate with the Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) to roll out "bespoke data collection points" across the country, including venues, organisers, delegates and exhibitors.

Chair of BECA, Leo Jago said, "better data means better decisions, better decisions mean better events, and better events mean a bigger boost for Australia's visitor economy".

## SA wants the Wolf

**THE** new \$20 million event centre currently under construction in Adelaide's southwestern suburbs will be named after wine icon and philanthropist, Wolf Blass.

The Wolf Blass 'The Man' Event Centre will cater to a range of functions, from boardroom lunches to corporate events, race day functions and weddings.

**MEANWHILE**, Business Events Adelaide has launched its 2023 Planners Guide detailing the city's business event offerings.

Event planners will find useful info about corporate incentive itineraries, business delegate experiences, event support services, and more.

To see the digital guide, [CLICK HERE](#).

## ICC appoints Adam

**THE** International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney has welcomed Adam Smith as the venue's new Director of Building Services.

Smith brings more than 20 years' experience in the hospitality and events industry, most recently as General Manager at the Australian Turf Club.

ICC CEO Geoff Donaghy noted that Adam's great track record of ensuring the success of major events and leading large, multi-disciplinary teams will be invaluable in his new role.

## Arinex gets hands dirty for a good cause

**ARINEX** has become the first event management company to trial a new reforestation project open to business event groups visiting Tropical North Queensland.

While in Cairns for the Arinex Conference, team members were able to learn about the endangered ecosystem at the Wongabel Mabi Forest Restoration project.

They were also able to get hands-on, planting enough



native trees to offset the non-travel related carbon emissions generated by the conference.

The Arinex MD believes the project "highlights a practical and impactful way" to incorporate sustainability into conference programs.

## Great Ocean deal

**PLANNERS** who book an event at Great Ocean Road Resort in Victoria this winter will receive their choice of two complimentary accommodation rooms for their group, two free nights for the event organiser to use personally, or \$20pp off the full day conference package.

The deal applies for bookings made before 30 Jun, with a minimum of 20 guests - [CLICK HERE](#) for info.

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## 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.

**Gordon Tanner** will be restarting his position as the National Director of Sales & Marketing for **Bali Tours & Beyond, Vietnam Tours & Beyond, Sri Lanka Tours & Beyond & Vision Tours**. Tanner has now been with the travel company for over six years

**Jayne Macdougall** has become the new Executive Director at **Phuket Hotels Association**. Macdougall will be guiding the association's strategic direction with her wealth of experience in areas such as sustainability. She was most recently the Senior Consultant of GLZ's pilot program in eliminating single-used plastics in the hotel industry.

**AIG Travel** welcomes **Simon Dodd** as its new regional Head of Travel Asia Pacific. Dodd will join CEO, Jeffrey Rutledge and Regional CEO Asia Pacific, Steven Barnett's teams to spearhead operations across the Asia Pacific. He has over 20 years of experience and was the SVP & Head of Aviation Development at Brisbane Airport Corporation prior to joining.

**New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC)** has appointed **Prue Daly** as its General Manager to better prepare for the opening of the venue in 2025. Daly was previously the Director of Sales, where she has worked the marketing team to drive the Tamaki Makaurau and NZ tourism sectors.

### SH's Diana arrives

**HELSENKI** Shipyard and Swan Hellenic (SH) have announced the delivery of *Diana*, the cruise line's third expedition ship, which is on her way to the Mediterranean.

The ice-class vessel will now begin her cultural expedition cruising program, with her inaugural sailing to depart from Palermo in Italy.

The 10-night *Mysteries of Carthage & the Moors* cruise will take guests to explore some of the most fascinating locations in North Africa, before crossing the Pillars of Hercules to Lisbon.

Following this, *Diana* will depart from the Portuguese capital on 25 Apr on the nine-night *Historic Ports of the Western Seaboard to Amsterdam*.

### LA double feature

**MARRIOTT** International's Moxy Downtown Los Angeles & AC Hotel by Marriott Downtown Los Angeles are set to debut next week as a new "cultural hub".

With a total of 727 guestrooms, the two hotels feature an unprecedented 12 dining and entertainment concepts.

### Hilton Monterrey

**HILTON** Hotels & Resorts has expanded its presence in Mexico with the debut of Hilton Monterrey.

The newly built 225-room hotel features a farm-to-table restaurant, a rooftop bar, as well as a range of versatile meeting and event spaces.

## An Adventure in Anaheim



**ONE** hundred lucky Aussie and Kiwi agents and tourism professionals had the opportunity to explore Anaheim as part of the Disney 100 Mega Famil last month (*TD* 16 Mar).

Before immersing themselves in the magic of the Disneyland Resort, the group was able to experience the highlights of the Californian city.

The trip began with a delicious dinner at Great Wolf Lodge, which also features an indoor water park, mini-golf course and bowling alley.

Agents were also treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of Honda Center, where they were able to watch famous ice hockey team, the Anaheim Ducks, in action, before sampling the famous brews at the Golden Road Brewpub.

Agents were then divvied up into small groups to check into their four Anaheim hotels - the Best Western Plus Stovall's Inn, the new Cambria Hotel & Suites, the recently renovated Sheraton Park Hotel at the Anaheim Resort, and the new Westin Anaheim.

Before wrapping up their trip, agents indulged in a shopping adventure at Citadel Outlets, where they had access to the shopping centre's luxurious VIP Lounge, and could choose a bite to eat from over 40 dining vendors in the famous Anaheim Packing District.

**Pictured:** Flight Centre's Melanie Gabbusch and friends ready to enjoy a pint at the Golden Road Brewpub.

### Aman NY tours

**AMAN** is introducing Exclusive Journeys for 2023 to immerse travellers in the diverse, dynamic and storied city of New York.

The itineraries include a three-hour private photo shoot session, a three-day workshop with celebrity photographer, Mark Mann, explorations of the Museum of Modern Art, a new art and architecture walking tour in Brooklyn, and culinary journeys with various cuisines.

Learn about Aman's exclusive New York itineraries **HERE**.



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