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### Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of the latest news and a **Travel Associates** photo page plus a front cover wrap from **Journey Beyond**.

### Outback Spirit deal

**JOURNEY Beyond's** Outback Spirit has launched an incentive offering agents the opportunity for a free trip simply by making three bookings (or six guests).

The offer coincides with the operator's 2024 earlybird sale - for details see the **cover page**.

### Vouchers ease pain

**SABRE** has signed a new deal with iCoupon so its partners can offer pax the option of turning boarding passes into vouchers that can be redeemed at airport restaurants and retailers when flights have been delayed.

The new solution negates the need for a physical voucher and can be issued instantly.

## FCTG luxury targets \$1b

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) Travel Associates luxury brand is set to reach new heights, with Global MD Danielle Galloway saying that having just completed planning for 2024, "all our budgets are adding up to well over a billion dollars-plus for our luxury business globally".

"It is huge," she told delegates in Singapore at the 2023 Global Luxury Business Leader Conference, confirming that the past 12 months had seen Travel Associates have its best performance in 25 years.

The network has smashed targets in all areas including profit, sales growth, average booking size, dollars per file, staff retention & supplier relationships, Galloway said, adding Travel Associates will this year take out the Most Productive global award for the wider Flight Centre Travel Group.

"We have individuals achieving

\$10 million in sales - that's more than some small travel agencies make combined...it's quite phenomenal," she added.

Galloway attributed the strong results to looking after luxury clients "like no other", leading to strong retention and repeat ratios.

Staffing is also key, with Galloway paying tribute to Travel Associates' business leaders and advisors, 90% of whom have remained within the organisation.

"This is the place to be, and it's because of the leaders in the room," Galloway said.

Another pillar for the group has been the transformation of its luxury product portfolio "to make sure that the experiences we're delivering to our clients are the right ones," she said, adding "we like to think of ourselves as the largest boutique luxury network".

More from Travel Associates on pages **four** and **five**, as well as today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

## Travel Daily on location in Singapore

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of **Travel Associates and International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM)**.

**SINGAPORE** is all about luxury this week, with key travel suppliers gathering with buyers from across the globe for ILTM Asia Pacific.

Invitees for the exclusive event include about 65 business leaders from Flight Centre's Travel Associates network in Australia and NZ, who also took the opportunity over the weekend for a pre-ILTM conference.

Supplier partners attended a lavish dinner at famed Japanese restaurant KOMA, while all of the delegates were last night treated to a gala Travel Associates conference cocktail event before ILTM kicks off today.



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## Disney World sesh

DISNEY is reminding agents it will be running a webinar for Walt Disney World Resort tomorrow in partnership with Bedsonline.

The online session will take place at 3pm (AEST) tomorrow, and relay important 'magic' info about the destination - see [HERE](#).

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## Travel agents key - ILTM

TRAVEL agent usage by premium travellers is on the rise, according to research detailed by Alison Gilmore, International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM) Portfolio Director in Singapore yesterday during the Travel Associates Global Luxury Leaders Conference.

Gilmore's special presentation came in the lead-up to this week's ILTM trade show, which includes more than 65 hosted buyers from the Travel Associates network in Australia and New Zealand.

ILTM conducts regular surveys to gain insight into the luxury consumer mindset, with post-COVID trends showing well-heeled clients increasingly want to spend their money on "travelling in style on unique and memorable trips to make up for lost time".

"People need someone to plan these big extravagant trips, and travel agents have become a crucial part of the planning process, with two-thirds of wealthy travellers planning to use travel agents for at least some or all of their holiday bookings going forward," Gilmore said.

She said key factors cited by research respondents included wanting the flexibility to make adjustments when plans change, as well as staying up to date on the latest travel rules and regulations.

Other growing trends included family and multi-generational trips, making plans further and further in advance, and a

willingness to pay up to 20% more for sustainable or eco-friendly travel options.

Interestingly, the study also found decreasing demand for privacy and seclusion and a decline in local and regional trips, after the domestic travel boom necessitated by the pandemic.

Also slowing down is the impact of social media influencers, with family and friends cited as key drivers of travel decisions, followed by a reliance on trusted travel advisors.

By and large luxury consumers are accepting of the "new normal" including higher fares, a tendency to fly less often but take longer holidays, and a preference to spend money on experiences rather than luxury items.

Tonight, Gilmore will open this year's ILTM Asia Pacific, with the release of further insights including a new report into the Chinese travel market - see tomorrow's *TD* for details.

## Sun to rise in Aus

NORWEGIAN Cruise Line (NCL) will be redeploying *Norwegian Sun* to Australia in 2024-2025, due to the cancellation of *Norwegian Spirit's* sailings.

The cruise line confirmed the abandonment of the cruises is due to increased demand for the line's charter business in Asia.

All changes are now being communicated to impacted guests - more in tomorrow's *CW*.

## JQ boosts Brissy

JETSTAR is preparing to launch nonstop flights from Brisbane to Tokyo, Osaka and Seoul after signing a new deal with Brisbane Airport today (*TD* breaking news).

The Tokyo service kicks off on 31 Oct with five return flights a week, set to increase to daily from 03 Dec, while Osaka flights will start 02 Feb 2024, operating four times weekly.

Jetstar will also introduce three weekly flights between Queensland's capital city and South Korea from 01 Feb 2024.

Additionally, the low-cost carrier will ramp up its existing services from Brisbane to Bali and Auckland, with the Bali route increasing from seven to 10 return services a week from 01 Feb, while the Auckland service is set to expand from four weekly to daily frequency from 29 Oct.

## QF resumes Rome

THE Flying Kangaroo jump-started its popular seasonal Perth to Rome route yesterday, just in time for the European summer.

The direct flights will operate three times weekly with Qantas' Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft, providing more than 22,000 seats between Australia and Italy over four months until 03 Oct.

First launched last year (*TD* 27 Jun 2022), the carrier confirmed the Perth-Rome flights will also return for a third year, with flights for 2024 to go on sale early Jul.

The news follows Etihad's recent Rome expansion (*TD* 15 Jun).

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## Find destination experts

**TRAVEL** Agent Finder (TAF), an Australia-based online platform connecting travellers with specialist travel agents, has announced the launch of new destination features.

The features combine travel inspiration, traveller essentials and agent's unique destination experiences, while also shining a spotlight on certified destination experts pre-approved by the destination board.

Tourism Western Australia and the Hong Kong Tourism Board are the trial partners for the new destination features platform, which aims to encourage the visitation of holiday spots under the guidance of a travel expert.

TAF owner and operator Anna Shannon said she is excited to "feature destinations specialists in a new way to further highlight their expertise and generate new leads from their ideal clients".

The first destination feature

to launch is Western Australia, which is now viewable on the platform **HERE**.

Suppliers with agent specialist training programs are encouraged to ensure their certifications are recognised on TAF and that their specialist agents are featured.

More than 700 agents have joined TAF since it launched in late 2021 (**TD** 03 Sep 2021).

For more info, contact Shannon on 0404 240 967 or email her at [anna@travelagentfinder.com.au](mailto:anna@travelagentfinder.com.au).

## UK player back in Oz

**LONDON-BASED** travel insurance provider PassportCard has relaunched in the Australian market for the first time following COVID, boasting a real-time payment approach on claims as a major point-of-difference.

Instant payout coverage includes medical emergencies, delayed luggage, and stolen cash.

## Vietjet boosts Qld

**QUEENSLAND** has welcomed its first-ever direct international flight from Vietnam, with Vietjet's A330-300 touching down in Brisbane last Fri.

The flight kicks off twice-weekly services between Ho Chi Minh City and Brisbane (**TD** 05 Jun), with the Vietnamese carrier planning to expand the route to four per week after the first year.

The service is expected to carry 39,000 pax to Brisbane a year.

## Fairer slot allocation

**THE** International Air Transport Association (IATA) has joined a chorus of airline associations in calling on governments to improve the fairness around how airline slots at airports are distributed under Worldwide Airport Slot Guidelines.

"Fragmentation of slot regulation risks disruption to airline schedules...efficiency and competition," IATA argued.



## Window Seat

**A FEMALE** flight attendant in Buenos Aires has been arrested on charges of phoning in a threat, telling Aerolineas Argentinas there was a bomb on board a flight carrying her ex-boyfriend and his new partner to Miami.

The incident occurred late last month, with the 47-year-old reportedly telling a call centre operator to "check the airplane because it's going to blow up in a thousand pieces".

The 270 passengers and crew were evacuated, with emergency response teams unsuccessfully searching for the non-existent explosives.

Officials traced the call to the woman's daughter's phone, which she had borrowed to make the call in a ham-fisted attempt to avoid detection.

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## BKB heads to the East Coast



**BKB** Holidays recently held a series of roadshows along the east coast, visiting Newcastle, the Gold Coast, and Maroochydore.

Each event attracted a great agent turnout, with attendees hearing plenty of interesting updates from some of BKB's industry partners, and scoring a swathe of great prizes.

G'day Group, PONANT, Journey Beyond, DOUBLE-SIX Luxury Hotel - Seminyak, Heritage Expeditions, Far East Hospitality Management, True North, Wild

Bush Luxury, and Christmas and Cocos Keeling Islands were among the organisations who hit the road with the BKB team.

**Pictured:** Dee Whyte, True North; Karen Palfreyman, BKB Holidays; Amanda Fenwick, BKB Holidays; Dayu Basmiari, Double-Six Luxury Hotel Bali; Louise Barker, Far East Hospitality; Fiona Axford, BKB Holidays; and Ega Purnama, Double-Six Luxury Hotel Bali.

## AY boosting BKK

**FINNAIR** is set to expand capacity on the Helsinki-Bangkok route, with GDS screens indicating flights will increase from seven to 11 weekly.

The expansion is effective from 30 Oct, with the route operated using AY's Airbus A350-900 XWBs.

## New Indian carriers

**NORTHEAST** India will be served by a fledgling domestic carrier called JettWings Airways, which plans to launch with two Embraer jets later this year.

A total of 16 regional routes are planned from a base in Guwahati.

Also on the runway is a new Goa-based carrier called Fly91, which will utilise ATR-72 aircraft.

## FCTG plots AI use

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group expects to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) tools into its operations, according to Wendie Lee, Chief Product Officer of the Luxury and Independent division.

Speaking in Singapore at the Travel Associates Global Business Leaders Conference yesterday, Lee gave delegates a hands-on introduction to ChatGPT, noting its backing by Microsoft.

"I'm grateful that Flight Centre Travel Group has a major partnership with Microsoft, so we're going to be leveraging that," she said.

Lee noted there are various tools emerging that can write, prepare presentations, answer questions and more.

"It won't be long before this is embedded in Office 365, so this will just become part of how we work," she said.

## Luxperience is key

**HAVING** the Luxperience trade show as part of Flight Centre Travel Group's luxury portfolio (**TD 15 May**) is an opportunity to bring industry connections to Australia, according to Flight Centre Travel Group Luxury & Independent Global Brand & Marketing Leader, Anna Burgdorf.

"Luxperience is a fantastic brand and event in its own right, and that's the way it will be preserved," she said, confirming it will continue as a standalone entity under the leadership of Event Director, Lynn Ormiston.

## Stores drive traffic for Travel Associates

**BRICKS** and mortar outlets have been key in maintaining market presence for Travel Associates, with the organisation's GM Australia and NZ, Rachel Kingswell, saying that in contrast to some other travel agency brands, "the office network is still so relevant in the luxury market".

The branded stores offer client appointments to share the expertise and experience of the network's advisors, and having a presence in the community has been key to strengthening connections, she added.

While not a huge growth area, there are already three or four new physical outlets on the agenda for the next 12 months.

"We will continue to look to open offices with an owner who is dedicated to the local area," Kingswell added, while also flagging the potential for franchisee partnerships - particularly in regional areas of Australia as well as NZ where appropriate clients exist.

The Luxury and Independent division is also focusing strongly on the independent contractor space, with Nikki Glading recently appointed as GM of the Independent Luxury Collection.

On a global scale, plans are to grow the core Travel Associates and Scott Dunn brands, alongside an ongoing acquisition strategy and the potential for upmarket partnerships with other non-travel-related luxury retail brands.

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## Travel Associates gathers in Singapore

LAST weekend's Travel Associates Global Luxury Business Leader Conference in Singapore took place at the Shangri-La hotel, with delegates treated to a range of special experiences, networking and business updates.

Major sponsors of the event included Discova, the Globus Family of Brands, Oceania Cruises, Ponant and Regent Seven Seas Cruises, all of whom made the most of the opportunity to showcase their products to the audience of top-selling travel advisors and business owners.

Keynote speakers included Alison Gilmore, Portfolio Director for International Luxury Travel Market, which kicks off today, with the Travel Associates leaders forming a significant cohort of the invited buyers at the event.

Also on stage was Michael Londregan from Virtuoso, who spoke about some of the key issues facing the industry, as well as the huge opportunity ahead, while Hilton Asia-Pacific's Richard Todd shared some of the organisation's leadership strategies and their impact on performance.

A gala event last night and a range of inspirational team-building activities today continue the conference, which then segues into the opening session of ILTM at the Marina Bay Sands conference centre this evening.



**THE** Travel Associates partner dinner took place at KOMA at Marina Bay Sands, complete with a sake tasting led by famed sake sensei, Joshua Kalinan.



**KARL** Tailby, Travel Associates Balgowlah; Belinda Pignone, Travel Associates National Customer Success Manager; and Stew Evans, Travel Associates Mosman.



**FTG** Global MD Luxury & Independent Danielle Galloway with Regent Seven Seas VP APAC Lisa Pile.



**TENEISHA** Gill from Travel Associates Geelong with Nikki Glading, GM Flight Centre Luxury Collection Independents.



**EDWARD** Yee, Yee & Turner Travel Associates with Travel Associates NZ Head of Operations Ashleigh Teixeira.



**LISA** Wright, Travel Associates National Events Manager with Virtuoso SVP Michael Londregan.



**ASKIN** Ercan, Travel Associates Head of Operations with Malcolm Hyslop from Hyslop & James Travel Associates.



**JO KENNEDY** from Kennedy & Turner Travel Associates with FCTG Luxury & Independent Global Product Manager of Technology, Wendie Lee.



**NIC** Sinclair from Travel Associates Victoria Point with Greg Kitchen, Travel Associates Hawthorne.



**BECKY** Kent-Perchalla from Perchalla & Turner Travel Associates; Paul Egan, Egan & Turner Travel Associates; and Brook Mocha, Travel Associates Burleigh.



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## 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](mailto:brochures@traveldaily.com.au).



**Quark Expeditions - Antarctica 2024/25**  
Quark Expeditions has unveiled its interactive brochure for the Antarctica 2024/25 season. The 60-page travel guide is designed to immerse readers in the destination through a series of instantly-accessible videos, imagery and guest reviews. Up to 30 departures are showcased in the brochure, including voyages to the Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia Island, and more. Along with the release of the brochure, Quark is also offering guests up to 25% off select voyages, an additional 10% off when paying in full at the time of booking, as well as a US\$1,000 flight credit.



**Avanti Destination - Croatia Full of Life**  
Avanti Destination has partnered with the Croatian National Tourist Board to curate a comprehensive travel guide to better showcase 'The Land of a Thousand Islands', Croatia. The brochure calls out the essentials to enjoy city trips, including customisable packages, hotels, tours and destination information for key locations such as Zagreb, Dubrovnik, Split, Korcula, Hvar, and more. Avanti also noted in the brochure it is best to

consider travelling to the European country during the off-peak season for an ideal travel experience.

## Dicky hops aboard

**HUMAN** headline Richard Branson will join a special-edition Virgin Voyages sailing in Aug, giving Sailors the chance to interact with cruise line's founder.

Celebrating 50 years of the Virgin brand, the 'A Virgin Celebration Voyage' will set sail from Athens on 27 Aug, with passengers able to interact with Branson and Virgin leaders, and enjoy intimate fireside chats and special performances.

Sailing Club members can save 30% off their fare - **CLICK HERE** for more info and to book.

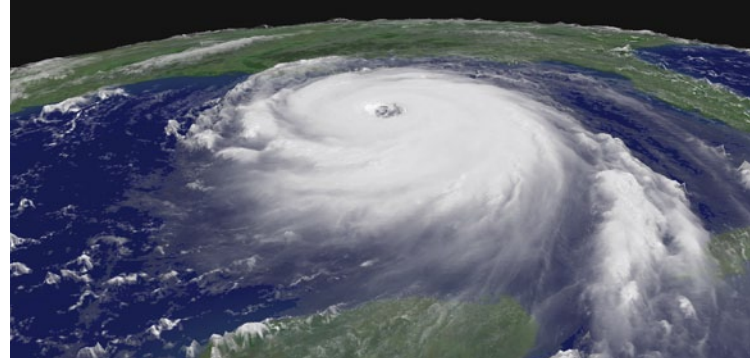
## Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

**THIS** year's skiing and snowboarding season will officially kick off tomorrow at alpine resorts around NSW, thanks to an eagerly awaited dumping of snow over the weekend.

Thredbo saw around five centimetres of snow accumulate yesterday morning, which is expected to rise to 20cm by the end of today and potentially double over the next week.

Snow may also reach parts of the Central Tablelands tonight.

## Don't get caught in a storm



**A LEADING** travel insurance company is urging Australian travellers "to read the fine print" of their policies when it comes to being covered for travel plans impacted by natural disasters.

One of the insurance policy traps that World Nomads believes often trips travellers up is the phrase "unexpected events", which often doesn't cover hurricanes or natural disasters 'after' they have been officially identified by weather bureaus.

The insurance company is asking Aussies to be particularly mindful when booking future trips to the United States this year, with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicting a 30% chance of an above normal season this year, including storms in the range of strong categories three to five.

"If a hurricane derails your travel plans, travel insurance coverage may offer cover for a range of events including trip cancellation, trip interruption, and trip delay," World Nomads General Manager of Marketing and Brands Christina Tunnah said.

"Hurricanes are becoming stronger and more frequent, increasing the likelihood of loss from this type of event."

Good insurance coverage should be able to cover travellers if a hurricane causes complete cessation of travel services at your departure point, allowing for a claim for cancellation or trip interruption expenses, with some policies also covering cancellations in instances where a hurricane makes your destination accommodation uninhabitable.

In the event of delays caused by a weather event, benefits of insurance may also include reimbursement for basic expenses like transport and accommodation incurred.

"International visitors to the US, who may change flights in the south or eastern parts of the US en route to their final destination, should consider extreme weather this summer when making travel arrangements," Tunnah added.

## Scenic internet reaches for the stars

**SCENIC** Luxury Cruises and Tours and Emerald Cruises has begun rolling out Elon Musk's high-speed satellite internet Starlink technology to its oceangoing fleets.

The first ship to be equipped was the new *Scenic Eclipse II*.