



# WINTJIRI WIRU

WHERE AN ANCIENT STORY LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT SKY

OPENING MAY 2023

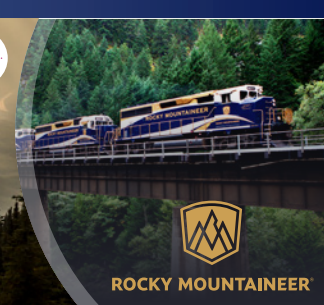


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## Amex GBT imposes 3% QF surcharge

**AMERICAN** Express Global Business Travel has written to its Australian clients telling them that from later this month it will add 3% to the ticket price of any Qantas bookings purchased in Australia, citing “changes to [Qantas’] economic partnership model with travel management companies”.

The new Qantas surcharge “will be made known at the time of booking and itemised on your invoice,” Amex GBT said, with the 3% increase only being applied to QF fares, and not taxes or fees.

It’s understood that TMC rival Corporate Travel Management also imposed a 2% surcharge on Qantas international fares last year in response to QF commission cuts.

TMCs are also concerned by Qantas moves to remove its cheapest domestic fares from GDS, an issue also highlighted by AFTA in its recent ACCC submissions (*TD* 30 Jan) as likely to increase consumer costs.

More corporate travel news on [page five](#) of today’s *TD*.

## Voyages launches world first

**AYERS** Rock Resort at Uluru has announced the debut of a major new attraction, combining ancient First Nations storytelling with state-of-the-art drone and laser light technology.

Developed in partnership with the local Anangu people, *Wintjiri Wiru* (“a beautiful view out to the horizon”) will be the first time a light, laser projection and drone experience of this magnitude has been performed on a regular basis anywhere in the world, according to Matt Cameron-Smith, CEO of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia.

Cameron-Smith said the show, featuring over 1,000 luminous drones lifting ancient images to the sky, will bring to life a chapter of the Mala ancestral story of which the Anangu are custodians.

A consultation group with the traditional owners has been involved in naming the experience, advising on the visuals, narrating the story in English, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara languages and delivering the music, ensuring every level of the experience is

shared with respect.

“We are honoured that we can share the cultural importance of the Mala story with our guests, through such an illuminating and captivating experience in the spiritual heart of Australia,” Cameron-Smith said.

Two *Wintjiri Wiru* sound and light shows will run every night from Mar-Dec, with one show a night operating in Jan and Feb, with Voyages offering a signature three-hour *Wintjiri Wiru* Sunset Dinner priced at \$385pp, or a second one-hour *After Dark* show costing \$190pp.

Trade partners can now book the new experience, which launches in May this year, alongside Ayers Rock Resort accommodation and other tours at the click of a button via the recently launched Voyages Tjuta trade portal - more on the [cover page](#) or at [trade.voyages.com.au](http://trade.voyages.com.au).

## Carnival onboard

**CARNIVAL** Australia has named Katie Malone as the new Marketing Director for P&O Cruises Australia, joining the business from her former role with Crystalbrook Collection.

She joins the group’s new Chief Commercial Officer, Kathryn Robertson (*TD* 30 Aug 2022) who commenced in her role in Nov after a career with Air NZ.

More of the latest cruise news in today’s issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

## JQ/FJ want c’share

**THE** Qantas Group is seeking approval from the International Air Services Commission (IASC) to allow Fiji Airways to codeshare on Jetstar flights to Singapore.

The move requires a variation to an existing IASC determination allowing unlimited capacity on the Singapore route, with QF providing a confidential code share agreement to the Commission as part of its application for the approval.

## Today’s issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of news including a **Disney Moments** page and **Corporate Update**, plus a front cover wrap from **Voyages Indigenous Tourism**.

## JAL to boost MEL

**JAPAN** Airlines will add a fourth weekly frequency between Melbourne and Tokyo Narita, with the expanded capacity using a Boeing 787-8 aircraft deployed from 26 Mar this year.

The carrier will also maintain its daily Sydney-Tokyo Haneda 787-9 flights, according to GDS screens.

## VS Shanghai return

**VIRGIN** Atlantic Airways (VS) has announced the resumption of direct flights between London Heathrow and Shanghai.

Effective 01 May, VS will restart daily services on the route 859 days after suspending operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The flights will utilise a three-class Boeing 787-9 aircraft, and VS will also offer onward connections on its new SkyTeam partner, China Eastern.

Shanghai is Virgin Atlantic’s final route resumption following the pandemic, returning the carrier’s flying program to full capacity.

## Uncover WA regions

**AGENTS** can learn more about Western Australia’s less traversed region with the latest instalment of Tourism Australia’s Aussie Specialist program running on 07 Feb at 2pm AEDT next week.

In the sixth part of the series, Aussie Specialist Trainer Caroline will outline some of the best accommodation and experiences on offer in WA’s golden outback, south west, Coral Coast, and north west regions.

Those who join for the live session will also be in the running to score themselves a leather tote bag from Bahru Leather.

To register to attend, see [HERE](#).



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## QF A380s return to HKG

**QANTAS** is set to significantly boost Sydney capacity to Hong Kong in the coming months, with its current four weekly A330 services transitioning to daily A380 superjumbo flights.

Initially the expanded services are listed for sale between 26 Mar and 18 Jun, with the move meaning QF will offer a four-class product on the route including First, Business, Premium Economy and Economy seating.

Aviation blog *Airline Hub Buzz* noted the change would result in adjustments to other QF

routes, including the temporary suspension of the carrier's current Melbourne-Hong Kong operations.

Other changes include a switch of one of QF's current daily Sydney-Los Angeles A380 flights to a 787-9, while Melbourne-Singapore 787 frequencies will revert to an A330 from 22 Apr.

## GJNZ departs station

**THE** first departure in a new range of multi-day escorted tours from Great Journeys New Zealand (GJNZ) recently took off, travelling for 15 days from Auckland to Queenstown and offering guests an array of custom experiences.

Passengers were able to choose from six different itineraries, including the shorter six days on board the Northern Highlights trip from Auckland to Wellington, or the longer New Zealand Highlights' journey of 15 days.

GJNZ will run 70 departures across the country in 2023, with tour dates now released through until Apr 2024 for agents to book. See [HERE](#) for more details.



## TIME is running out

**VIRTUOSO** Travel Australia and the Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) are reminding graduates of the mentoring program they still have the opportunity to apply for a special scholarship to attend Virtuoso Travel Week in Las Vegas (**TD** 19 Dec 2022), a gathering of the world's top performers in the world of luxury travel.

"This event is normally exclusive to the Virtuoso network and TIME is thrilled that a member of our community will experience it," the training organisation said.

Virtuoso will personalise the experience for the winner, and will also pay for the registration and accommodation in Vegas, which will run from 12 to 19 Aug.

Details can be found [HERE](#). Submissions close 28 Feb.

## Travellers to say Hello to Hong Kong



'**HELLO** Hong Kong', Hong Kong Tourism Board's (HKTB) new global promotional campaign, has launched today, with half a million free air tickets to be given away to entice globetrotters to embark on a long-awaited return to the destination.

The promotional campaign sends the message Hong Kong is back with signature new exciting experiences awaiting visitors, in light of the lifting of all entry restrictions to the destination at the start of the year (**TD** 03 Jan).

Hello Hong Kong includes a series of vibrant promotional content, which will include a series of thematic videos featuring business leaders, social influencers, "Hong Kong Super Fans", and local celebrities, including "Cantopop" legends Aaron Kwok, Sammi Cheng and Kelly Chen, showcasing the destination's array of thrilling new experiences.

The 500,000 free air tickets on offer will be given away by the Airport Authority Hong Kong to different markets in phases through three home-based carriers, namely Cathay Pacific Airways, Hong Kong Express, and Hong Kong Airlines, starting from next month.

There are also Hong Kong-wide offers, "Hong Kong Goodies" visitor consumption vouchers, to entice travellers to participate in the destination's experiences.

To celebrate Hello Hong Kong, as well as the recent Lunar New Year, HKTB last night

commemorated the Year of the Rabbit with an event at The Gardens By Lotus at the Chinese Garden of Friendship Sydney.

**MEANWHILE** HKTB has also enlisted the services of Linkd Tourism to look after its marketing activities in Australia.

**Pictured** are HKTB local Director Karen MacMillan and Manager Trade Marketing & Business Tourism Lisa Lee.

## Pacific Adventure setback in NZ

**P&O** Australia has conceded that alterations may need to be made to some New Zealand itineraries after being ordered to clean the hull of its *Pacific Adventure ship* for the second time in only a matter of months.

A spokesperson for the line told **TD** that the mandate by Kiwi biosecurity authorities was an "unexpected result", and a dive team has already been engaged to assist in the cleaning efforts off the coast of New Zealand.

"Such an offshore operation is weather dependent, and while we currently have a favourable forecast to complete the work, the success of this work will determine our onward itinerary and further alteration may be necessary," P&O said.

NZ has some of the most stringent biosecurity rules in the world, and follows several orders from the NZ Government for cruise ships to be more thoroughly cleaned prior to entry.

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## QF "back to delivering"

**QANTAS** CEO Alan Joyce has hailed a turnaround in the airline's performance, in an opinion piece published overnight admitting that as recently as six months ago "a lot of people felt we'd let them down".

"Almost half our flights were late, our rate of misplaced bags had more than doubled and we were cancelling up to 7% of our schedule.

"Knowing that we were routinely letting customers down was hugely disappointing for everyone at Qantas...it's the exact opposite of our culture," he wrote.

However, a concerted effort to remedy the situation appears to have borne fruit, with the carrier

hailing new figures showing it had more on-time flights and fewer cancellations in Jan than in the same month pre-COVID.

Joyce said there were also complaints about high fares, but noted that reduced flying and having more aircraft and crew on standby meant less supply amid lots of demand, so fares rose.

He noted that domestically QF is almost back to 100% of pre-COVID flying levels, while internationally the airline will reach 80% by the end of the year.

"We've recently seen most of our competitors announce a major ramp up in their capacity so you can expect to see fares trend down," he promised.

Joyce also addressed the recent spate of Qantas aircraft turn-backs, saying "despite the hype, they are actually a symptom of strong safety systems".

## Dusit expansion

**DUSIT** Hotels & Resorts has confirmed its entry into Japan and Europe in 2023, along with new hotel openings in China, India, Kenya, Nepal and Thailand.

The new Japanese properties include ASAI Kyoto Shiro and Dusit Thani Kyoto, while the brand's European debut will be in Greece with the new Dusit Suites Athens.

## Namibia easing

**THE** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has lowered the level of its Smartraveller advice for Namibia, and is now advising Australians to "exercise normal safety precautions" when visiting the African nation.

## McArthur's Lynx LCC goes to US

**LYNX** Airways, the fledgling Canadian ultra low-cost carrier headed up by former Virgin Australia senior executive Merren McArthur, has launched its first international route.

Services from Toronto to Orlando debuted this week, with four weekly Boeing 737 MAX 8 frequencies marking the first of several new US routes which will shortly also include the launch of flights from Calgary to Phoenix, Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

## All smiles at ID Travel event



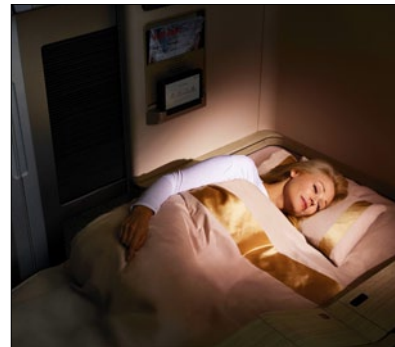
**THERE** were plenty of great prizes given away at ID Travel's exclusive agent cocktail event hosted in Sydney this week at the Kimpton Hotel.

One lucky winner, Wentworth Travel's Lynn Mayer, walked away with the grand prize of three nights at Soneva Fushi and two at Soneva Jani in a one-bedroom villa, as well as return air transfers

and a one-way speedboat transfer between resorts.

She also won three nights at Wild Coast Tented Lodge - Relais & Chateaux.

**Pictured** are ID Travel COO & partner Laurie Palumbo, Inspired Luxury founder & Director Lynne Ireland, and ID Destination Specialist Joanne Ng & Associate Director Asia Pacific Belinda Layt.



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## Sharing more Magic

**WELCOME** to our latest Disney Magical Moments page produced in collaboration with Disney Destinations.

Disney has made its second batch of agent selections about who should win a coveted spot on its anticipated Disney100 mega famil to the Disneyland Resort California next month.

The latest pair of travel advisors share their 'Magical Moments' (see right), proving once again that travel agents are a special breed of people who often go above and beyond in times of need for their clients.

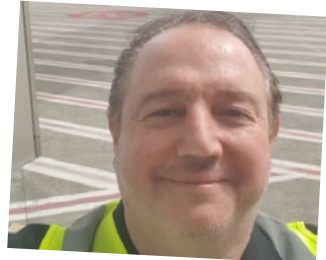
Agents wanting to join the highly anticipated Disney100 famil can enter via two ways, either by submitting a Magical Moment [HERE](#), or through Disney's trade incentive [HERE](#).

To qualify for entry to the incentive draw, agents must book any Disneyland Resort Park ticket and flights on United Airlines to the United States.

## More agents share Magic dust

**TWO** more agents have been selected to enjoy an incredible Disney100 mega famil to the Disneyland Resort California after sharing their Magical Moments enjoyed with clients.

The first was Lynton Jones from Savvy Traveller in Sydney (pictured inset below), who revealed the warm feelings he experienced after helping a "very



special family" from the South Coast of NSW, who needed to make a life-changing trip to Europe to support their youngest daughter.

"It still brings a tear to my eye while typing this but also a smile

in knowing that everyone who contributed made a difference and created a little bit of magic for this brave little Princess," Jones recalled in his submission.

Another star travel advisor who has landed a seat on the big Disney famil is Michelle Kingsford from TravelManagers in Pacific Pines, Qld (inset right), who described the rewarding feeling she experienced after helping a client in need who was involved in an accident outside one of Europe's most famous landmarks.

"One of my older clients was three days into her round the world three-month itinerary and had landed in Paris, went for a walk to The Louvre and whilst taking photos stepped back on the cobblestones and fell," Kingsford recalled.

"She was in hospital after falling, no one spoke much English and she was struggling and didn't know who else to call but me -

she hadn't even called her family yet...I called her family here and



relayed to them what had happened and then jumped on the phone to her travel insurance provider to advise them as well."

Kingsford also went the extra mile by contacting a colleague to ask if they could pick up her client's mobile charger from her hotel room, knowing that her phone battery was running low in hospital, and thankfully a fellow agent was about to start a famil in Paris and could oblige.

She also cancelled all remaining itineraries, and even continued liaising with insurance people during her son's soccer match.

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## CORPORATE UPDATE

### BCD explores air future

BCD Travel has released a new report on the future of air travel, summarising the wide variety of sustainability initiatives as corporates increasingly look to reduce their carbon footprint.

The study comes after a BCD survey of travel buyers, which found that almost two-thirds of travel managers rated environmentally sustainable travel as “very” or “extremely” important.

BCD notes the heavy investment being undertaken by some airlines in sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), as well as other options such as hybrid electric, fully electric and hydrogen powered flights, have the potential to reduce emissions as technology advances.

“Rail also plays a role in sustainable travel, and is being increasingly considered as an option for shorter trips,” the BCD report notes - although rail’s potential is limited, the company

said, with trains “low down the list of sustainable travel options presented to business travellers”.

BCD VP of Sustainability, Olivia Ruggles-Brise, noted that addressing carbon emissions generated by aviation remains one of the greatest challenges in the quest for net zero.

Carbon offsets and the creation of new technology will play a part, but in the meantime, each business traveller can also assist in the sustainability of aviation by critically evaluating the need for each flight taken, she said.

“The future of aviation lies in purposeful travel that maximises value and minimises impact.”

See the report at [bcdtravel.com](http://bcdtravel.com).

### Tripactions rebrand?



**TRIPACTIONS**, the tech-focused TMC, corporate card and expense management business which owns Reed & Mackay, looks set to rebrand after registering Navan as a new trademark last year.

A new logo registered with the US Patent and Trademark Office (**pictured**) is set to roll out as early as next Mon, reports *Skift*.

TripActions secured US\$400m in new credit facilities in Dec, following a capital raising which valued the business at US\$9.2b.

The Australian office of TripActions recently became a CT Partners member (**TD** 16 Dec 22).

### CWT M&E tools

CWT Meetings & Events has launched a new website collaboration tool for event planners, allowing clients to mark up requested changes to their events at the click of a button.

The company has also added live chat support to its portfolio of attendee engagement and management services, with the facility able to be easily added to event websites at no extra cost.

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### Aye, it was a trip to remember



**A GROUP** of lucky Aussie buyers have just wrapped up their educational visit in Scotland as part of VisitBritain’s Showcase Britain UK trade event.

The whirlwind adventure included a visit to the Skywalk at Tottenham Stadium, a feast aboard a double decker bus, and a night of boogying to 70s hits at the ABBA Voyage inside a new purpose-built arena in London.

Another five nights were spent checking out the best of Scotland, such as distillery tours of Edinburgh and Glasgow, a lunch on Scotland’s Fingal Edinburgh floating luxury hotel, as well as a special private tour of the National Piping Centre.

“From the beauty of our coast and countryside to the exciting variety of our cultural attractions to our world class dining and accommodation, buyers will experience first-hand the warmest of British welcomes and the outstanding and varied tourism products on offer,” said VisitBritain CEO Patricia Yates.

**Pictured** standing on the balcony at the new Virgin Hotels Edinburgh with Edinburgh Castle in the backdrop are: Fiona Edgar, Helloworld Travel; James Whiting, The Travel Junction; Mark Banning-Taylor, Odyssey Traveller; Tahlia Miller-Williams, British Travel; Monica Di Vito, Flight Centre; Carole Bold, VisitScotland; and Peta Evans from VisitBritain.

### Emerald adds to ‘24

**TWO** new itineraries have been added to Emerald Cruises’ latest collection of European river cruises for 2024.

New product includes 10-day Danube Explorer & Highlights of Budapest sailing through Linz, Cesky Krumlov, Melk, Vienna, as well as an 11-day Rhine Castles & Moselle Vineyards river cruise from Amsterdam to Zurich.

To celebrate the launch, super earlybird savings of up to \$3,500 per person are on offer for guests who pay 12 months in advance.

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## TRAVEL SPECIALS

**WELCOME** to Travel Specials, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of, send the details to [specials@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:specials@traveldaily.com.au)

**Globus Family of Brands** is offering double Qantas Points and savings on Asia, Australia and NZ tours under its Globus and Cosmos brands. Offers include a \$1,250 per couple saving on the Naturally New Zealand Globus tour, priced from \$8,294 for 2023 departures. Call 1300 230 234.

Savings of up to 10% are being offered by **AAT Kings** and **Inspiring Journeys**, under a new "Last Minute Deals" (LMD) initiative. Offers include up to \$1,112 per couple off AAT Kings' Southern Spectacular tour, or \$988 per couple off Inspiring Journeys' Outback Contrasts - for more information see [aatkings.com.au/last-minute-deals](http://aatkings.com.au/last-minute-deals).

Extended apartment stays with **Accor** in Australia are cheaper this month during an ALL Accor Live Limitless Apartment Sale. Deals are available for two-, three-, five- and seven-night stays in Pullman, Sebel, Peppers and Mantra properties - more details at [all.accor.com](http://all.accor.com).

**Royal Caribbean International** has debuted last minute Valentine's Day deals on selected eight-night South Pacific *Quantum of the Seas* departures from Brisbane. Fares lead in at \$599pp for cruises leaving 07 Feb and 15 Feb to Port Vila, Vanuatu & Noumea - call 1800 754 500

Discounts of up to 25% are now available with **Intrepid Travel** as part of its Big Sale on selected small group adventures departing in 2023. Offers are available on both domestic and international trips booked before 16 Feb, with itineraries taking in the Galapagos, Rajasthan, Italy, Morocco, Egypt & Jordan and Australia's Red Centre - more on 1300 304 974.

### Ritz-Carlton clubs

**MARRIOTT** Bonvoy's The Ritz-Carlton brand has announced a "newly elevated experience" within the Club areas of its Asia-Pacific hotels.

The upgrade follows a successful launch in Mainland China last year, and includes locally-curated immersive experiences such as discovering a WA wine at The Ritz-Carlton, Perth with Sommelier Camila Luzzi, or a bonfire-themed family movie room at The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong.

Signature in-club dining includes breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, hors d'oeuvres and cocktails.

### Amadeus + Cirium

**THE** Amadeus Travel Platform is set to feature advanced airline schedules data from aviation analytics firm Cirium, under an extension of a decade-long partnership between the firms.

Cirium CEO Jeremy Bowen said the expansion of the partnership would further improve flight search and bookings, with Cirium's schedules database covering over 900 global carriers.

Amadeus Exec VP of Air, Rail & Global Online, Sam Abdou said the deal "contributes to maintaining a high data accuracy and bookability for our customers".

## Kaitaki eyes pax return

A **KIWIRAIL** vessel is preparing to return to service between New Zealand's North and South Islands after being forced to make a mayday call in the Cook Strait last weekend.

The inter-island vessel *Kaitaki* was transporting 800 passengers across the Strait when she experienced a sudden loss of power in rough conditions last Sat, forcing the skipper to send an urgent message for help.

Thankfully, after dropping all of her anchors, onboard engineers were able to get the ship going again, with the problem subsequently identified as a fault with the engine's cooling systems.

Yesterday, KiwiRail informed the

public that the popular service for residents and tourists alike would look to resume services in a staged manner, first operating only for freight, before resuming full passenger bookings after a period as a safety precaution.

"We will confirm the timeframes as soon as we are able, but it is likely to run as freight-only for one to two weeks," the company conceded, adding that the connection has been repaired and all other components of the cooling system have been checked and tested.

KiwiRail is also running additional sailings on board *Aratere* and *Valentine* to help meet demand.

## keep dreaming... travel inspiration for your clients' next dream holiday

Be inspired by this week's magazine featuring Norway, Barcelona, Tasmania and more dreamy destinations.



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