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## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features nine pages of industry news including a photo page from **Visit Europe & Britain** and our **Sustainability** page, plus a cover page from **CLIA**, a special update from **Bunnik Tours** and a full page from **Silversea**.

## Millan to offer agents Choice

**TRAVELLERS Choice** has appointed Paul Millan as its first ever Network Development Manager, tasked with expanding the group's network by enticing successful independent travel agency owners into the collective.

Based in Sydney, Millan (**pictured**) has been in travel for almost 35 years, including over a decade in the leisure and corporate segments.

He's also well known to the industry through former roles with Traveltek, Tour Amigo, Amadeus and Travelscene.

Travellers Choice MD Christian Hunter said Millan's unique skillset would help the group achieve its growth targets by facilitating conversations with



independent agency owners who are re-evaluating their consortia arrangements.

"Paul has extensive industry experience and a proven record in delivering solutions for travel businesses," Hunter noted.

"He will ensure that Australian travel agents truly understand the commercial advantages Travellers Choice shareholders enjoy in terms of unrivalled sales, marketing and business support," he said. *JM*

## Dream big, go small

**BUNNIK Tours** is showcasing its longstanding expertise in small group touring, with over 25 years of global experience operating trips with a 20-guest maximum.

Bunnik's new Europe 2024 programs include an expanded Short Tours range from eight to 14 days - more details in the special product profile on **page 11**.

## Upgrades are suite

**SILVERSEA** is offering special suite upgrades on its ocean and expedition cruises, as well as up to US\$1,000 of onboard credit and reduced deposits.

For details of the limited-time deal see **page 10** of today's **TD**.

## Benhamou is back!

**PATRICK Benhamou**, the long-time chief of Atout France in Australia (**TD 13 Apr**), has returned to the industry and is now running his own business called SHOW 7 Events.

Well known for lavish French showcases over more than 40 years, Benhamou's new venture is already engaged with key clients including Dior l'Occitane, Philips, Channel 9 and American Express.

He's also become the ambassador of a Bordeaux wine estate and a Provence resort called Terre Blanche, and "that is only the beginning" he told **TD**.

Patrick can now be contacted on [pabenhamou@gmail.com](mailto:pabenhamou@gmail.com).

## Join CLIA now!

**TRAVEL** advisors are being invited to make the most of the rising tide of cruising by joining Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia in 2024, with applications for membership now open - more details on the **cover page**.

## GROUPS NETWORK

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## EK expands UA pact

EMIRATES has added additional Canadian ports to its codeshare agreement with United Airlines, with GDS screens now indicating the EK code available on UA flights from Chicago to Calgary and Toronto as well as Vancouver to Houston and San Francisco.

## NTIA 2023 host named

POPULAR comedian Anthony "Lehmo" Lehmann has today been announced as the host of the upcoming National Travel Industry Awards, set to take place in less than two weeks at Melbourne's Crown Palladium.

The industry night of nights will see the standup comic (pictured) take the stage courtesy of Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers.

Lehmo has appeared in many Australian TV shows as well as enjoying comedic stints across the globe over the last 20 years.



Gow-Gates Executive Director, Tom Gow-Gates, said the company was thrilled to sponsor the host, saying the night of nights "brings the industry together to acknowledge achievements and applaud the resilience and excellence of the sector".

The NTIA intermission entertainment, sponsored by Express Travel Group, has also been revealed as being "a former Australia's Got Talent winner" with the surprise guest to be unveiled on the night.

ATIA CEO Dean Long thanked Gow-Gates and Express for their sponsorship, "as we bring together the very best of Australia's travel industry to celebrate excellence". BP


More from ATIA on **page eight**.

## ATAS termination

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has terminated the ATAS participation of Piccadilly Travel Service (ABN 36 136 590 611), based in Helensburgh, NSW, due to a breach of section 2.5 of the ATAS charter which governs eligibility.

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## NZ has no Seoul

AIR New Zealand has confirmed the suspension of another international route due to issues with Pratt & Whitney engines (TD yesterday), with flights between Auckland and Seoul to be paused from Apr 2024.

The carrier had already confirmed Hobart flights would be axed due to the issue, which will impact up to 700 engines globally over the next three years.

The pause on flying to Seoul "is to allow more resiliency when the Trent1000 engines that power our 787 fleet go for regular maintenance, due to potential issues with the availability of spare engines from Rolls Royce to cover the maintenance period," said CEO Greg Foran.

Both routes have performed well, but "we need to ensure we can deliver a reliable service across the rest of our network".

## Solomons special

FLY Solomons has announced a special earlybird sale fare in conjunction with the promotion of the Pacific Games 2023.

Deals are on offer for travel from BNE, MEL, SYD, CBR, ADL, CNS, DRW and PER to Munda, Gizo, Seghe, Suavanao, Auki, Nadi and Port Vila, with all fares filed in GDS for auto pricing.




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**CANADA**



## Window Seat

WE ALL love to take a souvenir home from our travels, and while most usually opt for something relatively small and sentimental, four men have taken off with a loo, of all things.

Not just your ordinary toilet though, this 18-carat gold lavatory is worth a whopping A\$9.5 million, and was part of an exhibition by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan.

Michael Jones, 38, and James Sheen, 39, face burglary charges, while 35-year-old Fred Doe and Bora Guccuk, 39, are accused of conspiring to transfer criminal property.

The thieves travelled from all across England to Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire to carry out the unusual heist, causing flooding and damage to the stately home in the process.

As it turns out, the golden toilet, which was entitled 'America', was not just for show - it was actually plumbed in and could be used for its intended purpose.



## New sports tix platform

MYTICKETPRO has launched a sports ticketing platform for the tourism industry, providing travel professionals access to verified live ticket inventory for North American sports events.

Unveiled overnight in London at World Travel Market (WTM), the new tool offers uniform pricing and instant digital confirmations, as well as "industry standard" commission to travel advisors.

The tickets are sourced directly from the teams, guaranteeing that a ticket sold through the platform is legitimate, Founder and President MyTicketPro and Amadeo Travel Solutions Jonathan Zuk said.

Basketball, baseball, hockey and soccer tickets are available on the platform, with MyTicketPro planning to expand its inventory to other sports based on demand.

"MyTicketPro represents a new standard in tourism sports ticketing and debuts today built upon a software solution I am proud to have developed and tested in the market over the past 15 years," he shared.

"Thanks to this foundation,

## AC, SQ codeshare

AIR Canada and Singapore Airlines will expand their codeshare partnership from Apr 2024, with the AC code appearing on SIA flights from Singapore to Perth, Colombo, Bangkok, Dhaka, Ho Chi Minh City, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Phuket and Phnom Penh.

MyTicketPro's proprietary software connections are already trusted by and familiar to the travel trade, who can quickly and comfortably start selling."

International interest in attending North American sporting events, including basketball, baseball, hockey, soccer, and more, is on the rise, with the most recent data from the US Travel Association showing a 10% surge in the space of just one year.

The new MyTicketPro platform enables advisors to take advantage of the flourishing travel segment, the company said - more details [HERE](#). JM

## EK's SAF take-off

ONE of the first Emirates flights operating with sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) landed in Sydney on 24 Oct, arriving from Dubai International Airport (DXB).

Supplied by Shell into the DXB airport fuelling system, the blended eco-fuel consisted of 40% neat SAF and 60% conventional Jet A-1 fuel.

"Powering flights from our Dubai hub is just one of the steps we've taken to reduce emissions and concretely help our customers minimise their own carbon footprint," according to EK President Tim Clark.

More sustainability news on [page seven](#) of today's TD.

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# TODAY IS CHOOSE DAY

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## visitBerlin on the ball for 2024



**THE** visitBerlin team recently hosted some fun and interactive roadshows in Australia, receiving an enormous amount of positive feedback from the industry.

To better promote the city's vibrant and fruitful calendar in 2024, including the hosting of the UEFA European Championship and the 35th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the group connected with travel advisors in Sydney and Melbourne with updates on all the happenings.

"We cannot wait to visit Berlin" was heard everywhere throughout the events, with more info on what's on offer in the city available by **CLICKING HERE**.

**Pictured** ready for a huge 2024 season kick-off are, from left: Ralf Ostendorf, visitBerlin Director Market Management; Sebastian Riewe, Adlon Kempinski Berlin; Tanja Gruhle, Regent Berlin; Christian Kieschke, Ritz-Carlton Berlin; and Burkhard Kieker, visitBerlin CEO. *MW*

Missed out on any episodes of Season ONE of 'Conversations with women in travel'?

[CLICK HERE](#) to listen

## MRPS has a friend

**TOUR** Amigo's new Cruise Amigo product has gone live with its first customer, Murray River Paddlesteamers (MRPS).

The product was launched earlier this year, with Cruise Amigo set to "transform" Murray River Paddlesteamers' booking and reservation management, as well as its customers' online booking experience.

Murray River Paddlesteamers is believed to have made the transition as its existing system no longer met the demands of the cruise line's multi-day voyages and business-to-business opportunities.

"Our onboarding experience with Tour Amigo was exceptional," Murray River Paddlesteamers Chief Executive Officer Craig Burgess said, with the technology upgrade coming during the construction of MRPS' groundbreaking new luxury *PS Australian Star* (*TD* 29 Sep 2022). More in today's **Cruise Weekly**.



### ADELAIDE

Today's issue of *TD* is coming to you courtesy of Tourism Australia, which is hosting its incentive showcase, **Dreamtime 2023, this week.**

**WE ARE** en route to Adelaide today ahead of Dreamtime 2023, which kicks off tomorrow.

Returning for the first time since 2019, the event will showcase Australia as a premier events destination to visiting international buyers.

The Dreamtime program consists of a full day of business-to-business sessions to connect Australian industry sellers with incentive agents from across the globe, as well as special activities to showcase Adelaide's incentive offering - more in tomorrow's *TD*.

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# Travel Daily

Tuesday 7th Nov 2023

## Celebrity on sale

**CELEBRITY** Cruises is offering up to 75% off second guests plus savings of up to \$225 per stateroom on all sailings three nights and longer departing 10 Nov 2023-30 Apr 2024.

The Black Friday deals are valid for sale 11-14 Nov - [MORE HERE](#).



## WHITSUNDAY EXPLORER

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## No poaching - QR

**QATAR** Airways has partnered with United for Wildlife, an initiative working to tackle the illegal wildlife trade and protect endangered species.

QR and United for Wildlife will pursue campaigns around their shared mission to fight the illegal wildlife trade and advance the work of the initiative's regional chapters across the globe.

Qatar will also participate in the United for Wildlife Global Summit in Singapore, which aligns with its sustainability initiatives and responsibilities.

## MU ramps up SYD

**CHINA** Eastern Airlines is fuelling its recovery with two new routes to Sydney, from Hangzhou and Jinan.

Seat capacity is forecast to be 97% recovered between Sydney and China by Christmas, as China Eastern's flights to Hangzhou restart this week.

MU will also fly three return services per week to Jinan from 28 Nov - the first time there has been a direct flight to the Chinese city from Australia.

From the end of the month, there will be nine airlines with direct flights from Sydney to 14 different Chinese cities, offering a whopping 85 weekly return services to the country.

MU's Hangzhou-Sydney route will also fly its first trans-Tasman service, travelling onward to Auckland - the sixth airline flying between SYD and AKL.

# EXPERIENCE


## Qatar

Formula 1

Qatar Airways

Qatar Grand Prix

Travel & Cruise Weekly



[Click here to watch the action](#)

## FCTG enjoys custom Bunnik tour



**BUNNIK** Tours played host to Flight Centre (FCTG) recently on the travel agency's Area Leaders Conference and planning days.

The three-day event was hosted at Bunnik's headquarters in Adelaide, and was attended by key FCTG personnel, and more than 30 area and national leaders from across Australia.

While in SA, Bunnik showcased the best of its home state to the Flight Centre team, taking the group on its own unique tour for the day.

The excursion highlighted the best of South Australia, such as culinary delights and fine wines.

The group visited Adelaide Central Market and Penfolds Magill Estate Cellar Door (**pictured**), with both experiences part of Bunnik's 'Discover South Australia' small group tour.

The day ended with a private

farewell dinner hosted by the South Australian Tourism Commission, where the group heard a brand and market update from General Manager Global Markets & Trade, Chantal Ward, as well as a "Bunnik masterclass" from the company's CEO Dennis Bunnik and National Sales Manager Zoe Francis.

"It was an honour to welcome Flight Centre to the heart of Bunnik Tours in South Australia," Francis said.

"This provided us with an excellent opportunity to offer a first-hand experience of our culture and award-winning small group touring philosophy.

"We thoroughly enjoyed hosting Flight Centre on their exclusive Bunnik Tour, brimming with special experiences that exemplify our expertise as the small group touring specialists." *MS*



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## Visit Europe & Britain Roadshow inspires

**AROUND** 100 travel advisors attended the inaugural Visit Europe + Britain Roadshow in Melbourne and Sydney last week, where they connected with and heard from the Rail Europe team and nine tourism representatives from Atout France, the Italian National Tourist Board, Switzerland Tourism, Tourism Ireland, the Austrian National Tourist Office, Visit Monaco, Spain Tourism Board, Visit Portugal and VisitBritain.

Not only did advisors learn firsthand some key new happenings and experiences in Europe and Britain in 2024, they also improved their knowledge on European train services and connections across the continent.

Before the nights were over 10 lucky advisors from each city took home some eye-watering prizes for acing the quiz - Melbourne winners: Teniesha Gill, Travel Associates Geelong; Nickie Collings, Global International Travel Services; Jacinta Anderson, TravelManagers MEL; Anna Huang, FCTG Collins St; Diane Rawlings, Where2Travel MEL; Ivana DeColle, FCTG Ivanhoe; Maddie Wood, FCTG Collins St; Michelle Banoura, Travellers Lounge; Maurits Klunder, FCTG Brighton; and Catherine Whelan, Hawthorn Travel.

Sydney winners: Ganesa Suppiah, GSA Hospitality; Caitlin Hoey, Libertas; Cathy Moir, TravelManagers; Bret Bellchambers, Atour Travel Services; Emma Mogensen, FCTG Balgowlah; Jade Jackson, Flight Sale; Irena Bryant, TravelManagers; Kate Turner, FCTG Bridgepoint; Lani Symons Vaughan, MTA Mobile Travel Agents; and Emma Hanger from FCTG George St.

The roadshow was a partnership between Rail Europe, the European Travel Commission (ETC) and VisitBritain.



**VISIT** Europe + Britain Partners at the Pullman Circular Quay.



**MELBOURNE** prize winners.



**SYDNEY** prize winners.



**FROM** cultural cities and train travel to hotel openings and sporting events, advisors were provided with a ton of updates on new products and happening.



**PETA** Evans, VisitBritain; James Hooper, Rail Europe; Sofia Hansson & Emanuele Attanasio, European Travel Commission AU Chapter.



**MELBOURNE** advisors arriving at the Intercontinental for workshops to learn about travel in Europe & Britain 2024.



**ADVISORS** learning about the ETC and the work it is doing to improve traveller experiences.



**SYDNEY** advisors ready to learn about everything in store for travellers in 2024 and beyond.



**INTRO** speeches by Grant Robertson & Richard Leonard, Rail Europe; Sofia Hansson, ETC; and Peta Evans, VisitBritain.

**ADVISORS** journeyed across Europe during the night to learn about the continent's latest offerings.



### YHA for wildlife

#### NOT-FOR-PROFIT

accommodation network YHA Australia has partnered with World Animal Protection to develop a new set of wildlife guidelines for tours and experiences with wild and captive wild animals.

The recommendations are designed to prioritise wildlife wellbeing and education across the organisation's network, and promote responsible and sustainable wildlife tourism.

YHA Australia will now market a range of wildlife venues and activities to its travellers, such as rehabilitation facilities and rescue centres - more [HERE](#).

## WEBJET LEADS CARBON OFFSET UPTAKE

**WEBJET** has seen a 72% year-on-year increase in tonnes of carbon emissions offset via its Sustainable Traveller program, with a record 119,300 bookings this year alone.

Run in partnership with Asia-Pacific voluntary carbon offset provider, Tasman Environmental Markets (TEM), the program has offset a total of 47,500 tonnes of carbon in 2023 - the equivalent weight of 2,639 Sydney buses.

Domestic passengers led the charge, accounting for 88% of all carbon offset flight bookings, while international travellers lagged behind, making up just 12% of offset bookings.

New data from the online travel agency also shows that solo travellers are more likely to get

behind the green movement, comprising 69% of bookings.

Additionally, travellers aged over 46 make 64% of all carbon offset bookings, while under-25s are the least likely to invest in offsetting their travel (6%).

"We are thrilled that Webjet customers continue to respond so enthusiastically to Sustainable Traveller," Webjet OTA CEO David Galt shared.

"Over the last three years, they have offset a remarkable 640 million kilometres of air travel - the equivalent of 37,695 trips from Sydney to London.



"Sustainable Traveller's success reflects the demand for eco-conscious travel options, which enable Aussies to explore the world while minimising their environmental impact".

Going into its fourth year, the program will continue to support high-quality projects that reduce carbon emissions, such as the Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (ALFA) Indigenous fire abatement project in Australia ([pictured](#)). *JM*

### Zoos Victoria duped

A **CARBON** credit scheme that sold credits to Zoos Victoria, among other Australian businesses, has come under investigation for allegedly selling worthless emissions offsets.

The Kariba REDD+ Forest Project, which had promised to regenerate a vast section of Zimbabwean forest, is now being scrutinised by global greenhouse crediting organisation Verra.

Zoos Victoria has denied any knowledge about problems with Kariba credits before they bought them, and said it is working with Verra and Climate Active, Australia's official carbon assessor.

### VV is at the helm of eco-fuel sea trials

**VIRGIN** Voyages (VV) has successfully completed its first-ever sustainable marine fuel trial, bringing the cruise line closer to its aspirational goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2025.

The Barcelona-based *Valiant Lady* bunkered the waste-based biofuel on 24 Sep and completed testing and burning of the fuel on 16 Oct, with fuel and engine performance tested throughout the trial.

The fuel was a blend of 20% used cooking oil and 80% conventional heavy fuel oil.

VV Senior Director of Social Impact and Sustainability, Jill Stoneberg, said the aforementioned fuel blend is "one of the greatest opportunities for transitioning to lower-carbon fuel solutions".

"We're encouraging our cruising counterparts to ask for and test these fuels as stronger demand will ultimately help accelerate the market."

VV will continue to explore how eco-fuel adoption will accelerate its decarbonisation strategy in the short term, Stoneberg said.

### CAAS, SIA pilot

**ALTHOUGH** Singapore is operationally ready to supply sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), more needs to be done to support adoption, a new SAF trial has found.

The 20-month pilot, run by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS), GenZero, and Singapore Airlines (SIA), showed SAF can be safely deployed to Changi Airport and uplifted onto flights without changing existing infrastructure; it also outlined a pathway to sustainable fuel adoption.

# Collect moments, not things

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## ATIA UPDATE

from Richard Taylor, Director of Membership Experience



**I'M DELIGHTED** to say that our team will be visiting the Gold Coast this weekend, when Dean, Nina and myself join Travellers Choice for its annual conference.

And the following weekend - now just 10 days away - it's the small matter of the National Travel Industry Awards. The judges have judged, the tables are arranged, the tux is at the dry cleaners (alright no it's not, must get onto that) and 1,300 travel folk will soon descend on Melbourne to connect and celebrate the best our industry has to offer. We're just a little bit excited, and for those attending this year we're looking forward to bringing you a fantastic night.

Before that, we're having Welcome Drinks on Fri, followed by an exclusive event for our finalists. For some of these people, especially if they're based regionally or simply newer to the industry, the size and scale of the awards night will come as quite the shock.

With these smaller gatherings the finalists will have the opportunity to meet their peers and especially other finalists in their own category in a more

intimate setting. It's about maximising the return on the effort people make to get to the awards, and creating affordable networking opportunities for different people beyond the 'same old, same old'.

Over 70 finalists are taking part, and they will be the stars of the weekend. And a special, heartfelt thanks to the sponsors of the Fri event, Viking and CVFR, who grasped the importance of making this weekend a true VIP experience for all of those who've worked so hard to become finalists this year.

That hard work is surely the industry theme for 2023. If last year was about celebrating the return of the NTIAs and our industry's dogged resilience to get there, this year it's surely got to be about the hard yakka you've put in. To say "it's been busy" would hardly scratch the surface.

So celebrate the finalists you work alongside, for it's a gargantuan accomplishment to be in that cohort in a year where frankly we all deserve a trophy. I did suggest this in the office but was voted down - apparently we'd still be presenting awards at 8am the following morning.

If you cannot make it, follow along on our LinkedIn page or via the various other coverage. But if you are headed down we very much look forward to seeing you.

## Titan heads to the beach



**ASCEND** Travel Group and Titan Travel held the tour operator's latest national roadshow stop in the Sydney beachside suburb of Cronulla last week.

The well-attended event, held at 1908 Cronulla restaurant, saw guests share their excitement and positive feedback for Titan, which launched in Australia earlier this year (**TD** 30 Aug).

Titan says its national roadshow has been a huge success, with hundreds of attendees in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Queensland (**TD** 24 Oct).

The tour operator is Ascend's first client, with the operation spearheaded by well-known travel identities Julie Primmer & Lynda Wallace (**TD** 27 Jul). *MS*

## Theme park merger

**US THEME** park giants Six Flags and Cedar Fair have announced a merger which will create a network of almost 50 locations across North America.

The US\$8 billion all-stock deal will see the combined entity operate under the Six Flags name, running 27 amusement parks, 15 water parks and nine resorts in 17 US states, Canada and Mexico.

The deal is estimated at generating US\$120m in synergies.

## DL wi-fi rollout

**DELTA** Air Lines is extending its free in-flight wi-fi program to its regional network, after signing a deal for the installation of systems aboard more than 400 Boeing 717 aircraft.

The project will roll out from mid-2024 with the aim of completing the upgrade by the end of the year, complementing the free wi-fi already offered via Delta's mainline network.

Access is offered at no charge to all members of Delta's SkyMiles loyalty program.

## New Clare Valley accommodation

**DEVELOPERS** have revealed plans for a new accommodation property in South Australia's Clare Valley wine region, which will offer private villas and futuristic glamping tents.

Set on 42 acres of land, the property will comprise of two sections - three villas among the existing olive grove and five glamping stays over the hill.

Owners Stephen Keens and Duc Tran said the accommodation would aim to connect travellers to the outdoors, while offering all the luxuries of a city stay.



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## Lion joins ABEA

**FORMER** Business Events Australia chief Penny Lion has been named as a Director of the newly formed Australian Business Events Association (**TD** 03 Jul). She joins other ABEA directors including industry legend Dr Leo Jago, Director of Tourism and Business Events International, who was appointed to the organisation's Board last month. Nine of the 11 ABEA Board positions are now filled, giving a wealth of industry connections.

## New AUH lounges

**ETIHAD** Airways has unveiled new premium lounges at Abu Dhabi International Airport's new Terminal A, offering sweeping views of the runway and direct access to three gates. Spanning three floors, the First and Business class lounges feature a range of dining options, relaxation and entertainment spaces, including the Constellation Bar at the enclosed Roof Lounge. "When designing the Etihad Lounges in our new home, Terminal A, our teams thought through every detail, ensuring an experience that will delight our guests from the moment they step through the door," Etihad CEO Antonoaldo Neves said. The debut of the lounges comes as the airline prepares to fully relocate to the new terminal between 09 and 14 Nov.

## Green London hotel



**LONDON** now features a new accommodation option with the opening of 1 Hotel Mayfair, the European flagship of fledgling "mission-driven hotel brand" 1 Hotels, which is strongly focused on sustainable practices. The 181-room property promises to be a haven where guests can "rest, revive, restore and recharge in an environment filled with native plants and a preserved moss-covered wall".

## Bamboo shoots through...



**THE** final flight for Bamboo Airways departed Sydney over the weekend, with the bittersweet moment captured by former National Sales Manager ANZ for the airline, Brad Crawford. The Vietnamese carrier withdrew from the Australian market last month (**TD** 23 Oct) after its head office made the decision to abandon long-haul destinations in favour of a more

localised network approach. Bamboo's short-lived presence started in 2019, operating debut Aussie flights from Hanoi to Melbourne, before launching services between Ho Chi Minh City & Melbourne and Sydney. **AB**

## New Day for Bonza

**BONZA** has named Tatiana Day as its new Head of Communications, taking over from Heather Mollins who will shortly take an overseas break. Day has extensive PR experience including roles at Australia Zoo and Koala Mattresses.

## Phuket recovery

**THE** hotel market in Phuket, Thailand has returned to pre-COVID levels in terms of revenue thanks to soaring room rates, but hospitality analyst C9 Hotelworks has warned of an upcoming crunch due to pressure on the destination's ageing infrastructure. C9 Hotelworks' MD Bill Barnett said the 2023/24 high season is likely to see a "carmageddon" gridlock traffic scenario which will significantly impact tourists. As in other markets, hotels have been plagued by consistent staff shortages, with Barnett urging authorities to implement a master plan and strategy to finalise key projects including a planned light rail network, cross-island expressway and the Patong-Kathu tunnel.

## Railbookers new Signature itineraries

**RAILBOOKERS** has released nine new trips under the Signature Collection banner, enhancing the company's portfolio of independent rail holidays with once-in-a-lifetime experiences and activities. The expansion includes trips ranging from the Canadian Rockies to fjords in Norway, with experiences such as private touring of the Normandy beaches, Italy's Cinque Terre and hotel stays atop the Swiss Alps - more details **HERE**.

## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US\$0.649**

**THE** Aussie \$ has jumped ahead of the monetary decision by the Reserve Bank of Australia today, performing better against key markets, surging almost two cents against the greenback, and up almost \$0.03 against the Japanese yen. The RBA is likely to hike the interest rate to 4.35%, with experts informing a halt may pressure the Australian dollar to underachieve as a result. *Wholesale rates this morning.*

<b>US</b>	\$0.649
<b>UK</b>	£0.526
<b>NZ</b>	\$1.088
<b>Euro</b>	€0.605
<b>Japan</b>	¥97.33
<b>Thailand</b>	฿23.04
<b>China</b>	¥4.715
<b>South Africa</b>	11.87
<b>Canada</b>	\$0.889
<b>Crude oil</b>	US\$84.89



# Suite Upgrades

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# Bunnik Tours: Dream big, go small

Bunnik Tours are the small group touring specialists. With over 25 years of experience, their mission is twofold: to offer personalised travel experiences and to contribute positively to the economic and social well-being of the places they visit.

Still making the most of their small group touring philosophy with a maximum of 20 guests and spacious coaches, Bunnik Tours 'Short Tour' travelling style gives travellers more flexibility by being able to book their own flights or combine multiple tours together at once.

After seeing an increasing interest in their Short Tours range, they decided to ramp up their Europe 2024 itineraries to deliver even more choice for travellers.

These tours range from 8 to 14 days, visit one to two countries, and will take your guests to the heart of a destination.

Austria & Slovenia is among one of the new Short Tours introduced this year. This enchanting small group tour begins in the historically rich city of Vienna, before making its way through Salzburg, Innsbruck, Lake Bled and Ljubljana over the course of 11 days.

The next tour release, Southern Spain, is designed for those wanting an in-depth experience of the Andalusia region of Spain.

The tour begins in Seville, the country's vibrant capital city, before making its way through Ronda, Granada and Cordoba over the course of 8 days.

These tours exclude airfares and mostly start and finish in main cities, making it easy for clients to continue on their journey or add on to existing travels.

## CONTACT US

Contact one of Bunnik Tours' friendly Travel Specialists to find out more about their Short Tours. With over 25 years' experience, Bunnik Tours is an Australian family owned, multi award-winning small group tour operator.



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