BRISBANE AIRPORT PRESENTS THE RETURN OF



Brisbane Airport is excited to invite you to this exclusive travel agent cocktail evening at the International Terminal.

Pack your bag and bring your passport - two lucky travel agents will win a seat on the next Air Canada flight from Brisbane to Vancouver.

The winners will spend 2 nights at the Metropolitan Hotel Vancouver followed by 2 nights at the Pan Pacific Vancouver, and enjoy the city's attractions with a Destination Vancouver Experience Pass.

They will also enjoy the night of the event at Pullman Brisbane Airport, prior to their flight.

Wednesday 22 March 2023 - 6:00pm - 7:30pm Brisbane Airport, International Terminal.

RSVP: Click to Register now

Places are limited to the first 150 travel agents to respond. Please ensure you have a valid passport with you and are approved by your manager to fly out on Thursday 23 March, returning on 29 March. Please click on link to register to see full terms and conditions.



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BRISBANE AIRPORT

First with the news

Enjoy:



Wednesday 22nd Feb 2023

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of news including a photo page from Visit USA and our Luxury feature page, plus a cover wrap from Brisbane Airport Corporation, and full pages from:

- The Travel Junction
- Celebrity Cruises
- Sharon Stanley Consulting

BNE cocktail event

BRISBANE Airport is inviting travel agents to an exclusive cocktail evening on Wed 22 Mar at 6pm, taking place in the International Terminal.

Two lucky agents will score seats on an Air Canada flight from Brisbane to Vancouver, plus four nights' accommodation - see the front cover for details.

7 Wendy Wu Tours. SAVE PER COUPLE ON ALL 2023/2024 GROUP TOURS OR SAVE 50%

OFF THE SINGLE SUPPLEMENT



FLIGHT Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) recovery has gained significant recent momentum, with the company's profit for the six months to 31 Dec 2022 well ahead of expectations (TD breaking news).

The company posted a first half underlying EBITDA result of \$95 million, which is 19% above the forecast average of between \$70 million and \$90 million.

It was also an almost \$280 million turnaround from the \$184 million underlying EBITDA loss recorded during the previous corresponding period.

FCTG was profitable in both corporate and leisure, as well as in all geographical segments, apart from Asia, where the company only broke even.

However, as the continent reopens, positive signs of recovery are already emerging, including in China, where following last month's travel restart, volumes have been tracking above pre-COVID levels. Sales recovered strongly in the first half, with Total Transaction Value (TTV) up 203% to \$9.9 billion, and is tracking at 80% of its record result in 1H 2020.

FCTG's corporate businesses are trading ahead of industry growth rates, Global Chief Executive Officer Graham Turner noted, delivering a record TTV of \$5 billion, which is set to top \$10 billion during this fiscal year. Meanwhile, leisure TTV contribution is back up to 44% of FCTG's total, which was a strong increase on its 25% contribution

Celebrity sees stars

to the company's TTV for the PCP.

CELEBRITY Cruises is the first and only Relaxed Luxury resorts at sea to receive a star rating by Forbes Travel Guide, which boasts 65 years' experience in evaluating luxury at the finest hotels and resorts in the world.

See page eight to learn more about the cruise line's charms.

FCTG recovery picks up Turner described FCTG's start to the fiscal year as "solid", in an improved, but not fully recovered, trading environment.

"The sales momentum that helped drive our recovery last year continued throughout the 1H, with TTV and revenue both tripling," he said.

"Positive margin trends have also emerged, with underlying cost margin dipping below 10% to a record low, and revenue margin gradually ticking upwards, in line with our expectations.

"In both leisure and corporate, we are achieving our strategic objectives and laying foundations for more meaningful profit recovery in the future."

Turner added that FCTG's lowercost models are gaining scale and capturing a larger share of sales, complementing the mass-market Flight Centre flagship brand.

While we continue to monitor market conditions, we are not currently seeing evidence that the recovery is slowing with the leisure business currently trading at post-COVID highs and corporate travel activity escalating after the traditional holiday period," he added.

London is calling

THE Travel Junction is offering travel agents up to 15% commission on selected accommodation bookings in Great Britain, plus the chance to win a three-night London city break package.

For further details on the incentive, see page seven.

Upskill discounts

AGENTS looking to move into their first client account management role can enjoy a 15% discount on Sharon Stanley Consulting's five-week Transition to Client Account Management Coaching Program when they register before 01 Mar. See the **back page** for details.

We can do it better

THE Australian Chamber of Tourism Executive Chair John Hart has penned a letter to Australian Trade and Investment Commission's Philippa King, requesting stronger long-term sector engagement regarding Australia's visitor economy.

Signatories on the letter include AFTA CEO Dean Long and the heads of major tourism industry bodies, incorporating requests for industry to set the agenda for future meetings, as well as be assured of more accountability from the Federal Govt, including report-backs on items raised previously, links between these items and the overall long-term tourism THRIVE 2030 Strategy, and oversight bodies for THRIVE 2030 to be driven and comprised of industry stakeholders.







OUT NOW

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Wednesday 22nd Feb 2023

LA Now Playing

THE next phase of Los Angeles Tourism's new Now Playing global advertising campaign has launched today, coinciding with the 95th annual Academy Awards and the centenary of the famed Hollywood Sign.

A new 30-second TVC will complement streaming, online, display, social, native and search engine campaign elements - see traveldaily.com.au/videos.

MH extension

MALAYSIA Airlines has today announced the final extension of MH e-vouchers, which must now be redeemed by 31 Mar 2023 for travel before 30 Jun this year.

The vouchers apply to existing COVID-impacted tickets issued for travel 01 Jan 2020-29 Oct 2022.



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CATO plots NZ alliance



THE Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with its Kiwi counterpart, the New Zealand Outbound Travel Suppliers Association (NZOTSA).

The pact was sealed in Auckland yesterday, and will see the bodies collaborate in several areas.

CATO MD Brett Jardine said "there are numerous synergies and potential benefits through the cooperation of services and sharing of relevant intellectual property across Australia and New Zealand, which makes our MoU very exciting".

"As our sector of the travel industry continues to rebound at a rapid pace, the MoU puts in place the groundwork to allow further expansion of the land supply sector across the Tasman".

Relevant activity covered by the agreement will revolve around advocacy efforts, member education, research, trade distribution, administrative capability & networking opportunities, the bodies said. NZOTSA was formed just over

MU daily to MEL

CHINA Eastern Airlines will increase its flights between Shanghai and Melbourne to a daily operation effective 26 Mar. GDS screens indicate 787-9 flights operating seven times weekly through until 29 Sep. 12 months ago, as part of moves to formalise lobbying with the NZ Government on support for the then locked-down travel industry as well as pushing for a pathway to reopening.

MuTours

Kenya FXPRF

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NZOTSA Chairman, Joe O'Sullivan, from Auckland-based cruise specialist wholesale and representation company Cruise World, said the MoU will allow the organisations to "explore, discuss and develop areas of mutual benefit for members across each organisation and the region in general".

Pictured in NZ yesterday are, from left: Joe O'Sullivan, NZOTSA Chair; Marija Kapiteli, MD of Croatia Times Travel; CATO MD Brett Jardine; Robyn Galloway, MD of Innovative Travel; Wendy Wu Tours NZ MD Paul Dymond; and Lisa Pagotto from Crooked Compass, CATO Vice Chair.

Window Seat

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SIGNATURE

AIR New Zealand's new non-stop flight to New York is among the longest routes in the world, so you can imagine the disappointment of passengers who boarded in Auckland last Thu, who spent 16 hours in the air, and then landed again - in Auckland.

An issue occurred mid-flight, not with the aircraft itself but at JFK Airport Terminal 1, where operations were disrupted by a significant electrical outage.

All flights scheduled to land there were diverted, including this flight which was about halfway through the journey and apparently turning around and heading back to AKL was the best decision.

Acknowledging the passengers' frustration, Air NZ said "diverting to another US port would have meant the aircraft would remain on the ground for several days, impacting a number of other scheduled services and customers".

Travellers were rebooked on the next available service, which for some meant another eight-hour layover in AKL before a flight to Los Angeles and then an onward connection to the Big Apple.



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Qantas grants open

QANTAS is inviting regional community groups to apply for a share of \$10 million as part of its grants program, which formally opened yesterday.

The grants will provide \$10 million in grants over five years to support Australian based not-forprofit groups and projects that benefit regional areas, which will be awarded in the form of flights, cash and marketing support.

"When we announced that we were relaunching and doubling the size of the grants program, more than 1,500 community groups across Australia registered their interest," QantasLink Chief Operating Officer Petrea Bradford said - apply for grants **HERE**.

Crystalbrook talent

CRYSTALBROOK has appointed three new General Managers after a series of internal promotions.

These include Josquin Crepelliere as GM of Crystalbrook Kingsley, Emma Alcorn as GM of Crystalbrook Byron, and Carl Taranto appointed as new Area GM of Crystalbrook Vincent, Brisbane and Crystalbrook Byron.

Dec 12% shy of '19

THERE were 4.87 million Australian domestic commercial air passengers in Dec 2022, around 12% below the same month in 2019, the latest figures from BITRE have shown.

The number of trips during Dec 2022 rose significantly compared to the same month in 2021 (49,602 vs 39,695), but was still around 5% less than the 52,112 trips taken in Dec 2019.

Sydney was Australia's busiest domestic airport for Dec 2022, with 1.94 million passenger movements, followed by Melbourne (1.87 million) and Brisbane (1.30 million).

Regional airports recorded 1.88 million pax movements for Dec around 11% under 2019 levels.

Ireland paints Australia green



MEMBERS of the trade across Australia and New Zealand recently had the opportunity to "Experience Ireland" at Tourism Ireland's 2023 Roadshow.

Wednesday 22nd Feb 2023

More than 400 travel advisors, 150 industry executives and media participated in nine days of activities across Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Auckland.

Attendees were entertained with live traditional Irish music and dancing, and heard from Tourism Ireland's Vice President of North America, Australia and New Zealand, Alison Metcalfe. Nine tourism suppliers from Ireland also provided updates at the roadshow events, including EPIC the IRISH Emigration Museum, Titanic Belfast, Original Irish Hotels, Killeavy Castle, Park Hotel Kenmare, Griffin Group, Visit Derry, MCT Tours and Hastings Hotels.

Topdeck savings

DISCOUNTS of up to \$700pp on selected USA and Canada trips are on offer as part of Topdeck's latest Get Social promotion.

Travel groups and individuals aged from 18-39 years old can book a trip between 23 Feb and 29 Mar to receive discounted fares on trips departing from Apr 2023 to Mar 2024.

Adventurers are also able to include their loyalty discounts with the current promotion for further discounts on the fares. Access more details on Topdeck's campaign **HERE**. "During the events we have also highlighted Tourism Ireland's ongoing goals for sustainable travel, including encouraging Australian and New Zealand travel agents to book their clients in the shoulder seasons, and to visit some of the lesser-known sites and regions across the Island of Ireland," Metcalfe said.

Pictured: Michael Cowell, MCT Tours; Sofia Hansson, Tourism Ireland; Finola McDermott, EPIC; Alison Metcalfe, Tourism Ireland; Eimear Lafferty, Titanic Belfast; Eoin McGrath, Hastings Hotels; Robin and Mick Boyle, Killeavy Castle; Fiona Delahunty, Griffin Group; Alison Deegan, Original Irish Hotels; Odhran Dunne, Visit Derry; and Francis Brennan, Park Hotel Kenmare.

NT agent incentive

AAT Kings and Inspiring Journeys have partnered with Tourism NT to offer travel advisors the chance of winning a six-day Inspiring Journeys Outback Contrasts itinerary, valued at over \$6,000.

The prize also includes 50% discounts for a travel companion, with the agent with the highest sales of guided NT tours between 20 Feb and 21 June landing the coveted free trip.

The operators are also giving travellers up to \$800 off NT adventures departing between 01 April 01 2023 and 31 Mar 2024. Agents can download a flyer **HERE** and marketing tools **HERE**.

A NEW FUTURE

brought to you by TravelManagers

The future of travel is home-based



AN INCREASE in consumer demand for experienced travel advisors has resulted in month upon

month of record-breaking sales. It's only reasonable that advisors should share more in this success.

Hard-working consultants should be suitably rewarded for their experience, dedication and skills. As consulting from home has become a reality for many agents over the past three years, we see more taking the next step of running their own home-based travel business, allowing them to earn up to 95% of their total commissions. A salary they deserve.

To maximise the opportunities of the year ahead, travel advisors need access to specialised support, technology and systems that are tailormade for the home-based model. Strong supplier relationships are more important than ever, along with the security of having financial protections like the TravelManagers Customer Fund (TCF). Home-based travel advisors can then focus on what they are most passionate about. Their customers and selling travel.

Joe Araullo, CEO – House of Travel



To find out more about TravelManagers' home-based model email join.us@travelmanagers.com.au



Wed 22nd Feb 2022

THE Visit USA Expo Series set up shop in Melbourne last night to woo agents with the latest updates from across the USA.

More than 70 exhibitors descended on the Pullman on the Park Melbourne to greet over 220 agents in what was an exciting and lively evening.

Richard Reid was on hand to MC the event and there were showgirls wearing champagne dresses to welcome agents as they were treated to a delicious array of canapes and drinks, and to top it off there were also fabulous prizes including flights and accommodation packages on offer for the agents.

US Consul General for Victoria, Kathleen Lively, was thrilled to see such energy for US travel, while President of Visit USA



Australia, Caroline Davidson, added the sold-out gathering was as a vibrant as ever and showed a rising appetite for US travel.

Tonight, the Visit USA Expo series wraps up in Sydney at Luna Park, which will be an actionpacked evening, buzzing with energy with a few showgirls and cowboys to boot!

CELEBRITY MC Richard Reid with USA Showgirls at the Visit USA Expo in Melbourne.





KATHLEEN Lively, US Consul General VIC; Caroline Davidson, Visit USA President alongside the showgirls.











extravagant champagne dress.







luxury@traveldaily.com.au Wednesday 22nd Feb 2023

Heinemann opens

THE new Heinemann department store has opened at Sydney Airport, offering duty-free luxury beauty, fashion and accessories to travellers (**TD** 15 Dec 2022).

Spread across an expanded floor space within the international terminal, travellers will find a swathe of international designer labels, including new and exclusive brands across fragrance, skincare, make-up, watches, jewellery, and more.

CX First class lounge to reopen

CATHAY Pacific has revealed it is on track to reopen the Pier First Class lounge in Hong Kong International Airport by mid-2023, which has been closed since the pandemic.

In the interim, a section of the Pier Business lounge remains reserved for First class passengers, Cathay Diamond frequent flyers and their Oneworld Emerald equivalents.

The Asian carrier also confirmed it will continue to gradually reopen its passenger lounges, with The Wing Business lounge to also reopen in the coming months, joining the Wing First Class and the Deck lounges.

LUXURY LEADING FOR FLIGHT CENTRE

FLIGHT Centre's strong focus on the luxury segment is seeing more than 7% of the company's revenue derived from the sector, with the recent Scott Dunn acquisition bringing further scale to the business.

Today's FCTG first half results (see **p1**) confirmed the strategy, which also saw the company's luxury revenue climb to \$71 million for the six months to 31 Dec 22, just over 15% of Flight Centre's overall leisure revenue on a pro-forma basis.

Of that \$71 million, about 23% was derived from the Scott Dunn operations in the UK, a further 8% in the USA, and 68% in Australia and New Zealand via the Travel Associates network.

Luxury forms a key part of Flight Centre's leisure travel mix, with an ASX presentation noting aspirations to create "the



leading network of luxury travel advisors designing 'One of a Kind' experiences for discerning guests, across a global Luxury Travel Collection".

Flight Centre CEO Graham Turner confirmed that the Travel Associates brand had now almost reached pre-COVID TTV levels from about half of its pre-COVID Australian and NZ shop network - as revealed at last week's Travel Associates showcase (*TD* 13 Feb).

Flight Centre paid £121 million for Scott Dunn, giving the company an accelerated entry point into the United States and United Kingdom luxury travel market "through a well-regarded, scalable brand which will be supported by Flight Centre's global platform".

Moran serves up Fiji

MATT Moran is bringing his farm-to-table cooking to Fiji, taking over the kitchen at two luxury island resorts. Moran is taking up a fivemonth residency at two Marriott properties - Fiji Marriott Resort Momi Bay and Sheraton Fiji Golf & Beach Resort, running the kitchens from Mar to Aug to serve up his wildly popular culinary cuisine.

Travel & Cruise

Weekly

Twiggy purchases Waldorf Astoria for \$575m

ANDREW "Twiggy" Forrest and his wife Nicola have purchased the first planned luxury Waldorf Astoria hotel Down Under for a reported \$575 million.

The high-end 25-storey hotel will be positioned in Sydney's Circular Quay precinct, and is due to open in late 2026.

Part of the Hilton stable of brands, the 220-key property will offer travellers luxury accommodation and views across Sydney Harbour, as well as multiple restaurants, spa and wellness facilities, an indoor pool, ballroom and function spaces, along with a rooftop bar and restaurant.

The property will be added to Forrests' growing Tattarang portfolio, joining recent additions like Lizard Island in Far North Qld, and the Gaia Retreat & Spa in Byron Bay.

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Wednesday 22nd Feb 2023

ACCOMMODATION

WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, Travel Daily's Wed feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



Dreams Flora Resort & Spa is the latest addition to the Hyatt Hotels' portfolio. The resort sits on the palm-studded beach of Cabeza de Toro and boasts 520 suites, each containing a furnished balcony or terrace. Guests have a variety of cuisines to choose

from, with a la carte restaurants, a buffet, cafe and a snack grill. The relaxation hub also offers kid-friendly and adult-only pools, while families can enjoy two waterslides at the water park.



TFE Hotels' transformation of Melbourne's historic Pentridge Prison sees the soft opening of the Adina Apartment Hotel Pentridge Melbourne. Consisting of 106 one- and two-bedroom apartment style guest rooms, the property has been reinvented to reflect a contemporary modern standard while preserving

the heritage of the 170-year old site. Guests can dine at the adjoining North & Common restaurant and Olivine wine bar.



IHG Hotels & Resorts signed a new 151-key InterContinental Hotels & Resorts property on the island of Dominica, with the opening planned in spring 2023 once the existing resort has been transformed. Guests will be able to enjoy the resort's four

outdoor pools, expansive spa, fitness centre and beach access with four on-property restaurants and a pool bar for refreshments. An enormous 790m² of space is available for indoor or outdoor meetings as well as an onsite business centre for corporate events and blended travel.

IHG protects more

IHG Hotels & Resorts has joined the Australian Child Safeguarding Business Coalition, which aims to drive action on improving children's safety in Australia.

Recently launched by Australian Childhood Foundation and YMCA Australia, the Coalition will work together to assess risks to children and young people, develop policies and practices, and share resources to help enhance child safeguarding.

Air NZ close to '19

AIR New Zealand carried 1.19 million pax in Jan 2023, down by 8% on pre-COVID Jan 2019, while revenue passenger kilometres were down 22%, according to the carrier's latest investor update.

The Kiwi airline's domestic traffic for Jan almost completely recovered to pre-pandemic levels, with 770,000 pax carried last month compared to 775 in Jan 2019, and only 1% difference in revenue passenger kilometres.

IGAPORE W TRAINING ACADEM



The magic of Arabia



MAGIC Arabia & Magic Camps hosted its first Australian educational trip to Oman last week, giving a lucky group of travel agents the chance to experience highlights in and around Muscat.

The itinerary included trekking and canyoning in Wadi Shab, dolphin watching and snorkelling at Bandar Al Khairan and a night under the stars at the Luxury Magic Camp in the Wahiba Sands.

The agents were also pampered at Alila in the Jabal Akhdar Mountains and enjoyed a visit to the Land of Frankincense in Salalah, and enjoyed true Arabian hospitality courtesy of Magic Arabia's hotel partners, including Shangri La Al Husn, W Hotel Muscat, Kempinski, and more.

Pictured (Back L-R): Caroline Ferguson, Luxury Bound; Lisa Maddox, Independent Affiliate of The Spencer Travel Group; Narelle Gregory, Helloworld Bateau Bay; Mark Spurway, MTA; Dennis Bunnik, Bunnik Tours; Megan Catteral, itravel Northern Beaches; Gay Boersma, Travel

Designers Canberra. Front L-R - Andrea Powi, Travelling Divas; Sandra Cahill, Magic Arabia & Magic Camps; Juma Al Harthy, Operations Manager Magic Arabia & Magic Camps.

TripGen launches

TRIP.COM has launched TripGen, an AI chatbot offering travellers live assistance, including tailored travel routes, itineraries and travel booking advice.

The new tool is designed to save travellers time and stress, using advanced context-based Natural Language Processing-integrated (NLP) to provide exact answers to users when they ask complex or vague questions.

TripGen can provide suggestions for pre-trip decisions and in-trip arrangements, including flights, hotels, transportation and tours, and currently supports English, Japanese, Korean and traditional Chinese, with more languages to be added in the future depending on user needs.

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- Module 3 Becoming a trusted advisor
- Module 4 Approaching difficult conversations *course outline may vary slightly
- Module 5 Problem solving

C. Managing Accounts

Module 6 – Process Module 7 – Tools Module 8 – Project Management

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About your coach

Sharon Stanley is a trained coach with 20+ years experience account managing, leading successful AM teams, consulting on AM best practices and coaching others in these roles.

FOR DETAILS ON THE MARCH INTAKE CONTACT SHARON@SHARONSTANLEYCONSULTING.COM OR 0412 584 950 OR GO TO WWW.SHARONSTANLEY.NET/COACHING/2/