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Club Royal Rewards

ROYAL Caribbean has announced the launch of Club Royal Rewards, a new trade loyalty program which allows agents to earn extra commission.

Available now, the program is designed to help trade partners learn more about the brand's product range and current offers, with Australian trade partners given access to exclusive competitions, money-can't-buy events and experiences.

With any new booking secured with a deposit, agents can earn up to \$25 on top of their standard commission, with the money then transferred to their own Royal Caribbean prepaid Visa card.

The program can be accessed via the cruise line's Club Royal trade platform - [CLICK HERE](#) to access program.

Karbo to head up GMTC

SENIOR Australian travel executive Joe Karbo has returned from the UK to take up a new role as Chief Executive Officer of Greece and Mediterranean Travel Centre (GMTC).

Karbo is well known to the industry as the former London-based Global Group CEO of Wendy Wu Tours (*TD* 07 Jun 2016), and was most recently Chief Operating Officer of UK-based Morseand Travel, one of the country's largest independent travel agencies (*TD* 11 Sep 2019).

He announced his departure from Moresand to return home to Australia just before Christmas (*TD* 02 Dec 2022), telling *Travel Daily* yesterday "I'm delighted to be at Greece and Mediterranean Travel Centre, a 20-year established brand, working again with our trade partners".

Karbo will work alongside GMTC founder Halina Kubica, who he noted had "built the business becoming the Australian wholesale leader to the

Mediterranean".

Kubica said Karbo was joining at an exciting time.

"Our business is experiencing a significant uplift, exceeding pre-pandemic sales - especially for Greece," she said.

"Having someone of his calibre on board at this time will only enhance our growth and expansion plans," Kubica added.

As well as Greece, GMTC offers product to all key Mediterranean and Arabian destinations including Italy, Croatia, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and Israel.

Aman joins luxury yachting club

AMAN Resorts is the latest upmarket hospitality brand to reveal a move into cruising, with the announcement of "Project Sama", a 183m vessel constructed under a joint venture with Cruise Saudi.

The ship will feature 50 suites with "exceptional luxury, spacious public spaces and unrivalled entertainment facilities", according to Italian shipbuilder T.Mariotti, which has been awarded the construction contract for the newbuild.

Aman's as-yet-unnamed new yacht is expected to launch in 2026, joining other hoteliers on the sea including Ritz-Carlton, Four Seasons and Accor/Orient Express - more cruise news in today's issue of *Cruise Weekly*.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest news including our **Sustainability page**, plus a full page from **Abercrombie & Kent**.

Win \$1K with A&K

ABERCROMBIE & Kent (A&K) is giving agents the chance to win a \$1,000 pre-paid Visa card for every booking on 'Africa: Across a Continent by Private Jet'.

The amazing itinerary will see a maximum of 48 guests depart from London and explore seven countries across the African continent over the span of 22 days on a private jet journey.

The adventure is priced from \$189,500 per person and departs 29 Sep this year- see the **back page** for further details.

 Wendy Wu Tours.

SAVE \$600

PER COUPLE ON ALL 2023/2024 GROUP TOURS

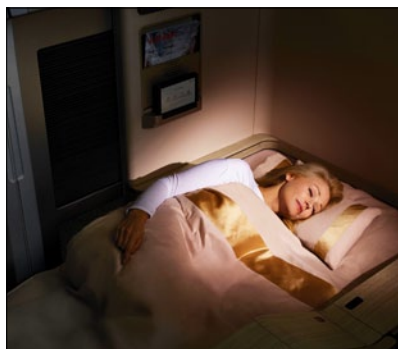


[Explore more](#)

More China flights

BEIJING Capital Airlines has become the latest Chinese airline to announce a resumption of operations to Australia, with two weekly Airbus A330 flights between Qingdao and Melbourne scheduled from 14 Feb.

Frequencies on the route will increase to thrice weekly effective 09 Mar, according to GDS screens.



Reservation: au.flyasiana.com

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Travel to Korea in the hotel in the sky.

Asiana A380 is now offering the 1st class suite at the business class rate for the return flights to Seoul.

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Window Seat

A CANADIAN couple tracking their lost luggage using Apple AirTags have expressed shock after Air Canada allegedly donated the bag to charity.

The pair described the ordeal in a social media post, with not all of their luggage making it back to Toronto when they returned from their honeymoon in Greece.

After completing a report, they tracked the AirTags which showed the suitcase sitting in Montreal for four weeks.

When it started to move they assumed the luggage was finally heading home, but it stopped again - so eventually they visited the address shown by the AirTags and found the bag among about 500 other pieces of luggage as part of a "wrongful" charity donation.

Operators deal with fallout

EXCLUSIVE

SEVERAL tour operators have been forced to cancel trips in Peru due to the political unrest gripping the country, causing violent protests and widespread disruptions to services.

As a result, the Government of Peru has closed popular tourist sites including Machu Picchu and the Inca trail leading up to it until further notice (TD 23 Jan).

Intrepid Travel told *Travel Daily* it has one group of three customers in the country, who were safely evacuated to a hotel in Cusco where they will remain with their tour leader until they can travel to their next destination.

The adventure travel company has cancelled itineraries visiting Peru until 05 Feb, with affected guests offered a refund (minus unrecoverable costs) or credit, which they can use on a different trip anywhere in the world.

Meanwhile G Adventures has

also cancelled its Peruvian tours up until, and including, 05 Feb, and is currently in the process of advising travellers on any possible affected departures.

The tour operator said it is working to reroute all travellers currently on the ground in Peru.

Wendy Wu Tours also confirmed to *TD* that its next tour group to the country, which includes Machu Picchu, is scheduled to depart on 01 May.

Pentridge breaks out

MELBOURNE'S infamous Pentridge Prison will open to the public on 01 Mar with the launch of Pentridge Prison Tours.

The offering is debuting in partnership with National Trust Victoria, with tickets going on sale from 23 Feb starting at \$35 - pentridgeprisonstours.com.au.



TM Banks on Alison

ALISON Banks has returned to TravelManagers (TM) as a Business Partnership Manager in the company's National Partnership Office to assist WA-based agents.

Banks previously enjoyed an 11-year stint at TM between 2010 and 2021, and returns after a year and half with WestCycle, the peak body for bike riding in WA.

Jetstar friends offer

JETSTAR has today launched a new 'Fly a Friend for Free' sale, offering discounted holiday packages to a range of domestic destinations, as well as Bali.

Under the offer, for each full paying passenger an additional guest can fly at no charge, with deals including return starter fares and accommodation along with a range of value-adds.

Packages are on offer until midnight on 30 Jan - jetstar.com.

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Travel Daily

Perth Skäl hits the airwaves



THE Skäl Club of Perth kicked off 2023 with a special event hosted at the newly renovated studios of Seven West Media.

The networking meeting, hosted by Skäl member Jennifer Green, included a special “digital welcome”, along with a presentation from the network’s Aviation Editor, Geoffrey Thomas, who runs the airlineratings.com website and

is a regular commentator, giving Skäl members insights into the problems currently confronting the global aviation sector.

An exclusive behind-the-scenes tour ensued, while the meeting also welcomed new member Melissa Harkins from Futurenow Training Council, followed by an “indulgent smorgasbord BBQ”.

Members are **pictured** enjoying the Seven West Media hospitality.

Viking around Oz

VIKING Cruises has announced a circumnavigation of Australia as part of its newly released 2024/25 itineraries, with its *Viking Venus* to undertake a 32-day voyage which departs Sydney in Jan 2025.

The circumnavigation is currently priced at \$19,995ppts in a Veranda stateroom, including savings of up to \$2,000 per couple.

Michelle Black, MD of Viking Australia/NZ, said past guests had been requesting the local itinerary for some time, warning that with strong demand it will sell fast.

Also new in the program is an 18-day West Indies & Panama Canal Passage journey from San Juan to Los Angeles or vv, priced from \$8,995ppts.

New 2024/25 departure dates on other popular Viking ocean voyages are also part of the release, with savings and a flexible deposit policy available as part of Viking’s current Explorer Sale - call 138 747.

“No-fly list” hacked

THE US Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has confirmed a cyber incident in which a hacker found the official list of known or suspected terrorists denied entry to the USA.

Incredibly, the list of 1.5 million people, including names and birthdates, was discovered in a text file simply titled “No-Fly.csv” on a server hosted by Ohio-based regional carrier CommuteAir.

The hacker, whose online identity is ‘maia arson crimew online’, advised the airline of her discovery and then published a blog post amusingly titled *How to completely own an airline in three easy steps*.

The TSA issued a statement saying it was “aware of a potential cybersecurity incident, and we are investigating in coordination with federal partners” while CommuteAir confirmed the data accessed was an “outdated 2019 version of the federal no-fly list”.



EXPLORER SALE



DISCOVER THE INDUSTRY’S LEADING CRUISE-ONLY OFFERS

With savings up to \$9,000 per couple, no kids, no casinos, and everything your client needs included in their fare, there has never been a better time to book a Viking river, ocean, and expedition voyage.



VIEW OFFERS



CI Taipei-Chiang Mai

CHINA Airlines last Fri debuted a new route between Taipei and Chiang Mai in Thailand.

The new route offers Aussie travellers more options for flights to the destination, as part of CI's moves to ramp up Taiwan as a transit hub to Southeast Asia.

CI flies to Thailand 27 times per week, and recently also launched flights to Cebu and Da Nang.

Cebu's MEL restart

CEBU Pacific has announced the resumption of its Manila-Melbourne flights.

Following the successful relaunch of its Manila-Sydney service in Jul (**TD** 06 Jul 2022), Cebu is set to resume its Melbourne route three times weekly at the end of Mar.

To celebrate Cebu becoming the second airline to fly direct between Manila and Melbourne, flights on the route are available for \$299 one-way across all fares.

Parker to lead FCTG supply

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) this morning announced the appointment of Greg Parker as the Chief Executive Officer of the company's global supply division, succeeding Melanie Waters-Ryan when she retires later this year (**TD** 14 Nov 2022).

Parker, who has been with the company for over 20 years, is currently FCTG MD of Global Supply Partnerships, and will work closely with Waters-Ryan to ensure a smooth transition.

He will report to CEO Graham Turner and become a member of the company's "Task Force" global leadership team.

Turner said Parker's career with the company had seen him deliver outstanding results, including "year-on-year growth in our supply returns, significantly reducing our cost of ticketing and ensuring we are the distribution chain of choice for our partners throughout the world".

Parker has also driven FCTG's New Distribution Capability (NDC) strategy, including the acquisition of tech firm TP Connects (**TD** 13 Apr 2022), which "will enable FCTG to build a leading global air capability and further entrench our position of innovation and investment in the supply side of our business", Turner added.

FCTG's global supply division was established last year (**TD** 28 Mar 2022) with Waters-Ryan taking on the CEO role, while her former position heading up the company's global leisure division was taken on by James Kavanagh.

The dedicated supply operation works across all Flight Centre brands and geographies to strengthen the group's product offerings, ensure synergies and negotiating capabilities, and provides partners with a more efficient single access point to the group's international stable of businesses.

Mint clarification

NEW Zealand agency groups First Travel Group and World Travellers Group have both appointed Mint Payments to be their exclusive payments partner (**TD** yesterday).

EK points promo

EMIRATES is giving travellers the chance to win one million miles as part of a new promotion to celebrate hitting 30 million Skywards members.

The jackpot is open to new loyalty members who join before 04 Feb **HERE** and use the promo code 'FLYBETTER'.

Other giveaways will also be running during the same period for travellers on select flights through Dubai, including 30,000 bonus miles, Skyward packages, Silver Tier upgrades, flight upgrades and chauffeur vouchers.

Winners will have '30 million stickers' placed on their luggage upon arrival into Dubai Airports.

Position Vacant

Business Partnership Manager NSW

Join a team of travel industry professionals in a dynamic, progressive and award-winning organisation.



Due to an internal promotion, TravelManagers is looking for an enthusiastic and motivated business partnership manager for NSW. Bring your exceptional relationship management skills to Australia's largest home-based travel agency group, and NTIA Best Mobile Travel Advisor Network 2022 winner, to grow and support our network of personal travel managers.

For more information and a confidential discussion, please call 0401 725 812 or email julia.mclean@travelmanagers.com.au

Applications close: Tuesday 31st January



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Shizuoka appoints

EVIL Twin PR is now responsible as the press office for the region of Shizuoka in Japan locally.

Only 40 mins from Tokyo via the Tokaido Bullet Train, Shizuoka offers visitors to Japan ancient culture with its age-old aspects of nature, including Mount Fuji.

SYD reaches 3 mill

SYDNEY Airport's Dec passenger traffic was down 21.7% compared to Dec 2019, with around three million travellers passing through in Dec 2022.

SYD CEO, Geoff Culbert, applauded the milestone of reaching over three million passengers, however he also acknowledged that air travel was not yet back to where it was before the pandemic.

"There is significantly more work to do to rebuild overseas travel... Australia needs to unlock more capacity, and quickly, if we want to see a sustained recovery."

The famil was a Breeze



WINDSTAR Cruises and Travel the World recently hosted agents on a famil trip onboard *Star Breeze*, during the ship's inaugural season Down Under.

The luxury liner headed to Australian shores in Dec to offer a range of itineraries showcasing the highlights of Australia and New Zealand.

The 312-capacity ship features new public areas, two new dining

venues and a new spa, an infinity pool and a fitness area following an extensive renovation.

Pictured from back row: Jeremy and Linda Nolan, Jeremy Nolan Travel; Laura and Heidi Clarke, Events at Sea; Jenni Davis, Davis & James Travel Associates; Front row - Murray and Robyn Sinfield, Home Travel Company; Clare Wheeler-Smith, host Travel the World/Windstar; and Jan Davis.

Air NZ ups Shanghai

AIR New Zealand will launch extra flights to Shanghai, moving from three times a week to four times weekly from 04 Feb - double what the carrier was flying at the end of last year.

The extra flight takes the weekly capacity to 1,200 seats.

"Shanghai offers travellers a wealth of opportunities to experience from traditional markets and temples to...luxury shopping," Air NZ said.

Tassie lux cruising

THE highly anticipated luxurious expedition vessel, *Odalisque III*, was launched in Hobart today, at the same time celebrating Tasmania's rich maritime history.

The On Board-owned vessel promises to redefine luxury in the "Tasmanian way" and has features designed to lower its environmental impact & reduce its land-based footprint.

Read more in *Cruise Weekly*.

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For more information and to apply, visit singaporeair.com/aucareers
Applications close 31 January 2023.





MH joins UNGC

MALAYSIA Aviation Group (MAG) is the first aviation company to sign up and take part in the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), in a commitment to promote responsible business practices and advance the Sustainable Development Goals within the industry.

Through the initiative, MAG will access local and global sustainability tools and resources, and implement cultural and talent development programs to increase group-wide engagement of its sustainability efforts.

A&K philanthropy

THE number of Abercrombie & Kent (A&K) philanthropy projects now stands at close to 60.

One of the journeys which includes a visit to philanthropy projects is the 14-day Taj Mahal & the Treasures of India itinerary, which features an exclusive talk on tiger conservation by a member of the local Pardhi community.

Meanwhile, the 13-day Indochina Adventure will see guests commune with a local family to learn about the A&K Cambodia Clean Water Project.

ON AN ULTRA-THIN WING AND A PRAYER

NASA has selected Boeing and its industry team to assist in the decade-long development of its full-scale Transonic Truss-Braced Wing (TTBW) demonstrator airplane (**pictured**).

When combined with expected advancements in aviation technology, a single-aisle airplane with a TTBW configuration could reduce fuel consumption and emissions by up to 30%, relative to the most efficient single-aisle airplanes of today, NASA claims.

The technologies demonstrated and tested are part of the Sustainable Flight Demonstrator (SFD) program, which will inform future designs and could lead to breakthrough aerodynamics and fuel efficiency gains.

“The SFD program has the potential to make a major contribution toward a sustainable



future,” Boeing Chief Engineer and Executive Vice President of Engineering, Test & Technology Greg Hyslop said.

“It represents an opportunity to design, build and fly a full-scale experimental plane, while solving novel technical problems.”

TTBW planes boast ultra-thin wings braced by struts with larger spans and higher-aspect

ratios, which could eventually accommodate advanced propulsion systems that are limited by a lack of underwing space in today’s low-wing airplane configurations.

Under previous NASA programs, Boeing conducted extensive wind tunnel testing and digital modelling to advance the design of the TTBW.

Sustainability now top of the agenda

SUSTAINABLE tourism is becoming increasingly important among travellers, according to a new report by World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and Trip.com Group.

A Trip.com survey revealed that 69% of travellers are actively seeking sustainable travel options, while nearly 60% have chosen more sustainable travel options in the last couple of years, and 74% said they are considering

travelling more sustainability.

Since Trip.com introduced a carbon offsetting option in Jun last year, uptake has ballooned at an average of around 33% per month, with the majority of carbon offset bookings made for international flights.

Additionally, around three quarters of affluent travellers surveyed by Virtuoso said they were willing to pay more to make their trips more sustainable.

Eco specialist joins CLIA team

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) Europe has announced Sascha Gill as its new VP for Sustainability, which tasks him with leading the company to achieve net zero carbon cruising by 2050.

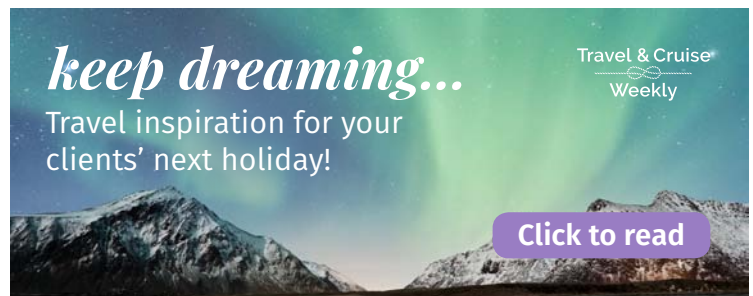
Gill joins from Viking, where he worked as VP Nautical Operations; and has also held roles at Seabourn and Cunard, as well as hotel brands like InterContinental.

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MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.703

THE Australian dollar has experienced short-term momentum, managing to break through the US 70 cents level.

However, some economists believe that the Aussie economy could be pushed into recession if the RBA raises rates again, factoring in falling house prices and lower consumer demand.

It is a big week ahead with the fourth quarter Australian CPI due out tomorrow.

Wholesale rates this morning.

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| US | \$0.703 |
| UK | £0.568 |
| NZ | \$1.082 |
| Euro | €0.646 |
| Japan | ¥91.83 |
| Thailand | ฿23.01 |
| China | ¥4.768 |
| South Africa | 12.09 |
| Canada | \$0.939 |
| Crude oil | US\$81.31 |

Lord Howe hacked

HACKERS are believed to have been responsible for the spread of X-rated articles on the website of one of Australia's most popular holiday destinations yesterday.

The issue on Lord Howe's tourism site has since been fixed, which saw explicit and inappropriate content circling dating applications and links to pornographic websites.

Lord Howe Island Tourism CEO Trina Shepherd assured no customer data was breached during the brief hack.

Lord Howe Island is located 600km east of Port Macquarie.

Just another brick in the wall



THIS is what you'd definitely describe as a BLOCK-buster.

Scott Cam, the ocker tradie host of the popular TV construction show *The Block*, has clearly become such a big influencer that he scored a ticket to the opening of Dubai's newest hotel, Atlantis The Royal - which was headlined by pop megastar Beyonce last weekend.

The American singer reportedly earned an eye-watering US\$24 million for the one-off concert which lasted 85 minutes - equating to A\$9,700 for every second she belted out her tunes.

Also on the red carpet was Aussie TV chef Gary Mehigan, alongside media personalities Sonia Kruger, Natalie Bassingthwaite and Jules Sebastian, Aussie Rules WAG and former *Neighbours* star Olympia Bellchambers - not to mention Australia's own Hollywood royalty, Rebel Wilson.

The lucky Aussies trod the red carpet alongside a host of "global A-listers" including Kardashian-famous Kendall Jenner, Ellen

Pompeo from *Gray's Anatomy* and *Wakanda Forever's* Letitia Wright.

Pictured: Scott Cam on the red carpet of Atlantis The Royal.

NT icon shuts down

AFTER more than two decades of service to the public, Lorella Springs Wilderness Park in the Northern Territory has decided to shut the gates to the tourism site permanently later this year.

The remote private property on the edge of Limmen National Park in the Gulf region is home to a number of waterfalls and swimming holes, however owner Rhett Walker said the closure had been brought on by too much red tape and bureaucracy, providing no further details.

Lorella will close to tourists later this year, with a small number of guided tour groups to remain beyond the closure date.

"Fate would have it that Lorella would grow so popular that she became a victim of her own success," Walker lamented.

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Abercrombie & Kent are giving you the opportunity to win a \$1000 pre-paid Visa card for every booking on 'Africa: Across a Continent by Private Jet' – embarking from London. This bucket-list adventure will take your luxury clientele on a private jet journey that spans seven countries across Africa.

A maximum of 48 privileged guests will travel on an A&K chartered Boeing 757 with some of the finest Tour Managers and local guides in the industry, enjoying fully lie-flat seats, with dedicated crew and executive chef on board, and in-flight internet access (where available).

22 days from AU\$189,500 per person. Departs 29 Sept 2023
Solo travellers save up to 50% off single supplement.



Terms & Conditions: Valid for all bookings made on any A&K private jet journeys departing in 2023. Private Jet Journeys for 2023: Africa: Across a Continent and Cultural Treasures: Around the World. Valid for any private jet booking made from 6 December 2022 to 28 February 2023. Booking must be paid in full before being eligible for the pre-paid Visa card. Incentive open for all AU/NZ travel advisors. All A&K private jet journeys are fully commissionable; earn from \$37,900 per twin-share booking.