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13 days | Cairns – Darwin | All-Inclusive

Departs May – June 2023

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Leichhardt's Savannah Expedition

1 Number of nights stay



15 days | Cairns – Darwin & vice versa

Departs April – June 2023

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Red Centre & Field of Light Spectacular

1 Number of nights stay



6 days | Alice Springs – Uluru & vice versa

Departs March – June 2023

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Pilbara & West Coast Expedition



14 days | Broome – Perth & vice versa

Departs April – June 2023

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Canning Stock Route Expedition

1 Number of nights stay



16 days | Broome – Perth & vice versa

Departs May – June 2023

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Simpson Desert Expedition

1 Number of nights stay



14 days | Alice Springs – Alice Springs

Departs April – June 2023

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New TCH podcast



TRAVEL Community Hub (TTCH) Founder and AFTA Director of Membership Experience, Richard Taylor, has today released the first episode of a new podcast series.

Featuring Taylor and Frontier Travel GM Ann-Catherine Jones, *Offloaded* has been launched to “chart the next era for our industry, through the voices of those living in it,” Taylor said.

Each episode will feature an extended interview, with the first three guests confirmed as AFTA CEO Dean Long, Steve “the points whisperer” Hui from iFlyFlat and Kate Shilling from Ultimate Winery Experiences.

The first instalment is live now on all the usual podcast channels and travelcommunityhub.com.

Baini honoured

COLETTE Baini from The Conference Room has received global recognition for her work in the incentive sector, receiving the Kevin Forde Spirit Award from the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) at its global conference in New York this week.

HLO backs QF/EK alliance

EXCLUSIVE

HELLOWORLD Travel Limited has come out strongly in favour of ACCC authorisation for the proposed Qantas and Emirates Restated Master Coordination Agreement, with a submission by CEO Andrew Burnes seeing HLO appearing to differ significantly from the public position taken by the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA).

Travel Daily has obtained a copy of the letter sent earlier this month from Burnes to ACCC Chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb, in which he states that “in my experience and having negotiated commercial agreements with both Qantas and Emirates over the last seven years of my tenure as CEO of Helloworld Travel Limited, I have not experienced any negative commercial outcomes for Helloworld or our agents as distributors, or for any of Helloworld and its agents’ customers”.

“As a major seller of both Qantas and Emirates flights (along with many other carriers) throughout Australia, we have considered the impact of an extension/reauthorisation of the existing codeshare and marketing agreement, and on balance, we strongly believe that this arrangement is beneficial for consumers in Australia,” he said.

The Helloworld submission stands in stark contrast to that of AFTA, which has lobbied its

own controversial response (*TD* 30 Jan) which said in the QF/EK application “there has not been sufficient evidence provided by the applicants to support the continuation of coordination on distribution strategies for passengers and agents”.

AFTA’s submission cited a range of detriments arising from the renewal and suggested imposing several conditions, including a requirement that all fare types and schedules should be made available to travel agents via all distribution systems, and also ensuring full and equal rights for refunds and cancellations.

The proposed conduct “will allow these two major airlines to collude on distribution in a way that others in the industry cannot,” AFTA claimed.

The Helloworld submission cites a range of benefits of the QF/EK pact, including allowing customers to take advantage of the expanded Emirates network particularly throughout Europe, Africa and the Middle East, in order to undertake travels to a much broader range of destinations utilising the combined network than they would otherwise.

“Our customers will also earn frequent flyer points on QF code share flights operated on EK aircraft,” Burnes wrote, adding “I believe the reasons for allowing this reauthorisation greatly outweigh any reasons that might be put to disallow it”.

The ACCC continues to consult with industry stakeholders, with a draft decision expected shortly.

CX back to JNB

CATHAY Pacific has flagged the resumption of non-stop flights between Hong Kong and Johannesburg.

GDS screens indicate CX’s first post-pandemic South Africa flight scheduled for 01 Aug, with Airbus A350-900XWB aircraft to operate the route thrice-weekly.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of the latest news including our **Sustainability** page, plus a front cover wrap from **Outback Spirit**, a product update from **Bench Africa** and a full page from **Norwegian Cruise Line**.

Outback Spirit '23

WITH limited availability and savings of up to \$8,310 per couple, now is the last chance for travellers to book a 2023 adventure with Outback Spirit.

Priced from \$10,495ppts, the 13-day Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure is just one of the itineraries on offer, while the Red Centre & Field of Light Spectacular leads in at \$3,795 - for details, see the **cover page**.

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Window Seat

IN FURTHER proof that our industry still has the ability to attract the best and brightest minds, three students from one of Adelaide's universities recently expressed an interest in TIME (Travel Industry Mentor Experience).

They'd noticed an email that Jason Simpson of Zoos South Australia and formerly of The Travel Corporation had recently sent out about TIME.

Simpson followed up with a meeting, but before he'd had a moment to introduce the program the students excitedly launched into a "heavy discussion about physics and the theories of relativity".

"I was thinking," Jason said, "far out, maybe I've sat down with the wrong people here... but then, when they asked for my opinion on time travel... and it all clicked."

"It turns out they thought I was representing some sort of time travel mentoring scheme."

Jason explained the mix-up & what TIME is actually about, and "the conversation pretty much stopped right there...I felt like a proper goose!"

Travel Daily salutes Jason for his efforts, and would like to sign up for the Time Travel Mentoring Experience as soon as it's launched.

QF \$100m lounge upgrades

QANTAS CEO Alan Joyce says the carrier's \$100 million lounge upgrade program (**TD** breaking news) will take place over the next three years, telling media during an event at Sydney Airport "being back in profit means we're back to making long-term investments for our customers".

The work includes the 2025 debut of a new First Class Lounge at London Heathrow which is timed to open alongside the commencement of Project Sunrise non-stop flights between the UK and Australia's east coast.

QF will reopen a refreshed

lounge at Hong Kong International Airport, as well as undertaking a complete refurbishment and expansion of the International Business Lounges in Sydney & Melbourne.

There's also a new Hobart Qantas Club and a new double-sized Broome Regional Lounge, with today's announcement coming on top of previously revealed plans to expand lounges in Adelaide, Auckland, Port Hedland and Rockhampton.

MEANWHILE QF Loyalty CEO Olivia Wirth has also today revealed a significant expansion of Classic Reward Seat availability on international routes.

Going live at 11am AEDT this Fri 24 Feb, thousands of extra reward seats will be available across all cabins on flights to a range of destinations through to Dec 2023, Wirth promised.

Bench Kruger trip

BENCH Africa is today showcasing its seven-day itinerary in South Africa's Kruger Park.

Daily departures are on offer including accommodation, meals, game-viewing activities & excursions, a sundowner safari, and return airport transfers.

Head to **page 8** for more info.

MTA makes \$1.6m

MTA Mobile Travel Agents has recorded a \$1.64 million profit for the six months to 31 Dec, according to the Helloworld Travel Limited first half results announcement (**TD** yesterday).

HLO owns 50% of MTA's parent company, Mobile Travel Holdings Pty Ltd, and reported its share of profits for the period as \$820,000 compared to an \$85,000 loss for the six months to 31 Dec 2021.

2c HLO dividend

THE Directors of Helloworld Travel Limited have declared a 2c per share interim dividend, after yesterday reporting a \$2.9 million pre-tax profit for the first six months of the 2022/23 financial year (**TD** 20 Feb).

That means a payout of \$818,000 for holding companies associated with CEO Andrew Burnes and Executive Director Cinzia Burnes, while the second largest shareholders, Consolidated Travel owners Spyros and Irene Alysandratos, will receive about \$412,000 in dividends from Helloworld.

MEANWHILE the HLO half year result also confirmed negotiations are still ongoing with Corporate Travel Management over a \$7.9 million "final working capital adjustment", which Helloworld believes it is entitled to receive as part of last year's divestment of its corporate business.

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CATO confirms IWD keynote

THE Council of Australian Tour Operators has confirmed the keynote speaker at its upcoming International Women's Day event (**TD 19 Jan**) will be **Travel Daily's** very own Hoda Alzubaidi.

Hoda (pictured with today's issue at **TD** world headquarters this morning) will share her inspirational story at the sellout event at Sydney's Darling Harbour on Wed 08 Mar, with over 170 attendees now confirmed.

Having arrived in Australia at a young age as a refugee from Iran, Hoda is now one of the industry's most respected sales executives, and her face is also familiar to Foxtel viewers as one of the runners-up in last year's season of *The Great Australian Bake-Off* (**TD 27 Jan 2022**) - check out some of her yummy creations on Instagram [@hoda_alzubaidi](https://www.instagram.com/hoda_alzubaidi).

The CATO lunch will be hosted by publishing personality Julia Zaetta, and will also feature a



panel discussion moderated by Crooked Compass founder Lisa Pagotto and featuring APT Travel Group co-owner Lou Tandy, Globus MD Australasia Gai Tyrrell, World Expeditions CEO Sue Badyari, Evolution Travel Collective Joint CEO Ingrid Berthelsen, and TTC Tour Brands MD Toni Ambler.

Bonza to Victoria

BONZA has today launched its first Victorian route, with the inaugural flight from the Sunshine Coast to Melbourne Avalon.

Services are operating three times per week, with bookings now available on the Fly Bonza app or via registered travel agents.

Bonza CEO Tim Jordan said the launch was the result of a strong partnership with Sunshine Coast Airport and transport giant Linfox.

WWT Late Getaways

WENDY Wu Tours (WWT) has launched a new collection of Late Getaway tours pitched at Aussie travellers looking to take a trip in the next two to three months.

All trips are guaranteed to depart and are based on land only arrangements to free up flexibility around flights.

WWT is also offering travellers savings of up to \$1,000pp on select Late Getaways to Asia.

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

EVT strong rebound

EVT Hospitality & Entertainment has witnessed a strong rebound in its earnings in the first half of the fiscal year, which included record results for its Thredbo and hotels divisions.

Normalised revenue was \$606.8 million, up \$168.8 million (38.5%) on the prior year, and normalised EBITDA was \$107.7 million, up \$43.7 million (68.2%) on the prior comparable half-year, and only 17.9% below the pre-COVID first half in 2019.

"The record results achieved for Thredbo and hotels...underline the benefits of the group's strategy," Chief Executive Officer Jane Hastings explained.

"The half-year result included a record hotels and resorts result on a like-for-like basis, adjusting for the upgrade-related closure of Rydges Melbourne, and a record result for Thredbo, up 41.2% on the previous record first half result for 1H19."

See the full report [HERE](#).

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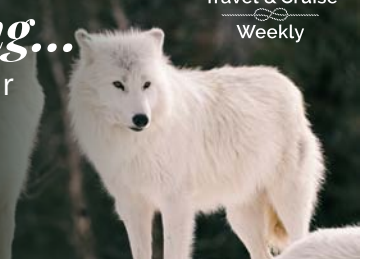


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G'day Parks promo

TO CELEBRATE its loyalty program's fifth birthday, G'day Parks is running a comp with members to win 100 prizes.

Prizes include 100,000 FlyBuis points, Shell/Coles Express fuel vouchers, as well as products from Breville and Black & Decker.

To win, members must answer a question correctly online **HERE** to go into the draw, with the competition open until 11.59pm AEDT 14 Mar.

MSC World Cruise

MSC Cruises has opened sales for its World Cruise 2025, including a brand-new itinerary aboard *MSC Magnifica*.

The 116-night global voyage is scheduled to visit 21 countries and 50 destinations, including 22 that have never featured on an MSC World Cruise before, with seven overnight stays also included - **CLICK HERE** for details and to book.

Govt snubs tourism

AUSTRALIAN Tourism Export Council (ATEC) CEO Peter Shelley has expressed his disappointment at the Federal Government so far failing to deliver on a pre-election promise of more funding.

"Last year the Federal Govt promised a \$10 million fund to support Australian tourism exporters to drive back into market, but today the fund remains undelivered with no word on when this industry will see the support materialise," Shelley said, adding he was "disappointed" the key assistance for tourism exporters remains undelivered by the Government.

Shelley also argued that without further assistance, Australia will continue to lose out to other markets in the northern hemisphere and Africa and slow the local tourism recovery down.

"[Our] sluggish return highlights the need for stronger Govt investment in re-establishing our brand on the world stage."

AFTA UPDATE

Richard Taylor, Director of Membership Experience



IN MY debut column within the confines of the green box that is the AFTA update, I wanted to touch on something that's much more about

people than policy.

Perhaps like me you've noticed recently that an increasing amount of familiar industry faces are slowly, gradually coming back into our sector after a period of doing something else, and it's wonderful.

There are consequences of this, of course. One is the slow frazzling of what's left of your brain as you try to remember where everybody works now, but that's a small inconvenience in the grand scheme of things.

Bringing people into our industry, at scale, is perhaps a more key issue than any other.

You may have seen here in **Travel Daily** and elsewhere that 'Travel Consultant' has now been added to the Federal Government Skills Priority List.

This a magnificent outcome after a lot of unseen work carried out by a group of industry volunteers who serve on AFTA's National Taskforce for Skills and Careers.

Did you know we had a National Taskforce for Skills and Careers?

I certainly didn't, prior to joining AFTA a few short weeks ago.

We'll name those volunteers at the end of this because they deserve the recognition, and much more besides.

This result is a Genuinely Big Thing that will play a part in making travel a more visible and attractive career path. Our congratulations to all involved.

All this, though, is just one element in addressing an issue for which there is no magic cure. I believe we can all play our small part by shouting from the rooftops about the magical experiences and career opportunities that working in travel can bring to someone, whether they're looking for their first job or simply considering a career change.

Let's all bang that drum, because every single person that joins us is a step in the right direction.

And if you're reading this as someone who has re-joined the industry recently, welcome home. We've missed you.

Oh, and those people I mentioned?

They are Kylie Conboy, Alisha Dopper, Emma Evans, Nicole Galliford, Dwayne Good, Nicola Strudwick, Moyna Makina, Erin Simpson and Kelley Matson.

More details on the Taskforce can be found here: afta.com.au/advocacy/our-taskforces.



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Travel mogul sells

THE founder of Peregrine Adventures has listed a popular tourist attraction in Victoria's Mornington Peninsula for sale with a \$30 million price tag.

Rob McNaught's property is located at Borneo Park, and features a top-tier equestrian facility and the Arilla restaurant.

More than 10km of trails, some dating back to the 1800s, run through the wetlands on the site, which are popular with birdwatchers and hikers.

Union warning

UPHOLDING Qantas Airways' decision to fire staff members will weaken workplace rights, the Transport Workers' Union (TWU) of Australia is warning.

Qantas is seeking to overturn a High Court finding it illegally outsourced 1,700 ground handler jobs (**TD** 18 Nov 2022).

The TWU warned the overturn would create "uncertainty" about accessing workplace rights, and water down other forms of discrimination.



TNZ takes AIME

TOURISM New Zealand's (TNZ) stand set up at AIME in Melbourne was designed to promote the country's strong sustainability credentials to the industry.

Initiatives being spruiked included offsetting the carbon emissions for international flights for every New Zealand partner featured on the stand.

Meanwhile the stand itself was highly sustainable and geared towards lowering waste, including wood-based flooring which can be reused for other customers, aluminium wall frames for the structure (negating the need for wood waste), as well as a video wall which projected written content and therefore eliminated the need for printed graphics.

BOEING DOUBLES SAF COMMITMENT

BOEING has purchased 21.2 million litres of blended Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) from Neste to help lower the carbon footprint of its commercial operations, effectively doubling its current volume of green fuel stocks.

The latest procurement will account for around a quarter of Boeing's total jet fuel used in 2022, with Boeing also revealing a purchase of 11.34 million litres of the same blended SAF from EPIC Fuels and Signature Aviation to help supplement its Boeing ecoDemonstrator flight test program, as well as sites in Washington and South Carolina.

"We are demonstrating our commitment to reduce our carbon footprint and catalyse the SAF industry," Boeing Vice President of Environmental



Sustainability Sheila Remes said.

The blended SAF is comprised of conventional jet fuel at a ratio of 30/70, and follows recent news that Boeing is pioneering the development of jet reference fluids to enable SAF compatibility testing to help reach its objective of producing 100% SAF-capable jets in the not-too-distant future.

Boeing has been making solid headway in this space over the last five years, in 2019 it began offering customers the option to power commercial delivery flights with SAF, and in 2018 the Boeing ecoDemonstrator created the industry's first commercial test flight with 100% SAF in partnership with FedEx.

Marina Bay certified

LUXURY Singaporean resort, Marina Bay Sands, has been certified by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council as meeting key sustainability criteria for accommodation providers.

The accreditation recognises hotels that are successful in minimising their environmental impact, maximising social and economic benefits, as well as enhancing cultural heritage.

Singapore is aiming to have 60% of its hotel room stock achieve the accreditation by 2025.

Greener choices

AROUND six in 10 high-income travellers said they are more likely to choose sustainable accommodation, according to a new survey from FloWater.

More than half of the respondents said they consider sustainable tourism options important, with 60% stating they prefer to spend their money at businesses that follow best practices for sustainability.

SkyTeam's Flight Challenge is back

GLOBAL airline alliance SkyTeam will host The Sustainable Flight Challenge (TSFC) in May, encouraging airlines to explore new ways to reduce air travel's carbon footprint.

The initiative was launched in May 2022 and saw 16 airlines collectively improve operational efficiency by 15% (measured by CO² intensity) across a total of 22 medium- and long-haul flights operated

as part of the challenge.

This year, TSFC has been extended to 'friends and family' airlines close to SkyTeam, with the goal of inspiring wider industry change.

"Our members are sharing a wealth of creative ideas and showing immense commitment in our bold ambition of making The Sustainable Flight Challenge a force for change," SkyTeam CEO and Managing Director Patrick Roux said.

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MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.689

THE Australian dollar has surged higher ahead of the Reserve Bank of Australia's minutes, which came out today.

Although it was a quiet trading session with United States-based markets, which were closed for the country's Presidents' Day holiday, Asian shares were stronger, with the Shanghai Composite up 2%, as it neared six-month highs.

Commodities were also higher, with crude oil up 1% and copper up 1.6%.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.689
UK	£0.572
NZ	\$1.097
Euro	€0.645
Japan	¥92.68
Thailand	฿23.60
China	¥4.684
South Africa	12.41
Canada	\$0.923
Crude oil	US\$83.00

Air Canada results

AIR Canada has revealed a full-year loss of A\$201 million - a massive improvement on the A\$3.29 billion loss for 2021.

The Canadian carrier managed to turn an operating profit during the final quarter of 2022, recording revenues of A\$5.05 billion - a 71% increase year-on-year and 6% higher than Q4 2019.

The airline also achieved a 147% increase in capacity (measured in available seat miles - ASM) from 2021, and predicts a return to its pre-pandemic capacity in 2024.

Voyages salutes latest graduates



VOYAGES Indigenous Tourism Australia held a ceremony at Ayers Rock Resort last weekend, celebrating 17 graduates who had attended the National Indigenous Training Academy (NITA).

The training program was introduced in 2011 to provide a sustainable foundation for young Indigenous Australians in the tourism, hospitality, landscape gardening and retail spaces at Voyages properties Ayers Rock Resort and Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre in QLD.

The program has so far assisted 640 graduates since commencing, with the current graduating group to go on to work with Voyages at the Ayres Rock Resort or with tour operator AAT Kings.

Fletcher promoted

FLIGHT Centre has promoted Vicki Fletcher to the role of Global Content & Creative Leader, seeing the content marketing executive move on from her position as Global Discipline Leader - Content & Social Media.

Fletcher's remit will involve developing content and social media marketing campaigns.

Pictured: The graduating class of 2023 alongside the NT Attorney General and Minister for Justice Chanstin Peach, and members of the Voyages executive team.

Isle of Wight hotel

PHILLIP Island's once-iconic Isle of Wight Hotel is set to be revived into a tourist destination, following a proposal by national hospitality group CLG and developers Moda.

The proposed plans include a 160-room hotel, ground-floor food and beverage facilities, a signature restaurant, a large-scale event space, a wellness centre and a pool deck overlooking the foreshore and Western Port.

The first-ever hotel to open on Phillip Island, the original Isle of Wight opened in 1870 before being destroyed by a fire in 1925, and once again in 2010.

"We're looking forward to capturing the nostalgia and spirit of the original hotel and bringing it back to life with new energy for a whole new generation," Moda MD Ed Farquharson said.

The revived tourism destination is slated to open in 2025.

SYD back to 80%

SYDNEY Airport has recovered to 79% of pre-COVID passenger levels, with a total of 3.12 million travellers passing through its terminals in Jan 2023.

Domestic passenger traffic totalled 1.88 million last month, representing an 82% recovery compared to Jan 2019.

Australians travelling abroad took out top spot, followed by visitors from New Zealand and the United States.

CEO Geoff Culbert said the lack of capacity on key overseas routes continued to hamper recovery, with US and UK visitors still only 75% of pre-COVID levels.

FC grows its views

FLIGHT Centre has grown its YouTube channel's total number of subscribers by 88% following the merger of its five regional channels in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom and Canada.

One of the primary drivers of the growth, according to Chief Marketing Officer Clinton Hearne, is YouTube's ability to post longer form content, which Flight Centre has used to insert its "irreverent brand personality", including its recent Kids Talk series.

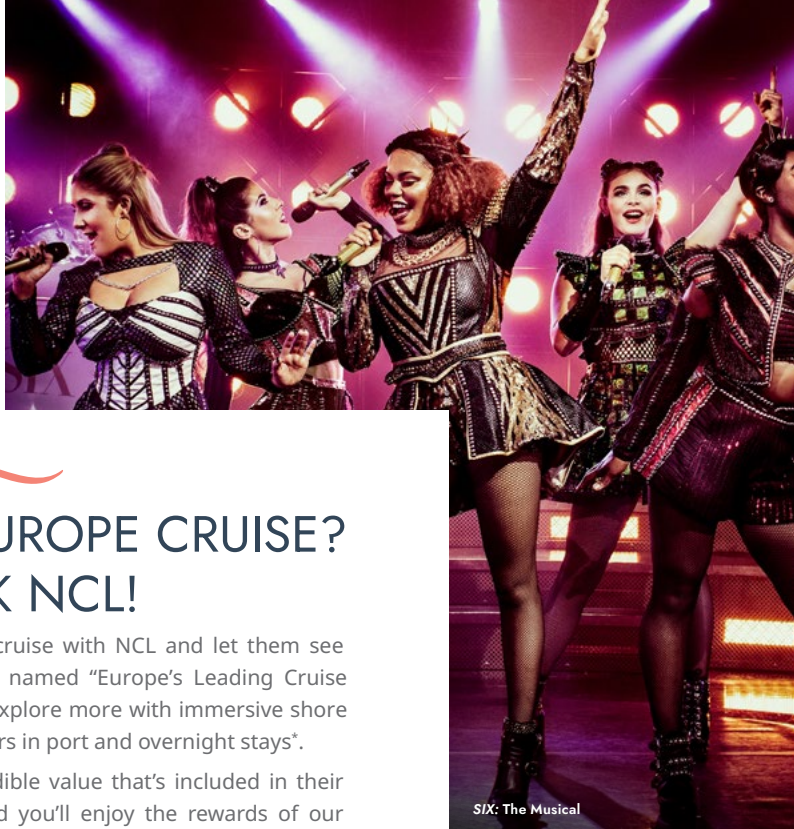
Travel easy with HA

HAWAIIAN Airlines' passengers can now enjoy quicker processing times at the TSA security checkpoint at Honolulu International Airport thanks to a new multimillion-dollar investment in more space.

The new facility at Lobby 3 provides travellers with 93m² of extra room and 280m² of additional screening space.



Norwegian Getaway, Dubrovnik, Croatia



SIX: The Musical

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MAY – JULY & SEP – OCT 2023

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- Sundowner safari
- Return airport transfers

Kruger is one of Africa's largest and most renowned national parks, famed for its vast array of wildlife, including the Big Five. This classic 7-day itinerary offers various game viewing opportunities including safaris in Kruger National Park, Makutsi Reserve, and sightseeing in the Drakensberg Mountains and Blyde River Canyon. Guests are transferred from

Hoedspruit airport to Makutsi Safari Springs, where they can indulge in the natural, thermal mineral pools, unwind on the terrace, and watch the wild go by. Search for an assortment of wildlife on 4WD open safari vehicle game drives and spend a full day in Kruger National Park, with plenty of chances to spot the Big Five! Makutsi's nocturnal game drive is also not to be missed!

A day is reserved for sightseeing in the Drakensberg Mountains and Blyde River Canyon, where guests can purchase locally made crafts and curios whilst exploring the area. The adventure culminates in a final game drive, providing guests with one last opportunity to spot wildlife before departing.

This 7-day adventure offers an unforgettable African experience filled with adventure, wildlife, nature, and relaxation. Tailor your client's perfect African itinerary with extensions to Cape Town, Victoria Falls, Botswana and beyond!

NEW BROCHURE

Established in 1969, Bench Africa is Australia's oldest and most trusted Africa travel expert. Their newly released 2023/24 brochure features the best of Africa's diverse and captivating destinations and showcases a variety of travel options. Available from TIFS.



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