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Hurry, some of our most popular 2023 itineraries have already sold out and new 2024-2025 sailings are filling fast.



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*When booking airfares through Viking standard airline deposits and non-refundable conditions apply. Deposits are refundable in the form of a future cruise voucher up until 120 days before departure or final payment. After final payment has been made standard cancellation fees apply.

South Africa seeks new Hub chiefs

SOUTH African Tourism has launched a recruitment drive seeking new heads for its operations in seven key international markets including Australia/NZ.

Applicants must be South African nationals who are “results-driven, credible individuals with strong interpersonal and influencing skills, strong business acumen and creative flair,” according to a job description posted last week on the SA Tourism website.

Submissions are open until the end of the month, with five year fixed-term assignments being offered in UK/Ireland, Central Europe (Germany), South Europe (France), North Europe (Netherlands), Asia Pacific (China & Japan), India and Australia/NZ.

Yeti Airlines crash

AT LEAST 68 people, including one Australian, have been killed after the crash of a Yeti Airlines ATR 72 aircraft in Nepal yesterday.

The plane was flying from Kathmandu to Pokhara, and reportedly went down about 20 minutes after takeoff.

A national day of mourning for the victims has been declared in Nepal today, with details of what caused the crash unclear at this stage and pending investigation.

EK doubles BNE flights

EMIRATES is expanding its services to Brisbane, with the addition of a daily Boeing 777-300ER service this month.

Combined with its daily Airbus A380 service, the growth means Emirates will offer almost 12,000 seats per week to Brisbane - a return to pre-pandemic levels.

The flight expansion was secured under the Qld State Government’s \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, which was created to boost Queensland’s tourism economy.

EK Divisional Vice President Barry Brown said the expansion comes as the carrier celebrates 20 years of flying to Brisbane.

“Not only will this service cater to the demand of Australians looking to travel overseas, but also welcome more travellers and tourists from Dubai and across our global network to enjoy Queensland, Australia’s tourism mecca,” he said.

Disney date saver

DISNEY Destinations is titillating the industry today with a “save the date” for 14-18 Mar this year.

Disney is celebrating its 100th birthday, with further details to be forthcoming from Disney Parks, United Airlines and Visit Anaheim in the coming days - more on **page six**.

“This is another important milestone in the resumption of our Australian capacity and reaffirms our longstanding commitment to flying Down Under,” Brown added.

Brisbane Airport Chief Executive Officer Gert-Jan de Graaff said Emirates’ doubling of services was a huge vote of confidence in the city and the Queensland market.

“It effectively doubles overnight the Emirates capacity between the two cities...in terms of rebuilding what was lost by COVID, this is a significant brick in the wall,” he explained.

MEANWHILE Emirates will once again be courtside this week as the Official Airline of the Australian Open for 2023 - the ninth year it has been associated with the Grand Slam tournament.

In recent days EK also announced the resumption of A380 flights to Glasgow and Birmingham, as well as the return of a second daily service to London Stansted from 01 May.

Pro-invest appoints

PRO-INVEST Hotels today announced the appointment of Emily Foster as Head of Commercial, while Caleb Morris is being promoted to become the group’s Director of Hotel Openings and Revenue Strategy.

The Pro-invest portfolio includes Kimpton Margot Sydney, voco properties in Auckland and Brisbane, Hotel Indigo Brisbane City Centre, Sebel Canberra Campbell, Holiday Inn Express Melbourne Little Collins and Holiday Inn Express & Suites Sunshine Coast.

QF Points discount

QANTAS is discounting the number of Qantas Points required for Classic Flight Rewards across its domestic network by 30%.

Offers are valid for points redemptions booked by 22 Jan, for travel 01 Mar-30 Jun 2023.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news, plus a front cover wrap from **Viking Cruises**, and a full page from **Disney Destinations**.

Viking's big deals

VIKING Cruises is allowing guests to secure bookings for just \$1,000 per person deposit as part of its 2023 Explorer Sale.

And if guests cancel they receive a full refund in the form of a future cruise voucher, with offers available on departures through until 2025 on Viking’s ocean, river and expedition departures.

Viking says many of its most popular itineraries for 2023 are already sold out, with 2024 and 2025 departures filling fast - for details see the **cover page**.

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Window Seat

TOURISM authorities in the Korean city of Busan have settled on what some may describe as a perhaps prosaic new slogan, after consulting the populace about their preferred new tag-line.

The winner - "Busan is Good" - says it all, according to Mayor Park Heong-joon, expressing pride and satisfaction in the destination while being flexible and highly usable.

"Close to 40,000 citizens and experts participated in the selection of a new city brand slogan for Busan," the organisers said, promising that Busan is Good would become a "world-class city brand that surpasses New York's I♥NY, based on brand design development and strong promotional strategies".

G Adventures restructure

SMALL group adventure operator G Adventures has announced the launch of G Travel Community (GTC), a new holding company that will act as the overarching parent brand for its existing and new acquisitions.

The stated goal is to "create a community of travel companies that have 'community-led growth' at the core of their strategies".

Brands joining the GTC portfolio include its G Touring UK acquisitions Travelsphere and Just You (**TD** 02 Feb 2017) plus TruTravels (**TD** 05 Dec 2018) as well as Planeterra, G Adventures' non-profit partner.

Each brand will keep its own sales and marketing function, customer services, and "values & identity", while being supported by centralised shared services.

The launch will result in several senior leadership changes within the business, with G Adventures founder Bruce Poon Tip becoming

chairman, G Travel Community.

G Adventures CEO Jeff Russell will become the CEO of GTC, which will see him responsible for the G Adventures, TruTravels and G Touring brands.

In addition to his role as director for G Adventures in the USA, Boston-based Ben Perlo will also head up the G Adventures brand as President and CEO.

"For 32 years G Adventures has had a positive impact on both our travellers and the communities we visit, but our goal is always to have a far bigger impact in the wider world of tourism," Poon Tip said.

"With the formation of GTC we are finally creating that community - a stable of travel brands that can really drive change to a wider demographic of people who love to travel, but at the same time want to change the world."

Two years ago private equity firm Certares took a stake in G Adventures (**TD** 11 Feb 2021).

Ormina Sicily

ORMINA Tours has published an updated version of its Sicily Sell Guide for the fourth consecutive year, with the brand's own tour coming out on top as offering the best value.

The guide compares the small group tour operator's Sicily Bella itinerary with similar tours on the market, providing a line-by-line comparison that looks at price, group size, duration of stays, hotels, tour inclusions and overall value for money.

To download the comparison guide for free, **CLICK HERE**.

Christchurch event

AUSTRALIAN travel trade are being invited to discover the appeal of New Zealand's South Island and connect with local business operators at ChristchurchNZ's trade event, taking place in Melbourne on 21 Feb and Sydney on 22 Feb - RSVP **HERE** before 03 Feb.

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Domestic traffic recovering

NEW figures released by the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Regional Economics (BITRE) track the steady return of Australia's domestic aviation sector, with activity in Oct 2022 recovering to about 88% of pre-pandemic levels.

There were 5.17 million passengers carried on Australian domestic commercial aviation (including charter flights) in Oct - almost four times the 1.33 million in Oct 2021 but still below the 5.9 million in Oct 2019.

There were a total of 48,911 aircraft trips during the month, compared to 21,366 in Oct 2021 and 45,113 in pre-COVID Oct 2019, BITRE said.

The industry-wide load factor increased from 54% a year ago to a much more healthy 85.3% in Oct 2022, with Melbourne-Sydney Australia's busiest scheduled flight route with 625,907 passengers.

Brisbane-Sydney was the second most busy route with 349,059 passengers during the month, while 273,035 passengers flew between Brisbane and Melbourne.

Sydney was Australia's busiest domestic airport in Oct 2022, with 2.05 million passenger movements, followed by Melbourne with 1.96 million passengers and then Brisbane with 1.39 movements.

Andaz to Thailand

HYATT Hotels today announced the opening of Andaz Pattaya Jomtien Beach, with the move marking the debut of the "luxury lifestyle" Andaz brand in Thailand.

The beachfront property has 204 rooms, suites and villas, plus two soon-to open heritage-inspired houses ideal for families and intimate celebrations, along with six restaurants & three pools.

ANZCRO targets US

ANZCRO has announced the appointment of Kiran Nambiar in the newly created role of Senior Vice President of Sales, North America from 01 Mar.

The new role, based out of ANZCRO's Queenstown office, was created to boost the NZ specialist operator's inbound business from the USA and Canada and capitalise on huge aviation capacity growth, with an immediate focus on North America before expanding into other source markets.

Nambiar joins ANZCRO with over 25 years of international industry experience, most recently at Destination Queenstown where he led the trade and business events teams as Business Development Director.

"As we look ahead to our fourth decade, we are turning our sights to making selling Australia and New Zealand easy for North American travel sellers," Managing Director Nick Guthrey said.

THL leaseback

TOURISM Holdings Limited (THL) has announced the sale and leaseback of properties in Canada which became part of the group in its recent merger with Apollo Tourism & Leisure.

The CAD\$51 million deal gives THL rights to the properties for up to 20 years at a starting annual base rent of about CAD\$3 million.

Apollo acquired the operations as part of its purchase of CanaDream five years ago (*TD* 17 Jul 2017), with THL saying the deal represents an indicative pre-tax gain on sale of CAD\$17.5m.

Hilton Motif Seattle

HILTON has announced the opening of Hilton Motif Seattle, a 319-room property formerly known as Motif Seattle.

The downtown hotel is located close to the waterfront and iconic Pike Place Market, and features a rooftop dining destination and extensive meeting facilities.

Position Vacant

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Applications close: Tuesday 31st January



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New Frontier for Ponant



FRONTIER Travel and Ponant recently welcomed eight business leaders and their travel partners onboard Ponant's *Le Laperouse* for the inaugural Frontier Travel Conference.

The group participated in conference sessions during the sea days, while the expedition ship made her way from Christchurch to Auckland, via the Chatham Islands.

Pictured aboard the ship with their partners: Sonia Jones, Sonia Jones Travel; Ann-Catherine Jones, GM of Frontier Travel; *Le Laperouse* Captain Ludovic Provost; Donna Phillips, Donna Phillips Travel; Julie Golding, Ponant Australia; Jenny Taylor, Frontier Travel North Sydney; Deb Oliver, Island Travel Specialists; Ingrid Borgas, The Curious Traveller; Craig Stepnell and Kevin Garwood, The VIP Traveller.

New BCD GM

BCD Travel has confirmed the appointment of Simon Halpin as its new General Manager for Australia, a promotion from his former role as Director of Sales.

Halpin takes on the role vacated with the departure last year of Tass Messinis (*TD* 12 Aug 2022).

MEL int'l arrivals up

MELBOURNE Airport processed just over 766,000 international passengers in Dec - its highest figure in almost three years and up almost 120,000 on Nov and 71% of the Dec 2019 figure.

About 1.87 million domestic pax were processed at MEL in Dec, down on the prior three months which CEO Lorie Argus said reflected higher airfares, capacity constraints and changing consumer behaviour.

Virgin float on radar

VIRGIN Australia's private equity owner Bain Capital has confirmed it will shortly seek advice on an initial public offering for the carrier - but plans to retain a "significant shareholding" in the business it bought from Administrators Deloitte in 2020.

Bain Partner, Mike Murphy, told the *Australian Financial Review* that the business had made a long-term commitment to support VA's growth and sustainability.

Confirming talks about a possible float, Murphy said "Bain Capital will ensure these preliminary deliberations are not a distraction for Virgin Australia management, who can remain 100% focused on their roles".

Chimu on sale

CHIMU Adventures has launched a sale offering discounts on over 400 Antarctica itineraries on 30 expedition ships.

The best savings are on the remainder of the current 2023 season, offering 45% off fares which are now available from \$9,836, while next season's prices have savings of up to 35%.

Deals also include free return flights from mainland Ecuador to the Galapagos on some itineraries, as well as 10% off all Great Southern Flights in all seat categories and dates.

Chimu is billing itself as the "one stop shop for Antarctic cruises", with all special offers online now at chimuadventures.com.

DL back in black

DELTA Air Lines has reported a net profit after tax of US\$1.318 billion, on operating revenue of almost US\$51 billion.

The 2022 result was just under a third of its hefty US\$4.77 billion pre-pandemic profit for 2019.

The carrier noted that fuel prices had increased 66% over the year, with CEO Ed Bastian announcing over US\$500 million in profit-sharing payments to employees next month.

He said DL expected to operate 99% of 2019 capacity in the first quarter of this year.

Silversea appoints

SILVERSEA Cruises has appointed Massimo Brancaconi as its new Senior VP of Global Sales, with Brancaconi joining the Royal Caribbean Group brand from his most recent role as SVP Global Sales at Costa Cruises.

All of Silversea's regional managing directors will report to the newly created role.

New JetBlue routes

NEW York based JetBlue Airlines has announced seven new domestic and international routes, including services to Atlanta, Bermuda, Hyannis and Nassau from La Guardia.

Additions also include flights to Aruba and Montego Bay from Newark and a daily Boston-Vancouver route.

JetBlue said the expansion was made possible via its Northeast Alliance with American Airlines.

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CZ AKL increase

CHINA Southern will increase its Boeing 787-9 flights between Guangzhou and Auckland to a daily service rather than four weekly, with the change effective 26 Mar according to agent GDS.

Oceania b'day sale

OCEANIA Cruises is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a special sale offering up to \$800 shipboard credit per stateroom and 50% reduced deposits, valid for bookings confirmed by 28 Feb. View the marketing kit [HERE](#).

US spending surge

INTERNATIONAL visitors are spending big in the USA, according to new data from the country's National Travel & Tourism Office.

Holidaymakers from overseas forked out more than US\$146b on US travel and tourism-related goods and services from Jan to Nov 2022 - more than double the same period in the previous year.

Fares purchased by overseas travellers from US carriers totalled US\$3.2b in Nov, versus US\$1.7 billion in Nov 2021, and not far off the pre-pandemic Nov 2019 level of nearly US\$3.4 billion.

A superstar and a Queen



BELOVED Aussie pop queen Delta Goodrem has brought her star power onboard Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth* to celebrate the ship's return to Sydney for the first time since the pandemic.

Dressed in a silk dress in the colour of Cunard red, the superstar was accompanied by a string quartet as she performed "Waltzing Matilda" on the bow of the ship when she sailed majestically into Sydney Harbour. The iconic moment will feature in the luxury cruise line's new Australian TV campaign, which kicks off alongside the start of the Australian Open today.

A 30-second TVC will be shown across various TV channels, VOD, BVOD, as well as the full 100-second version on paid social and YouTube for three months.

"We wanted to show our Australian audience how special Australia is for Cunard, particularly after our long 2.5-year absence," Cunard VP, Commercial for North America & Australasia, Matt Gleaves said.

"I've performed in many locations around the world but performing on the bow of *Queen Elizabeth* as she sailed through Sydney Harbour was one of my highlights," Goodrem enthused. "As we neared the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, performing *Waltzing Matilda* was truly a magical moment."

The ship will set sail from Sydney on 28 Jan for an inaugural Great Australian Culinary Journey headlined by well-known Australian chef and TV personality, Matt Moran.

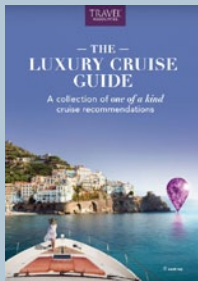
Queen Elizabeth will then head to Melbourne to set off on Australia's first-ever Gardening Journey on 04 Feb, featuring recognisable green thumbs, Jamie Durie and Graham Ross.

As the second-largest vessel in Cunard's fleet, *Queen Elizabeth* caters to just over 2,000 guests and 1,000 crew, and boasts more than 10 restaurants and cafes, a library, ballroom and more.

To watch Goodrem's performance, [CLICK HERE](#).

BROCHURES

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Travel Associates - The Luxury Cruise Guide

Travel Associates has curated a new guide in time for Wave Season, which showcases inspirational cruise itineraries from its luxury cruise partners, including Explora Journeys, Oceania Cruises, Ponant, Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Scenic, Seabourn, Silversea, and Viking. Within the pages of the guide, travellers will also find a list of Travel Associates' top 10 favourite destinations to explore by sea; a fine dining section featuring some of the onboard best culinary experiences; and a section that showcases the latest sustainable cruising innovations.



Aurora Expeditions - 2023 Ultimate Bucket List

The latest guide from Aurora Expeditions is full of the top bucket-list destinations, experiences and activities for 2023, hand-selected by the cruise line's Expedition Team. The book provides a month-by-month snapshot which recommends activities based on the most ideal time of year to do them. For example, the May section focuses on the United Kingdom, highlighting Aurora's Jewels of Coastal UK itinerary, while the best time to spot wildlife - including the polar bear - in the Arctic is Aug, with that month's feature showcasing the brand's Jewels of the Arctic itinerary.

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100

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