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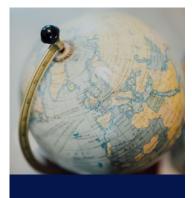
# Travel Daily First with the news

Tuesday 18th Apr 2023



# Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today features six pages of the latest industry news including our Sustainability page plus a cover page from Rail Europe, a product update from **Tourism NT** and a full page from Norwegian Cruise Line.



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# Airlines slugging pax: AAA

### EXCL<u>USIVE</u>

**AUSTRALIAN** Airports Association (AAA) Chief Executive Officer James Goodwin has accused carriers operating in Australia of overcharging Aussie travellers on airfares.

Speaking with *Travel Daily* this week, the AAA chief lambasted airlines for not passing on the lower cost of operating to consumers, namely the recent falls noted in the price of jet fuel.

"The costs of providing aviation passenger services have not increased commensurately, with the price of jet fuel falling by 35% in real terms in Feb," he argued.

"It is clear consumers are paying too much, the latest ACCC report shows despite recent falls, airfares are well above pre-pandemic levels and down slightly from historical highs in late 2022."

Goodwin was quick to point out that the increases in airfares was not related in any way to airport costs, with the average aviation revenue per passenger at our four major airports coming in at just \$22.80.

Goodwin also indicated that the higher prices of air tickets are

#### NCL Learn & Earn

**ENROL** in Norwegian Cruise Line's (NCL) Class of 2023 for a chance to win some fantastic prizes and graduate at an exclusive end-of-year party. See page 7 for more info.

proving to be a significant hurdle in Aussies taking trips both at home and overseas.

"The AAA's market research shows the biggest barrier to Australians travelling domestically or internationally is the cost of flying for 55% of domestic travellers and 69% of int'l travellers...airports are concerned consumers are being priced out of travel and it's hurting," he said.

The AAA boss added that he would like to see the ACCC continue to hand down reports into airline competition, which are scheduled to end in Jul.

## Air Canada ups Oz

STRONG demand from the Queensland market has led to Air Canada increasing seats on its Brisbane-Vancouver service for the 2023/24 northern winter season by 34%.

From Nov, the airline will replace its 298-seat Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner with a 400-seat Boeing 777-300ER, operating five times a week in Nov, before moving to daily from Dec to Mar.

The carrier has also revealed plans to boost frequencies on its Sydney-Vancouver route, with the daily 12pm departure to be supplemented by an additional three flights per week between Dec 2023 and Jan 2024.

Meanwhile, Auckland-Vancouver services will also increase to five times a week between Dec and Mar.

#### Unlock connections

**RAIL** Europe is running a booking incentive from Apr to Jun, allocating rewards for agents who book at least five trains, and \$10 for every additional booking.

The company is also offering dedicated support and flexible payments - see the front page.



Wendy Wu Tours

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#### Oceania extends

**OCEANIA** Cruises has extended its offer of complimentary preand post-cruise land programs to include select voyages in 2024.

Valued at up to \$5,000 per cabin, the cruise line's Free Land Programs are available on 24 featured sailings for guests who book by 30 Jun.

Tour destinations include Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, Dubai, Cape Town, New Zealand and UNESCO Sites such as India's Agra Fort and Jerusalem's Old City.

#### Starstruck in the NT

**EARTH** Sanctuary World Nature Centre in Alice Springs is inviting travellers to become starstruck in the Red Centre.

There's no other night sky quite like it anywhere in the world, with Central Australia offering clean, clear air and no light pollution.

To learn more about Earth Sanctuary, head to page eight of today's *Travel Daily*.

#### **VA** seeks capacity

VIRGIN Australia has lodged an International Air Services Commission (IASC) application to renew its existing capacity allocation on the Korea route.

VA noted that it has not historically operated its own services to Korea, but instead utilised the allocation as a marketing carrier via a codeshare deal with Singapore Airlines.

The carrier seeks to renew the 1,000 weekly seat allocation for a period of five years, with the IASC now inviting other applications for the capacity by 01 May.

Virgin Australia is also asking for the renewal of a 720-seat weekly allocation on the Indonesia route.

**MEANWHILE** the IASC has also issued renewal determinations for Virgin Australia relating to previous applications, including a five-year allocation of 720 weekly seats on the Vanuatu route and two Indonesia allocations comprising 1,260 and 692 weekly seats respectively.



# FCTG adventure winners

**FCTG** Independent is celebrating the success of its recent adventure travel incentive, which saw 14 agents win a prize.

The quarterly incentive just wrapped up, having run from Jan to Mar, and was designed to encourage sales from brands such as Intrepid, G Adventures and Adventure World.

These suppliers offered a variety of rewards to travel advisors who achieved specific sales targets, including free tours from Intrepid, \$3,000 G Adventures travel credits, as well as Animals Asia Travel Packages with Adventure World Travel.

"We are thrilled to see such a positive response to our quarterly incentive program," said FCTG Independent's General Manager, Nick Queale.

"It is a win-win for everyone involved - our agents get the opportunity to earn some amazing rewards, our suppliers benefit from increased sales,



and our clients get to experience some incredible travel."

Ida Portella (**pictured**), who was the top overall seller for Intrepid, said "it is a simple sell when you have a top-notch, premium product, regular updates, and excellent marketing material.

"Coupled with an impressive website, Intrepid's efficiency and promptness further enhanced the experience," she added.



# **Experience More**

**DESIGNER** Journeys has debuted its new Experience More trade campaign, targeting travel agents whose clients expect "exceptional" activities on trips.

The campaign showcases experiences beyond the typical tourist trail, such as a high-speed Ferrari 458 test drive on Maranello Circuit in Italy, piranha fishing and jungle stays in Brazil, and an exclusive kids' scavenger hunt through The Louvre in Paris.

Chief Executive Officer Matt McCann said agents who partner with the company can benefit from its expertise in tailoring itineraries that cater to the specific interests and preferences of their clients.

"Agents are always looking for ways to provide unique and personalised travel experiences to their clients, and the Experience More campaign...provides them with an opportunity to do just that," he said.



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- **2.** Having access to the widest rail product offering also means advisors can easily help clients "unlock" destinations and new opportunities across the continent, while earning up to 7% commissions.
- **3**. From April-June, double monthly rewards apply. To qualify, agencies must ticket five bookings before enjoying \$10 per booking thereafter. And for April only, qualified agencies who book Eurail and Swiss Travel Passes will see receive a further \$5. The reward is capped at \$250 per agency per month.

For more information, visit **agent.raileurope.com** or contact **jhooper@raileurope.com** (VIC, TAS, SA) or **grobertson@ raileurope.com** (NSW, ACT, QLD, WA & NT).

#### Unlock Easy Rail Access

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# CATO's crisis team arrives

**THE** Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) has announced the full program of speakers for its upcoming Crisis, Risk and Resilience Conference taking place in May (*TD* 14 Feb).

The event will be held at Novotel Sydney Central on Mon 15 May, featuring speakers from various sectors of the industry, including Chimu Adventures Managing Director Chad Carey (pictured), who will star on the speaker panel to share a moving review of crisis in action.

Flight Centre Travel Group's
Head of People & Culture, Allisa
O'Connell, will also join the
line-up to cover crisis leadership,
alongside CATO Board Director
and travel law specialist Aaron
Zoanetti, who will discuss the
topic of legal essentials, and Gow
Gates Insurance Director, Brad
Kelly, who will look at the reality
of travel risk.

Completing the impressive



speaker panel is Sydney Airport General Manager Operations, Grey Hay, who will share an inside view on airport operations and disaster preparation, and Rock IT Managing Director, Nik Devidas, discussing cyber security.

Travel Agent Achievers founder Roslyn Ranse will moderate a panel of experts consisting of Crooked Compass' Lisa Pagotto; Scenic's Aleisha Fittler; Entire Travel Group's Brad McDonnell; G Adventure's Sean Martin; and Student Horizons' Jamie Wansey.

The event will conclude with a Q&A with MC Mark Carter and CATO Chair Dennis Bunnik, prior to networking - buy tickets **HERE**.



## HAL 150 promo

**HOLLAND** America Line's (HAL) 150th anniversary sale is offering \$1 deposits for today only.

HAL's sesquicentennial anniversary falls today, and in addition to dollar deposits, the cruise line is also offering savings of up to 25% off cruise-only launch fares - CLICK HERE.

#### Air Vanuatu in the air

**AIR** Vanuatu has resumed its Australia and New Zealand routes after two weeks of flight disruptions.

The airline's only Boeing 737, which was grounded due to mechanical issues (*TD* 05 Apr), returned to the sky on Sat.

Air Vanuatu's full re-ticketing and refund policies remain in place, with the carrier continuing to support travellers impacted by cancelled flights.

Travel agents are advised to continue checking the Travel Advisory page **HERE**.

#### **Accor benefits ALL**

ACCOR has partnered with CommBank to offer benefits to members of the hospitality company's loyalty program, Accor Live Limitless (ALL).

Members can now turn their everyday spending into rewards points to redeem for holidays and experiences by transferring their CommBank Awards points into ALL points.

These can then be redeemed for their next holiday, or to unlock tickets to some of their most popular concerts, shows, and sports events.

"This offer creates greater fluidity between bank currencies and ALL Reward points, providing unmatched benefits to members," Accor Chief Executive Officer Pacific Sarah Derry said.

"This new benefit means... customers can boost their Reward points to allow them to redeem hotel stays and other incredible experiences."

For more details, see HERE.







# Window Seat

**THIS** is why you should never throw anything out.

London's The Dorchester Hotel has announced it will commemorate the upcoming coronation of King Charles by revisiting the decorations used for his mother's accession to the throne.

Apparently they're not actually using the 70-year-old bunting, but instead accurately re-creating the original decorations which were created by British stage set designer Oliver Messel.

As well as coming up with the external adornments in 1953, Messel also unveiled a luxury suite within The Dorchester, which is still a key feature of the property.

The dramatic draping across the balconies (**pictured**) is designed to make the hotel's facade look like the interior of a theatre seen from the stage.

The hotel will also celebrate the coronation of HM The King with a royal take on its famous afternoon tea which will be available over the celebratory weekend of 05-08 May 2023, in which executive pastry chef Michael Kwan will offer a specially curated selection of themed cakes and sandwiches along with a gift and a glass of Champagne - the perfect way to celebrate the King for £125.



## Japan's first casino

**JAPAN** has officially approved plans to establish its first gambling resort in Osaka by 2029.

The attraction will include 500,000m<sup>2</sup> of space for a hotel, conference centre, shopping mall and a museum.

The plan follows the passing of legislation in 2018, which lifted the ban on gambling to create jobs and boost tourism, with the casino expected to generate a significant spike in tourism revenue, according to Japanese government sources.

## Airbus/AF acquitted

AIRBUS and Air France have been acquitted of manslaughter charges over a 2009 air crash that killed 228 passengers and crew (*TD* 02 Jun 2009).

Air France Flight 447, an Airbus A330 flying from Brazil to Paris, plummeted into the Atlantic Ocean after ice crystals caused the airspeed sensors to malfunction, disconnecting the autopilot system and confusing the pilots, who were wrongly banking the plane and unable to regain control after it stalled.

The two companies stood trial before a French criminal court, each facing a fine of €225,000 (A\$367,000), but were not charged due to a lack of evidence showing that the crash would have been avoided if those failings had not occurred.

#### JW Marriott Goa

**THE** new JW Marriott Goa resort has opened its doors to guests this week, featuring 151 rooms and variety of stylish amenities.

The property is located on the city's coastline adjacent to local attractions and is only 27km from Mopa Airport, offering guests four dining venues, a gym and an outdoor infinity pool, as well as large indoor and outdoor event spaces across two meeting rooms and the Grande Salao ballroom boasting an outdoor terrace.

# **AFTA UPDATE**

from Dean Long, CEO

LAST week I was on the road in Adelaide catching up with many great ATAS businesses. While I had

returned to Sydney by the time of the first bounce for the AFL's Gather Round, the power of

It is great to see the domestic sporting codes innovating their product to help revitalise our domestic tourism industry and Adelaide did an amazing job in turning out and supporting this

major events was on full display.

For me, this was the first of a few weeks of travel as I move around the country to hear directly from ATAS businesses about how the recovery is going.

The information collected from these visits helps AFTA refine it advocacy requests but also gives me critical intelligence as a member of the ACCC Small Business and Franchising Consultative Committee.

One of the major issues that

was a reoccurring theme was in relation to large suppliers' terms and conditions of carriage rules.

As the sole travel representative on this committee, I will be raising these issues for the attention of the ACCC at our first meeting on o5 May.

Also at this meeting we will be discussing all issues that are regulated by the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* and what education and information strategies can be developed to assist small and independent travel business.

What is clear from meeting ATAS agents, tour operators and wholesalers is that the issues we are facing are similar and revolve around the lack of qualified staff.

Where an agency has new staff, we are seeing increased workload for wholesalers and tour operators and vice versa.

It is clear that frustration in some circumstances is high.

These issues can only be solved by working together and ensuring a strong voice to state and federal government representing the whole sector.

# QR plots AKL return

QATAR Airways looks set to resume its nonstop flights between Doha and Auckland, with GDS screens indicating the services will recommence on a daily basis in Sep this year.

## Brawn just clicks

**CLLIX** Apartments & Hotels has appointed the highly experienced Natasha Brawn as its new Sales Manager NSW, representing properties in BNE, ADL, MEL, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast.







# We'd spend more and stay longer

**CLIMATE** change is an increasing concern among travellers, who are increasingly prioritising sustainability over cost and convenience, according to a new study from Travelport.

Nearly half of all consumers surveyed said they were willing to spend more (49%) and take longer, indirect transport routes to their destination (60%) in order to reduce their carbon footprint when travelling.

Younger travellers between the ages of 18-41 said they would travel two to three hours longer to save on carbon (CO2) emissions, compared to only 19% of those aged 42 and up.

# SAF IN FULL FLIGHT AROUND THE WORLD

PLANS to accelerate the decarbonisation of aviation around the world have been set out in more detail, with measures in the UK and the United States announced this week.

The UK Government has set out a new two-year plan to help meet its long-term goal of decarbonising the country's aviation sector by 2050.

The strategy, which was revealed at this week's Sustainable Skies World Summit at Farnborough Airport, includes new initiatives to accelerate the development of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) over the next two years.

This includes operating the first trans-Atlantic flight using 100% SAF later this year, the creation of a mandate on the use of SAF by 2025, and looking at mechanisms



to achieve "price stability" for the fuel to drive investment.

SAF will also lower emissions at San Diego International (**pictured**) in the United States, which has taken delivery of its first shipment of renewable diesel for its fleet of airside vehicles.

The fuel is now being used in a number of diesel-powered vehicles and equipment, such as baggage tugs, belt loaders, and firefighting vehicles. "San Diego International
Airport is thrilled to begin using
renewable diesel to reduce
the airport's carbon footprint,
improve local air quality, and
help meet our sustainability
goals," San Diego County Regional
Airport Authority President &
Chief Executive Officer Kimberly
Becker said.

"We thank our airlines for their cooperation and partnership during this process."

# Captain Cook plants

**CAPTAIN** Cook Cruises Fiji is marking 2023 Earth Day with two new initiatives for guests who join its Day Sail to Tivua Private Island on 22 Apr.

Guests who opt for the 'Plant a Palm' program will plant coconut trees and seedlings to help create a lively habitat above the ocean.

Alternatively, the 'Buy a Coral, Build a Reef' program allows guests to purchase and plant a coral frag under the guidance of marine biologists, to help preserve the 500 acres of coral reef surrounding the island.

# BWH Hotel Group ups green pledge

**BWH** Hotel Group has announced a new global sustainability strategic initiative, 'Because We Care', which will focus on Earth, People and Community (EPC).

The initiative complements the group's engagement with the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (*TD* 08 Jun 2022), and furthers its commitment to environmental and social responsibility across its global portfolio.

The 'Because We Care' movement celebrates the efforts of BWH Hotel Group's properties to implement sustainable-driven initiatives, including Prestige Hotels & Resorts in Canada, which has committed to the GreenStep Sustainable Tourism program.

Another example is Best Western Plus Kamloops Hotel in Canada, which has installed two EV charging stations and compostable single-use dishes.

# Double shore power for AIDA

GERMANY'S cruise industry has marked an impressive sustainability milestone after AIDA Cruises connected two of its ships simultaneously to a shore power facility in Rostock-Warnemünd.

AIDAsol and AIDAmar were supplied with electricity at the same time, while enabling the vessels to reduce emissions and noise by turning off the engines.







# **MONEY**

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

#### AU\$1 = US\$0.670

**AFTER** dropping to two-week lows during the Easter break, the AUD and NZD then peaked at seven-week highs before turning sharply lower again over the weekend.

However, the Aussie dollar was mainly weaker against other currencies, dropping 0.7% against EUR and 0.2% to GBP.

Meanwhile, the Chinese GDP report is due today, and if the data falls near the forecasted 4% drop, financial experts believe it could lead to a rise in the Aussie's value, rallying via improving commodities.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.670
UK	£0.542
NZ	\$1.084
Euro	€0.613
Japan	¥90.11
Thailand	ß23.11
China	¥4.611
South Africa	12.27
Canada	\$0.898
Crude oil	US\$86.31

#### Listen to Collette

**COLLETTE** is launching a brand new podcast called Travel Unpacked, a new show that will discuss travel issues and answer questions from listeners.

Listeners can join Josh, Kelsie, and Nicole from Collette, to unpack some of the curious aspects of the industry, swap stories, and chat with guests.

The first episode is available now on most podcast platforms -**CLICK HERE** to listen.

# **WA** meets the Dream Team



THE Tourism Western Australian executive team, along with Business Events Perth's Gareth Martin, travelled to Sydney recently to update the Tourism Australia leadership team.

During the Immersion Session, Tourism WA presented on its recent achievements and outlined its current projects, key priorities and plans for 2023-24.

#### Thailand on the nose

**TOURISTS** are avoiding Thailand's northern city of Chiang Mai and surrounding provinces due to high pollution levels, which reached 171 on IQAir's air quality index - 19 times over the World Health Organization's recommended level.

Hotel bookings in the city have dropped to 45% occupancy - well below the 80-90% level that was expected during last week's Thai New Year holidays.

The country's health ministry has advised the public to avoid outdoor activities and wear masks that can filter particles, with authorities blaming a combination of forest fires and crop burning as the cause of the deteriorating air quality.

The DMO also highlighted that WA recorded its highest-ever visitor spend in 2022 - \$14 billion dollars, nearly half a billion more than the previous record.

"The session was a fantastic way to explore opportunities for further collaboration with Tourism Australia, to work together as a national tourism industry." Tourism WA Managing Director Carolyn Turnbull said.

#### Farrell on a mission

FEDERAL Tourism Minister Don Farrell has departed Australia for Vietnam and the Philippines in a bid to strengthen tourism and travel ties with the South East Asian nation.

In Ho Chi Minh City, Farrell will mark increased flight connectivity between Vietnam's largest city and Australia, before travelling to Manila to discuss ways to improve the visitor economy.

"In our region, Vietnam and the Philippines are among the top emerging markets for international visitation to Australia and we hope our strong bilateral relationships with both nations will see continued growth in two-way travel," Farrell said.

## Volocopter Bruchsal

VOLOCOPTER, a leader in the urban air mobility space, has opened new production facilities in Germany's Bruchsal, where it will have the capacity to assemble more than 50 VoloCity aircraft each year (TD 04 Nov 2022).

The German company, which develops electrically powered air taxis, has committed to launching commercial air taxi services in cities like Singapore, Rome, NEOM and Paris as early as 2024.

#### Jetstar Asia China

JETSTAR Asia is gearing up to resume services between Singapore and Haikou on 29 Apr, after a three-year pause.

The service comes just in time for China's Golden Week Labour Day long weekend, with the low-cost carrier to operate four weekly return flights.

The recovery of Singapore-China flight frequency overall is currently at around 40% of prepandemic levels.

# Safety, British-style

TRAVELLERS flying with British Airways on its long-haul aircraft from 01 May will find themselves both educated and entertained by the airline's new onboard safety video, which showcases the instructions through the lens of British wit and 'obsessions', including a love for fish and chips.

The five-minute video (HERE) stars the airline's colleagues, including British Airways engineer Carl Carpenter and cabin crew member Sima Patel-Pryk, as well as recognisable British figures like rapper Little Simz and tennis player Emma Raducanu.

# Travel Daily

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# Starstruck in the Red Centre

There's no other night sky view quite like it anywhere in the world – the Northern Territory's Red Centre where the clean, clear air and zero light pollution put our galaxy spectacularly on show.

And for Red Centre visitors, there's no better place to see this unforgettable phenomenon than the award-winning tourist attraction Earth Sanctuary, just outside of Alice Springs and overlooking the majestic East McDonnell Ranges.

Launched in 1999, this family-run business is on its way to becoming a world-leader in sustainable tourism and education. Their passion for the environment (they are carbon-neutral!) and their incredible skies combine to

create a unique experience for people of all ages.

Visitors can book a range of activities. There are group and private Astro Tours led by a highly experienced astronomer who will guide you through the stars and planets, and offer a look through the deep sky telescope. For couples, there is the romantic Sunset to Sunrise Space Adventure, perfect for stargazing. And if the timing is right, you can enjoy one of only four special Dark Sky Night Astronomy Programs in 2023.

Earth Sanctuary also offers dinner and a star show for groups of 15 or more, where visitors enjoy canapes under a canopy of stars, a gourmet BBQ and delicious desserts – all accompanied by stories of local culture, ecology and astronomy.

Earth Sanctuary is located just 15 minutes' south of Alice Springs. Visitors can drive themselves while return bus transfers are also available.

#### **FOR MORE INFO**

Galaxies, constellations, shooting stars and planets – the Red Centre's night sky has to be seen to be believed. Head **HERE** to find out how to book and for more information.



Phone: (08) 8953 6161

Website: www.earth-sanctuary.com.au Email: hello@earth-sanctuary.com.au





